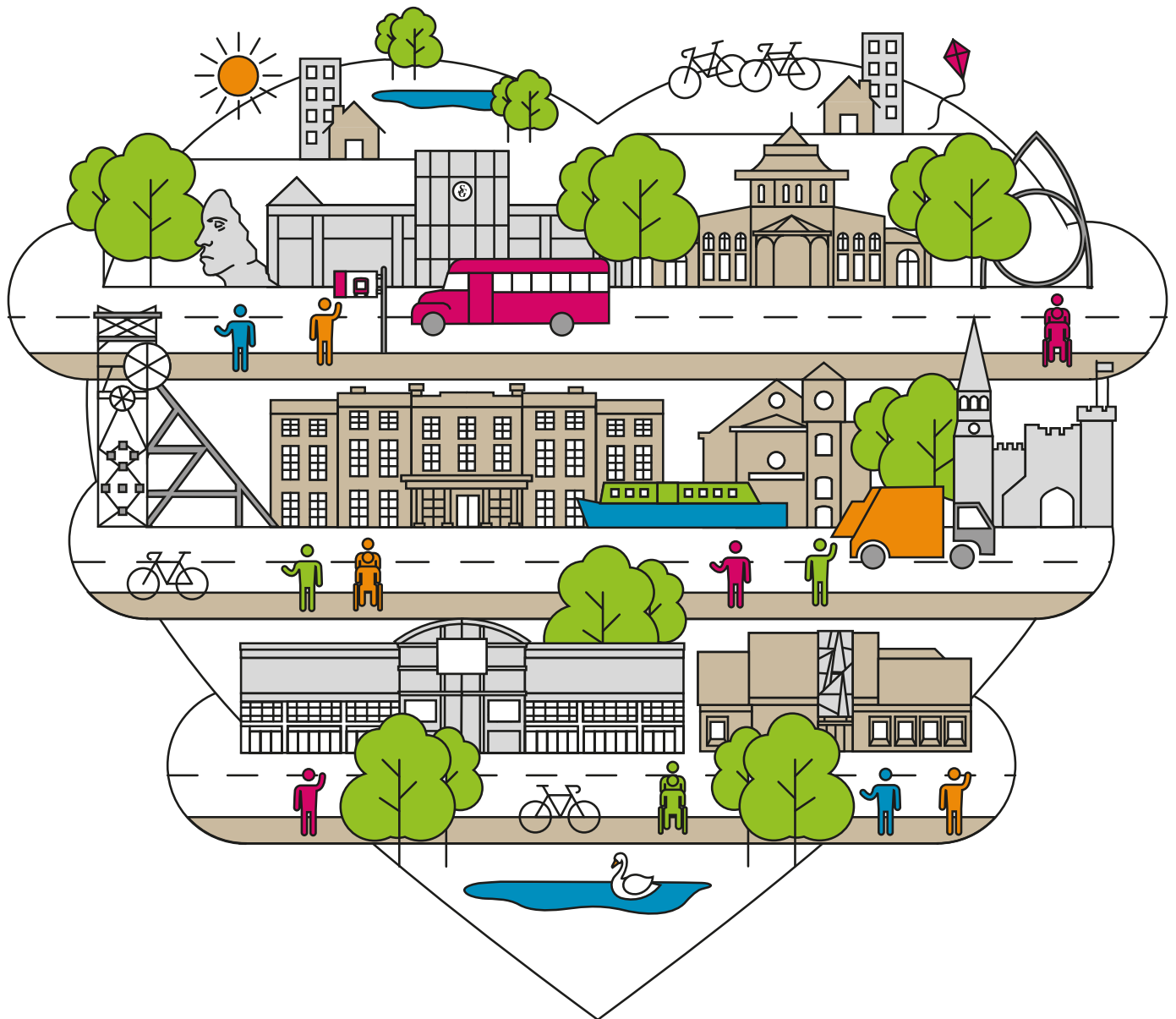


# Planning for the Future to 2040

Local Plan options and preferences



Homes | Jobs | Town Centres | Places | Transport | Environment | People



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# Introduction

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Welcome to this Options and Preferences consultation for the new Wigan Borough Local Plan. We intend the Local Plan to be ambitious for the future of the borough as far forward as 2040, and this is a key stage for people to get involved and influence what it is in the Local Plan.

The Options and Preferences have been informed by what people told us at the initial 'Issues and Opportunities' consultation stage in Autumn 2022. This next phase of consultation will inform the Initial Draft Local Plan, which will be published in 2024.

## Options and preferences

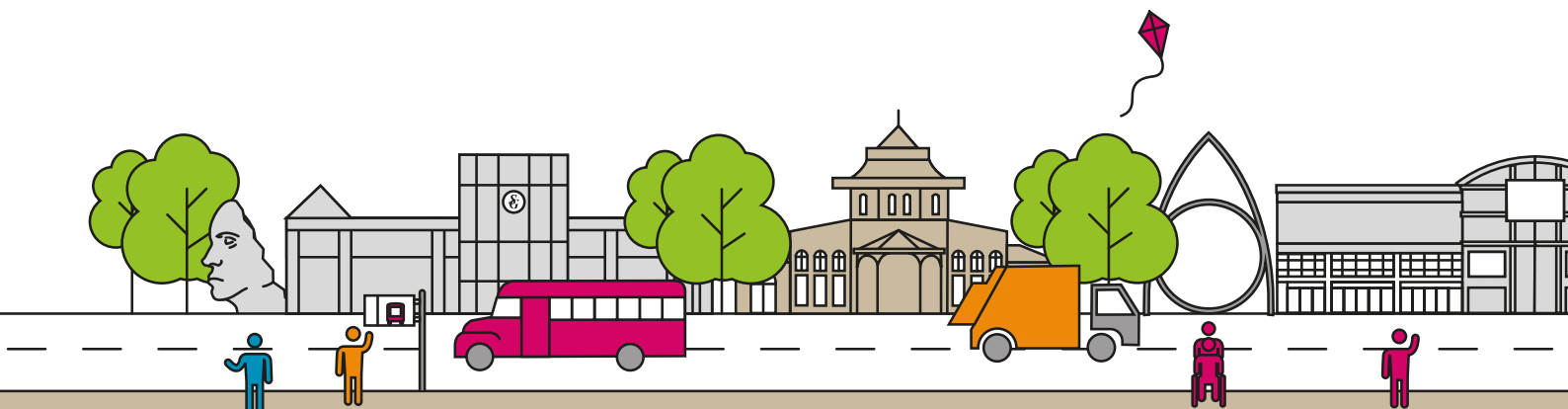
This consultation document sets out, and invites comments on, our preferred policy approach across 7 key themes – Homes, Jobs, Town Centres, Transport, Places, Environment and People.

Under each of the 7 themes, our preferred policy approach to various planning and development matters is presented, alongside alternative options that have also been considered. In each case there is an opportunity to comment.

Ahead of those chapters on the 7 themes, there is a spatial portrait, which sets out where we think the borough is now as a baseline for the Local Plan; proposed contents for a vision for where the borough could be by 2040; and strategic objectives for each theme against which the preferred policy approaches should be delivering.

In setting out these Options and Preferences we are very much aware that development needs to be supported by the right infrastructure, including community services such as health and education, roads, public transport, digital and utilities. As part of this consultation, we are in ongoing discussions with a range of infrastructure providers to ensure any proposed development can be supported with adequate infrastructure.

The views of residents, businesses and other stakeholders on these Options and Preferences are really important to us.



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## How to comment

You can comment as you go through this document or go to a particular part of the document. There are places to click on where you can view comments made by others and submit your own comments if you wish to. You will have to register first, however, as this software package is new to the council, but you will only need to register once.

The consultation is open for 8 weeks until 23:59 on Monday 18 December 2023.

## Consultation events

During the consultation period, we will be hosting a series of face-to-face consultation events across the borough to enable residents and interested parties to discuss the Options and Preferences with us in person. All events start at 7pm. Attendance at these sessions can be booked online at [bit.ly/optionsandpreferences](https://bit.ly/optionsandpreferences) and are taking place at:

- **Tuesday 31 October: Tyldesley Rugby Union Club, Tyldesley**
- **Wednesday 1 November: Hindley Library and Community Centre, Hindley**
- **Thursday 2 November: Platt Bridge Community Zone, Platt Bridge**
- **Monday 6 November: Sunshine House, Scholes, Wigan**
- **Tuesday 7 November: The Turnpike Gallery, Leigh**
- **Thursday 9 November: Atherton Town Hall, Atherton**
- **Tuesday 14 November: Salvation Army, Chapel Street, Ashton**
- **Wednesday 15 November: Lamberhead Working Men's Club, Pemberton**
- **Thursday 16 November: Standish Community Centre, Standish**
- **Wednesday 22 November: Golborne Parkside Club, Golborne**

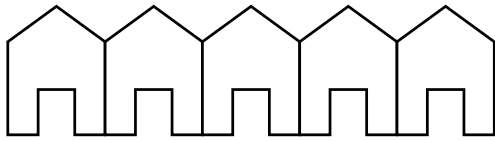


# Spatial Portrait

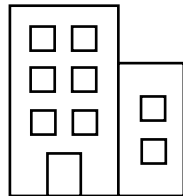
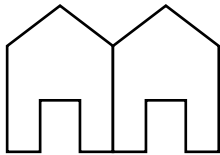
The Spatial Portrait sets out in pictures and words how the borough is now. It is important in establishing a baseline position at the outset of the plan.

## Homes

**46%**

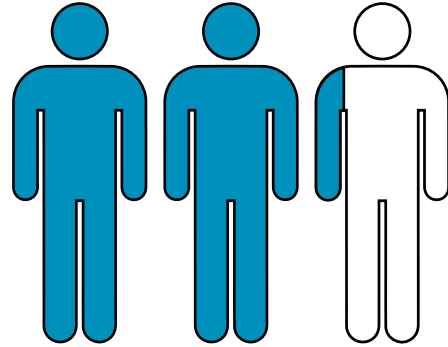


**27%**



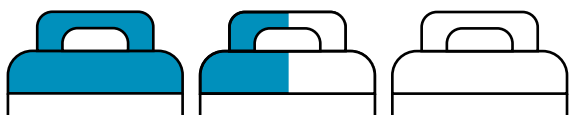
**7%**

Above average number of terraced and semi-detached homes - with a below average number of flats



**2.28**

The average number of people per household



**50%**

of Wigan Borough's homes have 3 bedrooms



The average house price is 5.9 times higher than typical earnings – cheaper than the national average



**Nearly half**

of homes are in Council Tax Band A, nearly double the national average

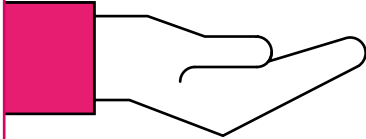


**275%**

increase in the number of households renting privately since 2001

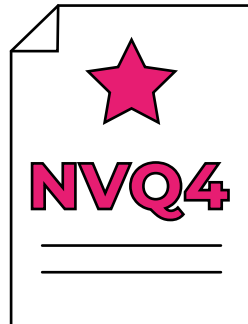
# Jobs

**£559**



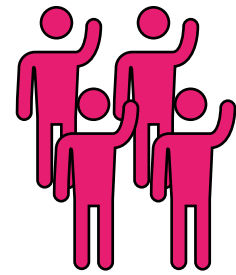
**Average weekly wage**

4% below the national average



**31%**

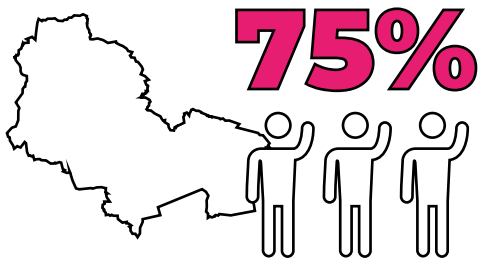
of working age residents have higher level qualifications (NVQ4 and above), lower than the regional (39%) and national (44%) average



The working age population is projected to decline marginally by

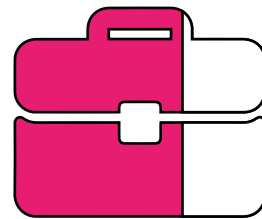
**-0.1%**

by 2041, despite growing by 4.8% in Greater Manchester



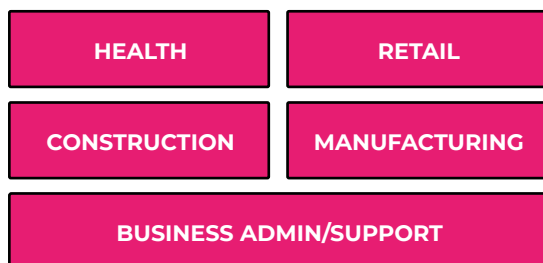
**75%**

Number of Wigan Borough residents that are employed, higher than the regional rate of 73%



**0.6**

jobs per working age resident, lower than the regional average of 0.85 and the national average of 0.84

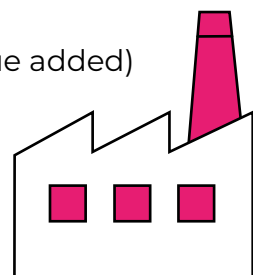


These are the most common industries in Wigan Borough and make up over half of all the jobs available

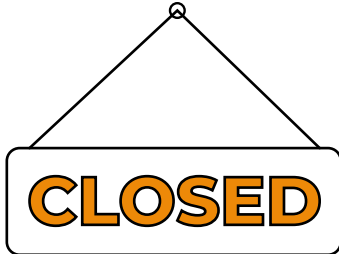
Manufacturing is the biggest contribution to the local economy of

**17%**

(GVA - gross value added)



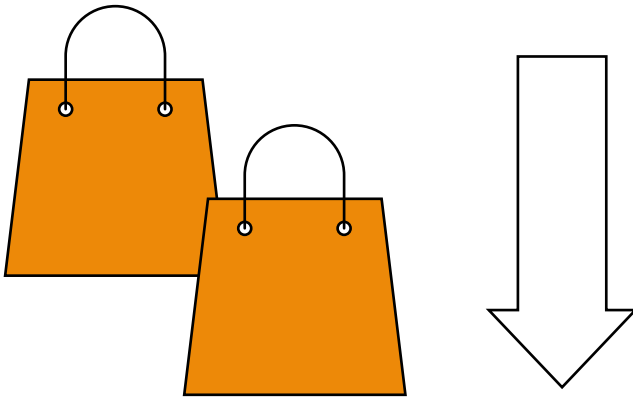
# Town centres



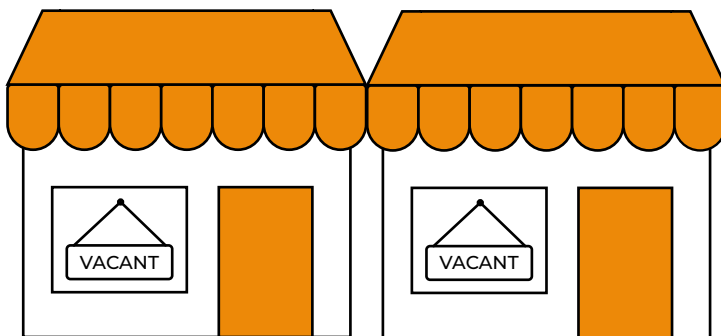
On average,  
**50 shops**  
per day closed  
nationally in 2022.



