

# Profile of Wirral: Demographic analysis using ACORN

Wirral Public Health  
Intelligence

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## Profile of Wirral: Demographic analysis using ACORN

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### Report Overview

<b>Abstract</b>	Demographic profile of local area using ACORN to better understand the local population and inform local need
<b>Intended or potential audience</b>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wirral Partners</li><li>• General Public</li></ul> <b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director of Public Health and wider Public Health Team</li><li>• Regeneration</li><li>• Communications</li></ul>

## Key Findings

1. ACORN can be used to classify the population into 7 Categories, 22 Groups or 65 Types, based on their postcode.
2. The largest ACORN Category is 4: Steadfast Communities, with 92,505 people, or 28.3% of the Wirral population classified as belonging to this Group; this Group is typically 'middle of the road Britain', with working families on incomes just below the UK average.
3. Over half of the population of Wirral (54.8%) are classified as belonging to just 4 ACORN Groups, 3G: Settled Suburbia (12.1%), 4L: Traditional Homeowners (16.8%), 5R: Hard-Up Households (12.2%) and 6S: Cash-Strapped Families (13.7%).
4. Eight ACORN Groups exist in such small numbers in Wirral, they can mainly be disregarded in analysis concerning the Wirral population; these are 1A: Exclusive Addresses (0.0%), 1B: Flourishing Capital (0.0%), 2E: Prosperous Professionals (0.0%), 3I: Up-and-Coming Urbanities (0.5%), 3H: Metropolitan Surroundings (0.0%), 3J: Aspiring Communities (0.8%), 4N: Urban Diversity (0.3%) and 7V: Not Private Households (0.9%).
5. The geographic distribution of the different ACORN Categories, Groups and Types in Wirral reinforces very clearly, what is already known about deprivation in Wirral, with the east of Wirral is dominated by deprived Categories such as 5: Stretched Society and 6: Low-Income Living; the west of Wirral on the other hand, is dominated by more affluent ACORN Categories 1: Luxury Lifestyles and 2: Established Affluence.
6. Although the majority of the UK adult population (83.6%) now own a smartphone, this varies considerably; among the most common ACORN Group in Wirral (Group 6: Low-Income Living), this figure is much lower at only 80.4% compared to 85.3% in Group 3: Thriving Neighbourhoods.

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## Introduction

ACORN is a powerful geodemographic classification tool that segments the UK population by postcode. By analysing demographic data, social factors and consumer behaviour, ACORN can provide an innate understanding of people and places across the country.

ACORN enables users to make more informed decisions to assist planning and marketing strategies by painting a detailed picture of the kinds of people living in a catchment or region, buying goods, or using services.

ACORN has been developed by combining the comprehensive detail provided in the Census with the wealth of data included in CACI's Postcode 'Spine' to ensure the data is consistently up-to-date and provides an accurate view into the UK population.

CACI's Postcode 'Spine' has been built by combining millions of data points from dozens of data sources, such as The Financial Research Survey (FRS), Channel Preference Survey and Understanding Society, to create a file of updateable information available at postcode level to build a complete picture of the UK population. It includes data on property type and tenure, house prices, student housing, gentrification, urban and rural areas and much more.

The Census data provides a complete picture of the UK population as of the date of the Census. It covers a range of questions including details about the demographics of those who live in the house, particularly their age, ethnicity, occupation, and education. It also includes information related to the property they live in, such as the house type, tenure, and size.

CACI has taken a snapshot of the Postcode Spine data on the date of the Census to provide a common baseline for CACI to update this data with further information, which is refreshed regularly. The benefits of using non-Census data include the finer level of geographic detail and better affluence indicators as well as the ability to update ACORN more frequently, whereas the Census data provides full coverage across the UK.

## Understanding ACORN Levels

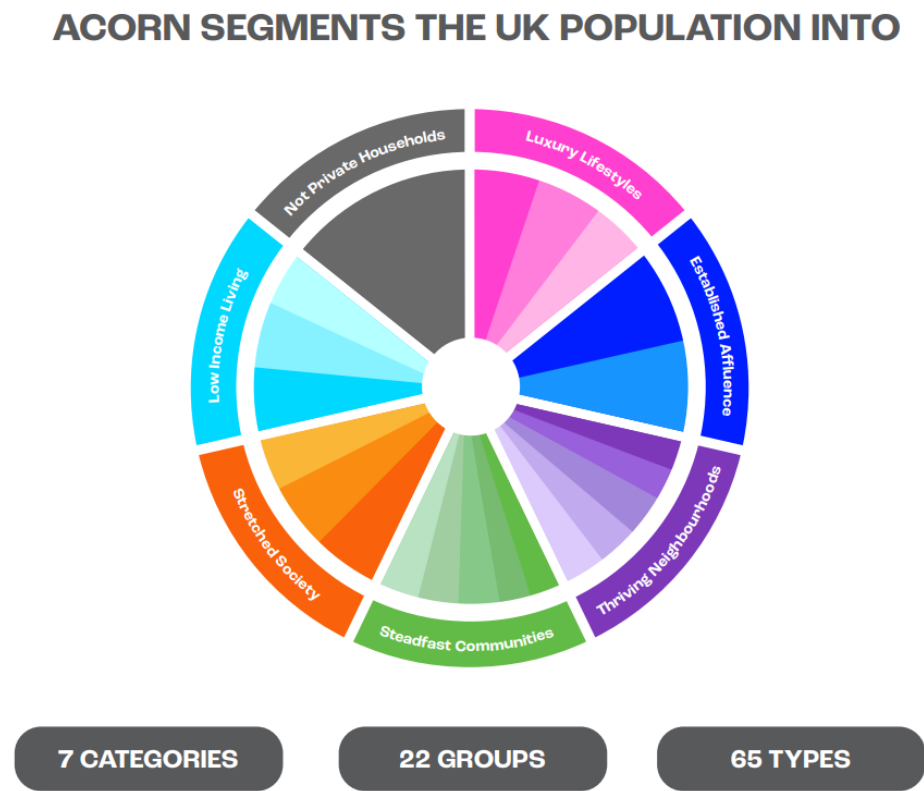
Available in a hierarchical structure, ACORN segments the UK population at three levels: Category, Group and Type, with each level having its own purpose.

