



**Environment and Urban Renewal Policy
and Performance Board**

**Wednesday, 26 March 2014 6.30 p.m.
Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David WR'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Councillor John Gerrard (Chairman) | Labour |
| Councillor Keith Morley (Vice-Chairman) | Labour |
| Councillor John Bradshaw | Conservative |
| Councillor Frank Fraser | Labour |
| Councillor Pauline Hignett | Labour |
| Councillor Andrew MacManus | Labour |
| Councillor Tom McInerney | Labour |
| Councillor Pauline Sinnott | Labour |
| Councillor Dave Thompson | Labour |
| Councillor Bill Woolfall | Labour |
| Councillor Geoff Zygadlo | Labour |

Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or e-mail gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

| Item No. | Page No. |
|--|------------------|
| 1. MINUTES | |
| 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS) | |
| Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item. | |
| 3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME | 4 - 6 |
| 4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES | 7 - 20 |
| 5. SSP MINUTES | 21 - 25 |
| 6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING | |
| (A) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2013/14 | 26 - 51 |
| 7. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES | |
| (A) CONSULTATION RESULTS REGARDING REQUEST FOR WAITING RESTRICTIONS TO PREVENT PARKING ON PART OF CRONTON LANE, WIDNES. | 52 - 57 |
| (B) BIG CASTLEFIELDS SURVEY – ANALYSIS & NEXT STEPS | 58 - 119 |
| (C) HALTON HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2013 - 2018 | 120 - 187 |
| (D) AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE | 188 - 198 |
| (E) CONTAMINATED LAND CAPITAL PROJECTS PROGRAMME - FUNDING WITHDRAWAL | 199 - 202 |

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
 - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
 - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
 - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
 - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the relevant Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

**8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board and Executive Mersey Gateway Board Minutes Relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2013
TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO**

**EXB129 OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS,
HALTON CASTLE WARD**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which detailed the objections received following public consultation on a proposed 20 mph speed limit on roads within the Halton Castle Ward.

The Board was advised that public consultation had taken place on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits on a number of residential areas within the Halton Castle Ward, as shown on the map at Appendix A. Details of the proposals were set out in Appendix B, attached to the report, and had been considered and supported by the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board at its meeting on 11 September 2013.

The introduction of 20mph speed limits had been shown to reduce the number of collisions on residential roads and reduce the severity of any accident casualties. It was reported that following formal consultation, two objections had been received, as detailed in the report. In addition, it was noted that the proposals had the support of Ward Councillors, Castlefields Implementation Group, Cheshire Police and the Portfolio holder for Transportation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) notice be given of the Council's intention to introduce an Order to implement a 20 mph speed limit on those roads listed in appendix B attached to the report; and
- 2) the objectors be notified accordingly.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2014
EXB136 DELIVERY AND ALLOCATIONS LOCAL PLAN SCOPING
DOCUMENT – APPROVAL FOR A PERIOD OF PUBLIC
CONSULTATION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval to publish the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan Scoping Document (the Scoping Document) for a six week period of public consultation.

The Board was advised that it was a statutory requirement for local authorities to produce a development plan for their area. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan would identify strategic development site allocations and land use, set out specific policies to help guide development and provide further detail on key areas of change as identified in the Core Strategy. It was reported that the Scoping Document would be the starting point for discussion on what should be included in the Local Plan and which would eventually guide the future development of the Borough. A copy of this document was attached at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan Scoping Document (Appendix 1), be approved for the purposes of public consultation for a six week period; and
- 2) any minor drafting amendments to be made to the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan Scoping Document prior to public consultation, be agreed by the Operational Director, Policy, Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Physical Environment.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2014
RESOURCES PORTFOLIO AND PHYSICAL
ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

EXB146 DEMOLITION OF MOOR LANE BUSINESS CENTRE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided an update on the closure and subsequent demolition of Moor Lane Business Centre.

The Board was advised that a decision to close the

Centre was made in early 2013, as repair work needed to return the building to a reasonable state of repair was estimated to be in excess of £750,000. It was noted that unless rents were increased substantially over a five year period, funding was not available to carry out this work.

Tenants had been provided with assistance with relocation and it was noted that although the majority of the 38 businesses had relocated within the Borough, five had relocated elsewhere. It was reported that if the building was demolished and the site cleared and secured, the site offered a regeneration opportunity. It was further noted that discussions had taken place with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group in respect of the site being used as an interim car parking facility for clients using the Moor Lane Health Centre.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted

- 1) that the final date for the closure of the building was 31 January 2014; and
- 2) the demolition of the premises would commence in late February 2014, with completion being due in early June 2014.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27TH FEBRUARY 2014
COMMUNITY AND SPORT PORTFOLIO,
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO AND
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**EXB159 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES - COMMUNITY &
ENVIRONMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on a review of fees and charges within the Community and Environment Services for 2014/15.

The Board was advised that the review of fees and charges within the Communities Directorate had been carried out as part of the budget preparations for 2014/15. It was reported that the existing fees and charges would be increased generally in line with inflation. However, some, such as Cemeteries and Crematoria had been increased by more to ensure full cost recovery. It was noted that others had been increased to reflect the charges in other local

authority areas.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report be approved for 2014/15.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB160 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB162 WASTE TREATMENT SERVICES TENDER - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the provision of interim waste treatment services.

The Board was reminded that at its meeting on 24 May 2012, it had considered a report on the Council's current and proposed future contractual arrangements for dealing with residual household waste. In partnership with the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Disposal Authority (MRWA), the Council was involved in the procurement of a Resource Recovery Contract (RRC) for the diversion of residual waste from landfill, which was due to commence in 2016.

Officers undertook two procurement exercises, previously reported to the Board, to try to establish whether there was a more cost effective alternative to the Council's current landfill disposal arrangements during the interim period up to the commencement of the RRC. As these had proved unsuccessful, a further procurement exercise was undertaken in December 2013 and the details of that exercise were set out in the report for Members' consideration.

Reason(s) For Decision

In order for the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations as a Waste Disposal Authority, it must have in place arrangements for the treatment or disposal of residual household waste. It was important to ensure that any arrangements that were in place continued to represent the most cost effective and value for money solution available to the Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

By undertaking a procurement exercise for the provision of waste treatment services through an 'open' process, the Council had sought to consider the widest range of options that were currently available. The outcome of the procurement exercise had determined the most cost effective waste management solution available.

Implementation Date

The Waste Treatment Services Contract was expected to commence in April 2014.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the award of the Waste Treatment Services Contract to the company named in the report, be approved;

and

- 2) the Strategic Director, Communities, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, to finalise all matters relating to the Waste Treatment Services Contract.

Strategic Director
- Communities

**MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON
23RD JANUARY 2014**

MGEB18 MERSEY GATEWAY CROSSINGS BOARD LTD

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive which gave Members details of the role of the Crossings Board in connection with the Project, specifically that:-

- the Council had been required by the DfT as a condition of funding to form the Crossings Board to manage delivery of the Project with due consideration of value for money and affordability; and
- the Crossings Board would enter into:
 - a) each of the Project Agreements and the DMPA as an additional counterparty to the selected contractors; and
 - b) the governance agreement to set out the terms on which the Crossings Board would manage the project on behalf of the Council and the respective obligations of the Council and the Crossings Board to the DfT

as reported elsewhere on this agenda.

The Board was advised that at previous meetings the Board had approved the creation of the Crossings Board. It was confirmed that the Crossings Board had been incorporated in October 2012 as a private company limited by shares and registered at Companies House with the number 08751307.

The Board was further advised that Section 188 of the Companies Act 2006 stated that any director's contract of two years or more duration required approval by ordinary

resolution, i.e. that the shareholders of the company must agree to such contracts in advance.

It was reported that the Governance Agreement proposed that all non-executive directors were appointed for three years by way of a Directors Service Agreement, and hence approval by ordinary resolution was required for MGCB to be able to offer the directors contracts for this duration.

The Construction Director and Finance Director would both be offered a combined Directors Service Agreement and Contract of Employment for four years, and again approval by ordinary resolution was required for MGCB to be able to offer the directors contracts for this duration

The Department for Transport had been consulted on these matters, in accordance with the draft Governance Agreement and there had been no issues with the proposed duration of the contracts.

The Governance Agreement allowed the Council to appoint the initial executive directors, subsequent appoints were to be approved by the Appointments Committee of the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- (1) note that the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd has been established in accordance with the Board's earlier approvals;
- (2) agree to the directors of Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd being offered contracts in excess of two years;
- (3) delegate the right to vote on the above matter to the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services; and
- (4) authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make all the initial executive director appointments in respect of the MGCB.

Chief Executive

The Board considered:

- 1) Whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) Whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**MGEB20 PROGRESS REPORT AND DELEGATIONS BY COUNCIL
TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN RELATION TO MERSEY GATEWAY
- KEY DECISION**

The Board was advised that Halton Borough Council (“Council”) would be required to enter into a number of contracts in connection with the Project (as defined in the Project Agreement referred to in paragraph 1 below), the primary ones being:

1. the project agreement (“Project Agreement”) between (1) the Council, (2) the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd (“Crossings Board”) and (3) the special purpose project company established

by the preferred bidder to deliver the Project (“Project Company”);

2. a direct agreement between (1) the Council, (2) the Crossings Board, (3) the Project Company, (4) the agent appointed by the funders and (5) the Security Trustee (as defined in the Project Agreement);
3. the demand management participation agreement (“DMPA”) between (1) the Council (2) the Crossings Board and (3) the special purpose demand management participation company established by the Preferred Bidder;
4. the governance agreement between (1) the Council and (2) the Crossings Board; and
5. a deed of appointment for the independent certifier to be appointed in connection with the Project, such appointment to be entered into between (1) the Crossings Board, (2) the Project Company, (3) the independent certifier, (4) the Security Trustee and (5) the Council,
6. together the “Project Documents”.

The Board was further advised that the Council would be required to provide certificates in respect of certain of the Project Documents pursuant to the Local Governments (Contracts) Act 1997.

The Board considered a report that had been prepared by the Mersey Gateway Project Director, together with the Council’s legal advisers and the Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) in respect of the Project Documents, and the other documents which the Council would be required to enter into (together with the Project Documents, the “Transaction Documents”).

It was noted that the Council’s final business case (“Final Business Case”) together with the draft of the final funding letter from the Department for Transport (DfT) containing the capital and revenue budgets for the Project (“Final Funding letter”) had each been approved by Council on 11 December 2013. It was further noted that certain relevant extracts from the Final Business Case had been appended to the report.

The Board was also reminded that the Council was required, by the terms of the Final Funding Letter, to provide written confirmation that the Council agrees to the terms and conditions of such funding, including certification from the Council's Section 151 Officer that the Council accepts the requirements set out in the Final Funding Letter.

The Board was advised that copies of the latest drafts of each of the Project Documents, the Final Business Case and the Final Funding Letter were and had been available at the Project Office for Members to review.

It was reported that some further matters of fine tuning to the current drafts of the Project Documents may be necessary between now and the date of Financial Close to implement the Project.

The Board also noted the procedure for the execution of contracts by the Council as set out in the Constitution of the Council adopted by resolution of the Council on 17 April 2013 ("Constitution").

The Board was further advised that although this was a key decision (as defined in article 14.03 (B) of the Constitution, it had not been included in the relevant forward plan. However, it was reported that the procedure in Rule 15 (General Exception) of Chapter 4 of the Constitution had been followed.

Having concluded the confidential discussions, the public and press that had been excluded from the meeting for this item of business were invited back into the meeting to be present while the decisions were taken.

Reason(s) for Decision

As described in section 1.1 of the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No alternatives were considered.

Implementation Date

The necessary relevant approvals need to be obtained in advance of the date to allow the Council to enter into the relevant contracts at Financial Close.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- (1) note the contents of the report and confirm the details of the project as set out therein;
 - (2) approve the draft of the Project Documents in their current form, noting that further amendments may be required between now and Financial Close;
 - (3) resolve that the entry by the Council into the Transaction Documents (as defined in paragraph 2.4 of the report) at Financial Close, will be necessary to implement the Project;
 - (4) note the appointment of Mark Reaney as Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) by the Council's Appointments Committee on 17 April 2007 (as evidenced in the extract from the relevant resolution contained in Part 1 of Appendix 1), and note the specimen signature of Mark Reaney (contained in Part 2 of Appendix 1);
 - (5) in accordance with Article 15.04 of the Council's Constitution, resolve that:-
 - i. any Officer of the Authority at Operational Director Level (as defined in the Constitution), together with another Officer of the Authority nominated by the said Operational Director, be authorised to sign any or all of the Transaction Documents; and
 - ii. the Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) or his nominee be authorised to attest the affixing of the Common Seal of the Council to any or all of the Transaction Documents;
- as required, provided that:-
- (1) in the circumstances set out in resolution (5) (i) such Officer and any nomination by such Officer be confirmed; and

- (2) in the circumstances set out in resolution (5) (ii) such nomination be made:

(as the case may be) by the Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) using the form of letter attached at Appendix 1;

- (6) resolve that each person so authorised by resolution (5) (each an “Authorised Signatory”) is further authorised to negotiate, agree and amend, and complete any missing information in, any Transaction Document or other agreement related to the Project as may, in the opinion of such Authorised Signatory, be required to deliver the Project including (but not limited to) any gaps lists prepared in respect of the Transaction Documents; and
- (7) resolve that the Councils Section 151 Officer be authorised to provide such written confirmations as required by the Final Funding Letter and to sign such certificates based on the form set out in Appendix 2 as may be required in connection with the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 in relation to the relevant Project Documents.

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Specialist Strategic Partnership minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Minutes relating to the relevant Portfolio which have been considered by the Environment and Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.



Halton Strategic **PARTNERSHIP**

Environment and Regeneration Specialist Strategic Partnership

(E&R SSP) Meeting Minutes

7th Floor Marketing Suite, Municipal Building, Widnes

25th February 2014

Present:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Mick Noone (MN) | Halton Borough Council (Planning and Transport) : Chair |
| Cllr Mike Fry (MF) | Halton Borough Council – Elected Member |
| Susan Humphreys (SH) | Norton Priory Museum |
| Clare Olver (CO) | Mersey Forest |
| Peter Heberlet (PH) | Groundwork Cheshire |
| Jimmy Unsworth (JU) | Halton Borough Council (Waste & Environmental Improvement) |
| Collette Butterworth | Stobart Group |
| Ian Boyd (IB) | Halton Borough Council (Logistics) |
| Shélah Semoff (SS) | Halton Borough Council (Partnership Officer) |

In Attendance:

Paul Oldfield – Mersey Gateway
 Alasdair Cross – Halton Borough Council (Planning Policy)
 Sara Munikwa – Halton Borough Council (Economy, Enterprise & Property)

| | | Actions |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | <p>Apologies</p> <p>C Griffiths, D Lyon, G Hazlehurst, J Hughes, M Knowles, N Renison, P Mullane, R Polhill, T Gibbs, H Dooley, D Houghton, J Yates, T Rimmer, M Fearnhead, P Hurst, L McEvoy, W Rourke, J Walsh</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Minutes & Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from 10th October 2013 agreed as a true and accurate record. Action points and comments from special meeting on 7th January 2014 agreed as a true and accurate record. <p>Matters Arising: Quick update given on the LCR Combined Authority and discussions still underway concerning the name and who will be Chair. Some issues around Governance structures still to be finalised but it does appear that as of 1st April 2014, the CA will be up and running, once the</p> | |

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------------|
| | <p>Financial Closure has been signed off.</p> <p>The group requested a presentation at the next meeting regarding all the work currently being undertaken at Sci-Tech Daresbury.</p> | WR |
| 3. | <p>Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Refresh – Update</p> <p>Several comments were received from Partners following the special meeting in January 2014. These had been incorporated into the refreshed objectives for the Partnership, and agreed by Partners. These will be published on the website along with the rest of the refreshed SCS.</p> <p>However, as part of agenda item, Partners had received a copy of a letter sent to main Board Members, from Cllr Rob Polhill, as Chair of the Partnership. This letter explained that whilst the current objectives in the SCS were still relevant, how Partners were actually going to deliver on these needed to be reviewed. The letter explained that in the current financial climate that the public sector found itself in, and the knock on effect this had for other sector Partners, an honest and frank conversation needed to begin on how services could be delivered differently. The letter asked Partners some key questions for consideration and informed them that the main Halton Strategic Partnership Board (HSPB) meeting in June would be dedicated to this issue.</p> | |
| 4. | <p>Gateway Biodiversity Presentation</p> <p>The group received a presentation from Paul Oldfield, from Mersey Gateway Team. PO explained the work of the Gateway Environmental Trust and it's hoped for legacy (presentation attached).</p> <p>The group felt it was important the work of the Trust was reported into the SSP on a regular basis, including sight of the Trust's minutes as appropriate and a standard agenda item (6 monthly).</p> <p>Partners, not already involved with the Trust's work, were invited to do so, and the representative from the Stobarts Group was particularly interested. Contact details to be shared.</p> | <p>SS/PO</p> <p>SS</p> |
| 5. | <p>Halton's European Priorities</p> <p>The group was informed of the European Workshop that had taken place on 7th February which looked at the agreed priorities in Halton's European Action Plan (copy previously circulated). There are 5 portfolios which will be sharing £17m, which is Halton's allocation of the Liverpool City Region European Structural and Investment Fund 2014 – 2020 (total £172m). Currently the process is moving towards a commissioning system as opposed to a bidding round.</p> <p>Partners have previously received a presentation from WR about this work, however it was explained that there is still time to comment on proposed project initiatives within each portfolio (i.e. smart cards and LCR wide ticket for public transport).</p> | |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| | <p>The group asked for the workshop feedback and presentations to be circulated (separately due to their size).</p> <p>It was also suggested that this should be an item for the joint SSP meeting on the 4th April.</p> | <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> |
| 6. | <p>HCA Funding</p> <p>In his absence PM had prepared a briefing document which was shared with the group. This explained the HCA's 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme Prospectus had been published in January and invited bids from a £17b pot. This was to support the building of some 165,000 affordable home (outside London).</p> <p>Halton Housing Trust should know the outcome of the bidding process sometime in mid-July 2014. PM will update SSP as appropriate.</p> | <p>PM</p> |
| 7. | <p>Affordable Housing SPD</p> <p>The group received a report which gave an overview of the recently adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p> <p>The purpose of this SPD is to provide greater certainty and clarity for all parties involved in delivery of affordable housing in Halton, and expands on policies contained with Halton's Core Strategy (CS13). The SPD has 2 specific aims:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Maximise the opportunities available and ensure the smooth delivery of affordable housing to meet Halton's housing needs; and b) Reduce uncertainty, ensure a consistent approach and provide clear guidance for all stakeholders to follow <p>So far only 2 applications have gone through the process of "Viability Assessment" but the new system does appear to be working.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Regeneration in Runcorn</p> <p>Sara Munikwa have a short update on ongoing regeneration in Runcorn. This followed on from the publication of the 2011 Prospectus detailing potential sites. The main two being the Council owned Old Crossville bus site, and various smaller areas TO BE FINISHED>>>>>></p> | |
| 9. | <p>Next Meeting & Future Diary Dates</p> | <p>4th April 2014 (Joint ELS/E&R meeting – 9:30 start)</p> <p>19th June 2014</p> <p>18th September 2014</p> <p>18th December 2014</p> |

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy & Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 3 of 2013/14

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the third quarter period to 31st December 2013.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2013-16 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board as detailed below:
- Development and Investment Services
 - Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services
 - Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services
 - Housing Strategy

The report details progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the second quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and

Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.

**Environment & Urban Renewal PPB
Priority Based Monitoring Report**

Reporting Period: **Quarter 3 – Period 01st October to 31st December 2013**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the third quarter of 2013/14.
- 1.2** Key priorities for development or improvement in 2013-16 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board i.e.:
- Development & Investment Services
 - Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement
 - Highways, Transportation & Logistics and Physical Environment
 - Housing Strategy
- 1.3** The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

There have been a number of developments during the period which include:

Development & Investment Services (WR)

Sci-Tech Daresbury

- A bid for £3.57m was submitted to Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for EZ Capital Grant via Liverpool LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership). The grant will support the current gap in funding for Project Tech Space alongside works for the preparation of Phase 2 at the Lord Daresbury and Hostel plots and on-site broadband infrastructure.

ERDF Funding bid

- A bid for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding was submitted in June 2013, a final decision is due before the end of March 2014.

The External funding team continues to support the Joint Venture (JV) Partnership at Sci-Tech Daresbury: claim 3 to the Regional Growth Fund is due in February 2014. The Growing Places Fund due diligence work is on-going, it is expected the first claim will be submitted by the end of January 2014.

Johnsons Lane

- Works required to clear the area of the site required or Ballast Phoenix, Tarmac and the access road of vegetation and Japanese Knotweed are due to commence at the beginning of January 2014. The Council are liaising with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) regarding Due Diligence for the Growing Places Funding for the access road. It is anticipated that the loan can be repaid from the land sale to Ballast Phoenix.

Gorse Lane former Bayer site

- The selection of Gazeley as development partner was approved at Executive Board on 5th September 2013. There are still a number of outstanding issues which will take time to resolve before the development agreement can be finalised. Discussions are also on-going with Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) to keep them up to date and get the required approvals relating to the development agreement as well as the ring fenced account (the historical charges and future ones).
- The Council have met with LEP representatives regarding the Due Diligence for the Growing Places Funding loan for the groundwater remediation. It is anticipated that the loan will be repaid from the land receipt along with the ring fenced account from the land receipt. This needs to be formally agreed with BIS. It is expected the Council will receive confirmation of the GPF loan in January 2014 subject to the Due Diligence. Work will be required to agree the process for the repayment with BIS.

Venture Fields – Barwood

- The phase 1 planning application has been approved. The lease with Pure Gym has been agreed and construction work is due to start on site in the New Year.

St Michael's Golf Course

- Mersey Valley Golf Course are working towards satisfying the conditions in their agreement to lease including the environmental bespoke permit and waste recovery plan.

Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement (CP)

Waste & Environmental Improvement

- In December, the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) signed contracts with a consortium led by SITA UK for the 30-year Resource and Recovery Contract (RRC) on behalf of the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership. The RRC will provide a sustainable and cost effective solution for dealing with residual waste produced in Halton and across Merseyside. The facilities provided by the RRC are expected to be operational in 2016 and will enable Halton to divert more than 92% of its residual waste from landfill.
- Council officers were involved in a successful multi-agency partnership operation to prevent and reduce unauthorised bonfires and other forms of environmental nuisance and damage to property across Halton during the 'Bonfire Period'. Activities included increased patrols in identified 'hot spot' areas, the deployment of a mobile CCTV Camera and information leaflets being delivered to householders.

Other preventative measures included the erection of metal fencing around open spaces in residential areas that have previously been subject to unauthorised bonfires. Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service reported that there was a 46% decrease in small deliberate fires recorded in 2013 compared to the same time period of 2012, equivalent to a reduction of 86 incidents.

- Corporate Services PPB received an annual report on Area Forums for 2012/13 in October 2013, the report detailed the expenditure across the seven area forums and external funding levered in to support projects, for every £1 of area forum funding a further £1.36 was levered in to match fund projects. A total of 181 projects were delivered in the period with community initiatives and environmental improvements being the largest categories of activity. The PPB received case studies to demonstrate the impacts on the projects supported which also hi-lighted the collaborative approaches generated to deliver on community identified needs.

Open Space Services

- During Q3 2013/14 design work on the new pavilion for Runcorn Hill & Heath Park was completed and tenders went out for its construction and for the renovation of the existing lakeside pavilion (which will be used by the Runcorn Model Boat Club) and bowling green hut. Adverts were also placed for an operator of the pavilion.
- Practical conservation tasks have begun at Runcorn Hill & Heath Park as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project using volunteers who attend weekly sessions. Restoring the heathland on the hill is the first priority.
- The car park at Halton Sports was resurfaced during Q3. The car park is used quite intensely and the old surface had broken up.
- The contract for the installation of two new cremators at Widnes Crematorium was signed off in Q3. The winning company was ATI. Work will commence on the installation of the cremators in Q4 and will take ten months to complete.
- During Q3 four mystery shopper visits were carried out to Green Flag Award parks all of which were found to be within the standards required.
- The winter work programme of the parks and Streetscene sections began in Q3 2013/14 and will continue through to Q4 2013/14. The annual programme concentrates on tree and shrub coppice, thinning and pruning as well as general neighbourhood tidy ups.

Highways, Transportation & Physical Environment (MN)

Highways

- Construction work has now commenced on Local Pinch Point Schemes to improve traffic capacity and access to Sci-Tech Daresbury with planning approval for site connectivity work being granted prior to works commencing later this financial year.

Bridge & Highway Maintenance

- As part of the additional funding to local highway authorities which was announced by the Chancellor in his Autumn Statement Halton will now receive an additional £355k (2013/14) and £187k (2014/15) to help renew and repair the highways network.
- A major funding bid to the Liverpool City Region Local Transport Body for SJB Bridge Maintenance has been included in the shortlist of 12 regional projects recommended for progressing to the next stage of the bid process. Further information concerning the outcome of the process will be provided as and when this becomes available.
- The winter maintenance scheme commenced in October 2013 and by the end of December 220 tonnes of grit had been used, which is similar to that of 2010/11 although representing a 50% reduction over 2011/12 consumption. At present 950 tonnes are stockpiled with an additional 500 tonnes being delivered in January.
- A winter maintenance working group has now been established with Lafarge Tarmac and Warrington Borough Council to identify opportunities for further efficiencies across both authorities.

Traffic, Risk and Emergency Planning / H&S

- Following a number of collisions, the street lighting has been switched back on the junction of the A558 Daresbury Expressway and Pitts Heath Lane in Runcorn.

Physical environment

- Historically Halton has been heavily reliant upon and successful in applying for contaminated land funding totalling £3.4M since 2002. However the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has now announced that it will no longer be funding the Contaminated Land Capital Projects Programme. Whilst the Council will continue to have a responsibility to investigate contaminated land, and publish a strategy as to how this will be done, the announcement by DEFRA will limit the future means by which such duties can be fulfilled.
- Work is progressing on the Widnes and Hale Green Belt Study with the initial site visits due for completion by the end of the January and initial sustainability assessments being undertaken.
- The Mid Mersey Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) continues to work with companies based at Sci-Tech Daresbury to encourage travel by sustainable transport. Funding from the LSTF to extend the route and time the 200 bus service has proven successful with patronage on the overall service doubling. Additionally the launch of a Smart Travel Application for PC's and Smartphones is scheduled during Quarter 4.

Housing Strategy (PMcW)

- Government has published additional statutory guidance on social housing allocations aimed at dispelling the perception that people with no local connection too often get priority over local people. The Guidance recommends the introduction of a 2 year minimum residency test to join the housing register. Exemptions apply to armed forces personnel, and further exemptions are suggested for those who can demonstrate strong association to an area through for example family association or employment.

- The current sub regional lettings policy, which is itself the subject of an ongoing consultation exercise in respect of other proposed changes, will be reviewed to determine what changes may be necessary.

3.0 Emerging Issues

A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of the Council including:

Development & Investment Services (WR)

Land Remediation Funding

- Lord de Mauley announced to all English local authorities that DEFRA will no longer be supporting the costs of investigating and remediating contaminated land under Part 2A. Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify “contaminated land” posing unacceptable risks and to then secure remediation.

HBC have secured funding through these grants to investigate and remediate St Michaels Golf Course. The budget for this national scheme had already undergone significant cuts, decreasing from £17.5 million in 2009/10 down to £2m for 2013/14. From 1 April 2014 for a three-year period only £500,000 will be accessible annually for high priority cases. Funding then completely stops in 2017.

Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement (CP)

Waste and Environmental Improvement

- Officers have undertaken a procurement exercise for the provision of services to divert residual waste from landfill during the interim period up to the commencement of the Merseyside and Halton Resource Recovery Contract. Details of the outcome of the procurement exercise will be presented to Members at a future meeting of the Board.

Open Space Services

- During Q3 the country experienced a period of storms and gales which resulted in a number of trees being blown over and others were badly damaged. This has put pressure on the planned works of the tree team. For obvious reasons emergency works always take precedence. Presently a large number of planned works have had to be rescheduled in the programme for later in Q4.

Highways Transportation & Physical Environment (MN)

Highways

- Phase 2 of the 2013/14 carriageway structural reconstruction has been delayed due to poor weather conditions and has been rescheduled for completion in February 2014.

Physical Environment

- The Department for Transport (DfT) launched guidance for the next round of LSTF in late December 13. Funding will be available for 1 year (2015-16) and is for revenue projects only with an overall value of a bid is set a £1m, or for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) as a whole £5m. Applications to this fund need to be submitted by the end of March 2014 and currently there are discussions taking place amongst the Liverpool City Regions on how best to proceed.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements.

As such progress concerning the implementation of all high risk mitigation measures will be monitored in Quarter 2 and Quarter 4.

5.0 Progress Against Equality Actions

Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.

As a result the Board will receive further information following the completion of the Annual Equality Assessment which will be undertaken during Quarter 3.

6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.

6.1 Development and Investment Services

Key Objectives / Milestones

| Ref | Milestones | Q3 Progress |
|--------|---|---|
| EEP 01 | Continue to market the Lakeside and Canalside development sites Continue the development of Mossbank Park Commence development of SciTech Phase 1 by June 2013 |  |

Supporting Commentary

Phase 1: On the 11th November 2013 the Council completed on the disposal of the site of the former Barge Public House and adjoining land to Keepmoat Homes. This was followed by an immediate start on site by the developer. The scheme comprises a total of 86 two, three and four bedroom homes starting at £90,000. Joint publicity with Keepmoat was gained in early December 2013, with the Executive Board Member for Physical Environment taking a leading role.

The site is progressing well and a sales office is scheduled to open in the new year with show homes following in Spring 2014. A number of early bird reservations have already been placed. The scheme is expected to take 3 years to complete. For further information about the development see: <http://www.keepmoat.com/development/bridgewater-gardens-runcorn>
Phase 2 - 3: Building lease complete, developer has started on site.

Mossbank Park is to now be known as Venture Fields. The leisure element now drawn down funds and works start on site at the end of January 2014.

Both planning applications for Tech Space and Site Connectivity at Sci-Tech Phase 1 received approval on 2nd December 2013. The programme is on target for a start on site in Spring 2014.

Scottish Power works are continuing to programme. The purchase of two buses has been committed and work is on-going to agree the final design.

Positive discussions have been held with DCLG to identify a series of actions for the Enterprise Zone.

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Measure | 12/13 Actual | 13/14 Target | Q3 | Current Progress | Direction of travel |
|-----------|--|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---|---|
| DIS LI 05 | Number of inward investment enquiries per annum | 246 | 180 | 233 (cumulative) |  |  |
| DIS LI 06 | Inward investment enquiry conversion rate percentage | 15% | 10% | 26% |  |  |
| DIS LI 01 | Occupancy of HBC Industrial Units. | 86% | 85% | 85% |  |  |
| DIS LI 02 | Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall. | 92% | 90% | 88% |  |  |

Supporting Commentary

The number of investment enquiries for the 2013 calendar year (306) is greatest since 2004 and represents a significant rebound since the onset of the global recession in 2008. During quarter 3 there were 66 enquiries.

The upward trend in investment enquiries is reflected in the number of conversions which, at 46 in 2013, is the highest level since 2001.

Occupancy of our industrial estates remains high and recent upturn in the market suggests that the target for 2013/14 will be met.

A number of traders have given notice to leave the market in this quarter, however there are five new applications which will be considered in the next quarter therefore it is anticipated that this target will be met.

6.2 Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement

6.2.1 Open Spaces

Key Objectives / Milestones

| Ref | Milestones | Q3 Progress |
|-------|---|---|
| CE 05 | Runcorn Hill Park (Parks for People bid) – Deliver project subject to success of funding bid. March 2014. Woodland Expansion - Additional 200m2 of Woodland planted Borough wide - March 2014. |  |

Supporting Commentary

The Runcorn Hill Park project is underway and target dates are being met. Major physical works will start on the ground in Q4 2013/14. The planting for the woodland expansion is now underway and the target date for completion of March 2014 will be met.

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Measure | 12/13 Actual | 13/14 Target | Q3 | Current Progress | Direction of travel |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|----|---|---|
| CE LI 19 | Number of Green Flag Awards for Halton. | 12 | 12 | 12 |  |  |

Supporting Commentary

Twelve green flag award parks have been retained. A mystery shopper visit in Q3 demonstrated that green flag parks are still within the standards required.

6.2.2 Waste Management

Key Objectives / Milestones

| Ref | Milestones | Q3 Progress |
|------|---|---|
| CE 6 | Continue to review and assess the effectiveness of projects and initiatives to help improve energy efficiency and reduce CO ₂ emissions - March 2014 . Develop and publish a Waste Communications Plan and implement actions arising from the Plan - March 2014 . |  |
| CE 7 | Continue to develop Action Plans and Protocols with External Agencies to effectively prevent and tackle a range of waste and environmental offences - March 2014 . |  |

Supporting Commentary

Opportunities to reduce energy usage in corporate buildings continue to be explored. Individual building performance charts, comparing all monitored sites, now provide building managers with feedback on relative progress towards the achievement of energy usage targets.

A Waste Communications Plan has been produced and will be published. A number of actions arising out of the Plan have already been completed or implemented, including the development of specific Waste Management Facebook and Twitter accounts and the delivery of an interactive education programmes to primary schools.

Officers are continuing to work on joint operations with external organisations and enforcement agencies such as local Housing Associations, Cheshire Police and the Environment Agency to tackle waste and environmental related nuisance. In October the Council undertook a further joint 'roadside check' with Cheshire Police seeking to tackle unregistered waste carriers.

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Measure | 12/13 Actual | 13/14 Target | Q3 | Current Progress | Direction of travel |
|----------|--|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---|---|
| CE LI 14 | Residual household waste per household (Previously NI191). (Kgs) | 633 kgs | 700 kgs | 473 kgs (Estimated) |  |  |
| CE LI 15 | Household waste recycled and composted (Previously NI192). (%) | 37.3% | 40% | 39.38% (Estimated) |  |  |
| CE LI 16 | Municipal waste land filled (Previously NI193). (%) | 58% | 60% | 56.36% (Estimated) |  |  |

Supporting Commentary

The figures relating to how waste in Halton and how it is processed are currently estimated figures with early indications showing that these targets will be met.

6.3 Highways, Transportation & Logistics (MN)

Key Objectives / Milestones

| Ref | Milestones | Q3 Progress |
|--------|--|---|
| PPT 01 | Review progress, revise SJB maintenance strategy document and deliver 2013/14 major bridge maintenance works programme. March 2014 |  |
| PPT 02 | To deliver the 2013/14 LTP Capital Programme. March 2014 |  |
| PPT 03 | Develop and consult on a local flood risk strategy for Halton by November 2013 and progress to adoption by March 2014 . |  |
| PPT 06 | Progress the Delivery and Site Allocations Local Plan (DALP) towards adoption. March 2014 |  |
| PPT 07 | Mersey Gateway - Enter into Project Agreement and Demand Management Participation Agreement – November 2013 . Mersey Gateway – Full business case approval, Financial close and Contract award and mobilisation – November 2013 . |  |

Supporting Commentary

2013/14 major bridge maintenance works programme is underway with individual work delivery being adjusted in line with budget availability as Target Costs for individual Task Orders are agreed.

In relation to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme the delivery of integrated transport schemes is well underway with around 10 schemes at various locations having been completed.

Construction of further transport and highway improvement schemes is due to commence in January at local neighbourhood centres at Moorfield Road and Ditchfield Road, Widnes.

With regard to the Road Maintenance element the programme of footway reconstruction is nearing completion for this year. Phases 1 & 2 of the Carriageway reconstruction & resurfacing schemes are complete with Phase 3 works imminent in February 2014.

Programme and Design work for next year's Phase 1 Footway and Carriageway schemes are well underway in line with the Annual Plan.

The draft Local Flood Risk Strategy has been reviewed by the Environment Agency and a formal partner / stakeholder consultation is currently in progress. It is anticipated that the public consultation will be undertaken during February 2014 and completed by the end of March 2014.

Initial scoping of DALP and necessary evidence base underway. The scoping report was presented to Environment and Regeneration PPB in November 2013. Public consultation of the Scoping Report starts on the 10th February 2014.

Whilst the Mersey Gateway Business Case was submitted to the Department for Transport in November 2013 the Financial Close has now been deferred until the end of February 2014.

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Measure | 12/13 Actual | 13/14 Target | Q3 | Current Progress | Direction of travel |
|-----------|--|--------------|--------------|------|---|---|
| PPT LI 01 | Number of third party compensation claims received due to alleged highway / footway defects. | 150 | 110 | 94 |  |  |
| PPT LI 11 | Damage to roads and pavements (% dangerous damage repaired within 24 hours). | 74 | 98 | 99 |  |  |
| PPT LI 04 | % Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for: | | | | | |
| | a) 'major' applications > 13 weeks | 66.7 | 60 | 56.3 |  |  |
| | b) 'minor' applications > 8 weeks | 30.9 | 83 | 51.5 |  |  |
| | c) 'other' applications | 70.4 | 83 | 91.1 |  |  |
| PPT LI 05 | To ensure a five year rolling supply of housing land available for 2, 760 homes over 5 years. Measure as supply of ready to develop housing sites (%). | 119* | 100 | N/A |  | N/A |

| Ref | Measure | 12/13 Actual | 13/14 Target | Q3 | Current Progress | Direction of travel |
|-----------|--|--------------|--------------|---------|---|---|
| PPT LI 15 | Bus service punctuality: | | | | | |
| | a) Percentage of buses starting route on time | 97.74 | 97.80 | 97.48 |  |  |
| | b) Percentage of buses on time at intermediate timing points | 89.31 | 97.40 | 90.46 |  |  |
| PPT LI 17 | No. of passengers on community based accessible transport | 275,518 | 255,000 | 189,039 |  |  |
| PPT LI 19 | Number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area in one year (000's) | 5,491 | 5,500 | 3,979 |  |  |

Supporting Commentary

There have been 94 3rd party claims by Q3. Although this is less than the Q3 total in 2012/13 (105), it would appear unlikely that the 2013/14 target will be met.

Damage to roads and pavements is now being undertaken through the new Highways term contract with Lafarge Tarmac undertaken under a new suite of incentivised performance indicators. This greater degree of contractual control in combination with new methods of reporting and instructing Priority 1 & Priority 2 work has brought performance back in line with target.

Performance in determining planning applications continues to improve in line with the team now being fully staffed.

*2011/12 figure quoted. Indicator produced as part of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The 5 year requirement is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve as cumulative undersupply since 2010 due to market conditions inflates the 5 year requirement i.e. 2012 target = 3,368 units (2,760 policy figure + 608 undersupply).

Bus service punctuality continues to improve as we move throughout the year and it is anticipated that the annual target will be achieved.

Halton Community Transport has indicated that the fall in journeys is due to a reduction in coach journeys being undertaken within the current year. It is anticipated that journeys will remain static for the remainder of 2013/14. Additionally bus patronage within Halton continues to decline overall. However, Q3 has improved greatly on the Q2 figure of 2,640 with a 50% increase in passenger numbers.

6.4 Housing Strategy (P.McW)**Key Objectives / Milestones**

| Ref | Milestones | Q3 Progress |
|-------|--|---|
| CCC 3 | Continue to negotiate with housing providers and partners in relation to the provision of further extra care housing tenancies, to ensure requirements are met (including the submission of appropriate funding bids). March 2014 |  |

Supporting Commentary

The construction of Halton Housing Trust's 50 unit extra care scheme at Pingot on Dundalk Rd in Widnes, is scheduled to begin in January 2014.