Online retail sales have grown  
significantly nationally from  
6% in 2009 to  
**27%**  
in 2022



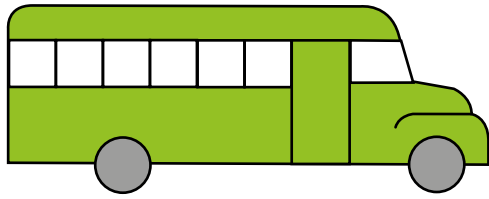
In 2023, footfall in town  
centres nationally  
remains on average  
**10% below**  
pre-pandemic levels



Some town centres have  
vacancy levels above  
**10%,**  
including Wigan and  
Golborne



# Transport

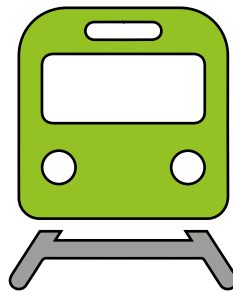
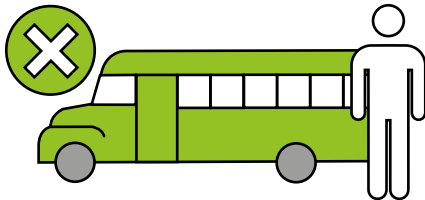


Over the last 30 years bus journeys across England (outside London) have fallen by

**over 40%**

**48%**

of residents haven't used a bus in the last 12 months



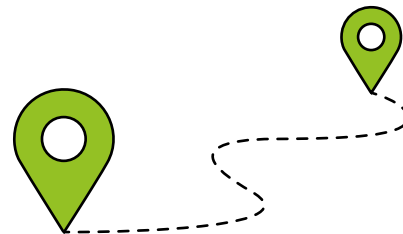
**Only 1%**

of all trips across Wigan Borough are by rail

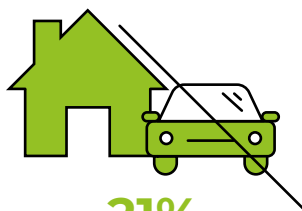


**2%**

of residents cycle to work at least once a year



Over **40%** of journeys in Wigan Borough are under 2 miles



**21%**

of households do not have a car



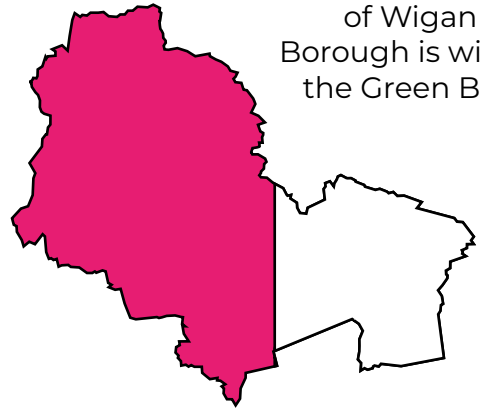
**14%**

The increase in vehicle miles in Wigan Borough since 2013

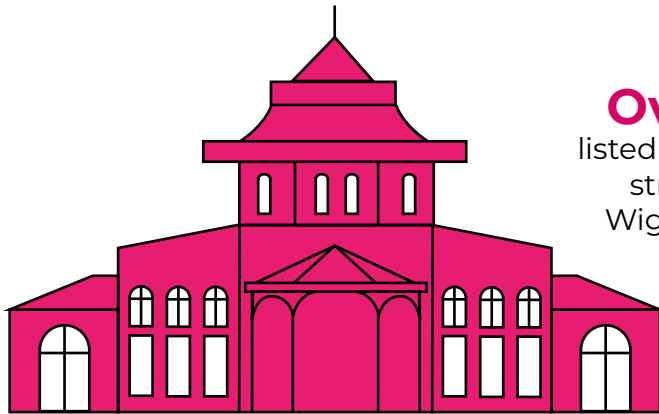
# Places



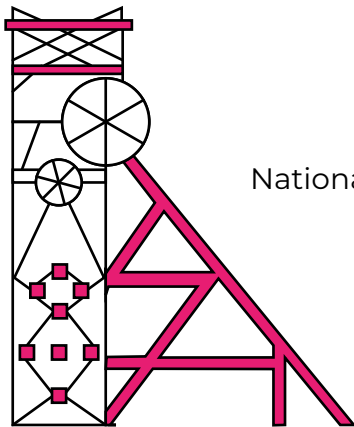
**23**  
Conservation areas



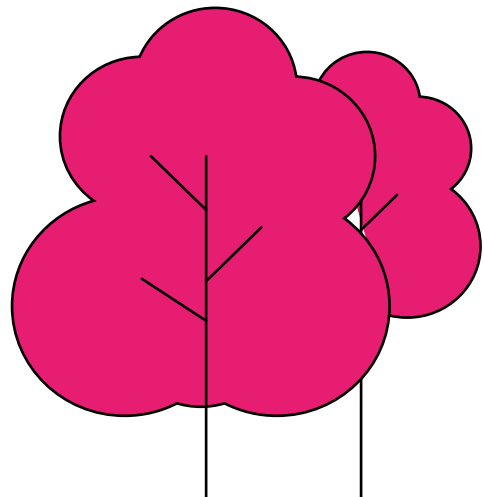
**56%**  
of Wigan  
Borough is within  
the Green Belt



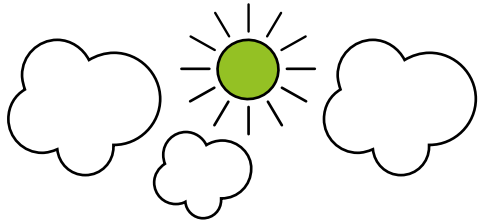
**Over 500**  
listed buildings and  
structures in  
Wigan Borough



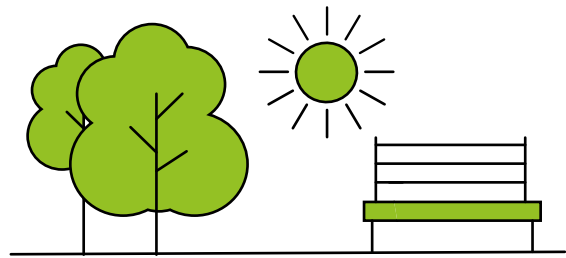
**12**  
Nationally important ancient  
monuments



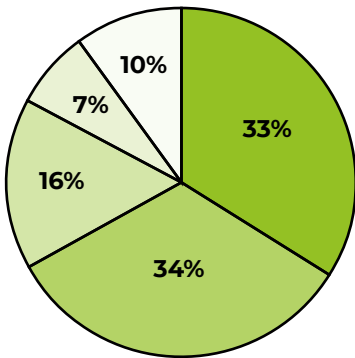
# Environment



Air quality in Wigan Borough has **improved generally** since 2011, but high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide remain in some locations



**two thirds** of Wigan Borough is open land and greenspace



## Emissions in Wigan Borough:

**34%** domestic

**4%** commercial

**31%** transport

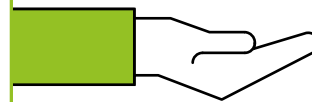
**6%** other

**20%** industry

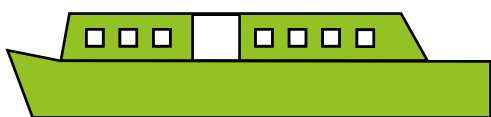
**5%** waste management



**2019**  
Wigan Council declared a climate emergency



**Over 1,800** hectares of Wigan Borough (around 10%) is designated for wildlife protection



The Leeds Liverpool and Bridgewater Canals run through Wigan Borough



The Douglas and Hey Brook are the main river corridors in Wigan Borough

# People

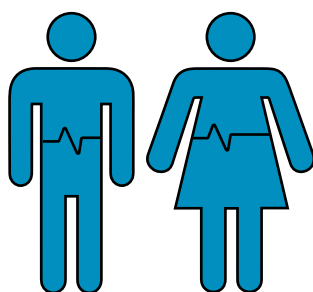


**93.2%**

of pupils were offered places at their first-choice primary school



Life expectancy in Wigan Borough varies by around **10 years** between the most and least deprived areas



Life expectancy (yrs)

**77.5**

years for men

**81.2**

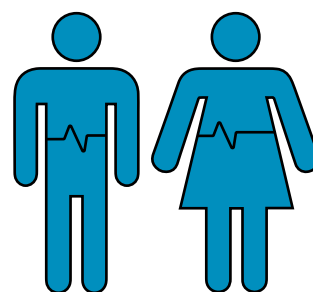
years for women

Wigan Borough

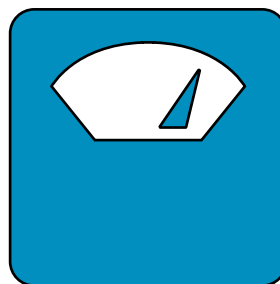
**77.5**  
years for men

**83.1**  
years for women

Nationally



**62%** of adults in Wigan Borough are physically active, lower than the regional and national average of 65% and 66% respectively



**71%** of adults in Wigan Borough are overweight, higher than the national average of 64%



**1 in 5** children aged 5 and

**2 in 5** children aged 11 are overweight



The number of people aged over 65 in Wigan Borough is expected to grow by

**33%** by 2039.



Leeds Liverpool Canal



Wigan Pier redevelopment



Mesnes Park, Wigan



Wigan town centre

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# Vision and objectives for the Local Plan

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## Vision to 2040

**Our Vision to 2040 is very much a work in progress. We want to be ambitious for the borough, but it is not something that the Local Plan, or the council, can achieve alone.**

It will need to be a collaborative effort with the people of the borough, business, and other stakeholders. Our vision will be developed together, in partnership with stakeholders, over the next 12 months as we prepare the Local Plan. This consultation is a key step in that journey, and we want to know what your thoughts on the vision.

### **Our initial vision to 2040 for Wigan Borough is:**

- **Homes:** A place where people are proud to live, with a range of attractive and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all.
- **Jobs:** A place with a strong local economy where businesses choose to invest, remain and grow, and residents have access to meaningful, higher skilled and better paid jobs.
- **Town and local centres:** A place with a range of strong, vibrant and diverse town centres which serve their local communities and where people want to spend time.
- **Transport:** A more connected borough with first class transport connections, where people can travel safely and conveniently both within, and to destinations outside the borough, with active travel the first and natural choice for short journeys.
- **Places:** A place where people live within thriving communities where their day-to-day needs, employment, and social interactions can be met close to where they live.
- **Environment:** A place at the forefront of action on climate change, with clean air and a flourishing natural environment.
- **People:** A place where children are given the best start in life and young people grow up to exceed expectations and where people live healthier and happier lives, with access to plentiful opportunities to be physically active and socially engaged.

## Strategic objectives

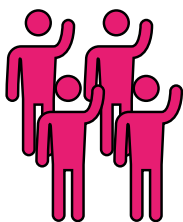
The proposed strategic objectives are intended to help deliver our vision for Wigan Borough by 2040. They are drawn from what people told us they want during the Issues and Opportunities consultation in Autumn 2022. They can and will be further refined in response to this consultation and as further progress is made on the Local Plan.

### Homes



To ensure that new housing provides a range of options to suit residents' needs, including affordable homes and specialist housing, and is supported by the right infrastructure including transport links, access to schools and greenspaces.

### Jobs



To attract and grow businesses which support our strong and growing sectors, improve access to training and provide meaningful career opportunities for residents.

### Town and local centres



To support our town and local centres to thrive and become vibrant and attractive spaces where people choose to spend their time.

### Transport



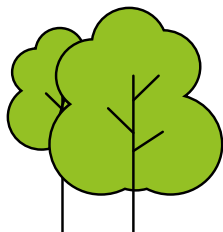
To enable everyone to travel safely and conveniently when they need to or want to.

### Places



To help enable and create thriving and sustainable communities through high standards of design, conserving the best of the past, incorporating good landscaping and making inclusive and safe places where people want to be.

### Environment



To ensure that new development responds to climate change positively, by utilising greener building methods, and encouraging more wildlife by protecting and improving our greenspaces.

### People



To help people to live healthier and happier lives by increasing opportunities to be physically active, engaged and develop their knowledge and skills.

# Homes

**You said** that the priorities for homes should be additional housing for first time buyers, social housing to rent, family homes, accommodation for older people, and more affordable housing. There was also strong support for homes that can adapt to meet people's needs over their lifetime. However, many believe that more homes are not needed.

## Providing an appropriate mix of housing

In response, our preference is to plan for a mix of types of new homes that meet needs in terms of size, type, tenure, affordability and specific needs. Our priorities would be:

- Providing more affordable housing for those whose needs are not met by the market.
- Providing more family housing to meet aspirations.
- Providing more housing for older people to be able to remain within their localities, maintain important community connections, and get the support they need as they grow older.
- Providing accommodation for care leavers.
- Providing other specialist forms of housing to meet identified needs.
- Providing plots for self-build if there is demand.
- Planning for many more homes in our town centres to create new communities.

We are undertaking further work on exactly what housing is needed and where, with the intention of including specific requirements in a policy on 'Providing an appropriate mix of housing'.

**The alternative option** is to continue to focus our efforts on the contribution of new council homes and new homes from Registered Providers (usually Housing Associations), but otherwise to let the market decide what is needed.

Given that private housebuilders provide around two-thirds to three-quarters of the new homes in Wigan Borough, we do not believe that this would secure the range of housing that we need.

We also know that we need policies on other matters, including allocating sites for new homes, homes in multiple accommodation and accommodation for gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople.





