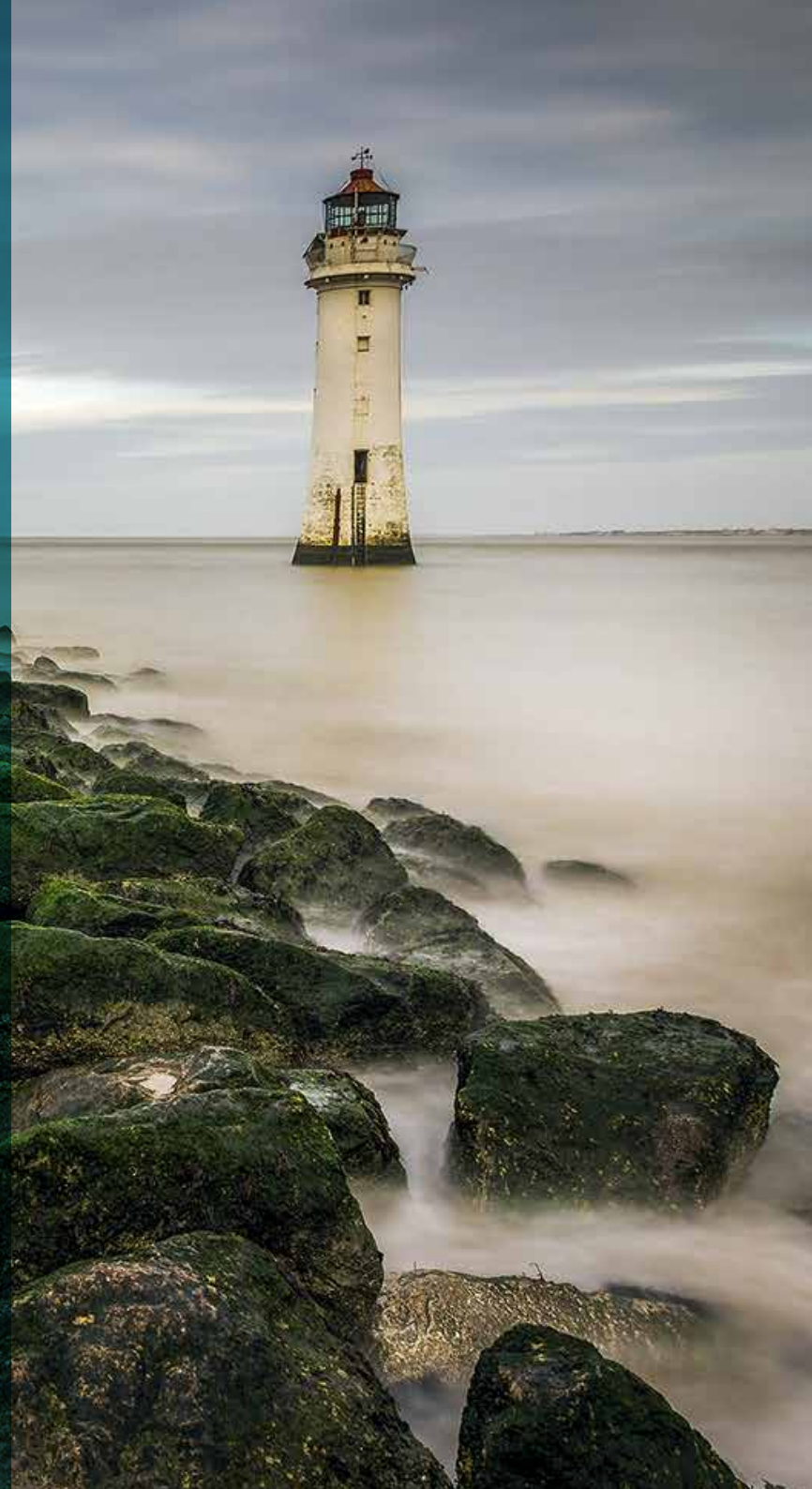


# Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027

Starting Well. Living Well. Ageing Well.