Category is the broadest level with just 7 segments. As an easy-to-understand view of affluence ranging from the most to least affluent, with rising and comfortable segments in the middle.

The next level down is Group, consisting of 22 different segments. Group level is the most widely used, as it shows enough differentiation in characteristics and behaviours of the ACORN segments while being a manageable number to work with. Group level tends to be the lens through which organisations engage with customers or service users, therefore, it is often used for personalisation strategies, product and proposition development and catchment analysis and mapping.

The lowest level is Type, which contains 65 segments and is the most granular ACORN view. Type tends to be used for tactical campaign selections and reporting, as well as drilling into finer details when only a few Groups have been identified within a cohort of customers.

Figure 1: ACORN Segment Wheel



Category	Group		Type
Luxury Lifestyles	A	Exclusive Addresses	1 - 3
	B	Flourishing Capital	4 - 5
	C	Upmarket Families	6 - 7
Established Affluence	D	Commuter-Belt Wealth	8 - 12
	E	Prosperous Professionals	13 - 15
Thriving Neighbourhoods	F	Mature Success	16 - 19
	G	Settled Suburbia	20 - 21
	H	Metropolitan Surroundings	22 - 23
	I	Up-and-Coming Urbanites	24 - 26
	J	Aspiring Communities	27 - 28
	K	Semi-Rural Maturity	29 - 33
Steadfast Communities	L	Traditional Homeowners	34 - 35
	M	Family Renters	36 - 37
	N	Urban Diversity	38 - 40
	O	Stable Seniors	41 - 43
	P	Tenant Living	44 - 47
Stretched Society	Q	Limited Budgets	48 - 49
	R	Hard-Up Households	50 - 52
	S	Cash-Strapped Families	53 - 56
Low Income Living	T	Constrained Pensioners	57 - 58
	U	Challenging Circumstances	59 - 61
Not Private Households	V	Not Private Households	62 - 65

Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

## ACORN Groups in Wirral compared to the UK

**Figure 2** below shows how the Wirral population (by ACORN Group) compares to the UK population. Bars to the right of the central line (over-represented in Wirral), are MORE common in Wirral than they are in UK overall. This includes Groups 3G (Settled Suburbia), 4L (Traditional Homeowners), 5R (Hard-Up Households), 6S (Cash-Strapped Families) and 6T (Constrained Pensioners). Bars to the left (under-represented in Wirral) are LESS common in Wirral than they are nationally. This includes Groups 3I (Up-and-Coming Urbanities), 3J (Aspiring Communities), 4M (Family Renters), 4N (Urban Diversity) and 5P (Tenant Living).

**Figure 2:** ACORN Groups in Wirral compared to UK overall



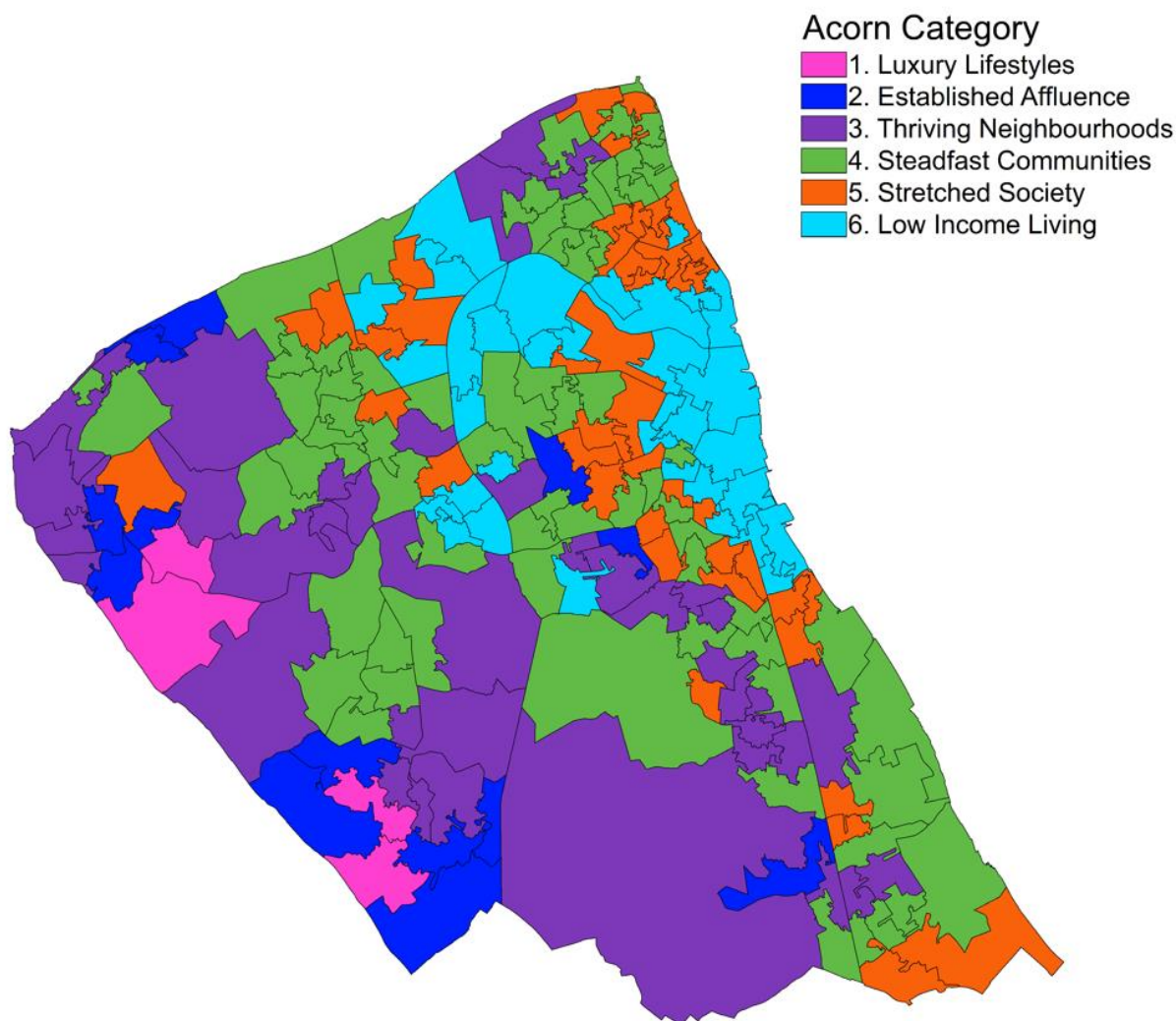
Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

**Map 1** shows the distribution of the most prevalent ACORN Categories across Wirral. For example, it shows that ACORN Categories such as 5: Stretched Society and 6: Low Income Living, tend to be located in the east of the borough (one exception being the Woodchurch and Overchurch estates in Upton ward).

