



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

This is Wirral

Environment

**Wirral Intelligence Service
(December 2019)**

This is Wirral

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Background to This is Wirral

This is Wirral is a collected set of evidence about Wirral.

It includes information about the Wirral population including their current and future health and wellbeing needs and the borough including information about the economy, housing, environment and transport.

The insight is collected into a number of sections to allow ease of access for the reader.

Each section contains detailed content including the key messages from the analysis and insight on main issues and is underpinned by detailed information.

The information forms our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) providing a detailed picture of the borough.

It is used to enable effective strategic planning to determine what actions local authorities and other partners need to take to meet resident needs and to address the wider determinants that impact on health and wellbeing.

How can you help?

If you have ideas or any suggestions about these issues or topics then please email us at wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk or go to <https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/>

Version Number	Date	Authors
1.0	December 2019	Claire Brandwood, Team Leader (Waste Reduction), for Wirral Council

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This is Wirral: Environment

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Key Messages

- Wirral's recycling rate has stagnated and even gone into decline in recent years, both as a result of the introduction of a charged garden waste service and the more stringent quality requirements from reprocessors. Wirral's recycling rate at March 2019 was 32.5%.
- Nationally the Government consultation on its new Resources & Waste Strategy will shape waste management policy in England and therefore Wirral for a number of years to come.
- The estimated maximum recycling rate for Wirral with the current waste collection system is only 42%.
- A detailed study of the composition of green (general waste), grey (dry recycling) and brown bins (garden waste) across Wirral has highlighted that over 35% of the content of the green residual waste bin is food.
- Food waste is the biggest component (by weight) of the non-recycled waste bin.
- Food waste is therefore one of the largest remaining opportunities to improve the Council's recycling performance.
- Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) is responsible for the treatment and/or disposal of all Merseyside Districts and Halton Borough Council's municipal waste.
- The cost of waste treatment and disposal via MRWA is through a Levy mechanism and all costs and savings are shared amongst the districts.
- Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) is a key performance indicator for the Loving our Environment Strategy. LEQ National 2017/18 was 86% for litter, whilst Wirral was 97.4% for B and above in shopping areas and gateways. In 2018/19, Wirral had a score of 98.4% (2014/15 it was 97.5%)
- The Council spends in the region of £3.6m per year on picking up litter, sweeping the streets and removing fly-tipping.
- Across the UK, 900,000 incidents of fly tipping on local authority land were reported in 2016, with many more occurring on private land. The economic costs are enormous – in 2014/15, local authorities spent almost £70 million on clean up and enforcement.
- In 2018/19, Wirral had 3,152 reported incidents of fly tipping. The majority of these were small van load size of household waste. This is a 53% increase from a figure of 2,052 reported incidents in 2014/15.
- In July 2019 Wirral Council announced [Climate Emergency](#).
- Wirral's 'Managing our Waste Strategy,' to achieve the EU and UK target of 50% recycling by 2020, requires major service change, involving the establishment of new collection arrangements.
- Through Eco Schools, Wirral schools have increased their recycling from 35% in 2014/15 to 49% in 2018/19.
- In 2018, the Government launched its 25-year plan for the environment, pledging that we would be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.
- 8 million tons of plastic waste ends up in the world's oceans each year, endangering marine life and entering the food chain. Wirral Council is committed to addressing the causes of environmental pollution and at its meeting in December 2017, the Council passed a resolution to address the impact of single use plastics (SUP) on the environment as part of this commitment. In November 2018, Wirral Council published its Single Use Plastic Free Wirral Policy.
- 2017 Residents Survey results show that "street cleanliness" is the second most important priority to residents, after "low levels of crime".
- 2017 Residents Survey results for all four constituencies had environmental issues such as dog fouling and littering as part of their top three concerns in their local area.

ENVIRONMENT



LITTER, DETRITUS AND GRAFFITI FREE

90%
(2013-2014)

98%
(2018-2019)

LEQ SCORES - B AND ABOVE. MAIN GATEWAYS / RETAIL AREAS



RECYCLING RATES

12%
(2005-2006)
START

32.5%
(2018-2019)
NOW

50%
(2020)
TARGET



WIRRAL SCHOOLS RECYCLING HAS INCREASED FROM 35% IN 2014/15 TO

49%

IN 2018/19 THROUGH ECO SCHOOLS

27



AWARDED TO WIRRAL FOR ITS PARKS



53%

INCREASE REPORTED FLY-TIPPING INCIDENTS (2014/15 - 2018/19) (2,052 to 3,152)



£3.6m

COUNCIL SPEND ON DEALING WITH LITTER SWEEPING & FLY-TIPPING (2018/19)

What do we know?

Wirral residents are fiercely proud of their local environment. Residents and visitors enjoy our coastline, countryside and perfect blend of the urban and rural. One of the remarkable things about living in Wirral is the fantastic environment we all share. Our coastline and world class parks are second to none.

Wirral residents' love where they live: they are active and take real ownership and pride in making sure Wirral looks its best. One of Wirral Council's key 2020 pledges is to encourage residents to take pride in their local community and increase personal responsibility, to keep Wirral 'clean and green'.

As part of the Wirral Plan, our ambition is to work with residents to help them ensure an attractive local environment for them and for their children. We want people to love where they live and will support communities to get fully involved in local environmental issues such as recycling, littering, fly tipping and dog fouling.

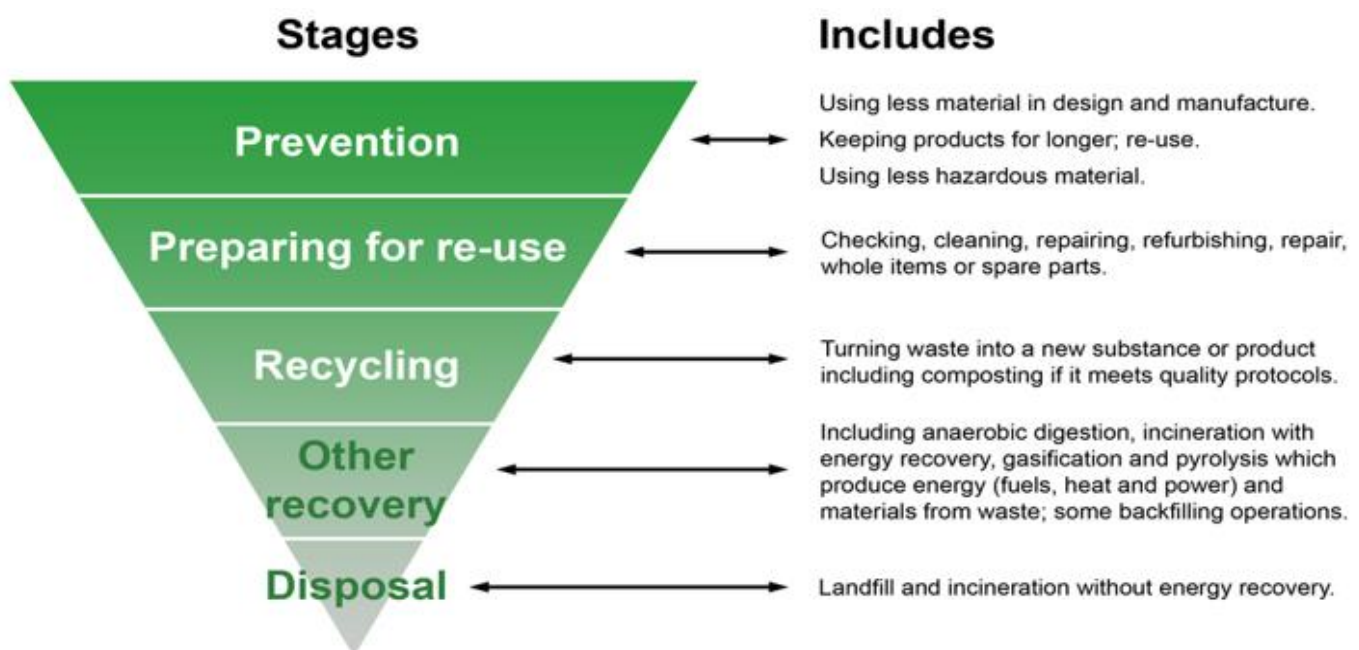
By 2020 Wirral's environment will be upheld as outstanding with local people and businesses involved in the management of their location and taking personal responsibility for protecting the environment. We will drive the direction of creating an attractive and sustainable environment across Wirral.

