

We want to hear your views about Health & Social Care in Wirral - Listen. Connect. Share.

## **BRIDGE Forum notes for Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026 11am – 12:30pm**

The purpose of [BRIDGE Forum](#) is to come together to share updates, themes, and regular information about Wirral Health & Social Care services, giving a voice to all sectors. A place that is shared with Community, Health & Social Care representatives.

If you would like to join-in, share information, receive [BRIDGE Forum notes](#) or speak at future meetings, or want to know more about the BRIDGE Forum, which takes place monthly each second Wednesday, please email us [spare5@healthwatchwirral.co.uk](mailto:spare5@healthwatchwirral.co.uk) .

### **Guest Speakers**

#### **1. Katy Taylor, Healthy Homes Teams Leader, Wirral Council.**

Katy gave us updates on the Renters Rights Act. This update to legislation will help to ensure that residents have more powers and feel more protected. Highlighted extracts below:

- From 01 May 2026, Section 21 ‘no fault’ evictions have been abolished; landlords can no longer serve their tenants with a ‘no-fault’ eviction notice. If a landlord now issues a Section 21 no fault’ eviction notice they are breaching the Renters Rights Act 2026, and they could face a civil penalty notice from the Local Authority.
- All tenancies have now changed to rolling tenancies which means that tenants are no longer tied into a six-month minimum contract.
- There is a ban on rent bidding, rent increases are limited to once annually, and payment of advance rent is limited to one month.
- There is an end in discrimination against tenants who are in receipt of benefits and/or against tenants with children.
- There have been changes to the provision of allowing pets in property; landlords must demonstrate a justifiable reason to refuse pets in their property.

Next steps will be:

- An introduction of a private rented sector database.
- An introduction of a private rented sector Ombudsman.
- An introduction of decent homes standards to give renters safer, better value homes and to remove the blight of poor-quality homes in local communities.
- An introduction of *Awaab’s Law\**, setting clear legal expectations about the timeframes which landlords in the private rented sector must take action to make homes safe where they contain serious hazards (\*Named in memory of Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old who died in 2020 from a severe respiratory condition proven to have been caused by prolonged exposure to mould in his home).

For more information on this, and guidance for landlords follow this link -

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/housing/housing-information-and-advice/guidance-renters-rights-act-tenants-and-landlords>

[healthyhomes@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:healthyhomes@wirral.gov.uk)



## 2. Dominic Griffiths, Business Relationship Manager, Energy Projects Plus

Dominic discussed the energy price cap and why it was brought into force. Before the price cap was introduced in 2019, energy suppliers were permitted to overcharge their current customers, and use the extra revenue generated to offer new customers cheaper deals.

In 2019, the government regulator Ofgem calculated a 'fair' top price for gas and electricity unit rates and daily charge rates; this is the 'price cap' that suppliers must stick to. The price cap does not set a total limit for what a consumer will be charged, just what will be charged per kilowatt hour (kWh); the more a consumer uses, the more they will pay.

- From January to March 2026 the prices for energy were up by 0.5%.
- For April to June the prices are down by 7%.
- For July to September prices are projected to go up by 13%.
- For October to December, there is predicted to be a rise of 2%.

There are multiple, international factors at play, for causes of an energy crisis, including:

- Climate Treaties have led to countries reducing use of coal, and shifting to gas instead, meaning more countries are bidding for the same gas supply, which pushes prices up.
- Global Climate Change is causing warmer summers, and colder winters, increasing the demand for gas, which the gas drilling companies use to justify increased charges.
- Gas-drilling companies can charge whatever they like; there is no international regulation. Former BP CEO Bernard Looney has said "When the market is strong, when oil prices are strong and when gas prices are strong, this is literally a cash machine".
- Our energy suppliers can agree to pay whatever the gas drilling companies charge, then pass those costs on to end-consumers. There is no incentive for anybody in the industry to haggle over prices with energy producers.

Preparing for Winter 2026/27:

- Energy costs will almost certainly be higher this coming winter than they were last winter. Because of the wider cost of living crisis, household budgets will be stretched even more, and for some this will leave them with a negative budget. Thousands of vulnerable UK residents die each winter from respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, which are exacerbated by living in cold temperatures. Most of them are elderly.