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# Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board Chair - Cllr Janette Williamson

**Being healthy gives us opportunities, freedom and independence. And when everyone is healthy our communities thrive and prosper. Ultimately the health of the population mirrors the welfare of its residents and when everyone is healthy, everyone benefits.**

The COVID-19 pandemic reminded us of this and how much we all value being healthy as individuals and as a community. The pandemic also highlighted the devastating impact of poor health on people, their families and friends, our public services and the economy. These impacts were not felt equally, and the pandemic underlined the enduring differences in health experienced by some people and communities.

Further challenges are now being faced by local people, with the rising cost of living having an impact on residents, many of whom will be experiencing hardship for the first time in their lives. This will present further challenges to improving the health of the population.

Over the last century, we have made great progress to improve health, with life expectancy improving and illness and deaths from preventable respiratory diseases, heart disease and cancer reducing. However, in more recent decades increases in life expectancy have significantly slowed, and over the last couple of years have worsened.

Whilst some communities continue to experience better health than others, differences in health mean that some people die earlier than others and spend more of their life in poor health. This is not acceptable. Nor is the impact on our people, community and services. Working together we must improve the health of those experiencing the worst impacts of poor health faster.

We want everyone in Wirral, no matter who they are or where they live, to enjoy all the benefits of being healthy. Our Health and Wellbeing Board partnership is committed to making this a reality. We have listened to what local people have told us about what they need to stay well and what we know about what works to help. This Strategy sets out our ambition and describes how we will achieve it, focusing on the things which can make the biggest difference when we work together.

We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to build on the shared commitment and effort demonstrated during the pandemic to tackle our most deep-rooted health challenges.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Williamson".

**Cllr Janette Williamson,**  
Chair,  
Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board

# Embracing opportunity

We are proud of our borough; our local partnerships are strong and our community spirit abundant.

**Wirral is an amazing place. Named as one of the happiest places to live in the UK, we are surrounded by beautiful beaches, parks and historic, industrial and maritime architecture. It is a great place to grow up, live and work. We are proud of our borough; our local partnerships are strong and our community spirit abundant. Wirral is however a borough of contrasts with some of the most affluent and deprived wards in the UK and where life expectancy varies by around 10 years between the rural and urban areas that sit alongside each other.**

Over decades, we have made notable progress in supporting people to live healthier lives, and have reduced deaths from heart disease, respiratory illness and cancers, taking action on things that cause these illnesses. However this trend of improving healthy life expectancy has stalled in more recent times. People in Wirral do not live as long as the England average, and within Wirral this difference is even greater with people living in the east of the borough dying around 12 years earlier than those living in the west and with more years lived in poor health.

The pandemic revealed the vulnerabilities in the health of local people and reinforced the differences

in health across Wirral. These differences are not limited to COVID-19 and have been evident across a range of health indicators for many years whether it is breastfeeding, tooth decay, hospital admissions for alcohol, obesity, diabetes, heart disease or cancer. Depending on where you live these disparities also exist in education, housing, employment and community safety. For the first time in decades life expectancy is falling and falling faster in the most deprived areas and differences in health have worsened.

The conditions and environment in which we are born, grow, live and work are the main reasons for these differences. Whilst there are some things that cannot be changed, such as our age and genes, we know that good work, our surroundings, money, housing, education and skills, transport, our family, friends and communities make us healthy and keep us well. Making sure people have access to health care is important but on its own does little to improve health. Local people have told us that it is easier to keep well when they have a decent job, a safe and secure roof over their head, feel good about themselves and enjoy stable relationships, interests and have good friends. This Strategy concentrates on increasing action on these things.

# Embracing opportunity

This strategy complements the work of individual organisations and contributes to the delivery of the Wirral Plan.

Whilst there are considerable health and economic challenges, nationally and globally, that we must withstand it is an exciting time for Wirral. We have a unique and timely opportunity to make a big difference. The programme of regeneration in the borough is one of the biggest in Europe and will create a world class standard of economic opportunity, digital connectivity and growth for Wirral and our residents. The new Integrated Care System offers an opportunity to further improve health outcomes through stronger collaboration between health services and partners. And the relationship between partners and with residents has never been stronger being underpinned by a plan for Wirral which aims to drive inclusive economic growth as well as improving services for health and social care, families, the environment and housing.