Preventing Waste & Reuse

Waste prevention (or minimisation) stops the generation of waste in the first place, so it is the most preferred method of waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment. It means using and throwing away less.

There are many ways in which people and businesses can do their part. By following the waste hierarchy (**figure 1**), residents can reduce the amount of waste they produce and throw away:

Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy



Source: [Real Nappies for London](#)

Recycling & Waste

The UK has a target of 50% reuse/recycling by 2020. The EU has extended this further to 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035.

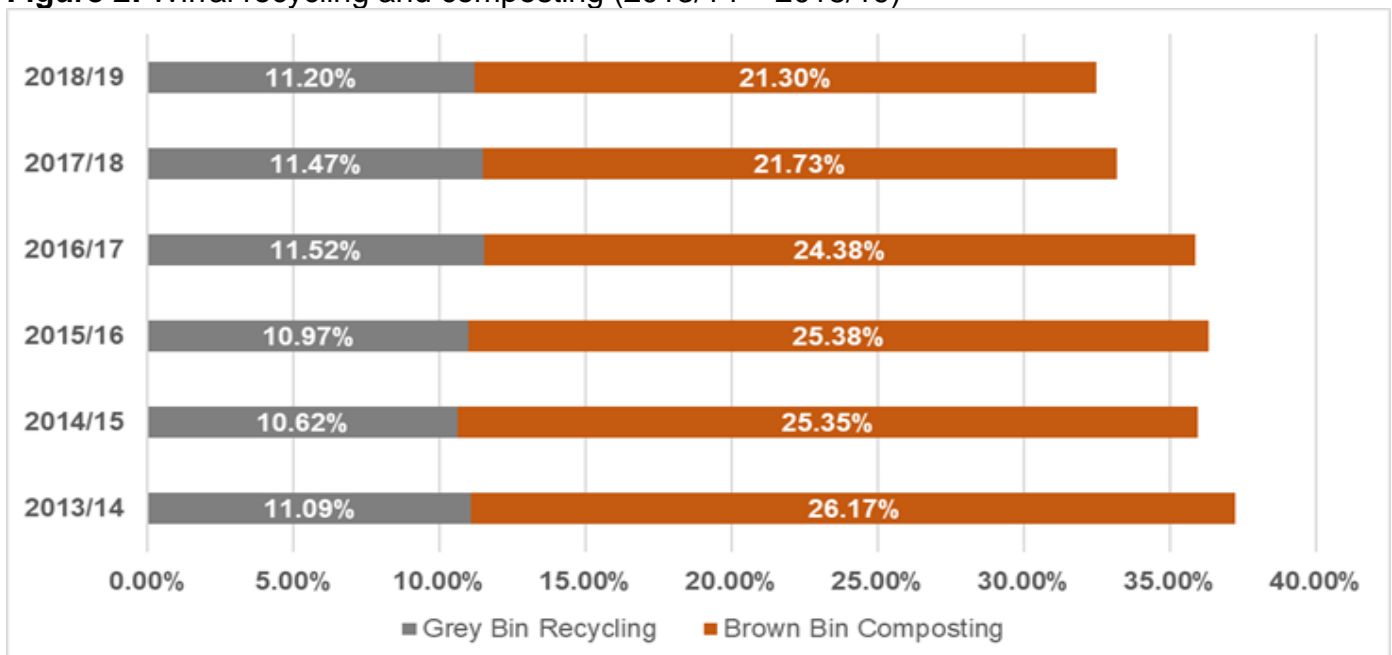
Wirral Council was the first Council in Merseyside to introduce an alternate weekly collection system in 2006/07 for the separate kerbside collection of general waste and co-mingled recycling. Due to this major service change, Wirral's recycling rate jumped from 14% to 36%. A further increase in recycling was achieved through the recycling of street sweepings, taking Wirral's recycling rate to 40%.

Since then, the recycling rate has stagnated and even gone into decline in recent years, both as a result of the more stringent quality requirements from reprocessors and possibly the introduction of a charged garden waste service.

This picture is not limited to Wirral alone – many other councils across the country have also experienced this downturn in recycling performance. This, and a greater financial squeeze from central government, has resulted in many looking to further improve their waste management systems, to bring increased recycling and decreased waste treatment and disposal costs.

Wirral's recycling rate to March 2019 was 32.5% (see figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Wirral recycling and composting (2013/14 – 2018/19)



Source: [Waste Data Flow](#) and Local Performance data (not published)

In December 2018, the Government published the Resources & Waste Strategy for England. This strategy sets out how we will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England. In February 2019, DEFRA launched a series of public consultations regarding proposals for waste collection from households and businesses in England:

- Consistency in household and business recycling collections in England
- Consultation to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)
- Consultation on reforming the UK packaging producer responsibility system (EPR)
- Plastic Packaging Tax

These consultations will shape waste management policy in England over the next few years, including possible mandatory collections for food and a core range of packaging materials, a deposit return scheme for on-the-go drinks containers and reforms of the packaging producer responsibility system.

