



**Wigan Local Development Framework
Core Strategy**

**Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Infrastructure Needs Assessment**

August 2011

**Wigan Council
Places Directorate**

Contents	
1. Introduction	3
2. Projected population and housing growth and development	5
3. Physical infrastructure:	
3.1 Transport	7
3.2 Utilities	13
3.3 Energy	16
3.4 Waste	20
3.5 Economy and employment	23
3.6 Built environment	25
3.7 Retail and town centres	26
4. Social infrastructure:	
4.1 Health	28
4.2 Education	34
4.3 Community safety and emergency services	37
4.4 Leisure and culture	40
4.5 Communities	43
4.6 Housing	48
5. Green infrastructure:	
5.1 Open space and recreation	51
5.2 Wildlife and habitats	59

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a supporting document providing part of the evidence base for the Wigan Local Development Framework Core Strategy. It covers the plan period from 2011 to 2026. This Infrastructure Needs Assessment accompanies the Infrastructure Delivery Plan providing an overview of existing infrastructure in the borough. All of our Core Strategy documents are available on our website at: www.wigan.gov.uk

1.2 The purpose of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is to identify the infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Wigan Core Strategy; to show that the required infrastructure is deliverable; and identify where additional investment may be required. This will enable the council to identify possible mechanisms for reducing funding gaps and will provide the basis for the development of local thresholds under the Community Infrastructure Levy.

1.3 Central to the evidence base for the Wigan Local Development Framework Core Strategy has been the production of 13 Topic Papers:

1. Health and recreation
2. Community safety and neighbourhood quality
3. Community development and involvement
4. Education and learning
5. Economy and employment
6. Housing
7. Retail and centres
8. Accessibility
9. Built environment and landscapes
10. Wildlife habitats and species
11. Energy
12. Waste
13. Natural resources and pollution

All of these Topic Papers are available on the council's web site.

1.4 The preparation of these Topic Papers has involved extensive consultation and partnership working, including a wide range of physical, social and green infrastructure providers who operate in the borough. The development of this Infrastructure Needs Assessment has been through combination primarily of infrastructure audits and infrastructure issues identified in the Topic Papers. This has enabled current provision to be established and identified any gaps or capacity issues.

1.5 Infrastructure can take many forms but is defined here under the headings of physical, social and green infrastructure. The table below identifies the various infrastructure types that are included in this Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

Infrastructure types		
Physical	Social	Green
Transport: - Walking and cycling - Bus network - Rail network - Road network Energy: gas and electricity Utilities: - Water and sewerage - Flood prevention Waste management Economy and employment Built environment Retail and town centres	Health Education - Early years - Primary - Secondary - Further education Leisure and culture Communities Emergency services Housing: Affordable housing	Open space and recreation (including sport) Green infrastructure (including wildlife and habitats)

1.6 This overview of infrastructure provision will be essential to support the objectives of the Core Strategy. Chapter 6 of the Core Strategy sets out a Spatial Vision for the borough to 2026 and Chapter 8 sets out the Spatial Policies. Policy SP1 sets out the broad spatial framework for future development in the borough while identifying areas where development will be limited. This is followed by a series of other spatial policies which identify sites and broad locations for future growth.

1.7 The council's overall spatial approach is to direct development within the 'east-west core' of the borough, where deprivation is at its highest. This will enable broad based, economic, environmental and community regeneration and deliver sustainable communities. There is also a focus on the town centres of Wigan, Leigh and Ashton which will be enhanced for public services and facilities, and hubs for business and commercial activity. This approach has received broad support from key stakeholders and the local community.

1.8 The east-west core includes communities which are most in need of physical, economic and social regeneration. Focusing development here will help to narrow inequalities in the borough, increase diversity, deliver social cohesion, and improve accessibility to education and employment opportunities.

2. Projected population and housing growth and development

Existing and forecasted population

2.1 At around 308,000, Wigan Borough has the second largest population in Greater Manchester (after the City of Manchester). This is forecast to increase to over 322,000 people by 2026 (a 4.5% increase), as a result of people living longer, increasing birth rates and migration into the borough from other areas.

2.2 There are around 134,000 households in the borough which are projected to increase to 151,000 households by 2026 (a 12.7% increase) as a result of the population increase and continuing forecast reduction in average household size.

2.3 In employment terms, 133,000 residents of the borough are in work but there are only 115,000 jobs here. This results in the borough having one of the highest net commuting outflows in Greater Manchester and this is forecast to increase.

Projected population and housing growth

2.4 Detailed population and housing growth forecasts are set out in Topic Paper 6 'Housing'. All of the evidence and forecasts demonstrate that around 1,000 additional new homes need to be provided each year up to 2026 to cater for need.

2.5 Sites will be allocated in subsequent development plan documents. Around 85% of this development can be accommodated in the east-west core of the borough, as indicated in the table below, helping to achieve regeneration in those towns.

Spatial distribution of housing by Township	
Township	%
Wigan (including Winstanley and New Springs)	24
Hindley and Abram	23
Leigh	19
Ashton and Bryn	9
Tyldesley and Astley	7
Golborne and Lowton	6
Atherton	5
Standish Aspull Shevington (excluding New Springs)	4
Orrell and Billinge (excluding Winstanley)	3
Wigan Borough Total	100

Spatial policies for development

2.6 The Core Strategy policy SP1 'Spatial strategy for Wigan Borough' proposes that development will be directed primarily towards the east-west core of the borough, notably the towns of Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Platt Bridge, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Ashton-in-Makerfield, in order to achieve transformational regeneration and create attractive places for people to live and businesses to locate and thrive.

2.7 The Core Strategy policy SP2 'Our town centres and local centres' proposes that our town centres will be enhanced as thriving, attractive and locally distinctive places, which can support a broad range of activities. Within these centres we will support proposals to improve their prosperity: Wigan, Leigh, Ashton-in-Makerfield, smaller town centres and local and neighbourhood centres.

2.8 The Core Strategy policy SP3 'A key strategic site - Northleigh Park' proposes a site between Hindley Green and Leigh for development of 44 hectares of housing and 8 hectares of new employment provision.

2.9 The Core Strategy policy SP4 'Broad locations for new development' proposes the following sites:

1. South of Hindley - a location for housing and employment development of up to 124 hectares.
2. East of Atherton - a location of up to 45 hectares for housing.
3. Garrett Hall, Astley - a location of up to 28 hectares for housing.
4. East of Wigan Road, Landgate, Ashton - a location of up to 45 hectares for employment development with a possibility of some housing.
5. Junction 25, M6 Motorway, south of Wigan - a location of around 30 hectares for a high quality employment park, comprising offices, manufacturing and logistics development.
6. East Lancashire Road Corridor - options for housing:
 - Land at Rothwell's Farm, Lowton Road, Golborne.
 - Land east of Stone Cross Lane, Lowton.
 - Land at Pocket Nook Lane, Lowton.
 - Land at Coldalhurst Lane, Larkhill, Astley.

2.10 More details for the key strategic site and broad locations for new development are contained in our 'Key Sites and Broad Locations Evidence Paper'.

2.11 The Core Strategy policy SP5 'Greenheart' proposes an area from north to south through the core of the borough, its 'Greenheart', will be developed as a high quality countryside park that helps boost the borough's image, supports regeneration and encourages healthier lifestyles, through a series of policies and key sites.

3. Physical infrastructure

3.1 Transport

3.1.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 8 'Accessibility' Infrastructure audit. The table below lists the main transport related infrastructure currently available in the borough. Infrastructure is managed by Wigan Council, unless stated otherwise.

Transport infrastructure in Wigan Borough		
Category	Infrastructure type	Count
Walking	Public rights of way: Footpaths	435 km
	Public rights of way: Bridleways	35 km
	Restricted Byways / Byways open to all traffic	Nil
Bus	Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs)	101 km
	Category A bus stations (Transport for Greater Manchester)	1 Wigan, 1 Leigh
Rail	Rail stations (Network Rail / Train Operators)	9 no.
	West Coast Main Line (Network Rail)	17 km
	Regional rail network (Network Rail)	31.7 km
Cycling	On road cycle lanes	26.7 km
	Traffic-free cycle routes: good quality	44.2 km
	Traffic-free cycle routes: in need of improvement	46.3 km
	National Cycle Network Route 55	3.9 km
	National Cycle Network Route 91	0.7 km
	Canal network / towpath	34 km
Roads	Motorways (Highways Agency)	17 km
	A roads	117 km
	B roads	55 km
	C roads	68 km
	Other unclassified roads	884 km
	Freight primary route network	45.3 km

Parking	Dedicated on-street motor cycle parking locations	1 (Wigan)
	Lorry parks	1 (Leigh)
	Car parks: multi-storey	4 Wigan (1 private) 2,330 spaces
		1 Leigh 158 spaces
	Car parks: surface (min 20 spaces)	20 Wigan (12 private, 2 PCT) 5,089+ spaces*
		14 Leigh (1 private, 1 PCT) 2,498 spaces**
		22 Other significant car parks in borough (16 private, 2 WL&CT) 4,581 spaces
	Convenient rail car parks (included in above)	Wigan North Western - 403 spaces
		Wigan Wallgate - 205 spaces
		Atherton - 66 spaces
	Hindley - 63 spaces	
* excludes matchday parking at DW Stadium		
** excludes Leigh Sports Village, not open at time of survey		

3.1.2 Within the A roads category only 25 km (24%) can be classed as being built to modern or relatively modern standards. Over three-quarters of this (77%) is the A580 East Lancashire Road (53%) the A579 Atherleigh Way (24%). The balance is made up of short stretches in the town of Wigan.

3.1.3 The 101 km of quality bus corridor is made up of 48.7 km of core routes partly funded by Transport for Greater Manchester and 52.2 km of non-core routes fully funded by Wigan Council.

Infrastructure constraints

3.1.4 Greater Manchester Transportation Unit records that A and B roads as a proportion of the total network and the amount of traffic carried on them is similar

in Wigan to Greater Manchester as a whole. This does not measure the quality of those roads and the prevailing conditions discussed in the previous section.

3.1.5 A and B roads in Wigan pass through significant areas of Victorian housing and frontage development where many residential and commercial properties are located close to the edge of the carriageway. Numerous active and redundant rail bridges add to the physical constraints, especially on routes into Wigan town centre at the A573 Britannia Bridge, A49 Wallgate Bridge and Skew Bridge and elsewhere on the B5206 at Gathurst, B5239 Standish, and A573 at Platt Bridge.

3.1.6 Land is extremely limited for widening schemes, to introduce bus and cycle lanes or provide off-road parking for residents. Air quality and vibration impact on residents' safety, health and wellbeing and make walking and cycling unpleasant. Competition for road space by general traffic, residents' parking, commercial freight and deliveries and public transport contribute to the conditions described previously.

3.1.7 Whilst the published maintenance regime ensures the existing roads are maintained to achieve optimum conditions it cannot be used to expand and significantly improve the network to bring it up to modern standards.

Walking

3.1.8 Wigan's pedestrian network takes into consideration all key routes to provide access on foot to local services and facilities. It comprises many different types of route:

- Footways alongside urban roads,
- Pedestrian areas in Wigan, Leigh and Atherton town centres,
- Alleys, ginnels, urban and residential footpaths often provide important cut-throughs and more direct access to key destinations,
- Public rights of way including footpaths and bridleways provide an off-road network,
- Parks and open spaces, including disused railway lines provide key linkages for functional trips as well as recreational walking,
- Shared use routes, cycleways and footways,
- Canal towpaths.

3.1.9 Wigan's Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out priorities for maintaining and enhancing the borough's Rights of Way network to cater for recreational and utility users whilst Active Travel: A Strategy for Encouraging Walking sets out general improvements to the pedestrian network.

Cycling

3.1.10 Routes in Wigan's cycle network fall into two main categories:

- on road: advisory and mandatory cycle lanes, quiet routes such as 20mph zones and traffic-calmed areas.
- traffic-free: along old railway lines, canal towpaths and bridleways and formal facilities adjacent to roads, often on a shared footway.