7.0 Financial Statements

POLICY, PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2013

| | Annual Budget | Budget To Date | Actual To Date | Variance To Date (overspend) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | | |
| Employees | 4,958 | 3,822 | 3,875 | (53) |
| Other Premises | 236 | 80 | 73 | 7 |
| Hired & Contracted Services | 438 | 208 | 208 | 0 |
| Supplies & Services | 309 | 250 | 248 | 2 |
| Street Lighting | 1,791 | 1,070 | 1,070 | 0 |
| Highways Maintenance | 2,223 | 1,337 | 1,337 | 0 |
| Bridges | 96 | 48 | 38 | 10 |
| Fleet Transport | 1,235 | 945 | 945 | 0 |
| Lease Car Contracts | 622 | 622 | 622 | 0 |
| Bus Support – Halton Hopper Tickets | 231 | 182 | 182 | 0 |
| Bus Support | 531 | 356 | 341 | 15 |
| Out of Borough Transport | 51 | 34 | 33 | 1 |
| Capital Financing | 406 | 307 | 307 | 0 |
| Grants to Voluntary Organisations | 68 | 68 | 68 | 0 |
| NRA Levy | 62 | 62 | 59 | 3 |
| Mersey Gateway | 4,966 | 3,262 | 3,262 | 0 |
| Total Expenditure | 18,223 | 12,653 | 12,668 | (15) |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Sales | -310 | -248 | -271 | 23 |
| Planning Fees | -506 | -354 | -373 | 19 |
| Building Control Fees | -81 | -71 | -80 | 9 |
| Other Fees & Charges | -519 | -351 | -387 | 36 |
| Rents | -8 | -4 | -2 | (2) |
| Reimbursements & Other Grants | -171 | -128 | -138 | 10 |
| School SLAs | -39 | -39 | -44 | 5 |
| Recharge to Capital | -2,736 | -995 | -995 | 0 |
| | -2,567 | -2,267 | -2,267 | 0 |
| Transfer from Reserves | | | | |
| Total Income | -6,937 | -4,457 | -4,557 | 100 |
| Net Controllable Expenditure | 11,286 | 8,196 | 8,111 | 85 |

| Recharges | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Premises Support | 770 | 333 | 332 | 1 |
| Transport Recharges | 568 | 430 | 430 | 0 |
| Asset Charges | 7,432 | 0 | 1 | (1) |
| Central Support Recharges | 3,200 | 2,400 | 2,401 | (1) |
| Departmental Support Recharges | 446 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Support Recharges Income – Transport | -4,699 | -2,823 | -2,823 | 0 |
| Support Recharges Income – Non Transport | -2,925 | -806 | -805 | (1) |
| Net Total Recharges | 4,792 | -466 | -464 | (2) |
| | | | | |
| Net Departmental Total | 16,078 | 7,730 | 7,647 | 83 |

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 3 is below budget profile. This is due to a number of expenditure and income budget areas.

Expenditure on staffing is above the budget to date, this is linked to the staff savings turnover target not being met for the year to date.

Planning fees are currently above the income target to date due a number of individual developments across the borough. These consist of one off large fee applications which cannot be guaranteed in the future. At this stage income on planning fees for the year is forecast to be in line with the annual budget

Schools SLA income is above target in Risk Management due to higher than anticipated demand for the service for the year.

The increase in other fees and charges is mainly due to extra income being generated in the MOT bay; however as this is customer lead it cannot be guaranteed.

The increase in sales is mainly due to increased fuel sales and highway searches.

At this stage of the year it is anticipated that overall spend will be within the Departmental budget at the financial year-end.

POLICY, PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2013

| | Annual Budget £'000 | Budget To Date £'000 | Actual To Date £'000 | Variance To Date (overspend) £'000 |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Local Transport Plan | | | | |
| Bridges & Highway Maintenance | | | | |
| Bridge Assessment, Strengthening & Maintenance | 3,060 | 1,700 | 1,635 | 1,425 |
| Road Maintenance | 1,715 | 1,100 | 1,025 | 690 |
| | 4,775 | 2,800 | 2,660 | 2,115 |
| Total Bridge & Highway Maintenance | | | | |
| | 725 | 210 | 205 | 520 |
| Integrated Transport | | | | |
| | 5,500 | 3,010 | 2,865 | 2,635 |
| Total Local Transport Plan | | | | |
| Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway | 15,378 | 9,016 | 9,016 | 6,362 |
| Development Costs Mersey Gateway | 3,500 | 995 | 995 | 2,505 |
| Street lighting – Structural Maintenance | 105 | 22 | 22 | 83 |
| Risk Management | 118 | 26 | 26 | 92 |
| | 950 | 400 | 366 | 584 |
| Fleet Replacement | | | | |
| | 20,051 | 10,459 | 10,425 | 9,626 |
| Total Halton Borough Council | | | | |
| <u>Grant Funded</u> | | | | |
| | 214 | 0 | 0 | 214 |
| Surface Water Management Grant | | | | |
| | 150 | 9 | 9 | 141 |
| Mid Mersey Local Sustainable Transport | | | | |
| | 364 | 9 | 9 | 355 |
| Total Grant Funded | | | | |
| <u>Local Pinch Point Fund</u> | | | | |
| A558 Access Improvements | 1,805 | 36 | 36 | 1,769 |
| | 1,805 | 36 | 36 | 1,769 |
| Total Local Pinch Point Fund | | | | |
| | 27,720 | 13,514 | 13,335 | 14,385 |
| Total Capital Programme | | | | |

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Summary Financial Position as at 31st December 2013

| | Annual Budget £'000 | Budget to Date £'000 | Expenditure to Date £'000 | Variance to Date (overspend) £'000 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | | |
| Employees | 4,419 | 3,521 | 3,572 | (51) |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 2,703 | 2,048 | 2,040 | 8 |
| Energy & Water Costs | 606 | 421 | 413 | 8 |
| NNDR | 637 | 621 | 622 | (1) |
| Rents | 376 | 355 | 355 | 0 |
| Marketing Programme | 128 | 23 | 17 | 6 |
| Promotions | 84 | 34 | 27 | 7 |
| Supplies & Services | 1,251 | 839 | 823 | 16 |
| Agency Related Payments | 168 | 145 | 145 | 0 |
| Total Expenditure | 10,372 | 8,007 | 8,014 | (7) |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Fees & Charges | -587 | -471 | -471 | 0 |
| Rent - Markets | -758 | -577 | -580 | 3 |
| Rent - Industrial | -965 | -615 | -610 | (5) |
| Rent – Commercial | -533 | -452 | -450 | (2) |
| Government Grant Income | -914 | -559 | -559 | 0 |
| Transfer from Reserves | -361 | -361 | -361 | 0 |
| Recharges to Capital | -420 | -207 | -207 | 0 |
| Reimbursements & Other Grant Income | -659 | -577 | -585 | 8 |
| Schools SLA Income | -494 | -494 | -494 | 0 |
| Total Income | -5,691 | -4,313 | -4,317 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Net Operational Budget | 4,681 | 3,955 | 3,958 | (3) |
| <u>Recharges</u> | | | | |
| Premises Support Costs | 1,498 | 1,133 | 1,133 | 0 |
| Transport Support Costs | 38 | 22 | 22 | 0 |
| Central Support Service Costs | 1,706 | 1,289 | 1,289 | 0 |
| Asset Rental Support Costs | 2,390 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Repairs & Maintenance Recharge Income | -2,185 | -1,639 | -1,639 | 0 |
| Accommodation Recharge Income | -2,759 | -2,070 | -2,070 | 0 |
| Central Supp. Service Rech. Income | -1,891 | -1,419 | -1,419 | 0 |
| Total Recharges | -1,202 | -2,684 | -2,684 | 0 |
| | | | | |
| Net Expenditure | 3,478 | 1,010 | 1,013 | (3) |

Comments

The overspend to date on the Employee budget has reduced this quarter due to vacancies within the Operations and Investment & Development Division. Spend to date is still over budget, as staff savings targets are not being achieved within the Building and School Cleaning Service as these services need to be fully staffed at all times.

In order to ease budget pressures spending has been restricted in year on Supplies & Services. Promotions and Marketing has also been kept to a minimum in an effort to achieve in year savings for the Department.

Income levels for industrial and commercial rent has improved as a result of renegotiation of contracts and compensation payments from Mersey Gateway for loss of rental income.

Work has continued with managers during the last quarter to look at budget pressures. This has resulted in realignment of budgets and this is reflected in the variances above.

In overall terms it is anticipated that net expenditure will be slightly above the overall Departmental budget by year-end, primarily as a result of the Staff Savings target.

COMMISSIONING & COMPLEX CARE DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2013

| | Annual Budget | Budget To Date | Actual To Date | Variance To Date (overspend) |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | | |
| Employees | 7,152 | 5,148 | 5,119 | 29 |
| Premises | 233 | 178 | 182 | (4) |
| Supplies & Services | 2,080 | 1,667 | 1,675 | (8) |
| Emergency Duty Team | 103 | 51 | 50 | 1 |
| Carers Breaks | 471 | 401 | 394 | 7 |
| Transport | 170 | 128 | 150 | (22) |
| Contracts & SLAs | 199 | 138 | 83 | 55 |
| Payments To Providers | 3,839 | 2,696 | 2,689 | 7 |
| Other Agency Costs | 828 | 616 | 615 | 1 |
| Total Expenditure | 15,075 | 11,023 | 10,957 | 66 |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Sales & Rents Income | -218 | -193 | -204 | 11 |
| Fees & Charges | -169 | -69 | -58 | (11) |
| CCG Contribution To Service | -846 | -519 | -507 | (12) |
| Reimbursements & Grant Income | -914 | -657 | -670 | 13 |
| Transfer From Reserves | -245 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Income | -2,392 | -1,438 | -1,439 | 1 |
| | | | | |
| Net Operational Expenditure | 12,683 | 9,585 | 9,518 | 67 |
| <u>Recharges</u> | | | | |
| Premises Support | 304 | 229 | 229 | 0 |
| Central Support Services | 1,958 | 1,327 | 1,327 | 0 |
| Transport Services | 440 | 223 | 223 | 0 |
| Asset Charges | 79 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Internal Recharge Income | -1,747 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Total Recharges | 1,034 | 1,779 | 1,779 | 0 |
| Net Departmental Total | 13,717 | 11,364 | 11,297 | 67 |

Comments on the above figures:

Net operational expenditure is £67,000 below budget profile at the end of the third quarter of the financial year.

Employee costs are currently £29,000 below budget profile. This results from savings made on vacant posts, specifically in relation to Day Services and the Supported Housing Network. The majority of these posts were appointed to in September and October, and it is not anticipated that the underspend will increase beyond the current level.

Expenditure on Contracts and Service Level Agreements is projected to be £75,000 below budget at the year-end. This relates to savings in respect of payments to bed & breakfast providers for homelessness support, and savings made on the Bredon Respite Care contract. There has historically been significant variations in demand for the bed and breakfast service, although current expenditure patterns are stable, and the projected underspend seems realistic. It should be noted that £50,000 of the bed and breakfast accommodation budget has been proposed as a saving from the 2014/15 budget year onwards.

Income projections take into account the fact that £50,000 of rental income relating to Grangeway Court will not be recovered whilst the building is in the process of being refurbished. However, income above target from trading services supplied by ALD Services (specifically catering, hairdressing, the tea room and micro-brewery) should result in the overall Departmental income target being met at the year-end.

At this stage, it is anticipated that expenditure will be approximately £60,000 below budget by the end of the financial year.

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2013

| | 2013/14 Capital Allocation £'000 | Allocation To Date £'000 | Actual Spend To Date £'000 | Allocation Remaining £'000 |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Choice Based Lettings | 7 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Bredon Respite Unit | 13 | 13 | 13 | 0 |
| Bungalows At Halton Lodge | 400 | 0 | 0 | 400 |
| Grangeway Court Refurbishment | 347 | 0 | 0 | 347 |
| Contingency | 29 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Total Spending | 796 | 18 | 18 | 778 |

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2013

| | Annual Budget | Budget To Date | Actual To Date | Variance To Date (overspend) |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | | |
| Employees | 12,206 | 9,205 | 9,370 | (165) |
| Other Premises | 1,363 | 969 | 876 | 93 |
| Supplies & Services | 1,549 | 1,083 | 1,023 | 60 |
| Book Fund | 225 | 186 | 187 | (1) |
| Promotional | 290 | 206 | 205 | 1 |
| Other Hired Services | 991 | 528 | 542 | (14) |
| Food Provisions | 773 | 499 | 460 | 39 |
| School Meals Food | 1,660 | 917 | 887 | 30 |
| Transport | 70 | 52 | 33 | 19 |
| Other Agency Costs | 877 | 145 | 153 | (8) |
| Waste Disposal Contracts | 4,799 | 2,697 | 2,667 | 30 |
| Leisure Management Contract | 1,492 | 1,011 | 1,042 | (31) |
| Grants To Voluntary Organisations | 333 | 290 | 287 | 3 |
| Grant To Norton Priory | 222 | 222 | 224 | (2) |
| Rolling Projects | 185 | 42 | 42 | 0 |
| Capital Financing | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Spending | 27,068 | 18,052 | 17,998 | 54 |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Sales Income | -2,216 | -1,508 | -1,431 | (77) |
| School Meals Sales | -2,224 | -1,154 | -1,192 | 38 |
| Fees & Charges Income | -2,729 | -1,750 | -1,676 | (74) |
| Rents Income | -156 | -97 | -94 | (3) |
| Government Grant Income | -111 | -31 | -43 | 12 |
| Reimbursements & Other Grant Income | -510 | -291 | -330 | 39 |
| Schools SLA Income | -278 | -254 | -226 | (28) |
| Internal Fees Income | -104 | -59 | -48 | (11) |
| School Meals Other Income | -2,265 | -1,883 | -1,916 | 33 |
| Meals On Wheels | -188 | -132 | -135 | 3 |
| Catering Fees | -173 | -130 | -62 | (68) |
| Capital Salaries | -103 | -77 | -39 | (38) |
| Transfers From Reserves | -247 | -185 | -185 | 0 |
| Total Income | -11,304 | -7,551 | -7,377 | (174) |
| Net Controllable Expenditure | 15,764 | 10,501 | 10,621 | (120) |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Recharges | | | | |
| Premises Support | 1,491 | 924 | 925 | (1) |
| Transport Recharges | 2,242 | 1,384 | 1,398 | (14) |
| Departmental Support Services | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Central Support Services | 3,119 | 2,362 | 2,362 | 0 |
| Asset Charges | 3,052 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HBC Support Costs Income | -375 | -375 | -374 | (1) |
| Net Total Recharges | 9,538 | 4,295 | 4,311 | (16) |
| | | | | |
| Net Departmental Total | 25,302 | 14,796 | 14,930 | (136) |

Comments on the above figures:

Net operational expenditure is £136,000 over budget profile at the end of the third quarter of the financial year.

Employees' expenditure is over budget profile by £165,000, primarily due to savings targets for premium pay of £256,400 for this financial year. Agency staffing is approximately £58,000 less than at the same stage last year, which is helping to keep the overspend on staff costs to a minimum. To date, with the exception of the Stadium, all other divisions with the department are under budget profile contributing to the achievement of the staff turnover saving targets of £461,625.

The main budget pressure is income received and the targets set for the department and budgets are underachieving in several areas particularly Sales, Fees & Charges, Catering Fees and Capital Salaries. Sales and Fees and Charges for the Stadium as a whole are still struggling to meet targets and changes to capital salaries criteria has added further pressure to the underachieving income targets.

Expenditure on other premises and supplies and services is currently £153,000 under budget profile. This is due to savings on equipment budgets, hired services, lower than expected utility bills within the Community Centres and savings on consumables budgets.

The Leisure management contract is over the budget profile and is expected to overspend by approximately £ 40,000 by year end.

Waste disposal contract invoices have been fluctuating during the year with amounts being higher than expected earlier in the year but recent invoices are lower, resulting in overall spend being less than anticipated for this stage of the financial year. It is possible that increases will occur in the next few months so revisions to projections will continue to be monitored regularly.

School Meals is still performing well against budget, with sales and food costs both having favourable variances.

The final year end position for the Department is expected to be approximately £180,000 over budget which will be contained within the Directorates budget.

Capital Projects as at 31 December 2013

| Project | Capital Allocation 2013/14 £'000 | Allocation To Date £'000 | Actual Spend To Date £'000 | Allocation Remaining £'000 |
|--|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>Community & Environment Division</u> | | | | |
| Stadium Minor Works | 30 | 8 | 8 | 22 |
| Stadium Disability Works | 30 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Stadium Gym Equipment | 30 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Widnes Recreation Site | 2,680 | 110 | 108 | 2,572 |
| Childrens Playground Equipment | 81 | 25 | 24 | 57 |
| Playground Third Party Funding | 340 | 13 | 13 | 327 |
| Arley Drive (Upton) | 66 | 2 | 2 | 64 |
| Crow Wood | 13 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| Open Spaces Schemes | 72 | 72 | 71 | 1 |
| Runcorn Cemetery Extension | 9 | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| Cremators At Widnes Crematorium | 396 | 5 | 5 | 391 |
| Runcorn Hill Park | 120 | 52 | 52 | 68 |
| Runcorn Busway Works for Gas Powered Buses | 30 | 30 | 30 | 0 |
| Litter Bins | 50 | 30 | 29 | 21 |
| | 3,947 | 348 | 343 | 3,604 |

8.0 Appendix - Explanation for use of symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

| <u>Progress</u> | <u>Objective</u> | <u>Performance Indicator</u> |
|--|--|--|
| Green  | Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u> . |
| Amber  | Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved. |
| Red  | Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an <u>intervention or remedial action</u> taken. |
| Direction of Travel Indicator | | |
| <i>Where possible <u>performance measures</u> will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention:</i> | | |
| Green  | <i>Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.</i> | |
| Amber  | <i>Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.</i> | |
| Red  | <i>Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.</i> | |
| N/A | <i>Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.</i> | |

Key for Operational Director lead:

| | | |
|--------|---------------|---|
| (MN) | Mick Noone | Operational Director, Policy, Planning & Transportation |
| (CP) | Chris Patino | Operational Director, Community & Environment |
| (PMcW) | Paul McWade | Operational Director, Commissioning & Complex Care |
| (WR) | Wesley Rourke | Operational Director, Economy Enterprise & Property |

REPORT TO: Environment & Urban Renewal
Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Consultation results re: request for waiting restrictions to prevent parking on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.

WARDS: Farnworth

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report on consultation that has been carried out in accordance with a Board resolution (Item 21, 11th September 2013 meeting) following submission of a petition requesting the introduction of bollards and waiting restrictions to prevent parking on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the necessary steps be taken to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order to implement 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions on both sides of Cronton Lane, Widnes, extending from its junction with Lunts Heath Road/Birchfield Road to Hill View.

2.1

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At a previous meeting (as above) the Board considered an 18 name petition from residents of Cronton Lane which raised concerns over abuse of the existing waiting restrictions in the area, obstruction of driveway entrances and sight lines, and vehicles being parked on the footway and is contained in Appendix 'A'. It requested that the existing 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions at the east end of Cronton Lane be extended and that drivers be prevented from driving up onto the footway by the installation of a number of bollards on both sides of the road, as shown in Appendix 'B'.
- 3.2 With regard to the request for waiting restrictions and bollards, it was resolved that wider consultation be carried out to seek views on the proposal from the surrounding area, following which a further report would be brought back to the Board. The consultation boundary and the extent of suggested waiting restrictions was pre-agreed with ward councillors before contacting households, restrictions being put forward as extending the full length of Cronton Lane to the Borough boundary. This approach was adopted in the light of the received petition but also due to a separate request from a resident for the application of waiting restrictions in the area of Stratton Park. The consultation area is shown on Drg. No. 9079 in Appendix 'C' but it was not considered appropriate to consult over this wider area on the installation of bollards.
- 3.3 168 letters were distributed to all the properties within the area shown on the plan in Appendix 'C'. A total of 64 responses were received with 38 (59%) in favour of the proposal, 25 (39%) against and one which didn't state a preference. One resident from a Hill View residence didn't give an exact address on their response. Of the 21 responses received from households on Cronton Lane between Hill View and Lunts Heath Road, being the section most affected by the current parking issues, 14 of the 21 responses were in favour of waiting restrictions (67%).

- 3.4 After reviewing the consultation results, ward councillors believe that the legal process should be commenced to extend the existing "At Any Time" waiting restrictions on Cronton Lane from Lunts Heath Road junction at the east end as far west as Hill View. During the associated formal consultation with affected frontages which would follow if this approach is agreed, any objections would be reported back to the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board prior to it going to the Executive Board in the agreed way.
- 3.5 Compliance with any waiting restriction is dependent on enforcement action from the Police and as in the original petition many respondents in the consultation exercise raised concerns over abuse of existing and proposed waiting restrictions. If effectively policed, there should be no need for the introduction of bollards to prevent parking on the footway and Cheshire Police have been contacted to request attention to the area. If 'parking on' does continue to be an issue, then consultation with individual households could be undertaken regarding introducing more bollards to footway areas.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The ward councillors for Farnworth have been consulted as above and support the recommended actions. Cheshire Police have been consulted and have raised no objections to the proposal.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total cost of introducing the requested waiting restrictions would be approximately £1,000. This could be funded through annual traffic management revenue allocations.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct policy, social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 7.1 Children & Young People in Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Children and Young People in Halton' priority.
- 7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.
- 7.3 A Healthy Halton
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Healthy Halton' priority.
- 7.4 A Safer Halton
The proposed waiting restrictions could serve to prevent obstruction and protect sightlines for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike.
- 7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal
There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 8.1 There is a variable and uncertain road safety risk associated with not introducing these requested waiting restrictions, the degree of risk depending on the degree to which

drivers would continue to park so as to obstruct the highway, desire lines and sight lines along Cronton Lane.

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES.

9.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Report to Executive Board Sub- Committee 7th December 2006 - Proposed Zebra Crossing – Cronton Lane, Widnes

10.2 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board, 11th September 2013 (Item 21) - Petition requesting the introduction of bollards and waiting restrictions to prevent parking on part of Cronton Lane, Widnes.

Cronton Lane Residents,
Widnes,
Cheshire,
WA8 5AJ

24th April 2013

Farnworth Ward Councillors,

Municipal Buildings,
Kingsway,
Widnes,
Cheshire,
WA8 7QE

Dear Sirs/Madam,

We are writing to you regarding the parking problems on Cronton Lane. This is regards to both sides of the road adjacent the shops on Cronton Lane.

Vehicles park on the double yellow lines & where no double yellow lines exist, blocking our entrances. They also park on the pavement which blocks our view of the oncoming traffic. All the signatories below agree that there will shortly be a serious road traffic accident. Bollards are fitted in front of a few of the houses to prevent parking on the pavement but these only extend to the yellow line area. We would like your support to have the double yellow lines & bollards extended.

There are times when cars at speed mount the kerbs making it dangerous for pedestrians.

Whilst we appreciate that the local shops provide a service, the extent to which the local area has had extensive housing developments has also increased the traffic in the area.

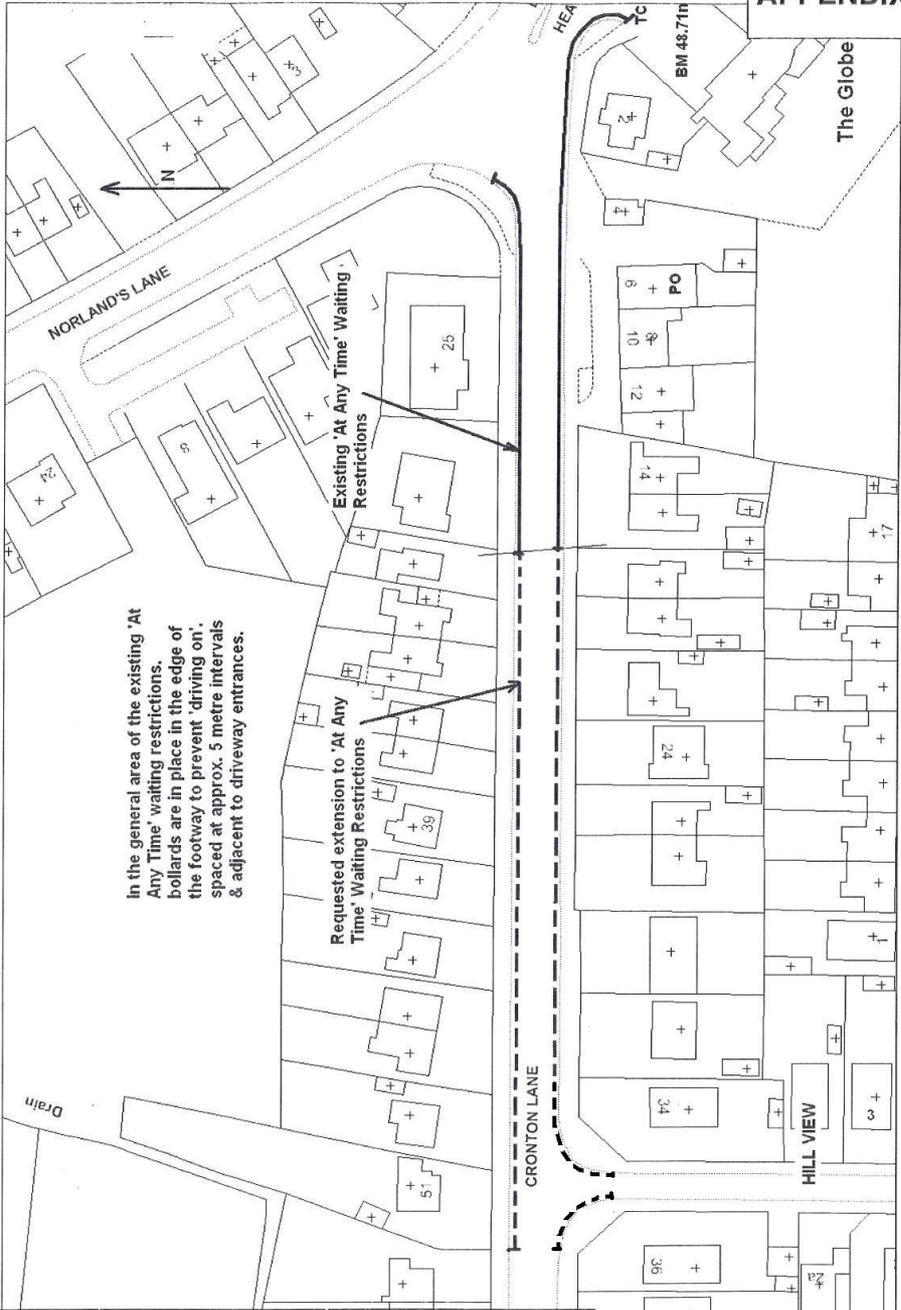
The situation is at its worst during rush hour times & evenings whilst people are trying to use the local facilities.

We all feel that before long, somebody is going to be seriously hurt. If you could provide support to prevent a potential accident, we would appreciate it very much.

Yours sincerely

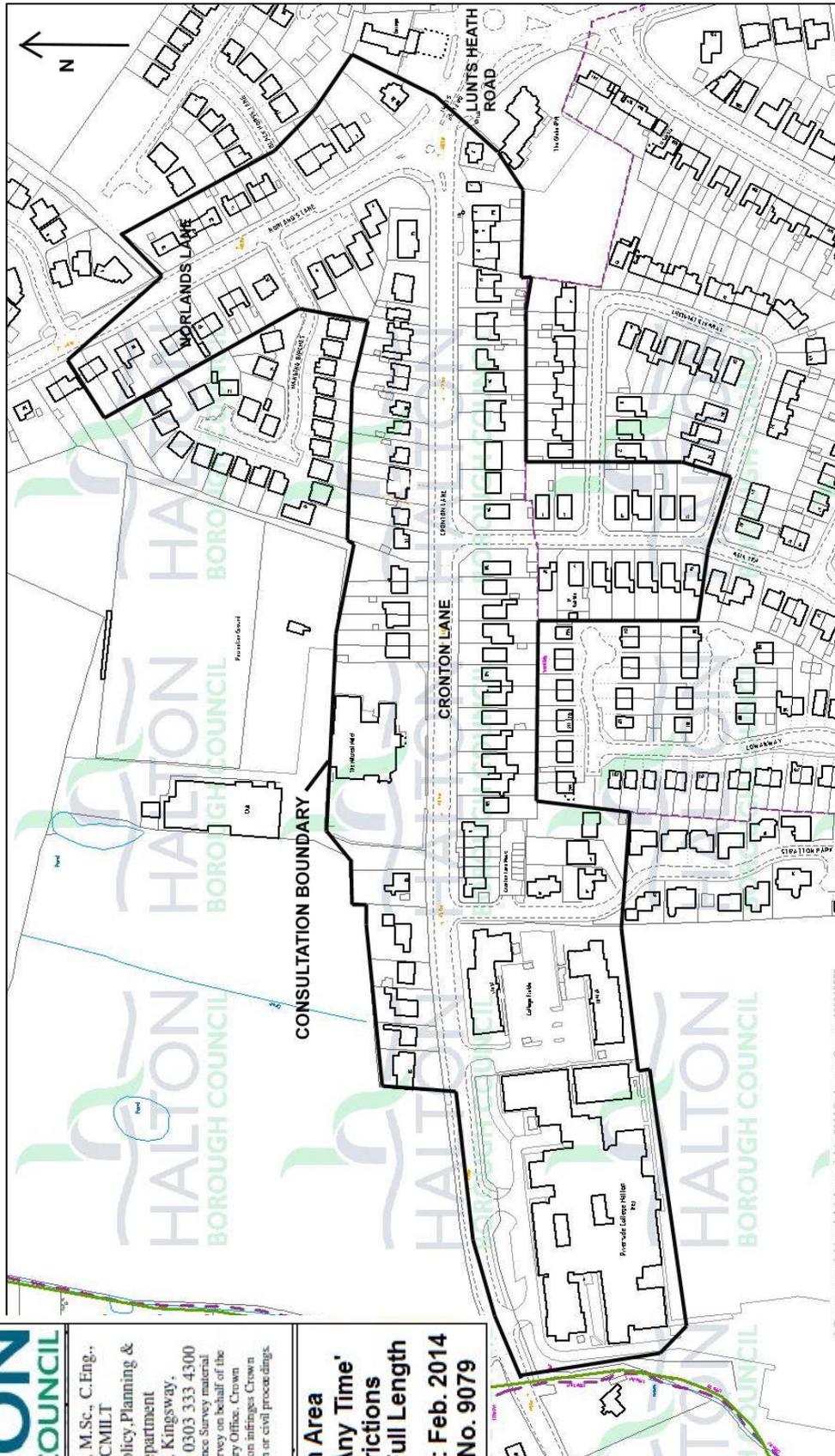
The residents of Cronton Lane

APPENDIX 'B'



Mick Noone, BA(Hons), M.Sc., C.Eng.,
MICE, MCIHT, CMILT
Operational Director - Policy, Planning &
Transportation Department
Municipal Building, Kingsway,
Widnes, WA8 7QF, Tel. 0303 333 4300
This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material
with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the
controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown
Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown
Copyright & may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
H.E.C. O.S. License LA 078323.

**Petition Requesting
Extension of 'At Any Time'
Waiting Restrictions and
Bollard Installation,
Cronton Lane, Widnes**
Scale: NTS Date: Jun 2013
Drawn: SJ Checked:
Drg. No.: 9229



Mick Noone, BA(Hons), M.Sc., C.Eng.,
MICE, MCIHT, CMILT
Operational Director - Policy, Planning &
Transportation Department

Municipal Building, Kingsway,
Widnes, WA8 7QF, Tel. 0303 333 4300
This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material
with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the
controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown
copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown
copyright & may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
H.B.C. O.S. License LA 078123.

Consultation Area
Proposed 'At Any Time'
Waiting Restrictions
Cronton Lane Full Length
Scale: NTS Date: Feb. 2014
Drawn: SJ Dra. No. 9079

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| REPORT TO: | Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board |
| DATE: | 26 th March 2014 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director: Children and Enterprise |
| PORTFOLIO: | Physical Environment |
| SUBJECT: | BIG Castlefields Survey – Analysis & Next Steps |
| WARD(S) | Halton Castle Ward |

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with: results of the BIG Castlefields Survey resident consultation exercise; an overview of the on-going work of Castlefields Implementation Group, working towards Castlefields Capital Programme close; and, broader policy lessons for future housing-led regeneration programmes.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- 1. the content and results of the BIG Castlefields Survey, comprising the household questionnaire report and resident Pinpoint group sessions analysis, are noted;**
- 2. the on-going work of the Castlefields Implementation Group, working towards Castlefields Capital Programme close in 2016/17, is acknowledged; and**
- 3. broader lessons from the BIG Castlefields Survey for future housing and neighbourhood regeneration programmes are considered.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Since September 2003, the Council has been formally engaged in the delivery of the 'Castlefields Masterplan - An ambition for regeneration and a plan for action'. Delivery of Council capital investment into Castlefields has been administered through a dedicated Castlefields Officer resource. The established Castlefields Implementation Group (CIG), chaired by the Executive Board Member for Physical Environment, has provided a specific forum to communicate with appropriate Members on progress of the Programme.

- 3.2 Implementation of the Masterplan has been through a partnership which includes, Plus Dane Housing, Liverpool Housing Trust and the Homes and Communities Agency. Whilst it has operated as a partnership of equals, with delivery through collaborative working, with partners pooling resource and expertise; the Council can be seen to have provided strategic leadership and acted as guardian of the Masterplan.
- 3.3 One of the guiding principles of the Castlefields Masterplan was 'community led regeneration', whereby the regeneration process is driven by the residents, key stakeholders and local business community. Throughout the life of the Programme, consultation and community involvement has contributed to shaping the priorities of the Masterplan and individual projects. Residents have shaped everything from the layout of new build properties, to the design of play equipment within Phoenix Park and determining the location of the new local centre. After over 10 years of activity and with the majority of Masterplan projects delivered, in 2013 the CIG approved a survey of Castlefields residents.
- 3.3 The purpose of the BIG Castlefields Survey was to undertake a substantive community consultation exercise that provides residents with an opportunity to reflect on the regeneration programme and to express future aspirations for the neighbourhood. This approach was in accordance with the Council's Community Engagement Strategy to ensure "Every individual in Halton has the opportunity to play an active role in their community and feels that they can influence the services that affect them locally." Additionally, the results of the survey would be incorporated into any future whole programme review and be used to inform the production of a new 10 year action plan for Castlefields that will guide work of the Castlefields Partnership until 2023.
- 3.4 Delivered through cooperation with partners, the Survey was undertaken in two parts:-
- 1) Quantitative research through a questionnaire delivered to all households within Castlefields neighbourhood, with responses via free post envelopes; and
 - 2) Qualitative research through three 'Pinpoint' discussion groups comprising Halton Castle Ward Councillors, tenant representatives and residents.

Part 1 was undertaken between August and September 2013 and the pinpoint group sessions in October 2013.

- 3.5 The results of the household questionnaire are contained in Appendix A. 13.5% of households responded and this gives a margin of error of plus / minus 5.7% to all responses.

Involvement in the Programme has been high, with 56% of respondents feeling that they have had an opportunity to be involved in the regeneration of Castlefields, and a further 20% stating they did not want to be involved. Over 85% of respondents had read a newsletter and 37% had attended an information event.

In respect of overall satisfaction with the Regeneration Programme, 70% think that Castlefields is now a better place to live and 49% feel it has a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. Looking at each of the Programme strands:

3.6 Housing Renewal and Development

84% of respondents are satisfied with their home, which increases to 91% when broken down to just households within a new build property. As a result of the Regeneration Programme, 70% of respondents felt safer in their home and 62% felt warmer. The approach of demolishing unpopular deck access blocks and replacement with new build properties, complemented by refurbishment of retained stock has had a positive impact on residents' quality of life.

Housing renewal was complemented by the redevelopment of the existing local centre with a new community hub, this significant intervention has resulted in the following satisfaction with local facilities as a result of the Regeneration Programme:

- 84% health centre;
- 80% community centre;
- 76% local shops; and
- 80% access to these facilities.

3.7 Placemaking

A major focus of the Masterplan was 'placemaking' – creating a quality public realm within the neighbourhood through a series of environmental and infrastructure projects. Overall 58% of respondents felt safer getting around Castlefields, linked to this the following percentage of respondents felt these aspects of the environment had improved (as a result of the regeneration):

- 68% street lighting;
- 59% litter and recycling;
- 59% bus stops;
- 51% streets and paths; and
- 75% creation of and improvements to Phoenix Park / Lake.

Whilst residents clearly feel the overall environmental quality of the neighbourhood has been driven up, some aspects of the public realm are still viewed negatively. Only 42% and 35% of respondents respectively felt that residential car parks and subways had improved as a result of the regeneration.

3.8 People & Employment

As previously acknowledged to this PPB in a Castlefields Progress Report (16th September 2009), one area where the Programme has experienced difficulties is targeted interventions to improve economic prosperity within the neighbourhood.

This is reflected in only 25% of respondents having overall satisfaction with employment, learning and training opportunities in Castlefields. Additionally, the following percentage of respondents felt that the Regeneration Programme had improved the following opportunities:

- 26% employment information and advice;
- 26% training and learning
- 14% apprenticeships
- 11% employment

Although it must be noted that when broken down to respondents looking for work, satisfaction does increase.

3.9 Looking ahead, the results of questionnaire identified the top 3 residents' priorities for next 10 years as community safety (51%), health and wellbeing (37%) and housing (33%).

- 3.10 Analysis of the Pinpoint groups sessions are contained in Appendix B. Undertaken after initial analysis of the household questionnaire, the discussion groups represented a chance to both corroborate and dig a little deeper in respect of some of the responses.

Led by the Council's Customer Intelligence Unit, three sessions were held with two questions to guide group discussions:

- 1) What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields?
- 2) What still needs to be improved on Castlefields / What should the priorities for the next 10 years be?

In respect of each question the following headlines can be identified:

- 3.11 Of the best things about the regeneration of the neighbourhood, responses from the discussion groups, identified three overarching themes:

- Transformation of the **physical environment**, both the buildings and spaces around them, as having one of the biggest positive impacts on the neighbourhood;
- The removal of overbearing and imposing high-rise concrete buildings has not only created a more "open layout" but also created a stronger sense of ownership through creating "homes". In turn this has created greater **community pride**; and
- The "**flagship projects**" of the Programme (Phoenix Park and the Village Square) represent a massive vote of confidence in the neighbourhood and have given residents something to be proud of.

- 3.12 In terms of the 2nd questions on what still needs to be improved on Castlefields / what should the priorities for the next 10 years be, four overarching themes can be identified:

- Confusion over responsibility for **maintenance of the public realm** is impacting on its general upkeep;
- It was felt some residents still do not look after their properties and fly-tipping remains an issue. This lack of **respect** for Castlefields need tackling;
- **Getting around** Castlefields could be further improved, parking was an issue and the neighbourhood layout had changed so much that it had made orientation confusing for some. Subways were also felt to be redundant due to alternative routes; and

- More should be done for **children and young people** in the neighbourhood.

3.13 The acid test for the success of the Castlefields Regeneration Programme is whether the neighbourhood is now regarded as a better place to live and is providing a positive impact on people's lives. Taken as a whole the BIG Castlefields Survey, whilst highlighting some areas for further improvement, can be seen to testify to the Programme being a success.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 At its inception, the regeneration of Castlefields was recognised as being one of the most ambitious sustainable regeneration programmes to be undertaken by the Council. Officers are working with the CIG towards a managed exit from the Council capital projects within the Regeneration Programme in 2016/17. The intention being that any Regeneration Officer resource can be directed towards emerging priority areas.

4.2 The key to a managed exit, and agreed by CIG, is firstly the production of a Council Position Statement; and secondly a new 10 year action plan for Castlefields, including endorsement by partners. This will inform movement away from largely capital projects to delivery of appropriate generic mainstream services within the neighbourhood and provide a Council (and hopefully Partnership) position in respect of any outstanding matters from the Regeneration Programme, such as the remaining 3 deck access blocks. The BIG Castlefields Survey is part of this journey and helps ensure residents' views are taken into account going forwards.

4.3 With the recent adoption of the Halton Core Strategy and the Mersey Gateway Project now in its construction phase, the Borough is entering a new period in its continued regeneration and transformation.

Whilst the results of the BIG Castlefields Survey are specific resident views in relation to the Castlefields Programme; they do provide an opportunity to draw out and consider some broader lessons for the Council and its partners about what resident's value from regeneration programmes, particularly those that are focused on housing-led and neighbourhood scale interventions.

Broad lessons drawn out of the results from the BIG Castlefields Survey worth further consideration are:

4.4 **1) Residents valued engagement and being listened to**

The Castlefields Programme has maintained a continual dialogue with residents, partners and other key stakeholders. 56% of residents felt they had an opportunity be involved. The Masterplan provided enough flexibility to enable the Partnership to listen to residents, learn and then adapt projects to take account of their views. After listening to residents, the Masterplan was amended to create a stronger core of shops and facilities within the Village Square, this can be seen to have a direct impact on the sense of ownership, and this in turn makes long term success more likely.