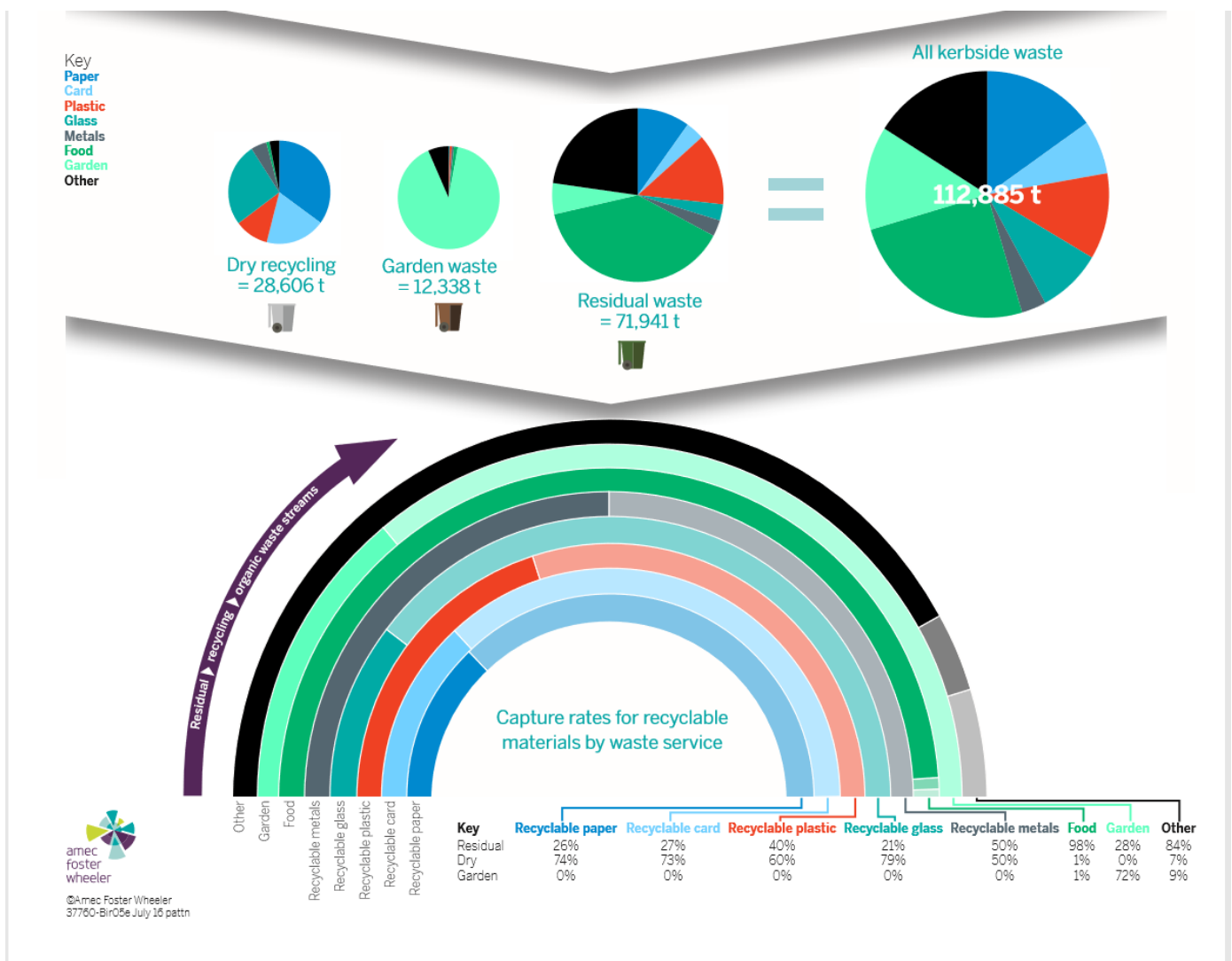
Wirral's waste composition

A waste composition analysis was commissioned by Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority in 2015/16. This shows that the maximum recycling rate possible with the current waste collection system is only 42%. To achieve the higher rates of reuse and recycling required in the future, significant change will be required.

This detailed study of the composition of green, grey and brown bins across Merseyside has highlighted that over 35% of the content of the green residual waste bin is food. The analysis also highlighted that food waste is the biggest component by weight of the non-recycled waste bin. Food waste collected separately can be treated to create gas to power vehicles and other uses such as the production of odourless agricultural fertiliser. Food waste is therefore one of the largest remaining opportunities to improve the Council's recycling performance.

In **figure 3** we see the composition of waste from Wirral's kerbside collection systems.

Figure 3: Composition of waste from Wirral's kerbside collection (2015/16)



Source: [Merseyside Recycling & Waste Authority Waste Composition Analysis 2015/16](#)

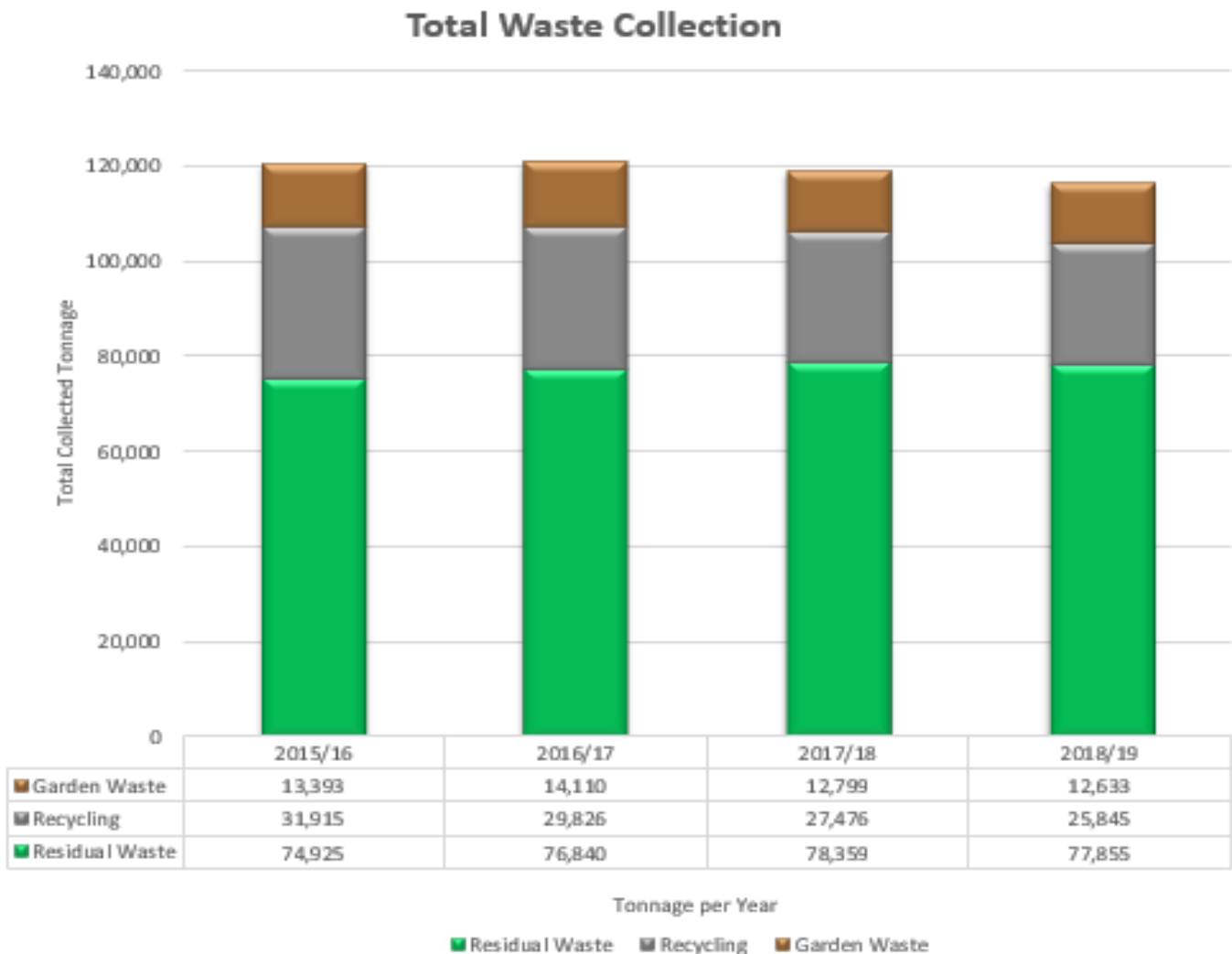
Waste

As a Waste Collection Authority, Wirral Council is responsible for collection of household waste, which is then consigned to the Waste Disposal Authority (Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority) for treatment or disposal. MRWA is the disposal authority for all Merseyside Districts and Halton Borough Council.

Over the past couple of years, the total quantity of household waste collected has reduced, but the proportion of this that is recycled has also decreased. This could be due to there being less glass and paper packaging used by manufacturers (heavy materials) and more plastics used in packaging (lighter materials).