3.1.11 Although cyclists are permitted to use these facilities, each has its own limitations such as cyclists not riding on public footpaths and cycle permits required on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal towpath. These are all set out in detail, along with programmes for general improvements, in Active Travel: A Strategy for Encouraging Cycling.

3.1.12 National Cycle Network route 55 provides 3.9km of cycleway within the borough, while route 91 enters to the north for a very short section (0.7km). The Whelley Loop Line provides a traffic free cycle route between Amberswood Common and Haigh Hall. Key challenges include providing a safe and continuous off-road walking and cycling network and improving the environment on urban routes to encourage more walking and cycling to local centres.

Bus

3.1.13 Both Wigan and Leigh have 'Category A' bus stations and frequent bus services connect them with most district and local centres in the borough. There are also cross boundary bus services linking Wigan, Leigh and Ashton with key adjacent towns and facilities. There are 49km of core Quality Bus Corridor routes partly funded by Transport for Greater Manchester and 52km of non-core routes fully funded by Wigan Council. Local Link, demand responsive, flexible and door-to-door services operate in several areas of the borough that are less well served by the conventional bus network and Yellow School Buses are in operation to many schools.

3.1.14 Plans for a new high quality busway linking Leigh with Tyldesley, Ellenbrook, Salford and Manchester are included as a priority in the Greater Manchester Transport Fund. The busway will play a key role in enhancing Leigh's public transport connections to the Regional centre, including interchange with other services regionally and nationally.

Rail

3.1.15 The borough benefits from good rail connections with direct services on the West Coast Main Line every hour to London and Scotland. Other direct destinations include Birmingham, Warrington, Preston, Liverpool and St Helens. These services depart from Wigan North Western Station, classed as a National Interchange by the Department for Transport. The line is also important for freight services.

3.1.16 The majority of direct services to Manchester City Centre via Atherton or Bolton, to the east and Southport and Kirkby to the west depart from Wigan Wallgate, 100 metres away. Proposals to provide a 'Wigan Hub' improving integration of the two stations is detailed Topic Paper 8 'Accessibility'.

3.1.17 There are 7 other stations in the borough and one just outside the boundary, all giving direct connection to Wigan and all but one to Manchester. However, some stations, such as Ince, Pemberton, Orrell and Bryn only have hourly services and, other than Ince, no Sunday service. A Sunday service started on the Atherton line in May 2010. Most of the south and east of the borough is not served by rail.

3.1.18 There are line capacity constraints on the Atherton line where headway and line speed restrictions and the lack of capacity at Salford Crescent and Salford Central Stations restrict the opportunity to increase the frequency of local commuter services. The Southport line also suffers from poor performance due to track, rolling stock and timetabling issues.

3.1.19 Several stations have benefited recently from improvements such as the recently completed car park at North Western, car-park enhancements at Hindley, upgraded walking and cycling access, real-time train running information and CCTV.

Road network

3.1.20 Wigan is well connected to the national motorway network, served by the M6 and the M58 to the west, and the M61 close to the north-eastern boundary. The A580 East Lancashire Road (dual carriageway) broadly follows the southern boundary of the borough.

3.1.21 While the borough enjoys excellent external road links the road network between towns in the borough is based almost exclusively on the late 19th century network between towns. These are characterised by 30 mph speed limits, single carriageways which pass through significant areas of Victorian housing and frontage developments. Numerous active and redundant rail bridges and canal bridges add to the physical constraints. Consequently there have been relatively few new routes or significant widening schemes and little space is available to introduce bus and cycle lanes or provide off-road parking for residents. Air quality, noise and vibration impact adversely on health and wellbeing and make walking and cycling unpleasant.

3.1.22 Congestion is therefore a serious problem in the core of the borough. Congestion monitoring indicates the most congested location in the morning peak being all roads approaching Hindley town centre.

3.1.23 The following current or emerging road proposals are set out in detail in Topic Paper 8 'Accessibility':

- A49 Diversion
- Wigan Inner Relief Route
- Saddle Link Road
- A578 Leigh Road – A579 Atherleigh Way link
- A578 Leigh Road – Liverpool Road link

Main transport infrastructure issues identified

3.1.24 A number of key gaps in provision can be identified that are not currently funded or will take many years to come on-stream through the Local Transport Plan and other programmes. The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 8 are:

Walking and cycling

- On road and traffic-free cycle and walking routes need to be joined-up and link origins and destinations effectively, taking advantage of rights of way and National Cycle Network routes, and developing new routes where needed and opportunities allow, such as at Northleigh Park and the broad location for new development. Conditions for walking and cycling also need to be improved, including route surfacing and maintenance, environmental quality and safety.

Bus and rail network

- The network of quality bus corridors needs to be further developed. Leigh and Tyldesley are poorly served by public transport to / from Manchester city centre. The proposed Leigh-Salford-Manchester Busway is still awaiting funding.
- Interchange facilities between the two rail stations in Wigan town centre and bus and taxi are poor. Public transport interchange at other rail station and at local centres is also poor.
- There is a need for better park and ride facilities at Atherton, Hindley and Gathurst stations. Improved track and signalling and additional and better rail rolling stock are also needed, as is electronic information and CCTV at stations.

Strategic road network

- There are weaknesses in the strategic road network in the borough particularly on east-west routes.

3.2 Energy

3.2.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 11 'Energy' Infrastructure audit.

Gas

3.2.2 National Grid owns and operates the high pressure gas transmission system in England, Scotland and Wales that consists of approximately 4,300 miles of pipelines and 26 compressor stations connecting to 8 distribution networks. They have a duty to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical transmission system for the conveyance of gas.

3.2.3 National Grid also owns and operates 82,000 miles of lower-pressure distribution gas mains in the north west of England, the West Midlands, east of England and North London – almost half of Britain's gas distribution network, delivering gas to around 11 million homes, offices and factories. National Grid does not supply gas, but provides the networks through which it flows.

3.2.4 National Grid has the following gas transmission assets located within Wigan Borough:

- Pipeline FM21 - Feeder 21 Mawdesley – Warrington
- Pipeline FM15 - Feeder 15 Bretherton - Warburton

3.2.5 Given the scale of these gas transmission networks, National Grid has informed the council that it is unlikely that the anticipated growth in Wigan over the next 15 years will create capacity issues. The existing network should be able to cope with additional demands.

Electricity

3.2.6 Electricity North West Ltd owns and operates the local electricity distribution network in the North West.

3.2.7 Wigan is fed from the Washway Farm Grid Supply Point (275kV/132kV) which also feeds Skelmersdale. This group is approaching capacity and reinforcements are under consideration to introduce additional capacity, involving the installation of a new Bulk Supply Point (132kV/33kV substation) at Orrell.

3.2.8 Wigan Bulk Supply Point has no spare capacity. There are six primary substations (33kV/11kV) which supply Wigan which have a combined spare capacity of approximately 15MVA. This capacity, however, is not spread evenly with spare capacity at some primaries and full capacities at others. Primary substation capacity is dependent on the location of future load growth. Reinforcement of the primary network may be required to cater for specific new large developments.

3.2.9 The Orrell Bulk Supply Point will require a new 132kV circuit from Kirkby. This is most economically achieved by installation of a new wood pole overhead line, and United Utilities is pursuing this option. However, there have been objections to the proposed line during the planning application process which has delayed the scheme.

3.2.10 Delivery of the Bulk Supply Point and circuit from Kirkby will cost up to £25 million. This will be delivered by United Utilities Electricity Services through a combination of Electricity North West funding and developer contributions for specific new connections.

Local energy generation

3.2.11 Although most of the energy used in the borough is imported via gas pipes and the National (electricity) Grid, there is some local generation of electricity within the borough; which is mostly fed back into the national grid.

Local energy generation in Wigan Borough			
Energy type	Name / location	Installed capacity	Status
Landfill gas	Kirkless	2.08 mw	Operational
Landfill gas	Ince Moss Landfill Scheme	0.62 mw	Operational
Landfill gas	Whitehead Landfill, Astley	5.3 mw	Operational
EfW (CHP)	Blakeley's EfW proposal / Bickershaw	8 mw electricity 24 mw heat	Planning approved
Small scale wind	Wigan North Western Train Station	12 kw	Operational
Small scale wind	Abraham Guest High School	30 kw	Planning approved
Small scale CHP	Various (4 sites)	0.41 mw	Operational
Small scale wind	Swan Lane Industrial Estate	12kw	Planning approved

3.2.12 There are no existing hydroelectric or large scale wind schemes in the borough.

Main energy infrastructure issues identified

3.2.13 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 11 are:

- We are highly reliant on non-renewable energy imported from outside the borough.
- In order to achieve zero carbon development and reduce the borough's carbon emissions, there will need to be investment in low carbon energy networks.
- There are energy capacity issues in the borough, particularly the south, that could restrain growth.
- There is the potential for large reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through improvement programmes in schools, other public sector facilities, and through major development schemes.
- There is potential for heat networks in the borough. To take advantage of this, investment will need to be made in the heat delivery infrastructure – linking heat generation with end users.

3.3 Utilities

3.3.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 13 ‘Natural resources and pollution’ Infrastructure audit.

Water supply and wastewater

3.3.2 United Utilities is the statutory body for providing the borough with a clean, safe supply of drinking water, and dealing with waste water. United Utilities owns and operates the water and wastewater networks in the whole of the North West of England, supplying 2,000 million litres of water every day via a network of around 40,000 kilometres of water mains, 1,444 kilometres of aqueduct and over 100 water treatment works. These networks serve approximately 7 million people, 2.9 million households and business premises, and over 400 industrial and commercial enterprises.

3.3.3 Wigan Borough is currently provided with drinking water from Thirlmere in the Lake District Aqueducts, Lake Wyrwyny in North Wales, and numerous boreholes located within the borough.

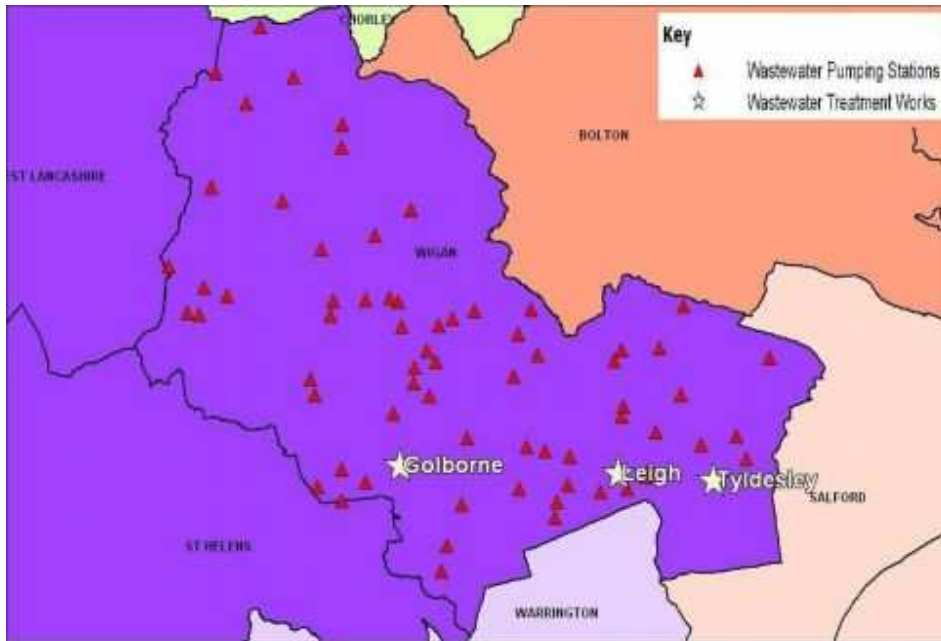
3.3.4 The Wigan Demand Management Zone forecasts for water demand are summarised in the table below. The general pattern is falling average demands with increasing peak demands due to usage patterns. These forecasts take into account the projected growth predicted in the Core Strategy.