4.5 **2) Residents valued use of high quality design**

A golden thread running throughout the Masterplan and individual projects has been a focus on quality of design in both buildings and public realm. As a concept 'placemaking' could have easily got lost in the delivery, but this guiding principle has been adhered to by all partners and recently extended to private sector developer Keepmoat, who were encouraged to reach the expected design bar.

The results of the Survey demonstrate that residents have valued this emphasis on design quality and it can be seen to foster a stronger sense of community ownership and pride in the local area.

Credit must also be given to the regulatory functions of the Council, particularly Planning and Highways, in helping to secure high quality design.

4.6 **3) Residents valued "flagship" projects**

The Survey identified that residents valued the large scale projects, what they termed as "flagship" projects. For example, the £11 Million Village Square, funded through public and private money, has been a complex development for the Council to be involved in delivering - such as through the use of Council Compulsory Purchase Powers. The Survey tells us that residents feel it has put the heart back into the neighbourhood and is a focal point for the community.

4.7 **4) Castlefields has had a physical regeneration focus**

The Castlefields Programme has focussed on transforming the physical environment of the neighbourhood and providing decent homes and local facilities. Whilst this has laid the foundations and provided the social and physical infrastructure for a better quality of life for existing residents and helped attract new residents into the area, it has not directly and consistently tackled some of the socio-economic 'behind front door' issues. This is apparent in some of the responses in the Survey in relation to residents' satisfaction with employment, learning and training opportunities in Castlefields.

The new 10 year plan which is focussed on mainstreaming of interventions provides an opportunity to address this on Castlefields; future programmes can learn from the need to embed regeneration programmes within the broader activities of the Council and its partners from a much early stage. Recent organisational changes which place the Council's regeneration function within the same operational area as employment, learning and skills will help ensure this approach.

4.8 **5) Managing programme transition**

The results of the Survey, particularly the resident group sessions, shows that as the physical transformation of Castlefields concludes, residents' priorities are now focused on more mainstream service issues such as maintenance of public realm, community development and provision of services for children and young people.

The Castlefields Regeneration Programme has targeted sustained investment and multi-organisational resources into an identifiable geographical area (in this case a residential neighbourhood). This can create a continued sense of expectation from the community for on-going action.

The transition from a physical Programme guided by a Masterplan and with delivery managed by a dedicated resource, to moving to dealing with more mainstream service issues requires careful organisational management.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 All remaining Council funds in the Castlefields Regeneration Programme have been committed by the CIG and Officers are working towards a financial close on Council capital expenditure in 2016/17.

Both Liverpool Housing Trust and Plus Dane continue to access to Homes and Communities Agency funding for the continued delivery of affordable housing on Castlefields both organisation are expected to include further Castlefields sites within their respective bids for the 2015 – 18 delivery round.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The Regeneration Programme aims to have positive impacts for children and young people; most evident is the provision of youth facilities at Phoenix Park, giving young people a place which they can call their own.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

This area of the Regeneration Programme has been acknowledged as being least effective and this is intended to be addressed within new 10 year plan for Castlefields.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The last Indices of Multiple Deprivation identified that two of Castlefields four Lower Super Output Areas are ranked as being within the 1% most deprived nationally for health indicators. Therefore, to make Halton healthier, Castlefields is one of the places which requires action.

6.4 A Safer Halton

All new housing schemes are built to 'design out crime', and have been complemented by a comprehensive programme of environmental and public realm improvements aiming to create a safe and attractive neighbourhood.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Completing the Castlefields Regeneration Programme remains a corporate priority within Halton's Housing and Urban Renewal strategies, and is one of the Council's most ambitious urban renewal initiatives undertaken to date.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Castlefields Programme is one of the Council's longest standing regeneration activities, with Council expenditure being delivered through a dedicated capital resource. The Council are operating within a stable partnership arrangement.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Castlefields is a placed based regeneration project and as such is targeted at all residents within the locality on an equal basis.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Castlefields Masterplan – | Regeneration Team, | Nathan Renison |

| | | |
|--|--|----------------|
| An ambition for regeneration & plan for action | Municipal Building | |
| Castlefields and Norton Priory Action Area SPD | Planning and Transport Policy Team, Municipal Building | Alasdair Cross |
| Executive Board Report: Castlefields Regeneration 25 September 2003 | Committee Services | Angela Scott |
| Environment and Urban Renewal PPB Report: Castlefields Regeneration Programme Review 16 September 2009 | Committee Services | Gill Ferguson |

The Big Castlefields Survey: Resident Sessions October 2013

During October 2013 three sessions were held to engage with representatives of the Castlefields Community and Castlefields residents to expand on results from the Big Castlefields Survey. Three sessions were held, each with the same two questions

1. What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields?
2. What still needs to be improved on Castlefields / What should the priorities for the next 10 years be?

Who responded

Session One: This session was attended by 7 community representatives including two ward Councillors, tenant representatives and a Patient Participation Representative for Castlefields Health Centre.

Sessions Two / Three: Residents who expressed an interest on the survey were given the opportunity to take part. 20 residents confirmed that they would like to attend the sessions and these represented a cross section of house type and tenure. 10 residents attended in total over two sessions.

*Overarching themes identified from the group sessions



Produced by HBC Customer Intelligence Unit
*these themes should be considered alongside the summary of the full discussion

Email research@halton.gov.uk for further information

Summary of each overarching theme: Best about the regeneration

Physical Environment

Residents believe that the regeneration of Castlefields has vastly improved the physical environment and neighbourhood. They identified the demolition of the large high rise blocks of concrete flats and their replacement with more traditional scale housing as making the biggest impact. Castlefields now has a more open layout; removal of the old local centre, new pathways and landscaping make it easier to get around. Improved street lighting and removal of hidden passage ways, have contributed to making it feel much safer to walk around than before.

Community Pride

In the main, residents now feel they have a sense of ownership due to the new housing and they now think of where they live as a 'home'. It is felt that the regeneration has helped to reduce anti-social behaviour in certain areas as more residents now feel proud to live where they do. It is also felt that the sense of ownership has contributed to community spirit which had been lost in the previous housing.

Flagship Projects

Residents identified that a number of 'flagship' projects have made a big difference to the neighbourhood. They feel that the new Community and Health Centres, Phoenix Park and the Village Square are excellent facilities that attract people from outside of the neighbourhood. Castlefields now feel more welcoming and residents are very proud of these facilities.

Summary of each overarching theme: Still to be improved

Maintenance of Public Realm

Residents are confused by whose responsibility it is for the general upkeep of the public realm in terms of litter / weeding / pathways / trees. Residents identified that there are problems with only one side of a path being maintained because the other side is someone else's responsibility. It is felt that this could be helped with more joined up working.

Respect

Whilst residents recognised that there was an improved sense of ownership and pride on Castlefields, it was felt that some residents still do not have this and do not look after their properties (such as the new front gardens) or the surrounding area. This spoils the efforts put in by those residents who do care. More community activities should be held e.g. in the community centre on Halloween to help promote a sense of belonging. It was also felt that authorities need to be tougher on any problem residents.

Linked to this, there are also issues with household waste and recycling. For example, the recycling facility is limited with a small blue box so rubbish goes into the normal waste bin instead. There is also still a problem with fly tipping on certain parts of the estate, which again is starting to bring the area down

Getting around

Residents felt there were problems with parking across the neighbourhood. This was a particular problem around the schools as the overcrowded parking makes both the roads

Email research@halton.gov.uk for further information

and pathways unsafe. Parking at the health centre is also an issue; it was felt that staff use the visitor spaces outside of the health centre when they should still be using their dedicated parking. Speed restrictions should be in place throughout the neighbourhood.

It was also felt that as the layout of the neighbourhood had changed so much, orientation was sometimes confusing, particularly for people looking for individual addresses. Residents thought better signposting could solve this. Also the underpasses are no longer required as there are alternative routes; they should be removed as they just create a place for people to hang out.

Whilst acknowledged as an issue everywhere, lack of public transport in the evening and at weekends was identified as a problem. This created a sense of isolation for some residents of Castlefields.

Children and Young People

Residents feel that more should be done for children and young people on the estate; it is felt that this could be an area of concern now that most of the housing has been completed. More small play areas for younger children should be provided as Phoenix Park is simply too far away for some children to go and play on their own.

There should also be wider community projects, such as something similar to the four estates project. It is believed this will get younger people more interested in where they live – and they may look after it more as they get older – again focusing on giving a sense of ownership and pride.

Session One Community Representatives: What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields?

Environment: Removal / demolition flats of flats, New housing, Removal of most deck housing opens the view, New Town Square, Lighting

People and Community: New build housing, New properties, Better lighting, Improved housing, Village Square, More trees being planted, New Community Centre

Flagship of Castlefields: New health centre, Phoenix Park, New Community centre



What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields? – Summary of main discussion

Environment

- The removal of the flats – they were an eyesore and there was lots of debris. People look after the houses much better now.
- Need to paint / insulate all houses, not just some of them, they have picked all of the outside houses that can be viewed from the road – *a response was provided at the session in such that this is currently waiting on grants.*
- Flats – idea has not worked, they are too intrusive and on top of each other.
- From a visual point of view, the approach and walk-through looks much better without the ‘high-rise’ skyline of the flats.
- Lighting around the old housing and pathways was dark and they were overgrown. Now it is more open, lighter and there no dark corners for people to hang around. This is also the same for the new town square compared to the old ‘Castlefields Centre’.

People and Community

- The new properties are lovely, they are being looked after and people are proud of where they live now. The removal of the flats also means the removal of a lot of the rowdy behavior / youths / drinking.
- New build means a fresh start, better sense of ownership. The flats look good – they have been built to look like houses. Makes Castlefields a more desirable place to live.
- More trees have been planted. This looks very nice and gives a friendlier feel, helps the environment and helps to break up the constant urban area. However, it was mentioned that trees are also being lost with the regeneration, so do need to make sure more are planted.
- Case study at the session – one person had moved house and found a new lease of life and as a result, big psychological and social improvement, the person now thinks of where they live as a home.
- The new Village Square is lovely, opens it all up, and lots of people use it to sit out. Shame that some residents don’t look after it. In comparison with what we had it is much nicer.
- The Village Square is now an open aspect and nice.
- Everything compliments each other now, Village Square and houses and shops, it is a focal point and meeting place.
- The Community Centre - we were lucky to get this, it is brilliant. This acts as the centre for all the new town and brings in the Old Town too.

Flagship of Castlefields

- The new health centre is a flagship for the area. It has become a focal point and centred the estate. It has developed into a health 'centre' rather than previously when it was just a GP – plus a bit extra.
- Car parking is a big issue there though. There have been a lot of issues with the planners, being told that it would take 3-4 months to get one extra parking space. People can't always walk or get the bus. For large events i.e. flu jab time it is chaos with cars everywhere and it needs better awareness and management coming up to these times.
- New health centre is great, but it did take ages to agree initially with GP on the location of it, the time taken for this decision spoilt the plan and meant there was much less car parking provision.
- There is an issue with doctors and nurses parking in the customer parking spaces. They have their own parking and it should be used.
- When compared to the old one, the new community centre is brilliant. This has enhanced the community and acts as a catalyst to draw people into the area.
- Phoenix Park needs a mention. Though it may be technically in Windmill Hill, it is seen as part of Castlefields and is a flagship regeneration success.

Session One Community Representatives: What should the priorities for the next 10 years be?

Consideration: Some kind of man-made football pitch, Need launderette, New private housing, Sport Centre / Pool, Post box in Village Square, Car park inadequate for centre and doctors, Miles of car parks gone, Top floor flat escape route, No drying areas in new flats, Facilities all gone and never replaced, Yellow lines in side street to allow emergency vehicle access, Smaller parks gone but are needed in certain areas, Housing too small compared to what has gone

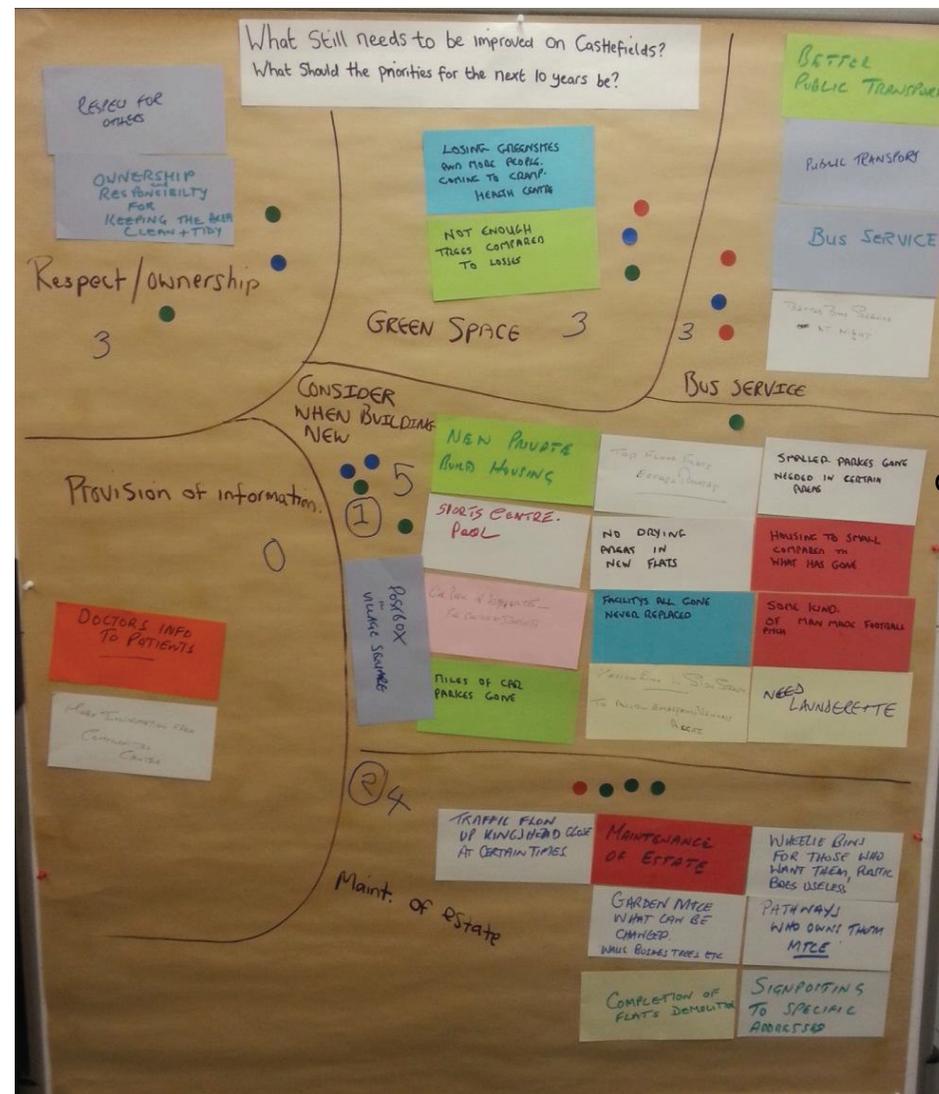
Maintenance of the estate: Maintenance of estate, Garden maintenance what can be changed? Walls, bushes, trees etc., Completion of flat demolition, Wheelie bins for those who want them, plastic bags useless, Pathways: who owns them for maintenance, Signposting to specific address: e.g. for emergency services, Traffic flow up Kingshead Close at certain times

Respect / Ownership: Respect for others, Ownership and responsibility for keeping the area clean and tidy

Green Space: Losing green sites and more people coming to cramp the health centre, Not enough trees compared to losses

Bus Service: Better bus service at night, Bus service, Better public transport, Public Transport

Provision of Information: More information from community centre, Doctors information to patients



What should the priorities for the next 10 years be? – Summary of main discussion

Consideration:

- Car Parking is a massive issue in the area. Should aim to encourage walking and more use of the bus. There are plenty of houses and there is more housing being built, therefore there is not (and will not be) enough parking. The problem is made worse though, as the area is now also enticing people in from outside – and these can't be accommodated.
- Car parks have gone round the Chester Close area. Car parking is always an issue here.
- Need more yellow lines in the correct places to aid access for emergency services. Example given of parking right to the very end of a street and there would not be enough room for the emergency services to get through – need to address this before it is too late.
- Major issue with signposting and direction to specific addresses in the area. Impossible to find property addresses, including for the emergency services and the residents. This needs real thought and planning, not just a case as putting a load of signposts in. This issue really does need sorting out.
- Traffic, especially school traffic, is mayhem. Feels like Wacky Races. Needs better managing and ownership, ideally from the schools themselves. Speed limits also need policing better.

- Completion of the flat demolition – there are just 3 left. Need to speed up and get on with it, they look out of place now.
- Still lacking new private housing to complete a diverse sweep of the community. This would lead to a better mix of the community.
- The space in the new housing is too small. Although rooms in modern housing are smaller, the residents were told rooms would not be any smaller. *A brief response was given saying that really it needed to be consulting the people actually living in them, and unfortunately it is a sign of the times, and the population is growing everywhere.*
- One person mentioned no drying areas (communal) in the new housing – expected to do it in-house, this is not very good for the house, and it is a health and safety hazard to dry clothes on the radiator. This should be a priority consideration for new housing.

- Facilities have gone and not been replaced. Such as the Sports Centre, the School, the Youth Centre, Bridgewater and a lot of play areas for babies and very small children.
- Suggestion to get a football pitch in the area.
- Other suggestions were for a launderette and a post box in the village square.

Maintenance of the estate:

- Bin collection methods needs looking at. The plastic bags are no good, either cats rip them up or they rip under the weight. Wheelie bins should be provided to people who want them. *Answer provided was – councillors pushing for a change, with 2 trial areas done already. Problems encountered however. De Lacy was ok, Summer Close was a disaster. The design is poor with many steps etc. so is impossible for people to get the bins to a suitable place. Bin men can collect but then had people saying they don't want to keep bins in their own yard. Something is going to be introduced though! But will need to be all wheelie bins or all bags – not mix and match.*
- Maintenance of estate – footpaths are council responsibility, grassed areas are RSL responsibility. This confusion needs to be sorted out and someone take responsibility for it all.
- Footpaths are peeling away under flooding - due to the cabling put down by Virgin and not covering properly. This is serious and becoming very dangerous for the elderly and disabled in the area to use.
- Garden maintenance – bushes are often used as bins, walls are collapsing, roots are overgrown and damaging drains. These all need better maintaining. Needs to be said though that the lads who do the jobs aren't proper gardeners and do a good job.

Respect / Ownership:

- Litter and waste is an issue and ownership of looking after the area (mainly litter) needs addressing, however it is recognized that this is probably a wider social issue. Maybe shops need to look after their direct outside surround more. Need more bins in area to help alleviate the problem.

Green Space

- Loss of green areas and trees, this is not good for overall aesthetics of area. Also linked into to this was a discussion about smaller parks / play areas. Although Phoenix Park is excellent it is too far for younger children to go and play on their own. More small localized green space would help with problem.

Bus Service:

- Better public transport is needed. The bus to Liverpool stops at 7pm. This issue stops people going out as a lot of people don't have cars. Other examples given were; can't get back from Shopping City / Liverpool FC game; no link from Runcorn train station / Runcorn East station; no taxis; no buses on Sundays. These all prevent people getting around and the residents feel isolated. It is acknowledged that this is an issue everywhere.

- Bus times are the big problem, last one from the old town is 7:20pm, means you have to take your chances walking through the tunnel at the shopping city of an evening.

Provision of Information:

- Need to give more information out – especially from GP e.g. info on prescription changes – possibly in the newsletter, not sure though. Other information such as training days if someone is not a regular at the GP, they wouldn't know – need to get the info out better. Possibly information provided in the community centre?
- There are issues with information about the community centre; you only know what is going on in the community centre when you are in the community centre. They were meant to have an open day, did this ever even happen?
- Ideally there would be info in the form of a leaflet posted to all households. There was discussion that information could be put in a newsletter, but it was recognized that they may not always read by people. The Community Centre should publicise better via the website. Can also get peoples e-mails and do an electronic mailshot – we know the GP's take peoples e-mail addresses.

Session Two Residents: What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields?

Better Design / Living: New housing / shops, New town square and doctors lovely, Better attendance to repairs etc. quick repairs, Demolition of flats, Better choice of tenant or tenants letting, New houses, Eco housing good.

Community Spirit: Community spirit, Phoenix Park, Looks friendlier, Everything is centralised and local. Don't have to travel to town or Halton Lea to get anything, Keeping green spaces, Lot of idiots gone.

Environment: Better facilities, Some roads improved, Concrete gone, Housing – improvements to existing and new housing, Demolition of Castlefields Centre, Community Centre / Village



What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields? – Summary of main discussion

Better Design / Living:

- The demolition of the 'old flats that were terrible' and replacement with new housing / layout of Castlefields have helped to give the area a new look and feel. There were 'rows and rows of awful housing', there are less places for gangs to hang around. The new town square and the new health centre also contribute to residents having pride for where they live and residents now like getting around Castlefields and it is also easier for those who have reduced mobility.
- Tenants / residents in general seem to be happier. However the lettings policy needs to change as one bad person can ruin the whole street although this has improved.
- The homes repair service is better than it was which helps to keep people's homes nice.
- The Eco housing is seen as a really good idea, one resident talked about how her heating bills are now really cheap, with particular reference to the solar panels. Heating was also important for another resident who used to live in the flats with a shared boiler and found the heating hard to live with sometimes, constantly having to have her windows open. Now she has moved and has her own boiler she has control of the temperature of her home.
- Roads have been improved and it easier to get around, especially in the winter. However there should be more speed restrictions on the estate.

Community Spirit:

- There is a new sense of community spirit amongst some of the residents now, Castlefields looks and feels friendlier. Residents feel that a lot of people who caused trouble on Castlefields no longer live there (less idiots, druggies, alcoholics and gangs).
- The facilities in the new Village Square means that you don't have to travel to the shopping city or the old town for bits of shopping, get your hair done, put a bet on etc.
- Phoenix Park is seen as a great asset and residents like that the green space has been kept and hasn't been built on. The landscaping of the lake / canal, with swans, wildlife and the play areas makes Phoenix Park a nice place to spend time with the family. They feel it is important that green spaces are kept – not just Phoenix Park but smaller local green spaces as Phoenix Park is too far for some children on Castlefields to go and play on their own.
- Opening up the estate makes it feel safer and people are out and about rather than staying at home.

Environment:

- Most of the concrete has gone; this has opened up the space and feels safer than the deck access flats – no hidden spaces or dark corners.
- The demolition of Castlefields Centre is seen as an achievement. It was rundown, not suitable for people with disabilities and was a place for people to hang around. Now people go out and see each other more often. There was also discussion that the old 'Castlefields Centre' divided the estate whereas now it is cleaner and more open and no longer feels hostile.

Session Two Residents: What should the priorities for the next 10 years be?

Litter: Closure of Bridgewater Centre – building vandalised, Underpass – close it please, Too many cats, Is it LHT or Council 'Twix packet syndrome' – to be sorted, Still a lot of fly tipping – need more collections, Litter left in Castlefields i.e. Carpets / Beds etc., Litter, Poor bin bag for stronger or plastic bins like LHT

Facilities: No rear access / exit to some new buildings, Lock ups – keys please people in flats not aware of lock ups!, Buses after 6 from the City to Castlefields, Chippy is expensive, More shops – not enough choice, Improvement on roads, More facilities for kids to play instead of on the street, Speed bumps.

Community Spirit: More policing, Quicker system to evict baddies. Although law has to be followed to the letter, More inspection of neglected gardens, Surrounding small spaces to be maintained, Keeping gardens tidy.



What should the priorities for the next 10 years be? – Summary of main discussion

Litter / Vandalism:

- There still some areas for improvement. For example the Bridgewater Day Centre has been left to stand and the building is being vandalised / lots of litter – this is a shame as it was a really good facility.
- The remaining underpasses need to be closed. Although the Council has tried to make them look nicer with painting projects they still attract gangs and residents do not use them anymore – unless they really have to. They did at one time serve a purpose due to the old layout / landscaping of Castlefields however now it has been redeveloped with safe road crossings, they do not suit the purpose anymore.
- Residents feel that the bin collection service is not adequate. The black bin bags that are provided are not suitable as they are too thin and rip far too easily / cats rip them – this is a false economy. The litter from the bin bags ends up strewn across the paths as it not the bin man's job to pick up the litter that falls out of the thin bin bags.
- There should be other facilities for waste such as plastic wheelie bins / larger blue boxes for recycling. Recycling is a good thing but residents have too much to fit in the blue box and end up putting recyclable waste in the normal waste. A more regular recycling service is needed. Another issue is that residents don't know what the council will collect and recycle, you can request blue bins from the Council but nobody tells you that.
- The new recycling points / waste bins are always overflowing.
- The skip days are good, however they fill up too quickly and if you work you don't get a chance to use the facility.
- Fly tipping is also a big issue. Shopping trollies are used to dump carpets, mattresses and other household goods; it makes residents ashamed to live on Castlefields. People are lazy and there is all sorts of rubbish all over the place.
- Another issue that needs to be dealt with is the 'Twix packet syndrome'. This relates to the housing association and the Council not taking responsibility for areas as it is not their 'patch'. For example you can have one area where one side of the path the grass is cut but the other side of the path is left untidy. If someone is already out cutting one part surely they can finish the job and cut the other side. Also problems with different providers maintaining areas to different standards. Residents should not have to care about who looks after which bit they just want the job done, it is poor customer service.

Facilities:

- Some of the new buildings do not have rear access / exits, this can feel quite unsafe.
- Roads still need some work for example speed limits or the flashing light alternative to speed bumps. Some people still use the avenues to race around.
- The building of new homes has led to the removal of smaller parks / green space for young children to go out and play, this needs to be readdressed. Phoenix Park is just too far for parents to allow their children to go and play out there on their own. Some smaller areas where children can go out and play for half an hour would be good.
- Village Square, although what is there is good there could still be some improvements to the facilities provided. For example somewhere to buy groceries / fruit and veg and a launderette, it was also mentioned that the 'chippy' is far too overpriced and the shop is overpriced as well. One resident felt that businesses are taking advantage because there is no competition. However this unfair as Castlefields is a deprived area.
- Lock ups? Why are they there?? Nobody has keys for them, they are too small for cars and we are not allowed to put mopeds / motorbikes in them.

Community Spirit:

- More still needs to be done about some residents who still do not appreciate all the effort that has been put into the area. There should be tougher rules for people who are tenants and the housing association should be able to get rid of them quicker. People should appreciate what they have got and what a good estate they live in.
- More policing, it was discussed that no one ever sees a police man on the beat, the community support worker is very good but a CSPO / policeman on the beat may be a deterrent to those who still cause ASB on Castlefields.
- Keeping areas clean and tidy, inspection of gardens for those who rent and general upkeep of the area was also discussed. The businesses who rent the shops should look after the shop fronts. Residents who rent property should keep a certain level of maintenance in their front gardens. This is spoilt for those who do look after their gardens. There have also been problems with plants being stolen and put in other people's gardens. Pathways should be weeded more regularly by whoever is responsible. One resident has taken to weeding the paths as they look very untidy and undo the good work that has been done. Pictures were brought to the session to illustrate this.

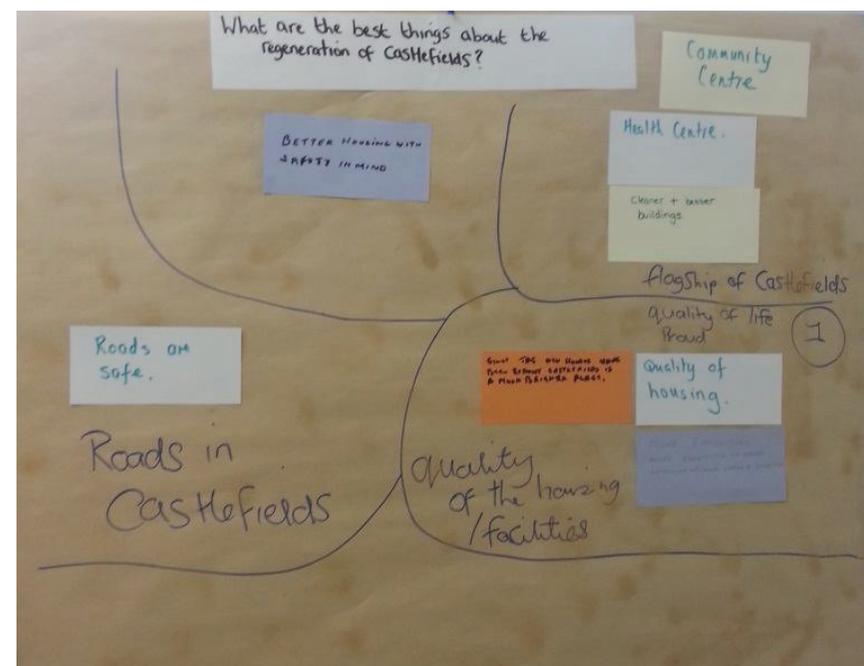
- There should be more benches in the Village Square
- More provision should be made for young people to play. Children play football in the car parks and around the bin stores which isn't the safest environment – there needs to be some more obvious sites for people to play. It was suggested that the school playing fields be open after hours, although it was recognised that there may be supervisory problems with this also.
- Poor evening / Sunday bus service limits the social life for people. As there is no longer a gym / swimming pool you have to travel to somewhere else to use this type of facility and there is no way for you to get home of an evening. Residents have a feeling of isolation. Lack of evening public transport has also prevented residents from outside the area attending adult learning classes as they can't use public transport to get home.

Session 3 Residents: What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields?

Quality of Housing / Facilities: Since the houses have been rebuilt Castlefields is a much brighter place, Quality of housing, More facilities more selections of shops especially McColl's larger selection

Safety: Better housing with safety in mind, Roads are safe

Flagship of Castlefields: Community Centre, Health Centre, Cleaner and better buildings



What are the best things about the regeneration of Castlefields? – Summary of main discussion

Quality of Housing / Facilities:

- Castlefields is a much brighter place since the deck access flats have been knocked down and the new housing has been built. The facilities such as the local shop have also made the area a better place to live. The shop is larger and has more variety so you don't need to travel to pick up small bits of shopping.
- The quality of life in Castlefields is much better since the new housing and facilities have been built.

Safety:

- The area feels safer now with the new road layouts / crossings. It was discussed that people who live in the new housing also feel safer than they did previously in the deck access flats.

Flagship of Castlefields:

- The new community centre, the new health centre is cleaner and brighter and provides much better facilities than the previous buildings. One resident wouldn't let her children go to Castlefields Centre on their own as it was a place for gangs to hang round and was very run down.

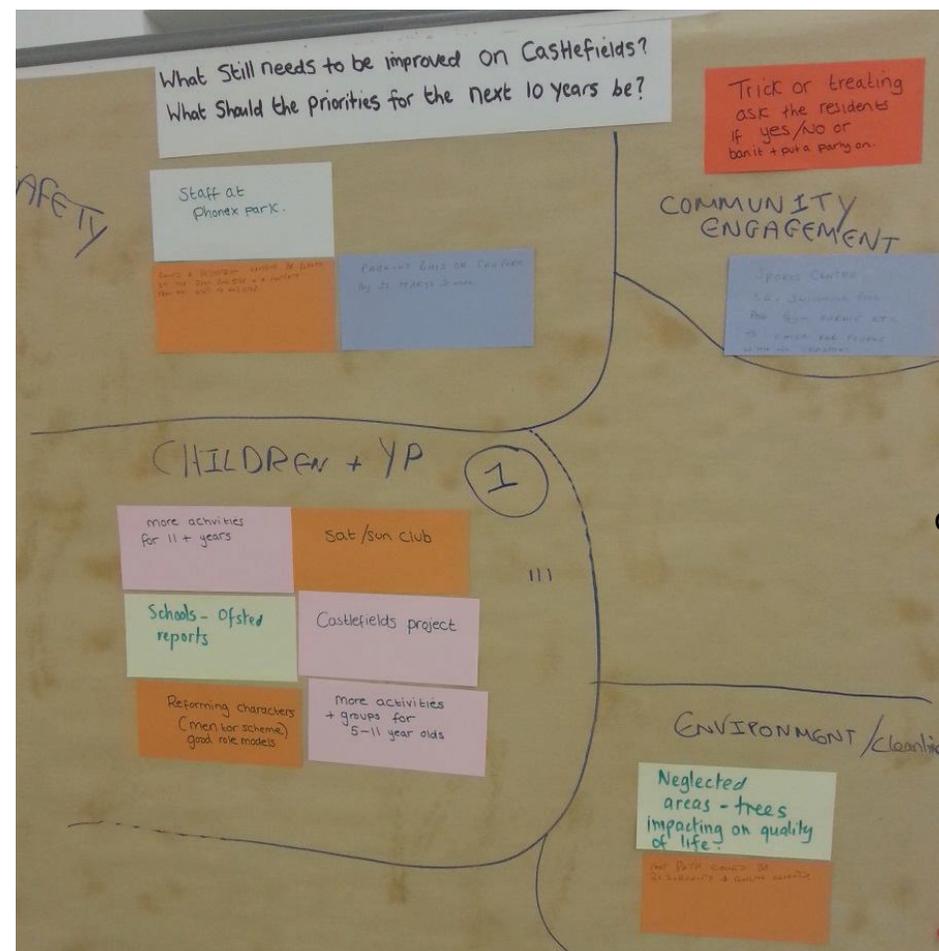
Session Three Residents: What should the priorities for the next 10 years be?

Children and Young People: Sat / Sun club, More activities for 11 year olds, Reforming characters (mentor scheme good role models), Castlefields Project, Schools OFSTED reports

Environment / Cleanliness: Neglected areas – trees impacting on quality of life, Footpath could be resurfaced and gullies cleaned

Community Engagement: Trick or treating ask the resident if yes / no or ban it and put a party on, Sports Centre i.e. swimming pool, Gym, Karate etc. to cater for people with no transport

Community Safety: Staff at Phoenix Park, Could a pedestrian crossing be placed at the Park Bus Stop and a footpath from No1 Stop to No2 stop, Parking bays or car park by St Marys School



What should the priorities for the next 10 years be? – Summary of main discussion

Children and Young People:

- There should be more provision for the children and young people on Castlefields. Unfortunately there are still families / individuals on Castlefields whose behaviour is not acceptable and spoils the atmosphere for everyone else. More play schemes / after school clubs / weekend clubs should be provided to keep children active and give the opportunity to mix with other children and to learn good behaviour.
- Mentor schemes with local people / role models for children and young people to learn from. Why can't we have a 'Castlefields Project' similar to the Four Estates project? Castlefields is a deprived area and a scheme like this would be really beneficial for the residents of Castlefields.
- There was concern over recent reporting of OFSTED results and parent removing their children from schools because of this. The report did not state that OFSTED have changed their criteria and therefore there will be a lot of schools affected and it not necessarily a true reflection of the school achievement. The report served to emphasise the negative of Castlefields rather than the positives.

Environment / Cleanliness:

- Residents like the fact that Castlefields is very green and lush, however there needs to be more maintenance of the trees in the area. One resident who is a homeowner of a non-new build property feels that residents in the old style housing are being neglected and care is not being taken to look after the areas that these houses are in. Another resident also agreed and said that by her family's old style house the trees are really overgrown and need to be cut down / managed properly rather than being left to get out of control – in height especially.
- Certain footpaths in Castlefields also need to be resurfaced and attention needs to be paid to the gullies in the footpaths, they are often overflowing and this can cause more harm than good.

Community Engagement:

- More should be done to try and bring the community together. For example on Halloween a lot of residents don't like the 'trick or treat' knocks on the door as they are scared of whom it might be. A community party in the community centre or a community agreement not to knock after a certain time should be discussed.
- A community sports centre, swimming pool, gym, karate etc. should be explored for those residents who do not have transport of an evening, again helping to bring the community together

Community Safety:

- Residents really like Phoenix Park however there have been incidents witnessed of bullying involving unsupervised children. Also some of the people who use the park do not look after it as they should. A ranger or some form of staff at certain times of the day might help deter bad behaviour. There was discussion that if a coffee shop is built this may also act as a deterrent.
- There are still underpasses in a couple of areas on Castlefields and the one at the Park bus stop by the old Woodlands Walk in particular causes problems. To cross over the Park bus stop to the Woodland Walk side is not suitable for those with restricted walking ability. To get to the houses you have to go through the underpass, climb a steep staircase or walk further to climb a steep hill – or do as others do and walk around the middle of the bus way which is dangerous. Can the stop on the Woodland Walk side be moved or a safe crossing put in place as has been done on other parts of the Busway? Also the underpass attracts anti-social behaviour.
- Another problem for community safety is parking. Although the road layouts are better there is a major parking issue at St Marys School. Parents / carers do not park safely around the school entrances and cause blockages to the road and footpaths which is very dangerous. Also parents who live a short distance from the school should be encouraged not to drop their children off in the car. There was discussion that this happens a lot.

estate people
centre health good
live area place
flats New better
Castlefields
houses improved community



The Big Castlefields Report 2013

October 2013

Produced by the Business Intelligence Team

Jolene Dunlop
Research and Performance Officer

Hannah Furniss
Research and Performance Team Leader

Report for



**The Castlefields
Partnership**

Index**Introduction**

Methodology, analysis and response.....Page 3

Executive summary / key findings

Executive summaryPage 4

Key findings.....Page 4 - 6

Comments summary.....Page 7 - 8

Detailed analysis

Types of interaction with the Castlefields Partnership.....Page 9

You and your home.....Page 10 - 13

Local shops and community facilities.....Page 14

Getting around Castlefields.....Page 14

Green spaces and recreation.....Page 15

Jobs, skills and employment and training opportunities.....Page 15 - 18

Overall satisfaction with Castlefields.....Page 18 - 20

Quality of life living on Castlefields.....Page 21 - 22

Top priorities for Castlefields over next 10 years.....Page 23

Tenant profile.....Page 24 - 25

Copy of questionnaire.....Page 26- 29

Introduction

Methodology

All residents living on Castlefields received a hand delivered survey and freepost envelop for return in August 2013. There was a prize draw incentive for all tenants who returned their survey in order to increase response rates; one first prize of £50 and two second prizes of £25 shopping vouchers.

We have not reported on groups of less than 10 respondents, so some groups are excluded from the detailed analysis.

Analysis

The results are worked out from the total number of respondents to each question, or total respondents to the entire survey if the question had the option to tick all that apply. Percentages are rounded to increase readability, so the total could add up to 99% or 101% as a consequence.

Response rates

256 surveys were completed out of a possible 1900 households living on Castlefields, resulting in a response rate of 13.5%.

The margin of error when using 256 replies to measure the views of 1900 residents is $\pm 5.7\%$. This means that if 50% of respondents answer 'yes' to a yes/no question, we know that between 44.3% and 55.7% of all tenants would have given the same response, including those who did not take part in the survey. We use a 95% confidence interval, which means that there is a 95% chance that the above is true.

To encourage residents to return their survey copies two researchers spent a day in Castlefields completing surveys with residents.

Executive Summary

- **84%** satisfied with their home.
- **76%** satisfied with local shops and common facilities.
- **58%** satisfied with feeling safe.
- **57%** satisfied with green space and recreation.
- **25%** satisfied with employment, learning and training opportunities.
- **70%** think Castlefields is a better place to live.
- **49%** think Regeneration has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.

Key Findings

Involvement with the Castlefields Partnership

- Over eight in ten respondents had read a newsletter, nearly one in four had attended an information event and one in five had been involved in a community group.
- Over half of respondents felt they had opportunity to be involved in the Castlefields regeneration.

You and your home

- This many respondents agreed with the following statements:
 - 80% thought the layout of their home was suitable for their needs.
 - 70% felt safer in their home.
 - 65% thought the garden space was suitable for their needs.
 - 62% thought their home was warmer.

Local shops and community facilities

- This many respondents agreed that the following have improved:
 - The health centre 84%.
 - The community centre 80%.
 - The local shops 76%.
 - Access to the facilities listed above 80%.

Getting around Castlefields

- This many respondents agreed that the following have improved:
 - Street lighting 68%.
 - Litter/ recycling 59%.
 - Bus stops 59%.
 - Streets and paths 51%.
 - Residential car parking 42%.
 - Subways 35%.