## Housing land

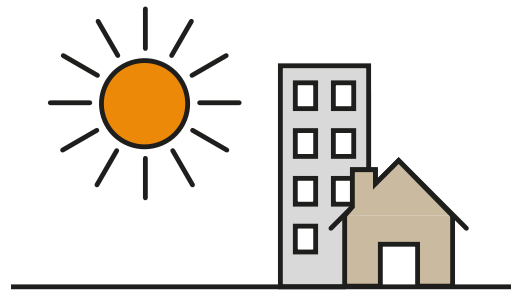
Our Local Plan has to show that we have enough land to meet our housing needs over the next 15 years. The Places for Everyone Plan sets this at an average of 972 new homes per year, in large part to meet demands from within the existing population, living longer and with average household size continuing to decline. A lot of the land in Wigan Borough has previously had industrial or mining uses, so we work with partners to ensure that it can be developed and the costs of making the land ready for development can be met.

An important part of our 15-year housing land supply is a number of large sites, which together account for around 5,100 new homes from a total requirement of around 15,000 to 2040.

These sites need careful planning to ensure that when they are developed the right infrastructure is in place.

Our preference, therefore, is to have a policy for each of these sites setting out how we expect them to be developed and the key issues that development at each site will need to consider. None of these sites are in the Green Belt.

**The alternative option** is to not allocate these sites in whole or in part, but that would not be helpful in ensuring that these sites, and any supporting infrastructure, are delivered. The implications of these sites not being delivered are that there would be intense pressure to develop sites in the Green Belt for new homes instead.



## North Leigh Park

North Leigh Park is located to the south-east of Hindley Green and to the north-west of Leigh between A578 Leigh Road and Westleigh Lane. It is a large site of around 65 hectares that has been despoiled by coal mining, quarrying, tipping and sewage treatment activities.

The wider site has outline planning permission for around 1,800 homes, with 99 homes already built to the north off Corner Lane and 87 built to the south off Nel Pan Lane.

Our preference is to establish a new policy for North Leigh Park that includes:

- A requirement for the development to accord with an approved masterplan for the whole site.
- The need for a comprehensive, high quality development of up to 1,600 homes that will meet a range of housing needs, including those listed above.
- Provision of a link road from the A579 Atherleigh Way to the A578 Leigh Road.

- Good accessibility for bus services and direct pedestrian and cycle links between housing and the facilities that serve them.
- Restriction of surface water run-off from the site into watercourses including Westleigh Brook to no more than the rates prior to development.
- Provision of a strategic landscaping plan and green infrastructure network to help define its character and key routes, including provision for open space, woodland, flood mitigation and wildlife habitat.
- The comprehensive remediation or mitigation of landfill, landfill gas, colliery spoil, mine shafts, coal seams and geological fault within the site.
- The provision of an appropriate level of affordable housing of mixed type and tenure, reflective of local needs.
- High environmental standards in terms of energy efficiency, design and low carbon technologies.

The proposed site boundary for North Leigh Park is shown in the accompanying map book.

## South Hindley

South Hindley is located to the south of Hindley and Hindley Green, between A58 Liverpool Road to the west and A578 Leigh Road to the east. Covering around 120 hectares, it includes two areas of dereliction, sport pitches, protected wildlife sites and Leyland Park. While some of these are key assets and will need safeguarding and improving, much of the area has been despoiled by coal mining, quarrying, and tipping and is of limited economic and social value relative to its potential. A planning application was submitted in 2018 proposing the development around 2,000 new homes and around 12 hectares of employment development.

**Our preference is to establish a policy for South Hindley that includes:**

- A requirement for the development to accord with an approved masterplan for the whole site.
- The need for the development of South Hindley to create a sustainable extension of Hindley, comprising new homes with employment development close to Leigh Road and a local centre.
- Provision of a link road from the A578 Leigh Road to the A58 Liverpool Road.
- Ensuring that the new road becomes the route of choice for most east-west travel in Hindley and that capacity released on the A577 through Hindley is captured for the benefit of bus travel, walking and cycling.



- Ensuring good accessibility to and through the development for bus services, walking and cycling, notably to Hindley town centre and services and employment opportunities off the A577.
- Provision of a strategic green infrastructure network within the site, including the regeneration and improvement of Leyland Park, other provision for play, allotments and maintain and enhancing the provision of sports pitches.
- Ensuring good physical and visual links into accessible countryside locations to the south.
- Contributing to the provision of other infrastructure as required, including school capacity in Hindley.

The proposed site boundary for South Hindley is shown in the accompanying map book.

## Remaining land South of Atherton

Much of the wider site at South of Atherton has been built out, is under construction or has planning permission for housing. It will be important to ensure that the remaining area of around 20 hectares to the east of Millers Lane comes forward for development in a coherent way.

**Our preference is to establish a policy for the remaining land South of Atherton to achieve:**

- High quality development of around 200 homes across two areas, one each side of Chanters Brook and the overhead power lines, and north of Lodge Lane.

- Completion of the road connection from Leigh Road at Howe Bridge to Tyldesley Road at Hindsford, if possible, with a suitable traffic light controlled junction provided at Tyldesley Road.
- A requirement that any substantive development south of Lodge Lane is accessed from the new road if provided, but due to flood risk constraints arising from the brook, this is likely to be limited to near the junction of Lodge Lane with Millers Lane and/or the farm complex east of the brook.

The proposed site boundary for the remaining land South of Atherton is shown in the accompanying map book.

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## East of Atherton

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East of Atherton is a 39 hectare urban fringe site located between Atherton to the west and Shakerley to the east that has been despoiled by former mining activity.

The north of the site is close to Atherton Rail Station on the Wigan-Manchester rail line, and the southern end abuts Chanters Industrial Estate allowing for further expansion to this employment area.

Our preference is to establish a policy for East of Atherton that includes:

- Development on land to the north to create a coherent new neighbourhood of around 500 homes, possibly more, with higher densities to the north and access from the A58 Bolton Road.
- Requiring a contribution to improving pedestrian routes from the development to Atherton Rail

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## Remaining land at Landgate, Ashton-in-Makerfield

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Landgate is a greenfield site located to the east of the A49 in Bryn close to Junction 25 of the M6 Motorway. Most of the site is subject to an outline planning permission and around 140 homes have been built to the west of the site. However, a more detailed and up-to-date policy position is needed to ensure the coherent delivery of the remainder of the site of around 40 hectares.

Our preference is to establish a policy for the remaining land at Landgate, Ashton-in-Makerfield that includes:

- Securing the development of the remaining land in a coherent way, including the area to the east that is not part of the outline planning permission, including for around 400 more new homes.
- Retaining, or replacing elsewhere on site, Landgate School and the adjacent employment premises.
- Extending the new road from the A49 Wigan Road through the site to the B5207 Bryn Road.
- Safeguarding and enhancing the settings of the fishing ponds for recreation and wildlife and improving the connections from this area into the countryside to the east for walking, cycling and horse-riding.

The proposed site boundary for remaining land at Landgate is shown in the accompanying map book.

Station and nearby bus stops on Bolton Road, as well as facilities at those locations.

- Maximising the opportunity to extend the existing industrial activity at Chanters Industrial Estate northwards within the confines of the council landholding.
- The housing development providing for, and ensuring the future management of, the area in between the housing and industry as a green infrastructure corridor, also incorporating the corridor of Hindsford Brook to the east, with the emphasis on recreation and wildlife.

The proposed site boundary for East of Atherton is shown in the accompanying map book.

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## Westwood Park, Wigan

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Westwood Park covers an area of approximately 28 hectares. It is predominantly brownfield and was home to the former Westwood Power Station which closed in 1986. It now has strategic highway connection by dual carriageway to Junction 25 of the M6, as well as being only 1 kilometre from Wigan town centre. A topographical survey and site investigations have been completed recently and the site will be marketed soon.

Our preference is to establish a policy for Westwood Park to:

- Create an aspirational residential neighbourhood of around 420 homes, including a mix of house types and tenures and the provision of affordable housing.
- Establish new employment space on around 3.5 hectares to the east of the site to serve the needs of modern businesses.
- Deliver high quality green infrastructure, taking advantage of its setting adjacent to Westwood Flash and the Leeds Liverpool Canal, with direct access into countryside to the south.
- Create an attractive gateway into Wigan town centre along the enhanced strategic road network.
- Enhance the public rights of way network and improve pedestrian and cycling links into Wigan town centre.

The proposed site boundary for Westwood Park is shown in the accompanying map book.

## Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are properties that are lived in by at least three people who are not from one household (such as a family) but share facilities like a bathroom and kitchen.

HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and contribute to choice. They provide lower-cost and flexible housing for people whose housing options may be limited, including people on low incomes, young professionals, students and people on short-term work contracts.

HMOs can be purpose-built, but most in Wigan Borough have been created through the conversion of existing properties, usually homes but sometimes commercial properties.

Most HMOs are well managed and provide decent homes, but poorly managed or badly designed or located properties have the potential to create amenity issues for both occupants and neighbours.



Legislation states that only a change of use from a house to a large HMO for 7 or more people needs planning permission. A small HMO of between 3 and 6 people does not need planning permission. The exception is where the council has been able to use other legislation (an article 4 direction) to remove those rights. This can only be done when HMOs are having a negative effect on the amenity of an area. An article 4 direction requiring planning permission for all HMOs is in place in selected parts of the borough, including Swinley and central Leigh. The council keeps the need for further article 4 directions under review.

We have recently established planning guidance on HMOs, which has proved helpful in dealing with planning applications received for new HMOs.

Our preference is to establish a Local Plan policy that allows for the provision of new HMOs subject to certain restrictions and safeguards (when planning permission is required), including:

- Restricting permission for new HMOs, where the proportion of properties in use as HMOs is more than 10% of properties within a 50 metre radius.
- Not allowing a new HMO when it would result in a home being sandwiched between two HMOs.
- Not allowing a new HMO where it would result in three or more HMOs adjacent in a row.
- Requiring new HMOs to meet accepted internal space standards.
- Requiring appropriate provision for outdoor amenity space, waste and recycling storage and secure storage for cycles.
- Considering the availability of car parking in the vicinity.
- Requiring the adoption and implementation of a management plan.

### The alternative options are:

1. To not seek to control the number and concentration of HMOs anywhere in the borough.
2. To not permit any new HMOs.

Neither of these options would be appropriate as while HMOs do meet a housing need for cheaper accommodation, including for people on low incomes, young professionals, students, and people on short-term work contracts, they do sometimes create amenity issues and it is appropriate to avoid over concentrations of HMOs, as it can change the character of an area to the detriment of other residents. But as they meet a need, a complete ban would also be inappropriate. It would also be challenged successfully by developers and landlords and not get through the plan preparation process, including public examination, to be included in the Local Plan for adoption.

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## Accommodation for gypsies and travellers

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The borough has five existing sites for gypsies and travellers as set out in the table below:

Existing sites for gypsies and travellers	
Site name	Number of pitches
Bickershaw Caravan Site, Bickershaw	16
Little Lane, Wigan	20
Aspull Common, Leigh	3
Chapel Street, Pemberton	2
104 Enfield Street, Pemberton	1

We are required to plan for future pitch plot needs relative to evidence of need, as set out below. Our accommodation needs assessment dates from 2018 and an update is underway. In the meantime, we need to use the figures from 2018.

This assessment, which also assessed cultural need including people who have stopped travelling on a permanent basis, concluded that 25 additional pitches are needed between 2017 and 2036.

The options to expand existing sites where practicable and appropriate, in order to meet accommodation needs, or to identify new sites to meet accommodation needs. The expansion of existing sites, if possible, would meet needs where much of it arises from growth of families within the existing sites, and benefit from existing links to the community and support networks around those existing sites.

**Our preference, therefore, for the expansion of existing sites considering the interests of gypsies and travellers, as well as neighbours of sites and wider planning interests, such as highway safety and the environment.**

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## Accommodation for travelling showpeople

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The borough has three existing sites for travelling showpeople, as set out in the table below:

Existing sites for travelling showpeople	
Site name	Number of plots
Moss Hall Farm, Seaman Way, Ince	24
Fairview, Bag Lane, Atherton	26
Ella View Lodge, Colliery Lane, Atherton	6
36-38 Sandy Lane, Lowton	1

Our latest accommodation assessment has concluded that 26 additional plots are needed for travelling showpeople between 2017 and 2036. Since 2017, a new site has opened at Seaman Way, Ince, which replaced the site at Presbyterian Fold, Hindley. The new site

has 24 plots while the former site had 10 plots, so there has been a net increase of 14 plots. In addition, retrospective planning permission was granted for a yard on Sandy Lane, Lowton in 2022. The balance of need between 2017 and 2036 is, therefore, 11 plots.

Nevertheless, at present there are a number of vacant plots on the site at Seaman Way, Ince, which suggest that there might not be a need for new plots.

**It is, therefore, our preference to seek clarification on the extent of need for additional plots for travelling showpeople before taking any further action.**

**The alternative option** is to not seek clarification or to identify additional land for 11 plots now.

# Jobs

**You said** that providing quality jobs in the borough is a high priority for you and that that you wanted to see a broader range of job types, including more higher paid jobs. You also said that we should have programmes to help local people to access jobs and training. You identified the priority business sectors to focus on as health and social care, green business sectors, general manufacturing, and advanced manufacturing, although creative media and digital, as well as construction, featured more strongly than manufacturing for young people.

**You said** that we should focus on redeveloping older industrial areas for business use and that we should prioritise helping reduce carbon emissions, including by optimising alternative energy sources and retrofitting existing buildings with low carbon and/or energy efficient measures.

Our existing employment land supply totals around **172 hectares** maximum, including:

**76.5 hectares across 20 sites**

within our existing employment areas, with two sites, land at Chaddock Lane, Astley (13.4 hectares) and the South Lancashire Industrial Estate extension (34.0 hectares) accounting for nearly two-thirds of that supply.

**25.8 hectares**

within sites proposed in the 'Homes' chapter as part of mixed-use development, at South Hindley (12.0 hectares), East of Atherton (9.0 hectares) and Westwood, Wigan (4.8 hectares).

**69.6 hectares**

at sites being allocated through the Places for Everyone Plan, at M6 Junction 25 (54.4 hectares), West of Gibfield (11.4 hectares) and Pocket Nook, Lowton (3.75 hectares).