Forecasts for water demand in Wigan Demand Management Zone				
Wigan Demand Management Zone	2006/07	2014/15 forecast	2024/25 forecast	2034/35 forecast
Average normal demand (MI/d)	91	86.3	87.2	90
Peak week demand (MI/d)	-	107.1	109.2	113.6
Peak day demand (MI/d)	-	115.7	118	122.7
MI/d = million litres per day				

3.3.5 For wastewater, United Utilities have identified that they have concerns with about sewage flooding in the borough with 381 properties identified as being at risk. This is higher than any other Local Authority in the North West. In particular, Ince, Hindley and East Lancs. pumping stations all have performance problems and have caused flooding issues and pollution. Tyldesley and Hindley waste water treatment works also have flooding and capacity issues. The map

below identifies the provision of waste water treatment works and wastewater pumping stations in the borough. The borough is also served by waste water treatment works at Hoscar near Parbold in West Lancashire and at Gateworth in Warrington.

Wastewater facilities in Wigan Borough



3.3.6 Every five years the UK's water companies have to submit a Business Plan for approval by the water regulator, Ofwat, outlining the investment they want to make to their network of pipes, sewers, water and wastewater treatment works and reservoirs.

3.3.7 United Utilities current approved Business Plan is for 2010 to 2015. In this period they will be spending a record £3.7 billion on upgrading the North West's water and wastewater systems. This investment will bring major improvements for customers and ensure the region meets the latest environmental targets and drinking water legislation. Specific to, or otherwise including, Wigan Borough it includes:

- Construction of a West-East link pipeline from Merseyside to Greater Manchester, via Wigan Borough. The 55 kilometre pipeline will be capable of carrying up to 100 million litres of water a day and consequently will improve United Utilities' ability to transport water around the region. It is due to be in operation by 2012.
- Maintenance and upgrading of plant and pipe work - Wastewater treatment works will be upgraded and the network of pumping stations will be improved to reduce the risk of pollution of watercourses. Sewers will be upgraded to cut flooding caused by sewer collapses or blockages. United Utilities are planning to resolve the problems at Ince, Hindley and East

- Lancs pumping stations and Tyldesley and Hindley waste water treatment works.
- Improving drinking water - The cleaning and renewal of water pipes across the region, bringing even better drinking water quality, to improve the taste and smell of tap water and to remove lead pipes from the water network.
 - The upgrading of storm overflows to reduce the number of discharges into coastal and inland waterways.

3.3.8 The Wigan Core Strategy proposes a significant amount of growth to meet the needs of forecast increases in population and households. The level of proposed new housing and employment development is likely to result in the need for investment in the water supply network, sewerage infrastructure and wastewater pumping stations, particularly in the south and west of the borough. A number of potential sites within some of the proposed broad locations and elsewhere in specific areas of the borough will require this infrastructure investment. More detail is contained in our 'Key Sites and Broad Locations Evidence Paper' and will be part of the Allocations Development Plan Document.

Flood protection

3.3.9 Flood prevention incorporates defence assets which may be hard formal structures designed for purpose such as flood walls or may be informal structures which were not designed as defence structures but are performing that role. The following flood preventions are in place across the borough:

- Lilford Park Flood Storage Basin (Environment Agency)
- Bedford Pumping Station (Environment Agency)
- Pennington Pumping Station (Environment Agency)
- Culverts: where appropriate (various landowners)
- Weirs: numerous (various landowners)
- Green Street Siphon, Wigan (landowner)
- Rivington Reservoir
- Worthington / Arley / Adlington system
- Leeds-Liverpool canal (British Waterways)
- Significant flood defence structures in the Poolstock area of Wigan (Environment Agency).

3.3.10 The Environment Agency has a number of committed projects in the borough including the construction of a flood alleviation structure (dam) across the River Douglas valley, and flood mitigation schemes on Millingford Brook and Jack Brook in Ashton. The Environment Agency is also scoping Flood Risk Management projects in Leigh East and Leigh West. These projects are currently at the appraisal stage. The adoption of these projects is subject to approval by the Agency's National Review Group. Subject to approval, these schemes are scheduled for 2013.

Inalienable Land:

3.3.11 Future work is needed to identify areas of inalienable land. This is defined as land that cannot be sold or mortgaged. In Wigan Borough this may include some community assets.

Main utilities infrastructure issues identified

3.3.12 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 13 are:

- Water pressures are known to be generally low in some areas and there may be a need to provide local water network reinforcement for significant developments at the expense of the developer.
- We need to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is in place to deal with surface water run off before development can take place.
- The level of proposed new housing and employment development, within some of the proposed broad locations and elsewhere in specific areas of the borough, is likely to result in the need for investment in the water supply network, sewerage infrastructure and wastewater pumping stations.
- Where United Utilities apparatus affects a proposed development site, appropriate works / mitigation measures must be carried out before development commences.
- There is a known risk of flooding from local sources in a few locations within Wigan Borough. Some of these locations, in time, will require management intervention and this may include improvements to infrastructure.

3.4 Waste

3.4.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 12 'Waste' Infrastructure audit.

3.4.2 This section deals with the infrastructure provision in the borough for waste management. This comprises the facilities for waste management which enable the reuse, recycling and composting of waste as well as the landfill or landraise sites which are required for the residual waste remaining after treatment. In addition, waste infrastructure also includes the infrastructure required to transport waste to the places where it will be dealt with. This includes roads but also railways, canals and other waterways.

3.4.3 Details of the quantity and types of waste management facilities required to deal with borough's waste are dealt with in the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document. The table below lists the current infrastructure used by the council for Municipal Waste Collection and Recycling.

Municipal waste collection and recycling infrastructure	
Infrastructure type	Location
Transfer Station	Kirkless, Wigan
Household Waste Recycling Centres*	Kirkless, Wigan
	Orrell District Office, Orrell
	Slag Lane, Leigh
	Chanters Industrial Estate, Atherton
Local Recycling Sites	167 sites throughout the borough
* The Frog Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre closed in 2010.	

3.4.4 The council approved a revised Municipal Solid Waste Management Strategy in April 2009 (MSWMS 2009) which brought the previous strategy into line with the Waste Strategy for England (2007). In order to implement the strategy the council has opted to follow a sole procurement route, whereby Wigan Council will procure a private sector partner, or partners, to manage its Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). At the same time, Wigan was approached by Waste Recycling Group (WRG), the current contractor managing the Wigan MSW who proposed an interim solution to treat some of the Wigan MSW at a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) plant in Huyton. Discussions for this interim solution are currently ongoing.

3.4.5 The current waste flow tonnages and the major disposal routes for household collected waste are set out in the table below. These figures are based on the implementation of the MSWMS 2009.

Waste flow and the disposal routes for household collected waste in Wigan Borough		
Material	2009 / 10 quantity (Tonnes)	Disposal Solution
Residual waste	103,697	Via the transfer station at Kirkless to landfill at Arpley
Paper	8,487	Via the transfer station at Kirkless to Shotton paper mill
Dry recyclables	8,232	Via the transfer station at Kirkless to various processors
Green waste	12,886	Direct to composting facility for use by local farmers

Residual waste disposal

3.4.6 There is one landfill site within the Wigan Borough at Whitehead, Astley, and depending on the solutions brought forward by the procurement this may be an option included. The alternative is that residual disposal from the treatment will be sent out of the borough to the alternatives at Chorley, St Helens, Arpley etc. or indeed further afield.

3.4.7 In order to provide Wigan with security and flexibility the following site requirements need to be satisfied:

- **For Municipal Solid Waste treatment:** a minimum of two sites, one being Kirkless, of a minimum of 4 Ha. The rationale for at least one additional site to the Kirkless site is security. Should, for whatever reason, planning fail at Kirkless then the council must have an alternative identified within the Joint Waste Development Plan Document (JWDPD). Planning risk is the biggest single risk that an Authority takes when putting in place a residual waste treatment project and hence the more sites included within the JWDPD the greater the risk reduction. The sites proposed are an area of Martland Park (W13); land off Makerfield Way, Ince (W56); and Ince Moss Junction Sidings (W57).
- **For Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** A minimum of one additional site, potentially within the Martland Park area. The future of the HWRCs is uncertain at this time and will depend on proposals brought

forward by bidders during the procurement for HWRC services. The location of Martland Park would offer an alternative to the current site at Orrell, which is far from ideal and has no potential of expansion.

Main waste infrastructure issues identified

3.4.8 Infrastructure issues will be identified and dealt with as part of the preparation of the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document. The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 12 are:

- There is a need to identify sites and areas that are suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities.
- There is a need to reduce waste movements and, where waste needs to be moved, to promote the sustainable movement of waste across the sub-region.

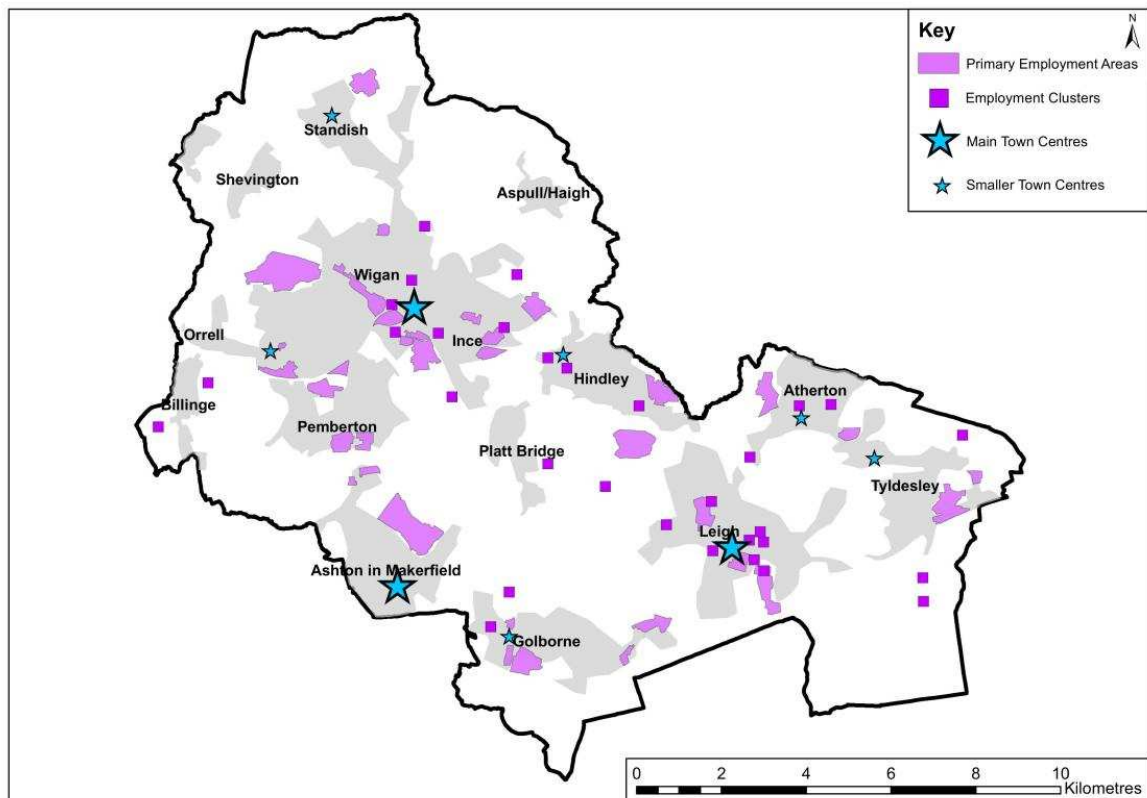
3.5 Economy and employment

3.5.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 5 'Economy and employment' Infrastructure audit.