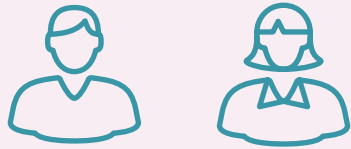
This Strategy has been developed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, which is a collective of local organisations including the Council, NHS, Healthwatch, the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority, Merseyside Police, the Department for Work and Pensions and Wirral Metropolitan College. Every area is required to have

a Health and Wellbeing Board. Our job is to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population, as a partnership committee, producing a joint assessment of health needs and a joint health and wellbeing strategy.

This is our Strategy. It focuses on our mutual priorities, resources and assets that will make the biggest difference to improving health in Wirral. It sets out our shared ambition, solutions and approaches using the best of our combined strengths and capabilities. It is built upon what you have told us about being healthy and what we know works to help.

This Strategy complements the work of individual organisations and contributes to the delivery of the Wirral Plan. It is also a key part of the vision for the Integrated Care System, that has a duty to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board. More broadly it supports the local delivery of All Together Fairer, Cheshire and Merseyside's collaborative approach to reducing differences in health outcomes. It is important that these other strategic commitments continue to be delivered as part of our overall approach to realise this Strategy.

# State of the Borough



**78**      **82**

**Life expectancy** has worsened in recent years and is lower than the England average



**12 years**

A child born today in Greasby, can expect to **live 12 years longer** than a child born in Tranmere



**18 years**

People in Wirral are spending around **18 years of their lives in poor health**



**115,000**

1 in 3 people in Wirral live in areas reported as the **most 20% deprived in England**



**1 in 4**

people in Wirral will **die from Cancer** - this is the leading cause of death



**1 in 5**

Wirral people **have Circulatory problems** such as heart disease - the 2nd highest cause of death



**50%**

**Poor mental health** accounts for more than half of all people out of work, due to a health condition



**1 in 3**

working age adults in the most deprived area of Wirral, are **claiming out of work benefits**



**Cancers, circulatory and respiratory diseases**

are **more likely in Wirral people**, compared with England overall



**Children**

**achieving a good level of development** in Wirral at the end of Reception has worsened



**Lower**

**achievement of children** receiving Free School Meals at Reception age



**22%**

of people in Wirral **earn below the Real Living Wage**, a fall in recent years, from 30% in 2018

# Our ambition

Five priorities which, by working together, will make the biggest difference to improving health for everyone.

**We want Wirral to be a place where everyone has the opportunity to live a healthier life, no matter who they are or where they live.**

We will turn this ambition into a reality by focusing on the following five priorities which, by working together, will make the biggest difference to improving health for everyone and to help reduce health differences within Wirral:

## Our Priorities

- 1** Create opportunities to get the best health outcomes from the economy and regeneration programmes.
- 2** Strengthen health and care action to address differences in health outcomes.
- 3** Ensure the best start in life for all children and young people.
- 4** Create safe and healthy places for people to live that protect health and promote a good standard of living.
- 5** Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together.





# Priority 1

## Create opportunities to get the best health outcomes from the economy and regeneration programmes

Our health and the economy are the twin pillars of a resilient, thriving and prosperous society. The economy is also a major reason for the differences experienced in health outcomes. Wirral is at an important point in its economic history. We have embarked on a transformational regeneration programme along the 'Left Bank' of the River Mersey stretching from New Brighton to Bromborough, underpinned by the Birkenhead 2040 Framework and Local Plan. There are new opportunities with the transformation of Seacombe, and developments in Birkenhead Town Centre, all of which provides a unique and unprecedented opportunity for positive change.