Green spaces and recreation

- This many respondents agreed that the following green spaces and recreational areas have improved:
 - Creation of and improvements to Phoenix Park/ lake 75%.
 - Other green spaces 48%.
 - Smaller parks/ play areas 45%.

Jobs, skills and employment and training opportunities

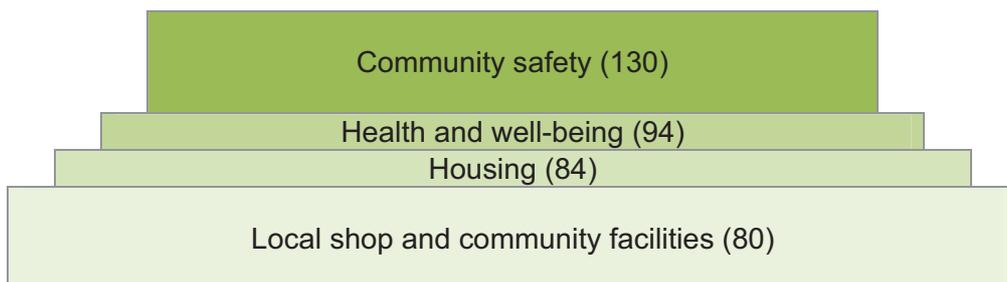
- This many respondents agreed that the following opportunities have improved:
 - Employment information and advice 26%.
 - Training and learning 26%.
 - Apprenticeships 14%.
 - Employment 11%.
 - People were more likely to agree that opportunities had improved if they were looking for work.

Overall satisfaction

- This many respondents were satisfied with the following in Castlefields:
 - Their home 84%.
 - Respondents were more satisfied with their home if they lived in a new build or a two or three storey house.
 - The local shops and community facilities 76%.
 - That they feel safe getting around Castlefields 58%.
 - The provision of green space and recreation areas 57%.
 - Employment, learning and training opportunities 25%.

Quality of life living on Castlefields

- This many respondents agreed with the following:
 - Castlefields is a better place to live 70%.
 - The regeneration of Castlefields has had a positive impact on my Health and Wellbeing 49%.

Top priorities for the next 10 years (Number of respondents in brackets)

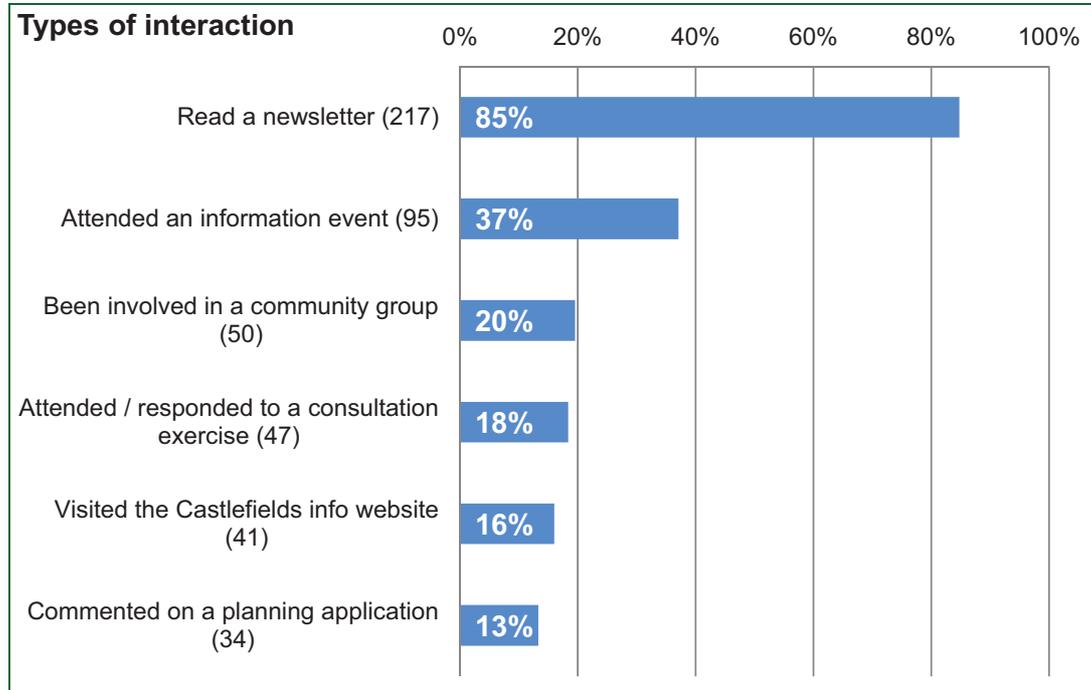
Comments

- Comments given by respondents on why they agreed or disagreed with the statements “Castlefields is a better place to live” and “The regeneration of Castlefields has had a positive impact on my health and wellbeing” can be summarised by the following points:
 - Most respondents agreed that Castlefields is now a better place to live and that it has had a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
 - Some respondents felt that, although the place looked better, it had not changed as the people had stayed the same.
 - Some residents felt that the underlying issues, such as litter, transport and drugs, still remained after the regeneration.

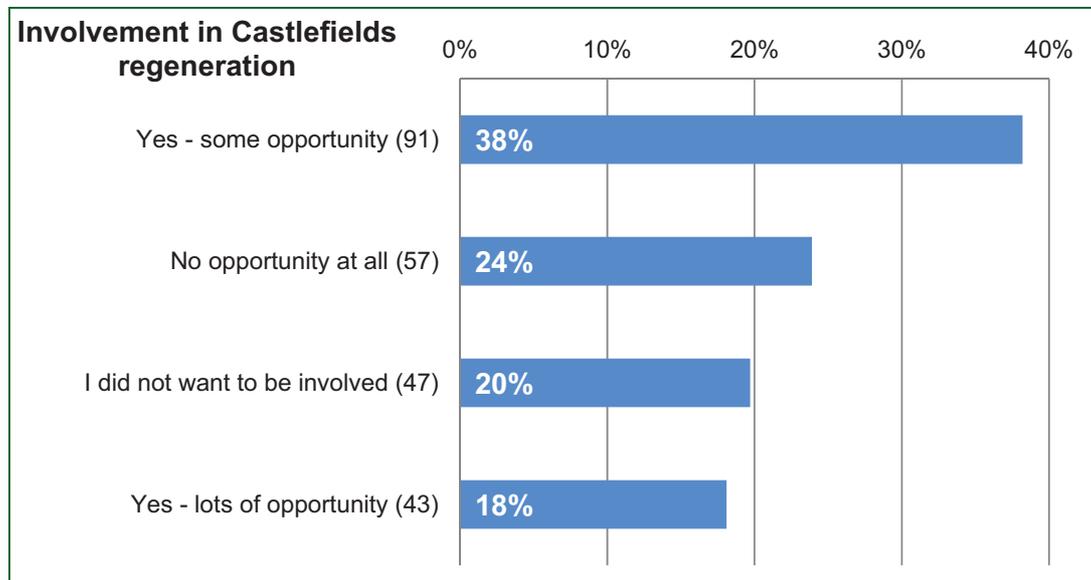
- Comments given by respondents on what they find good about Castlefields can be summarised by the following points:
 - The new housing that has been built.
 - The overall look of the new Castlefields.
 - The Village Square, in particular the health centre and community centre.
 - Community feel.
 - Improved community safety.
 - Regeneration has had a positive effect on health and wellbeing.
 - Castlefields is a better place to live and residents have a new found pride in where they live.

- Comments given by respondents on what they think can be improved on Castlefields can be summarised by the following points:
 - Transport; the bus service stops from 7pm on weekdays and on Sundays.
 - People who live on Castlefields; tenants who do not look after their properties, get involved in the community or are involved with drugs.
 - Knock down the remaining older housing and replace with new housing.
 - More maintenance needed on the estate; litter picking, dog fouling, street lighting, green spaces etc.
 - More activities for adults and children on the estate.
 - More local amenities i.e. more shops, post office, gym etc.

Please note these comments have been summarised, and to gain a better understanding of all the issues please read the comments document, separate to this report.

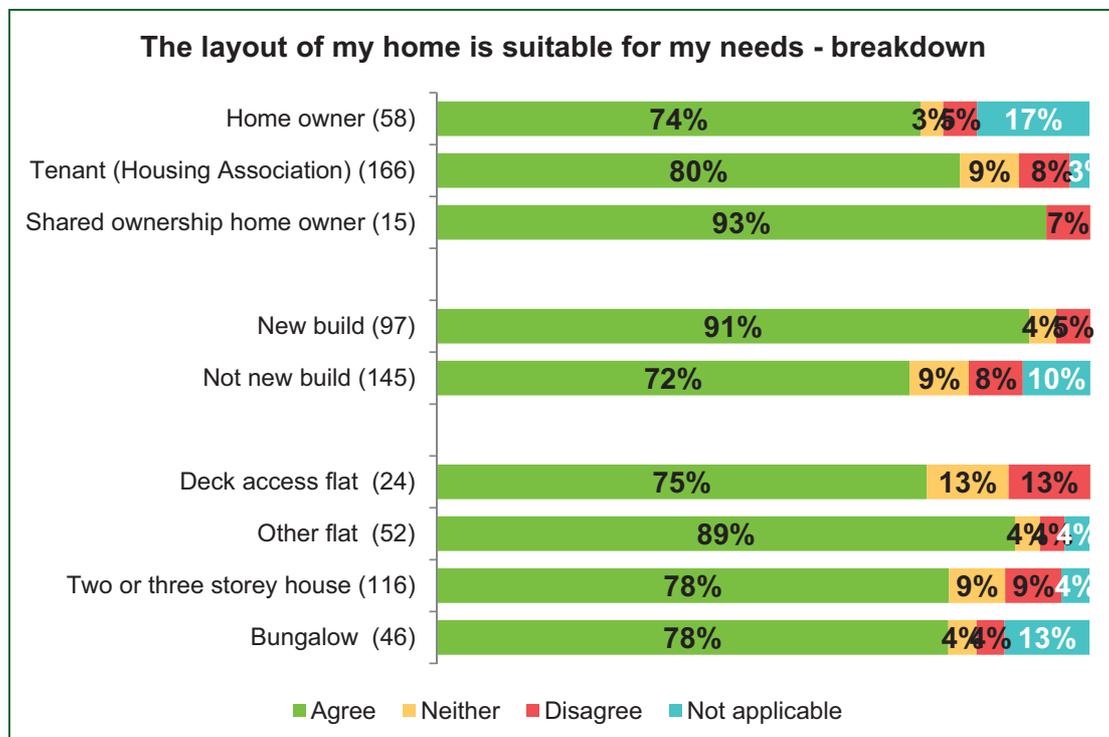
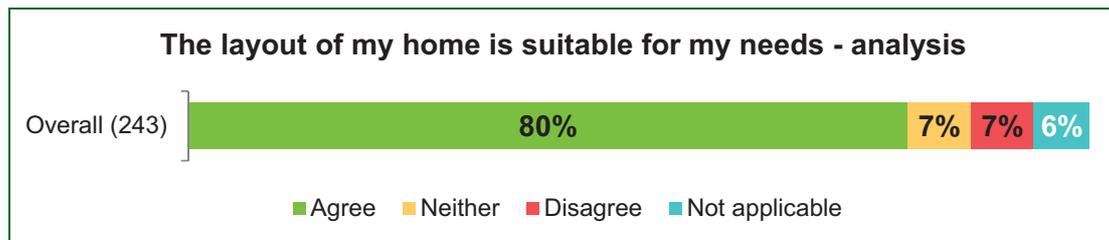
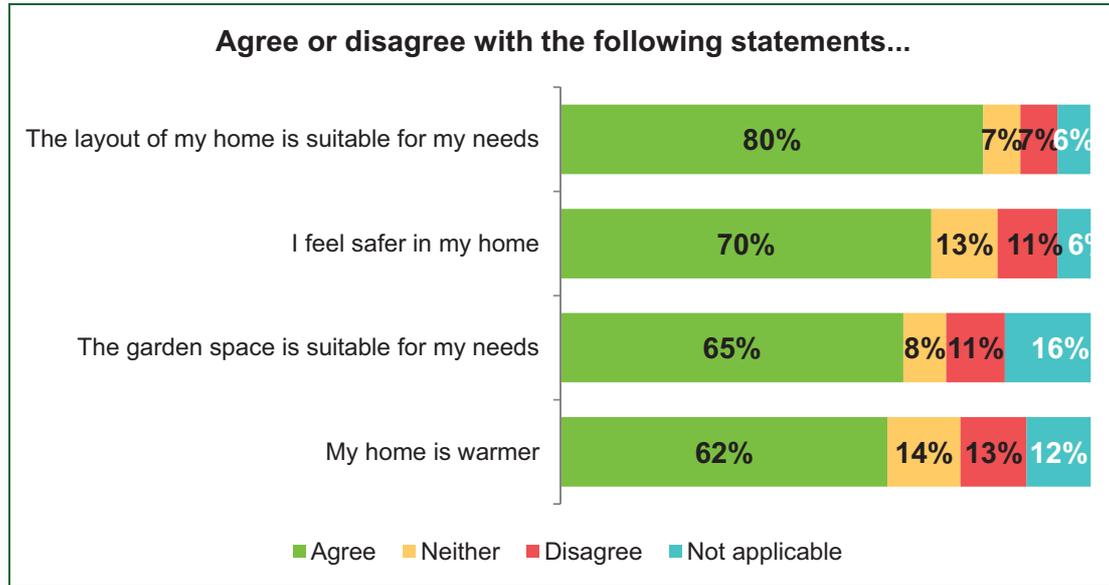
Detailed Analysis**Types of interaction with the Castlefields Partnership**

- Over eight in ten respondents had read a newsletter, nearly one in four had attended an information event and one in five had been involved in a community group.

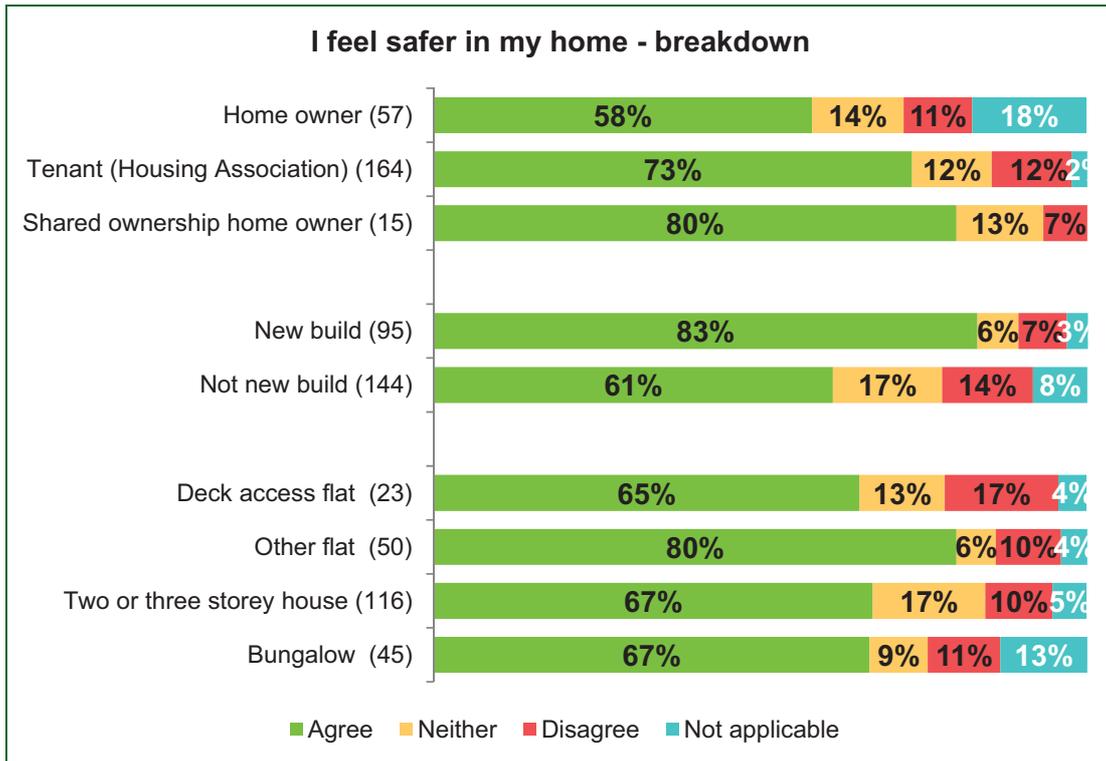
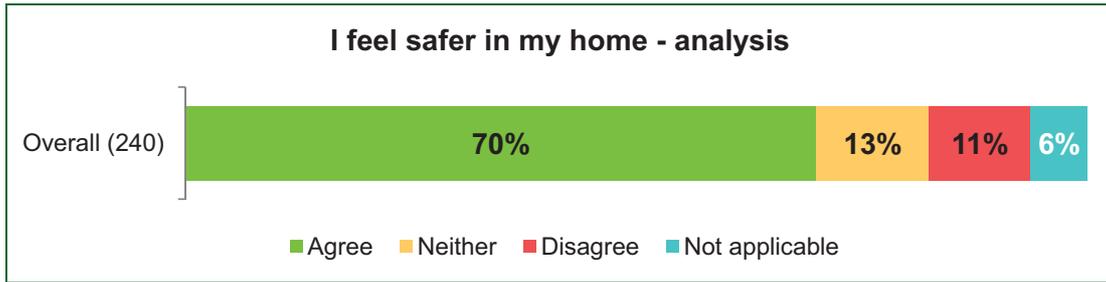


- Over half of respondents felt they had opportunity to be involved in the Castlefields regeneration, one in five did not want to be involved and almost a quarter felt they had no opportunity at all.

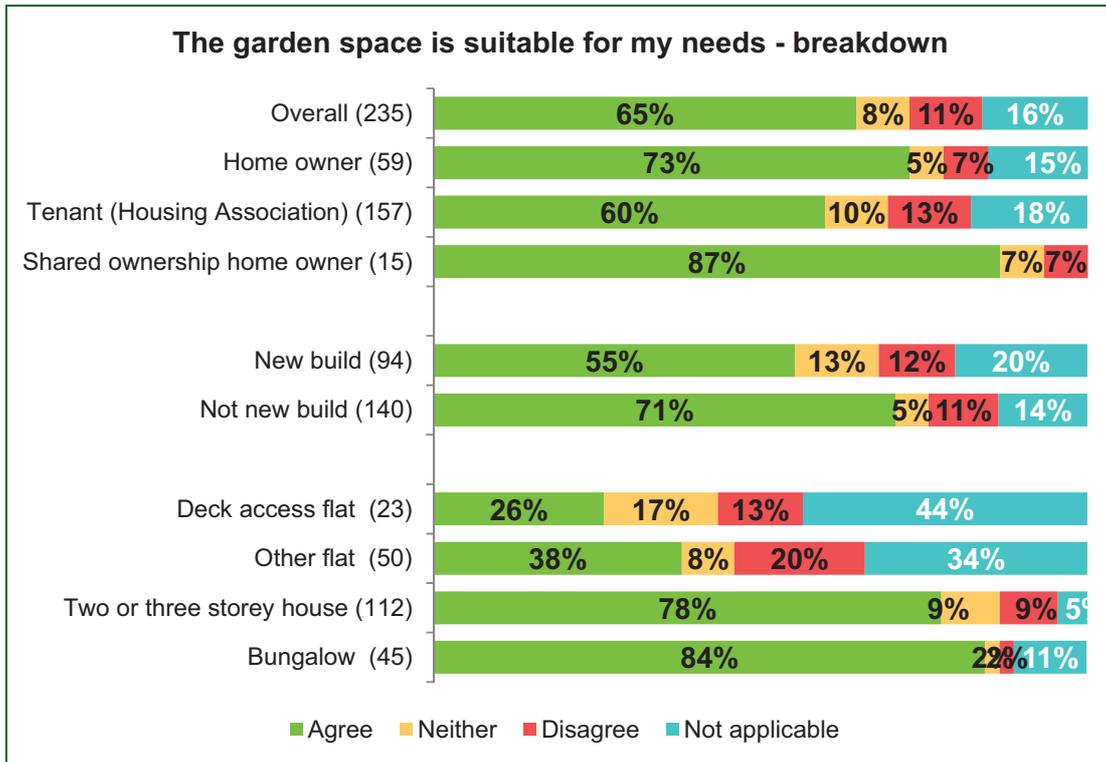
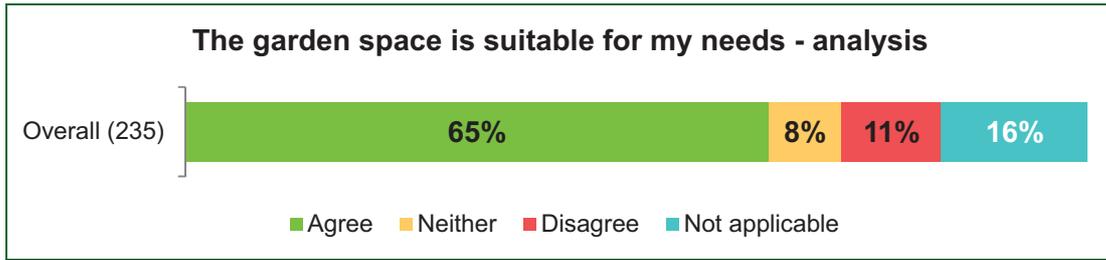
You and your home



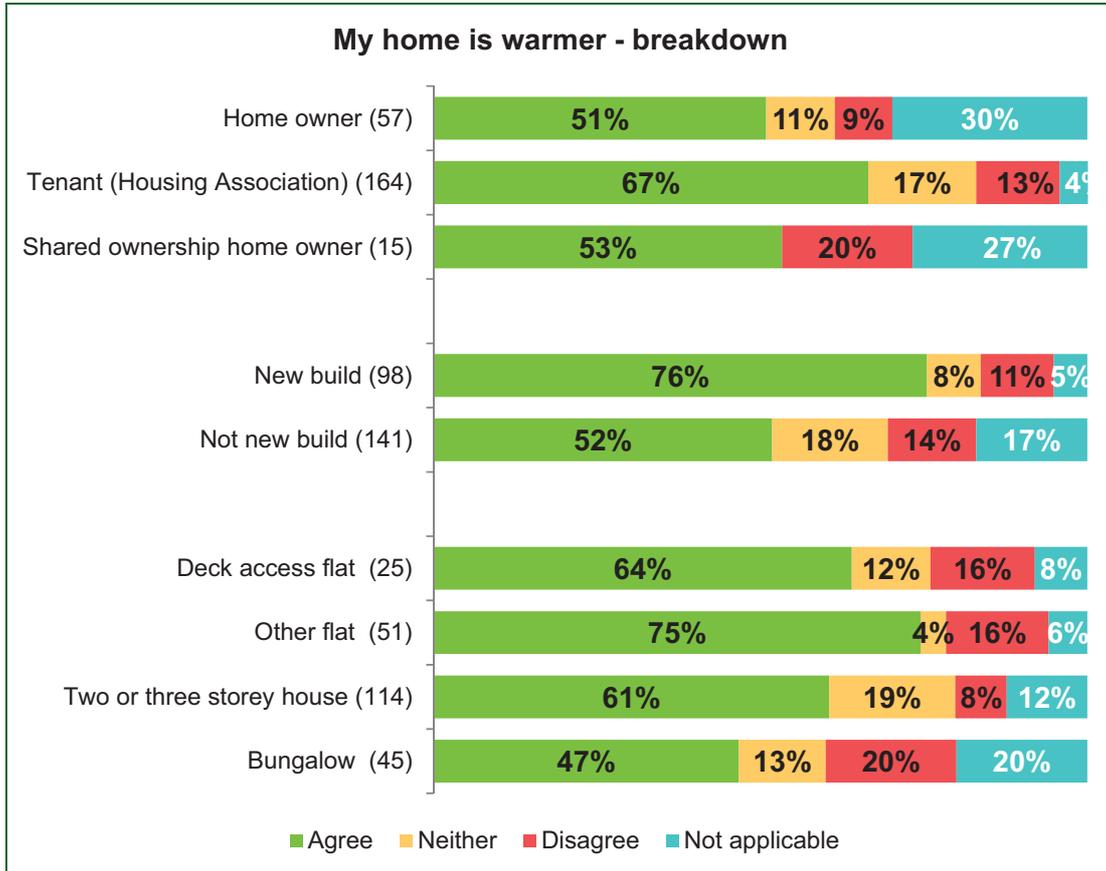
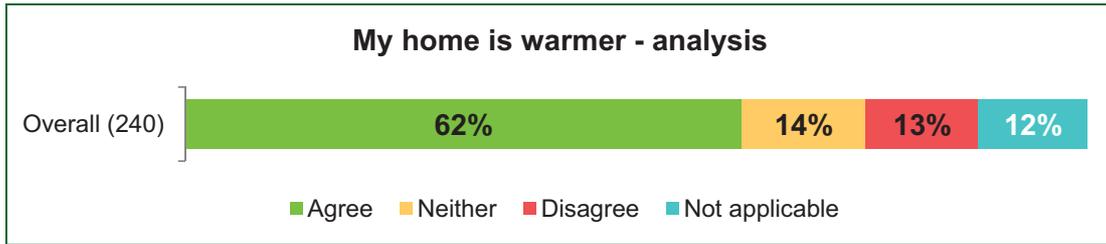
- Respondents living in housing association properties, new builds or “other flat” types had the most suitable home layout for their needs.



- Tenants in housing associations, new builds or “other flat” types felt safest.

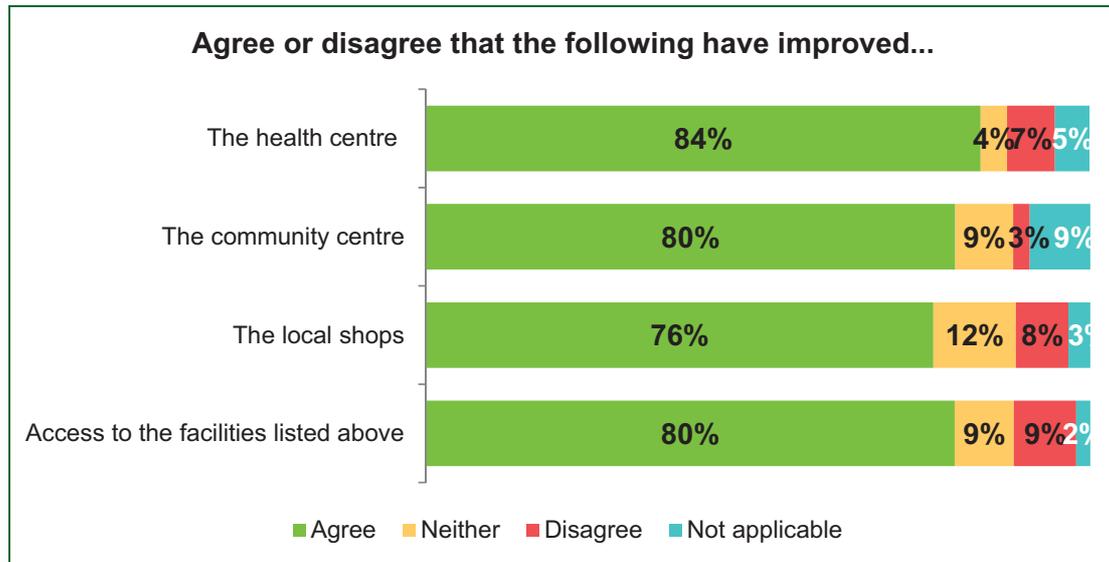


- Garden space was most suitable for respondents needs if they were shared ownership home owners, did not live in a new build or lived in a bungalow.

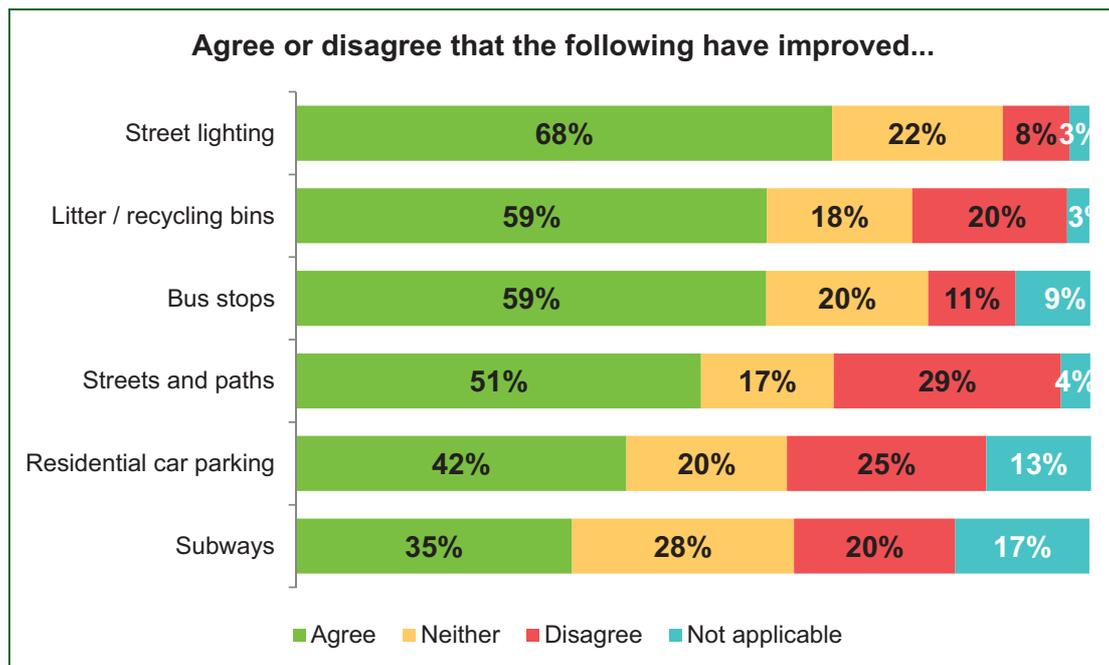


- Homes were warmer where respondents were the tenant of housing association, lived in a new build or lived in an “other flat” type.

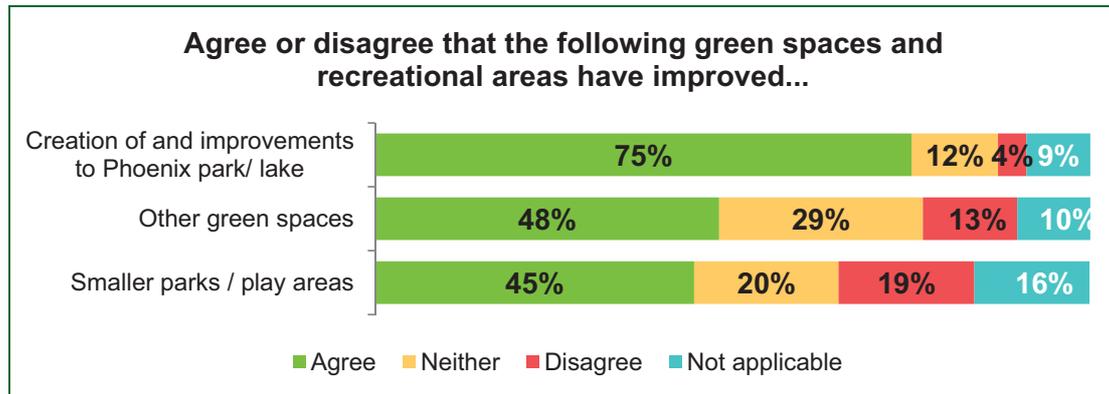
Local shops and community facilities



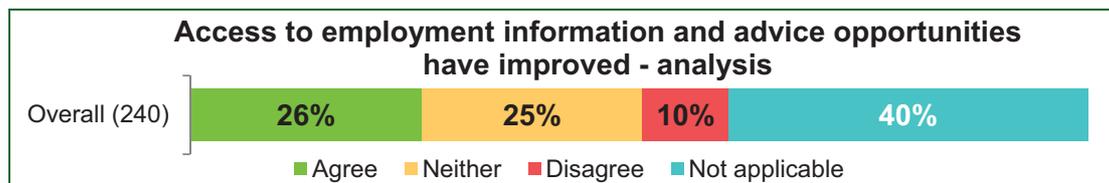
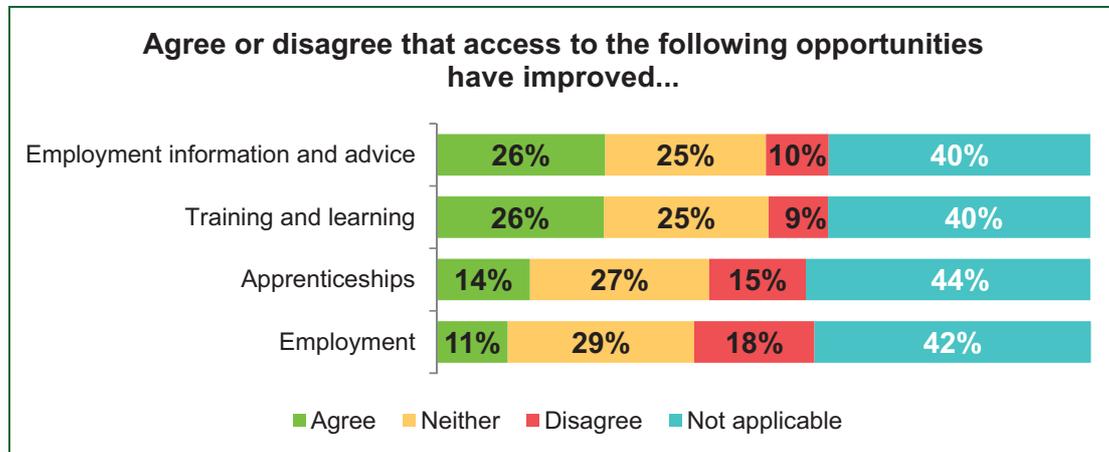
Getting around Castlefields

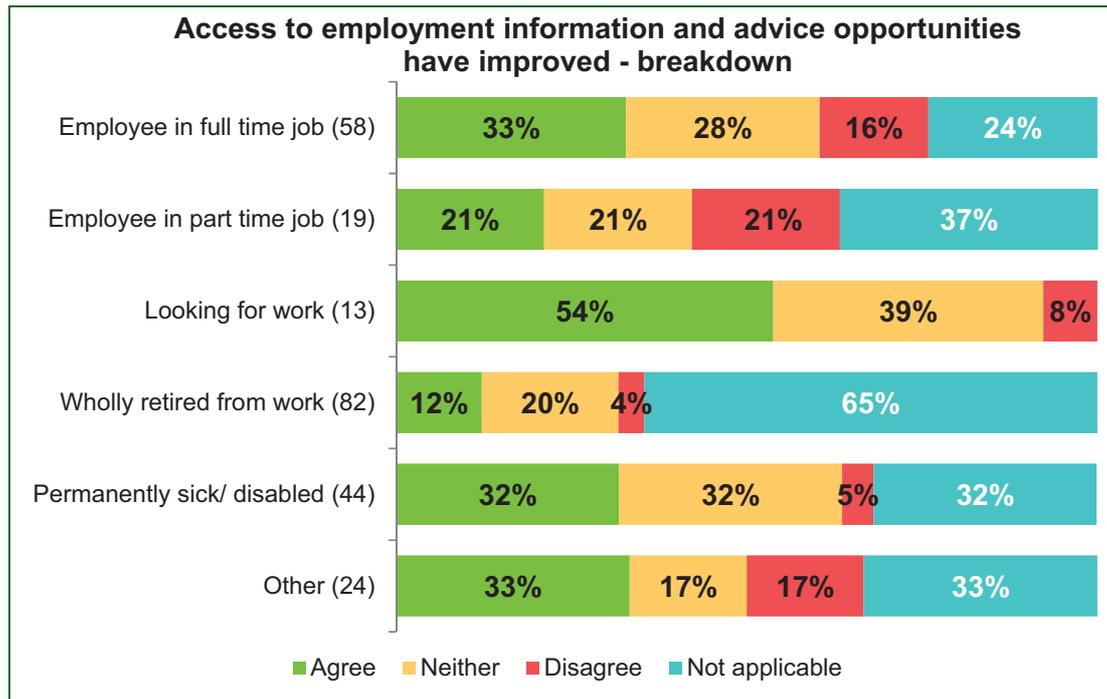


Green spaces and recreation

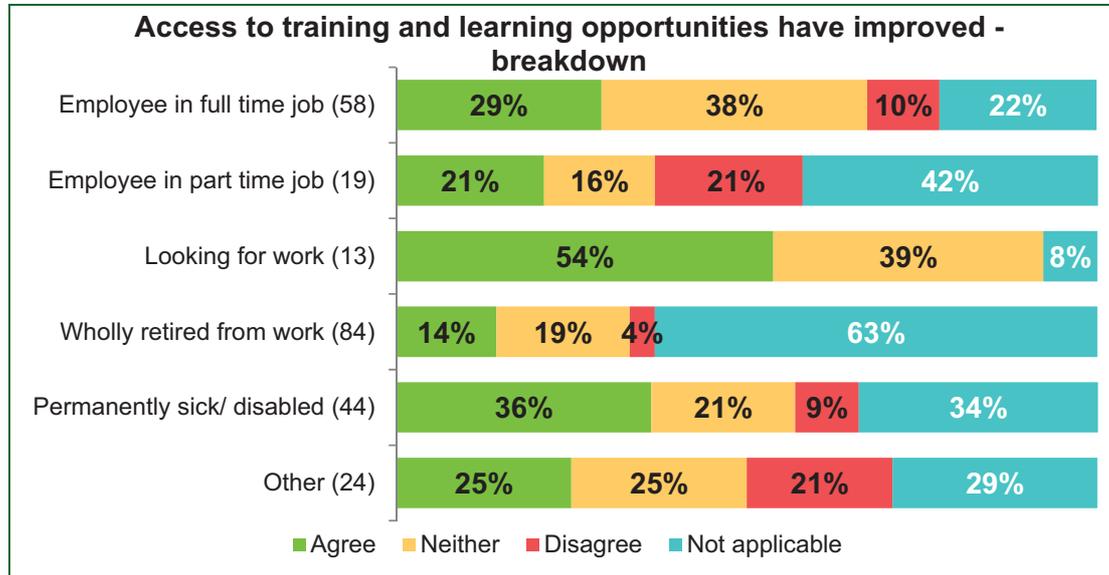
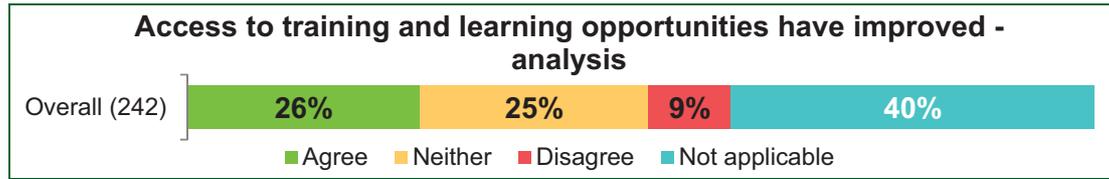


Jobs, skills and employment and training opportunities

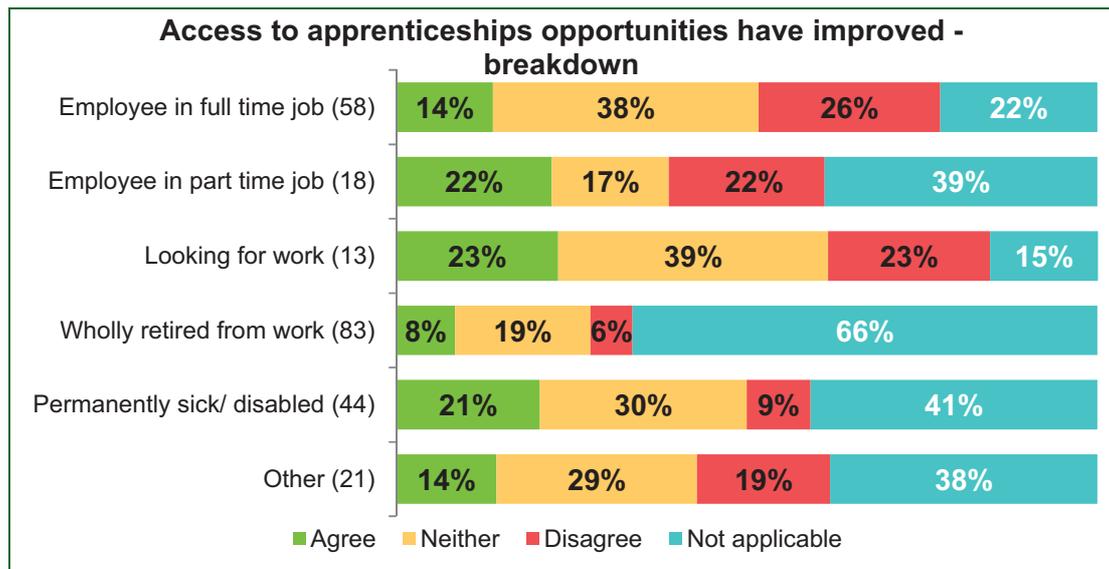
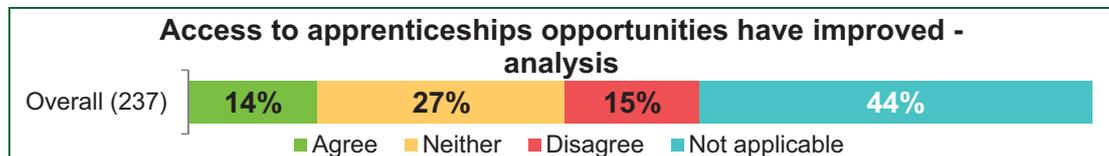




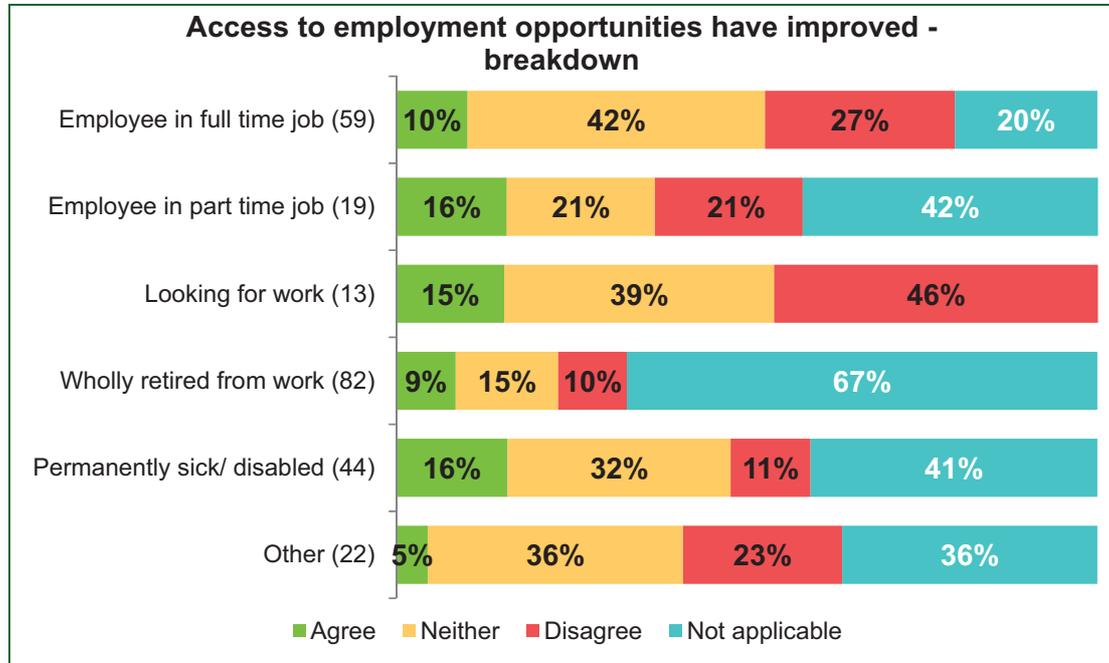
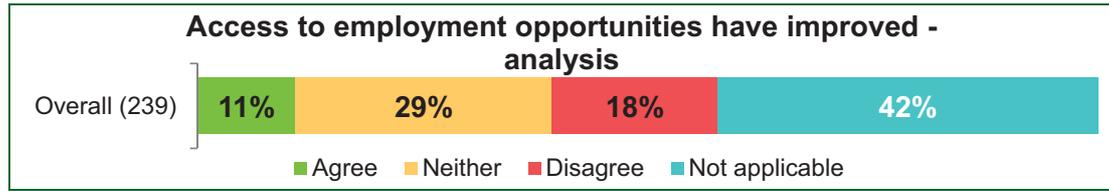
- People were more likely to agree that access to employment information and advice opportunities have improved if they were in full time work or looking for work.