3.5.2 There are a number of key employment areas in the borough, shown on the map below, including:

- 35 Primary Employment Areas
- 30 employment clusters
- 3 main town centres - Wigan, Leigh and Ashton
- Smaller town centres (see Retail and centres)

Key employment areas in Wigan Borough



3.5.3 Whilst the majority of primary employment areas and employment clusters in the borough are successful, a number are unattractive to business investors due to one or more of the following factors:

- Poor perception of Wigan as a business location
- Poor road access, particularly to the strategic network
- Employment accommodation in poor condition and/or not of the right type or specification to meet modern business needs
- Poor broadband infrastructure
- Power supply issues

3.5.4 These issues, which are covered in detail in Topic Paper 5, need to be resolved if Wigan is to reach its potential as a competitive economic destination with the ability of attracting and retaining business.

3.5.5 There are currently around 109,200 people employed in jobs based in the borough. The leading sectors are:

- Health - 14%
- Manufacturing - 13%
- Retail - 13%
- Business services - 12%
- Education - 8.1%

3.5.6 The Wigan economy is no longer over-reliant on declining sectors such as manufacturing and engineering with knowledge sectors such as financial and professional services, Digital ICT and environmental technologies all experiencing growth in recent years. Despite this, the borough has a low proportion of employment in knowledge intensive sectors compared to other Greater Manchester districts and areas of the North West.

3.5.7 Despite there being 109,200 jobs in the borough, over 126,800 employed people reside in the borough, contributing to Wigan having the highest level of out-commuting for work in Greater Manchester.

Main economy and employment infrastructure issues identified

3.5.8 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 5 are:

- Improved accessibility, through new and improved road infrastructure, is fundamental if the borough is to attract new businesses, including growth sectors, and meet modern business needs. Development within the broad locations and at the key strategic site at Northleigh could deliver such new and improved road infrastructure.
- There is a need to improve the transport infrastructure of the borough to enable residents to access job opportunities more easily.
- Although the borough can boast 100% second-generation broadband coverage, the prices charged by providers means that connection is too expensive for the majority of the borough's businesses to access. In order to compete effectively in economic terms, a more affordable connection to the internet is needed.
- A large proportion of the borough's existing employment accommodation is old, in poor condition and / or not of the right type or specification to meet modern business needs.
- The development and retention of some employment sites in the inner area of the borough will require additional road infrastructure works to support the development and the local area.

3.6 Built environment

3.6.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 9 'Built environment' Infrastructure audit.

Heritage assets

3.6.2 Heritage assets in the borough include:

- 606 Listed Buildings, including 1 Grade I (The Church of St. Wilfrid, Standish), 40 Grade II* and 565 Grade II. 5 Grade II* buildings are classified as 'at risk' on the national register and an additional 40 Grade II listed buildings 'at risk' on the local register. Lack of maintenance is an issue for a number of Listed Buildings.
- 12 Scheduled Monuments, on of which is classified as 'at risk'.
- 1 nationally registered historic park (Mesnes Park)
- 18 local historic parks, gardens and cemeteries
- 23 Conservation Areas covering a variety of urban, suburban, industrial and rural settings. One Conservation Area is at present classified as 'at risk' on the national register, as it is considered to be deteriorating due to poor maintenance. Lack of maintenance is an issue in a number of Conservation Areas.
- Over 700 buildings of local interest, which currently do not benefit from protection.

Main built environment infrastructure issues identified

3.6.3 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 9 are:

- Some of the borough's listed building stock is either underused or under threat from demolition; there are 5 grade II* listed buildings classified as being 'at risk' on the national register and around 40 grade II listed buildings 'at risk' on the local register.
- A number of buildings and structures of local interest do not benefit from protection by national legislation (and currently do not benefit from identification under local policy).
- Some Conservation Areas are at risk due to poor maintenance, which may alter a locality's sense of place.

3.7 Retail and centres

3.7.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 7 'Retail and centres' Infrastructure audit.

3.7.2 The table below lists the existing main retail and centres provision in the borough.

Main retail and centres in Wigan Borough		
Category	Number	Centres
Sub regional	1	Wigan
Main centre	2	Leigh, Ashton
Town centre	6	Atherton, Golborne, Hindley, Pemberton, Standish and Tyldesley
Local centres	25	Aspull, Astley (Blackmoor), Beech Hill, Borsdane, Bryn, Hawkley, Higher Folds, Higher Ince, Lower Ince, Lowton, Marsh Green, Newtown, Norley Hall, Orrell, Orrell Post, Platt Bridge, Scholes, Shevington, Springfield (Park Road), Swinley (Mesnes Road), Swinley (Wigan Lane), Tyldesley (Sale Lane), Winstanley, Worsley Hall and Worsley Mesnes.
Out of centre / retail park	5	ASDA (Golborne), Morrisons (Ince), Marus Bridge Retail Park / Sainsbury's (Wigan), Parsonage Retail Park / Sainsbury's / ASDA (Leigh) and Robin Retail Park / ASDA (Wigan)

3.7.3 A review our local centres, including their boundaries and whether there is a need for a separate tier of smaller 'neighbourhood centres', will be undertaken in a future development plan document.

Key data for the main centres in Wigan Borough				
Centre	Units	Floorspace (m²)	A1 Units	% Vacant 2010
Wigan	526	121,868	266	14.5
Leigh	311	55,859	164	6.9
Ashton	200	21,885	104	8.6
Atherton	163	19,521	78	17.8

Golborne	81	9,055	31	21.7
Hindley	149	20,834	53	17.2
Pemberton	100	10,801	56	8.2
Standish	84	10,315	39	4.8
Tyldesley	149	16,092	56	15.0
A1 = Retail Uses * Wigan figure from LDC Mid year report 2010				

3.7.4 In most centres in the borough the condition of some of the older commercial property stock is a cause for concern. Many properties have suffered from a lack of investment, making them difficult to attract occupiers and creating vacancies.

Some of the shopping centres in the borough are no longer suitable for modern commercial requirements. This has led to a number of vacancies within these centres.

3.7.5 For other infrastructure issues related to retail and centres see Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation', Topic Paper 5 'Economy and Employment' and Topic Paper 8 'Accessibility'.

Main retail and centres infrastructure issues identified

3.7.6 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 7 are:

- In most centres the condition of some of the older commercial property stock is a cause for concern. Improvements are required to safeguard these properties.
- Some of the shopping centres are no longer suitable for modern commercial requirements. Remodelling or refurbishment will be required to meet future requirements.
- Leisure and cultural facilities such as restaurants, cinemas, theatres and performance venues are limited within the borough's town centres.

4. Social infrastructure

4.1 Health

4.1.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation' Health Infrastructure Audit.

Primary care

4.1.2 Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Primary Care Trust is at present responsible for delivering health care and health improvements to the borough. It works in partnership with the Local Authority and also commissions other local National Health Service Trusts to deliver health and social care.

4.1.3 The Trust delivers community based health services which are usually the first (and often the only) point of contact that patients make with the health service. It is specifically responsible for the support and development of:

- Over 200 General Practitioners (including locums) working from 76 practices
- 116 dentists (including assistants) working from 37 practices
- 67 pharmacies and 42 optical establishments

4.1.4 The Trust is also responsible for a range of community health care services provided at 19 clinics and health centres.

General Practitioners (GPs)

4.1.5 The 76 GP practices include 202 GPs (or 177.2 whole time equivalent GPs). This equates to 1969 patients per GP, which is above the national target of 1800:1. The table below shows the distribution of GPs per Township.

Distribution of GPs per Township				
Township	Number of whole time equivalent (WTE) GPs	Number of patients per WTE GP	Head count of GPs	Number of patients per head count GP.
Ashton Bryn	17.2	1662	20	1522
Atherton	10.9	2063	12	1838
Golborne Lowton	9.0	2702	10	2609
Hindley Abram	22.5	2010	23	1984
Leigh	29.2	1866	36	1685
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	1.0	3111	1	3111

Standish Aspull Shevington	17.2	1780	19	1654
Tyldesley Astley	15.3	1728	17	1564
Wigan North	25.4	2555	31	1743
Wigan South	29.6	1418	33	1245
Wigan Borough	177.2	1969	202	1739

4.1.6 This table suggests that there are capacity issues particularly in the townships of Orrell Billinge Winstanley and Golborne Lowton. Atherton, Hindley Abram, Leigh and Wigan North also have GP registers above the national average.

Dentists

4.1.7 The distribution of the 37 dental practices in Wigan is shown in the table below.

Distribution of dentists per Township		
Township	Number of dentists	Number of practices
Ashton Bryn	11	2
Atherton	7	3
Golborne Lowton	12	3
Hindley Abram	12	4
Leigh	20	6
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	5	2
Standish Aspull Shevington	6	3
Tyldesley Astley	6	2
Wigan North	24	8
Wigan South	13	4
Wigan Borough	116	37

4.1.8 Details on the level of demand and numbers of patients on waiting lists for NHS Dentists will be discussed with the PCT and will be used in future updates of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This only covers NHS dentists and does not reflect services provided by private dental facilities which operate in the borough.

Pharmacies

4.1.9 The distribution of the 67 pharmacies in Wigan Borough is shown in the Table below.

Distribution of pharmacies by township	
Township	Number of pharmacies
Ashton Bryn	4
Atherton	4
Golborne Lowton	5
Hindley Abram	7
Leigh	10
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	4
Standish Aspull Shevington	8
Tyldesley Astley	4
Wigan North	11
Wigan South	10
WIGAN BOROUGH	67

4.1.10 The Information Centre for Health and Social Care, General Pharmaceutical Services in England 1999/2000 to 2008/2009 found that England had 20 pharmacies per 100,000 population. NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan had 22 pharmacies per 100,000 population. This shows that there are slightly more pharmacies per head than the national average. This would suggest that current needs are being met.

Clinics and health centres

4.1.11 There are 19 health centres / clinics in the borough. These are listed in the table below.

Distribution of health centres and clinics by township	
Township	Health Centre / Clinic
Ashton Bryn	Ashton Clinic
Atherton	Atherton Health Centre
Golborne Lowton	Golborne Clinic

	Golborne Health Centre
Hindley Abram	Hindley Health Centre
	Platt Bridge Health Centre
Leigh	Leigh Health Centre
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	Orrell Clinic
Standish Aspull Shevington	Aspull Clinic
	Shevington Clinic
	Standish Clinic (replacement under construction 2011)
Tyldesley Astley	Astley Clinic
	Tyldesley Clinic
Wigan North	Lower Ince Health Centre
	Longshoot Heath Centre
	Wigan Health Centre
Wigan South	Marsh Green Clinic
	Pemberton Health Centre
	Worsley Mesnes Health Centre

4.1.12 The National Health Service is currently delivering a programme of new and improved primary and community healthcare facilities across the country. As part of this a series of new 'super health centres' have been built in Wigan Borough, mainly in deprived communities where they are most needed.

4.1.13 The seventh and most recent health centre to be built is Leigh Health Centre which was completed in November 2010 and is located on the Leigh Infirmary site. This health centre replaced the existing health centres at College Street and Grasmere Street and provides services including a walk in centre, children's services, specialist weight management services and adult sexual health services. Chandler House in Worsley Mesnes is the largest facility in the borough to date and offers five GP practices, community health services, family planning, physiotherapy, minor surgery and an education and learning centre. Other centres have been opened in Golborne, Wigan (Frog Lane near to the town Centre), Platt Bridge, Lower Ince and Atherton.

4.1.14 Another recent development has been the SHINE sexual health clinic which opened in July 2010 and is located in The Galleries in Wigan town centre. This clinic also houses the Brook Centre which was previously located in the Coops Building. These new and improved sexual health services offer patients free confidential advice, testing and treatment.

4.1.15 A new health centre is also currently under construction in Standish town centre on the site of the existing Standish Clinic. The new health centre will provide much needed new premises for the Standish GP Practice but will also include the Ashton Leigh Wigan Community Healthcare NHS Trust services currently provided from Standish Clinic.