Conversely, ACORN Categories such as 1: Luxury Lifestyles and 2: Established Affluence appear mainly in the more affluent west of the borough (although again, an exception is in Prenton and Oxton ward, which has a high proportion of these ACORN Groups).

Categories 3: Thriving Neighbourhoods and 4: Steadfast Communities, seem to be spread throughout the Wirral, with a particular prevalence in Moreton West and Saughall Massie, Eastham, Bromborough and Wallasey wards.

**Map 1:** Most Common ACORN Category by LSOA in Wirral, 2024



**Source:** Wirral Public Health Intelligence Team using ACORN data, 2024



**Table 1** and **Figure 3** show the breakdown of the Wirral population by ACORN in further detail. The actual number of residents (and percentage of the overall population each Group comprises) is displayed in **Table 1**, while the same information is shown more visually in **Figure 3**.

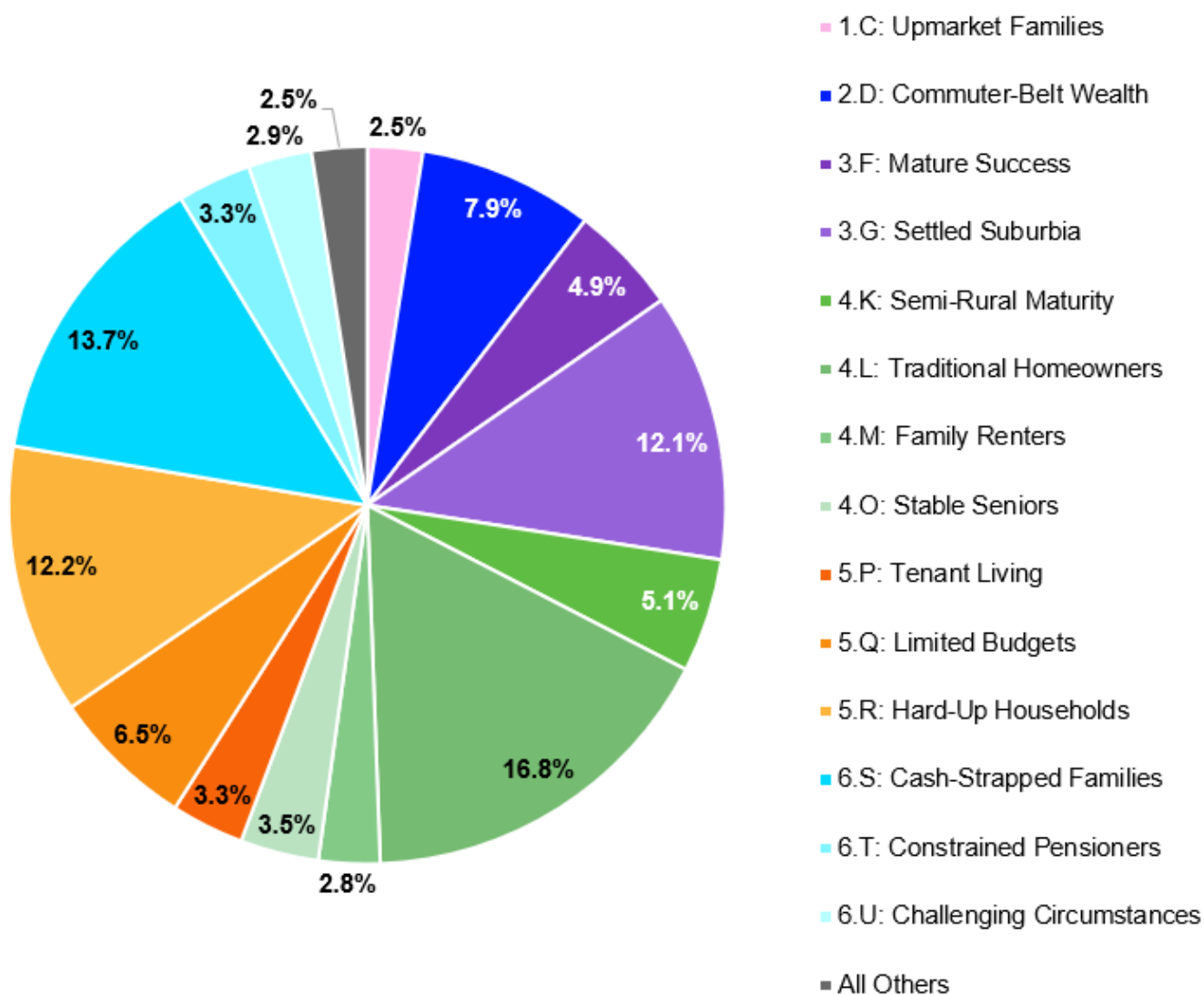
As **Table 1** and **Figure 3** show, over half of the population of Wirral (54.8%) are classified as belonging to just 4 out of the 22 ACORN Groups, these are: Group 4L: Traditional Homeowners (16.8%), Group 6S: Cash-Strapped Families (13.7%), Group 5R: Hard-Up Households (12.2%) and Group 3G: Settled Suburbia (12.1%).