- People were more likely to agree that access to training and learning opportunities have improved if they were looking for work or were permanently sick/ disabled.

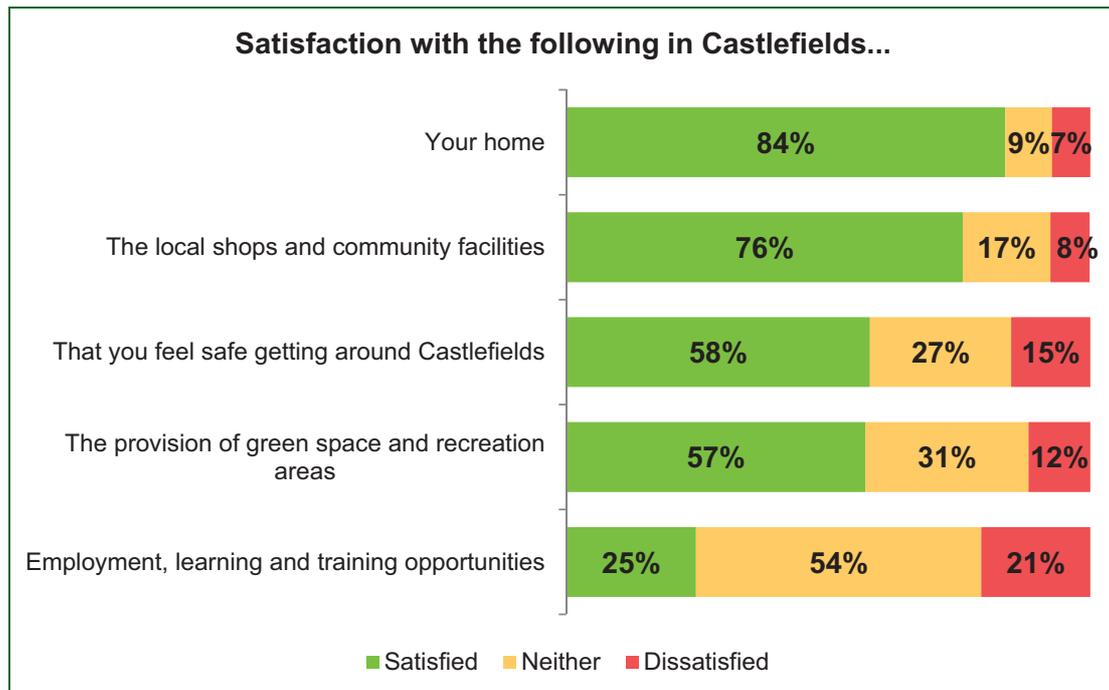


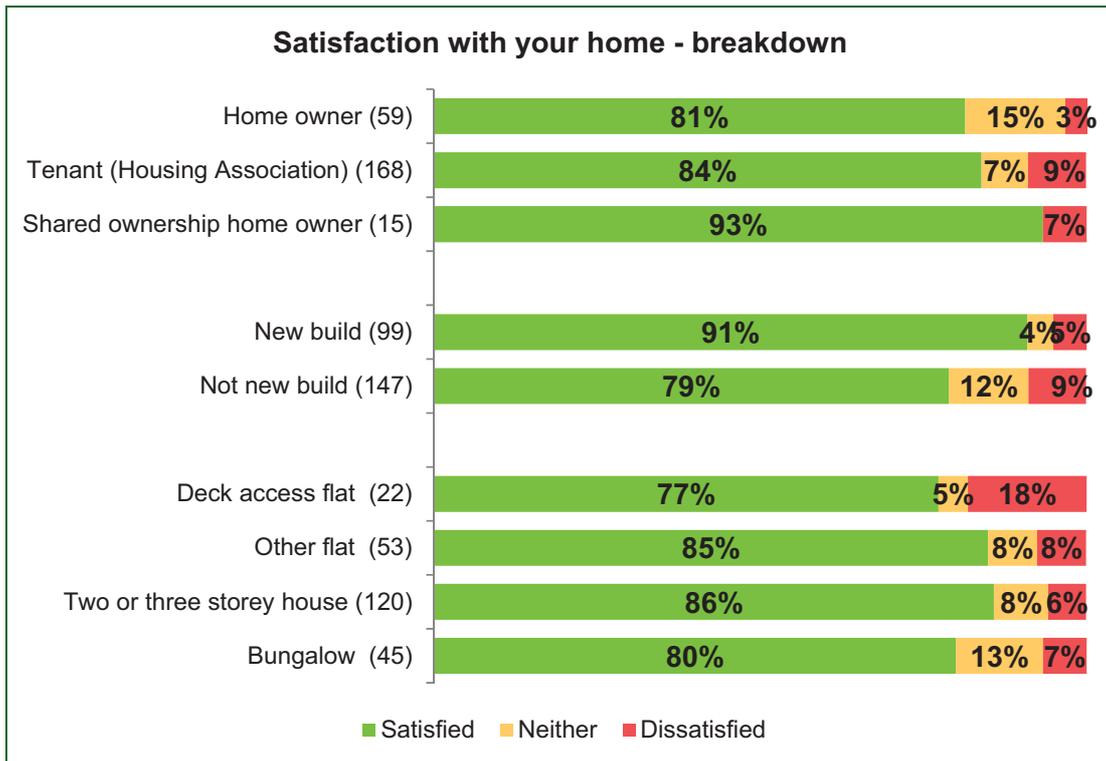
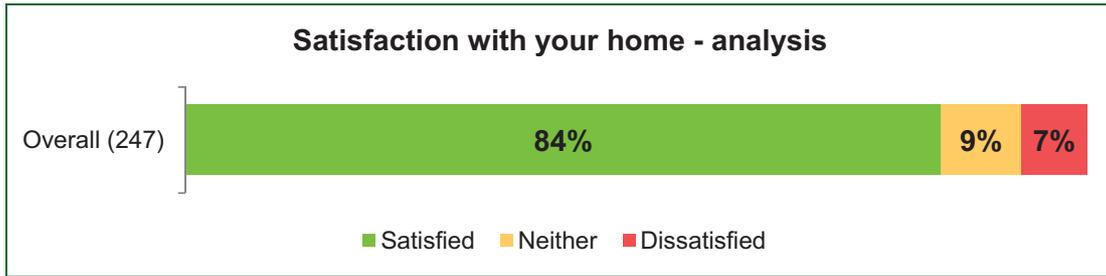
- People were more likely to agree that access to apprenticeships opportunities have improved if they were looking for work or in a part time job.



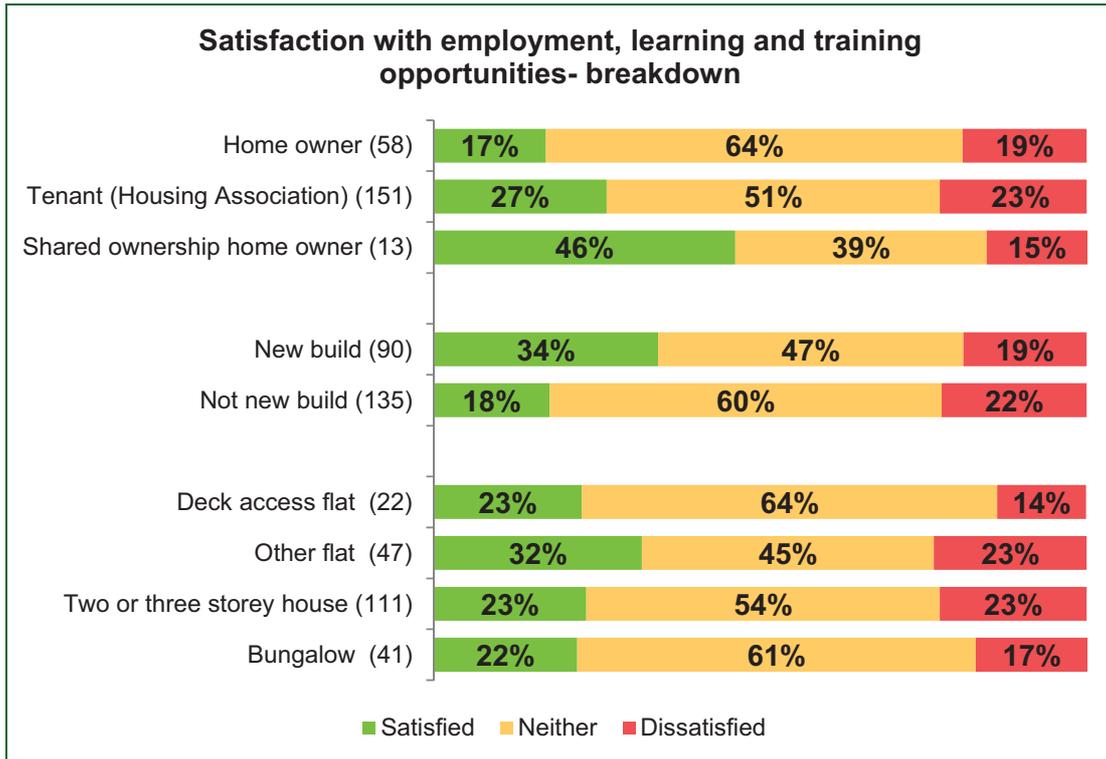
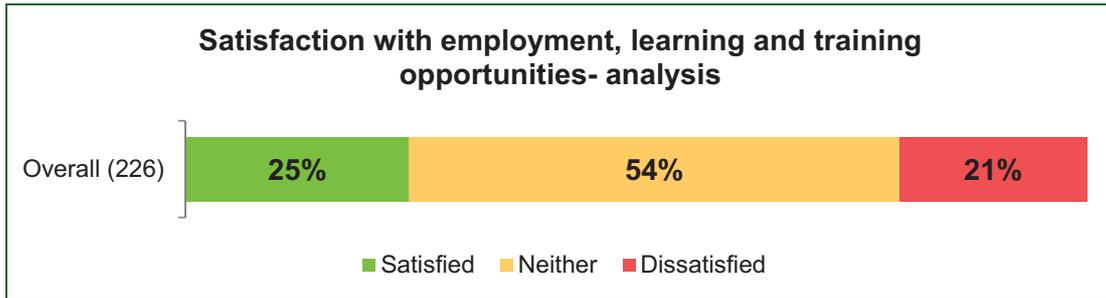
- People were more likely to agree that access to employment opportunities have improved if they were permanently sick/ disabled or in a part time job.

Overall satisfaction with Castlefields



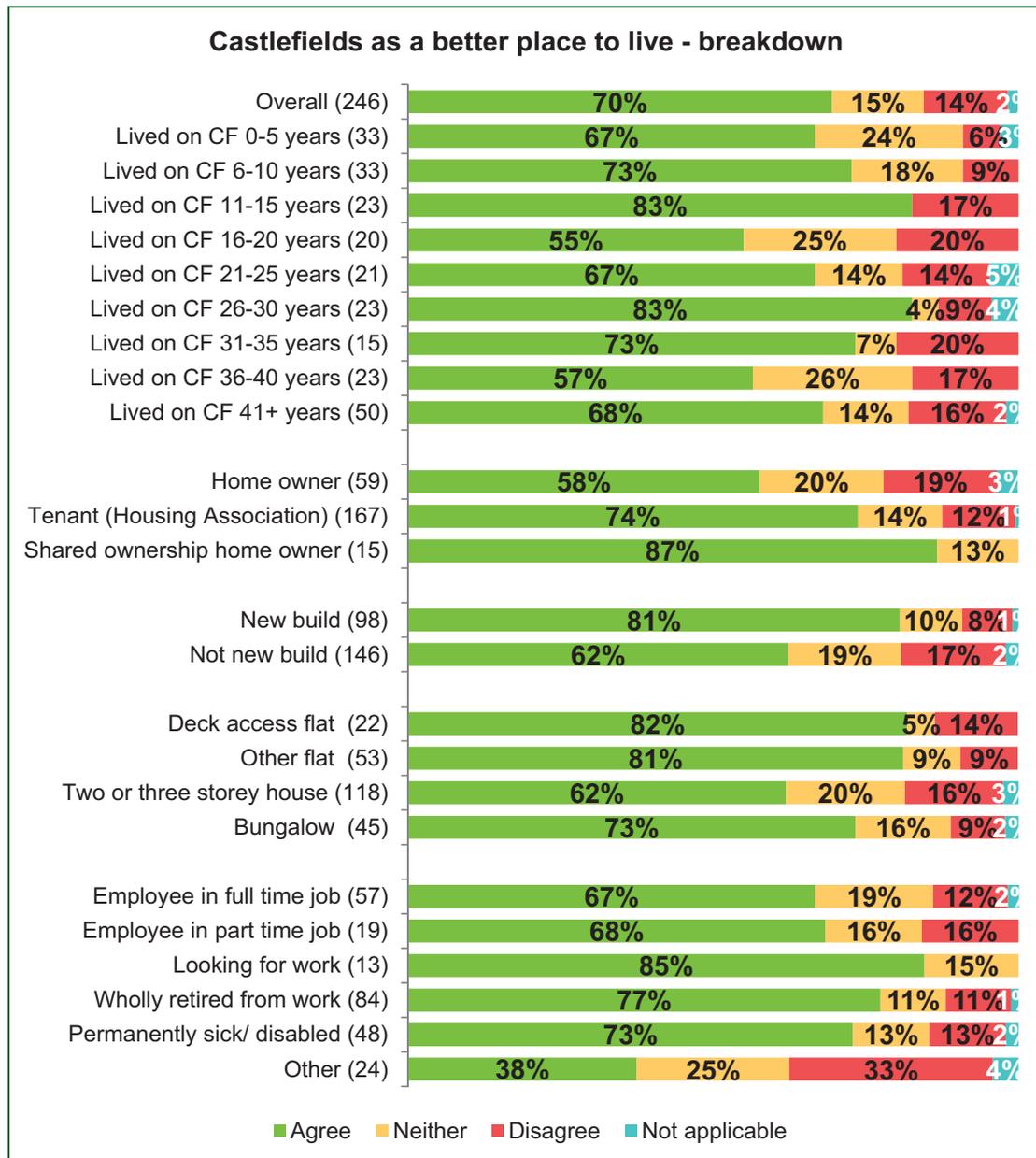
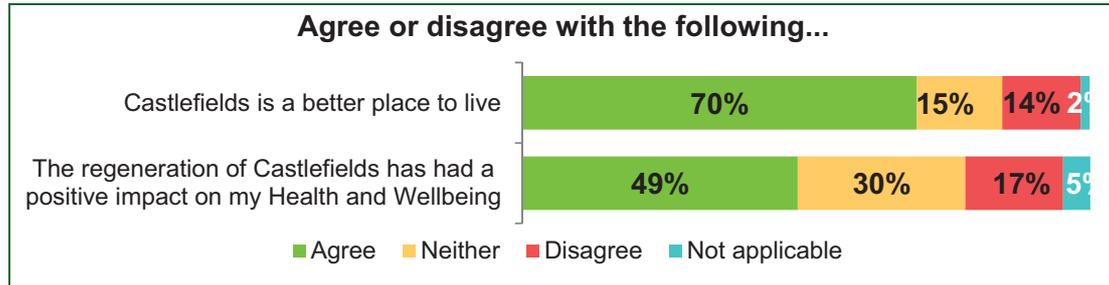


- Respondents were more satisfied with their home if they were a tenant of a private landlord, lived in a new build or a two or three storey house.

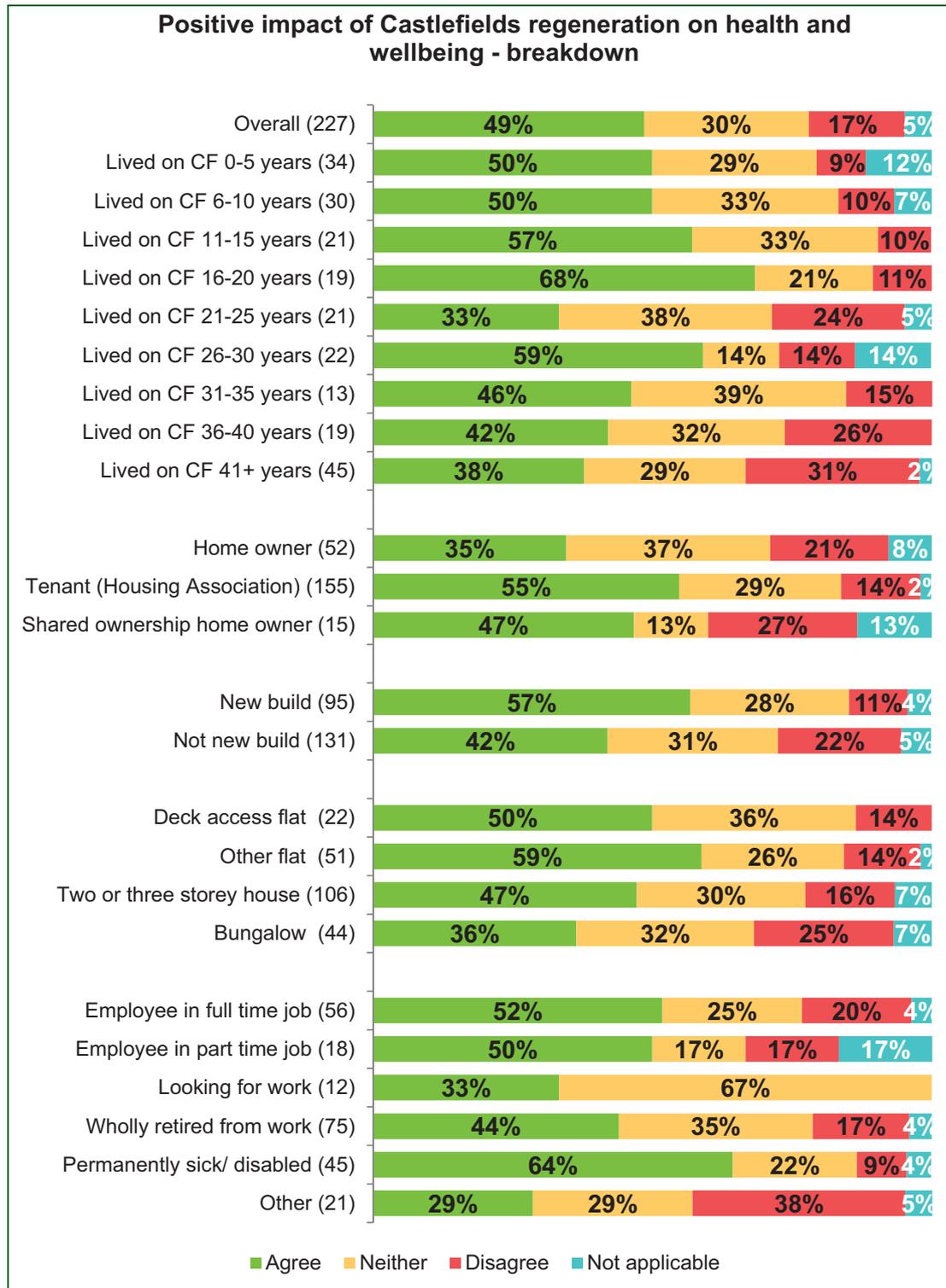


- Respondents were more satisfied with employment, learning and training opportunities if they were a shared ownership home owner, lived in a new build or lived in an “other flat” type of property.

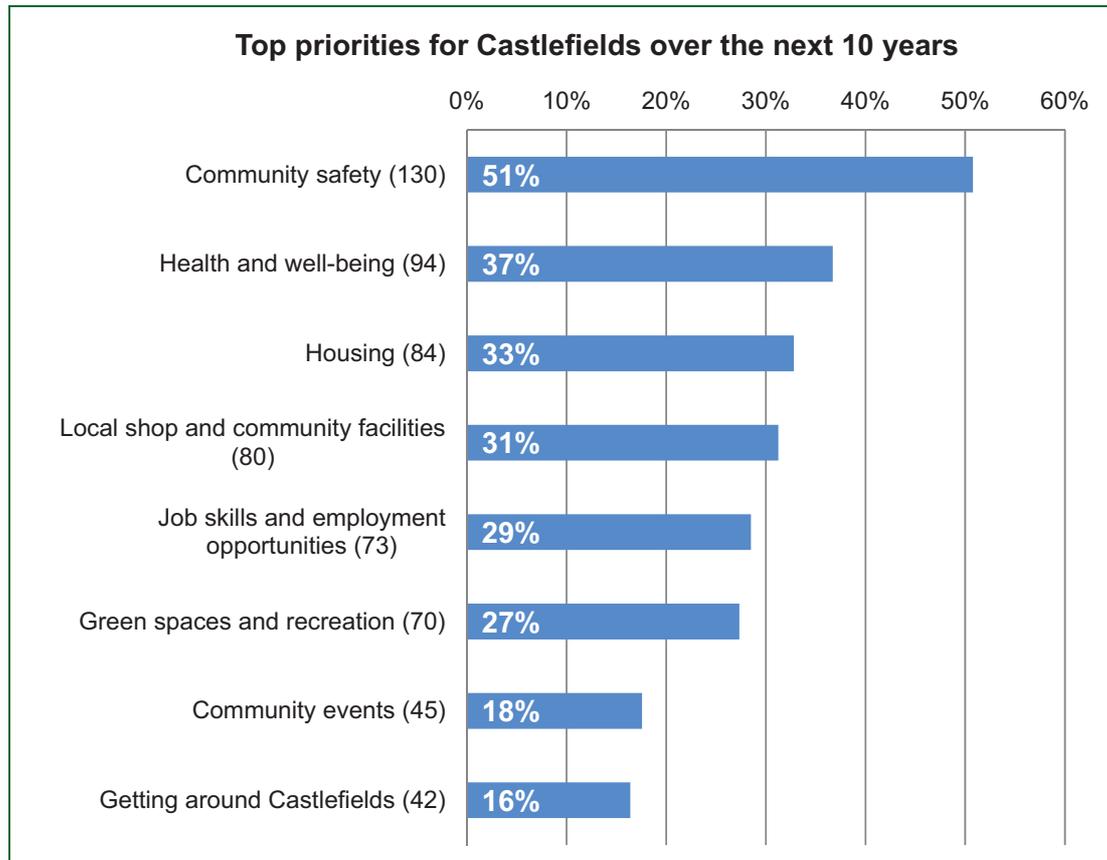
Quality of life living on Castlefields



- People were more likely to agree that Castlefields is a better place to live if they had lived on Castlefields for 11-15 or 26-30 years, they are a shared ownership home owner, they live in a new build, they live in a deck access flat or they are looking for work.

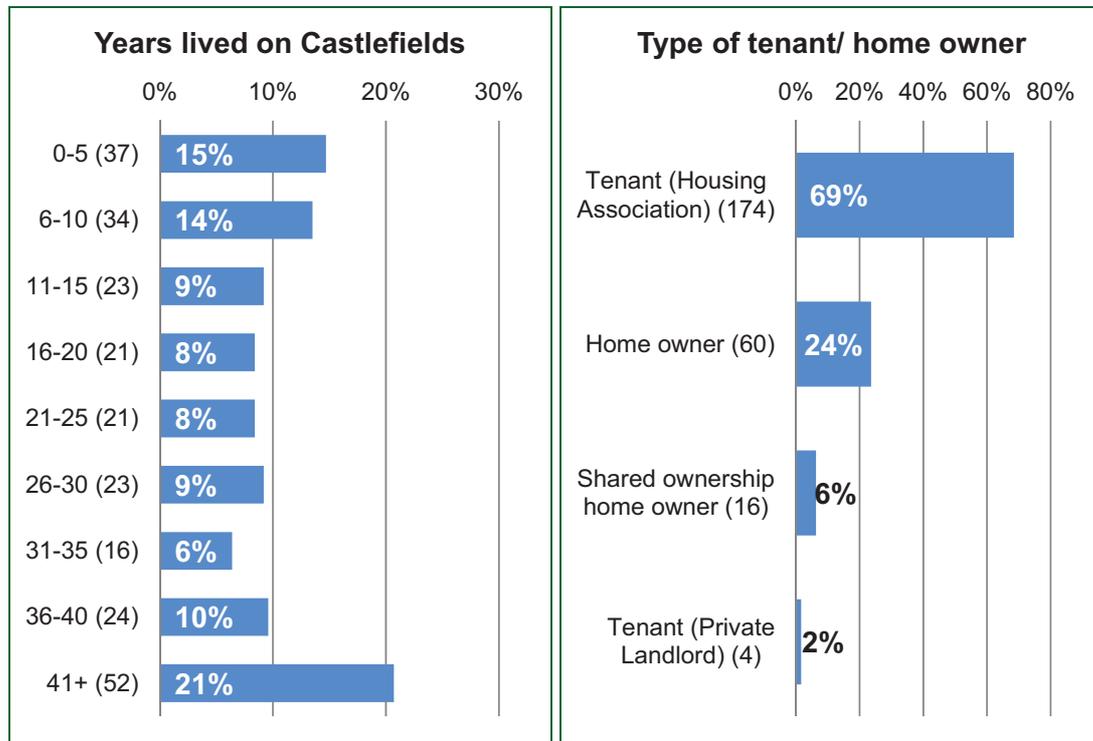


- People were more likely to agree that the Castlefields regeneration has had a positive impact on health and wellbeing if they had lived on Castlefields for 16-20 or 26-30 years, they were a tenant of a housing association, lived in a new build, lived in “other flat” type of property or they were permanently sick/ disabled.

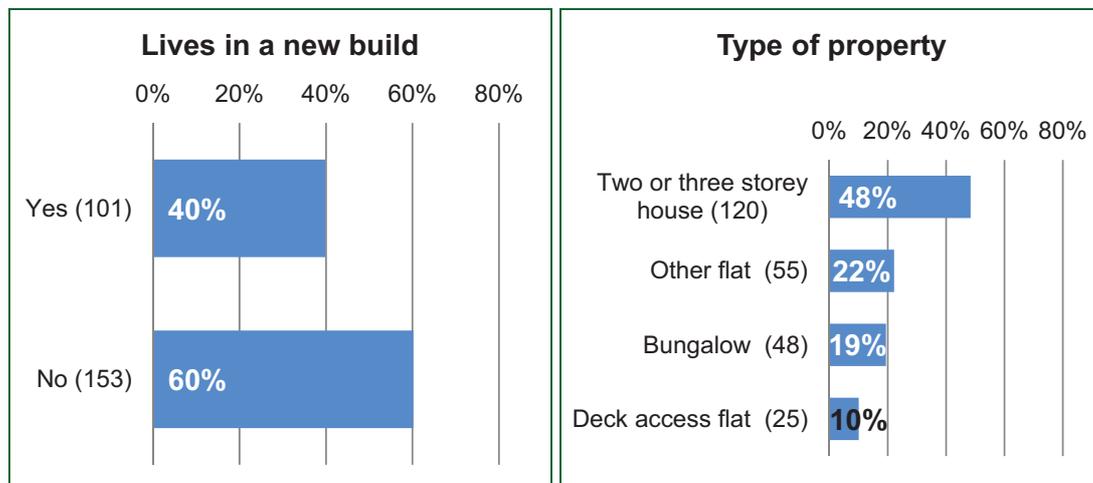
Top priorities for Castlefields over the next 10 years

- Respondents listed the top priorities for Castlefields over the next ten years as:
 - Community safety.
 - Health and well-being.
 - Housing.

Tenant profile

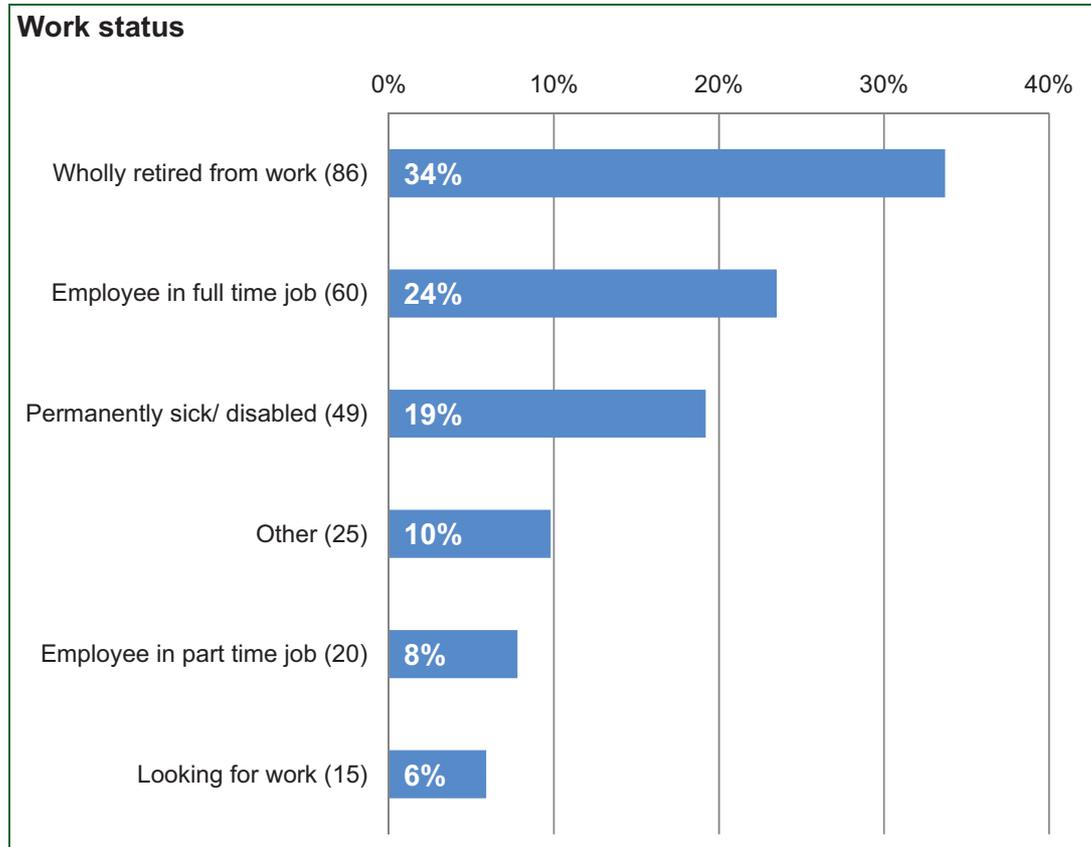


- Almost a quarter of respondents have lived on Castlefields for up to ten years. Just over one fifth have lived on Castlefields for over 40 years.
- Nearly one in seven respondents were tenants of a housing association. Almost one quarter of respondents owned their own home. Compared to the Census information for Halton Castle ward the survey does not directly reflect the household profile. The survey over represents social tenants (69% compared to 50% in the census profile) and shared owners (6% in this survey compared to 2% in the census profile); and underrepresents home owners (24% in the survey compared to 41% in the census profile) and private tenants (2% in this survey compared to 5% in the census profile).



- The majority of residents, three fifths, do not live in a new build property.

- The most popular type of property was a two or three storey house (just under half of all respondents), followed by other type of flat, bungalow and deck access flat. Compared to the Census information for Halton Castle ward, the survey over represents people who live in flats (32% in the survey compared to 24% in the census profile) and underrepresents people who live in houses and bungalows (67% in the survey compared to 76% in the census profile).



- Most respondents were wholly retired from work, followed by full time work and permanently sick/ disabled. Compared to the Census information for Halton Castle ward, the survey was heavily over represented by retired people (34% of survey respondents, and 16% of the census profile) and underrepresented by people that are in full time employment (24% in the survey, compared to 33% in the census profile).



The BIG Castlefields Survey

Since 2002 the Castlefields Regeneration Partnership have been working with local residents to help make Castlefields a better place to live. In 2003 a Masterplan was produced that set out the work required to help us to do this.

Now over 10 years has passed and the majority of the Masterplan has been delivered. We would like to give residents the chance to tell us what you think about the regeneration of Castlefields.

The Partnership includes Halton Borough Council, Liverpool Housing Trust, Plus Dane Housing and the Homes and Communities Agency and we really hope you take time to complete this questionnaire as your views about Castlefields now and in the future are really important to us.

Please complete the survey and return in the FREEPOST envelope provided by **Friday 9 August 2013**.

We really appreciate your time in completing this survey and you can be entered into a draw to win one of three prizes - **one first prize of £50 and two second prizes of £25 shopping vouchers**.



YOU AND YOUR HOME

Q1 How many years have you lived on Castlefields? Please write in the box below.

Q2 How many years have you lived on Castlefields?

- 0-5.....
- 6-10.....
- 11-15.....
- 16-20.....
- 21-25.....
- 26-30.....
- 31-35.....
- 36-40.....
- 41+.....

Q3 Are you a...? Tick **one** box only ✓

- Home owner.....
- Tenant (Housing Association).....
- Tenant (Private Landlord).....
- Shared ownership home owner.....

Q4 Do you live in a new build property?

Tick **one** box only ✓

- Yes
- No

Q5 What type of property do you live in?

Tick **one** box only ✓

- Deck access flat
- Other flat
- Two or three storey house
- Bungalow

Q6 Work Status Tick **one** box only ✓

- Employee in full time job.....
- Employee in part time job
- Looking for work.....
- Wholly retired from work.....
- Permanently sick/ disabled
- Education/ training
- Other.....

YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Q7 Have you...? Tick all that apply ✓

- Been involved in a community group
- Commented on a planning application.....
- Attended / responded to a consultation exercise.....
- Attended an information event.....
- Visited the Castlefields info website.....
- Read a newsletter

Q8 Do you feel you have had the opportunity to be involved in the regeneration of Castlefields? Tick one box only ✓

- Yes - lots of opportunity
- Yes - some opportunity
- No opportunity at all
- I did not want to be involved

HOW CASTLEFIELDS HAS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF THE REGENERATION

Q9 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your home?

Tick **one** box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| My home is warmer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The layout of my home is suitable for my needs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I feel safer in my home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The garden space is suitable for my needs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q10 Do you agree or disagree that the following have improved?

Tick **one** box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| The health centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The community centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The local shops | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Access to the facilities listed above | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q11 Do you agree or disagree that the following have improved?

Tick **one** box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Streets and paths | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Subways | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Residential car parking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bus stops | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Street lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Litter / recycling bins | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q12 Do you agree or disagree that the following green spaces and recreation areas have improved? Tick **one** box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Creation of and improvements to Phoenix park/ lake | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Smaller parks / play areas | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other green spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q13 Do you agree or disagree that access to the following opportunities have improved? Tick **one** box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Employment information and advice | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Training and learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Apprenticeships | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q14 Overall, how satisfied are you with the following in Castlefields? Tick one box on each line ✓

| |  Satisfied |  Neither |  Dissatisfied |
|---|--|--|---|
| Your home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The local shops and community facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| That you feel safe getting around Castlefields | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The provision of green space and recreation areas | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Employment, learning and training opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

QUALITY OF LIFE LIVING ON CASTLEFIELDS

Q15 As a result of the regeneration how much do you agree or disagree with the following? Tick one box on each line ✓

| |  Agree |  Neither |  Disagree |  Not applicable |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Castlefields is a better place to live | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The regeneration of Castlefields has had a positive impact on my Health and Wellbeing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please briefly tell us why you said this.

THE NEXT 10 YEARS IN CASTLEFIELDS

Q16 Thinking about the themes in this questionnaire which do you think should be a priority on Castlefields over the next 10 years? Tick three boxes only ✓

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> | Job skills and employment opportunities..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local shop and community facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | Health and well-being | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Getting around Castlefields | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community safety..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Green spaces and recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community events..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q17 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the regeneration of Castlefields? This could be something that you are happy with or something that you think we could still improve on.

Please write in space below what you think is good about Castlefields.

Please write in space below what you think could be improved about Castlefields.

We are giving residents an opportunity to talk to us in more detail about the impact of the regeneration of Castlefields. If you wish to take part or enter the prize draw please tick the appropriate boxes and fill out your details below.