We will use our significant regeneration programme to drive health improvement in the areas where health is poorest by addressing the income and employment issues that cause ill health. With Community Wealth Building principles at its heart to help build an inclusive, fairer economy, our inclusive economic growth will generate jobs and prosperity for the people of Wirral in the future. The ambition and scale of these programmes gives us the greatest opportunity in generations to redress the economic and health differences within Wirral, and between England.





*Once I find a job, things will get better. It will be a distraction for me and I won't be stuck in the house thinking all day."*

*I have been thinking about going to college - doing a part time craft course in Liverpool. But you have to buy your own equipment, and they don't provide help. Every step I take, there's something else to block the way."*

### To do this we will

- Complement the Wirral Economic and Community Wealth Building Strategies focusing on the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board member organisations as businesses and local employers, support for people unable to work due to ill health and creating communities that are flourishing and connected.
- Enable people to live well, helping those who are unemployed into work or training and helping them to benefit from economic and regeneration programmes.
- Use our individual organisations' resources and assets as local anchor institutions to ensure, how we spend our money, use our buildings, who we employ and how they develop, benefits the Wirral economy and health of our residents.
- Build Health Impact Assessment into our regeneration schemes to ensure living, working and community conditions benefit health.
- As partners, align capital infrastructure projects and asset plans with the place regeneration programme for Wirral, where they are mutually beneficial for local people.

### We will initially focus on

- Making sure that services help people, who are unemployed and those experiencing health related worklessness, responding to the current economic challenges, the cost of living crisis and the aftermath of the pandemic.
- Piloting the Healthy Cities Tool, in a regeneration area, to measure health impacts; applying the learning into planning and how we can use this in other major redevelopment and regeneration schemes.
- Reviewing our individual anchor institution plans to learn from each other and identify opportunities to work together so that they have more reach into our communities and support the work of this Strategy, the Wirral Plan and the current financial challenges experienced by our residents and businesses.



# Priority 2

## Strengthen health and care action to address differences in health outcomes

We all want the very best health and wellbeing for our families, friends, communities and for ourselves. And when we need to access health and care services, we want these to provide us with excellent care and the best outcomes. Preventing mental and physical health conditions before they develop is better for everyone. It helps people to be healthier for longer and reduces pressure on health and care services so that everyone can get the right quality care, treatment and support when they need it most. Focusing on preventable conditions, targeting those most at risk, will also help us to reduce differences in health outcomes.

The new Integrated Care System is a partnership that brings NHS services together with local

authorities and other local partners to collectively plan health and care services to meet the needs of the local population. As part of the developing Integrated Care System arrangements, we have an opportunity to ensure Wirral's Place Based Partnership builds on the collaboration achieved through the pandemic and has a clear focus on reducing health differences in Wirral.

This opportunity is being matched by action. The Wirral Place Based Partnership is committed to ensuring reducing health differences runs through everything we do. This work is already underway with the agreed 2022/23 operational plan outlining how reducing inequalities will be embedded across all priorities.



*I don't see anyone at the moment, I just take the meds. Some days it's so bad I don't want to get out of bed."*

*I have been unable to work since 2001 due to a number of chronic and painful health problems. I knew from early on that my health wasn't going to improve. I had no support network, couldn't see a future for me and it felt as if my life was over."*

## To do this we will

- Make sure that all local people have easy and timely access to health and care services shaped around them to screen, diagnose, treat and prevent disease as early as possible through the Integrated Care Partnership and Wirral Place Plan.
- Address differences in health outcomes by changing the way we deliver health and care services focusing on population health outcomes, with an understanding of needs within our communities and an emphasis on those who can benefit most.
- Increase interventions that prevent health problems and offer support at an early stage focusing on people and communities at greatest risk of poor health outcomes. For example through joint efforts to provide opportunities for all Wirral residents to be more active, increasing vaccination uptake, tobacco control and fuel poverty.
- Ensure high quality and safe health and care service delivery with strong attention to good infection prevention and control to prevent avoidable harm.
- Assist people to age well by keeping them healthy and connected to their communities for as long as possible in their own home.
- Use our collective resources and our role as an anchor institution to deliver across other key priorities within this strategy e.g. employment, regeneration, housing, climate change.