**Table 1:** Breakdown of the Wirral population by ACORN Group, 2024

ACORN Group	Number	Percentage (%)
1.A: Exclusive Addresses	0	0.0%
1.B: Flourishing Capital	0	0.0%
1.C: Upmarket Families	8,096	2.5%
2.D: Commuter-Belt Wealth	25,597	7.9%
2.E: Prosperous Professionals	<10	0.0%
3.F: Mature Success	15,946	4.9%
3.G: Settled Suburbia	39,225	12.1%
3.H: Metropolitan Surroundings	0	0.0%
3.I: Up-and-Coming Urbanities	1,506	0.5%
3.J: Aspiring Communities	2,664	0.8%
4.K: Semi-Rural Maturity	16,660	5.1%
4.L: Traditional Homeowners	54,553	16.8%
4.M: Family Renters	8,960	2.8%
4.N: Urban Diversity	866	0.3%
4.O: Stable Seniors	11,466	3.5%
5.P: Tenant Living	10,649	3.3%
5.Q: Limited Budgets	20,932	6.5%
5.R: Hard-Up Households	39,409	12.2%
6.S: Cash-Strapped Families	44,253	13.7%
6.T: Constrained Pensioners	10,810	3.3%
6.U: Challenging Circumstances	9,288	2.9%
7.V: Not Private Households	3,033	0.9%

**Source:** Wirral Public Health Intelligence Team using ACORN data, 2024

**Figure 3: Breakdown of the Wirral population by ACORN Group, 2024**



**Source:** Wirral Public Health Intelligence Team using ACORN data, 2024

**Note(s):** Wirral has no residents classified as any of the following Groups:

- 1.A: Exclusive Addresses
- 1.B: Flourishing Capital
- 2.E: Prosperous Professionals
- 3.H: Metropolitan Surroundings

Wirral has <1% of the following Groups (these are included in "All Others"):

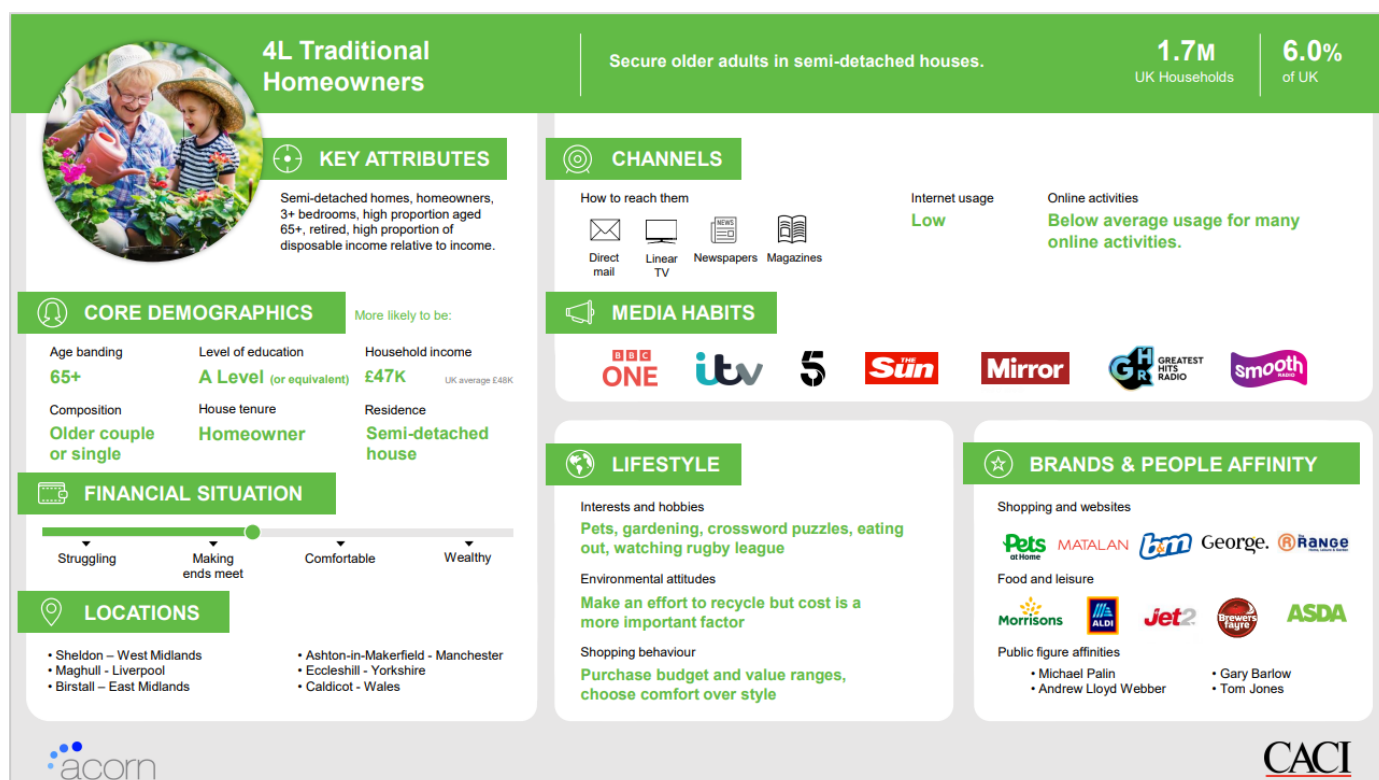
- 3.I: Up-and-Coming Urbanities (0.5%)
- 3.J: Aspiring Communities (0.8%)
- 4.N: Urban Diversity (0.3%)
- 7.V: Not Private Households (0.9%)

**More detailed information on the four largest ACORN Groups in Wirral (all of which comprise more than 10% of the Wirral population) can be found in the next section.**