Not all of this land supply is certain due to ground conditions and development costs affecting viability. This is particularly the case where considerable investment in new infrastructure is needed, which is an ongoing issue for development values in some locations.

**In response, our preference is to focus on four main priorities:**

- **To support and grow the sectors that have traditionally provided jobs in the borough and where we have existing strengths, which we call our 'foundation sectors'. These include manufacturing, construction, health and care services and logistics.**
- **To support the establishment and growth of new 'frontier sectors' that build on opportunities and strengths in the borough. These include advanced manufacturing and green technology, as well as the growth of businesses and supply chains in our existing sectors.**
- **To ensure that we have planned for enough land, in the right locations, to ensure that we can meet these objectives.**
- **To keep in place a range of wider measures to ensure that businesses are confident to invest in the borough, including skills, education and apprenticeships, transport links, availability of good quality housing, and attractive town centres.**

**The alternative options** are to focus on different priorities in whole or in part.



## Existing employment areas

Our preference in planning for our existing employment areas is to protect and enhance their economic and employment function, particularly as a main focus for our ‘foundation’ businesses, and to support their modernisation and renewal to ensure that they remain relevant to business needs and continue to support a full range of businesses.

Our employment areas are as set out below, and are shown in the accompanying map book:

Employment areas	
Abram	Bolton House Road (Bickershaw), Junction Works (Bickershaw Lane)
Ashton-in-Makerfield	Land Gate, Link 25 Industrial Estate, South Lancashire Industrial Estate
Atherton	Bolton Road, Chanters Industrial Estate, Gibfield
Golborne	Ashton Road, Bridge Street, Golborne Enterprise Park, Harvey Court and Bank Street, Moss Industrial Estate, Newton Road (Lowton), Stone Cross Park
Hindley	Darby Lane, Greenbank Industrial Estate, Hindley Business Centre, Swan Lane Industrial Estate, West of Leigh Road
Ince	Makerfield Way, Cemetery Road, Dobson Park Industrial Estate, Moat House Street, Richard Street, Rose Bridge, Seaman Way
Leigh	Brewery Lane, Bridgewater Business Park, English Street, Firsdale Industrial Estate, Hope Carr / Leigh Commerce Park, Kiribati Way and Kirkhall Lane, Mather Lane, Platt Fold Street
Orrell	Hewitt Business Park
Standish	Bradley Lane
Tyldesley	Chaddock Lane, Lower Green Lane, Mort Lane, Parr Brow
Wigan	Chapel Lane, Gidlow Lane (North), Kirkless Industrial Estate, Lamberhead Industrial Estate, Leyland Mill Lane, Martland Park and Heinz, Prescott Street, Richmond Hill Industrial Estate, Smithy Court and Beecham Court, Springfield and Miry Lane, Warrington Road (Hawkley), Warrington Road Industrial Estate, Wallgate, Westwood Park Drive, Wheatlea Industrial Estate, Wigan Pier Business Park

**The alternative options** are to not retain our existing employment areas to the fullest extent that is needed; or to not retain specific employment areas; or amend boundaries; or to retain other areas including smaller employment areas.

## Loss of employment accommodation

When it is not possible to retain all or part of an employment area in employment use, it is our preference to require that either:

- Part of the area to be redeveloped is set aside and redeveloped for employment use; or, where that is not practicable,
- A financial contribution is provided to fund employment development off-site, with a possible emphasis on funding affordable start-up business accommodation.

The ability to achieve these will be subject to the extent that it is viable, which will be impacted in part by the costs of demolishing and cleaning up the site for redevelopment.

**The alternative options** are to not seek replacement employment development to part off-set the loss of all or part of an employment area.

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## Affordable business accommodation

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**You said** affordable business accommodation is needed.

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In response, our preference is to secure the means to establish a supply of affordable business accommodation of different types for start-up businesses and not-for profit social enterprises.

**The alternative option** is to not secure the means to establish a supply of affordable business accommodation.

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## Office uses

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**You said** we should focus on making our town centres more attractive places for businesses to locate in.

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Despite the significant rise in office work at home, there is still a demand for offices. There is not currently a significant commercial office market in Wigan Borough and, economically, we would benefit from more success in that area.

Our 'Town and local centres' chapter seeks to ensure that our town and local centres prosper and help to create the conditions where companies want to invest in office development, in particular in Wigan, Leigh and Ashton.

Our town centres are the best locations as they have interactive business networks with supporting infrastructure and services; and are the most accessible places for staff, offering opportunities for somewhere to shop or access to food and drink or to socialise at lunch time and/or the beginning or end of the working day.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to develop the office sector in our town centres.

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## The green economy

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Our preference is to actively support and encourage businesses in green sectors to establish and grow in Wigan Borough. Through our Climate Change strategy, we also want to support our existing businesses to become greener, both in terms of what they produce and how they produce it, so that our local economy becomes more resilient to change and moves towards a zero-carbon ambition.

with low carbon energy generation and energy conservation measures, and to incorporate green infrastructure.

This includes supporting measures for the renewal and refurbishment of existing business premises to ensure they remain fit for purpose, retrofitted

**The alternative options** are to not actively support and encourage businesses in green sectors to establish and grow in Wigan Borough and other businesses to become greener, or to do more to transition to a green economy.



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## The visitor economy

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Our preference is to support the growth of our visitor economy by focussing on protecting and enhancing the special features of the borough that attract visitors, capitalising on those locations in a compatible way.

Our priorities include:

- Promoting and improving Wigan Borough's key tourist and cultural assets, such as Haigh Hall, Pennington Flash, our towns centres, Wigan Pier, Lancashire Mining Museum (Astley Green), the DW Stadium and Leigh Sports Village, the Flashes of Wigan, and Leigh National Nature Reserve, the Mosslands, the Leeds and Liverpool and Bridgewater Canals and the river valleys.
- Promoting the enhancement and expansion of existing visitor attractions and tourist accommodation, and the provision of new visitor and tourism facilities, in sustainable and appropriate locations.
- Maintaining and, where appropriate, enhancing the provision of arts and cultural activities and

facilities within our town and local centres, including workspaces and studios.

- Focusing on the borough's historic and natural environments in sustainable and appropriate locations.
- Improving access to our historic and natural environments through enhancing our public rights of way network and other routes and encouraging access by sustainable transport to tourist and cultural sites.

The visitor economy generates jobs and investment, and the borough is well placed to capitalise more strongly on this, to the benefit of residents for leisure opportunities too.

**The alternative options** are to not support the growth of our visitor economy or to identify different priorities.

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## Digital infrastructure

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Our preference is to strongly support the ongoing rollout and improvement of affordable, high speed, high-capacity digital infrastructure serving all parts of the borough, in principle.

Our proposal is to require new development to be future proofed as far as reasonably possible, including by being capable of accommodating more than one digital infrastructure provider.

It is also our proposal to ensure that telecommunications development is located in a way that minimises its impact on the street scene, on neighbouring amenity and on the wider environment including townscape and landscape quality. It

should not compromise other objectives of the plan, including supporting active travel and minimising opportunities for crimes to be committed.

It is also our proposal to ensure that adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure shall be avoided. Where this is not practicable, appropriate mitigation shall be provided.

**The alternative option** is to not support the roll-out and enhancement of digital infrastructure across the borough.

# Town and local centres

**You said** that your priorities for town and local centres include more independent shops, bars, cafes and restaurants, a safer environment, better transport connections and car parking. Leisure and entertainment opportunities featured strongly for young people.

## Our hierarchy of town and local centres

In response, our preference is to reassert our hierarchy of town and local centres within the borough, and seek to broaden their roles to better meet the needs of the towns and communities they need to serve, identifying:

- Wigan as our principal town centre, recognising its important sub-regional role.
- Leigh as the main town centre in the east of the borough.
- Ashton-in-Makerfield, Atherton, Golborne, Hindley, Pemberton, Standish and Tyldesley are important town centres for their respective parts of the borough.
- 43 local and neighbourhood centres across the borough that make an important contribution for local communities by providing day-to-day services and facilities close to where people live, as set out below:

Appley Bridge
Aspull and Scot Lane, Aspull
Atherton – Bolton Road, Hag Fold and Shakerley
Bryn
Hindley – Atherton Road (Hindley Green) and Borsdane
Ince - Higher Ince and Lower Ince
Leigh - Higher Folds and Wigan Road
Lowton - Church Lane, Oaklands Road and Slag Lane
Orrell and Orrell Post
Platt Bridge
Shevington
Tyldesley and Astley – Blackmoor, Mosley Common, Parr Bridge, Sale Lane and Stour Road
Wigan - Beech Hill Avenue, Gidlow Lane (Beech Hill), Goose Green, Hawkley, Kitt Green, Marsh Green, Mesnes Road, Newtown, Norley Hall, Poolstock, Scholes, Springfield, Whelley, Wigan Lane (Swinley), Winstanley, Woodhouse Drive (Beech Hill), Worsley Hall and Worsley Mesnes

- That these centres will be protected and strengthened in their roles in supporting thriving communities.
- That relative to their size and role, they will be the main locations for new shops, bars, cafes and restaurants, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture and tourism, offices, education, health and community uses, with an emphasis on making them safe, inclusive and welcoming places.
- That, for the purposes of national planning policy, a Town Centre Core will be identified within each town centre as the focus for town centre uses.
- That housing also has a key role in our centres, both in making them sustainable places and in aiding regeneration, provided that they don't impinge on the wider function of the centre and have a suitable level of amenity.
- That residential neighbourhoods within, or on the edge of, our centres have an important role in the dynamic of those centres and should be sustained and enhanced to help them fulfil that role.

The proposed boundaries for the town centres and local and neighbourhood centres are shown in the accompanying map book.



**The alternative option** is to have a different hierarchy of town, local and neighbourhood centres or to include or exclude centres.

## Regenerating Wigan town centre

We propose to continue our focus on regenerating Wigan town centre to ensure it thrives and prospers in a multi-functional, multi-faceted way, as the principal town centre in the borough and our only town centre with a sub-regional role. The focus will be on consolidating the retail offer to a sustainable level, increasing the reasons to spend time in the town centre, making it easier to access, making it attractive across the generations including for families, and establishing vibrant residential town centre communities.

We propose to focus on following key sites and locations:

- The Galleries – completing the comprehensive redevelopment of this site for a new market, hotel, food and drink, and leisure uses and establishing a market for new-build residential to create a new neighbourhood in the heart of the town centre.
- The Grand Arcade – consolidating its role as an important location for shops but using vacant floorspace on the edges in different ways to add to the opportunities in the town centre.
- The Civic Centre – conversion to managed business innovation and incubation workspace.
- King Street – continuing the conservation-led transformation of this street to provide for a broader range of leisure and entertainment opportunities, including in the daytime, and residential conversion opportunities at upper floors, and better connecting the street to Library Street and the Station Gateway.
- Wigan Station Gateway – designated for the creation of a combined rail station with associated redevelopment opportunities for residential and commercial.
- The Eastern Gateway – designated for mixed use development opportunities.
- Wigan Pier Quarter – continuing the comprehensive, mixed use, conservation-led regeneration of this area, with a focus on Eckersley Mills, land south of Southgate and remaining opportunities around the canal.



- Queen Street / Caroline Street / Wallgate – reimagining this underused area, as a new neighbourhood for living, leisure and work, better integrating the area with the Station Gateway and wider town centre.
- North of Mesnes Street and Crompton Street (including parts of Dicconson Street) – reimagining this underused area of the town centre as a new neighbourhood for living, leisure and work, including a focus on independent shops, cafes, restaurants and bars and provision of a new car park for access from the north and east of the town centre.
- The Learning Zone – supporting and strengthening the role of this zone and its contribution to upskilling the borough and supporting the wider town centre functions.
- Market Street and New Market Street – restoration of the vacant townhouses opposite the Learning Zone and focus on independent shops on Market Street.
- Wallgate North – improving the quality of this area interfacing with the main Wallgate gateway route and the Pier Quarter opposite, the employment area to the rear and the Station Gateway to the east.
- Traffic and travel – improving connectivity to the central core of the town centre from surrounding areas, by active travel and by public transport.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Wigan includes the Grand Arcade, Standishgate (south of Northway), The Galleries redevelopment site (commercial uses), Market Street, Market Place, Makinsons Arcade, Millgate, Library Street, King Street and Wallgate north of the bridge.

The proposed boundaries for Wigan Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not continue to focus on regenerating Wigan town centre or to identify different priorities for the town centre.



Makinson Arcade



Wigan town centre



Galleries redevelopment



Wigan Pier redevelopment



Wigan town centre



Wigan town centre



Wigan Pier redevelopment



Eckersley Mills



Wigan Station Gateway



Wigan Life Centre



Trencherfield Mill, Wigan



King Street, Wigan

## Regenerating Leigh town centre

We propose to keep focusing on opportunities to achieve regeneration in Leigh town centre, to enable it to reach its full potential as a vibrant and diverse town centre and the main town centre in the east of the borough.

The focus will be on consolidating the retail offer, promoting a more diverse mix of uses including commercial, leisure and food and drink, growing the evening economy offer and events, securing a mix of quality new homes of different types and tenures, and improving access around the town centre and the quality of the environment.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Metrolink - building on the success of the busway to develop the business case to bring Metrolink to Leigh.
- Civic Square and Market Street - linking this area better to the heart of the town centre in Bradshawgate and developing it as a vibrant hub for civic and cultural activity, capitalising on the Town Hall, Turnpike Centre and Parish Church that surround the square on three sides.
- Bradshawgate - recreating a thriving street underpinned by shops, with an emphasis on more independent shops, and complemented by leisure and cultural uses including cafes, restaurants and bars, realising active uses on upper floors and focusing on conserving the special character of the street.
- Spinning Gate Shopping Centre - supporting its role as a key location for retail and commercial uses.
- Leigh Market - securing a prosperous indoor market that provides an attractive and comfortable environment for traders and customers.
- The Loom - better integrating it into the town centre through improved linkages and landscaping, and with the canal as an asset for the town centre.
- Ellesmere Street - reimagining this hidden and underused area as a new neighbourhood for living and/or work ensuring it enhances the canalside.
- Railway Road - capitalising upon the street's historic and architectural character to support regeneration, enhancing the quality of the place, consolidating commercial activity largely to east and sustaining and enhancing the residential role of the street.
- North of Bradshawgate - improving this mixed commercial and residential area as a place to live and for business, including reducing the dominance of the car in the environment.
- Chapel Street (west) and East Bond Street – consolidating this area as a location primarily for business and public services.
- Connections - improving connections for active travel between the town centre and Parsonage Retail Park and Leigh Sports Village, so that they better work as a combined offer, and ensure that the town centre is comfortably walkable from surrounding communities.
- Car parking – investigating the potential to rationalise provision across the town centre to enable the more effective use of space.
- Street scene - improving the appearance, quality and accessibility of the town centre, including making it greener with street trees.
- Housing market - developing a broader market for living in the town centre, with a mix of quality new market and affordable homes of different types and tenures.