## We will initially focus on

- Making sure that the new Wirral Place Plan delivers on the work of the health and care collective to improve health, empower individuals and create a sustainable health and care system.
- Ensuring access to high-quality disaggregated data to measure performance and outcomes, including by deprivation and ethnicity. In particular, all organisations should review and improve the quality and accuracy of their data on patient ethnicity.
- Developing integrated, seamless support services within local areas, delivering health and care services with local people as equal partners.
- Using the Core20PLUS5 approach to guide and drive local action.
- Systematically assess health inequalities related to our work programmes and collectively identify and implement actions to help reduce differences in health outcomes.
- Ensuring a collective approach to protecting the health of Wirral Communities from infectious diseases and environmental hazards. With a strong focus on improving quality, infection and prevention control and reducing inappropriate antibiotic prescribing, which will keep people safe and support health and care service resilience.
- Implementing new ways of reducing illness and deaths from alcohol and drug misuse, through the development of a Wirral substance misuse strategy aligning work and priorities between the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Wirral Partnership Board (Safer Wirral).



# Priority 3

## Ensure the best start in life for all children and young people

We know that having a safe, loving and nurturing start in life supports children to enjoy happy and fulfilling lives, which is something we want for all children growing up in Wirral. We also know that most of the poor health experienced in later life is the result of what happened in the earlier stages in life. Bad experiences in childhood can impact on health for life and can also carry through into future generations. Unfortunately, not all of our children and young people have the same life chances that enable them to live their best life. That is why this is a priority.



*Help our parents look after themselves, so that they can look after us.”*

*When we don't have extended family support I don't know anywhere to go for help when I've got the baby.”*

### To do this we will

- Work together to support parents and carers to help their children to achieve a good level of development in their early years, and to prepare them for the school years (i.e. School Readiness). To have the biggest impact, we will focus most of our efforts in communities that need it the most, in order to reduce the unfair differences that too many of our children experience.
- Support parents and families (through a partnership approach) to address the issues that result in family disadvantage e.g. by improving employment opportunities, reducing levels of debt, improving housing conditions for struggling families.
- Make sure that help is provided to families, children and young people at an early enough stage to prevent issues from escalating to the point of having a major impact on their lives.
- Align what is taught in our schools and further education settings to the emerging training and employment opportunities associated with Wirral's regeneration programme.
- Redesign and improve our support and prevention services so that wherever possible, they are based in the heart of local communities and are easily accessible, integrated, modern and adaptable to the changing needs of children, young people and families.

### We will initially focus on

- Developing a system-wide understanding of what School Readiness means and agree partner responsibilities for taking action (including those of parents and carers).
- Consulting with partners and local communities to produce 'Family Hubs' model for our future, where the local system will come together to provide high-quality, whole-family, joined up family support services.
- Identifying the elements of 'Cradle to Career', 'Breaking the Cycle' and '1001 Days' programmes that are making the biggest difference to local families, through evaluation and ongoing discussions with local people.
- Working with educational settings to understand how to better align what is taught locally, with Wirral's employment opportunities and skills gaps. This will also include an assessment of the impact of newer emerging qualifications (e.g. 'T' levels).
- Agreeing, together with young people, families and other partners, what is needed to properly help our young people to deal (at an early enough stage) with the variety of issues that can cause them problems (e.g. mental health, substance misuse, sexual exploitation).



# Priority 4

## Create safe and healthy places for people to live that protect health and promote a good standard of living

We know that where we live, and spend most of our time, has a huge influence on how healthy we are and how easy it is to stay well. You have told us that feeling safe where you live and having a secure home is important for your health and wellbeing. Creating safe, healthy and sustainable places and communities will make a big difference to reduce the variance in health between our communities.

Improvements to existing housing, alongside wider regeneration activity for new homes, is crucial. Having a home that is affordable and of a good

quality is fundamental to achieve in life chances; without this there are so many barriers which widen the inequality health gap.