## Detailed information about the most common ACORN Categories in Wirral

### Steadfast Communities

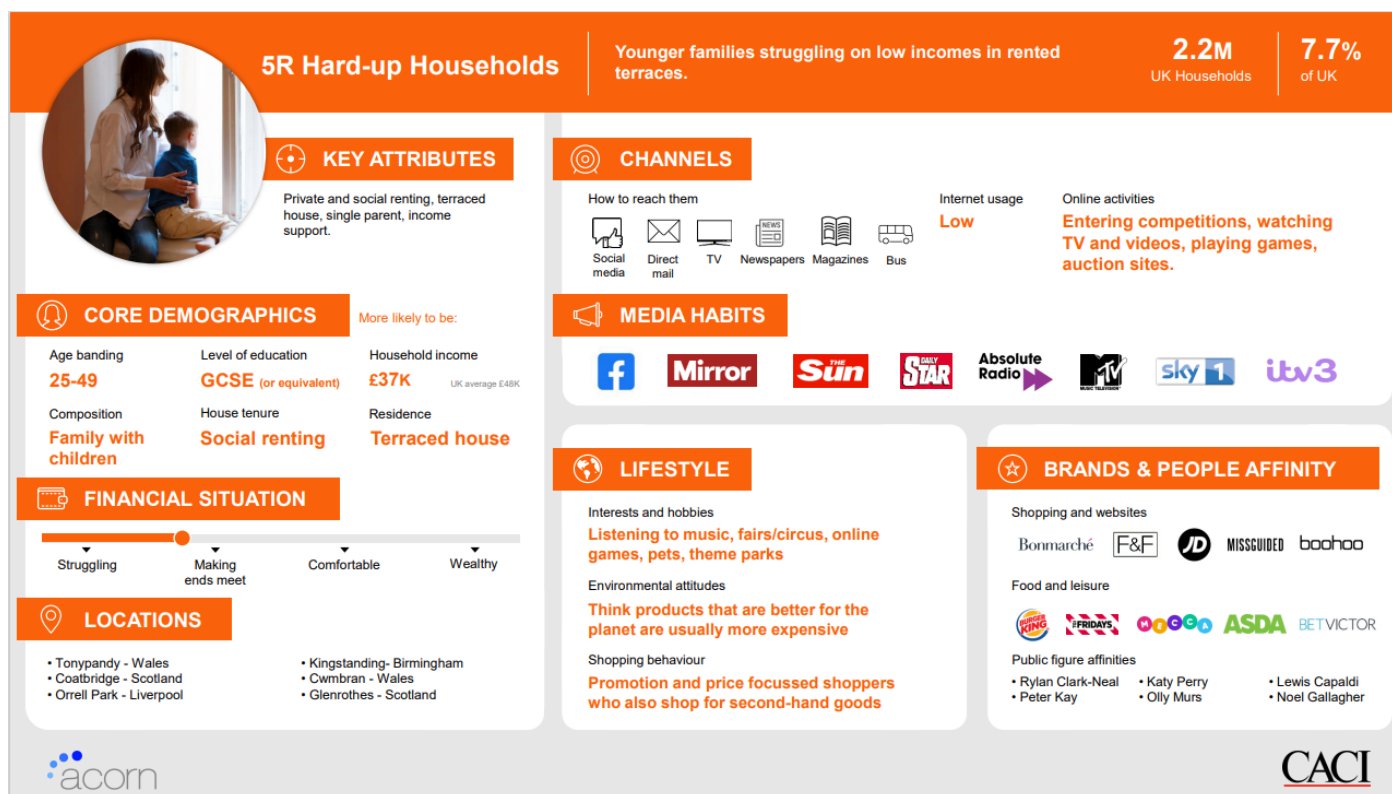
Steadfast Communities makes up 28.3% of the Wirral population (compared to 25.7% in the UK). Moreton West and Saughall Massie, followed by Eastham and Wallasey wards have the highest concentrations of residents classified as belonging to this ACORN Category in Wirral. The largest ACORN Group within this Category is Traditional Homeowners (16.3% of population, or 57.6% of this Group).