The proposed Town Centre Core for Leigh includes Bradshawgate, the Market the Spinning Gate Shopping Centre, King Street (north) and Market Street.

The proposed boundaries for Leigh Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not continue focusing on opportunities to achieve regeneration in Leigh town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.

## Regenerating Ashton-in-Makerfield town centre

We propose to support the regeneration of Ashton-in-Makerfield town centre to enable it to further prosper as a vibrant and diverse town centre and to become the main town centre in the southwest of the borough. The focus will be on reducing the impact of traffic, improving the environment and broadening the offer of the town centre.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- In the short term, softening the impact of traffic in Gerard Street and at key junctions at each end of the street, with improved shop frontages, surfacing, road crossings and landscape planting, and in the longer term exploring options to divert traffic away from the town centre.
- The Gerard Centre - consolidating its role as a key location for large format retail.
- Market Place - reinventing part of this area as multifunctional square that is home to a range of community, social and entrepreneurial activities, and better managing remaining car parking across the town centre as a whole.
- Garswood Street – improving the frontage of the small retail premises.
- Millingford Brook and the rear of Gerard Street – improving the environment around the brook and to the rear of properties on the west side of Gerard Street, backing on to the Market Place.

- A58 Bolton Road gateway - improving this gateway to the town centre by addressing gap sites and vacant buildings and through other environmental improvements.
- Connections - improving active travel connections, including to Jubilee Park to the north, King George's Field and the west of the town.
- Bus services – improving cross boundary bus services, including to employment locations in Haydock and Newton-le-Willows.
- Homes – sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on and around Bryn Street.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Ashton includes Gerard Street, the Gerard Centre and Garswood Street.

The proposed boundaries for Ashton Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the regeneration of Ashton town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.



## Regenerating Atherton town centre

We propose to support the regeneration of Atherton town centre to enable it to further prosper as a vibrant and diverse town centre which, with Tyldesley town centre, will be a key centre in the north-east of the borough. The focus will be on improving the town centre as a place to spend time in and enjoy.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Market Street – investigating the potential for full pedestrianisation of the street between Crab Tree Lane and Hampson Street to create a much more people-friendly town centre to spend time in and use the shops and other businesses, provided that appropriate alternative means of bus services serving the town centre can be realised.
- Shop frontages and upper floors - supporting businesses and owners to improve shop frontages and realising active uses on upper floors, including for housing, with a potential focus on the Market Place Conservation Area.
- Evening economy - facilitating more evening economy uses in ways that keep improving the quality of the offer.
- The Market – reviving or relocating a regular market and/or occasional special markets, potentially on-street within a pedestrianised Market Street.
- Busway services – maximising the potential of the Leigh Guided Busway for services to/from Atherton.
- Car parking – better managing the provision of car parking for shoppers and for park and ride purposes related to busway services, and improving boundaries including on Mealhouse Lane.

- Street trees - greening the town centre, including street trees on Market Street if fully pedestrianised.
- Public conveniences - restoring or replacing the facilities at Flapper Fold Lane.
- Ena Mill and Tesco - improving the connections for active travel between Market Street and Ena Mill to the north and the supermarket on Crab Tree Lane, so that they better work as a combined offer, and ensure that the town centre is comfortably walkable from surrounding communities.
- Wet weather shelter – investigating the feasibility of incorporating pavement canopies to buildings on Market Street.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on streets off Market Street, or backing on to it.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Atherton includes Market Street.

The proposed boundaries for Atherton Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the regeneration of Atherton town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.





## Regenerating Golborne town centre



Golborne town centre

We propose to support the transformational regeneration of Golborne town centre as the key centre in the south of the borough. The focus will be on growing the town centre to better serve Golborne and Lowton.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- High Street and Heath Street – strengthening the shopping role of these streets, with an emphasis on independent shops but complemented by leisure and cultural uses including cafes, restaurants and bars, and improving the pedestrian environment.
- New railway station – securing the best possible new rail station and services for Golborne.
- Railway Road / Queen Street – reinventing this area to maximise the benefits for the regeneration of Golborne town centre from the new railway station and services, including ensuring it is easily accessible by active travel, bus services and taxi, and that car parking is better managed, that the quality of the environment is improved significantly, and that this area relates well to Heath Street as well as to High Street.
- Heath Street – seeking to reduce traffic levels and improve the quality of the environment on this shopping street and at Peter Kane Square and resolve vehicle conflicts at the junction with High Street.

- West Coast mainline – reducing the impact of the railway as a barrier to accessing the town centre and railway station from the west, including from the adjacent part of Golborne but also from Lowton.
- Golborne Library – improving the facility, either on site or relocated as part of the new railway station works.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on streets off Heath Street and High Street.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Golborne includes parts of Heath Street and High Street.

The proposed boundaries for Golborne Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the transformational regeneration of Golborne town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.



Golborne Library



Train passing through Golborne

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## Regenerating Hindley town centre

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We propose to support the regeneration of Hindley town centre to enable it to further prosper as a vibrant and diverse town centre and the key centre in the central north of the borough. The focus will be on broadening the offer in the town centre and taking advantage of development within its catchment and the associated opportunity to reduce the impact of traffic in the town centre.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Market Street – maintaining the role of the street at the heart of the town centre, strengthening its shopping role and its emphasis on independent shops, but complemented by leisure and cultural uses including cafes, restaurants and bars, and focusing on conserving the special character of this street’s contribution to the conservation area.
- Cross Street – retaining and maximising the benefits of the supermarket in the heart of the town centre and enhancing its physical connections with Market Street and Cross Street.
- Morris Street – reviving a regular market and/or occasional special markets and securing improvements to the quality of the site.
- Connectivity – improving active travel connections with surrounding residential communities, notably to the east, south and north, including to the railway station.

- Borsdane Brook – improving the environs of Borsdane Brook to the east of the town centre, for recreation, flood risk management and nature.
- Traffic reduction – securing benefits for Hindley town centre of traffic being diverted away from the A577 and A58 between Wigan and Atherton and Ashton and Bolton, a result of development in the Wigan – Bolton Growth Corridor and attracting new residents to use the town centre.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on streets off Market Street or otherwise close to it.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Hindley includes Market Street, Cross Street and the supermarket.

The proposed boundaries for Hindley Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the regeneration of Hindley town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.

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## Improving Pemberton town centre

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We propose to support the further improvement of Pemberton town centre to enable it to continue prospering as the key town centre in the west of Wigan.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Ormskirk Road – maintaining the role of the street at the heart of the town centre, strengthening its shopping role and its emphasis on independent shops, but complemented by leisure and cultural uses including cafes, restaurants and bars.
- Traffic reduction – diverting through traffic away from the A577 to the M58 Link Road between the M6 motorway and Wigan, and securing real gains for active travel and bus services and making the town centre a better place to spend time.
- Car parking – better managing the provision of car parking across the town centre for shoppers.

- Connectivity – improving active travel connections with Norley and Orrell to the north and Pemberton and Highfield to the south.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on streets off Ormskirk Road, or otherwise close to it.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Pemberton includes part of Ormskirk Road and White Street.

The proposed boundaries for Pemberton town centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the further improvement of Pemberton town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.

## Improving Standish town centre

We propose to support the further improvement of Standish town centre to enable it to continue prospering as the key centre in the north-west of the borough.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Standish crossroads - maintaining the role of the area around the crossroads at the heart of the town centre, strengthening its shopping role and its emphasis on independent shops, but complemented by leisure and cultural uses including cafes, restaurants and bars.
- Pole Street, Market Place and Cross Street - improving the quality of the street-scene and making it more pedestrian friendly.
- Connectivity - improving active linkages from surrounding residential areas, notably to the north-east, east and south-west.

- Car parking – agreeing a strategy locally to better manage car parking provision.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on Church Street.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Standish is centred on the crossroads and includes Pole Street and the Standish Centre.

The proposed boundaries for Standish Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the further improvement of Standish town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.



St Wilfrid's Church, Standish

## Regenerating Tyldesley town centre

We propose to support further regeneration of Tyldesley town centre to enable it to prosper as a vibrant and diverse town centre which, with Atherton town centre, will be the key town centre in the north-east of the borough. The focus will be on ensuring that the great work locally on the Heritage Action Zone is continued and the benefits of the busway are maximised.

We propose to focus on the following key priorities:

- Elliott Street - furthering the great community-led Heritage Action Zone regeneration in Elliott Street, including building fabric restoration, shopfront improvements, with a focus on independent shops, cafes, bars and restaurants and the active use of upper floors where practicable, including for homes.
- The Square - improving the appearance of the buildings fronting onto The Square, and the materials and furniture used in the square, so that they better reflect the buildings facing The Square on Stanley Street and Elliott Street and reviving a regular market and/or improved occasional special markets.
- Historic civic buildings - securing the conservation and appropriate reuse of the former Town Hall, former Technical School and former Conservative Club.

- Providing additional capacity for park and ride on the busway, and better managing the provision of car parking more widely for shoppers and residents.
- Connections northwards - improving the connections for active travel to the town centre from the north, including softening the barrier of Shuttle Street.
- Homes - sustaining and enhancing the role of housing in the dynamic of the town centre, including on streets off Elliott Street or backing on to it.

The proposed Town Centre Core for Tyldesley includes Elliott Street.

The proposed boundaries for Tyldesley Town Centre and Town Centre Core are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not support the further regeneration of Tyldesley town centre, or to identify different priorities for the town centre.



Tyldesley town centre

## Local centres supporting thriving communities

**You said** that you value local shops and services close to where you live.

In response our preference is to focus development and investment towards local centres and smaller centres in neighbourhoods as community hubs, providing services and facilities that enable people to meet their day-to-day requirements close to where they live, places to engage with friends and neighbours and places to gain employment in the heart of their community.

We propose to ensure, as far as possible, that convenience retail – food, toiletries and so on, is part of the offer in local centres, as well as other services such as hairdressers, barbers and cafes. Hot food takeaways are an appropriate part of the mix but should not dominate availability. Access to public services such as health and social care would also be an appropriate part of the offer.

We also propose to protect public houses from changes of use or demolition unless there is robust evidence of insufficient demand and unviability, and more widely to protect local centres from inappropriate uses.

We also propose to target underperforming centres for improvement, including coalescing public and community assets around these centres as far as we are able, including a focus on where the private sector is unwilling or unable to provide services.

We also propose to focus wider investment on these centres to improve accessibility for active travel, road safety and the quality of the environment.

The proposed boundaries for Local and Neighbourhood Centres are shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not value the role of local centres and smaller centres in neighbourhoods as community hubs.



# Transport

## Active Travel – walking, wheeling and cycling

**You said** that the priorities for health and wellbeing include creating safer and more attractive routes for walking and cycling. Young people said improving walking and cycling infrastructure should be a priority to help reduce carbon emissions. While most agreed that improving walking and cycling would create a safer environment in our town centres with better transport connections. At the same time there were mixed views on whether more road space should be given to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, and some people said that nothing would encourage them to reduce their car use.

In response, our preference is to ensure active travel is the first and natural choice for shorter distance journeys by:

- Creating safe, attractive and enjoyable active travel infrastructure, including local streets and roads in our town centres that are designed to discourage through traffic and 'rat-running', and that feel safe and usable by people not travelling by car.
- Reallocating other road space where it is practical to do so to provide increased space and facility for active travel, including safe crossings.
- Expanding and increasingly joining up our dedicated active travel route network, including the provision of segregated routes.
- Ensuring that new development is designed to incentivise travel by active modes for shorter journeys and to access bus and/or rail services, including the provision of shorter routes than general traffic must take.



Bee Network buses



Tram

- Connecting new development to the dedicated active travel route network, and/or making provision to connect to a planned or future network.
- Ensuring new development has complimentary measures such as secure cycle parking, showers, changing facilities and lockers as applicable.

**The alternative option** is to not ensure active travel is the first and natural choice for shorter distance journeys. However, this would likely lead to higher levels of car usage and more congestion over time, and would not achieve benefits for health, air quality and our climate change ambitions.

## Public transport

**You said** that an integrated, affordable, and effective public transport system was most likely to encourage people to travel less by car, although some people also said that nothing would encourage them to reduce their car use.

**You also said** that to help attract and retain businesses, we should focus on improving transport links and that we also need to help local people to access jobs and training; and that the priorities to help reduce carbon emissions include improving public transport.

Bus users will have noticed a significant change since 24 September 2023, when services locally started to operate under the new franchising model that is controlled by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

This means that the GMCA through TfGM have responsibility for where bus routes operate, timetabling including service frequencies, and fare structures. This is a major shift in policy and should open opportunities for a more convenient and affordable service for people over time.

### Bus

In response, therefore, our preference is to capitalise on the opportunity provided by bus service franchising to work in partnership with TfGM to develop a better bus service network for the borough, built on affordable fares, high quality reliable services, swift and convenient connections, and customer accountability by ensuring that:

- Bus services are optimised to best serve residents and destinations, including their frequency and scope.
- Interchange opportunities are optimised, including between bus services, between conventional bus services and the guided busway in the east of the borough, and with rail such as at Hindley.
- Maximum benefit is achieved from the guided busway, as part of the franchised network.
- Cross boundary services are made as seamless as possible with the franchised network, including services connecting with Chorley, Skelmersdale, St Helens and Warrington.
- New development is designed to promote and encourage travel by bus.
- Bus priority measures are implemented where practicable, including bus gates and bus lanes to help give bus services an advantage, including on

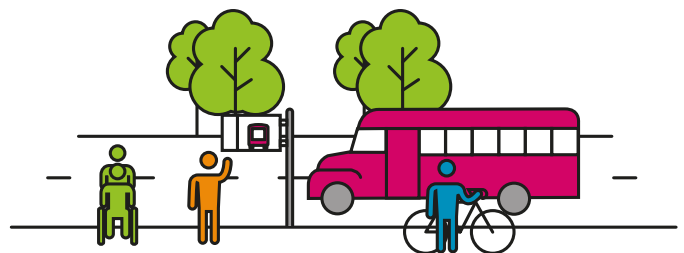


Cllr Paul Prescott, Wigan Council (left), Cllr David Molyneux MBE, the leader of Wigan Council (right)

Wigan-Bolton and Wigan-Leigh services.