In **figure 4** below is the total waste collection data for Wirral from 2015/16 to 2018/19. Wirral Council pays a levy to MRWA for the treatment or disposal of our household waste. This is made up of a cost per tonne, cost per head and recycling credits. Recycling is cheaper than waste treatment via energy from waste or disposal via landfill, but ultimately, following the waste hierarchy, producing less waste overall is even less expensive.

Figure 4: Total kerbside household waste collection for Wirral (2015/16 – 2018/19)



Source: Wirral Council Waste Collection Data (Internal Source)

Local Environmental Quality

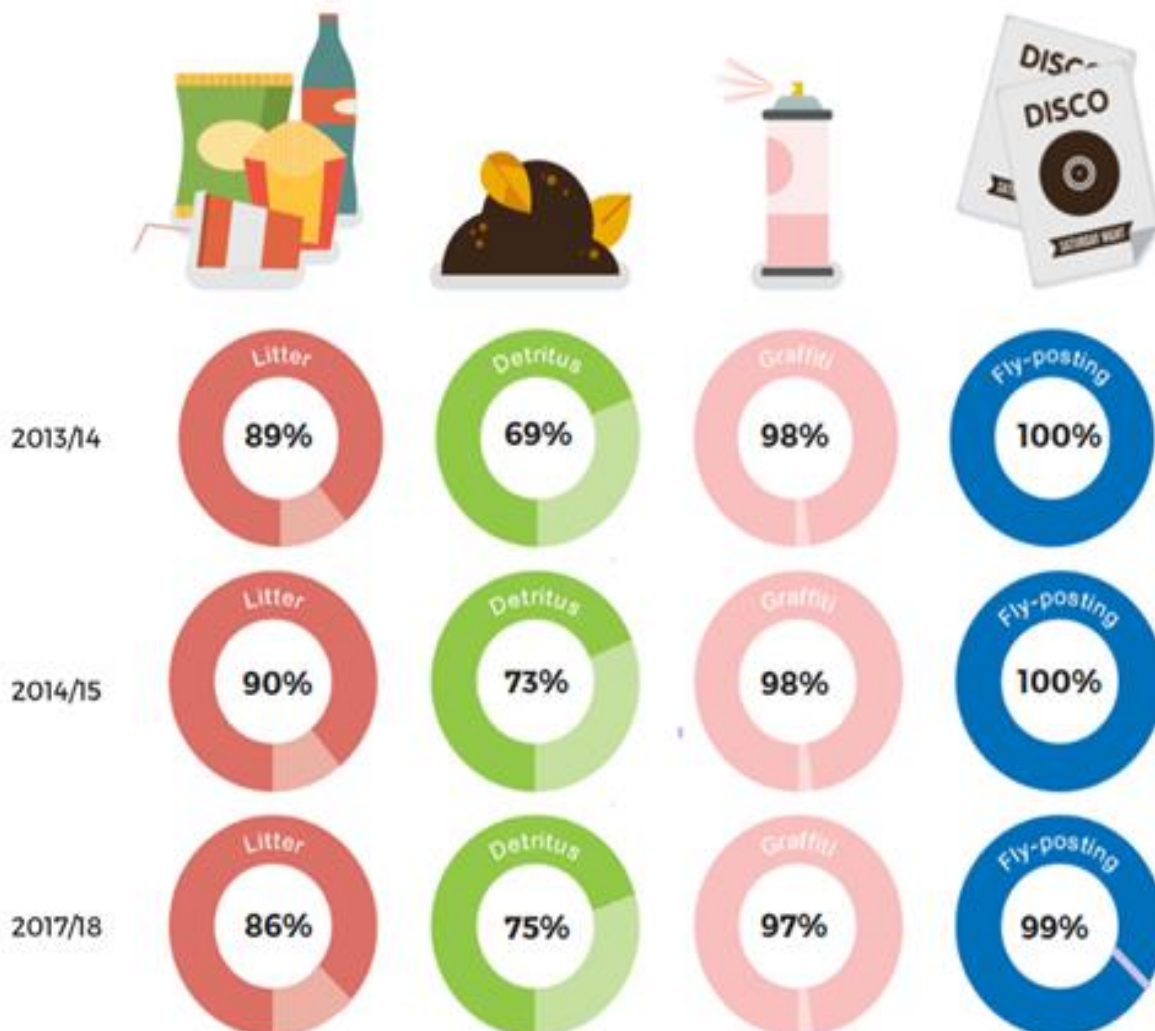
In 2017/18, environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy carried out a local environmental quality (LEQ) survey of England.

Figure 5 describes the headline results and highlights that litter has become worse across England since the last survey was carried out in 2014/15. 14% of sites across England did not meet an acceptable standard for litter. For litter, 4% more sites failed nationally in 2017/18 compared to the last national survey in 2014/15.

25% of sites failed to meet the acceptable standard for detritus. Detritus is mud and grime found on our roads and when built up can lead to blocked drains and localised flooding.

Percentage of sites at or above an acceptable standard (grade B and above) for each of the headline indicators 2017/18:

Figure 5: Percentage of sites at or above an acceptable standard (grade B and above) for each of the headline indicators 2017/18 (England)



Source: [Keep Britain Tidy - Litter In England, The Local Environmental Quality Survey Of England 2017/18](#)

Littered items

Figure 6 below describes the top ten types of litter found on the highest percentage of sites in 2017/18.

The survey notes presence or absence of different types of litter. In 2017/18, 79% of sites surveyed had smoking-related litter present, this is a 6% increase on 2014/15. 33% of sites had fast food litter, a 1% increase on 2014/15 and a litter type that has been on the increase since 2010/11, when it was observed on 21% of sites. Alcoholic drinks-related litter has seen a sharp increase from 19% in 2014/15 to 25% in 2017/18.

Figure 6: Top ten types of litter found on the highest percentage of sites in England (2017/18)



Source: [Keep Britain Tidy - Litter In England, The Local Environmental Quality Survey Of England 2017/18](#)

Local Environmental Quality in Wirral

In the 2017 Wirral Residents Survey, cleanliness was shown to be important to Wirral residents. Area cleanliness is a key driver for local area satisfaction and of the Council representing value for money, so it is important to understand what shapes perceptions of litter issues.

Dog fouling comes out as the top issue across the board, with all constituencies bar Wirral West naming it as the top problem in the local area. All four constituencies deem food and drink packaging to be the biggest issue in their nearest town centre.