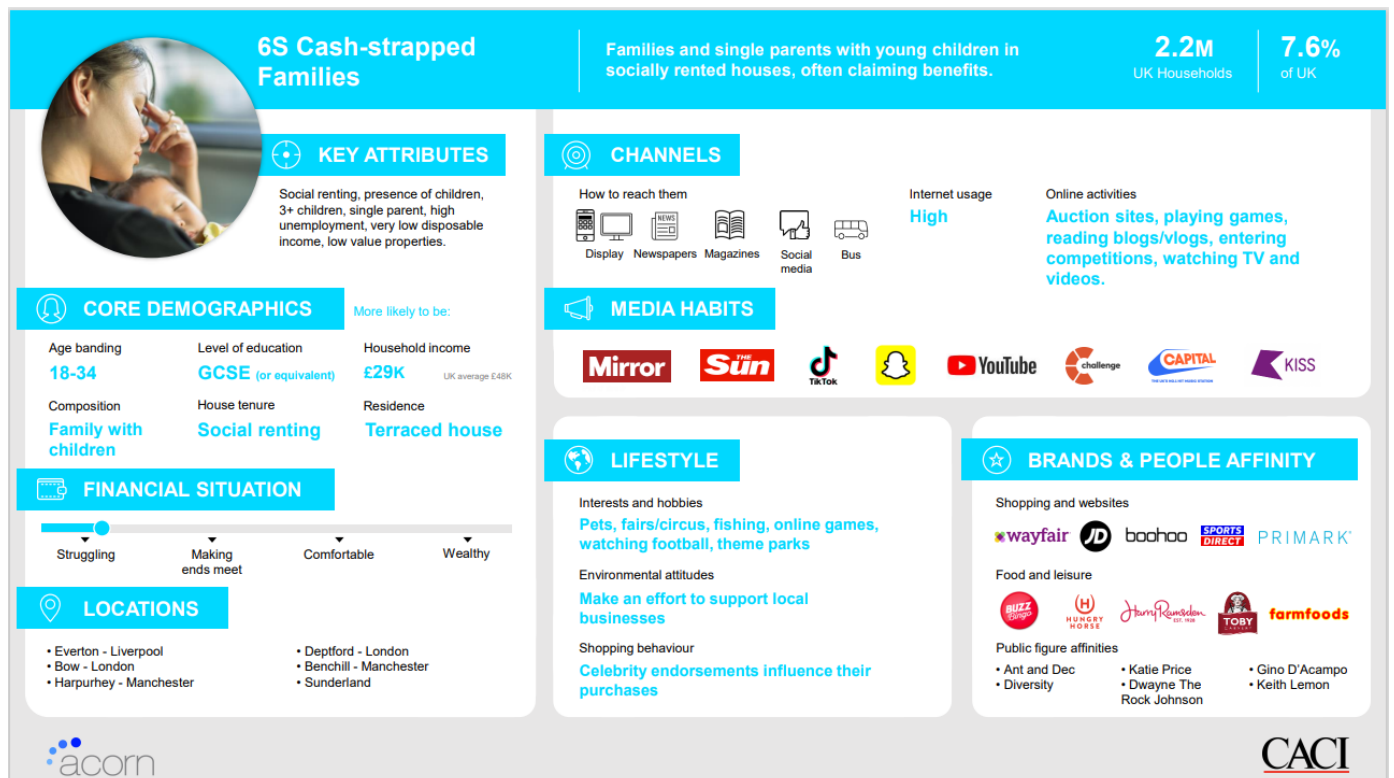
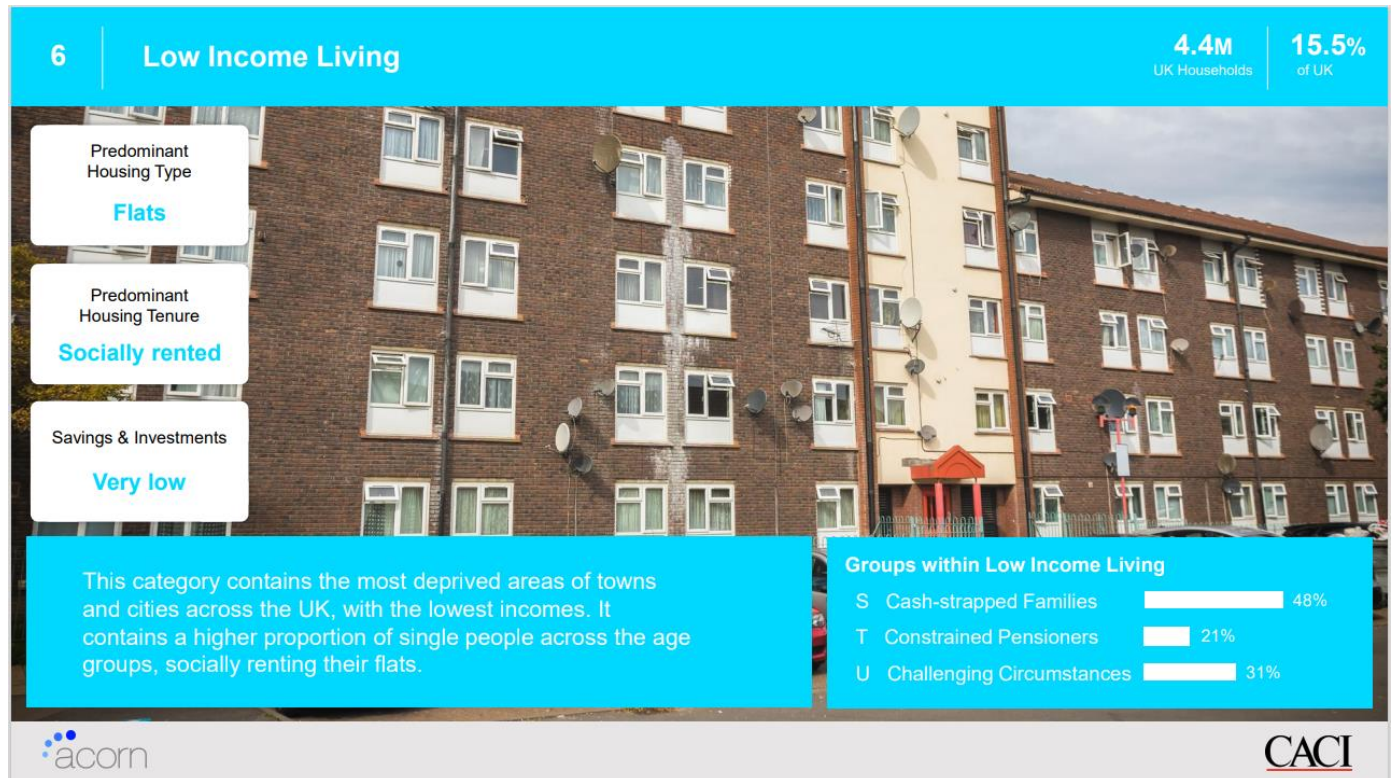
## Stretched Society

Stretched Society makes up 21.9% of the Wirral population (compared to 21.1% of the UK). Seacombe, followed by Liscard and Bromborough wards have the highest concentrations of residents classified as belonging to this ACORN Category in Wirral. The largest ACORN Group within this Category is Hard-Up Households (11.7% of population, or 53.3% of this Group).