4.1.16 The Primary Care Trust are looking at other sites for primary and community healthcare facilities, including possible further development at the Leigh Infirmary site. Other priority locations for healthcare facilities include Scholes, Ashton, and as part of the substantial new community at Northleigh Park / south of Hindley, if required.

Acute care

4.1.17 The Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Acute National Health Service Trust is commissioned by the Primary Care Trust to deliver emergency and acute work, such as secondary care or hospital-based services. The Acute Trust operates across three hospital sites at Wigan, Leigh, and Wrightington just outside the borough in West Lancashire, and an outpatient centre in Wigan town centre (The Thomas Linacre Centre).

4.1.18 Following a review of their service, the Board of Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust (WWL) made the decision in May 2011 to retain all three of their main hospital sites - Royal Albert Edward Infirmary (RAEI) in Wigan, Leigh Infirmary and Wrightington Hospital. This was to ensure continued viability of the Trust and to continue to provide patients with local access to our services.

4.1.19 The decision represents a major ten year £30 million investment across the Trust that intends to deliver:

- Phase Five at Wigan with a dedicated elective surgery facility, more single room accommodation, replacement of Victorian building stock, more car parking, replacement pathology laboratory and second MRI scanner
- New outpatients and diagnostic facilities at Leigh to enable it to offer highest availability and improved environment maintaining local access for patients
- The beginning of a phased programme at Wrightington to increase capacity and improve current facilities
- The Thomas Linacre Outpatients Centre will also be retained.

Accessibility

4.1.20 In general we have good accessibility to health facilities in the borough, however in the case of accident and emergency facilities there is a gap in provision in the Leigh area. Only 21% of Leigh residents are well-placed for

access to an Accident and Emergency department, having to travel to Wigan or Bolton to access such a facility.

Ambulance service

4.1.21 The ambulance service is included in the Emergency Services Section of this Assessment.

Main health infrastructure issues identified

4.1.22 The main health infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 1 are:

- Suitable locations are needed for delivering additional primary and community healthcare facilities. Ashton and Scholes, Wigan are the next priorities for strategic estate development but due to the NHS Trust's current financial uncertainty neither of these schemes are currently being progressed.
- Access to accident and emergency facilities is difficult for many residents, particularly in the south-east of the borough.

4.2 Education

4.2.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 4 'Education and learning' Infrastructure audit.

4.2.2 There are currently 131 schools in Wigan Borough, including 104 primary schools, 20 secondary schools and 7 special schools, providing education to approximately 44,000 young people from 4 to 16 years old.

School provision (4 to 16) in Wigan Borough			
Township	Primary	Secondary	Special
Ashton Bryn	7	3	2
Atherton	9	1	1
Golborne Lowton	9	2	0
Hindley Abram	14	1	2
Leigh	17	2	0
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	8	1	1
Standish Aspull Shevington	13	2	0
Tyldesley Astley	7	2	0
Wigan North	11	3	0
Wigan South	9	3	1
TOTAL	104	20	7

4.2.3 Of the 104 primary schools and 20 secondary schools:

- 6 primary schools (6%) and 2 secondary schools (10%) have over 25% surplus spaces.
- 22 primary schools (21%) are overcrowded, of which 3 are by more than 10%.
- 5 secondary schools (25%) are overcrowded.

4.2.4 Annual roll projections estimated at all non-Catholic secondary schools in the borough suggest a surplus of school places at a number of schools, in particular at Shevington, Rose Bridge, Abraham Guest, Lowton, Golborne and Hesketh Fletcher. Only Hindley, Cansfield and Westleigh High are projecting increased rolls during the period 2008 / 2009 to 2017 / 2018.

Early years provision

4.2.5 There are 20 children's centres across the borough helping to support families and providing early education, childcare and other services. The

government's aspiration was for a Children's Centre in every community by 2010. This was achieved in the borough.

4.2.6 The table below states the number of children's centres, childcare providers and childminders in Wigan at the Township level.

Early years provision in Wigan Borough			
Township	Children's Centres	Childcare Providers	Childminders
Ashton Bryn	3	13	17
Atherton	1	11	26
Golborne Lowton	1	11	26
Hindley Abram	2	10	24
Leigh	4	26	37
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	2	12	37
Standish Aspull Shevington	1	18	40
Tyldesley Astley	2	14	44
Wigan North	4	16	19
Wigan South	1	7	16
TOTAL	21	138	286

Further and higher education

4.2.7 There are 3 further education colleges in Wigan. These are:

- Wigan and Leigh College
- Winstanley College
- St John Rigby College

4.2.8 They offer a range of qualifications including the traditional academic qualifications of AS and A Levels as well as vocational type qualifications such as Apprenticeship, BTEC, 14-19 Diploma, HNC and NVQs on both full and part time attendance.

4.2.9 In 2010, the Skills Funding Agency replaced the Learning and Skills Council as the funding agency for 16-18 education in England. None of the 3 colleges currently have Capital Plans approved by the Skills Funding Agency. All three colleges did have plans or feasibility studies in progress but due to a funding issue at the Learning and Skills Council, funding has not been available.

4.2.10 Wigan and Leigh College has closed its further education provision at Railway Road, Leigh, which was in a poor condition. The opening of a 14-19

Centre at Hesketh Fletcher High School, which will be funded by 14-19 Capital funding in 2012/13, could provide suitable replacement accommodation.

4.2.11 Wigan and Leigh College previously submitted an application for University status but was unsuccessful and it is unlikely in the near future that this application will be re-submitted.

4.2.12 Wigan and Leigh College set the following spatial objectives in their 2008 Property Strategy:

- Significantly reduce the size of the estate;
- Provide a skills centre in Leigh to accommodate vocational and adult provision;
- Provide a Higher Education Centre in Wigan;
- Consolidate the performing arts provision to Wigan;
- Provide a high profile presence in Wigan reflecting the College's modern image;
- Provide flexible accommodation to respond to changes in curriculum demands and teaching methods;
- Provide space efficient accommodation;
- Consolidate the administration and finance departments in a single location.

Main education and learning infrastructure issues identified

4.2.13 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 4 are:

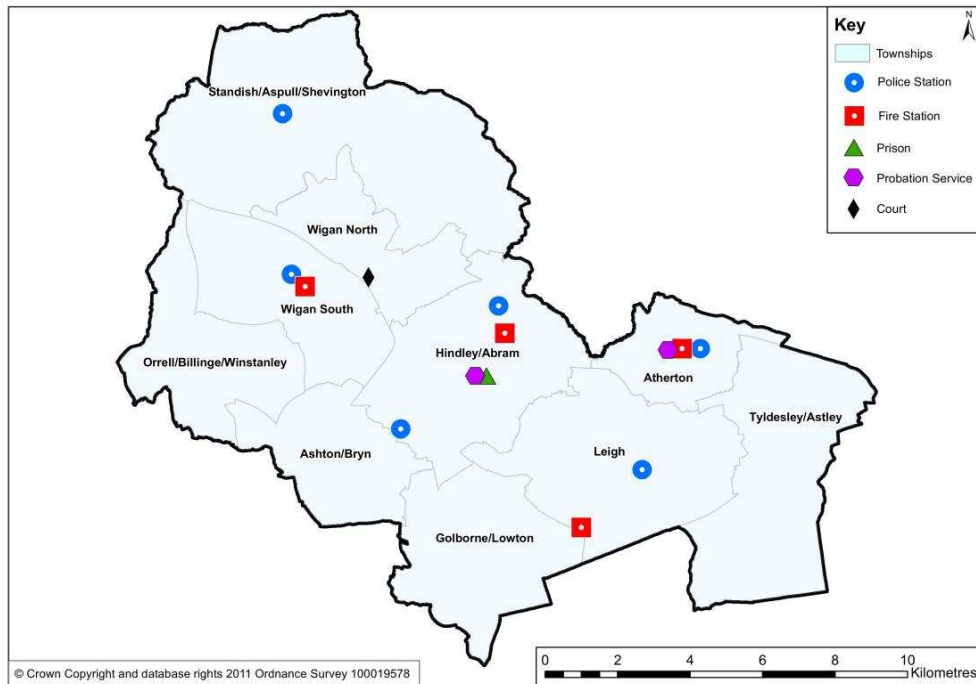
- A number of primary and secondary schools in the borough are in poor condition and are in need of modernisation.
- There are a number of schools in the borough with a significant surplus of school places. These include PEMBEC, Hesketh Fletcher, Nicol Mere and Bickershaw CE. Overall, the borough has an 8% surplus of primary places and 7.7% surplus of secondary places. There are also schools with significant levels of overcrowding.
- The projected increase in population and the level of proposed new housing, both within the proposed broad locations and elsewhere, is likely to result in the need for new school provision in the borough. This could be the expansion of existing schools or new schools.
- The rate of growth of the borough's colleges is raising locational and transport issues.
- Wigan and Leigh College's objectives include the provision for a focal point for Higher Education in Wigan and to increase the skills offer in Leigh to accommodate vocational and adult provision. The College however aims to reduce the size of its overall estate.

4.3 Community safety and emergency services

4.3.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 2 ‘Community safety and neighbourhood quality’ Infrastructure audit.

4.3.2 The map below identifies the location of all police stations, fire stations, courts, prisons and probation services in the borough. An audit of each of these services is set out in more detail below.

Emergency services and criminal justice locations in Wigan Borough



Fire service

4.3.3 Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (GMFRA) are responsible for the fire service in Wigan and they oversee four fire stations within the borough at Hindley, Leigh, Atherton and Wigan. There is a requirement in the future to improve facilities and capacity of the borough command at the Wigan fire station when funding resources become available.

4.3.4 All fire stations are well placed, meet response times and key performance indicators for priority areas, which are particularly the most deprived areas of the borough. A continuing priority for the fire service is to promote prevention measures, such as smoke alarms, which it is currently successfully achieving.

Police

4.3.5 Greater Manchester Police delivers policing in the borough with the Greater Manchester Police Authority (GMPA) owning and managing the Police Estate. At present there are 3 police stations within the borough at Wigan (Divisional Headquarters), Leigh and Standish, and 2 deployment stations at Atherton and Bamfurlong. These are supported by local area help points (Police Posts) at Golborne, Aspull, Ashton and Hindley which offer the local community a staffed police point at set times of the week that they can easily access. There is also a Family Support Unit in Abram.

4.3.6 However, following a recent review, the provision from January 2012 will be that, while all buildings will remain operational, only Wigan (Divisional Headquarters) and Leigh Police Station will be open to the public with an enquiry counter. The enquiry counters at Standish, Atherton and Bamfurlong will close and be replaced by public phone boxes as will the Police Posts at Golborne, Aspull, Ashton and Hindley.

4.3.7 Greater Manchester Police initiated an Estate Strategy in 1998 that has been implemented and will conclude with the opening of the new Force Headquarters in 2011. Changes in policing delivery are currently being assessed and once the implications and expectations are known it is expected that a further Estate Strategy & Asset Management Plan will be drafted to cover a five year period.

Ambulance service

4.3.8 There are 4 ambulance stations within the borough at Wigan, Hindley, Atherton and Billinge. A number of vehicles from stations in neighbouring boroughs contribute to the Wigan Groups performance, as do Wigan's vehicles to theirs.

4.3.9 This distribution of ambulance stations allows an even geographical spread across the borough for responding to the national eight-minute response time target. The North West Ambulance Service considers that there is a sufficient level of resource for the borough and that any increase in demand for services is likely to have an impact for the workforce and ambulance fleet rather than on land requirements.

Criminal justice system

Court establishments

4.3.10 All magistrate and county court facilities have recently been centralised in one establishment at Darlington Street, Wigan serving the whole of the borough.