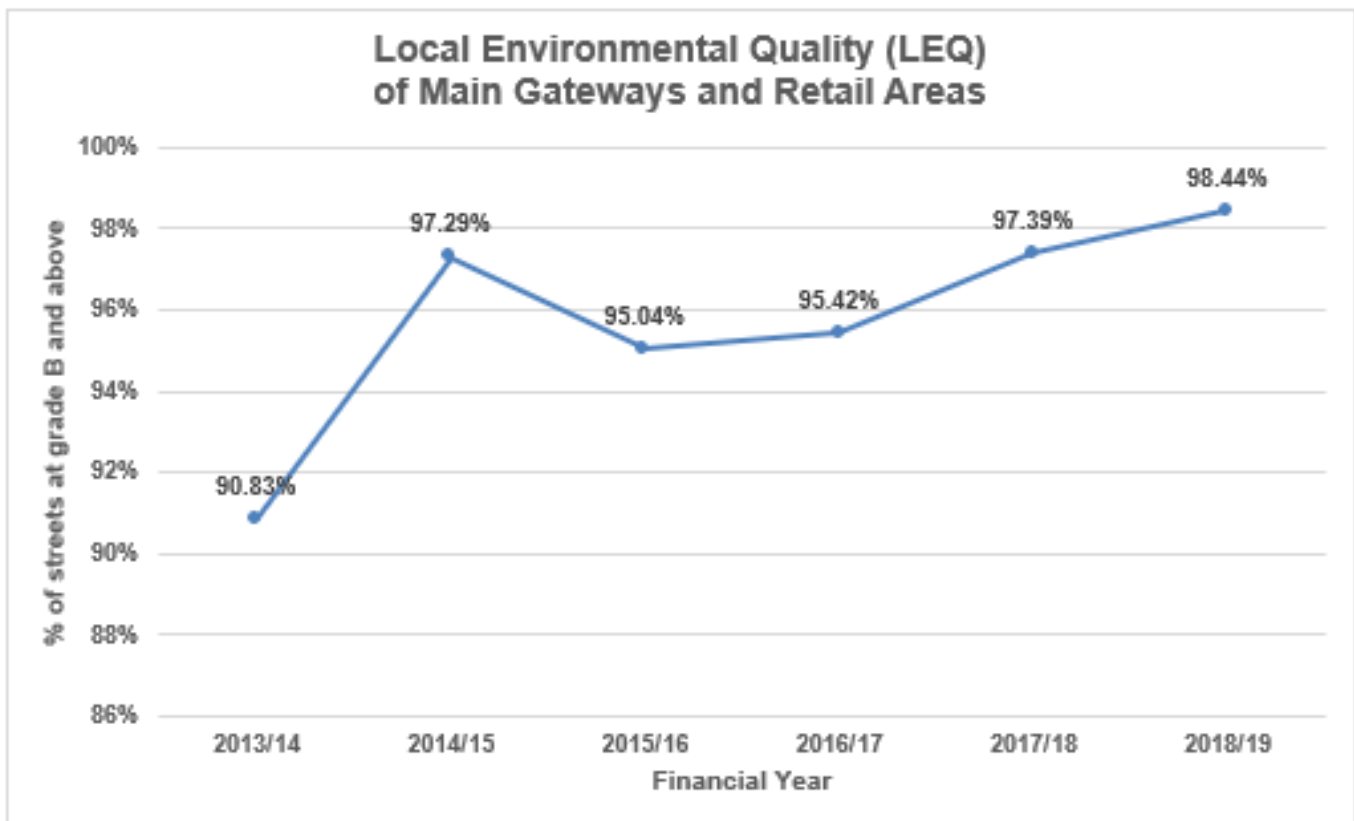
The Council spends in the region of £3.6m per year on picking up litter, sweeping the streets and removing fly-tipping. By proactively deploying resource and effective monitoring of main retail and key gateway areas within the Borough, we are directly supporting the Growth Plan and our Loving Our Environment strategies; both support relevant pledges within the Wirral Plan.

The Council's aim is to create an attractive local environment across Wirral, making it an attractive place to businesses, encouraging inward investment and ensuring residents have a clean and well-maintained environment in which to travel, live and work.

In **figure 7** below are the Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) results 2013-2019 with this being a key performance indicator for the Loving our Environment Strategy as maintaining local environmental quality (LEQ) via the street cleansing of litter, detritus, graffiti (Main Gateways and Retail Areas).

Local environmental quality scores for the borough's gateways and district centres have improved over the period of the Wirral Plan and have remained high and above target throughout the last year. Despite this we have commenced a review of cleansing resource deployment across district centres to ensure consistency, as well as a review of litter bin provision to improve location and access.

Figure 7: Local Environmental Quality results for Wirral (Main Gateways and Retail Areas) (2013-2019)



Source: Wirral Council LEQ Data (Internal Source)

Fly Tipping

There were 900,000 incidents of fly tipping on local authority land reported in 2016, with many more occurring on private land. The economic costs are enormous – in 2014/15, local authorities spent almost £70 million on clean up and enforcement.

Fly tipping is unsightly and contributes to a sense that places are uncared for. Poor local environmental quality is correlated with elevated levels of crime and lower feelings of wellbeing, with residents often feeling less safe as a result.

In extreme cases, fly tipping of asbestos or chemicals can risk serious harm to human health and local environments.

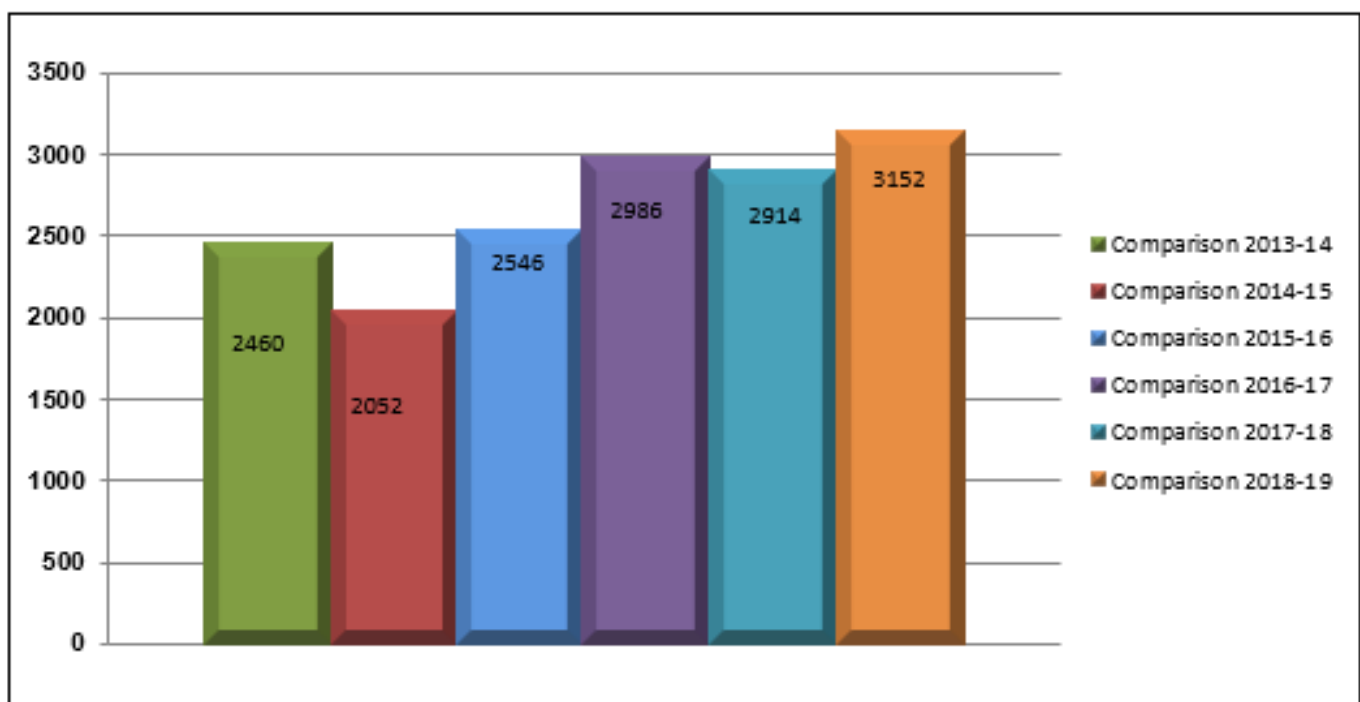
Around $\frac{2}{3}$ of fly tipped waste originates from households, with the remainder from industry and commercial premises. This suggests that householders are fly tipping their own waste or handing it over to a private waste removal company, who subsequently fly tip their waste.