## Low Income Living

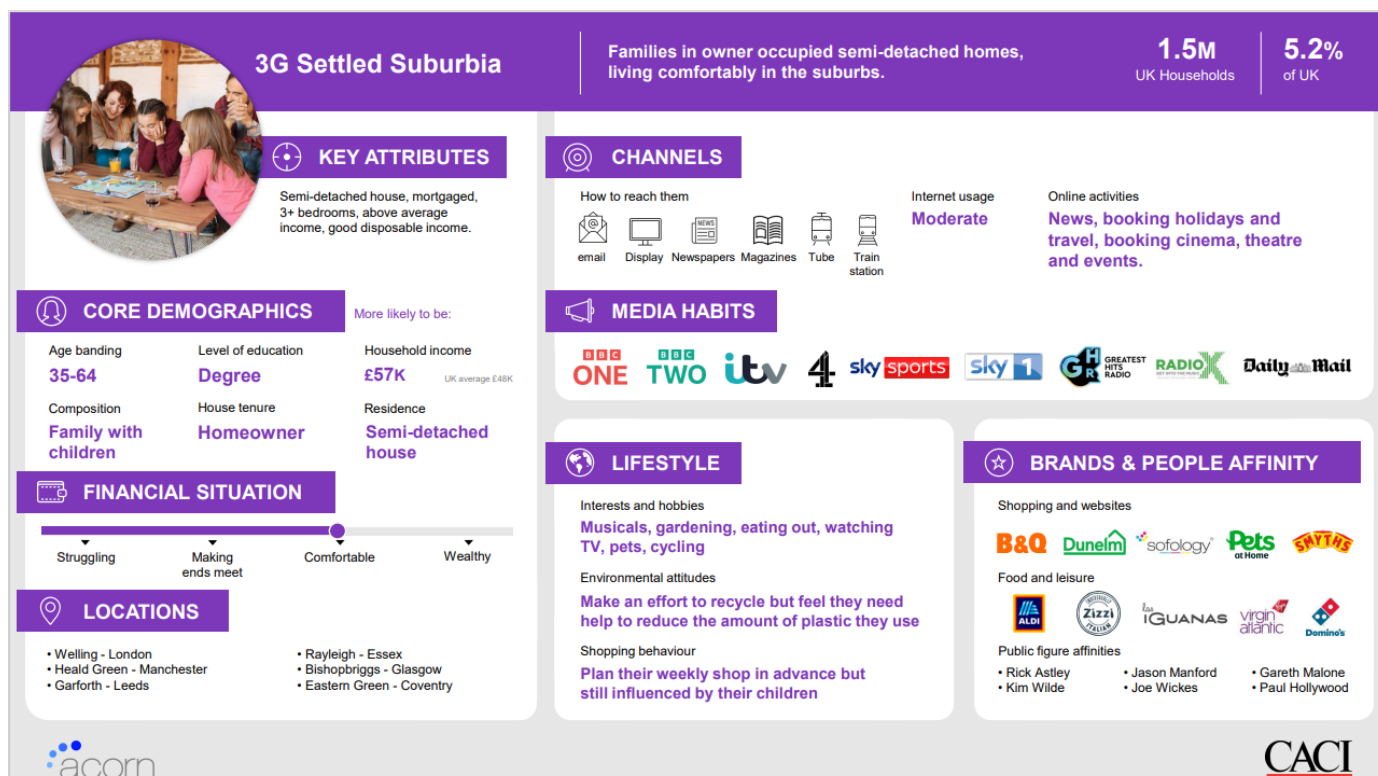
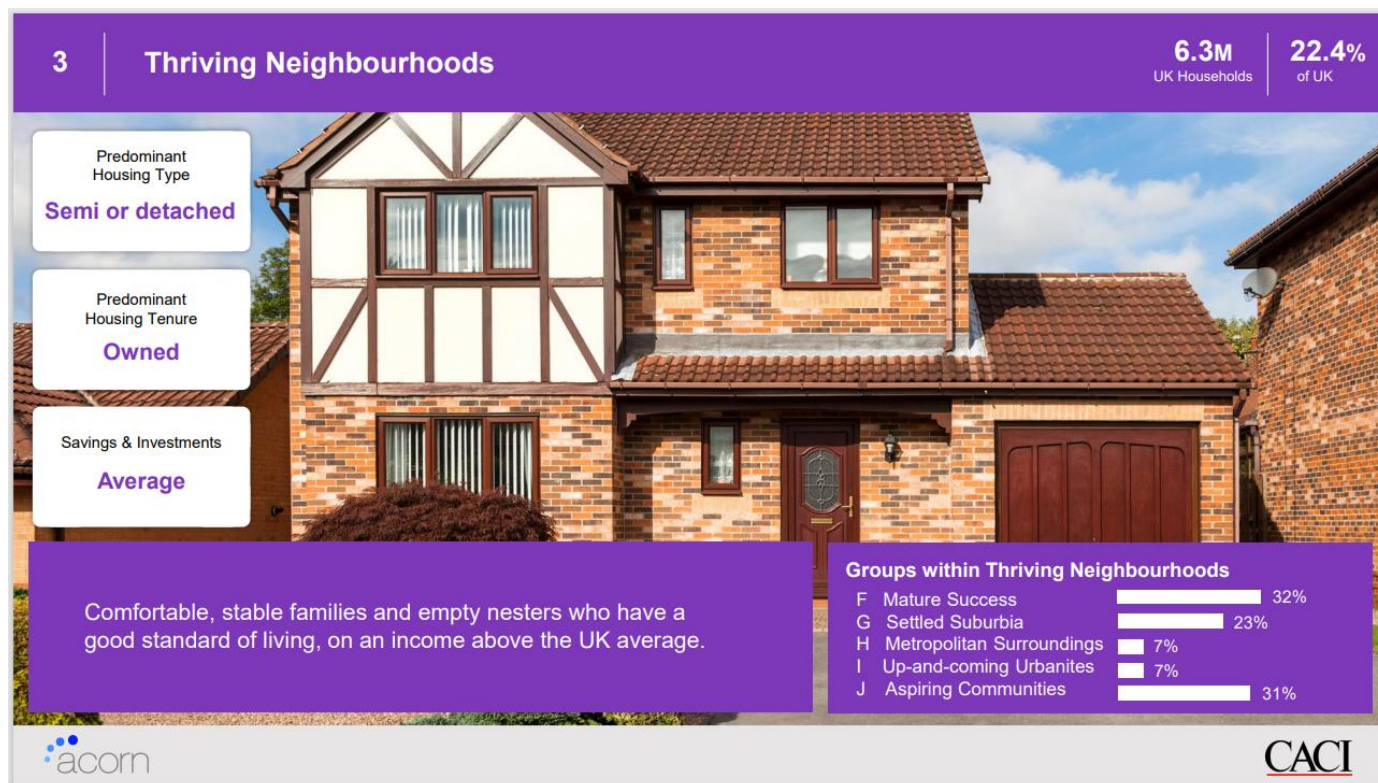
Low Income Living makes up 20.0% of the Wirral population (compared to 15.5% of the UK). Bidston and St. James, followed by Birkenhead and Tranmere, and Rock Ferry wards have the highest concentrations of residents classified as belonging to this ACORN Category in Wirral. The largest ACORN Group within this Category is Cash-Strapped Families (12.9% of population, or 64.5% of this Group).





## Thriving Neighbourhoods

Thriving Neighbourhoods makes up 18.2% of the Wirral population (compared to 22.4% of the UK). Greasby, Frankby and Irby, followed by Clatterbridge and Bebington wards have the highest concentrations of residents classified as belonging to this ACORN Category in Wirral. The largest ACORN Group within this Category is Settled Suburbia (11.9% of population, or 65.2% of this Group).



## Communication preferences in ACORN Groups

The 7 ACORN Categories and 22 Groups have differing preferences regarding how they prefer to be communicated with and what technology they utilise the most. This information can enable services to target and communicate with residents in the way they are most likely to respond to. In the current climate of financial challenge, ACORN can be a useful tool, as it allows organisations to disseminate information in a targeted way only to those who may find it relevant and/or useful.