What Energy Projects Plus is doing:

- We are encouraging our clients to get their boilers serviced during the summer months, so they are more likely to work more efficiently this autumn/winter.
- We are stocking up on oil-filled radiators, which we can provide to residents in an emergency, if their usual heating system stops working.
- We are stocking up on Winter Warm Packs, which can help residents endure living in a cold home.
- We will be glad to see the return of our *LEAP* Boiler Scheme this autumn, which we can use to repair or replace boilers free of charge.

Email [events@epplus.org](mailto:events@epplus.org) to request talks for community groups, or for an energy efficiency advice stall to attend your event.

Email [training@epplus.org](mailto:training@epplus.org) to request a briefing session for your team.



EPP - Energy Crisis



EPP Leaflet - NHS



EPP Poster - NHS



medequip -

Update - 13 May 2021 Cheshire & Merseysid Cheshire & Merseysid powering your commi

### 3. Beverley Murray, Public Health Principal, Adult Care and Health – Public Health, Wirral Council.

Beverley shared an overview of the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Prevalence Survey 2025/26:

- The Health and Wellbeing Population Survey is a key tool for understanding the health, wellbeing, and wider determinants of health of our local population.
- Reliable, robust, and timely information on the health and wellbeing of the local population is crucial to inform Wirral Council's plans and strategies.
- Prevalence of key risk factors that impact on population health is not otherwise collected routinely in a systematic way, therefore the survey will provide local intelligence on physical and mental wellbeing, lifestyle behaviours and social connections, and broader factors such as economic security and housing.
- By gathering this information directly from residents, the survey helps build a detailed picture of health and wellbeing across different communities and population groups, including those most at risk of poor outcomes.
- Its purpose is to generate locally relevant intelligence that complements existing data sources and strengthens our understanding of residents lived experiences.

Despite improvements in some health outcomes, significant health inequalities persist across communities.

Routine data sources often tell us *what* is happening (for example, hospital admissions or mortality), but not *why*.

Routine sources also rarely capture subjective wellbeing, mental health, loneliness, or persons lived experiences of services and place. Therefore, the survey is designed to:

- Fill critical data gaps, particularly around wellbeing, prevention and lived experience.
- Identify inequalities between different groups, neighbourhoods and protected characteristics.
- Provide insight into emerging issues, such as cost-of-living pressures, mental wellbeing, and social isolation.
- Support early intervention and prevention, rather than crisis response.
- Strengthen accountability by tracking progress against local strategies and priorities.

Local, resident-level insight is essential to ensure decisions are evidence-based, targeted and aligned with what matters most to our communities. The Wirral Council Public Health Team is using the Health and Wellbeing Population Survey to directly inform planning, commissioning and partnership working across the system:

- Targeting resources where need and inequalities are greatest.
- Shaping local strategies, including the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Supporting joined-up working across the local authority, NHS, and VCFSE.
- Improving services through resident feedback on access and barriers.
- Monitoring change over time and assessing impact.
- Strengthening residents' voices in decision-making.
- Supporting the Neighbourhood health agenda.
- Forming a clear evidence base to shape the priorities and actions of a future Public Health Annual Report.

The survey is planned to go live in September 2026.



#### 4. **Anthony Wood, Men Too Merseyside.**

*Men Too* is a registered charity which was set up following work undertaken by the charity *WEB Merseyside* who identified that men were not getting the support they needed within their local community. *Men Too* was founded to help men with their well-being and mental health, making sure men know they are not alone and providing a safe environment where men can access support and improve personal development.

*Men Too* services for men operates from its partner charity *WEB Merseyside*'s Training Centre on Argyle Street, near Hamilton Square Railway Station and Birkenhead Bus Station. They can offer support with signposting and hold groups/sessions for men to attend which include:

- Welcome sessions - the first step to accessing services. Once a referral form or enquiry has been submitted, their administration team will be in touch to answer any questions or to book a welcome session with the *Men Too* team.
- Warm Hub - at Warm Hubs, areas of focus are provided depending on which Warm Hub is accessed. Main items available are food and warm drinks. Some Warm Hubs provide Wi-Fi and computer access, as well as benefits and housing advice.
- Care Maintenance - group work to help encourage and support men's mental health.
- Caring Dads - a programme designed to increase fathers' awareness of wellbeing and safety of their children, to build capacity for the application of child-centred fathering and to promote respectful co-parenting with the children's mother; often following break down in relationships.
- Grandparents Group- a mixed group for grandparents to attend.
- Cost of living support.