- Reliable and affordable services to job opportunities, education, and other important services are provided.
- Bus services are accessible and safe and secure for all users.

**The alternative option** is to not capitalise on the opportunity provided by bus service franchising to develop a better bus service network for the borough.



## Rail

Wigan Borough has some great rail assets, with services radiating out from Wigan North Western and Wallgate stations in 7 different directions, and this rail connectivity is critical to the success of our borough. Rail links not only improve our internal connectivity but provide the most convenient way of travelling to nearby places around the Northwest, including major employment areas such as Liverpool and Manchester city centres.

However, none of these lines provide as good a service as they could with great potential for improvement, and the same applies to the 11 stations on the network serving the borough.



In response, our preference is to strengthen the role of the borough as a national and regional rail hub by:

- Securing the redevelopment and integration of Wigan North Western and Wigan Wallgate Stations to create an international standard gateway and interchange.
- Securing the proposed new rail station at Golborne and maximising opportunities for rail services to serve the station.
- Working with partners in the rail sector and stakeholders along the line to achieve new rail service opportunities on the West Coast Mainline, such as Crewe-Warrington- Wigan-Preston, stopping also at intermediate stations such as Golborne and potential new station opportunities such as Standish.
- Securing Metrolink to Leigh and significantly improved services on the Atherton line, including the opportunities for suburban style frequent electric rail services, potentially connecting into the Metrolink network.

- Securing significantly improved services on the Kirkby line, including the potential extension of Merseyrail from Kirkby to Wigan, and opportunities to better serve Skelmersdale.
- Securing improvements at Appley Bridge, Atherton, Bryn, Gathurst, Hag Fold, Hindley, Ince, Orrell and Pemberton stations to better provide for passengers, including accessibility, advice, comfort and safety.
- Better capturing the opportunity for Bryn station to serve a wider catchment, for services to Liverpool and St Helens, as well as Wigan and interchanges there, including to Manchester.
- Securing the electrification of the Southport line to take full advantage of the electrification of the Bolton-Wigan line.
- Investigating the potential for new stations at Little Hulton on the Atherton line (part in Bolton), Glazebury on the Chat Moss line (in Warrington) and at Standish.
- Selectively providing enhanced park and ride opportunities at stations where this would genuinely reduce car journeys and not compete with existing services upstream.
- Securing significant rail capacity improvements at pinch points in Manchester/Salford and Liverpool city centres and the West Coast Mainline to secure the benefits sought in Wigan Borough.

**The alternative option** is to not to strengthen the role of the borough as a national and regional rail hub.





## Road

Our preference is to not incentivise travel by car while understanding that there will always be an element of demand that needs to be catered for, by:

- Improving east-west connectivity across the borough but ensuring that the new east-west road infrastructure needed to deliver new homes and support economic development provides a permanent alternative for general traffic, while the existing A577 through Pemberton, Wigan, Ince and Hindley is prioritised for people, active travel and bus services, with traffic generated by those communities directed to the new road.
- Developing the electric vehicle charging infrastructure network across the borough, with particular focus on off-road charging locations in destinations and kerbside charging technologies for communities with little or no off-road parking.
- Demonstrating that the residual cumulative impact of new development on the road network is not severe and that there is no unacceptable impact on highway safety.
- Managing the impacts of major sites near the borough's boundary such as at Parkside and Haydock Point.
- Securing improvements to M6 motorway junctions 23, 24, 25 and 26 serving the borough.
- Supporting and enabling the provision of area and local consolidated distribution centres and use of more sustainable delivery models, such as electric-assisted cargo bikes.
- Investigating the need to provide lorry parking and associated facilities to support logistics.

**The alternative option** is to give greater priority to travel by car.



## Parking

**You said** that the priorities are for our town centres to include free or cheaper car parking.

Parking charges are not a matter for the Local Plan. However, it can set standards for the amount of parking that should be provided in new development.

**Our preference, therefore, is to revise our existing parking standards to:**

- Set requirements for different uses that can only be exceeded or under provided in certain circumstances, including for cars, car parking for disabled people and cycles.
- Include within those circumstances the accessibility of the site by public transport and active travel, the availability of other parking close by that could be utilised, the feasibility of providing on-site parking relative to wider planning issues, and the implications for local traffic management.
- Improve the specifications for cycle parking in terms of its location, security and quantity.
- Incorporate adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

**The alternative option** is to not revise our parking standards or to provide no parking standards. However, providing no parking standards would result in some development having far too little parking to the detriment of traffic management, road safety and amenity, and other development having far too much parking which would be an inefficient use of land.



## Travel Plans

Travel Plans can be used to help reduce the traffic impact of new development, by providing opportunities for people on that development, whether residents of new homes or people working in new commercial developments, to choose active travel or public transport for many journeys.

We are revising our planning guidance on Travel Plans.

**Our preference is therefore to continue to support Travel Planning by requiring:**

- Proposed development that needs to be supported by a Transport Assessment to also be supported by a Travel Plan.
- For residential development, the use of automatic counters to monitor general traffic, walking and cycling; provision of activation work in the locality to support and enable people to walk or cycle; and provision of a travel pack to all new households setting out where and how they can catch a bus or train and walk and cycle locally.
- For commercial development, provision of travel information for workers and customers (as applicable) setting out where and how they can catch a bus or train and walk and cycle to the workplace, together with tangible incentives to choose those modes.

**The alternative option** is to not require Travel Plans or not revise our approach to travel planning. However, as noted above, Travel Plans can help reduce the traffic impact of new development. As such we have sought different measures as set out, with only the travel packs to be provided directly by the developers, and the other two measures to be provided by the council against payment by developers.



# Places

**You said** that the priorities for places are for people to feel safe, social and included, and having good quality greenspace and greenery.

## Sustainable communities

In response, our preference is to use our place making ambitions to help deliver truly sustainable communities within the borough that are founded on the following key principles:

- **Shared:** incorporating conveniently located areas for social interaction, such as public spaces, co-working and co-living spaces and community facilities, to allow a sense of togetherness and encourage meaningful social connections.
- **Prospects:** creating positive environments for lifelong learning, growth, and development, to enable good educational attainment, nurturing of skills and reduced poverty and unemployment.
- **Safe:** incorporating crime prevention measures effectively and sensitively, where practicable, without compromising overall design quality, to help reduce crime, the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour.
- **Accessible:** providing fair and equal access to local services and amenities, sport and recreation, employment and training opportunities and a mixed tenure housing offer.

- **Desirable:** creating vibrant community hubs which provide local services and facilities to meet day-to-day needs, places to gain employment and training, and places to engage with friends and neighbours close to where people live in the heart of their community.
- **Resourceful:** creating ecologically and economically sustainable communities through measures such as sustainable drainage systems, district heating networks and low carbon energy technologies, and supporting community wealth building using local labour and supply chains.

**The alternative option** is not to prioritise the delivery of sustainable communities.

## Sustainable design

Building upon the crucial elements to achieve sustainable communities, our preference is for new developments to be of a high design quality that:

- Integrate effectively into their wider natural and built surroundings.
- Respond to existing local characteristics, in terms of the street pattern, siting, scale, built form, materials and details used.
- Provide a good level of amenity for people living within and close by.
- Are easy to navigate with clear, and safe connections to destinations both within and beyond the site, particularly by walking, cycling and public transport.
- Integrate existing, and incorporate new, natural features to support and enhance biodiversity.



- Provide homes and buildings with good quality internal and external environments for their users that have good provision for servicing, including waste storage and collection.
- Are energy efficient and resilient.
- Are prepared using nationally recognised and established standards of design, such as Building for a Healthy Life or successor standards.

**Alternative options** are to not prioritise good design in new developments, or to set different design priorities.

## Landscape design

Good landscape design helps to create places where people want to live, work and spend their leisure time, in turn providing many benefits to our environment and society.

As such, our preference is to retain our current approach which requires new developments to deliver and maintain good quality landscaping that:

- Genuinely mitigates and adapts to the impacts of climate change, through a landscape-led and green infrastructure approach to design, including measures such as green roofs, carbon storage through soils and vegetation, and sustainable drainage.
- Strengthens the local character and identity inherent in the local landscape, both through planting and hard landscaping materials.
- Stimulates the senses, which includes being visually appealing in most instances, but also can include taste, smell, sound and touch.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles and activity and creates healthy places, which these priorities all relate to – see also the People theme, as well as improving air quality.
- Enhances biodiversity through prioritising native species, including in sustainable drainage schemes, wildflower meadows, hedgerows, watercourse buffers and woodland, as well as retaining and/or enhancing on-site habitats.
- Is safe, secure and accessible to all, enabling people to enjoy the outdoors and contribute positively to the success of the neighbourhood.
- Contributes to providing well defined public and private spaces, minimising the visual impact of

boundaries and helping assimilate development into the surrounding area, including any open land or countryside adjacent.

- Contributes to making developments easier to navigate, including through effective tree and hedge planting which clearly define pedestrian and cycle routes and provide separation from vehicles.
- Links to the wider green infrastructure network in the neighbourhood and beyond, including through the location and type of planting and retaining mature trees where possible.
- Ensures the sustainable use of materials, including soils and water as essentials for green growth but also hard landscaping materials with low embodied carbon.
- Is easy to maintain and is designed to limit the need for intensive and extensive management, with opportunities for urban food growing and/or natural play as applicable.
- Is multi-functional, offering diversity and choice for members of society, including opportunities for people to grow food, enjoy nature, play and exercise.

Our preferred approach would align with and support the implementation of the landscape design principles set out in the Council's Landscape Design Supplementary Planning Document (2021).

**The alternative option** is to not prioritise good landscape design as part of development.



Worthington Lakes

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## The borough's canals

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Wigan Borough has some significant canal assets which have benefited from some significant investment, development and improvement over the past 30 years, as the positive benefits of canalside regeneration have become widely accepted. However, their full potential, not just for development, but for recreation, leisure and the associated health and wellbeing benefits, access and sustainable transport has not been fully realised.

In response, our preference is to recognise the value and optimise the use of our canals as key assets in our approach to place-shaping in the borough, by ensuring that development which adjoins or affects the canal:

- Effectively and sympathetically integrates the waterway and towpath into the overall design, does not turn its back onto the canal, and improves pedestrian access.
- Promotes high quality design in which the scale, massing, detailing and materials of new development respects the local context and reflects and/or complements the distinctive industrial or architectural heritage of the canal.

**The alternative option** is not having a policy which recognises the value and optimises the use of the borough's canals as key assets.



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## Amenity

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Helping to protect local amenity and quality of life is a key role of the planning system. Amenity includes, but is not limited to, issues of air quality, noise, vibration, sunlight, daylight, space, layout, aspect, privacy, temperature and microclimate.

Our preference, therefore, is to retain our current approach to amenity issues, which requires new development to be effectively planned and designed so that it does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on amenity and quality of life and/or that it will not itself be impacted upon in such a way by existing uses or activities in the area.

**The alternative option** is to cover amenity within a broader 'good design' policy, rather than as its own specific policy.



## Historic environment

**You said** that you were proud of the borough's rich built and cultural heritage and wanted to see it protected and improved for future generations.

### Our historic environment

In response, our preference is to protect and conserve the historic built environment in the borough by:

- Recognising key elements which contribute to its identity, character and distinctiveness, and where any development proposals would need to be supported by a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment, namely:
- The borough's Roman origins, including the town of Wigan which sits on the Roman settlement of Coccium, with Roman Roads extending through various parts of the borough, including from Wigan to Standish, Wigan to Ashton (broadly following route of A49) and Wigan to Mosley Common via Hindley and Atherton (broadly following the route of A577).
- The borough's medieval past, found particularly beneath our town centres, and around halls and moated sites.
- The borough's industrial origins, including the former textile mills of Butts Mill, Eckersley Mills, Ena Mill, Leigh Spinners Mill, Mather Mill, Pagefield Mill, Trencherfield Mill and Victoria Mill.
- The Leeds Liverpool and Bridgewater Canals and their associated buildings and structures, such as bridges and locks.
- The borough's mining legacy, including the Lancashire Mining Museum at Astley Green, which is a former colliery site and home of the last surviving headgear in the Lancashire coalfield
- Historic town centres, including Wigan, Leigh and Standish which have medieval cores.
- Historic halls and country houses including Haigh Hall, Winstanley Hall and Dam House in Astley.
- A wide range of churches and chapels ranging from the medieval period to the 20th Century, with the oldest and most ornate tending to be in the major towns and villages, including the Grade I listed St Wilfrid's Church in Standish.
- Former industrial landscapes such as Kirkless Local Nature Reserve, Wigan Flashes and Pennington Flash.
- Facilitating the restoration, renovation and/or sensitive regeneration of heritage assets at risk, including through, where necessary and applicable, the use of our enforcement powers, taking advantage of funding
- Recognising the significant public interest in local history, ensuring that public access to information about any heritage assets affected by development proposals is maximised.

**The alternative options** are to identify other key elements of the historic environment which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing, and/or not to facilitate the restoration, renovation and/or regeneration of heritage assets at risk.



## Conservation areas

A considerable proportion of the borough's historical and architectural heritage are located within our 23 conservation areas. These are areas of special architectural or historic interest, where it is desirable to preserve and/or enhance their character, identity and appearance. Development proposals within conservation areas therefore need to be managed carefully and sympathetically to ensure that they do not impact detrimentally on their character, identity and distinctiveness.

As such, our preference is to retain our approach to development in conservation areas which, in conjunction with other design policies in the Local Plan, will require the following considerations to be applied to ensure that their character, identity and appearance is preserved and/or enhanced:

- Ensure that any development proposals will preserve or enhance, and not harm their character and appearance.
- Not permit the demolition or inappropriate alteration of buildings which make a positive contribution to their historical, architectural or industrial archaeological character or appearance.
- Encourage the improvement or appropriate replacement of buildings detrimental to their character.