### Mobile Phone Ownership

As **Table 2** shows, the majority of the UK adult population (93.4%) now own a mobile phone, with 83.6% owning a smart phone. This varies by ACORN Category, however. Group 6 (Low Income Living) are much less likely than the UK average to own both a mobile phone and a smartphone, likely to be because this is the Category with the lowest incomes, and so many may struggle to afford a mobile/smartphone. This is noteworthy, as a large percentage (12.9%) of the Wirral population are comprised of this Group, so the fact that almost 10% of this Category are unlikely to own a mobile phone (with a further 20% unlikely to own a smart phone) means this Group will be unable to download apps, or follow links sent via text to book appointments etc. Of the 4 most common ACORN Groups in Wirral listed above, Group 3 (Thriving Neighbourhoods) were most likely to own a smartphone (with 85.3% likely to own one; although this still means that 1 in 7 of this group are unlikely to own a smartphone).

**Table 2:** Ownership of mobile and smartphone by most common ACORN Categories in Wirral; % compared to UK %, 2024

Topic	Variable	UK	3	4	5	6
Mobile phone	Has mobile phone	93.4%	94.4%	93.4%	93.1%	90.9%
Mobile phone	Has smartphone	83.6%	85.3%	81.9%	83.5%	80.4%

Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

Notes: 3 = Thriving Neighbourhoods, 4 = Steadfast Communities, 5 = Stretched Society, 6 = Low Income Living.

### Digital Attitudes (Computers)

**Table 3** shows self-reported internet 'savviness', or confidence in using the internet and highlights a similar picture to owning a smartphone. Most of the Groups common in Wirral were more likely to consider themselves 'very' internet savvy compared to the national average; *except for Group E – Senior Security*, who considered themselves much less likely than average to be internet savvy.

**Table 3:** Attitudes to computers, by most common ACORN Categories in Wirral; % compared to UK %, 2024

Topic	Variable	UK	3	4	5	6
Digital attitudes	Computers confuse me, I'll never use them	14.0%	13.7%	13.9%	13.8%	14.4%

Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

Notes: 3 = Thriving Neighbourhoods, 4 = Steadfast Communities, 5 = Stretched Society, 6 = Low Income Living

### Internet Access Frequency

**Table 4** shows how frequently the most common ACORN Categories use the internet compared to the UK average. Of the most common ACORN Categories in Wirral, 5 (Stretched Society) and 6 (Low Income Living) are the heaviest users of the internet, both above the UK average.

On the other hand, Categories 3 (Thriving Neighbourhoods) and 4 (Steadfast Communities) were likely to be lighter users of the internet, having a greater proportion of the population (compared to the UK overall) of those that used the internet up to only an hour per week.

**Table 4:** Internet access frequency, by most common ACORN Categories in Wirral; % compared to UK %, 2024

Topic	Variable	UK	3	4	5	6
Internet access frequency	Light (up to 1 hour per week)	1.8%	2.1%	2.2%	1.4%	1.7%
Internet access frequency	Moderate (up to 10 hours per week)	35.4%	39.4%	39.1%	28.1%	26.3%
Internet access frequency	Heavy (10+ hours per week)	58.2%	54.9%	53.2%	65.6%	65.1%

Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

Notes: 3 = Thriving Neighbourhoods, 4 = Steadfast Communities, 5 = Stretched Society, 6 = Low Income Living

## Public Sector Channel Preferences

**Table 5** shows that 'email' was the most preferred method of receiving information related to local services (across all the four ACORN Categories most common in Wirral), followed by 'telephone call'. Category 5 (Stretched Society) however, is the only Category that prefer 'text message' than 'website'. For researching information about local services, the first preference of each Category is 'website', followed by 'email'. Finally, when submitting/providing information to the local authority, the first preference of each Category is 'website', followed by 'email'.

**Table 5:** Public sector channel preferences, by most common ACORN Categories in Wirral; % compared to UK %, 2024

Topic	Variable	UK	3	4	5	6
Receiving information related to local services	Email	36.7%	36.9%	37.6%	34.3%	36.3%
	Face to face and / or visit	2.0%	1.8%	2.5%	2.1%	2.0%
	Mail	8.4%	9.3%	8.8%	8.4%	7.4%
	Mobile app	4.2%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	3.8%
	Social media	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%
	Telephone call (mobile / landline)	22.3%	20.9%	22.2%	22.2%	27.6%
	Text message	11.8%	10.6%	11.0%	14.8%	11.6%
	Website (inc chatbot)	13.8%	15.2%	12.1%	13.5%	12.7%
Researching information about local services	Email	23.2%	23.4%	24.1%	23.8%	21.0%
	Face to face and / or visit	2.0%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%
	Mail	4.5%	4.4%	5.1%	4.4%	4.4%
	Mobile app	5.6%	5.1%	6.4%	5.9%	4.8%
	Social media	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.9%	2.7%
	Telephone call (mobile / landline)	9.5%	9.3%	9.3%	8.8%	11.0%
	Text message	5.8%	5.5%	4.8%	7.0%	7.2%
	Website (inc chatbot)	46.6%	48.6%	44.9%	44.0%	46.4%
Submitting information to Local Authority	Email	29.2%	30.3%	28.8%	28.2%	27.2%
	Face to face and / or visit	3.0%	2.8%	3.7%	3.4%	3.1%
	Mail	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	4.4%
	Mobile app	8.7%	7.5%	8.5%	11.0%	8.6%
	Social media	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
	Telephone call (mobile / landline)	14.0%	13.6%	14.3%	14.3%	17.2%
	Text message	4.9%	3.4%	5.1%	5.9%	5.5%
	Website (inc chatbot)	34.6%	37.1%	34.5%	30.8%	34.3%

Source: [ACORN, CACI, 2024](#)

Notes: 3 = Thriving Neighbourhoods, 4 = Steadfast Communities, 5 = Stretched Society, 6 = Low Income Living



## Further Information

- [Acorn | Geodemographic Segmentation | Acorn Data | CACI](#)
- [Wirral Acorn Profile - Wirral Health and Knowledge Hub](#)

## Contact Details

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