Prisons and probation services

4.3.11 Hindley Prison is the only prison facility within the borough. In April 2009 Hindley became a dedicated centre for offenders under the age of 18. Hindley is now the largest under 18 establishment in the country. There are no specific plans or sites identified for new prison development at present. The Greater Manchester Probation Service for Wigan Borough is based in Atherton; there is also a base linked with the prison.

Neighbourhood teams

4.3.12 There are five neighbourhood teams arranged on a twin township basis throughout the borough; these are listed in the table below. These deal with front-line issues including anti-social behaviour, environmental crime and minor highways issues. The teams are also responsible for carrying out Local Environmental Quality Surveys which feed into performance management frameworks. Neighbourhood teams work closely with Greater Manchester Police, who also work to the twin township model. Co-located local facilities and joint working is a key feature of this approach.

Neighbourhood teams	
Twin Township	Location of neighbourhood team
Orrell, Billinge, Winstanley / Wigan South	Marsh Green Library
Wigan North / Standish, Aspull and Shevington	Civic Buildings, Wigan
Hindley and Abram / Bryn and Ashton	Platt Bridge Housing Office
Leigh / Golborne and Lowton	Kennedy House, Leigh
Atherton / Tyldesley and Astley	Ena Mill, Atherton

Main emergency services infrastructure issues identified

4.3.13 The main infrastructure issue identified in Topic Paper 2 is:

- There is a requirement in the future to improve facilities and capacity of the borough command at the Wigan fire station when funding resources become available.

4.4 Leisure and culture

4.4.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation' Recreation Infrastructure Audit.

Libraries and lifelong learning

4.4.2 As of May 2011, the library service had 18 libraries spread across the borough and two mobile libraries which serve areas which are geographically remote and those who are unable to access static libraries. You need to be registered to use the mobile libraries. The 18 libraries are listed in the table below. The library portfolio includes large town libraries in Leigh and Wigan, area libraries in the communities of Hindley, Tyldesley, Ashton and Atherton and smaller community libraries in areas such as Golborne, Standish and Beech Hill. There are also two outreach libraries in Hope and Abram run by members of the community. The spread of libraries is such that every resident in Wigan lives within two miles of a fixed service point.

4.4.3 It should be noted that Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust are undertaking a major review of library services. A decision on the shape of the service will be taken in mid August.

Library provision in Wigan Borough		
Township	Library location	Library type
Ashton Bryn	Ashton	Area
Atherton	Atherton	Area
Golborne Lowton	Golborne	Community
Hindley Abram	Abram*	Outreach
	Hindley	Area
	Platt Bridge	Community
Leigh	Leigh	Town
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	Hope*	Outreach
Standish Aspull Shevington	Aspull	Community
	Shevington	Community
	Standish	Community
Tyldesley Astley	Tyldesley	Area
Wigan North	Beech Hill	Community
	Ince	Community

	Wigan***	Town
	Wigan Children's***	Town
Wigan South	Lamberhead Green**	Community
	Marsh Green	Community
<p>* Outreach libraries run by the local community ** Located within Abraham Guest Specialist Sports and Arts College *** Wigan Library and the children's library will be relocated to the Wigan Life Centre in December 2011</p>		

4.4.4 The majority of library buildings are Disability Discrimination Act compliant, though level access to Tyldesley Library can only be provided via the rear of the building and Hindley can only be accessed via steps to front or rear.

Culture and other leisure facilities

4.4.5 The following table provides a list of other cultural and leisure facilities available in the borough.

Other cultural and leisure facilities in Wigan Borough		
Township	Facility	Ownership
Ashton Bryn	Three Sisters Race Circuit	Private/Public
Atherton	Formby Hall	Private
Golborne Lowton	Lowton Civic Hall	Private
Hindley Abram	Monaco Ballroom	Private
Leigh (for east of the borough facilities)	Leigh Sports Village Stadium (11,000 seats)	Private
	Cinema* (7 screens)	Private
	Turnpike Gallery	Public
	National bingo hall	Private
Orrell Billinge Winstanley		
Standish Aspull Shevington	Aspull Civic Hall	Private
Tyldesley Astley	Astley Green Colliery Museum	Private
	Tyldesley Little Theatre	Private
Wigan North	Ince Public Hall	Private
Wigan South (for west of the borough and borough wide facilities)	DW Stadium, Robin Park (24,800 seats)	Private
	Cinema (11 screens)	Private

	Museum of Wigan Life	Public
	Drumcroom Art Gallery	Public
	Trencherfield Mill Steam Engine	Public
	Wigan Little Theatre	Private
	Norley Hall adventure playground	Public
	Two national bingo halls	Private
* Leigh cinema opening late 2011		

Main leisure and culture infrastructure issues identified

4.4.6 The main infrastructure issue identified in Topic Paper 1 is:

- There is a limited range of cultural facilities in the borough such as theatres and performance venues.

4.5 Communities

4.5.1 The following is extracted from the Topic paper 3 'Community development and involvement' Infrastructure audit.

Physical community infrastructure

Community facilities

4.5.2 It is thought that community centres promote and act as a focus for community development. They are locations for services, leisure, health and for regeneration and renewal initiatives - which can be provided in a locally acceptable style and place.

4.5.3 The table below outlines existing community centres in the borough. These can be regarded as the main community centre provision in the borough as they are community buildings with a primary community purpose.

Community centres provision in Wigan Borough	
Township	Community centres
Wigan South	Worsley Mesnes (North) Community Centre
	Clifton Street Community Centre (Worsley Mesnes)
	Norley Hall Community Centre
	Bramble House / Worsley Hall Community Resource Centre
Orrell, Billinge, Winstanley	The Grange Community Complex (Marus Bridge)
Standish, Aspull, Shevington	Standish Community Centre
Tyldesley and Astley	Shakerley Community Centre
Hindley and Abram	Tudor House Community Centre
	Platt Bridge Community Zone
	Platt Bridge Community Centre
	Abram Community Centre
Wigan North	Scholes and Whelley Community Resource Centre
	Rose Bridge Sports and Community Centre (Ince)
	Penson Street Community Centre (Swinley)
	Ince Clinic and Community Centre

	Marsh Green Community Centre
	Manley Street Community Centre (Lower Ince)
	Hallgate House Community Centre (Wigan)
Golborne and Lowton	Lowton Youth and Community Centre
	Golborne Linc Centre
	Church Lane Community Centre (Lowton)
Leigh	Higher Folds Community Centre (Leigh)
Atherton	Dorset Road Community Centre (Hag Fold)
Bryn and Ashton	Captains Lane Youth and Community Centre (Ashton)

4.5.4 The table above shows that there is varied provision of these primary community facilities across the borough, but with some townships only possessing one recognised centre. However there is a wide and diverse range of other facilities which provide varying degrees of community benefit.

4.5.5 There are many community facilities which have a secondary but important community purpose but this is not the primary use. These may be facilities which provide rooms or services for community use such as clinics / health centres, schools, libraries or churches. There are several hundred facilities across the borough where this may be available:

- Clinics / health centres - at present there are 19 Clinics / health centres spread across the borough; more detail can be found in Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation'. Many of these provide community facilities and promote community health services and events.
- Schools and Children's Centres - at present there are 131 Schools and 20 Children's Centres spread across the borough; more detail can be found in Topic Paper 4 'Education and learning'. Many of these provide access for community use and promote community services and events.
- Libraries - at present the library service has 18 libraries spread across the borough; more detail can be found in Topic Paper 1 - Health and Recreation. Most of these provide a community room and promote community services and events. However, it should be noted that a major review of library provision is being carried out and this may affect the number and location of libraries in the future.
- Places of Worship - there are 184 places of worship spread across the borough. Many churches have facilities available for community use or have associated church halls which provide space for community services and events. According to the 2001 Census, 87% of Wigan's population

are Christian. There are insignificant levels of other religions in the borough with over 12% of the population identified as either having no religion or not stating a religion. There is a wide range of religious facilities in the borough including those relating to Church of England, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Methodist, United Reformed, Salvation Army, Jehovah's Witness, Latter Day Saint, and Muslim.

4.5.6 In addition there are many facilities which may have an incidental community use such as pubs, clubs and halls, or with an associated recreational use such as sports clubs, arts or cultural activities and will provide rooms for hire or to provide a community service. However changing social demands mean that the number of local pubs and clubs is reducing.

4.5.7 A draft Community Buildings Strategy (Wigan Council, 2006) identified several challenges facing community centres in the borough.

- Some buildings are in poor condition
- Some buildings are not accessible for disabled people - or they are restrictive
- Some buildings are not well used, or hardly at all
- There are some buildings with plans to improve but there is limited funding
- Some buildings are overused
- There are not enough volunteers and not enough with the necessary skills
- Some premises exist that might be good for community use but they are not available to members of the public
- There are not enough paid workers to support a growing number of buildings
- Some buildings are not in the right place to serve the community effectively

This is being reviewed at present in the context of public sector funding reductions.

Human community infrastructure

4.5.8 As well as the physical infrastructure provided by community centres and other facilities, community engagement and development is also supported by 'human infrastructure' such as strong community networks and established working practices between partners and communities.

4.5.9 The following outlines the structures and frameworks in place for supporting community engagement and development in Wigan.

Wigan Borough Partnership

4.5.10 Partnership working is a key feature of local service delivery. Wigan has a long history of successful partnership working with strong relationships across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, all working together to

identify and tackle key issues for the borough. The Local Strategic Partnership for the borough is Wigan Borough Partnership and the Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the strategic priorities and principles. The Sustainable Community Strategy has been delivered through:

- Four delivery partnerships:
 - Economy, Environment, Culture and Housing
 - Adult Health and Wellbeing
 - Building Stronger Communities
 - Children, Young People and Families
- Township Forums (locality structures)
- Community Networks (communities of interest)

4.5.11 These structures have all included representation from Third Sector (community and voluntary) organisations. Community networks also include individual community members. All the structures have been supported by an officer group structure.

4.5.12 At present, as policy changes emerge, nationally, regionally and locally, Wigan Borough Partnership Board want to ensure each of these areas are fully reviewed against the borough's vision and priorities. Currently, a review is being carried out on all elements of partnership working arrangements. The Board recently approved an approach that will see:

- A stripped back structure, less meetings, more dialogue
- Partnership in action, more time limited projects
- Replacing the Board with a bi-annual Leaders' Summit setting the direction
- Standing down the current officer arrangements, but retaining a membership of senior leaders to come together about the big issues
- The Health and Wellbeing Board, the Wigan Forward Board and the 3rd Sector Assembly forming the core of our partnership working
- A review of all statutory and non-statutory partnerships to identify added value
- Development of stakeholder partnerships for more effective dialogue with communities of interest

A Framework for community engagement

4.5.13 Community engagement is a term used to describe complex and diverse processes and structures that are developed for more than one purpose. This framework describes the processes and structures, currently being developed in Wigan, that specifically support the engagement of citizens and customers in decision-making. These include:

- How policy and strategy around community engagement is being formed
- How the views and needs of individual community members, in localities, are understood and collated

- How 3rd sector organisations, who in turn represent and support individual community members, are engaged in decision-making structures
- How relationships with 'communities of interest' are being formed
- How systems relating to our customer services practices are being improved

4.5.14 This framework is not intended to capture all the community engagement activity that the council and its partners undertake. Community engagement is carried out on a day to day basis as part of the delivery of services. This framework relates specifically to the strategic focus provided through Wigan Borough Partnership. Whilst the council may have taken a lead on some of the work outlined, it is being developed as a partnership response to strategic engagement.

Third sector involvement

4.5.15 Third sector organisations are represented at all levels of Wigan Borough Partnership. The partnership also understands that a thriving and effective third sector infrastructure is vital to delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy. The many hundreds of community and voluntary sector organisations in the borough need to have the opportunity to contribute to the strategy.

4.5.16 A review is currently being undertaken into how the partnership supports and facilitates their involvement and promotes new ways of working. This is in the context of a period of unprecedented change following the banking crisis, subsequent economic recession and public expenditure reductions by the coalition government. This means that there are many uncertainties for the future of the third sector and there will inevitably be more changes. The pressures include declining resources at a time of increased demand and raised expectations from the government's localism agenda.