*Men Too* can also offer sessions for schools and colleges. If anyone would like to arrange this, please contact Anthony by email [anthony@mentoomerseyside.org](mailto:anthony@mentoomerseyside.org)

<https://mentoomerseyside.org/>

<https://youtu.be/wogflfRWXBo?si=nI7ZnxEzU6v3ZYr>

#### **AOB- information sharing, updates, and news.**

1. Wirral Carers Alliance has organised a Carers Conference on Monday 08 June at Eureka in Seacombe CH44 6NR, from 10am to 7pm. The aim is to connect Carers with support services in the area. If any organisations would like to get involved, contact [info@wirralcarersalliance.org.uk](mailto:info@wirralcarersalliance.org.uk)

<https://www.wirralcarersalliance.com/commitment-to-carers-conference>

Wirral Carers Alliance also holds a weekly drop-in session called *CoLLaB*, for care, connection, and collaboration for those with caring responsibilities, held on a Wednesday at Greasby Library, CH49 3AT from 10am to 3pm. <https://www.wirralcarersalliance.com/collab-carer-connection>.

2. Bronwen Thomas, Technical Specialist and Quality Lead, Citizens Advice Wirral, mentioned that the government has launched the Timms Review to ensure that Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is fair and fit for the future in a changing world and helps support disabled people to achieve better health, higher living standards and greater independence, including through employment. The Timms Review is open until 28 May 2026 to anyone wanting to give feedback, using the [online form](#). Responses can be submitted anonymously if wished.

[Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment: call for evidence - GOV.UK](#)

3. Jamie Carter- Founder and 'tour de force' of Wirral Pride, shared that Wirral Pride is celebrating their fifth anniversary on 08 August 2026 with their Wirral Pride Event in The Victoria Quarter, Victoria Road, New Brighton, CH45. Jamie added that, rather than simply being an annual Pride event, Wirral Pride really wants to have a year-round impact as an organisation in our community. They are working on anti-bullying resources for young people both online and in person, in youth groups, schools etc. They also want to offer support for people who have lost members of our community, as there seem to be gaps in this area. If anyone would like to contact Jamie,

Email [jamie@wirralpride.co.uk](mailto:jamie@wirralpride.co.uk)

<https://wirralpride.co.uk/>

4. Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance (CMCA) wishes to promote their upcoming engagement drop-in sessions between June and September, when CMCA colleagues will be visiting NHS Trust sites across our region to engage with staff and members of the public, listen to experiences, and raise awareness of their health inequalities work. Please share the attached posters through usual channels to help promote the sessions and encourage people to attend.



Engagement Drop  
Ins Posters - JUNE.p

5. Lynda Appleton Senior Researcher, Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust, stated they are seeking 3 to 4 unpaid carers to complete their study exploring how care to a person with cancer is managed when the person providing support has a pre-existing health condition/s. Please refer to the attached poster for details. Unpaid carers can self-refer.



Study advert v.1.1  
24 April 2025.pdf

6. *Re-Engage* shared details for their free services for adults aged 75+ on Wirral. They aim to prevent and alleviate loneliness and isolation in later life and hold a free monthly social group at Wallasey Village Library, on the last Tuesday of each month from 1 to 3pm. *Re-Engage* also has a Call Companion Service, where one of their volunteers will call an older person once weekly for a companionable chat. Anyone aged 75+ who would benefit from these services can be referred via this link - [www.reengage.org.uk/refer](http://www.reengage.org.uk/refer).

For anyone under 75 who may equally benefit from the services, they could be a helper, joining in as a volunteer.



Would you like a  
call companion A5 fl

**Forthcoming BRIDGE Forum dates in 2026:**

10 June

08 July

August – No BRIDGE Forum this month

09 September

14 October

11 November

09 December.



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