The following issues have the potential to encourage fly tipping:

- Due to the nature of the crime, often undertaken in out of the way areas at quiet times, the risks of being caught are low.
- If fly tippers are caught, the sentence issued are weak, despite the potential for magistrates to issue fines of up to £50,000 and custodial sentence of 12 months.
- Too many householders are unaware that they need to ask for a waste carriers license when handing waste to a third party for disposal.
- Many local authorities charge for collection of certain waste and some have limited opening times or closed local recycling centres, making it more difficult for householders to legally dispose of their own waste.

Figure 8 below highlights the trend in the number of reported fly tipping incidents for Wirral between 2013/14 and 2018/19. This reached its peak in 2018/19, when Wirral had 3152 reported incidents of fly tipping. The majority of these were small van load size of household waste.

Figure 8: Total number of reported incidents of fly tipping (2013/14 – 2018/19)



Impacts of Climate Change

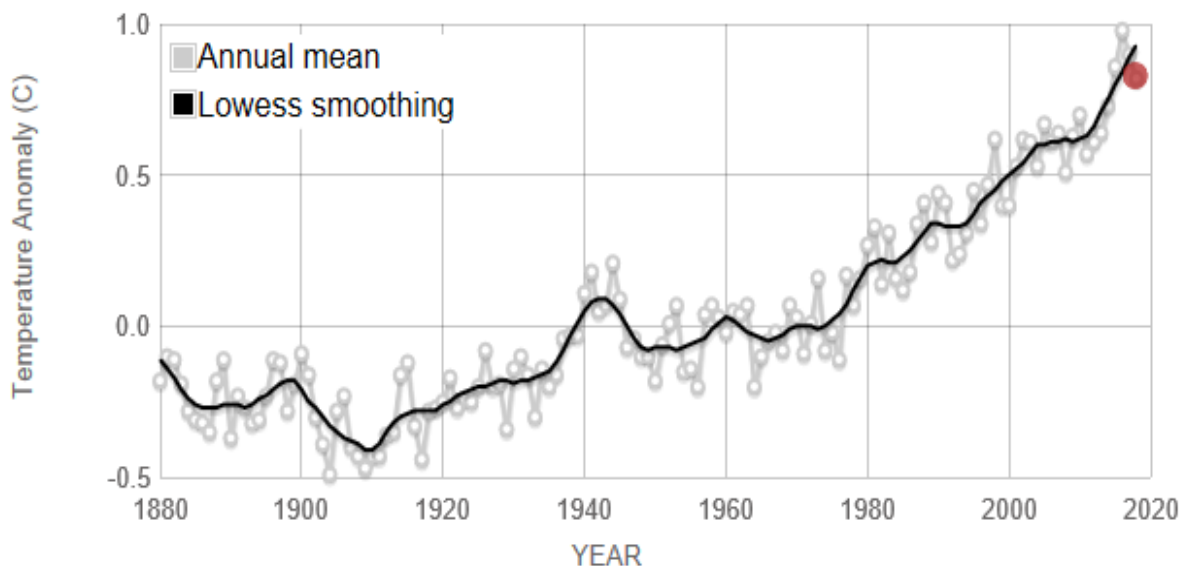
Unnatural climate change is happening across the earth. There has been 1°C of abnormal heating since the preindustrial period so far. The damaging impacts from disruption to the Earth's climatic system are already being felt with extreme weather events of the type predicted by scientists now happening. Collectively all people need to stop pollution that causes unnatural heating fast to avoid further damage. **Figure 9** below highlights the change in global land and ocean temperatures since late Victorian to present day.

Figure 9: Global Land-Ocean Temperature Index (1880 To 2020)

GLOBAL LAND-OCEAN TEMPERATURE INDEX

Data source: NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS).

Credit: NASA/GISS



Source: [NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies \(GISS\)](https://www.giss.nasa.gov/)

Excess heat is being trapped by the atmosphere due to increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. The rise in concentration of these gases is principally as a result of pollution associated with our burning of fossil fuels for heat, power and transport. If left unchecked, it will drive more overheating and cause severe and irreversible damage on a planetary scale.

The latest scientific evidence about climate change paints a disturbing picture. Humankind - and much of the natural world upon which we rely - is currently heading for disaster unless we change course. We must eliminate climate damaging pollution by the middle of the century in order to curb the rise in excess heat to no more than 1.5°C.

Some further change in the climate is unavoidable due to pollution already produced. We need to adapt to these changes to avoid disruption. Here in Wirral we can anticipate:

- Higher summer temperatures with prolonged dry spells and increased frequency of heat waves;
- Warmer, wetter winters;
- More storms and floods; and,
- A rise in sea levels.

Council declares Climate Emergency

In July 2019 [Wirral Council declared an Environmental and Climate Emergency](#), which mirrored similar moves by over 150 other Local Authorities, District and Parish Councils.

The Council recognises the need to support the Climate Emergency Declaration with practical local action. Over the coming years, this will involve a wide range of measures and actions and a Climate Emergency Action Plan is being developed.

Parks and Open Spaces

Our Wirral peninsula is widely known for its attractive parks, coast and countryside sites. Wirral's parks and open spaces provide many positive benefits for both local people and visitors from the UK and further afield. By March 2019 Wirral had 27 Green Flag awards for its parks.

This is in no small part a testament to the extensive network of volunteers, Friends Groups, and diverse partner organisations who work with Wirral Council to help care for, improve and promote parks and open space sites and related activities throughout the borough.

Wirral's [parks and open spaces](#) provide access to a wide range of positive activities for people of all ages throughout the borough. They are a treasure trove of history, from Viking to Victorian times and beyond. They are home to many kinds of wildlife and plants.

Birkenhead Park opened in 1847, inspiring the creation of urban parks around the world, including the world famous Central Park in New York. From beaches to historic parks, nature reserves and country parks to playgrounds: parks and open spaces help make Wirral a special place, loved and appreciated by residents and visitors alike.

Wirral [Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2014-2024](#) recognises the importance of green and open spaces for residents and sets out its key principles in setting out to maintain and develop these resources:

- Attract and retain investment in the borough through provision of attractive, well managed parks and open spaces;
- be accessible, safe and well-used places for local people, communities and visitors to enjoy;
- help bring different generations together through providing positive healthy activities for local people and communities;
- contribute to the environmental sustainability and biodiversity of Wirral, achieving a good balance by protecting habitats while supporting economic growth;
- be funded, delivered and managed through a new, viable business model.

Air Quality

Industrialisation, technological advancements and modern transportation systems have brought many benefits, however modern lifestyles continue to fuel the generation of air pollutants, which have notable health and environmental implications.

Healthcare Implications The health impacts of pollution were the focus of the 2017 Chief Medical Officer's annual report for England. Specifically, air pollution is considered to be the greatest environmental risk to public health ([Landrigan, 2017](#)). It is a major contributor to the global burden of disease, increasing morbidity and mortality (Cohen et al, 2017).

In 2015, ambient particulate matter (PM2.5 – an outdoor pollutant with notable adverse health impacts) was identified as the fifth greatest mortality risk factor globally (Cohen et al, 2017). Nationally, air pollution is one of the leading risk factors contributing to the burden of disease.

In 2013, air pollution was estimated to account for around 2% of disability-adjusted life-years lost in England (Newton et al, 2015). Some air pollutants can also contribute to global climate change, which in turn compromise health, food and water supplies, and increase the risk of devastating environmental disasters ([Watts et al, 2015](#)). ([For more information on climate change in our local area, see our JSNA on climate and health](#)).