Main communities infrastructure issues identified

4.5.17 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 3 are:

- There is a need for more accessible community facilities in some parts of the borough.
- The level of proposed new housing, both within the proposed broad locations and elsewhere, is likely to result in the need for additional community provision.

4.6 Housing

4.6.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 6 'Housing' Infrastructure audit. There are currently around 136,000 houses and other dwellings in the borough. There is a high proportion of terraced (29%) and semi-detached homes (47%) and relatively fewer detached homes (17%) and flats (7%). The majority of homes (58%) are medium sized properties with 5 or 6 rooms. Over four-fifths of dwellings in the borough are private housing. More than 90% of these are owner-occupied with the remainder being private rented. Most of the other homes are council rented with a small proportion rented from registered social landlords such as housing associations. The areas surrounding the town of Wigan have the highest proportion of social rented housing; Orrell and Winstanley have the lowest proportion.

Social Housing

4.6.2 The 2008 Housing Needs and Demand Study indicates 19.5% of the current housing stock within the borough is affordable housing (council rented, housing association rented or shared ownership) which implies a total of 25,691 units. The tables below highlight the tenure to housing type split, number of bedrooms by tenure and adequacy by tenure of the current social housing stock.

Property type by tenure in Wigan Borough									
Tenure	Detached		Semi Detached		Terraced		Flat / Maisonette / Bedsit		Total
Council rented	607	3%	10585	47%	5416	24%	5865	26%	22473
HA rented	118	4%	496	16%	577	19%	1831	61%	3022
Shared ownership	0	0%	47	24%	83	42%	66	34%	196

Number of bedrooms by tenure in Wigan Borough							
Tenure	Bed-sit	One	Two	Three	Four	Five+	Total
Council rented	0.3	27.6	29.3	41.4	1.4	0.0	100
HA	4.8	45.6	34.7	13.6	1.3	0.0	100
Shared Ownership	0.0	33.7	23.5	42.8	0.0	0.0	100

Adequacy by tenure in Wigan Borough	
Tenure	% adequate
Council rented	80.0
HA rented	85.8
Shared ownership	100.0

Gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople

4.6.3 The 10 Greater Manchester local authorities commissioned Arc4 to carry out a study 'Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and Service Delivery Needs in Greater Manchester - 2007 / 2008'. The study looked at existing provision and projected future need for gypsy and traveller pitches and travelling showpeople's plots to 2015. The results for Wigan Borough are in the tables below.

Gypsy & traveller pitch requirements to 2015 in Wigan Borough			
Current need (2007)	Projected need	Pitch supply	Total shortfall (to 2015)
45	3	9	39

Plot Requirements for Travelling Showpeople to 2015 in Wigan Borough			
Authorised plots	Current shortfall (2007)	Projected growth (to 2015)	Total need (to 2015)
36	11	12	23

Main housing infrastructure issues identified

4.6.4 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 6 are:

- The affordable housing sought by moving households in the borough represents a demand for 3,307 units. Of this total, 2,073 are implied for council rented accommodation, 940 for Housing Association rented, and 294 for shared ownership.
- 1,231 concealed households are also looking for social housing. Nearly half of this is for one bed accommodation, with over a third seeking 2 bed accommodation.

- The greatest requirement for affordable housing occurs in the outer areas of the borough including Orrell, Billinge, Winstanley, Shevington, Standish and Aspull. These areas account for almost half of the affordable housing requirement from moving households.
- The 2008 Wigan Housing Needs and Demand Study indicates that the total level of outstanding affordable housing need is for 277 units per annum, after allowing for current re-let supply.

5. Green infrastructure

5.1 Open space and recreation

5.1.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation' Recreation Infrastructure audit.

Parks and local nature reserves

5.1.2 The table below shows the distribution of our principal and township parks and local nature reserves. More details on the indicative timescale for improvement and funds required for each park can be found in the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.

Distribution of parks and local nature reserves by township		
Township	Park name	Park Type
Ashton Bryn	Jubilee Park, Ashton ^{GF}	Township Park
	Three Sisters, Ashton	Township Park
Atherton	Central Park, Atherton	Township Park
Golborne Lowton	Pennington Flash Country Park, Leigh	Principal Park **
	The Bonk, Golborne ^o	Township Park
Hindley Abram	Abram Park	Township Park
	Borsdane Wood, Hindley	Local Nature Reserve
	Leyland Park, Hindley	Township Park
	Low Hall Park, Platt Bridge	Local Nature Reserve
Leigh	Lilford Park, Leigh	Township Park
	Pennington Hall Park ^{GF}	Township Park
Orrell Billinge Winstanley	Greenslate Water Meadows, Orrell*	Local Nature Reserve
	Orrell Water Park	Township Park
Standish Aspull Shevington	Ashfield Park, Standish	Township Park
	Aspull Civic Park	Township Park
	Haigh Country Park	Principal Park **
	Shevington Park ^{PC}	Township Park

Tyldesley Astley	Astley Street Park, Tyldesley	Township Park
Wigan North	Mesnes Park, Wigan ^M	Principal Park
	Walmesley Park, Ince	Township Park
Wigan South	Alexandra Park, Newtown ^{GF}	Township Park
	Wigan Flashes ^{LWT}	Local Nature Reserve
<p>Key</p> <p>^{GF} Green Flag Award Parks. Enhanced maintenance in place until 2020.</p> <p>^{LWT} Managed by Lancashire Wildlife Trust</p> <p>* Part of Orrell Water Park.</p> <p>^M Major works in progress (2009-2012) followed by enhanced maintenance until 2020.</p> <p>^o Options for future to be explored</p> <p>^{PC} Parish Council site</p> <p>** Identified as destination park of sub-regional importance</p>		

5.1.3 Generally the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study found the provision of parks across the borough to be satisfactory. Investment should be used to improve the quality of existing parks rather than increase the number of designated parks as other types of open space, such as amenity greenspace, can fulfil the same function. The main catchment gaps are identified in the Topic Paper 1 'Health and Recreation'. It is important amenity greenspace is not lost or additional space is provided where additional needs are identified.

Semi-natural greenspace

5.1.4 Local Nature Reserves are included in this category and at present there are four designated reserves in the borough as shown above. More details can be found in Topic Paper 10 covering wildlife habitats and species. There is a shortfall of around 5 to 10 hectares and a shortfall in accessibility terms in the east of the borough to meet the Natural England recommendation of one hectare per 1,000 population.

Amenity greenspace

5.1.5 The Open Space Sport and Recreation Study identified some 1,890 amenity greenspace sites across the borough totalling more than 376 hectares. Catchment mapping suggests the majority of the borough has sufficient amenity greenspace, with only minor catchment gaps identified particularly in the north of Hindley which is served by provision in Westhoughton. The facilities in some of the space identified however are in need of improvement, including the provision of benches and footpaths.

Children and young people

5.1.6 The Open Space Sport and Recreation Study found a total 11.41 hectares of sites providing for casual play, youth provision, local areas for play with and without equipment, neighbourhood equipped areas of play and unclassified sites on 132 sites throughout the borough. These are managed by or on behalf of Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust, co-ordinated by the Play Strategy.

5.1.7 There is an aim to have a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play of at least 0.1 hectares with play equipment catering for a variety of ages, one casual play site such as a multi-use games area, basketball areas, kick-about areas, youth shelter and games wall; and one site with youth provision such as BMX tracks or skate parks in each township. The main shortfalls have been identified in the areas listed below. Along with these areas, there are still local catchment gaps in the other townships.

- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play in Golborne Lowton, Hindley Abram, Orrell Billinge Winstanley and Wigan South
- Casual Play Areas in Standish Aspull Shevington and Ashton Bryn
- Youth Facilities in Ashton Bryn, Golborne Lowton and Tyldesley Astley.

Allotments

5.1.8 There are 48 sites classified as allotments in the borough covering just over 34 hectares. Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust currently manage 12 statutory sites with 376 plots. A further 36 non statutory sites with 238 plots are managed from the Property Division in the Resources Directorate. Wigan has 4.9 allotments per thousand households; this figure is the lowest ratio per 1000 households across greater Manchester and is almost 50% less than the Greater Manchester average. There is therefore a need to increase provision, particularly where significant gaps have been identified in Standish, Aspull and Shevington, Wigan North, Ashton and Bryn, and Hindley and Abram. In September 2008, there was a waiting list of 728 people (Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust).

Cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds

5.1.9 The Open Space Needs Assessment counted 40 sites covering 89 hectares under this category throughout the borough, with only a small number of catchment gaps identified. The table below illustrates the anticipated remaining capacity of cemeteries for new graves. Cemeteries are managed by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust.

Estimated remaining capacity of cemeteries	
Cemetery location	Approximate year of full capacity
Ince in Makerfield	Full

Atherton	Full
Wigan Cemetery, Lower Ince	Full
Gidlow, Standish	2025
Leigh	2025
Hindley	2011
Howe Bridge	2025
Westwood, Lower Ince	2012
Tyldesley	2012

Outdoor sports provision

5.1.10 The Open Space Sport and Recreation Study identifies provision for the following sports in the borough. These facilities have not been updated to include provision at the new Abraham Guest Specialist Sports and Arts College.

Number of available pitches / courts / greens in Wigan Borough			
Sport	Senior	Junior	Mini
Football	108	6	16
Cricket	14		
Rugby league	39	6	4
Rugby union	12		
Hockey	5		
Bowls	53		
Tennis	66		
Athletics	3		
Golf	8		
Netball	42		
Notes:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cricket pitch provided by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust, rest privately owned • 19 rugby league clubs across borough • Rugby union is administered by the Lancashire County Rugby Football Union. All pitches are privately owned. • Hockey pitches at school sites • 25 private bowling greens. Rest on WLCT managed sites mainly in parks. • 2 municipal golf courses • Athletics at Leigh Harriers, Robin Park and Leigh Sports Village. 			

- Netball courts mainly playground markings at schools, 13 specific sports areas

5.1.11 The Open Space Sport and Recreation Study also identified where surpluses and deficiencies of sports pitches may occur in the borough by 2017. This focused on football and rugby league as the main sports for which local authority provision of pitches is important. As the notes to the table indicate other pitch sports rely on privately owned facilities. In many cases there is a surplus of senior pitches but a deficit in junior provision. As a result, this is indicative of junior teams playing on senior pitches. This occurs in Ashton Bryn, Atherton, Orrell Billinge Winstanley, Wigan North and Wigan South.

5.1.12 There is an overall surplus of pitches in Hindley Abram and Tyldesley Astley. Some sites in Tyldesley Astley are found to be surplus to requirements and other uses could be explored for these, such as casual play. There is a significant surplus in Standish Aspull Shevington for all sports with the exception of junior rugby league. The shortfall in rugby league pitches could be accommodated by improving the quality and therefore the capacity of existing facilities.

5.1.13 There are shortfalls of pitch provision in Golborne and Leigh. In Golborne this could be met through additional provision at private sports clubs. In Leigh it could be met through improvements to local authority sites, such as improvements to pitch quality and provision of changing accommodation.

Indoor sports

5.1.14 The table below provides details of the sports facilities run by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust on behalf of Wigan Council.

Public indoor sports facilities			
Venue / Location	Swimming pool	Gym and fitness suite	Multi-purpose sports hall
Wigan Life Centre *	Yes	Yes	No
Leigh Sports Village	Yes	Yes	Yes
Robin Park, Wigan**	No	Yes	Yes
Ashton	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hindley	Yes	Yes	Yes
Howe Bridge	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tyldesley	Yes	No	No
* Due to open September 2011			

** Robin Park arena, sports and tennis centre (separate indoor facilities for tennis, athletics, gymnastics and cricket)

5.1.15 There is also community sports provision at a number of schools and colleges throughout the borough and new improved sports facilities have recently been provided at Abraham Guest Specialist Sports and Arts College. Further community involvement is currently being sought for Hindley and Tyldesley swimming pools.