- Apply strict requirements to shopfronts and signage - including fascia signs, advertisements, projected and hanging signs, both illuminated and non-illuminated - to ensure that they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, particularly in terms of their size, style, proportions, materials, discreetness and cumulative impact.
- Retain existing historic windows, or where replacements are necessary, ensure they are designed to fit the character of the building and the conservation area.
- Encourage the preservation and, where necessary, the sensitive relocation of attractive items of street furniture and the preservation, and where possible the enhancement and extension of stone sett and flag surfaces.
- Use our powers to withdraw permitted development rights within conservation areas where this is needed to retain their special character and appearance.

The areas designated as conservation areas are shown via the link to the Initial Policies Map on the main consultation web page.

**The alternative option** is to not require specific design principles to be applied to effectively and sensitively managed development within our conservation areas.





## Green Belt

**You said** that there is strong support for protecting the Green Belt from further residential development.

While national planning policy applies a presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, Local Plans need to sympathetically manage appropriate development within the Green Belt, including within our Green Belt settlements, and proposed extensions and alterations to existing buildings.

### Design in the Green Belt

Land within the Green Belt is generally more open than in urban areas, therefore development will often stand out more from further afield. Accordingly, there is a different challenge for design that means buildings should make an appropriate contribution to their immediate surroundings and, as relevant, from more distant viewpoints.

As such, our preference is to ensure that, when new development is appropriate in the Green Belt, it:

- Complements the character of the area and, for extensions, the building being extended, in terms of the materials, height, shape and detailing as appropriate, unless it is of an outstanding and

innovative design that helps raise design standards more generally.

- As far as practicable, minimises its impact on the openness of the Green Belt through the use of soft boundary treatments as part of an appropriate curtilage, with any ancillary structures sited close to buildings.

**The alternative option** is not having a specific policy managing the design of new development in the Green Belt.

### Limited infilling within Green Belt settlements

Whilst the construction of new buildings is generally considered inappropriate within the Green Belt, an exception to this is limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land within established Green Belt Settlements, in accordance with national planning policy.

As such, our preference is to continue to designate Haigh and Bickershaw as Green Belt settlements, albeit with slightly amended boundaries to reflect existing or committed development, and to add the existing community at Bolton Road, Aspall as a new Green Belt settlement.

The proposed boundaries for the Green Belt settlements are shown in the accompanying map book.

**An alternative option** is not to identify these Green Belt settlements.



### Extensions and alterations to existing buildings in the Green Belt

Our preference is to tighten our existing approach by limiting extensions to no more than a 30% increase in the cubic content of the original building.

**An alternative option** is to retain our existing approach which limits extensions to no more than a 75% increase in the cubic content of the original dwelling, though this is relatively lenient in comparison to other districts and risks harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

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# Environment

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**You said** that the priorities to help reduce carbon emissions should include optimising alternative sources of energy and retrofitting existing buildings with low carbon / energy efficient measures.

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## Renewable and low carbon energy

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In response we propose to support a significant contribution from within the borough to enable the rapid transition to renewable and low carbon energy generation needed to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. Our priorities include supporting, in principle:

- The rapid expansion of solar power generation on roofs and at ground level when it is compatible, including on new development.
- The incorporation of hydro power generation at locations on the River Douglas.
- The provision of wind power generation, if feasible and practicable within the borough, including micro generation within developments.
- The generation of hydrogen power from renewable energy schemes.
- The development of heat networks utilising the spare heat generated by industrial processes, and potentially from mine water, to provide district level heat and power.

We are undertaking further work to determine the initial best opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy.

**The alternative option** is to continue to not support a significant contribution from within the borough to the rapid transition to renewable and low carbon energy generation. However, this would not help mitigate the worst effects of climate change.



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## District level heat and power

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Opportunities for the development of heat networks utilising the spare heat generated by industrial processes and other sources to provide district level heat and power, include:

- Schemes relating to major industrial uses, in particular those operating 24 hours a day.
- Schemes relating to other manufacturing operations.
- Exploring the potential to extract heat from underground mine water.

We are undertaking further work to determine the initial best opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to capture spare heat for use in heating (or powering) other buildings in the area, but that would mean continuing to rely on existing sources of energy and requiring more of a transition to other forms of renewable and low carbon energy generation, such as solar, hydro and/or wind power.

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## Retrofitting energy efficient measures to existing buildings

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The Places for Everyone Plan includes the following policy statement: “The aim of delivering a carbon neutral Greater Manchester no later than 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, will be supported through a range of measures including:

“1. Promoting the retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling.”

In response, we will explore and develop opportunities for retrofitting and, if necessary, develop guidance.

**The alternative option** is to not explore and develop opportunities for retrofitting or develop guidance.

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## Carbon

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There is a commitment across all districts in Greater Manchester to deliver carbon neutrality across the sub-region by 2038, with a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. This will be achieved through a range of measures including promoting the use of life cycle cost and carbon assessment tools to ensure the long-term impacts from development can be captured.

In response, we will work in partnership with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the other districts to establish a consistent approach

to ensuring that any major planning proposal is supported by a whole life carbon assessment to demonstrate that the proposals take account of the 2038 carbon neutral target.

**The alternative option** is to not require certain new developments to include whole life cycle carbon assessments, however this would not help us reach our carbon neutrality target.



## Development and flood risk

We need to ensure that development takes full consideration of flood risk from all sources. There is also a need to take an integrated catchment-based approach to water quality and quantity in line with the Northwest River Basin Management Plan.

**Our preference, therefore, is to ensure that development:**

- does not have an adverse impact on the status of water bodies.
- takes opportunities to reduce flood risk on site and downstream.
- does not culvert or direct watercourses.
- opens watercourses that are culverted and restores natural features where practicable to do so.

Our preference is also to use nature-based solutions to manage flood risks strategically, including in our catchment areas.

**The alternative option** is to not take a catchment-based approach to flood risk which would potentially inhibit the protection of people and property from flood risk and not deliver other multiple benefits.

## Flood water storage areas

Sometimes, during periods of heavy rainfall, it is necessary to hold back some water to prevent flooding downstream. There is a flood storage area at Lilford Park to hold back water from Atherton Brook and Hindsford Brook to reduce the risk of flooding in nearby properties in Leigh. As such, this facility needs to be protected to ensure that their function is not inhibited by new development.

**Our proposal therefore is to safeguard the flood storage area at Lilford Park, Leigh to ensure that its function is not inhibited by new development, and to safeguard any other areas needed in the future.**

The area designated as a flood storage area at Lilford Park is shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative option** is to not safeguard these areas but that would potentially inhibit the ability to protect people and properties from flooding in the future.

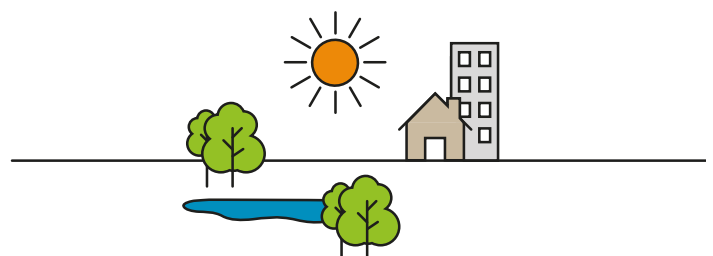
## Sustainable drainage systems

Sustainable drainage systems are a key tool in managing surface water and mitigating flood risks, with nature-based solutions usually very much part of it. In short, they slow the flow to replicate what it would have been prior to development, even if the site was originally developed a long time ago. Nature based sustainable drainage systems can also provide multiple other benefits, such as for wildlife, amenity, water quality and urban cooling in hot weather.

**Our preference, therefore, is for development to be required to:**

- follow the surface water drainage hierarchy, which is to discharge surface water into a surface water body, in preference to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system, in preference to a combined sewer which, historically, is what usually has been the case.
- incorporate 'green' sustainable drainage, which includes detention basins, retention ponds, wetlands and swales, in all cases where practicable to do so.
- design the sustainable drainage to deliver multiple benefits as part of landscape proposals.
- not increase the rate of surface water run-off on greenfield land and reduce the rate of surface water run-off by at least 30% on previously developed land, rising to a minimum of 50% in a critical drainage area, as currently required. Work is underway to update our critical drainage areas.

**The alternative option** is to not require sustainable drainage systems to be 'green' or restrict run off rates in our critical drainage areas however this would mean multiple benefits were missed and future flood risk may be increased.



## Green infrastructure network

**You said** that the priorities to help reduce carbon emissions include providing more green infrastructure and the priorities to support wildlife are for additional planting in urban areas (including green walls, green roofs, street trees); and increasing woodland and tree cover.

Green infrastructure refers to all natural and semi-natural assets that are soil based and includes peoples' gardens and farmland, and includes small scale assets such as green roofs, green walls and street trees, but generally refers to the wider network of green spaces, water and other natural features, which significantly, naturally and/or through intervention, delivers multi-functional benefits for health and wellbeing, the environment including nature and the climate, and the economy in making places that people want to live and invest in.

### Priority locations for green infrastructure

You said that the priorities to help reduce carbon emissions include providing more green infrastructure and the priorities for health and wellbeing also favoured accessible natural greenspace. The priorities to support wildlife included additional planting in urban areas (including green walls, green roofs, street trees), and increasing woodland and tree cover.

Our preference is, therefore, to further develop and support the network of green infrastructure across the borough with the emphasis on maximising the multi-functional benefits.

It is proposed that our priority locations for green infrastructure are:

- The flashes and wetlands in the borough's Greenheart between Wigan Leigh and Hindley.
- The mosslands south of Astley and Lowton, connecting into Salford and Warrington.

- The river valleys including the River Douglas in and around Wigan and Borsdane Brook/Hey Brook in Aspull, Hindley, Abram and Leigh.
- The Leeds and Liverpool and Bridgewater Canals.
- The common land and main parks in our towns and villages.
- Urban greening in our town centres such as providing more street trees, green walls and green roofs.
- Future strategic development sites such as North of Mosley Common and West of Gibfield.

**The alternative option** is to not propose priority locations for green infrastructure or to propose different or additional locations.

### Development and green infrastructure

Our preference is to ensure that development and other activity overall protects and enhances the green infrastructure network in Wigan Borough. We will achieve this through requiring, as far as possible and practicable, that:

- Proposals for development take account of, and respond positively to, the surrounding landscape character and existing green infrastructure.
- Schemes for landscape design, sustainable drainage, biodiversity net gain, open space and play space and active travel are designed and implemented to be compatible with the principles of green infrastructure and maximise the benefits.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to maximise opportunities for green infrastructure.



Lilford flood basin, Leigh

## Wildlife habitats and species

**You said** that the priorities for health and wellbeing include better access to nature and the natural environment. Better provision of accessible natural greenspace was also favoured. The priorities to support wildlife included additional planting in urban areas (including green walls, green roofs, street trees), and increasing woodland and tree cover.

### Nature recovery and improvement

Our preference is to support recovery and improvement in wildlife habitats and species throughout the borough in line with its designation as part of the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area, which includes important sites such as Wigan Flashes, Bickershaw, Pennington Flash and Haigh Plantations.

We propose, therefore, to continue and, where possible, strengthen our support for nature recovery and improvement by:

- Protecting our designated sites - the Special Area for Conservation at Chat Moss (to the south of Astley), the Flashes of Wigan and Leigh National Nature Reserve, the four Sites of Special Scientific Interest - and supporting the designation of suitable new sites.
- Designating, protecting and reviewing the Sites of Biological Importance, Local Nature Reserves, and National Nature Reserve declarations in the borough.
- Protecting other important wildlife-rich habitats and species.
- Seeking to create and maintain bigger, better, more joined up and resilient habitats, as well as establishing protective buffering of sites and linkages between them.
- Protecting our regionally important geological sites in Haigh Plantations.
- Improving the function of ecosystems to provide for an appropriate diversity of species that thrive under future as well as present climates.

The areas designated for nature conservation are shown via the link to the Initial Policies Map on the main consultation web page.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to support a recovery and improvement in wildlife habitats and species throughout the borough, but a recovery and improvement is greatly needed and the borough is in a strong position to support, and benefit from nature, in large part as part of the legacy on land formerly subject to mining or industrial activity.

### Environmental net gain

Mandatory biodiversity net gain is being introduced under the Environment Act 2021 from November.

The concept of embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development was introduced in the national 25-Year Environment Plan (2018). Biodiversity net gain is the starting point for the roll out of a wider environmental net gain approach that includes natural capital benefits, such as flood protection, recreation and improved water and air quality, so effectively covers much of what green infrastructure is about.

Our preference is to investigate further the opportunities to secure an environmental net gain through new development.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to secure an environmental net gain through new development.





Kirkless Local Nature Reserve

## Additional ecological enhancement in new development

Alongside mandatory biodiversity net gain there are further opportunities for development to provide enhancements that halt the decline of certain species, such as swifts, garden birds, bats, bees and hedgehogs.

Our preference, therefore, is to support the recovery of nature in urban areas such as swifts, house martins, garden birds, bats, bees and hedgehogs by requiring:

- Appropriate bird bricks or boxes within new developments.
- Appropriate bat bricks or boxes within new developments.

- Bee bricks within new developments.
- Hedgehog highways within boundary treatments on new developments.
- Other improvements such as bug hotels within open spaces that are not covered by the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements.

**The alternative options** are to not seek to support the recovery of swifts, house martins, garden birds, bats, bees and/or hedgehogs, or to support the recovery of other species.

## Wildlife corridors

Wildlife corridors are a key component in enabling nature to recover and improve nationally, and in Wigan Borough. They link our core wildlife assets - our Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at Manchester Mosses, our National Nature Reserve, our Sites of Special Scientific Interest, our Sites of Biological Importance, and our Local Nature Reserves, enabling movement of species so they are not stranded, and supporting ecosystem services such as carbon storage, climate regulation, food production and recreation.



Our preference, therefore, is to revise our existing wildlife corridors as the current corridors are based on outdated information. This will be informed by work on the emerging Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The proposed key priorities are to ensure that:

- Opportunities to offset biodiversity net gain requirements are focused on our wildlife corridors.
- Development within a wildlife corridor would not have an adverse effect its connectivity or function.
- When development would have an adverse impact, it should be mitigated effectively within the development and/or within the remaining gap in the corridor to maintain the integrity and function of the corridor.

**The alternative options** are to not have wildlife corridors to connect key habitats.

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## Chat Moss

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Chat Moss spans an area in the southeast of the borough and crosses into the neighbouring boroughs of Salford and Warrington. It is an important area of remnant peatland habitats that are significant for biodiversity and increasingly recognised as significant for carbon storage.