I want to attend a session

I want to be entered into the prize draw

Name

Address and postcode

Telephone number

**Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.
Please return in the free-post envelope provided.**

LHT Business Intelligence Team Research and Performance

The Research and Performance Team within the Business Intelligence Team works on projects requested by other departments within LHT, Symphony Housing Group or its member organisations.

Research

The research work we do includes paper surveys, focus groups, face-to-face interviews and web surveys.

To read some of the previous work we have done, please go to [LHT > Key Information Place > DATA LOCKDOWN > Surveys](#).

To see what we can offer you, please have a look at our [Tenant Consultation Toolkit](#).

Performance

The performance work we do can be anything from collating Key Performance Indicators to assisting submission and analysis of benchmarking information through Housemark to annual regulatory returns and anything else that may come our way.

To read about some of the performance reports we have produced, please go to [LHT > Key Information Place > DATA LOCKDOWN](#).

Contact

If you would like more information about how we can help you or to request specific pieces of work – please contact one of our team members;

Hannah Furniss, Research and Performance Team Leader
0151 708 2480 – hfurniss@lht.co.uk

Jolene Dunlop, Research and Performance Officer
0151 708 2379 – jdunlop@lht.co.uk

Helene Reier, Research and Performance Officer
0151 708 2476 – hreier@lht.co.uk



REPORT TO: Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment

SUBJECT: Halton Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2018

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to present Halton's Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 to members of the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Board note and comment on the Strategy.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In accordance with Homelessness Act 2002 the local authority has conducted a full Strategic Review of Homelessness within the area and formulated a Homelessness Strategy for the next five year period.

3.1.1 The Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 is based upon the findings and recommendations of two other documents, one being a comprehensive review of the current homelessness services which was conducted over a nine month period during 2012 -2013. The other being the previous Homelessness Strategy 2009-2013, which involved active engagement with service users, providers and members.

3.1.2 The Strategic Review of Homelessness involved active engagement with service users, service providers and all partner agencies and Elected Members. The draft findings were discussed and agreed with all key stakeholders prior to the report being finalised.

3.1.3 The Review provided clear direction for preventing and addressing homelessness in Halton and reflects the factors known to affect future homelessness. It also forms the basis of this new Homelessness Strategy for Halton over the next five years.

3.1.4 During 2012/13 a Homelessness Scrutiny Review was conducted by

Members to review supported accommodation services within the district. A number of recommendations were made and were incorporated within the Strategic Review of Homelessness in 2012 and form part of the Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 Halton is experiencing a gradual increase in homelessness presentations and statutory homelessness acceptances. The main causes of homelessness are due to family exclusions, relationship breakdown and the loss of private rented accommodation.

3.2.2 There are a number of client groups that do not meet the statutory homelessness criteria, but have a pressing housing need. Concerted efforts are being made by the Housing Solutions Team to assist these client groups, offering temporary accommodation for a limited period and facilitating a more efficient and accessible move on process.

3.2.3 The Scrutiny Review highlighted the high vacancy levels across all the supported hostel accommodation schemes. Due consideration was given towards reducing capacity and a number of recommendations were proposed to address the changing homelessness culture and reliance upon supported housing provision.

3.2.4 The Housing Solutions Team is more accessible and community focused, with emphasis placed upon Prevention. The team strive to reduce the levels of homelessness within the district and fully utilise the prevention options and services available to vulnerable clients.

3.3 Legislation

3.3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced many changes to homelessness and allocations legislation. In November 2012, the Localism Act 2011 brought into force provisions that allow local authorities to end the main housing duty to a homeless applicant by means of a private rented sector offer, i.e. a fixed term assured shorthold tenancy for a minimum of 12 months. The authority should consider the new allocated powers, which will impact upon future homelessness and service delivery.

3.3.2 Furthermore, it was determined that the council would be able to reduce the length of stay for households in temporary accommodation and the associated costs. Additionally, it will help the council to avoid future use of B&B accommodation

3.3.3 Welfare reforms affecting single people and couples aged 18-35 have put significant pressures on local housing providers, as suitable accommodation is in short supply. It is therefore anticipated

that welfare reform and recent legislative changes will result in a further increase in levels of homelessness across the district.

3.3.4 The Homelessness Strategy identifies the gaps in provision and the need to improve communication between partner agencies. An integrated approach will enable the authority to address both the social and health care issues, reduce homelessness and encourage lifestyle change.

3.3.5 Halton is fully committed and focused upon health care and service provision for homeless people. The integration of CCG, Public Health and Homelessness will enable the authority to develop a new holistic approach. The aim would be to improve health care for vulnerable people, offering a more flexible and accessible service to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes for service users.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Localism Act 2011 will have future policy implications and will impact upon future housing provision and allocation of accommodation within the private rented sector.

The Homelessness Strategic Action Plan identifies a task to develop a Private Rented Sector Offer policy to ensure the Authority is fully compliant with its statutory housing duty, in accordance with Part 7, Housing Act 1996. It is recommended that future consideration be given to develop a PRSO policy and implement the option to adopt the power to end the homelessness duty within the private rented sector.

4.2 The following sections within the primary legislation represent the recent history of the new powers arising from the Localism Act 2011. The policy will fully comply with the following legal requirements:

- Housing Act 1996
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Localism Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Suitability of Accommodation Order 2012
- Homelessness Code of Guidance 2006
- Localism Act 2011

The policy will reflect the priorities and rules shown within the authority's local documents and would be implemented and administered by the Housing Solutions Team.

4.3 Upon considering the policy option, weight was given to the fact that the local Homelessness Strategy already promotes the use of private rented accommodation to prevent homelessness.

The Housing Solutions Team have successfully helped numerous households who may be threatened with homelessness to obtain accommodation from a private landlord, fully utilising various incentives, such as rent deposit, Bond Guarantee and Discretionary Housing Payments.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The financial implications of delivering the Homelessness Strategy are outlined in the Action Plan.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Homelessness can have an adverse impact on the wellbeing of children and young people with educational attainment being affected by adverse residential mobility. The prevention focus of the Strategy will ensure that families with children are assisted swiftly to ensure minimal disruption. In addition, the Strategy recognises that homelessness amongst young people in Halton is challenging and therefore includes priorities to strengthen joint working to ensure this group is provided with the most appropriate support by the relevant agencies.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The lack of a settled home can adversely impact an individual's ability to find and sustain employment – the Strategy's focus on homelessness prevention allows people to remain in their homes wherever possible.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The Homelessness Strategy places emphasis on the links between health and homelessness and one of the strategy objectives is specifically focussed on this issue. Therefore, implementation of actions contained within the strategy will have positive implications for the health and wellbeing of those experiencing homelessness.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Criminal activity can be both a cause and consequence of homelessness and homeless prisoners are more likely to re-offend following release than those who have settled accommodation. Therefore, the Strategy includes a priority to improve joint working with the police and probation service to address the growing housing need for offenders.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The presence of rough sleeping can have a negative impact on the

environment and the Strategy seeks to continue to ensure that this does not pose an issue for Halton through the 'No Second Night Out' initiative.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The Communities and Local Government Homelessness Grant funding makes an important contribution to the delivery of a range of homelessness services in Halton. This fund is currently frozen and arrangements for distribution of the grant for the financial years 2014/15 are unclear. If the homelessness grant funding were to be reduced or ceased completely, it would adversely affect the ability of the Housing Solutions Team to offer a range of housing options and would impact upon performance and service delivery.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Strategy includes priorities targeted at providing support for those who are vulnerable or have complex needs and other marginalised groups such as young people and offenders.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.



Halton Homelessness Strategy

2013-2018



Contents

| Section number | Section title | Page number |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Foreword | 3 |
| 2 | Introduction | 5 |
| 3 | Homelessness in Halton | 7 |
| 4 | Achievements from Previous Strategy | 9 |
| 5 | Context | 14 |
| 6 | The Journey Ahead | 20 |
| 7 | Our Vision, Objectives and Priorities | 21 |
| 8 | National and Local Policy | 40 |
| 9 | Delivery of the Strategy | 42 |
| 10 | Action plan | 44 |
| 11 | Glossary | 59 |

1. Foreword



Halton Borough Council is pleased to present its Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2018 which sets out the key challenges, objectives and priorities for tackling homelessness in Halton over the coming years.

The Strategy highlights and reinforces our commitment to reducing and preventing homelessness. It identifies and examines the current homelessness issues faced by Halton and sets out how we plan to address the housing needs and aspirations of those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Although there have been many achievements in delivering effective homelessness services in Halton, the council recognises that some significant challenges lie ahead. The Localism Act has introduced the greatest changes to homelessness and allocation legislation since 1977 and we believe that many households, both new and existing ones, will be adversely affected by not only the housing and welfare reforms, but other new legislation. To respond to this and its impact on homelessness, joint working between the council and its key partners will be central in ensuring local housing need is met.

Demand for private rented accommodation greatly outstrips supply and rents are rising. Levels of homelessness fell during 2006–2011, but there are worrying signs now as the effects of the recession and overall economic environment begin to become apparent, that it is once again on the rise. In addition, vulnerable households will have specific needs. Among these is specialist housing with appropriate support. This can enable the person to remain at home for longer.

The Homelessness Strategy is based upon the findings and recommendations of two other documents – a comprehensive review of current homelessness services over a nine month period during 2012-2013 and the Homelessness Strategy 2008–2012 which involved active engagement with service users, service providers and members. This Strategy continues to build on current good practice and strives to meet the gaps in existing service provision to ensure the needs of those individuals who are at risk of homelessness are met.

Halton is fully committed and focused on the health care and service provision for homeless people. The integration of the Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health and Homelessness will enable the council to develop a new holistic approach. The aim would be to improve health care for extremely vulnerable people whenever they need help, within primary and community care and hospitals.

Halton aims to put the person/patient back at the heart of healthcare with the focus on what the individual wants and needs. With cross professional and organisation boundaries to shape care around the person and ensure services are more flexible and accessible. Experienced health and homeless professionals will be included at every level of the future shaping of services.

The Strategy is supported by a five year Action Plan which clearly sets out the short, medium and long term solutions along with specific actions to deliver long lasting change to those at risk.

To ensure the Strategy remains relevant it will be monitored by the Halton Homelessness Forum and reviewed annually in order that it can be responsive to emerging change.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Ron Hignett

Executive Board Member – Physical Environment

2. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to carry out a Strategic Review of Homelessness in their area and then formulate and publish a Homelessness Strategy based on the findings from the review.

Strategic Review of Homelessness

The review was conducted over a period of nine months and involved active engagement with service users, service providers and all partner agencies and members. Draft findings were discussed and agreed with key stakeholders before the report was finalised.

The review provides clear direction for preventing and addressing homelessness in Halton and reflects on the factors known to affect future homelessness. Its findings and recommendations are the basis for the development of this new Homelessness Strategy for Halton over the next five years.

This strategy will build upon the success of its precursor (2009–2013) which focused upon four important issues:

1. Understanding the Problem
2. Prevention
3. Increasing Access to Housing Choice
4. Providing Support

Understanding the problem (homelessness and housing need)

Significant progress has been made in determining the levels of homelessness, the reasons why people become homeless and which household group it affects most. This progress has been achieved through a range of measures including: analysis of the move from short term supported accommodation and research into households requiring resettlement services.

Prevention

The introduction of a preventative approach among statutory homeless households has proved successful. This change from reactive assessment to proactive prevention, coupled with a housing options service, proved to be a significant factor in improvement.

Increasing access to housing choice

Progress has been made in allowing customers choice and enabling them to access properties owned by accredited private sector landlords. This progress is likely to continue now that 'Property Pool Plus' has been introduced.

Providing support

Floating support services have been re-tendered. This has resulted in more streamlined and better support for households which are vulnerable to homelessness. With all of this successful work already undertaken and acting on the findings of the review, this new strategy will continue to strive to respond to evolving pressure on existing service provision. This will ensure that Halton is best placed to meet the needs of individuals at risk of being or who already are currently homeless.

Homelessness is increasing across the country and it is anticipated that this trend will continue. This will place additional pressure on services. To address this national problem, the Government has published 'Making Every Contact Count.' This recognises that early intervention to prevent homelessness is the key. It does this through 'social justice' by supporting the most disadvantaged individuals and families. It tackles many of the underlying problems that, if left unchecked, can increase the likelihood of the individual or family becoming homeless.

The ultimate goal, nationally and locally for Halton, is to ensure that people have settled homes. This stability will then enable individuals to build settled lives.

3. Homelessness in Halton

Halton is experiencing a gradual increase in homelessness presentations and of those being accepted as statutory homeless. The main causes are loss of home due to family exclusions, relationship breakdown or the loss of a private sector tenancy.

There are many groups of people who are not deemed statutory homeless, but still have pressing housing needs and no settled home. The Housing Solutions team work extensively with these groups and offer temporary accommodation for a limited period, to allow the crisis to be averted and suitable options explored and implemented.

People on low incomes without regular work, lack of proven track record, previous failed tenancies, mental health or substance misuse are unlikely to meet letting agents/landlords vetting procedures and so cannot obtain a private tenancy.

Poor discharge planning for ex-offenders and those with mental health needs have been cited as additional factors contributing to homelessness. Those with complex needs, addiction, negative behaviour, and poor parenting and life skills face particular problems in attaining settled homes and can often fall through the net of services and accommodation provided.

Welfare benefit reforms, especially limiting Housing Benefit for younger people and the effect of the 'Benefit Cap' on larger families, will increase the risk of homelessness for these groups in the future.

Rough Sleeping in Halton is not identified as a major problem; however, the majority of people identified as sleeping on the streets of Halton are aged between 26 and 50. The council developed a sub-regional prevention service to tackle rough sleepers and the outreach service will ensure that all clients have access to services and if necessary are relocated back to their local connection area.

Homelessness issues

Key issues influencing the Strategy are examined in detail within the Homelessness Review Consultation Report (2013). They are summarised in the following table under three themes (People, Health and Wellbeing and Communities). Each underpins the overarching aims and the six strategic objectives and accompanying priorities.

| People | Health & Wellbeing | Communities |
|---|--|---|
| <p>National evidence of impact on health and wellbeing due to homelessness</p> <p>National evidence indicates additional costs due to children entering the care system</p> <p>Impact on young people and families experiencing/ threatened with homelessness</p> <p>Lack of settled accommodation and support can prove detrimental and lead to repeat homelessness</p> <p>Domestic violence within Halton is evident and analysis confirms 11% of acceptances compared to 3% in England</p> | <p>National evidence of poor health or neglect of physical needs related to homelessness</p> <p>Mental Health and substance misuse problems are contributable factors towards homelessness</p> <p>Impact on health and social care services due to homelessness and rough sleeping</p> <p>National evidence that homeless people have significantly higher levels of premature mortality, mental and physical health needs than the settled population</p> | <p>Impact of anti-social and offending behaviour due to increased homelessness</p> <p>National evidence indicates dependency on drugs and alcohol amongst rough sleepers</p> <p>Criminal activity can be both the cause of and a consequence of homelessness</p> <p>High incidence and turnover of temporary accommodation within an area can lead to neighbourhood decline</p> |

Homelessness characteristics

- Families or friends unwilling to accommodate.
- Domestic violence
- Relationship breakdown
- Health – addictions, drug/alcohol misuse
- Offending, anti-social behaviour
- Issues with private rented property (disrepair, loss of assured shorthold tenancies)
- Debt, money problems, rent arrears, often due to benefit issues

Prevention and relief

- Housing Solutions community focused service
- Partnership working with registered providers and private landlords
- Joint working between various agencies.
- Benefit and legal advice
- Floating support
- Supported temporary accommodation
- Effective and accelerated Move On approach to secure accommodation

4. Achievements from Previous Strategy

There have been many successes in the last five years in spite of the high housing demand in Halton. Nationally, the number of individual cases accepted as homeless increased by 16% and there has been a 44% increase in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation in the year ending March 2012. However, in Halton over the same period, there were no households in bed and breakfast accommodation and the borough has managed to maintain an annual decrease in its use of temporary accommodation.

This is an outstanding achievement given the intense housing pressures in Halton. It has been achieved through the high priority placed on homelessness prevention in the borough and the continuing work in delivering practical homelessness solutions. As a consequence, a strong network of partnerships and services has been developed to support those who are either threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

Since the previous strategy there have been significant changes in legislation such as the Welfare Reform and Localism Act 2011. This combined with the considerable cuts to local authority budgets have led to significant challenges for the borough. Yet despite this, there have been a number of major achievements, as described in the following sections.

Statutory homelessness

| Achievements | 2008/ 09 | 2009/ 10 | 2010/ 11 | 2011/ 12 | 2012/ 13 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Statutory homelessness presentations | 241 | 216 | 78 | 154 | 168 |
| Statutory homelessness acceptances | 166 | 158 | 37 | 64 | 86 |
| Use of temporary Accommodation. | 54 | 41 | 35 | 23 | 39 |
| Use of Bed & Breakfast | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Homelessness Prevention | Not recorded | 625 | 550 | 492 | 431 |
| Advice and assistance | 803 | 1800 | 2228 | 2488 | 2051 |

The following key points can be observed from the data displayed in the table above:

- Over the past five years, there has been a reduction in the number of households presenting as statutory homeless.

- Significant reductions in the use of temporary accommodation which meet and go beyond the March 2010 target set by CLG.
- A decrease in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation. This has improved the quality of life for homeless households and reduced the cost to the public purse.
- An increase in homelessness prevention (advice and assistance) and developed initiatives. The priority is on preventing homelessness occurring by helping people resolve their housing problems. In addition people are helped to tackling barriers which would prevent them from either obtaining or retaining sustainable accommodation.

Youth homelessness

- The Southwark Protocol was developed and implemented in 2010/11 and is currently being reviewed. The aim is to provide a co-ordinated response to the prevention of homelessness amongst 16-17 year-olds. It ensures they receive the right level of support and are able to access appropriate and suitable accommodation where necessary. The protocol was a response to judgements by the House of Lords which reaffirmed and clarified that the duty under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 takes precedence over the duties within Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 in providing for children in need who require accommodation.
- Made use of extra funding to create a dedicated Youth Officer post. This role involves joint working with Children's Services in connection with the Southwark Protocol. It will focus on homeless prevention and mediation among 16-17 year-olds.
- 85% of young people presenting as homeless were facilitated successfully back home.

The age-groups 16-24 and 25-44 contain the highest numbers of statutory homeless individuals. This national pattern is also reflected in data for Halton. The table below shows the percentage statutory homeless (national and local) for the year 2011-2012 by age-groups:

| Age group | % accepted as statutory homeless | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| | Halton | England |
| 16-24 years | 34% | 35% |
| 25-44 years | 52% | 51% |
| 45-59 years | 13% | 11% |
| 60-64 years | 2% | 1% |
| 65-74 years | 0% | 1% |
| 75+ years | 0% | 1% |

- A 'Home Essentials Fund' was launched to help young people between the ages of 18 – 35 to move on from hostel accommodation and sustain their tenancy by providing help towards the cost of setting up a home. The scheme provides assistance to purchase household items such as microwaves, bedding, crockery and cookery items up to the value of £300, which is not repayable.
- 55 Gift applications were received in 2011/12
- 38 applications were approved and received assistance under the scheme
- 75% of clients have successfully sustained their tenancies since 1st April 2012

Case study: youth homelessness



Melissa is a 17 year old female who approached the Housing Solutions Service to present as homeless.

Melissa claimed that due to constant arguments with her mum, she was ordered to leave the family home and not able to return.

Melissa was referred to the Housing Solutions

Youth Adviser and a full homeless assessment was completed, although, Melissa stressed that she wished to be accommodated within the hostel where her friends had been placed.

The Youth Officer conducted a home visit to discuss the situation with Melissa's mum and negotiate for Melissa to return home, but mum refused.

Melissa was referred to the Nightstop service and reluctantly took up the temporary accommodation.

Mediation was put in place and after a number of home visits and telephone discussions; both Mum and Melissa agreed to work with the officers to resolve their issues.

Unfortunately, Melissa failed to engage with training/education programmes, which jeopardised her placement.

The officer dedicated, considerable time to work with Melissa and mum to address their issues, and encouraged them to discuss how they could work together to resolve them.

OUTCOME: After regular contact with Melissa and her mum, an intense support package was agreed and implemented. Melissa was allowed to return home and is actively engaging in training and there has been improvement in her relationship with her mum.

Mortgage rescue

- Development of a Repossessions Action Plan. This was in response to Halton being identified as a national 'hotspot' for mortgage repossessions. To achieve this, the council introduced a 'task and finish' working group. This brought together the work of various agencies in the borough to prevent repossessions.
- In addition, the Housing Solutions Team established a dedicated Mortgage Rescue Advisor. This post provides tailored advice to those at risk of repossession and can negotiate with lenders and at court hearings.

Case study: mortgage rescue



Mrs L approached the Housing Solutions Team as she had suffered a relationship breakdown and could not afford her mortgage on her income alone.

Mrs L stressed that her son had recently been offered a placement on a speech and learning therapy course that was located within the vicinity and to move from her present home would affect his health and be detrimental to his progress.

The Housing Solutions Adviser completed a Mortgage Rescue application which was submitted to Riverside for review in September 2013.

In October 2013, Mrs L received confirmation that her application had been successful and she would be allowed to remain within the family home.

OUTCOME: The acting agent completed the buyback process, allowing Mrs L to remain in her property as the tenant at an affordable rent and close to all the support networks for her son's needs.

Service improvement

- Progress made with the development and implementation of the Housing and Support Gateway. This will provide a single point of access into support services for individuals with housing support needs.
- Improved information for local people through the development of a pack of leaflets on such topics as homelessness, housing options, the 'Bond Guarantee Scheme' and a guide for private tenants.
- Developed and promoted a customer satisfaction survey. This gathers feedback on the quality of the service and identifies areas for improvement.
- Towards the end of 2009, a mystery shopping exercise was carried out. This led to improvements being made to the way customers were dealt with via the contact centre and one-stop-shops.
- Designated Housing Solutions Officers located at local one-stop-shops to provide immediate advice for those facing homelessness. This saves time by reducing the need for an appointment among homeless or those threatened with homelessness. This initiative stemmed from an internal review of the Housing Solutions Team was taken late in 2011.

Sub-regional approach

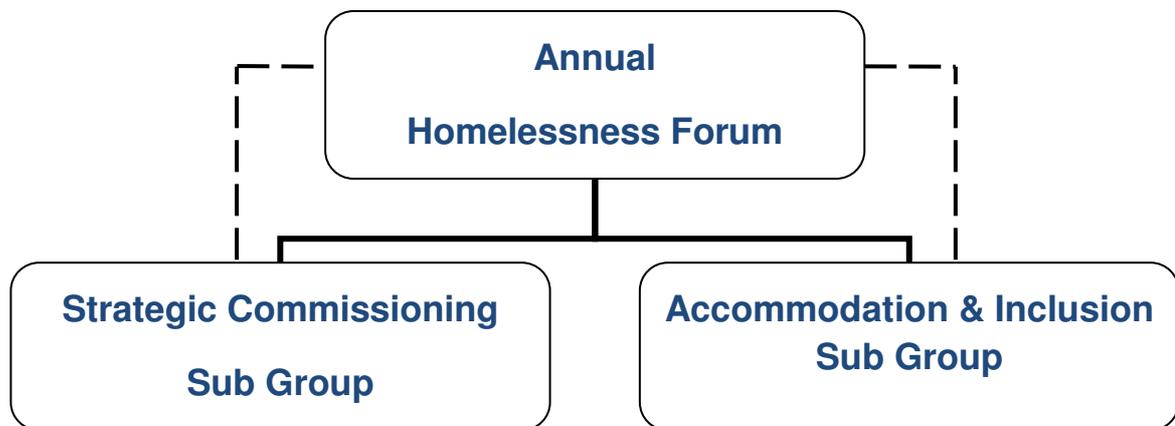
- Partnership working with Merseyside authorities led to the development of the 'No second night out' initiative. In its strategy – 'Vision to end rough sleeping: no second night out', the

government called on local authorities to implement this initiative (previously successfully piloted in London). This provides a quick and effective response from relevant services to help individuals off the streets.

- In Merseyside, local authorities have collaborated to deliver the vision that by the end of 2012 no-one will live on the streets of the Liverpool City Region and no individual arriving on the streets for the first time will sleep out for more than one night. The scheme involves widespread promotion of the one telephone number to call to report someone sleeping rough in the sub-region.

Homelessness Forum structure

- A re-structured homelessness forum from one large meeting into an annual meeting plus two sub groups to focus on Strategic Commissioning and Accommodation & Service Inclusion.



Homelessness Scrutiny Group

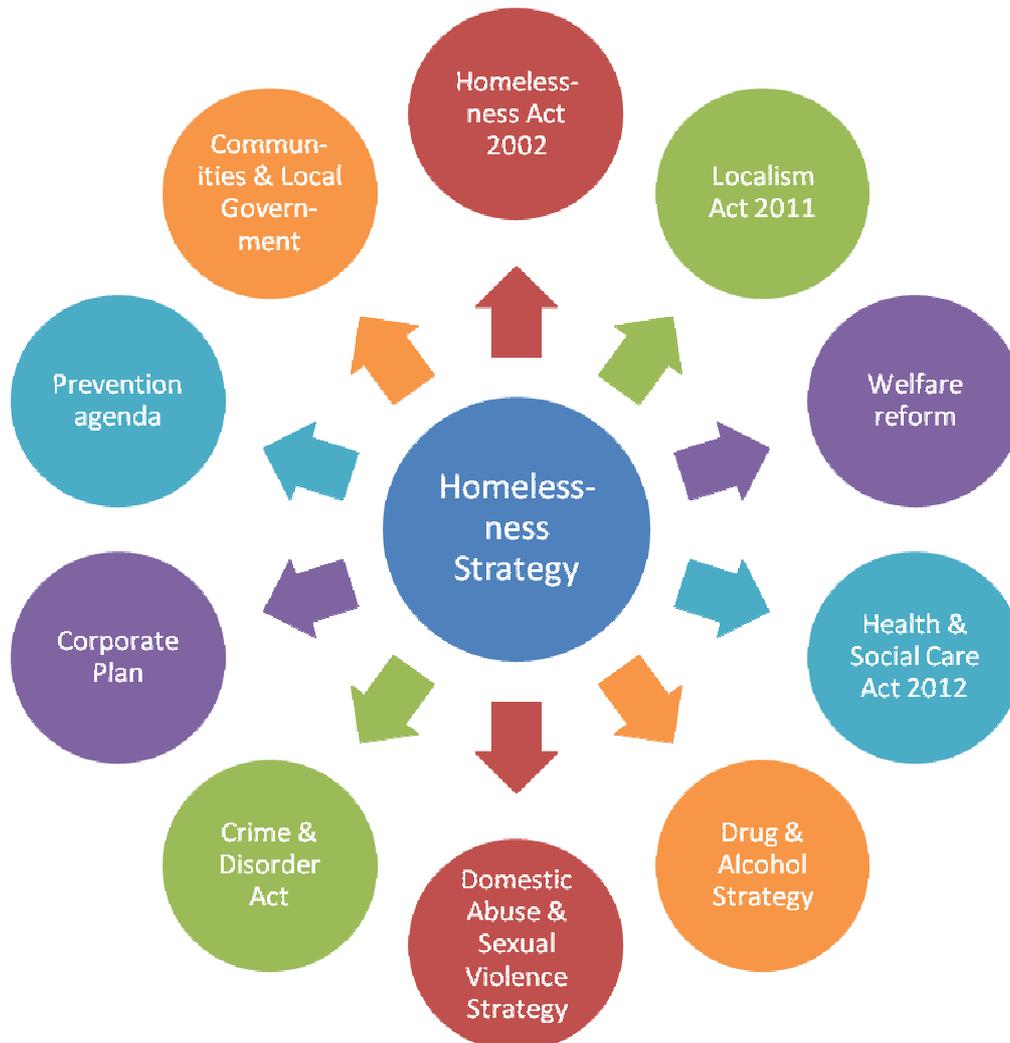
- A set of recommendations arising from a scrutiny review led by Elected Members (2011-12). This resulted in efficiencies being achieved through a new contract with Halton YMCA for the YMCA hostel and ‘Nightstop’, the de-commissioning of the ‘Y’s Up’ advice and guidance service, a new contract with Plus Dane for floating support services. Efficiencies have also been achieved through the reconfiguration of hostel provision for single homeless people. Access to services has been prioritised to those who are owed a statutory duty. There is also an increased focus on prevention to help people to resolve their housing issues.

However, despite these achievements, Halton is not complacent and acknowledges that the challenges ahead will be considerable. Halton will continue to review and adapt its service provision to prevent future homelessness in the most effective way.

We are witnessing fundamental changes in the housing market and in social and welfare reform. The successes of the past five years will be even more difficult to replicate in the years ahead.

5. Context

Halton's Homelessness Strategy has been developed in the context of a wide range of national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans. These are summarised in the diagram below. Further details of how this influences the Strategy can be found in the evidence paper Strategic Review of Homelessness in Halton 2012/13.



Homelessness services are essential in meeting Halton's priorities set out in the 'Sustainable Community Strategy', as demonstrated below:

A Healthy Halton

- Homeless people have significantly higher levels of premature mortality, mental and physical ill health than among the settled population and are more likely to have a drug or alcohol addiction.
- Net cost estimated to be £64m per year over and above health costs for same number of general population.

Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

- The lack of a settled home can be a significant barrier for those seeking permanent employment and training opportunities.
- Additional costs of providing support to homeless people to enable them to find a job and live independently.

A Safer Halton

- Criminal activity can be both a cause of and a consequence of homelessness.
- Research shows that homeless prisoners are more likely to re-offend within the first year of release than those who had settled accommodation before custody.

Children and Young People in Halton

- Research shows that frequent adverse residential mobility (e.g. due to homelessness) can have a detrimental effect on educational attainment.
- Additional costs resulting from children entering the care system due to the lack of a settled home.

Environment and Regeneration in Halton

- Environmental impact of rough sleeping and its potential impact on economic investment in an area.
- High incidence and turnover of temporary accommodation in an area can lead to neighbourhood decline.

Making Every Contact Count: a joint approach towards homelessness prevention

In August 2012, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) published this report produced by the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness. It states clearly that 'there is no place for homelessness in the 21st century'.

The report sets out the Government's approach to homelessness prevention by focusing on the contribution that a commitment around troubled families, health, crime prevention and employment

and skills can make. The report calls for central Government, local authorities, government agencies and the voluntary sector to work together to support those at risk of homelessness.

It also gives an indication of the Government's direction and expectations for homelessness prevention. This emphasises a number of important factors, including; greater integration of local authority services (Housing, Social Services, Welfare Rights etc.); increased focus on a payment by results approach to funding; increased reliance on the private rented sector; and a focus on wrap-around services to tackle youth homelessness (such as those provided by Youth Hubs).

The report also set ten local challenges, which the government has recommended local authorities should take forward. This strategy recognises the importance of these challenges and acknowledges existing work already undertaken or underway in response to them. Halton will ensure that the ten '**Gold Standard Pledges**' remain key to its targeted approach in addressing homelessness prevention and homelessness. The Strategy identifies key themes, with emphasis placed upon reducing homelessness and increasing future prevention initiatives. The Gold Standard ten-point challenges will be to maximise opportunities arising from the Government commitments and will be **reflected within the six strategy objectives and their accompanying priorities and the strategy action plan.**

Link between Strategy Objectives and Gold Standard

| Strategy objective | Gold standard |
|---|---|
| 1. Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a pro-active approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs • Adopt a 'no second night out' approach or an effective local alternative • Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the mortgage rescue scheme |
| 2. Health and homelessness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients |
| 3. Minimise the impact of welfare reform | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients |
| 4. Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords |
| 5. Increase and improve communication and partnership working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs • Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support |
| 6. Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed & Breakfast accommodation • Not place any families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than six weeks |

Health

Local authorities complete a quarterly statistical report (P1E) which identifies levels of homelessness and prevention outcomes achieved. The report is submitted to Communities and Local Government (CLG) in relation to their activities to ensure compliance with the relevant homelessness legislation. The new Public Health Framework sets out the desired outcomes and how they will be measured, which includes two homelessness indicators – statutory homeless acceptances and households in temporary accommodation.

There is an encouraged focus on the health of the local homeless population and a real commitment within Halton to ensure health services assist in identifying those at risk and prevent homelessness by making every contact count.

The health of people who are homeless is generally much poorer than that of the general population. There is limited data available at a local level and it is not routinely collected and analysed, consequently, it is not possible to determine the exact health issues facing people who are homeless. The National Audit found that homeless people have a higher usage of healthcare services than the general population and established;

- 41% had gone to A&E at least once;
- 31% had been admitted to hospital at least once (compared to 7% of the general population in a typical year);
- 28% had used an ambulance at least once;
- 82% had been to a GP at least once;
- Only quarter of homeless people admitted to hospital had help with housing;
- Average length of stay of 6.2 days for homeless people (compared to 2.1 days for the general population);
- Most common reasons for admission include toxicity, alcohol or drugs and mental health problems.

To allow further understanding of the public health needs and pressures placed on services, the Liverpool Public Health Observatory has been commissioned to complete a Health Needs assessment. The commissioned piece of work will look at qualitative methods of gathering intelligence to determine health experience, access to services and homelessness status.

Health & Well Being

The 'Health and Well Being' needs of the homeless in Halton can vary significantly between individuals, and is frequently related to their particular status. This ranges from households fleeing domestic abuse and identified as a priority need for accommodation, to the hidden homeless, single non-priority persons who are rough sleepers, 'sofa surfers' and night shelter residents.

Priority groups for housing include young families, who usually retain access to primary care services and GP to ensure their physical and mental health needs can be met. However, the hidden homeless are particularly vulnerable, with complex physical and mental needs leading to an extremely high level of mortality and an average life expectancy of 40. They can often prove extremely hard to reach through mainstream provision.

Information taken from National Audit carried out by Homeless Link during 2010/11 gave a proxy analysis of the health needs of homeless people in Halton found:

- 8 out of 10 clients have one or more physical health needs and 1 in 5 confirmed they found it difficult to cope and required support;
- The most common conditions mentioned were chest/breathing, pain, joint and muscular problems, dental and eye sight problems. The proportion of homeless people citing these conditions was much higher than prevalence of general population;

- 56% reported long term health conditions compared to 29% in general population;
- 72% have mental health needs compared to 30% of the general population;
- 1 in 3 regularly eat less than 2 meals a day and only 7% consume the recommended 5 portions of fruit or vegetables a day compared to 21% of the general population;
- 77% were smokers and had been offered smoking cessation advice;
- 52% indicated they used one or more type of illegal drugs.

Whilst it is essential that the strategic focus remains on preventing homelessness, there is now a new council responsibility under the Health & Social Care Act 2012. This is to reduce premature mortality and tackle health inequalities. Hence the council is strongly committed to supporting a system where vulnerable single homeless persons have equal access to its health and social care services.

The welfare reform and wider economic pressures are likely to increase the numbers of hidden homeless in Halton, further increasing demand on existing health and support services. Following the NHS reform, Public Health now sits within Halton Borough Council. This provides a unique opportunity to review and reposition all disparate homeless health provision investments through Section 75 agreements with Public Health Services. Joint commissioning of a new integrated homeless service could then be more easily achieved. This would meet the spectrum of health needs of the hidden homeless along with those identified for priority accommodation.

Halton intends to build upon the partnership links made with other agencies, including health and mental health services and will remain vigilant in its search for joint working opportunities that improve outcomes for service users.

6. The Journey Ahead

The magnitude and complexity of the issues that face us in the next 5 years must not be underestimated. However, Halton will continue to plan ahead and will work in partnership with others who can assist in delivering solutions. We have prioritised issues and proposed actions to build on our past success, mitigate the impacts of changing housing markets, social and welfare reform but, above all, prevent homelessness.

Halton's future goals

- Early intervention to prevent homelessness before a crisis point is reached.
- Provision of appropriate advice, accommodation and support if crisis occurs.
- Prevention of repeated homelessness to ensure people have settled and sustainable homes.
- Improve clear links between Health, Homelessness, Housing and Social Care.

Key challenges

The outcome of the consultation held for reviewing and developing the new strategy with stakeholders highlighted the key challenges Halton is facing. Key issues and priorities identified were:

- Adverse impact of welfare reform;
- Funding;
- Affordable housing need;
- Increasing pressures on household incomes in the current and future economic climate;
- Single non priority and intentionally homeless households;
- Young people;
- People at risk of domestic abuse;
- Difficulty in meeting the needs of households with more complex needs;
- Service integration to develop and improve health care for homeless people;
- Increasing problems accessing private rented accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless households;
- Developing solutions to meet gaps in future funding including accommodation based services for rough sleepers.

Factors that may affect future homelessness levels

- Lack of affordable housing;
- Housing and Welfare Reforms;
- Increase in Landlord and Mortgage repossession claims.

How Halton will deliver its objectives in response to these pressures is contained within the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. This sets out clear tasks and targets within identified areas of

work.

7. Our vision, objectives and priorities

The vision is to assist and prevent people who are threatened with homelessness in Halton. To provide a community focused and accessible service to ensure people know where and how they can seek help and assistance to prevent them becoming homeless and receive a quality and confidential housing options service.

The Strategy aims to:

- **Reduce Homelessness presentations and acceptances; and**
- **Increase and improve Homelessness prevention and access to housing services.**

Further emphasis is placed upon prevention, support and partnership working to deliver an efficient and coordinated approach towards reducing the levels of statutory homelessness within Halton.

To help achieve these aims, we have adopted the following six strategic objectives. Each contains a set of priorities detailed below, which are linked to the Gold Standard pledges. The Strategy explains why each priority has been selected, what we hope to achieve and how we plan to achieve it.