Air pollution can damage ecosystems, compromising habitats and biodiversity. Agriculture and crop production can also be negatively impacted by air pollution, which has implications for food supply. Mobilising efforts to reduce air pollution would support national aims to promote sustainability within the Health and Social Care System to ensure resources are available to future generations ([Sustainable Development Strategy for the Health and Social Care System 2014 – 2020](#)).

On a global scale, efforts to reduce air pollution are in line with a number of key sustainable development goals set by the United Nations ([Landrigan, 2017](#))

[For more information go to Air Quality JSNA on Wirral Intelligence Service website](#)

Enforcement

In July 2015, Wirral Council introduced a new zero tolerance approach to littering. Enforcement of littering was contracted to Kingdom Environmental Services. From May 2016, enforcement of dog fouling was also provided by Kingdom.

Over the period of the contract, almost 32,500 FPNs were issued, for a number of litter offences, such as littering, dog fouling, littering in alleyways and smoking in vehicles.

The number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued declined over the years. This was partly due to behaviour change starting to appear. This positive behaviour change also contributed to the improved Local Environmental Quality scores observed.

In March 2019 the council terminated its Environmental Enforcement Contract by mutual agreement. A range of possible models for a new service are being explored, based on evidence of good practice elsewhere. Key issues to consider include the need to strike a balance between education and enforcement and the financial implications of introducing a new model.

Blue Planet effect....

In 2017, the BBC aired Blue Planet II. One episode, which focused on the impact of human activities on the world's oceans, has had a profound impact on people's perception of the environment and their role in its protection. Plastics were a particular focus and the programme has resulted in a number of actions to tackle the increasing amount of plastic in the oceans, including the EU agreeing to ban single-use plastic items such as plates, cutlery, straws, balloon sticks or cotton buds, from 2021. Many global retailers have already made the change from plastic straws to paper alternatives.

Schools and communities are also increasingly taking part in beach cleans and litter picks within their local areas.

What are we doing and why?

The recycling performance from existing domestic refuse collection services can be improved and various initiatives are already underway to do this, including a promotion campaign that started in November 2015 and an emphasis on getting more grey recycling bins into use by subsidising the cost to the resident, so that new recycling bins are free of charge.

However, officers believe that the optimum recycling performance level from existing arrangements is approximately 40%. Therefore, as set out in the 'Managing our Waste Strategy,' to achieve the 2020 target of 50% recycling, major service change will be required, involving the establishment of new collection arrangements. The strategy can be viewed here: [Managing our Waste](#). A revised waste collection policy was also agreed and can be seen here: [Waste Collection Policy](#).

Eco Schools

Eco-Schools is a global programme engaging 19.5 million children across 67 countries, making it the largest educational programme on the planet. The programme covers ten topics (Marine, Biodiversity, Energy, Litter, Waste, Water, School Grounds, Healthy Living, Transport and Global Citizenship) and there are seven steps to achieving a Green Flag (Step 1 Eco-Committee, Step 2 Environmental Review, Step 3 Action Plan, Step 4 Curriculum Links, Step 5 Informing and involving, Step 6 Monitoring and Evaluation, Step 7 Eco-Code), which teaches students great skills for their future.

Wirral schools have been engaging with the Eco Schools programme for many years, with over 60 schools achieving the coveted Green Flag status. Through Eco Schools, Wirral schools have increased their recycling from 35% in 2014/15 to 49% in 2018/19. Projects that schools have been involved in include litter awareness, "The Last Straw" plastic reduction video, annual Climate Challenge, Air Quality monitoring and planting and working together.

For more information on Eco Schools, visit <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

Wirral Constituency Environment Days

'Love Where You Live' Fund - Environmental Projects

The aim of this funding is to support projects that will make environmental improvements to any outdoor areas to which the general public has access to. Funding is available to voluntary, community or faith sector groups and not-for-profit organisations with an annual income of less than £30,000. [Access an application forms](#).

Seacombe Environmental Action Days

Using Seacombe as a trial high street, we are engaging with local residents, businesses and schools to develop and action plan to improve the local high street environment. The first took place in November 2018, involving 84 residents, school children (18 young people from local schools St Joseph's and Egremont Primary) and partners (including Fire Service, Police, ASBT, Community Safety, Involve Northwest Connectors and Waste and Recycling Team). Door knocking took place, litter picking in the local area, graffiti removal and fly tipping removal. A total of 76 bags of waste were removed (approx. 12 tonnes).

The second took place in February 2019, involving 23 people (including 1 young person and a range of local residents and partners). As part of the Action Day door knocking took place to engage local residents, litter picking in the local area, graffiti removal and fly tipping removal. A total of 45 bags of waste were removed (approx. 10 tonnes).

Love Wirral

Love Where You Live

Love Wirral encourages people to take greater responsibility and pride in their own local environment, whether you live, work or visit Wirral. Locations of the hubs and further information is available at www.wirral.gov.uk/lovewirral

Anybody can get involved all you need is a love of Wirral and pride to keep it beautiful and show it off to others. Whether you are a group of friends, local business, community group or an interested individual you can all do your bit.

Using funding from litter prosecutions, the Council has purchased litter picking kits for residents and volunteers to use, to help keep their local area clean and tidy.

Twenty Love Where You Live (LWYL) hubs were established around the whole of the Wirral (five in each constituency area). Each LWYL hub was given a litter picking pack, made up of:

- Adult litter pickers
- Child litter pickers
- High viz vests
- Hoops
- Bags

In January 2016 Wirral Council published Loving Our Environment – Love Wirral as part of The Wirral Plan – 2020 vision. [The Local Authority pledged that by 2020](#) Wirral's environment will be upheld as outstanding with local people and businesses involved in the management of their location and taking personal responsibility for protecting the environment.

Two Love Where You Live Forums were held and were well attended by volunteers engaged in a range of environmental activities. The process to develop Wirral Together for the Environment was introduced at the Wirral, Liverpool City Region Year of Environment launch event on the 28th February 2019.

During 2019-20 Wirral Council and partners, the Love Where You Live Forum and Community Action Wirral have committed to:

- Conduct a feasibility study for the development of a robust and streamlined online booking system for the rental of LWYL equipment and feedback of outcomes.
- Deliver a LWYL training programme consisting of 2 training events in each constituency area (8 in total) for environmental volunteers.
- Deliver an exercise to map out environmental volunteering groups across the Wirral, to enable promotion of such groups and improve support to them.
- To utilise Love Wirral to deliver an education campaign to encourage local environmental stewardship and support good dog ownership.
- To establish arrangements for the new approach to driving behaviour change and tackling environmental crime.
- Develop and publish the "Wirral Together for the Environment" deal.
- To review street cleansing arrangements for supporting Wirral as a visitor destination.
- To work with residents and partners to deliver the Neat Streets programme.
- Liaise with Planning, to ensure that the maintenance of green spaces is included as a condition for all future planning approvals

Year of the Environment 2019

In 2018, the Government launched its 25-year plan for the environment, pledging that we would be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

As part of the plan, 2019 was declared as a national Year of Green Action across the UK. The Liverpool City Region's Local Nature Partnership, Nature Connected, is taking the initiative, along with the Combined Authority, the Environment Agency and Natural England, to help deliver a Liverpool City Region focused Year of Action for the Environment, working with a broad range of partners from different sectors across the City Region.

Further information and a calendar of events are available at: www.yoe2019lcr.org.uk

Single Use Plastics

In the UK, some 2.2 million tonnes of plastic packaging are consumed annually. Only 40% of this is recycled domestically.