5.1.16 The borough has a number of private gyms with pools, including three run by large national operators. These include DW Sports Fitness at Stadium Way, Wigan and Parsonage Park, Leigh and Total Fitness at Goose Green, Wigan. There are also health and fitness suites with pools at national hotel chains with premises in the borough at Kilhey Court, Standish, Britannia Brook Hotel, Standish and Greyhound Hotel, Leigh.

Green belt and landscape

5.1.17 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 9 'Built environment and landscapes' Infrastructure audit.

Green belt and safeguarded land

5.1.18 Within the borough there are:

- 10,560 hectares of designated Green Belt (56% of the borough)
- 10 designated Major Existing Developed Sites with two additional proposed at Shevington High School, Shevington and St. Mary's High School, Astley.
- 642 hectares of Safeguarded land.

5.1.19 Areas of Green Belt and safeguarded land and Major Existing Development Sites are all listed in Topic Paper 9 'Built environment and landscapes'.

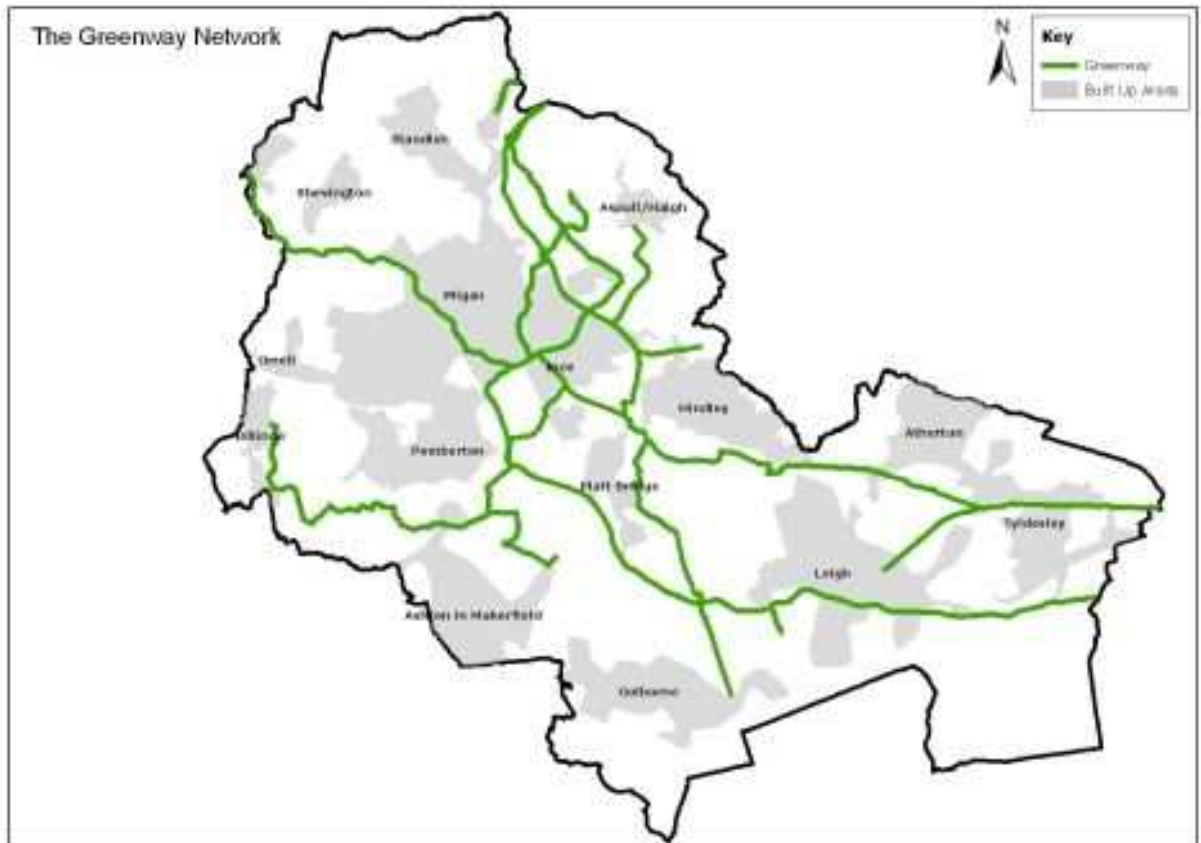
Strategic landscape and green infrastructure

5.1.20 The borough's strategic landscape and green infrastructure consists of:

- 3 principal parks and 15 township parks.
- 48 sites classified as allotments in Wigan covering just over 34 hectares. Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust currently manage 12 statutory allotment sites with 376 plots. A further 36 non-statutory allotment sites with 238 plots are currently managed by the council.
- 651 Tree Preservation Orders
- Public rights of way - 435 kilometres of footpaths and 35 kilometres of bridleways (see Transport - walking section).

5.1.21 The greenway network, which is comprised of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways, as well as river and canal corridors, is an important part of Wigan's green infrastructure. These are shown on map below:

The greenway network in Wigan Borough



Greenheart

5.1.22 The Greenheart area covers approximately 57 square kilometres at the heart of Wigan's former coalfield area, approximately 40% of which is publicly owned. The vision is to create a countryside park and form a linked-up network of open space, sport and recreation facilities, which encourages residents to make better use of the countryside on their doorstep. It is bordered by Wigan, Ince, Aspull, Hindley, Leigh, Lowton, Golborne and Ashton-in-Makerfield with the communities of Platt Bridge, Bickershaw and Abram within.

5.1.23 The key sites within Greenheart are Haigh Hall, Wigan Flashes, Amberswood, Three Sisters, Bickershaw and Pennington Flash. By 2012 there will be approximately 19.5km of improved towpath surfaces within the area. This will provide a continuous, good quality towpath surface between Marsland Green, Leigh to Top Lock and Robin Park in Wigan.

Main open space and recreation infrastructure issues identified

5.1.24 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Papers 1 and 9 are:

- There are catchment gaps for play provision throughout the borough.
- Allotments are in short supply, with demand for plots outstripping supply by two to one.
- There is a limited range of cultural facilities in the borough such as theatres, cinemas and performance venues.
- Half of the people in the borough live within a short walking distance of countryside and open land but, although convenient for many, it is underutilised for informal recreation.

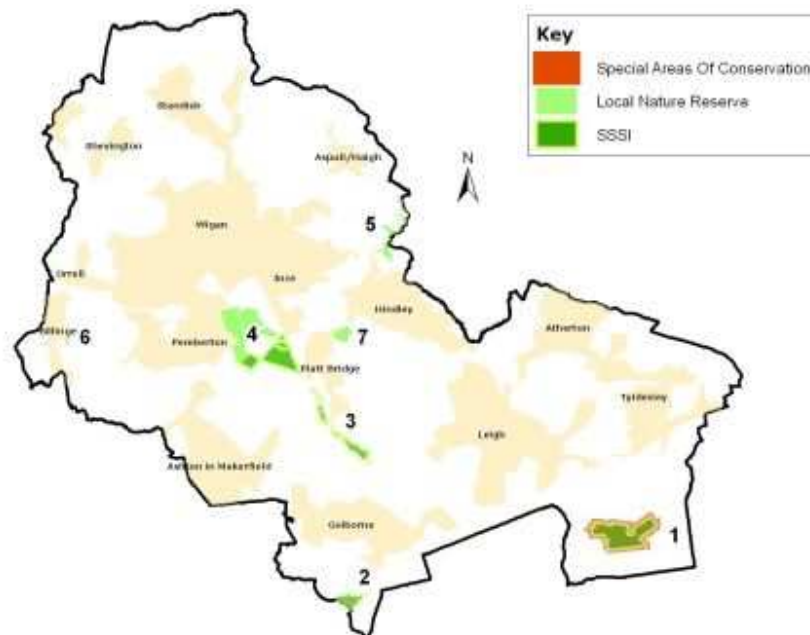
5.2 Wildlife and habitats

5.2.1 The following is extracted from the Topic Paper 10 'Wildlife habitats and species' Infrastructure audit.

Protected areas

5.2.2 The borough has several areas that are protected against development for their ecological or geological value. These are listed below and their locations are shown on the map below.

Designated sites of biodiversity importance in Wigan Borough



5.2.3 There are four Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the borough. These include wetlands, flower-rich meadows, and peat bog and are some of the country's best wildlife sites:

- Astley and Bedford Mosses (1)
- Highfield Moss (2)
- Abram Flashes (3)
- Bryn Marsh and Ince Moss (4)

Astley and Bedford Mosses also form part of the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation. This site consists of degraded raised bogs, still capable of natural regeneration.

5.2.4 There are currently five Local Nature Reserves:

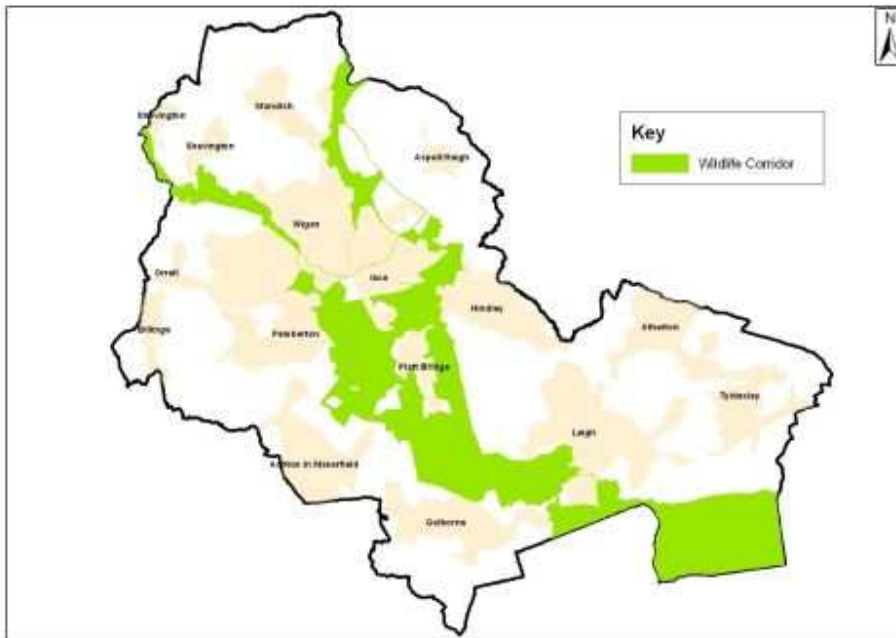
- Wigan Flashes (Part overlaps with a Site of Special Scientific Interest) (4)
- Borsdane Wood (5)
- Greenslate Water Meadows (6)

- Low Hall (7)
- Three Sisters (8)

5.2.5 The borough currently has 91 Sites of Biological Importance including woodland, canals, reedbeds, ponds, lakes, flashes, mosslands, disused railway tracks, marshland. Sites of Biological Importance are not designated by law, but are protected to an extent by planning policies.

5.2.6 We have identified key wildlife corridors to support functional networks for wildlife habitats and species including features of nature conservation importance. These are shown on the map below.

Existing wildlife corridors in Wigan Borough



5.2.7 The wildlife corridor boundaries were originally identified within the borough's Nature Conservation Strategy and are currently designated under policy EV2C in the Unitary Development Plan.

Main wildlife and habitats infrastructure issues identified

5.2.8 The main infrastructure issues identified in Topic Paper 10 are:

- Greenheart will be critical to the borough's Green Infrastructure and adaptation to climate change. A key component of this will be ensuring that wildlife habitats and species are part of linked networks.
- New development needs to address the continuity of wildlife habitats through careful design and enhancement on-site linking into surrounding habitats.
- There is a need to improve public accessibility to areas of countryside and wildlife habitat whilst conserving and protecting habitats.