The current financial climate threatens the standard of living for everyone but especially for people already experiencing hardship and the global environmental emergency also compromises our health. We want everyone to live in thriving communities, enjoy where they live and in homes that support health using the opportunities we have within Wirral to make a positive impact.



*No one invests in this area... have you seen it? There are some pretty hopeless people.”*

*I'd like to get involved in doing a bit more locally - but I don't know where to start. Is there a list somewhere of things that need doing?”*

### To do this we will

- Complement the existing strategies and programmes that set out to improve the living and working conditions and environments in Wirral, such as the Climate Emergency Strategy, the Council's Local Plan, targeted housing programmes, Economic Strategy, Active Travel Strategy and Wirral Community Safety Strategy, making sure that they improve health.
- Enable people to connect with other people in their communities, feel safe and love where they live.
- Enable people to be active by providing a wide range of facilities within local communities including parks, open spaces, safe cycling and walking routes.
- Make sure there is an integrated information and advice offer to enable people to access support when they need it.
- Build on the progress made during the pandemic to support people who are homeless and ensure that housing programmes reflect the changing needs of residents to address the challenges that have emerged.
- All work together to respond to the environmental and climate emergency.

### We will initially focus on

- Developing a partnership approach to the current cost-of-living crisis to ease the impact on people already experiencing financial hardship, prevent people becoming financially insecure and to help people when they need it.
- Making sure all Wirral Partners participate in the ongoing development and delivery of the Wirral COOL 2 Strategy and develop individual plans to collectively support Wirral's Climate Emergency Strategy.
- Implementing the new Local Plan in a way that improves health through the design of places and new homes, alongside existing homes, and access to services through co-location.
- Work together with partners to deliver the priorities of the Wirral Community Safety Strategy 2021-25, supporting residents to feel safe where they live, work and visit.



# Priority 5

## Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together

Together, and only together, can we shift the long-standing health challenges in our borough. We are all part of the solution. To develop this Strategy we have listened, and talked, to local people and community groups working across Wirral. Building on the incredible teamwork between local people and organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will continue to work together to do the things that we know make a difference to you.

We will also need you to take control and responsibility for your own health and wellness. We will need you to keep telling us about your health and how we can work with you to support you to do this.





*This feels very different, being asked to be involved in the Strategy from the beginning rather than it being written by officers and handed to us.”*

*We’ve learned down the years to trust each other and continue to build that trust which has been a key feature of this initiative.”*

### To do this we will

- Continue listening to, and working with, local people and community groups to deliver this plan, feeding back what we have done together.
- Build on the strengths and assets of individuals and communities to protect and build health into all that we do.
- Every year we will measure how well we are working together by monitoring the difference this Strategy is making to local people listening to what you tell us about your health.
- Provide information about health as a single Wirral system and in a way that you want it.

### We will initially focus on

- Working with the Health and Wellbeing Insight Group to establish an ongoing programme of community insight with local people linked to the Strategy priorities, to measure impact, and influence ongoing action and Strategy delivery.
- Connecting the work of the Community, Voluntary and Faith Network (formerly known as the Humanitarian Cell) and the Health and Wellbeing Board to make sure we are working together to support the delivery of this Strategy whilst reflecting the real time priorities of local people.
- Engaging proactively with communities to ensure that our actions are meeting the needs of local people and that we are doing things in a way that involves people with lived experience in the design of places and services.
- Equipping our workforce with the skills and tools to support people to improve health based on the things that matter to you and which builds on your strengths.
- Establishing a whole Wirral approach to media campaigns through the Keeping Wirral Well collaborative.

# Our commitment

Improve health and support people when they are unwell or need help.

Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board brings together leaders from local organisations to focus on the things that we can do together to prevent people from becoming unwell and to make sure that we are doing all that we can to reduce differences in health outcomes. This is in addition to the work of the individual organisations, that make up the Board, to improve health and support people when they are unwell or need help.