According to recent research¹, eight million tons of plastic waste ends up in the world's oceans each year, endangering marine life and entering the food chain

In addition, there is a growing understanding of the risks posed to human health by toxic chemicals present in plastics².

Wirral Council is committed to addressing the causes of environmental pollution and at its meeting in December 2017, the Council passed a resolution to address the impact of single use plastics (SUP) on the environment as part of this commitment. In November 2018, Wirral Council published its Single Use Plastic Free Wirral Policy. The details and policy can be viewed here: [Single Use Plastic Free Wirral](#).

The Council's SUP Free Policy includes provision for raising public awareness of the threat and environmental impact of SUP, working with communities to address the impact of SUP on the environment and remove SUP from Council service provision over a two-year period. The Council will promote SUP Free operating to all partners and local businesses.

One project that has come out of this is [Refill Wirral](#), which has been launched by a local business [Waste Not Want Not](#), in partnership with Wirral Council. Refill, an award-winning campaign, is designed to help residents and visitors reduce plastic pollution, by making it easy to refill a reusable water bottle instead of buying a plastic one.

2018/19 saw Surfers Against Sewage Wirral working hard with local businesses, to encourage them to become single use plastic free. Over 60 businesses have achieved Plastic Champion status so far, making Wirral a [Plastic Free Community](#).

Residents acting on local environment issues

Wirral Environmental Network

[Wirral Environmental Network](#) is an environmental education charity set up to promote and facilitate ethical and environmentally friendly lifestyles. They run a number of events throughout the year, including gardening, composting and furniture upcycling.

Environmental Volunteers

The number of people getting involved in their local environment has seen an increase over the past few years. Groups include [The New Brighteners](#), [The High Tidiers](#) and [Wirral Countryside Volunteers](#)

More details on how Wirral residents are making a difference to a range of environments will be added in subsequent versions of these documents

Local View

Residents Survey – Local Environment

The Residents Survey results show that Street cleanliness came only 2nd to Low levels of crime for most important priority and most needs improving.

When asked about the overall cleanliness of the local area, town centre(s) and the whole borough, there is a clear binary distinction between the constituencies. Residents in Wirral West & South are more inclined to feel their local area is cleaner than the rest of Wirral, whereas those in Birkenhead and Wallasey perceive the wider borough to be better kept than where they live.

Satisfaction with cleanliness of the local area is a key driver for overall local area satisfaction, so it is important to understand the specific perceived issues. Dog fouling comes out as the biggest issue across the borough. Residents from Birkenhead are overwhelmingly the most negative when it comes to local area satisfaction, and take specific issue with food and drink containers, poorly kept streets, and fly-tipping.

Residents were asked:

Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

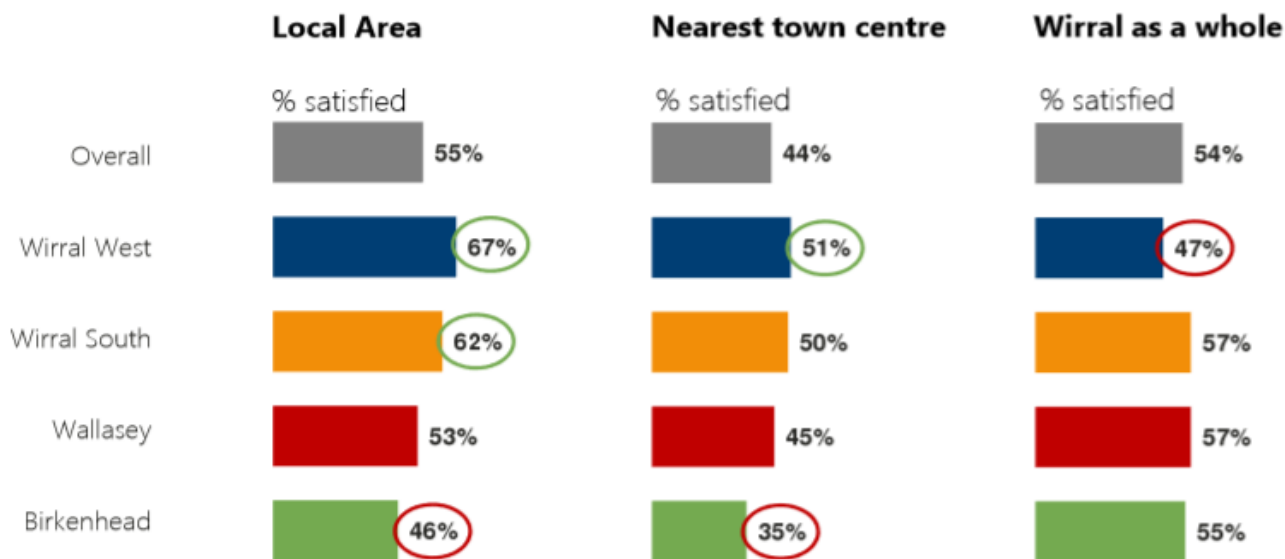
- 50% responded “The streets and environment are kept clean”. 40% said this needs improving
- 30% responded “People have access to parks and green spaces”. 7% said this needs improving

Distinct differences by constituency on perceptions of area cleanliness

Residents were asked to rate the cleanliness of three distinct areas; their local area, nearest town centre, and the borough as a whole (**see figure 10 below**). From the results Birkenhead residents are significantly more likely to be less satisfied with their local area (46% compared to 55% overall and 67% for Wirral West) and the nearest town centre (35% compared to 44% overall and 51% for Wirral West).

There appears to be a correlation between Wirral West and Wirral South, whose residents are more likely to consider their local area as cleaner than Wirral as a whole (67% and 62% compared to 47% and 57% respectively), whereas those in Wallasey and Birkenhead think the opposite (Birkenhead Local Area at 46% compared to 55% for Wirral as a whole and Wallasey Local Area 53% compared to 57% for Wirral as a whole).

Figure 10: Environment responses related to Wirral Residents Survey (2017)



Base: All responding – your local area (1236); All responding – your nearest town (1187); All responding – Wirral as a whole (1164);
Fieldwork dates: 18th September - 8th November 2017

Source: Ipsos MORI **WIRRAL**

Source: [Ipsos MORI – Wirral Residents Survey 2017](#)

Wirral West residents considered the top 3 problems in their local area to be:

- Dog fouling (57%)
- Food/drinks containers (49%)
- Upkeep of grass verges etc (40%)

Wirral South residents considered the top 3 problems in their local area to be:

- Food/drinks containers (62%)
- Dog fouling (50%)
- Upkeep of grass verges etc (35%)

Wallasey residents considered the top 3 problems in their local area to be:

- Dog fouling (69%)
- Poorly kept/dirty streets (42%)
- Food/drinks containers (56%)

Birkenhead residents considered the top 3 problems in their local area to be:

- Dog fouling (67%)
- Fly-tipping (56%)
- Food/drinks containers (53%)

Source: Wirral Residents Survey (2017)

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/About%20the%20council/Wirral%20Plan/Wirral%20Residents%20survey%20results%202017.pdf>

Related sources

- [EU Ban on single use plastics](#)
- [Keep Britain Tidy – Litter survey of England 2017/18](#)
- [Keep Britain Tidy – Policy position on fly tipping 2017](#)
- [Wirral Council – Resident Survey Results 2017](#)
- [Merseyside waste compositional analysis](#)

Sources

1. Wrap. Plastics Market Situation Report, Spring 2016, p9
2. Science. Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Oceans. Feb 13, 2015.

Underpinning and supporting evidence

[View additional information that supports this topic on Wirral Intelligence Service website](#)

Contact details

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