Strategic objective 1:

Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

- Priority 1A: Develop and co-ordinate services to deliver a comprehensive approach towards homelessness and prevention
- Priority 1B: Develop a marketing plan with partners to raise awareness of the Housing Solutions service to ensure that the homelessness services strive to meet the National Gold Standard
- Priority 1C: Promote a range of prevention options, including the GIFT initiative, prevention fund, and mortgage rescue scheme to enable clients to remain within their homes
- Priority 1D: Respond to and prevent rough sleeping

Strategic objective 2:

Health and homelessness

- Priority 2A: Ensure that homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Wellbeing Board
- Priority 2B: Develop a business case to formalise a single practice approach to address the housing and health care needs of vulnerable homeless people

Strategic objective 3:

Minimise the impact of welfare reform

- Priority 3A: Agree a joint approach with the Housing Benefits service for the future use of Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure they are used effectively to prevent homelessness and to determine future areas of action
- Priority 3B: Develop under-occupation schemes with housing providers to free up family homes and encourage shared housing

Strategic objective 4:

Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

- Priority 4A: Improve access to housing using the private rented sector and shared housing options
- Priority 4B: Improve working with private sector landlords and promote the Bond Guarantee Scheme

Strategic objective 5:

Increase and improve communication and partnership working

- Priority 5A: Develop an effective multi-agency approach to support vulnerable and complex needs households to sustain and secure affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness
- Priority 5B: Support young people and facilitate the delivery of integrated housing, care and support for young people at risk, care leavers, young offenders and teenage parents
- Priority 5C: Improve partnership working and communication with key agencies, police, probation and housing providers to address the growing housing need for offenders
- Priority 5D: Joint partnership working with agencies, police and housing providers to offer options and solutions to victims of domestic abuse to support them to remain within their home

Strategic objective 6:

Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation

- Priority 6A: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation (including B&B) to maximise the use of prevention options available to reduce homelessness

The following tables report the findings of the Strategic Review of Homelessness within Halton. These findings have been incorporated within the strategy document and comply with the government’s approach to homelessness prevention while focusing upon partnership working to support those at risk of homelessness.

| Why this is a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|--|
| <p>The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that every five years, local authorities must carry out a strategic review of homelessness, formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on its findings.</p> | <p>Determine the future levels, trends and demands of homelessness within Halton.</p> <p>Prevent homelessness within the Halton district and raise awareness of the wide range of services available.</p> | <p>Adopt a corporate commitment to reduce and prevent homelessness, which has a buy in across all local authority services.</p> <p>Early intervention in the homelessness risk assessment process to prevent homelessness and deliver a range of housing options.</p> <p>Develop a Housing and Support Gateway service that will offer an accelerated process and improve access to the homeless and support services within the district.</p> |

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

GOLD STANDARD:

- Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a pro-active approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
- Adopt a 'no second night out' approach or an effective local alternative
- Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the mortgage rescue scheme

Priority 1A: Develop and co-ordinate services to deliver a comprehensive approach towards homelessness and prevention

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Develop a homeless strategy that sets out a pro-active approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to ensure it is responsive to emerging trends.</p> | <p>Put a robust framework for measuring the effectiveness of interventions in place and implement the review recommendations by April 2014.</p> <p>Actively encourage partnership working with statutory and voluntary partners, including other Local Authorities to improve service delivery and address support, education, training and employment.</p> | <p>Conduct a review of the current homeless prevention using the Communities and Local Government (CLG) toolkit.</p> <p>Develop housing pathways with key partners and client groups that include appropriate accommodation and support. Continue to work with Supported Housing providers to strengthen the outcomes on prevention and long term tenancy sustainment.</p> |

Priority 1B: Develop a marketing plan with partners to raise awareness of the Housing Solutions service to ensure that the homelessness services strive to meet the National Gold Standard

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|--|--|
| <p>To ensure key agencies and partners have an understanding of the homelessness assessment process, applied legislation and prevention agenda to reduce the levels of homelessness.</p> <p>To increase access to prevention services and resources across the district.</p> | <p>Conduct review of current homeless prevention using CLG toolkit.</p> <p>Improve awareness of the Housing Solutions Team and promote the range of housing options and resources available to clients.</p> <p>Reduce the level of homelessness and increase positive prevention outcomes.</p> | <p>Develop a robust framework for measuring the effectiveness of interventions in place to determine trends and review recommendations annually.</p> <p>Commission a range of learning, development and role shadowing opportunities for staff and partners to improve knowledge and understanding around the issues of homelessness and prevention.</p> <p>Increase the number of 'Housing Solutions' drop in advice sessions across the district to further develop a community focused and accessible service.</p> <p>Increase/ develop prevention initiatives to promote client choice and access to services.</p> |

Priority 1C: Promote a range of prevention options, including the GIFT initiative, prevention fund, and mortgage rescue scheme to enable clients to remain within their homes

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Work in accordance with the Prevention agenda to develop and improve homelessness prevention initiatives.</p> <p>Reduce the levels of future homelessness presentations and acceptances.</p> | <p>Continuous improvement and delivery of prevention services with the priority on helping people to resolve their housing problems and tackle barriers to obtaining accommodation.</p> <p>Continue the delivery of the Mortgage/ Repossession role and ensure the MRS fund is fully utilised.</p> <p>Review and promote the GIFT scheme for young people to ensure it is made available to clients in crisis / homeless.</p> <p>Deliver a programme of training to promote homelessness prevention and the impact of the Localism Act, Welfare Reform and other initiatives with partners.</p> | <p>Ensure the service is accessible and transparent and people facing crisis are fully aware of the options and services available to them.</p> <p>Increase the number of those accessing the Mortgage Rescue Service by 20%. Further improve joint working with all housing partners to offer an accelerated process for clients facing repossession due to rent arrears.</p> <p>Further develop county court service and attend court action group to be aware of changes within the legal setting.</p> <p>Review information leaflets and circulate across the district. Update council website to illustrate the level of services and assistance available to clients.</p> <p>Develop as part of move on process to ensure service is fully utilised and clients have access to the relevant funding to take up a tenancy.</p> <p>Deliver joint staff training between partners and agencies every quarter commencing December 2013. Co-ordinate sub regional training programme to share resources and reduce costs.</p> |

| Priority 1D: Respond to and prevent rough sleeping | | |
|--|--|--|
| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
| Ensure that no client spends more than one night rough sleeping. | <p>Implement a sub-regional approach to tackling the problem of rough sleeping across Merseyside and Cheshire.</p> <p>Develop and improve a co-ordinated approach that is consistent across all Local Authorities when assisting clients sleeping rough.</p> | <p>Review the no second night out service to determine current trends and future funding to retain service provision</p> <p>Ensure sufficient specialist accommodation and support is available to meet the needs of single homeless clients in the borough.</p> <p>Ensure that the reconnection policy for 'out-of-borough' clients is fully supported when they return to their local connection district.</p> |

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

GOLD STANDARD:

- Offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients

Priority 2A: Ensure that homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Wellbeing Board

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Make every contact count and ensure individuals and/ or families affected by homelessness can access appropriate advice, support and accommodation.</p> | <p>Ensure that homelessness services are appropriately linked into Health Care services and fully informed of the options available to maximise resources, prevent homelessness and improve Health and wellbeing.</p> <p>To promote and encourage integration between homelessness and public health care services to allow a broader understanding of the priorities and challenges faced by each service</p> <p>Review the Hospital discharge policy to incorporate procedural practice changes to the service.</p> | <p>Present Homelessness Strategy to Health & Well Being Board to raise awareness of the Housing Solutions Service. To ensure Homelessness is identified as a Priority and to build upon joint Strategic Needs Assessments to determine future service delivery.</p> <p>To forge close working relationships with Health Care services and outline future trends and challenges of homelessness and the impact and cost it will have on future health care.</p> <p>Joint partnership approach to review and develop a Hospital Discharge Policy which will enable vulnerable clients to be discharged from hospital more quickly. This would put their home less at risk.</p> |

Priority 2B: Develop a business case to formalise a single practice approach to address the housing and health care needs of vulnerable homeless people

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Homelessness people are at the bottom of any graph of health inequalities, putting the average age of death of homeless people some 30 years below that of the general population. Homelessness is therefore a Healthcare issues</p> | <p>Integrated service approach to develop a National Practice for homelessness people that is flexible and easily accessible.</p> <p>Reduce homelessness and repeat hospital admissions by taking a holistic approach to reach the clients and address all their needs to improve the quality and experience of these groups</p> <p>Collect and record data to support local commissioners and health care partners to shape services around the health needs of the most vulnerable and marginal groups, that are often invisible.</p> | <p>To transform health outcomes for homeless people and other multiply excluded groups.</p> <p>Develop Healthcare pathway with integrated care co-ordination team that will include homelessness, to improve outcomes for homeless people.</p> <p>Conduct needs assessment and collect data on levels of hidden local health need and health inequalities within the defined population.</p> |

Strategic objective 3: Minimise the impact of welfare reform

GOLD STANDARD:

- Offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients

Priority 3A: Agree a joint approach with the Housing Benefits service for the future use of Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure they are used effectively to prevent homelessness and to determine future areas of action

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|---|---|
| <p>To ensure that the council is fully compliant with changing legislation and responsible for the administration of public funds.</p> | <p>Develop a co-ordinated approach to providing advice on housing and welfare benefit, debt and money advice by working with and fully supporting partner agencies.</p> <p>Agree a joint approach to the future use of Discretionary Housing Payments</p> | <p>Review current services to ensure that the level of advice offered on benefits, debt and money advice is accessible and efficient and to determine gaps in service delivery.</p> <p>Develop evening / weekend advice services and consider on-line advice services.</p> <p>Review and monitor future allocation of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to determine future areas of action.</p> <p>Request for Housing Solutions Officer to attend DHP application panel assessments.</p> |

Priority 3B: Develop under-occupation schemes with housing providers to free up family homes and encourage shared housing

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|---|---|
| <p>To prevent and reduce future homelessness for clients affected by the Welfare Reform Act.</p> | <p>A joint approach to administering the allocated DHP funding to reduce the impact of the Welfare Reform Act and minimise penalties in order to prevent and reduce homelessness.</p> <p>Target social tenants likely to be affected by the under-occupation penalties enforced through the welfare reform.</p> | <p>Develop a coordinated approach to offering advice and support for housing welfare benefit, debt and money management. This will increase early access to advice services and further promote financial inclusion.</p> <p>Targeted support to those likely to become homeless as a result of the under-occupation penalties and social rent conversions.</p> <p>Consult with all housing partners to develop a move on/ transfer scheme for clients affected by under –occupation penalties.</p> <p>Joint partnership approach to develop and promote shared housing scheme.</p> <p>Advertise and promote shared housing on the PPP housing register.</p> |

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

GOLD STANDARD:

- Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords

Priority 4A: Improve access to housing using the private rented sector and shared housing options

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Enable Halton Borough Council to take advantage of powers available to them under sections 148 and 149 (Chapter 20, Part 7 of Localism Act 2011). The powers allow the local authority to make an offer of suitable private rented accommodation to persons who have a priority need and are not intentionally homeless.</p> <p>Review the Allocations Policy to cover new powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and Welfare Reform Act.</p> | <p>Agree approaches to using the new homelessness discharge duty in accordance with PRSO policy and Improve access to housing via Property Pool Plus to increase private rented sector and shared housing options.</p> <p>Develop and review initiatives to make better use of social housing stock.</p> | <p>Encourage private sector landlords to advertise their accommodation on Property Pool Plus and work with the LA to secure accommodation for homeless households.</p> <p>Increase supply of homes to homelessness and vulnerable households by bringing empty homes back into use Promote and facilitate mutual exchanges to clients.</p> <p>Work with housing providers to develop incentives to free up stock and meet housing demands.</p> <p>Continue to work with floating support services to strengthen prevention outcomes and tenancy sustainment.</p> |

Priority 4B: Improve working with private sector landlords and promote the Bond Guarantee Scheme

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Reduce and prevent homelessness and enable the local authority to discharge its statutory housing duty using the private rented sector.</p> | <p>Increase housing options and choice to meet increasing housing demand to prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Improve partnership working with letting agents to improve the service available.</p> <p>Improve advice and support offered to landlords and clients.</p> | <p>Increase sustainable move on options and support from temporary accommodation to make full use of the bond guarantee scheme and promote independent living.</p> <p>Improve overall approach to working with private landlords to promote the 'Bond Guarantee Scheme' and increase number of lets with rental bond by 10% by April 2014.</p> <p>Make full use of DHP for rent in advance required for private renting. Encourage letting agents to work with the council to fully utilise the accommodation available.</p> <p>Undertake awareness and publicity campaign to inform landlords and tenants of services available.</p> <p>Encourage and support people to let out their property or rooms.</p> |

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

GOLD STANDARD:

- Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
- Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support

Priority 5A: Develop an effective multi-agency approach to support vulnerable and complex needs households to sustain and secure affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|--|---|
| <p>People experiencing homelessness are generally in contact with a range of other public services. Providing access to advice, information and support will ensure that the right help at the right time is provided.</p> | <p>Integrated approach to addressing the housing and social needs of vulnerable and complex households to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Deliver a planned approach involving key agencies. Respond to the needs of vulnerable and complex care households experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Develop an effective multi agency approach to support vulnerable and complex needs households to sustain and secure affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness.</p> | <p>Review intelligence which will identify arising needs for vulnerable and complex needs households</p> <p>Agree and develop a joint working protocol between Housing Solutions service and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Social Care • Mental Health • Local Hospitals • Probation • Job Centre Plus. <p>Provide emergency temporary housing provision and tailored support for vulnerable client groups experiencing homelessness.</p> |

Priority 5B: Support young people and facilitate the delivery of integrated housing, care and support for young people at risk, care leavers, young offenders and teenage parents

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Ensure that all young people in Halton have support, life skills and opportunities to thrive physically and emotionally to prevent homelessness.</p> | <p>Scope and identify opportunities to improve access to education, training and housing options for young people.</p> <p>Ensure that staff working with young people affected by homelessness, have the appropriate skills, knowledge and safeguarding training.</p> <p>Collaborate with the skills and work programme providers.</p> <p>Review the joint protocol with Children’s services and youth offending team to ensure the council complies with legal judgements and case law.</p> <p>Explore the development of emergency respite accommodation for 16 – 21 year olds.</p> | <p>Continue to develop joint working between the Housing Solutions Team, Children’s services and the team around the family.</p> <p>Ensure that the housing solutions team access children’s and adults safeguarding training to raise awareness of key issues and reporting process,</p> <p>Provide learning and development opportunities on Homelessness legislation and applied criteria to all key services that work with young people.</p> <p>Increase the number of referrals to training, employment and education providers by 15% annually.</p> <p>Support housing providers to develop a coordinated approach to delivering life skills sessions to young people.</p> <p>Further review and develop the joint working protocol for 16/17 year olds, enabling transition towards independent living with tailored support.</p> <p>Develop crisis intervention centre for young people threatened with homelessness. Offer a holistic approach to working with young people and their</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | households as a means of them returning back to the family home. |
|--|--|--|

Priority 5C: Improve partnership working and communication with key agencies, police, probation and housing providers to address the growing housing need for offenders

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Ensure the current housing accommodation and support for all offenders is appropriate and that pathways to specialist services are available to reduce the level of re-offending and enable Housing Solutions advisers to work with offenders as part of a wider package of support.</p> | <p>Review current housing policies to identify gaps in provision and agree the information required by Registered Providers to enable them to rehouse offenders.</p> <p>Reduce the number of prisoners being released from prison without a resettlement plan to prevent homelessness and re-offending.</p> | <p>Investigate Registered Providers reluctance to house Schedule 1 offenders and those subject to MAPPA.</p> <p>Work with shelter to develop joint protocol to maximise notice periods for prisoners requiring accommodation on release. To ensure offenders are registered with Housing Solutions and Property Pool Plus at earliest opportunity.</p> |

Priority 5D: Joint partnership working with agencies, police and housing providers to offer options and solutions to victims of domestic abuse to support them to remain within their home

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|---|--|---|
| <p>To ensure the council works in compliance with Homelessness Act 2002 and provides temporary /secure accommodation for victims of violence and abuse.</p> <p>To ensure that service provision is sufficient to meet with and tackle the issues of domestic abuse.</p> | <p>Work in partnership with National Domestic Abuse Organisations, Police, registered Housing providers and key agencies to offer a range of rehousing options and solutions to victims of domestic abuse</p> <p>Improve partnership working with Sanctuary scheme providers to promote safety housing options and solutions to victims of abuse.</p> <p>Improve referral and data sharing processes across organisations to ensure consistency and accuracy and better service delivery</p> | <p>Multi-agency approach to deliver a holistic prevention service. This will ensure that the right support and services are made available to the household.</p> <p>Develop a range of housing accommodation provisions to meet the needs of victims of abuse. Ensure that families with dependent male children and male victims can be accommodated within the district.</p> <p>Support Sanctuary scheme to reduce the number of men and women becoming homeless because of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Agree a pathway action plan with Key agencies to deal with the crisis and empower the individual to achieve positive outcomes and sustain long term tenancy.</p> |

Strategic objective 6: Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation

GOLD STANDARD:

- Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed & Breakfast accommodation
- Not place any families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than six weeks

Priority 6A: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation (including B&B) to maximise the use of prevention options available to reduce homelessness

| Why is this a priority? | What do we want to achieve? | How do we plan to achieve it? |
|--|---|--|
| <p>In accordance with homelessness legislation the council cannot place families into B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks.</p> | <p>Continue to reduce the use of B&B and temporary accommodation and make better use of housing stock within the district.</p> <p>Continued achievement to reduce the use of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Review the level of temporary accommodation within the district to ensure it meets current and future housing demands</p> <p>Temporary accommodation provision made available for non-statutory homeless households in crisis.</p> | <p>Early intervention and promoting a community focused service, made more accessible to households threatened with homelessness.</p> <p>Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by 20% by April 2014.</p> <p>Support temporary accommodation providers Promote housing services available and facilitate move on options.</p> <p>Evaluate and develop temporary accommodation provision within the district to ensure it meets the needs of statutory homeless households and reduce the level of voids and rent loss.</p> <p>Improve access to appropriate temporary hostel accommodation for short periods to allow housing solutions and key agencies to address the issues and facilitate move on to alternative suitable accommodation.</p> |

8. National & Local Policy

Local authorities have statutory duties under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). This includes a duty to provide advice and assistance to all people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Following the Homelessness Act 2002, preventing homelessness has become a central component of national and local policy direction. The Act imposes a statutory duty on local authorities to produce a homelessness strategy for addressing prevention and recurrence of homelessness. This includes a requirement to assist 16 and 17 year olds and other vulnerable groups. In carrying out these functions the council must consider both the objectives of central government and local priorities, as determined by the corporate housing strategy and other key council policy documents.

- **Localism Act** - The Localism Act 2011 introduced a range of measures to give more powers to individuals, communities and local authorities enabling them to make decisions, and influence policies in their own local areas with a diminishing central government role. The main implications for homelessness are changes to the local authority duty to accommodate households assessed as 'statutory homeless' and to allow the discharging of homelessness duty to the private rented sector.

The new legal powers will have implications for the Housing Solutions Team. For example, reliance upon private rented accommodation would form an important part of the service, alongside the existing focus on homeless prevention. This would increase pressure on the council to ensure there was better private sector stock provision by increasing enforcement activities, extending bond schemes, licencing and prioritising referrals to accredited landlords.

- **Welfare Reform** – The introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 has major implications for Halton residents and there are concerns that it could lead to an increase in homelessness. The reforms proposed are intended to protect the most vulnerable, create the right incentives to get more people into work resulting in a fairer benefit and tax credit system. However, our initial analysis indicates that welfare reform will have a detrimental effect on many of the vulnerable and high risk client groups.

A number of changes to housing benefit have already been implemented and will continue until 2014/15. Universal Credit will replace the current system of means tested working age benefits and tax credits and came into effect in October 2013 (in piloted areas). The measures to reduce Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates would ultimately result in people's inability to find suitable affordable housing in the private sector and may threaten the ability of some households to continue to afford their current home. To help households manage the transition, the Government has awarded increases in the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) fund. The council will use the increase in DHP to target vulnerable households with the most need and to address the 'bedroom tax'; however, there is a risk that the allocation may not be sufficient.

- **No Second Night Out (NSNO)** – The ministerial working group on homelessness published its first report in 2011. This addresses the complex causes of homelessness more effectively and tackles the problem of rough sleeping out on the streets. NSNO was a Merseyside sub-regional approach that has been operating successfully since 2011

9. Delivery of the Strategy

To achieve the strategic priorities and objectives an Action Plan has been developed in partnership with partners and stakeholders to outline key objectives and tasks to be delivered over the 2013 - 2018 period. The action plan is reviewed annually and targets set are evaluated to incorporate legislation and policy changes.

Governance and monitoring

Progress and delivery of the strategy and action plan will be monitored and updated quarterly by the *Strategic Commissioning Group* and annually by the *Halton Homelessness Forum* to celebrate the achievements and remove any barriers, address new challenges and ensure efficient service delivery. It is considered important to have the involvement of stakeholders and partners in the delivery of the targets set in the strategy action plan. The monitoring of the homelessness strategy targets is shown in the table below:

Monitoring Homeless Strategy Targets

| Stakeholders and Partners | Homeless Strategy Targets |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Halton Homelessness Forum | Annual conference to inform stakeholders and partners of the progress made towards delivering the set targets identified within the Strategy Action Plan. |
| Strategic Commissioning Group | Through quarterly meetings the strategy action plan will be updated and progress recorded for each action. Any new developments at local and regional level will be considered and the implications will be evaluated. |
| Halton Housing Partnership | Progress on the homelessness strategy action plan to be reported to HHP on an annual basis, however, exceptions could be reported to its monthly meetings. |
| National Performance Indicators: | <p>The new CLG single data list require the following data for homelessness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage Rescue quarterly return - monitors the number of households at risk of homelessness who are assisted by the Housing Solutions Team • Rough Sleeper annual return - records the number of people reported to be sleeping rough in the Local Authority on a given night between October and November each year • P1E quarterly return - covers all areas of Local Authority activity under the homelessness provisions of Housing Act 1996. |

| Stakeholders and Partners | Homeless Strategy Targets |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Local Performance Indicators: | <p>Halton will continue to monitor performance against certain local performance indicators relating to housing and homelessness. These are:</p> <p>LPI – relates to the <i>number of households who are considered homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days, who approached the Local Authority Housing Solutions Service, and for whom housing advice casework and intervention has resolved their situation.</i> This data is recorded on the ‘Housing Advice’ database and reported through section E10 of the P1E</p> <p>LPI – Shows the <i>average length of stay in B&B accommodation for households with dependent children or expectant mothers that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.</i></p> <p>LPI – This indicator measures the <i>number of households living in temporary accommodation provided under the homelessness legislation.</i> This indicator is no longer reported to Government but is monitored locally.</p> |

Risk elements to delivery of Homelessness Strategy

The key risks to the delivery of the homelessness strategy have been analysed to ensure there are mechanisms in place to mitigate or manage their impact.

Access to resources

The CLG Homelessness Grant funding makes an important contribution to the delivery of a range of homeless services in Halton. This fund is currently frozen and arrangements for distribution of the grant for the financial years 2014/2015 are unclear. If the homelessness grant funding were to be reduced or ceased completely, it would adversely affect the ability of the Housing Solutions team to offer a range of housing options and would impact upon performance and service delivery.

10. Action Plan

Homelessness Strategy for Halton (2013 – 2018) – Action Plan

| Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
| 1A: Develop and co-ordinate services to deliver a comprehensive approach towards homelessness and prevention | Review/ improve current homelessness prevention using CLG toolkit. | 2014 | PHO, Health & Social Care Commissioner | Officer time, P1E, CLG Homelessness Grant | Robust framework measuring effectiveness of interventions. Develop and implement the Action Plan recommendations. |
| | Adopt a corporate commitment to reduce and prevent homelessness in which all Local Authority services are involved. | 2015 Over strategy period | Merseyside and Cheshire sub-regional groups, Health & Social Care | CLG sub-regional Prevention Fund. P1E | Joint approach to develop and implement quality and cost-effective services across neighbouring authorities. |
| | Review mechanisms to introduce meaningful and cost-effective satisfaction and customer experience feedback – including independent facilitation. | Annually Over strategy period | PHO, Policy Officer (Communities) | Officer and staff time, CLG Homelessness Grant | Improve listening and learning from homelessness people to further develop; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community focused service • Procedural practice • Service provision • Accessibility • Integrated partnership approach to improve service delivery. |
| | Increase awareness of realistic housing options for agencies working with homeless clients. | Quarterly via regular partnership meetings | PHO Housing Solutions team | Officer and staff time. P1E | Identify gaps and actions from trends and changes, promoting wider public awareness of homelessness and supply and |

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|--|---|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| | Continue to work with Supported Accommodation providers to strengthen prevention outcomes and 'move on' processes. | Over the strategy period | PHO, SDO, Accommodation Providers | Officer time, CLG Prevention Fund, P1E | <p>demand for social housing. Improved partnership working with accommodation providers to improve prevention outcomes and comply with contract requirements.</p> <p>Develop housing pathways with key partners and client groups that include appropriate accommodation and support to promote independent living.</p> |
| 1B: Develop a marketing plan with partners to raise awareness of the Housing Solutions service to ensure that the homelessness services strive to meet the National Gold Standard | Revise procedures, staff awareness and training to incorporate any policy and legislative changes. | Over the strategy period | PHO, Policy Officer, HST | Officer time, training fund, P1E | Maximise homelessness prevention by 10%. |
| | Review best practice and performance to strive towards continual improvement to meet the Gold Standard. | 2014/15 | DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Policy Officer | Officer time, sub-regional groups | Fully utilise all resources and develop new initiatives to offer choice and prevent future homelessness. |
| | Deliver a programme of training to promote homelessness prevention and the impact of Localism and Welfare Reform with partners. | Quarterly Over Strategy Period | PHO, Homelessness Forum, Partners | Regular strategic partnership meetings, NHAS | Participate in national benchmarking to improve service planning and ensure cost effectiveness of homelessness services. |
| | Develop Gateway for homeless accommodation and support services. | May 2014 | DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Capita | CLG Sub Regional Funding | Increase the number of key agencies accessing homelessness training. Gaining better understanding of the service, the applied processes and priorities. |

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| | Develop and implement information recording and evidence base for homelessness. | 2014 | PHO, SDO, Capita | SP Budget, P1E | <p>Improved data recording and access to develop accelerated process to accommodation and support services.</p> <p>Maximised efficiency of recording systems to collect homeless data to monitor trends that will inform future policy and service development.</p> |
| <p>1C: Promote a range of prevention options, including the GIFT initiative, prevention fund, and mortgage rescue scheme to enable clients to remain within their homes</p> | <p>Review and promote GIFT scheme initiative and make available to clients aged 18-35.</p> <p>Continue the delivery of Mortgage Repossession Prevention Scheme.</p> | <p>2013/14</p> <p>Over the strategy period</p> | <p>PHO HST.</p> <p>DM Commissioning, PHO, MRS Officer</p> | <p>CLG Home Grant. P1E</p> <p>Officer time, SP Budget CLG Homelessness Grant</p> | <p>Increase access to funding to enable single homeless clients to take up and sustain new tenancies. 55 applications 2011/12 to increase annually by 5%</p> <p>Undertake advertising campaign to raise awareness of MRS and prevention options.</p> <p>Annual increase in number of households accessing mortgage rescue and advice by 10% to prevent and reduce homelessness.</p> |
| <p>1D: Respond to and prevent rough sleeping</p> | <p>Review impact of the 'No Second Night out' outreach service.</p> | <p>Annually</p> | <p>PHO, Merseyside sub-regional group Whitechapel</p> | <p>CLG sub-regional, budget, P1E</p> | <p>Reduction in number of new rough sleepers spending 2nd night on the streets.</p> |

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|----------|---|--|--|--|--|
| | <p>Review operational procedures to ensure they are consistent and clear to all sub-regional authorities.</p> <p>Develop and implement services to tackle issues of habitual rough sleepers.</p> <p>Improve pathways through supported accommodation for former rough sleepers.</p> | <p>Quarterly</p> <p>2014</p> <p>Over the strategy period</p> | <p>PHO, Merseyside sub-regional group Whitechapel</p> <p>PHO, Health & Social Care, sub-regional partners</p> <p>PHO, SDO, Whitechapel</p> | <p>Officer time, Merseyside sub-regional budget</p> <p>Staff time, CLG sub-regional budget</p> <p>Officer time</p> | <p>Rough sleepers with no local connection are reconnected to services in their local area.</p> <p>An assertive, personalised approach to target habitual rough sleepers and empower them to access alternative accommodation options.</p> <p>Improved move on options from supported hostel accommodation, with a constant review to deliver and achieve positive outcomes.</p> |

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p>2A: Ensure that homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Wellbeing Board</p> | <p>Present Homelessness Strategy to Health & Wellbeing Board to raise as priority for future action.</p> | <p>2014</p> | <p>DM Commissioning, PHO, CCG</p> | <p>Officer time</p> | <p>To ensure that Homelessness is identified as a priority and the board have an understanding of future challenges and funding requirements.</p> |
| | <p>Attend and contribute to meetings, events and regular performance reports.</p> | <p>Quarterly Performance reports</p> | <p>DM Commissioning Health & Social Care, PHO, Policy Officer</p> | <p>Officer time within existing resources</p> | <p>Maximise opportunities for joint commissioning to include health, DAAT, probation and key professionals.</p> |
| | <p>Review and develop sub-regional hospital discharge policy.</p> | <p>2013/14</p> | <p>PHO, sub-regional partners, Health & Social Care, Policy Officer, Accommodation Providers</p> | <p>Partnership working, Crisis Bid Fund, Merseyside sub-regional budget</p> | <p>Policy offering accelerated process for vulnerable clients discharged from hospital. A cost-effective, timely and proactive approach to reducing crisis-led homelessness and repeat admissions.</p> |
| | <p>Review and revise protocols and working arrangements with key partners.</p> | <p>2014–2015</p> | <p>PHO, Health, Policy Officer, Key partners</p> | <p>Officer time</p> | <p>More efficient and timely interventions from using a multi-agency approach to achieve positive sustainable outcomes.</p> |
| <p>Develop housing options for substance misuse clients to move on after rehabilitation and ensure they can sustain a tenancy.</p> | <p>2014-2015</p> | <p>PHO Commissioning Managers, HSO, substance misuse services</p> | <p>CLG Homelessness Grant, Health Budget</p> | <p>Effective move on and outreach support process for substance misuse clients to address social issues and reduce repeat homelessness.</p> | |

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|------------|---|--|--|
| | Review housing options for clients with low to moderate learning difficulties to inform future commissioning of support and appropriate housing. | 2015/ 2016 | Adult Comm. DM Commissioning, PHO | Officer time, SP & Health budgets | Develop model to provide accommodation and support provision to address the needs of clients with a learning disability and/ or Autism, to empower them to live independently. |
| 2B: Develop a business case to formalise a single practice approach to address the housing and health care needs of vulnerable homeless people | Develop a Healthcare pathway that offers an integrated multi - disciplinary approach and is fully inclusive and builds relationships around individuals, between the statutory and non-statutory services engaged in their care | 2014/2015 | CCG Commissioners, Health & Social Care, PHO, HST | Budget TBC Officer time | A developed model to transform and improve health care and homelessness service outcomes. A pathway that integrates health, and other services around vulnerable people. A process used to review all elements of an individual's care, across housing, social care, mental health, drug & alcohol services and personally, thus allowing the individual to reflect and choose a pathway that is right for them. |
| | Improve health care for patients who cross the boundaries of traditional GP practice areas. | 2014/2015 | CCG Commissioners, GPs, Health & Social Care, PHO | TBC, officer time, Multi-agency partners | Ensure that patients who are not registered with a GP and those with extensive and complex needs are identified and addressed through a multi-agency response. |
| | Improve arrangements for health care delivery for vulnerable homeless people. | 2014/2015 | Health & Homelessness services, key partner | Training budget, officer time | Empower front line staff and homeless officers to work with Public Health and service colleagues to develop a |

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <p>Participate in the Housing Needs Assessment commissioned from Liverpool Public Health Observatory</p> <p>Collect and record data to support local commissioners and health care partners to shape services around the health needs of the most vulnerable and marginal groups, that are often invisible.</p> | <p>April 2014</p> <p>2014/2015</p> | <p>agencies</p> <p>CCG Commissioners, DM Commissioning, PHO, S.R. Partners</p> <p>CCG Commissioners, Officers</p> | <p>Health care budget, officer time</p> <p>Budget TBC, officer time</p> | <p>comprehensive and integrated health response to homelessness, configured around a community of need and shared set of standards.</p> <p>The HNA will identify the health needs of the homeless population and assess whether their needs are being met, with recommendations to improve service provision.</p> <p>Determine qualitative methods of gathering intelligence on the subject of health experience, homelessness and access to services.</p> |

Strategic objective 3: Minimise the impact of welfare reform

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 3A: Agree a joint approach with the Housing Benefits service for the future use of Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure they are used effectively to prevent homelessness and to determine future areas of action | Joint approach to review and monitor future Discretionary Housing Payments with Housing Solutions representative at panel assessments. | April 2014 Over strategy period | PHO, HB Manager | Officer time, DWP budget | Increase the number of approved DHP applications to assist homeless clients into suitable accommodation. |
| | Develop financial inclusion strategy, with integrated financial management, budgetary skills and benefit advice. | 2014 | DM Commissioning, PHO, HB/DWP, key agencies | Officer staff and partner agency time | Improved referral process and access for debt advice and money management to promote financial inclusion. |
| 3B: Develop under-occupation schemes with housing providers to free up family homes and encourage shared housing | Review & monitor social tenants affected by the under occupation penalties enforced through the welfare reform. | 2014 Reviewed quarterly. | PHO, SDO, RPs and partner agencies | Officer and partner agency time. DHP budget | Early intervention and targeted support for households affected by the under-occupation penalties and social rent conversions to prevent homelessness and promote tenancy sustainment. |
| | Consult with housing providers to develop a transfer/ shared housing scheme for clients affected by under-occupation penalties. | April 2014 | DM Commissioning , PHO, HHT & housing partners | Officer time, housing budget | Increasing housing provision available to meet future housing needs and encouraged shared housing to reduce homelessness within the district. |

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 4A: Improve access to housing using the private rented sector and shared housing options | Develop and implement Private Rented Sector Offer policy which relates to new powers within the Localism Act 2011. This will allow the council to discharge full homeless duty into the private rented sector. | April 2014 Reviewed over strategy period | DM Commissioning, PHO, Landlord Accreditation Officer | Within existing resources | Increase supply and choice of housing available to homeless households. |
| | Develop a housing pathway toolkit to direct homeless clients into the private rented sector and revise procedures and training to incorporate policy change. | April 2014 | PHO, HST | Within existing resources | Devise assessment process and measures to encourage and support private landlords to accept homeless households. |
| | Produce a report and options analysis to consider the outcomes of landlord surveys and views of PPP to undertake a gaps and options analysis to include: | 2014/2015 Over the strategy period | PHO, Landlord, Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health, RPs | Within existing resources | Offer staff/ agency awareness training of PRSO policy and impact on homelessness services. Review analysis of current activity and performance to determine future trends and demand within the private rented sector. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of creating a social lettings agency. • Review incentives offered to landlord. • Effectiveness of Bond Guarantee. • Out of area moves where appropriate. | | | DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO | Develop social letting agency to facilitate and manage PRS accommodation and reduce future homelessness. Improve advice and support services available to landlords and clients. |
| 4B: Improve working with | Liaise with and support agencies and supported housing providers to identify private sector housing | 2013/14 Reviewed over strategy period | PHO, Landlord Accreditation Officer, | CLG Homelessness Grant, DHP, BGS | Increase accelerated move on process to empower individuals to secure suitable accommodation |

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>private sector landlords and promote the Bond Guarantee Scheme</p> | <p>options for vulnerable people.</p> | | <p>Accommodation providers</p> | | <p>and reduce dependency upon hostel accommodation provision.</p> |
| | <p>Develop sustainment and prevention roles with private landlords.</p> | <p>Over the strategy period</p> | <p>Landlord Accreditation Officer, Landlord Forum</p> | <p>Within existing resources</p> | <p>Encourage and increase involvement with private landlords to work with the council to address and resolve housing/homelessness.</p> |
| | <p>Develop a multi- agency approach for bringing empty properties back into use. Exploring the potential through initiatives and as funding becomes available with voluntary and community Sector agencies.</p> | <p>Reviewed throughout period of strategy</p> | <p>DM Commissioning, PHO Manager, Environmental Health, HHT, private rented sector</p> | <p>Empty Homes Fund, CLG Homelessness Grant, housing budget</p> | <p>Encourage key partners and agencies to develop financial and option incentives. This will free up housing stock to reduce and prevent future homelessness.</p> |
| | <p>Undertake publicity campaign to raise awareness and inform landlords, letting agents and tenants of services available.</p> | <p>April 2014</p> | <p>Landlord Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health</p> | <p>CLG Homelessness Grant, Cheshire sub-regional prevention fund</p> | <p>Improved advice and support offered to landlords, letting agents and tenants to improve service delivery.</p> |
| <p>Maintain register of reputable accredited private sector landlords with affordable good quality properties. To publicise using Property Pool Plus as a mechanism for moving within the existing social sector.</p> | <p>Review over strategy period.</p> | <p>Landlord Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health, Landlord Forum</p> | <p>Within existing resources</p> | <p>Encourage and support people to let out their property or rooms.</p> <p>Private rented sector properties advertised on Property Pool Plus scheme to increase housing provision available and prevent</p> | |

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|----------|--------|---------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | homelessness. |

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 5A: Develop an effective multi-agency approach to support vulnerable and complex needs households to sustain and secure affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness | Review intelligence which will identify arising needs for vulnerable and complex needs households. | Over the strategy period | DM Commissioning, Adult Comm., PHO, SDO | Within existing resources | Maximise efficiency to deliver a planned approach to respond to the needs of vulnerable clients. Ensure adequate housing and support is made available to address future demands. |
| | Work in partnership to develop supported accommodation project for single adults with complex needs and due to be discharged from hospital. | April 2014 Review | PHO, DM Commissioning, Health & Social Care, Whitechapel, YMCA | Budget TBC, officer and agency time | Efficient and timely approach to provide suitable self-contained accommodation and outreach support to address the needs of vulnerable clients. |
| | Develop complex needs /hospital discharge pathway plan and devise multi agency priority panel to review and monitor complex needs client group. | January 2014 | PHO, DM Commissioning, Health & Social Care, Whitechapel | Officer time | Multi agency approach to identify key responsibilities to increase access to suitable accommodation and support for complex needs groups to achieve successful outcomes and prevent repeat homelessness. |
| | Amend Allocations policy to ensure that Armed Forces are identified as priority client group. | Over the strategy period | Cheshire sub-regional group, Commissioning, PHO, RP | Within existing resources | Provide integrated and accessible services to ensure priority is given to Armed Forces personnel due to be discharged from service. |

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|--|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| | | | Partners | | |
| 5B: Support young people and facilitate the delivery of integrated housing, care and support for young people at risk, care leavers, young offenders and teenage parents | Develop social enterprise opportunities in education, training and employment to meet the needs of single homeless people in Halton. | Over the strategy period | PHO, YPT, HST, training providers | Officer time | Improved partnership working to improve access to training, education and housing services for young people. |
| | Identify lead agencies to seek funding and improve services available for young people. | Over the strategy period | DM Commissioning, PHO, YPT, regional partners/ agencies | Officer time, SP budget | To develop and sustain opportunities for young people to increase skills and prevent future homelessness. |
| | Develop specialised mediation service to work with young people and families. | 2014 Over the strategy period | PHO, YPT, partner agencies | Budget TBC, officer time | Improve services for young people and families to work through housing and social issues and promote positive outcomes. |
| | To ensure that all staff working with young people affected by homelessness have the appropriate skills, knowledge and safeguarding training. | 2014 Over the strategy period | PHO, homelessness forum members, regional partner agencies | Training budget, officer time | Increase learning and development training opportunities to raise awareness of key safeguarding issues and reporting process. |
| | Review joint (Southwark) protocol with Children's Service and YOT to ensure the council is fully compliant with legal case law judgements and legislation. | 2014/15 | PHO, YPT, YOT | SP budget, officer time | To improve joint working between services for 16/17 year olds, enabling transition towards independent living with tailored support to reduce repeat homelessness. |
| Promote young person involvement to fully participate in the delivery of | 2014/ 2015 | PHO, YPT, forum members, | | | |

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|--|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| | youth service. Develop emergency respite accommodation for 16 – 21 year olds to provide multi agency approach to prevent homelessness. | | accommodation providers DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, YPT Policy Officer | S/ P Budget. Budget TBC | To be actively involved with Homeless Forum and identify and deliver effective services for young people. A crisis intervention centre made available for young people threatened with homelessness, offering a holistic approach to facilitate them returning back home and preventing homelessness. |
| 5C: Improve partnership working and communication with key agencies, police, probation and housing providers to address the growing housing need for offender | Review current housing policy and procedures to identify gaps in provision and information required from providers to increase housing accommodation for offenders. | 2014/ 2015. | PHO, Probation, PPO, Policy, RPs | Within existing resources | Identify and address barriers to increase the availability of housing provision for offenders. |
| | Investigate Registered Providers' reluctance to house Schedule 1 offenders | April 2014. | PHO, SDO, Probation, RPs | Within existing resources | Increase involvement with MAPPA to gain a better understanding of the housing issues faced by offenders. |
| | To continue the integrated approach to offender management between criminal justice agencies and Homelessness services. | Over the strategy period | PHO Probation, Cheshire Police RPs | Staff time | To reduce the risks to the community posed by those individuals who are homeless and have a pattern of prolific, drug related offending. |
| 5D: Joint partnership working with agencies, police and housing | Increase partnership working with domestic abuse services, Police and registered providers to offer a range of rehousing options and solutions to homeless victims of abuse. | Over the strategy period | PHO, SDO DV Co-ordinator Policy officer, DA service providers | Within existing resources | Improve access to suitable accommodation options and improve service delivery to support victims of abuse to prevent homelessness. |

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| <p>providers to offer options and solutions to victims of domestic abuse to support them to remain within their home</p> | <p>Develop temporary dispersed housing provision to accommodate families with dependent male children and male victims fleeing domestic abuse.</p> | <p>Over the strategy period</p> | <p>DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, DV Co-ordinator, RPs</p> | <p>Budget to be identified.</p> | <p>Increased housing provision for victims of abuse to provide safe accommodation with tailored support.</p> |
| | <p>Work in partnership with Sanctuary Scheme to develop safe security options to facilitate victims of abuse to remain in or return to their homes.</p> | <p>Over the strategy period</p> | <p>DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Sanctuary Scheme providers</p> | <p>SP Funding</p> | <p>Reduce the number of male/females becoming homeless due to domestic abuse.</p> |
| | <p>Improve the substance misuse service response to drug and/or alcohol related domestic abuse.</p> | <p>2014/ 2015</p> | <p>Substance Misuse Service, Domestic Abuse Service, PHO</p> | <p>Budget TBC</p> | <p>The improvement of identification of victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse provided by substance misuse service staff and detailed within homeless assessment.</p> |
| | <p>Agree a referral criteria and pathway plan between the substance misuse, domestic abuse and Housing Solutions Services.</p> | <p>April 2014</p> | <p>PHO Commissioner, Substance Misuse Service, Domestic Abuse Service</p> | <p>Within existing resources</p> | <p>To reduce the impact of parental substance misuse and domestic abuse on children and young people.</p> |