Together, we have developed this 5-year Strategy, listening to, and learning from what you have told us. It relies on us all to achieve our ambition for Wirral. To do this we have all agreed that we will:

- Work as a Wirral collective to improve health and care outcomes for people and communities.
- Continue to listen to, and work with communities, so they are able to take control for their own health and wellbeing and live their lives as healthily and independently as they can.
- Focus on the things that together make the biggest difference to improving health.
- Make sure that everything that we do improves everyone's health, targeting our efforts to the people and communities where health is poorest.
- Do what we've committed to; individually and together.



# Delivering this Strategy

There are many opportunities but there are also challenges.

**This Strategy describes our 5-year ambition and includes the action we will initially focus on to start to make this happen. The actions will be reviewed and updated each year. There are many opportunities but there are also challenges. This plan is therefore a live document and may be refreshed in response to changes in the health of local people, what you tell us or developments in legislation, local and national policy.**

Delivery of this ambitious Strategy requires the ongoing commitment and drive of all Health and Wellbeing Board members as we move into the new strategic landscape that also includes the Integrated Care System. All partners need to build and strengthen shared capacity across the system to support these priorities and improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Wirral.

An Implementation Plan will set out more details around how the actions will be delivered. A steering group, representing Health and Wellbeing Board Members will oversee the delivery of the Strategy.

Health and Wellbeing Board meetings will have a clear focus on issues related to the wider determinants of health. The meetings will provide partners with the opportunity to collaborate and where appropriate provide mutual challenge so that we are constantly driving forward better, more integrated, working based around the needs of the population.



# Delivering this Strategy

Board members will work proactively to champion Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities.

Board members are system leaders who collectively set the direction of travel for health and wellbeing in Wirral. Additionally, they are all senior members of their own organisations and will work proactively to champion Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities.

For each priority, Board members will regularly report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on progress being made against actions and outcomes identified in the Strategy. This will provide the opportunity to share what is working well locally, and also act as a challenge to ensure that effective actions are being prioritised and as a means to identify barriers to progress that the Board can support partners to address. It will also enable actions and activity to flow across the system linking to the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership, to place or locality level as well as other system boards where appropriate. These systems and processes will be refined throughout 2022-23 as the Integrated Care System develops.

To understand the impact that the Strategy may be having, we will track high-level indicators for each priority over time so we can demonstrate that we have begun to 'turn the curve' and address key health and wellbeing challenges in Wirral.

## **Making sure we do what we say we will**

Through the Health and Wellbeing Board we will work on your behalf to ensure we do what we have committed to. The Board will continue to monitor the overall health and wellbeing of Wirral, but this represents an assessment of health rather than a measure of the success of this Strategy. Each year we will therefore review the difference this Strategy is making using health data and what you tell us about your health. We will publish regular updates and report on our progress.

We will hold ourselves to account by monitoring the progress we are making and work together to resolve any challenges to improvement collectively. Just as the actions to deliver on our ambitions must be developed and delivered together, we are reliant on the delivery of the wider ambitions in the Wirral Plan and the individual work of all the organisations that make up the Health and Wellbeing Board.

# For more information on Health and Wellbeing in Wirral

This Strategy is built on data, research and what you have told us. It also supports the work of the organisations that make up the Health and Wellbeing Board. For more detail on this information, and to follow the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, links are provided below:



## **Wirral Plan 2021 - 2026**

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/strategies-and-plans/wirral-plan-2021-2026/>

## **State of the Borough**

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/state-of-the-borough/>

## **Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for Wirral 2020 - 2021**

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/local-inequalities/2021-public-health-annual-report/>

## **Wirral Economic Strategy 2021 - 2026**

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/strategies-and-plans/wirral-economic-strategy/>

## **Wirral Place Based Partnership Plan**

<https://www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/your-place/wirral/>

## **All Together Fairer**

<https://www.champspublichealth.com/all-together-fairer/>

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=630>

## **Acknowledgements**

This Strategy has been jointly developed by representatives of the member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Local resident insight obtained over recent years about the priorities of this Strategy, has been used to inform and refine each priority and what we have committed to do. Resident comments have contributed to the Strategy content, for which we are very grateful. The Health and Wellbeing Board would like to thank everyone who has participated in the development of this Strategy.