Our preference, therefore, is to support the protection, enhancement and restoration of the peat habitats that make this area so important.

Key priorities include:

- Supporting the declaration of the Mosslands National Nature Reserve.
- Delivering nature conservation improvements that provide ecological connections to surrounding areas.
- Enhancing public access, with high quality walking and cycling routes through the area and connecting it with surrounding communities.
- Improving visitor facilities that support public use of the mosslands and offer learning opportunities.
- Supporting the reduction of carbon emissions through protecting and enhancing the area's role

in storing and sequestering carbon by creating active sphagnum rich peat habitats.

- Restoring the functionality of peat habitats, helping to regulate local watercourse flows in heavy rainfall events.
- Retaining the flat, open, tranquil landscape character of the area.
- Supporting opportunities for new forms of farming that are compatible with storing and sequestering carbon, such as paludiculture – farming of wetland crops on rewetted peat.
- Supporting recreational uses in the wider area where it is compatible with nature conservation.
- Supporting potential new nature designations at Chat Moss.

The area proposed for designation at Chat Moss is shown in the accompanying map book.

**The alternative options** are to not prioritise supporting the protection, enhancement and restoration of Chat Moss.

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## Trees, woodlands and hedgerows

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**You said** that the priorities to support wildlife are for additional planting of street trees in urban areas and increasing woodland and tree cover.

Our preference, therefore, is to support a further increase in the extent of tree cover across Wigan Borough by:

- Giving strong protection to trees that are subject to a tree preservation order or are within a conservation area.
- Ensuring that developments are designed and constructed in such a way as to minimise any adverse impacts on trees and, as far as possible, make them a feature of the development.
- Ensuring significant new tree planting proposals do not adversely impact on existing habitats that are of equal or greater ecological importance locally and are significant carbon stores.

- Where trees are lost as part of new development, appropriate replacement planting is provided.
- Encouraging the appropriate management of existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows and on new development sites, including aftercare in the period after planting.
- Achieving a net increase in street trees.
- Ensuring that new trees are of native species but of species likely to be more resilient to climate change and are otherwise suitable for their location.

**The alternative options** are to not support a further increase in the extent of tree cover across Wigan Borough, or to prioritise other ways of achieving it.



## Environmental protection

### Soil

Soil is one of the few essential life-giving resources and stores substantial amounts of carbon but is generally undervalued, including in development processes.

**Our preference, therefore, is to ensure soils are protected during development and that measures are taken to retain to the functionality of topsoil removed due to development.**

**The alternative options** are to not prioritise soil on development sites or to include further content on how and when soil should be safeguarded.

### Pollution control

Pollution can be in many forms, including that relating to air, water, soil and other land contamination, noise, odour, dust, light, vibration, litter and pests and vermin.

**Our preference is to maintain our position on pollution control by ensuring that development:**

- Does not result in unacceptable levels of pollution, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development, both operationally and during the construction phase.
- Would not itself be subject to unacceptable levels of pollution due to being sited close to existing sources or levels of pollution.

**The alternative options** are to not maintain our position on pollution control or to strengthen it, but it would have to be with the law either way.

### Land reclamation and renewal

Given the borough's mining and industrial legacy, there are many sites that would still benefit from reclamation and renewal.

**Our preference is to continue promoting opportunities for these sites to be reclaimed or renewed for development, nature recovery and improvement or active travel as appropriate.**

**It is proposed to identify the following locations as priorities:**

1. Whelley Loop Line – Canon Sharples to Sennicar Lane, Wigan
2. Whelley Loop Line – Chorley Road to Rectory Lane, Standish
3. Whelley Loop Line Viaduct, Wigan
4. Red Rock Railway South, Wigan
5. Gidlow Tip, Wigan
6. Gidlow Mineral Railway, Wigan
7. Ince Moss, Ince, Wigan
8. Grammar Pit, Hindley
9. Pickley Green Railway, Leigh
10. Bickershaw Colliery Spoil, Leigh
11. Leigh Road, Atherton
12. Princess Road, Ashton

**The sites proposed as priorities for land reclamation and renewal are shown in the accompanying map book.**

**The alternative options** are to not identify priority locations for reclamation and renewal or to identify different locations.

### Groundwater Source Protection Zones

There are groundwater protection zones in Lowton and south of Leigh to protect the integrity of underground aquifers that provide drinking water. Development has the potential to have adverse impacts on the water quality in these aquifers.

**Our preference, therefore, is to ensure that development within the groundwater protection zones in Lowton and south of Leigh does not impact**

**adversely on water quality in the aquifer, through ensuring appropriate design, construction and operation.**

**The alternative options** are to not maintain our position on pollution control or to strengthen it, but it would have to be with the law either way.

# People

## Health

**You said** that the priorities for health and wellbeing are for better access to nature and the natural environment, affordable healthy food, as well as creating safer and more attractive routes for walking and cycling and spaces for people to meet and interact. You also told us that the provision of additional healthcare is the top priority needed to support further housing development.

### Planning for healthier living

In response, our preference is to ensure that:

- Travel options continue to transition to a position that is more favourable to people walking, wheeling and cycling, as being active in travelling can make a big difference to living more healthily.
- People have access to open space and the natural environment, both for physical exercise and the positive impact the natural environment can have on wellbeing.
- Places are created or improved in ways that make people want to be there, for living, working and leisure.
- The impacts of climate change are mitigated and provided for as applicable, to reduce its adverse impact on health and wellbeing.
- Impacts of poor air quality, noise and other effects on amenity are minimised.
- Places are created or improved in ways that minimise opportunities for crime.
- Everyone has access to a secure, comfortable and affordable home.
- People can access work and training.
- Everyone can access healthier food.
- Everyone has access to health and social care services and community groups and facilities.

**The alternative option** is to not make sure that the connections between planning and enabling people to live healthier lives are widely acknowledged and planned in, or to remove some elements to make other connections.

### Implementing planning for healthier living

Our preference is to require the use of our health impact assessment tool for larger developments and our planning for health checklist for smaller developments, with thresholds for each as below, to ensure that the connections between planning and enabling people are implemented.

Use	Health impact assessment tool	Planning for health checklist
Housing	150 homes or more	10 - 149 homes
Housing (where numbers of homes are not known)	5 hectares or more	0.5 - 4.99 hectares
Employment development	5 hectares or more	0.5 - 4.99 hectares
Commercial / leisure uses	1 hectare or more	1,000 sq.m floorspace or more, or 0.5 - 0.99 hectares

The health impact assessment tool and planning for health checklist are set out in our Supplementary Planning Document 'Planning for Health' (2022).

**The alternative option** is to not have thresholds for requiring use of our health impact assessment tool and planning for health checklist, or to have different thresholds.

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## New hot food takeaways

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As part of accessing healthier food, our preference is to be more restrictive on the provision of new hot food takeaways.

Our preference therefore is to:

- Only allow new hot food takeaways in designated town centres and local and neighbourhood centres.
- Limit the concentration of hot food takeaways to no more than 10% of total ground floor commercial units in the centre, or one unit when that is greater in smaller local and neighbourhood centres.
- Not allow more than 2 adjoining or adjacent hot food takeaways.

- Apply planning conditions when located within 400 metres of a secondary school, to restrict hours of operation to be outside of school finishing times, and ensure that healthier food and drink options are available at all times when open.

### The alternative options

are to not be more restrictive on the provision of new hot food takeaways, or to be more restrictive.



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## Developer contributions to new health facilities

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You said that the provision of additional healthcare is the top priority needed to support further housing development.

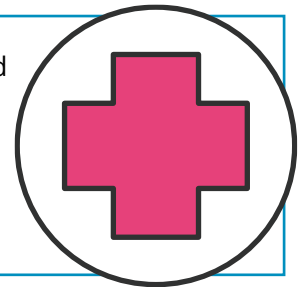
In response, our preference is to work with local health bodies and other key stakeholders as applicable, to undertake a 4-step process to determine the appropriate form of contribution for the provision of health facilities.

The 4 steps are:

- Step 1: Assessing the level and type of demand the proposal will generate.
- Step 2: Working closely with providers to understand the likely impact of the proposed development on health infrastructure capacity.

- Step 3: With providers, considering the appropriate additional capacity solution (new health facilities or adaptations and alterations to existing provision).
- Step 4: Considering the appropriate form of developer contribution (financial contribution towards the cost of providing new or enhanced facilities, or the provision of land and/or new buildings).

The alternative option would be to use a different process to the 4 steps set out, or to not seek developer contributions for new health facilities.



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## Community wealth building

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Our preference is to support community wealth building through planning and development, by:

- Using local businesses and social enterprises in the supply chain as far as possible and practicable.
- Taking opportunities to facilitate the ability of residents and vulnerable groups to participate in society.
- Promoting economic inclusion by providing training opportunities and on-site employment opportunities to Wigan residents, as well as

facilitating physical access to the site when needed.

The alternative option is to not support community wealth building through planning and development or to require stronger commitments.



## Open space, sport and recreation

**You said** that a priority for open space, sport and recreation is better provision for children and young people. Parks and gardens, allotments and community gardens and accessible natural greenspace were also identified by many as needing to be better provided for.

Open space, sport and recreation provision includes parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, natural and semi-natural greenspace, cemeteries and churchyards, allotments and community gardens, provision for children and young people, civic spaces, pitch sports (football, rugby league, rugby union, cricket, hockey), bowls, athletics, tennis, golf and indoor sports (sports halls, swimming pools, gyms).

### Provision for open space, sport and recreation

In response, our preference is to continue protecting open space and sport and recreation facilities from loss to other development and uses unless:

- The development would be ancillary, such as the provision of changing rooms.
- Alternative provision is made.
- It is not needed.
- The proposal is for a high-quality sports facility that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

**The alternative option** is to not protect existing open space and sport and recreation facilities or to have different criteria for when there are exceptions.

### Standards for open space, sport and recreation

Our preference is to seek to address any shortfalls in provision for open space, sport and recreation that are robustly demonstrated, and it is practicable and reasonable to do so.

**The alternative option** is to not seek to address any shortfalls in provision for open space, sport and recreation.



### Developer contributions to open space, sport and recreation

Our preference is to continue our approach of securing contributions from housing developers to meet the recreational demands that will arise from their development, with smaller developments contributing to improvements off-site and larger developments making provision on-site.

We therefore propose:

- For developments of 100 homes or more, to require the developer to provide public open space on-site equivalent to a minimum of 25 sq.m per home, and a payment to cover ongoing maintenance, unless there is an existing recreational site close by that it would be better to invest in.
- For developments of between 1 and 99 homes, to require the developer to make a financial contribution per house to provision off-site, as well as ongoing maintenance, unless the development does not include private garden space and there is no local play space nearby.

**The alternative option** is to not secure contributions from housing developers to meet the recreational demands that will arise from their development or to have different criteria for those contributions.

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## Community facilities

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**You said** that the priorities for health and wellbeing include having spaces for people to meet and interact. Community facilities make a significant contribution to that as well as to community wealth building, including providing an opportunity for residents and vulnerable groups to participate in society.

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In response, our preference is to:

- Protect existing community facilities unless it is clear that adequate alternative provision exists, or a replacement facility is provided, or it is clear that it is not viable and capable of being so.
  - Support the provision of new community facilities within a town centre or within, or well related to, a local or neighbourhood centre subject to it not impacting adversely on neighbours.
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**The alternative options** are to not protect existing community facilities or support the provision of new community facilities, or to have different criteria for the exceptions.



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## Education and skills

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Our preference is:

- To continue to support the ongoing improvement of education facilities for all ages and abilities, including in early years, 5-16 year olds, and post-16 education in the borough, to ensure our settings enhance learning experiences, increase aspirations and support our children, young people and adults to reach their potential.
- To work alongside businesses and other economic partners to understand the needs of our changing economy and ensure that we shape our educational offer across our schools, colleges, training providers and adult education to meet existing, and future, employer skills gaps.

- To continue securing developer contributions to ensure that the educational demands that will arise from their development can be met.
- To seek agreement with schools and colleges for long term community use of playing fields and other sporting facilities, wherever practicable.

**The alternative options** are to not support the ongoing improvement of education facilities for all ages, or not secure developer contributions, or not seek community use of playing fields, or to have different requirements.



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# What happens next?

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**We will acknowledge receipt of your comments when we receive them. There may be a short delay before this happens.**

Following the close of the consultation on the Options and Preferences after 18 December 2023, we will consider all the comments we receive and use them to help shape an initial draft of the Local Plan. We will produce a summary of the comments received at that point.

The Initial Draft Local Plan will include proposed site allocations and detailed planning policies, which will be based on the proposed policy content in this Options and Preferences, influenced by what you tell us, and further informed by a robust evidence base that we are continuing to refresh and update.

Consultation on the Initial Draft Local Plan is scheduled to take place in Summer 2024. It will be accompanied by a full report of this consultation setting out what was said and our response.

The Initial Draft Local Plan will also be supported by an Integrated Assessment of its policies and proposals against sustainability, health and equality considerations, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

If you have registered as part of this consultation, we will keep you informed of progress, including future opportunities to get involved.

**The stages following the Initial Draft Local Plan Stage in Summer 2024 are:**

- **Revised Draft Local Plan – January 2025**
- **Public examination – Summer / Autumn 2025**
- **Adoption – Early 2026**



To find out more and contribute to the Local Plan attend one of the following consultation workshops. To book your place visit [bit.ly/optionsandpreferences](https://bit.ly/optionsandpreferences). All workshops start at 7pm.

- Tuesday 31 October: Tyldesley Rugby Union Club, Tyldesley
- Wednesday 1 November: Hindley Library and Community Centre, Hindley
- Thursday 2 November: Platt Bridge Community Zone, Platt Bridge
- Monday 6 November: Sunshine House, Scholes, Wigan
- Tuesday 7 November: The Turnpike Gallery, Leigh
- Thursday 9 November: Atherton Town Hall, Atherton
- Tuesday 14 November: Salvation Army, Chapel Street, Ashton
- Wednesday 15 November: Lamberhead Working Men's Club, Pemberton
- Thursday 16 November: Standish Community Centre, Standish
- Wednesday 22 November: Golborne Parkside Club, Golborne

To make comments, please visit [bit.ly/optionsandpreferences](https://bit.ly/optionsandpreferences)