Strategic objective 6: Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation

| Priority | Action | By when | Responsibility | Resources | Success measures and outcomes |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| 6A: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation (including B&B) to maximise the use of prevention options available to reduce homelessness | Continued achievement of performance -indicator to reduce the use of temporary accommodation. | P1E – over strategy period | PHO HST | Within existing resource. | Reduce homeless levels and dependency upon temporary accommodation services. |
| | Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by 10% annually. | P1E – over strategy period | PHO HST | Within existing resources | Reduced level of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation by fully utilising prevention service options available to reduce homelessness. |
| | Evaluate and develop temporary accommodation provision within the district to ensure it meets the needs of statutory homeless households. | 2015 Reviewed quarterly | DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Policy Officer | Budget TBC | Reduced /remodelled supported housing provision to address future housing trends and meet the needs of statutory homeless households. Reduce level of voids and rent loss. |
| | Deliver sufficient, appropriate temporary accommodation suitable for homeless prevention at crisis point. | 2013/2014 | PHO, Supported Housing Providers | Within existing resources | Improved prevention assessment process to tackle homeless crisis and developed change in service/accommodation provision to promote prevention solutions, including private rented sector. |

11. Glossary

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Benefit cap | There's a limit on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can receive. This is called the benefit cap. It is £500 for couples with or without children living with them; £500 for single parents with children living with them; and £350 for single adults who don't have children or whose children don't live with them. |
| BGS | Bond Guarantee Scheme This scheme is aimed to help those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and can provide a landlord with a bond guarantee certificate, which confirms the deposit amount will be paid should it be reasonably required at the end of the tenancy. |
| CCG | Clinical Commissioning Group CCGs are responsible for implementing the commissioning roles as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. They are groups of GP practices that are responsible for commissioning health and care services for patients. |
| CLG | Communities and Local Government |
| DHP | Discretionary Housing Payment These can be made by the council if a person's housing benefit or council tax benefit is less than the full amount of their rent or council tax. |
| DM | Divisional Manager Refers to the Divisional Manager of the Commissioning section of the council, where the Housing Solutions Team sits. |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| DWP | Department for Work and Pensions |
| GIFT Initiative | Halton Borough Council operates a 'gift' initiative for 18 – 25 year olds, which provides some essential items to assist in furnishing their home. |
| Gold standard | In its report 'Making every contact count: a joint approach to preventing homelessness' CLG set local authorities ten local challenges, which will lead to homelessness teams delivering a 'gold standard' service. The council pledges, through implementation of this strategy, to meet this gold standard. |
| HHT | Halton Housing Trust The council transferred its housing stock to HHT in 2005. |
| HSO | Housing Solutions Officer |
| HST | Housing Solutions Team The team carry out assessments under statutory homelessness legislation and carry out homelessness prevention work. |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Local connection | Halton Borough Council will only have a duty to assist someone under homelessness legislation if that person has a local connection to the borough. If their normal place of residence is in another authority area then Halton will refer them to that authority. |
| Localism Act (2012) | This provides new freedoms and flexibility for local government; new rights and powers for communities and individuals; a much more democratic planning system and decisions about housing are taken locally. |
| MAPPA | Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements The principal multi-agencies are the Probation Service, Prison Service, Police and Local Authorities and collectively they are known as 'Responsible Authorities.' The arrangements are a set of procedures for dealing with registered sex offenders and other violent individuals who pose a threat of serious harm to the public. |
| Mortgage Rescue | The Housing Solutions Team has a dedicated Mortgage Rescue Adviser to help those who are facing repossession. It provides advice on the help available, negotiating with mortgage lenders and attending court hearings. |
| NHAS | National Homelessness Advisory Service |
| Nightstop | A supported lodgings scheme which enables young people to stay with a volunteer host family for an emergency period, whilst more suitable short-term housing is found or until mediation leads to the young person returning to their family home. |
| NSNO | No Second Night Out A campaign to ensure no-one spends more than one night on the streets in the Liverpool City Region. Halton participates in this scheme along with six other councils in the city region. As part of the scheme, people are urged to call a helpline if they see someone sleeping rough. The relevant agencies are then alerted in order to find somewhere for the person to sleep. |
| PHO | Principal Housing Solutions Officer |
| PPO | Persistent and Prolific Offenders |
| PPP | Property Pool Plus This is the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme used by Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral councils and over 20 housing associations to advertise and let their vacant properties. Housing Associations advertise their available vacancies every week through Property Pool Plus. The scheme offers increased choice allowing applicants who are looking for affordable housing to see what vacant properties are available, and express an interest in selecting a suitable new home. PPP informs applicants what priority banding they have, based on the urgency of their need to move from their current property. Properties are advertised and applicants are invited to place a bid (express an interest). The system then puts people into priority order for the property they have bid for, based on their priority band and application date. |
| PPP Housing Register | The register has been developed by Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral Councils in partnership with over 20 Housing Associations across Halton and Merseyside. A single application to join the Housing Register allows individuals to be considered for properties advertised by all the participating housing associations. |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| PRSO Policy | <p>Private Rented Sector Offer Policy</p> <p>Since November 2012 local housing authorities have been able to discharge their duty to secure settled accommodation to homeless households by using privately rented accommodation, as well as homes owned or managed by social landlords. This creates a greater range of options for local families, however the local housing authority must ensure that decisions of suitability are made objectively and take into account both the circumstances of the family and the availability of homes in the area.</p> |
| RP | <p>Registered Provider (of social housing)</p> <p>RPs are more commonly known as housing associations and have previously been referred to as Registered Social Landlords (or RSLs). They are independent societies, bodies of trustees or companies established for the purpose of providing low-cost social housing for people in housing need on a non-profit-making basis.</p> |
| Sanctuary Scheme | <p>This is a multi-agency initiative that is focused on victims of domestic violence. Its aim is to enable households where the person is at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes by installing sanctuary measures.</p> |
| SDO | <p>Service Development Officer</p> |
| Southwark Protocol | <p>The protocol aims to provide a co-ordinated response to the prevention of homelessness amongst 16-17 year-olds, ensuring they receive the right level of support and can access appropriate and suitable accommodation where necessary. The protocol was a response to judgements by the House of Lords which reaffirmed and clarified that the duty under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 takes precedence over the duties within Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 in providing for children in need who require accommodation.</p> |
| SP | <p>Supporting People</p> <p>Originally ring-fenced to fund housing related support services for vulnerable adults, including homeless people. In 2009 local authorities were no longer required to spend this funding on housing related support. In 2011 decisions about where to allocate funds became entirely at the discretion of the local authorities. Thus, SP no longer exists in a defined way and is managed in different ways by different local authorities.</p> |
| Statutory homelessness | <p>This is where a household is deemed to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless under the relevant legislation and in this case the council has a duty to find accommodation for the household.</p> |
| Youth Hubs | <p>These are venues for young people (aged 13-19) youth groups, voluntary organisations and partners, where young people can have a say in activities in their local area.</p> |
| YOT | <p>Youth Offending Team</p> <p>This is a multi-agency team that is co-ordinated by a local authority with the intention of reducing the risk of young people offending and re-offending, and to provide counsel and rehabilitation to those who do offend. YOT engages young offenders in a wide range of tasks designed to put something positive back into the local community through unpaid activities.</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| REPORT TO: | Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board |
| DATE: | 26 th March 2014 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director – Policy and Resources |
| PORTFOLIO: | Physical Environment |
| SUBJECT: | Affordable Housing Update |
| WARDS: | Borough-wide |

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on affordable housing development across the Borough and current Council policy concerning the delivery of affordable housing.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the content of the report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Affordable Housing

- 3.1 In planning terms 'Affordable Housing' refers to a particular type of housing tenure, which is delivered by a Registered Provider and secured in perpetuity. Registered Providers are providers of social housing, and can be private, public or not for profit organisations. Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households who cannot afford to access suitable market housing.
- 3.2 Social rented housing is rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and Registered Providers of social housing, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers to households eligible for social rented housing.
- 3.3 Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- 3.4 Intermediate affordable housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above, including shared equity products. It also includes other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.
- 3.5 There are two main methods of providing affordable housing; firstly through Registered Provider's developing 100% affordable housing

schemes funded through their own resources or more usually utilising Homes and Communities Agency Grants; or secondly through the planning system using Section 106 Agreements. The latter would require affordable housing to be delivered on market housing sites (those built by a private developer on the open market).

Halton's Affordable Housing Needs

- 3.6 Housing need is defined as the quantity of housing required by households who are unable to access suitable housing without financial assistance.
- 3.7 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Councils to plan to meet the full objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing in their areas. Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) are used to assess the housing needs arising in an area and inform the development of housing and planning policy for affordable housing which consider the balance between supply and demand for affordable housing. They provide evidence to inform policies about the level of affordable housing required. The Halton SHMA (2011) has been undertaken in conjunction with neighbouring authorities in the Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area.
- 3.8 Overall, the SHMA identified that (in 2010) 2,053 households were falling into housing need per annum. The study forecast an annual supply of 1,162 units (relets / committed new build) to meet these needs, leaving a predicted 'unmet need' across the Borough for an additional 891 affordable dwellings per annum for the following five years 2010-15 (estimated at the time of the Halton SHMA Household Survey in 2010).
- 3.9 This is made up of a requirement for 78 units per annum to meet the backlog of existing households in need and a further 813 units per annum to meet projected future needs. The SHMA notes that the high level of housing need identified reflects a combination of factors including the difference between the costs of market housing and local incomes (particularly of younger households), and the decline by 15% in the stock of affordable housing within the Borough over the last decade which could have been used to meet need.
- 3.10 A sub regional SHMA (including Halton) is proposed to be undertaken in 2015-16. This would reassess the level of affordable housing need in Halton. It should be acknowledged that the SHMA should be seen as an on-going process with key data monitored into the future to see the 'direction' in which the housing market is moving.
- 3.11 Annual unmet need for affordable housing is far in excess of the proposed total housing delivery targets as set out in the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) which is 552 dwellings per annum. Although the predicted unmet affordable need is in excess of the total housing policy figure for the Borough, this is increasingly not unusual. In Halton

the unmet affordable need is 891 per annum (from 2010) with the Core Strategy seeking to provide for 552 net dwelling gain (61%). In St.Helens the corresponding figures were 1,225 unmet need and 570 net dwelling gain figure (47%).

- 3.12 It should be acknowledged that the SHMA is an evidence base document that is used to inform policy. The affordable housing needs that are identified by the SHMA are not a defined target that must be met. There is no policy consequence of not meeting the 891 affordable dwellings per annum (2010-2015). The SHMA recognises that it is unlikely that this requirement would be met especially when viability is taken into consideration. It is therefore essential to seek to maximise the contribution of new affordable units from new housing developments although the viability of the impact of such a requirement on the overall development must be considered.

Halton Affordable Housing policy

- 3.13 In addition to the SHMA, the Council commissioned an Economic Viability Assessment (DTZ, 2010) to consider the realistic contribution that can be secured from new housing development across different housing areas under different market conditions. By doing so the Economic Viability Assessment was able to determine the appropriate level for an affordable housing requirement. The assessment showed that under a Mid-Market Position¹, 25% affordable housing is deliverable at a 50% social rented and 50% intermediate housing tenure split. Although a higher percentage of affordable housing could be delivered in an Improved Market Position (40% with a 34% social rented and 64% intermediate tenure split) it is acknowledged through the assessment that it is difficult to predict whether the improved market scenario will ever be met.
- 3.14 Taking into account the need for affordable housing and the viability of residential development, the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan set a policy requirement for affordable housing to be sought at 25% of the total residential units proposed on all schemes including 10 or more dwellings (net gain) or 0.33 hectares or greater for residential purposes. The policy also seeks to secure 50% of new affordable housing provision as social and affordable rented tenures and 50% intermediate housing tenures across the Borough.
- 3.15 The provision of affordable housing on open market residential development sites will be secured by means of a legal agreement (planning obligation) with the landowner under the provision of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 3.16 The Affordable Housing SPD which was adopted in January 2014 was produced to expand upon policy CS13: Affordable Housing and to

¹ The Economic Viability Assessment used a Baseline Position of revenues at May 2010. The Mid Market Position used a 10% increase on revenues over and above the Baseline Position whilst the Improved Market Position assumed a 20% increase.

provide greater certainty and clarity for all parties involved in the delivery of affordable housing in Halton through the planning system. Specifically the Affordable Housing SPD aims to:

- a) Maximise the opportunities available and ensure the smooth delivery of affordable housing to meet Halton's housing needs; and
- b) Reduce uncertainty, ensure a consistent approach and provide clear guidance for all stakeholders to follow.

Delivery of Affordable Housing

- 3.17 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy Local Plan and the introduction of the Affordable Housing policy, applications for housing in qualifying sites are subject to the policy requirement. To date, 5 applications have been assessed, but unfortunately, the viability of each development would have been compromised by the inclusion of an affordable requirement and as such no units have yet been secured through this route.
- 3.18 With regards to 100% affordable housing schemes there have been 18 affordable housing schemes completed since 2010 to date with a total of 510 dwellings. There are also currently 9 affordable housing schemes with 222 dwellings under construction. An additional 6 affordable housing schemes with an estimated 169 dwellings have secured funding and there are 8 schemes consisting of 110 dwellings in the pipeline. Appendix A details these affordable housing schemes across the Borough and Appendix B / C shows the locations of these schemes in Widnes and Runcorn respectively.
- 3.19 Since 2010, in total, there have been 1,011 affordable housing dwellings completed or in the pipeline which goes some way to meeting Halton's affordable housing need. However, this figure is greatly under the 891 dwellings per annum unmet affordable need (2010-15) identified in the SHMA.
- 3.20 The vast majority of the 100% affordable housing schemes have been supported by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Housing Programme which is aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing in England. Delivery of affordable housing through the HCA accounts for the majority of affordable housing supply across England.
- 3.21 The Department for Communities and Local Government released figures in November 2013 which show that in 2012-13, 86% of total affordable home delivery across England was reported by the HCA (or the Greater London Authority (GLA)), a reduction from 89% in 2011-12. Over this time period (2011-13), the total number of affordable homes reported by the HCA (or the GLA) has decreased by around 30%. The remainder of affordable housing has been delivered predominately through Section 106 Agreements. The number of affordable homes completed through Section 106 Agreements in England without grant rose by 19% to 4,920 in the period 2012-13.

- 3.22 It should be acknowledged that the investment in affordable housing through the Affordable Homes Programme has been reduced. The investment for the period 2011 – 2015 is expected to be £4.5bn (over four years) whilst the investment for the period 2015 – 2018 is expected to be only £2.9bn (over three years) with 1.2bn for the GLA and £1.7bn for the rest of England. This is compared to investment in the 2008/11 period of £8.4bn (over three years).
- 3.23 The reduction in affordable housing funded through the HCA highlights the importance of the introduction of affordable housing policies aimed at market housing schemes.

Affordable Housing Need Vs Supply

- 3.24 A significant proportion of the affordable housing required to meet Halton's housing needs during the Core Strategy plan period (to 2028) will need to be delivered through Section 106 Agreements. As a result the Council must ensure that the Core Strategy policy CS13: Affordable Housing, actually delivers on the ground. This will require partnership working with developers, landowners, housing associations, the HCA and across Council departments particularly Planning and Transport Strategy, Development Control, Housing Strategy, Property Services and Legal Services.
- 3.25 However, there is a need to recognise that Halton (like other Local Authorities across the country), particularly when consideration is given to the viability of development, will be unlikely to meet fully its affordable housing needs.
- 3.26 It must therefore also be recognised that the private rented sector (through Housing Benefit) does make a significant contribution to filling this gap between need and supply. The Halton SHMA states that in relation to meeting housing need and given the levels of affordable housing need shown in the study, the private rented sector is likely to continue to be used to some degree to make up for the shortfall of genuine affordable housing for the foreseeable future. The 2010 Halton Household Survey showed that 57% of private rented sector tenancies (at that time) were supported by Housing Benefit.
- 3.27 Although the private rented sector has a role to play in meeting housing needs, it is not appropriate to treat this sector as a form of affordable housing and it should be recognised that the private rented sector does not provide secure tenancies. It is through Council policy interventions, such as the Affordable Housing policy, that reliance on the private rented sector to 'bridge the gap' is reduced.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Up until 2013, Halton Borough Council did not have the policy framework in place to require affordable housing to be delivered on

market housing sites. The Halton Core Strategy Local Plan introduced this requirement for the first time and the Affordable Housing SPD seeks to provide additional guidance on this requirement. It is hoped that through the provision of this policy requirement the delivery of affordable housing in the Borough will be supported through the planning system using Section 106 Agreements.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Introducing an affordable housing requirement for the Borough through the Core Strategy requires Planning Officers to highlight the new policy to applicants and ensure compliance with the policy prior to the validation of any applicable planning application. In addition, officers in Property Services are required to consider the robustness of any Financial Viability Assessments submitted to the Council regarding the provision of affordable housing (further detail is included within the Affordable Housing SPD).

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Delivering affordable housing will help to ensure that children and young people across the Borough grow up in, and thrive in, safe residential environments and communities.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Although the priority of employment, learning and skills in Halton is not specifically connected to the delivery of affordable housing, there is a close relationship between the economy and the housing market, with housing a driver of, but also responsive to, local economic growth and performance.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Delivering affordable housing across the Borough supports the development of well-designed residential communities that are sustainable and accessible to all.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Delivering affordable housing will contribute to ensuring high standards of residential design for affordable units; this will include creating places that feel safe, secure and welcoming for everyone.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The delivery of affordable housing will support the creation of good quality residential environments that will assist in the urban regeneration of the Borough.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 No legal or financial risks to the Council have been identified. However, the evidence base used to inform the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan demonstrates that there is a large affordable housing need across the Borough which the Council must acknowledge and seek to reduce. Policy CS13 Affordable Housing aims to maximise the opportunities available for the provision of affordable housing to meet Halton's housing needs. Failing to adhere to this policy, particularly in viable development areas, will mean that the shortfall in affordable housing provision will widen. This will increase the dependence on Halton's private rented sector to make up for shortages in affordable housing.
- 7.2 The supply of good quality affordable housing is a pre-requisite for a strong and vibrant economy, for the health and well-being of individuals and for the stability of communities. It follows that an undersupply of affordable housing will have adverse consequences in these areas and a detrimental impact on people and communities across the Borough.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Current council planning policy regarding Affordable Housing and in particular policy CS13: Affordable Housing of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan and the Affordable Housing SPD will contribute to meeting the housing needs of Halton's communities. The SPD also encourages developers to meet high access standards in the design of affordable housing provision such as those for wheelchair accessible housing.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

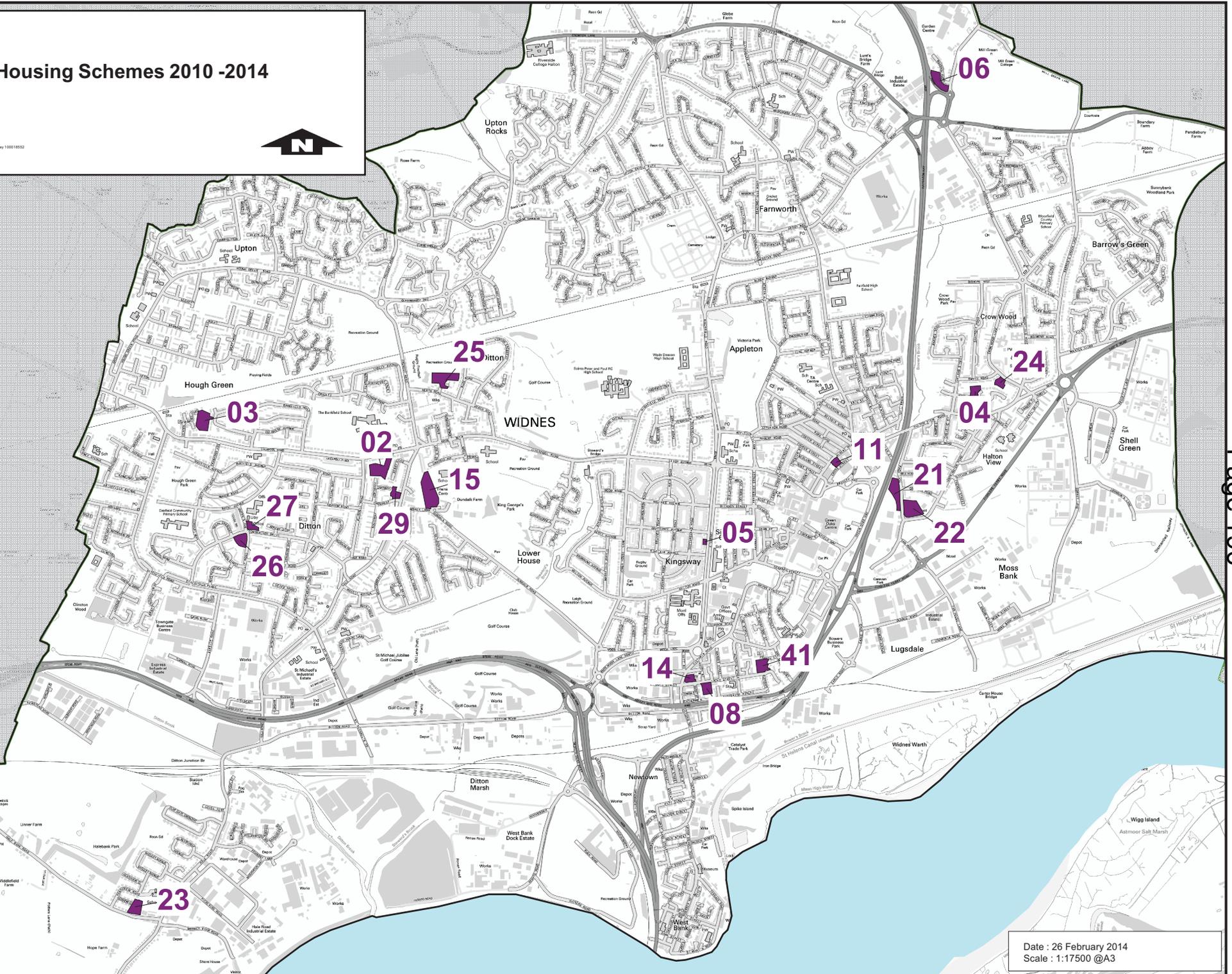
| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Consultation Draft Affordable Housing SPD (Oct 2013) | Planning & Transport Strategy, Municipal Building | Rachel Wright |
| Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (April 2013) | Planning & Transport Strategy, Municipal Building | Rachel Wright |
| Halton Housing Strategy 2013 - 2018 (2013) | Housing Strategy | Steve Williams |
| Draft Affordable Housing SPD (May 2012) | Planning & Transport Strategy, Municipal Building | Rachel Wright |
| Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2011) | Planning & Transport Strategy, Municipal Building | Rachel Wright |
| Economic Viability Assessment (November 2010) | Planning & Transport Strategy, Municipal Building | Rachel Wright |

| APPENDIX A: Affordable Housing Schemes | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|--|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Map Ref* | Site Name | Location | Description | Developer | Proposed No. Dwellings | No. Dwellings Completed | No. Dwellings Under Construction | Site Position | Application No. |
| 34 | Land North of Barnfield Ave | Runcorn | Construction of 74 No. new dwellings | LHT & Riverside HA | 74 | 74 | 0 | Site Completed 2010/11 | 09/00018/FUL |
| 35 | Nos 49-62 And 101-136 Kingshead Close | Runcorn | Construction of 33 No. new dwellings | CDS Housing | 33 | 33 | 0 | Site Completed 2010/11 | 08/00289/FUL |
| 36 | Nos 1-16 And 101-140 Keepers Walk | Runcorn | Construction of 36 No. new dwellings | CDS Housing | 36 | 36 | 0 | Site Completed 2010/11 | 08/00470/FUL |
| 37 | Land At Richard Close | Runcorn | Proposed new two storey brick block comprising 6 No.flats | Liverpool Housing Trust | 6 | 6 | 0 | Site Completed 2010/11 | 09/00251/FUL |
| No. Dwellings Completed 2010-2011 | | | | | | 149 | | | |
| 38 | Castlefields Local Centre, Kingshead Close | Runcorn | Erection of 2 three storey blocks | Plus Housing Group Ltd | 25 | 25 | 0 | Site Completed 2011/12 | 10/00094/FUL |
| 39 | 101-244 Hedge Hey, Castlefields | Runcorn | Construction of 34 No. flats | LHT | 34 | 34 | 0 | Site Completed 2011/12 | 08/00481/FUL |
| 40 | Land Off Brackendale | Runcorn | Construction of 18 No. houses and 8 No. apartments | Seddon Homes Ltd | 26 | 26 | 0 | Site Completed 2011/12 | 09/00430/FUL |
| 41 | Clarke Gardens | Widnes | Construction of a two storey block of 12 No. new build flats | HHT | 18 | 18 | 0 | Site Completed 2011/12 | 09/00270/FUL |
| No. Dwellings Completed 2011-2012 | | | | | | 103 | | | |
| 1 | Brookvale Ave N. | Runcorn | Land by Gorran Haven | Your Housing Group | 24 | 24 | 0 | Site Completed 2012 | 07/00726/FUL 10/00353/S73 11/00430/S73 |
| 2 | Naughton Fields | Widnes | former Liverpool Rd CP school | HHT | 47 | 47 | 0 | Site Completed 2012 | 10/00500/FUL |
| 3 | Avondale Close | Widnes | Infill site | HHT | 22 | 22 | 0 | Site Completed 2012 | 10/00043/FUL |
| 4 | Houghton Street | Widnes | Infill/garage site | HHT | 12 | 9 | 0 | Site Completed 2012 | 11/00183/FUL |
| 5 | Kingsway | Widnes | Infill site | HHT | 3 | 3 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 12/00054/FUL |
| 6 | Mill Lane | Widnes | Land by Rivendell Nursery | HHT | 20 | 20 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 10/00150/FUL |
| 7 | Russell Rd | Runcorn | Former church site | HHT | 23 | 23 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 12/00199/FUL |
| 8 | Lacey St | Widnes | Car park | HHT | 12 | 12 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 12/00016/FUL |
| 9 | Woodlands/King Arthurs | Runcorn | Site of cleared deck access flats | LHT | 67 | 89 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 10/00005/FUL 10/00517/FUL |
| 10 | Spinney Walk | Runcorn | Site of cleared deck access flats | LHT | 9 | 9 | 0 | Site Completed 2013 | 11/00085/FUL |
| No. Dwellings Completed 2012-2014 | | | | | | 258 | | | |
| 11 | Albert Road | Widnes | Former petrol station | HHT | 39 | 0 | 39 | Under Construction | 13/00174/FUL |
| 12 | Festival Way | Runcorn | Land by Centenary House/Festival Way | HHT | 20 | 0 | 20 | Under Construction | 12/00015/FUL |
| 13 | Linkway | Runcorn | Rear of Grange community centre | HHT | 33 | 0 | 31 | Under Construction | 12/00038/FUL |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------|---|-----------|----------------------------|---|------------|---|--|--|
| 14 | Victoria Rd/Lacey St | Widnes | Former Queens Hall | HHT | 17 | 0 | 17 | Under Construction | 13/00071/FUL | |
| 15 | Ashley Green, Dundalk Rd. WA8 8DF | Widnes | Former Pingot day care centre | HHT | 57 | 0 | 57 | Under Construction | 13/00112/FUL | |
| 16 | Castlefields Ave East | Runcorn | Former Barge Pub site | Plus Dane | 20 | 0 | 20 | Under Construction | 12/00238/FUL 13/00188/FUL | |
| 17 | Castlefields Village Square | Runcorn | Former community centre | LHT | 15 | 0 | 15 | Under Construction | 12/00391/FUL | |
| 18 | Hedge Hey Phase 3 | Runcorn | Site of cleared deck access flats | LHT | 16 | 0 | 16 | Under Construction | 12/00393/FUL | |
| 19 | Richards Close | Runcorn | Site of cleared deck access flats | LHT | 7 | 0 | 7 | Under Construction | 09/00066/FUL | |
| No. Dwellings under Construction | | | | | | | 222 | | | |
| 20 | Lockfield (Percival Lane) | Runcorn | Two infill sites | HHT | 21 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started | | |
| 21 | Page Lane | Widnes | Part P&O Site | HHT | 24 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started, subject to land acquisition | | |
| 22 | Page Lane | Widnes | Former Parker Merchancing site | HHT | 38 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started, subject to land acquisition | | |
| 23 | Halebank Rd | Widnes | Former Cock and Trumpet pub | HHT | 34 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started | 13/00372/FUL | |
| 24 | Crow Wood Lane | Widnes | Infill site | HHT | 16 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started | | |
| 25 | Brentfield | Widnes | Former club house, car park and bowling green | HHT | 36 | 0 | 0 | Funded but not started | 12/00513/OUT | |
| No. Dwellings with Funding Secured but not Started | | | | | 169 | | | | | |
| 26 | Coronation Drive | Widnes | Yew Tree Pub site | HHT | 19 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | 13/00043/FUL | |
| 27 | Queens Ave | Widnes | Former HDL office | HHT | 12 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | 13/00042/FUL (Pending) | |
| 28 | Grangeway | Runcorn | Grange House - former HHT office | HHT | 4 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | 13/00110/FUL | |
| 29 | Crossway | Widnes | Greenspace, former HBC Depot | HHT | 10 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | No current application | |
| 30 | Halton Brook Ave | Runcorn | Seddon 'Mosaic' site | Riverside | Numbers not yet determined | | | Not Started | 13/00087/FUL (Pending) | |
| 31 | The Ridgeway | Runcorn | Site of Jolly Brewer pub | LHT | 18 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | No current application | |
| 32 | Castlefields Ave North | Runcorn | Former Bridgewater day centre | TBC | 20 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | 13/00092/FUL (pending) | |
| 33 | Shepherds Row | Runcorn | Site of cleared deck access flats | Plus Dane | 27 | 0 | 0 | Not Started | 12/00417/DEM No planning app for Development | |
| No. Dwellings Funding not Secured | | | | | 110 | | | | | |
| *Please note that the analysis of affordable housing schemes from 2010-2012 was added to the data at a later date (than the 2012-2014 data) thus meaning that the map reference numbers are not chronological. | | | | | | | | | | |

Widnes - Affordable Housing Schemes 2010 -2014

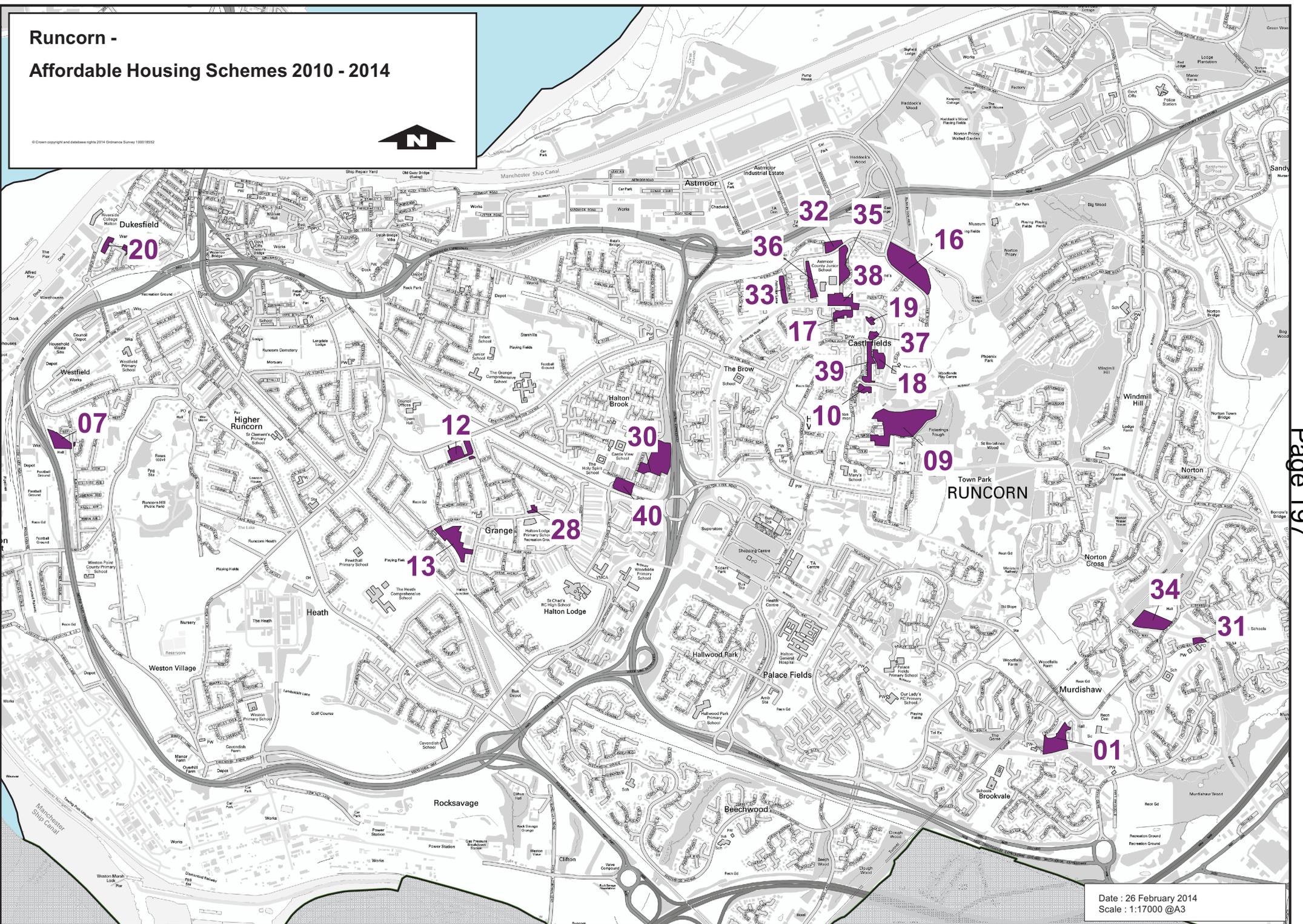
© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100018552



Date : 26 February 2014
Scale : 1:17500 @A3

Runcorn - Affordable Housing Schemes 2010 - 2014

© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100018552



Date : 26 February 2014
Scale : 1:17000 @A3

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 26th March 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment

SUBJECT: Contaminated land capital projects programme – funding withdrawal

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the decision by DEFRA to withdraw funding available to Local Authorities through the Contaminated Land Capital Projects Programme and the potential implications for Halton.

2 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 was introduced in 2000, and set out the regime for identifying and remediating contaminated land in England and Wales. Fundamental to the regime is the duty of local authorities to inspect their districts, underpinned by a written strategy, and to seek remediation. To enable local authorities to fulfil these new duties an un-ring fenced amount was included in the Rate Support Grant (RSG), and DEFRA provided a central fund for LAs and the Environment Agency to undertake inspection activities or remediation where the public body was liable, no relevant party could be found or if work had to be completed in default. Those monies were initially available via Supplementary Credit Approvals, and then as a direct grant from 2006 as the Contaminated Land Capital Projects Programme.
- 3.2 From funding levels of £21M in 2001 and an initially slow uptake by LAs, as many took time to adjust to the implementation of the new legislation, the amount was held relatively stable until a significant reduction in 2009/10. This unfortunately seemed to coincide with increased demand from LAs (and the Environment Agency whom also utilised the fund for their responsibilities under the regime). For 2012/13 the budget was £4.35M and there were 86 bids totalling £13M.

- 3.3 The budget for 2013/14 was further reduced to £2M, but in December DEFRA has announced that it will no longer be funding the scheme. It has suggested that an annual £0.5M 'emergency fund' may be available up until 2017.
- 3.4 In the letter from the Under Secretary Lord de Mauley, it is stated that DEFRA believes that the vast majority of contaminated land will continue to be remediated through redevelopment. Whilst this is correct in some ways, and the regime has been a driver for land contamination to be fully considered and addressed through development, it fails to take two major points into account.
- 3.5 Firstly, and critically, Part 2A was designed to tackle those problems where there are no other solutions, so inherently those areas of land for which there are no plans for redevelopment or regeneration. Typically the high priority sites that Local Authorities have investigated under the legislation have been old landfills, public open spaces and residential estates. These scenarios clearly could not rely on the spending power of developers to deal with risks to health or the wider environment. All of the projects Halton and its neighbouring authorities have conducted would not have been addressed through redevelopment and without the Capital Projects Programme it is unlikely they would have been initiated, even though there is a statutory duty to do so.
- 3.6 Secondly, assuming that re-development is the main or only route, there is the issue of introducing a bias towards the southeast in terms of ability for land contamination to be assessed and remediated. High land values in the southeast allow for greater expenditure on contaminated land to be absorbed in the overall cost of development. As Halton knows only too well, land contamination can be the major factor in making redevelopment unviable, leaving land derelict or underused for years. Figures produced by the Environment Agency show that the distribution of funds from the Capital Projects Programme have been evenly distributed across the country, for example, in 2012/13 15 out of 21 eligible bids were funded in the northwest, compared to 11 out of 18 in the southeast.
- 3.7 Halton has relied upon and been very successful in applying for and being awarded contaminated land funding. Since 2002 Halton has received approximately £3.4M across six projects.

| Project | Funding amount |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Oakfield Drive | 157,000 |
| Stenhills / Grange School | 115,000 |
| St. Michael's Golf Course | 2,945,000 |
| Needham Close | 78,000 |
| Ellesmere Street | 44,000 |
| Heath Road allotments | 59,000 |

- 3.8 This year a bid for £12,000 for a project assessing housing in Runcorn was eligible but not funded as it wasn't scored as a high enough priority against other projects in an over-subscribed grant scheme. This project was progressed utilising internal expertise and resources. Such a relatively small scale scheme, an investigation of 16 residential properties, is feasible, however larger scale works, particularly remediation, will require significantly larger funds to achieve. How this can be approached by Halton and other Local Authorities in the future is now unclear.
- 3.9 The decision to withdraw funding leaves LAs in a position where they have a statutory duty to investigate, with a published strategy for how they will do so, but, beyond an un-ring fenced amount in the RSG settlement, limited means of fulfilling those duties.
- 3.10 In Halton, with its legacy of the heavy chemical industry, we have identified some 1300 sites that could be adversely impacted by contamination and the Contaminated Land Team has a budget of approximately £20,000. Whilst it is correct that redevelopment has and will continue to tackle some of these sites, it still leaves a significant proportion unassessed. Whilst implementation of the regime, has at times been slow, Halton has achieved more than many authorities, it is now difficult to not foresee a stalling of the implementation of Part 2A nationally. Implementation will either be done very slowly and incrementally over several years as finances allow, only selecting small or uncomplicated sites, or only pursuing sites where there is a high possibility of success of forcing remediation through either voluntary action by owners or polluters or through serving notices. This doesn't necessarily fit well with the guiding principle of focusing on identifying the most serious and pressing problems first. If investigations are spread over years, this in itself could cause blight, uncertainty and huge concern for residents and businesses in the Borough.
- 3.11 This removal of the key source of funding for work under Part 2A may necessitate a revision of the overall Inspection Strategy for Halton and its priorities with a focus on the practicalities of being able to investigate and where necessary remediate sites.
- 3.12 There was no consultation by DEFRA on its decision to withdraw funding, so officers have written to Government asking it to consider re-instating the grant scheme, particularly when considering that the original proposed fund for 2013/14 of £2M was rather modest as a pot for all the English Local Authorities and the Environment Agency.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A lack of an external funding stream for the statutory duties set out in Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 will place additional burdens on current Halton budgets in fulfilling those duties .

6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

This could have a negative impact on efforts to remove risks to health posed by land contamination within Halton.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The inability to deal with significant land contamination problems could have an adverse impact on the developability of land within Halton.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 None identified.

8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.