

Wirral JSNA: Child Poverty

Summary

- The published data (up to August 2011) suggests that 16,665 children in Wirral are living in Poverty. This represents 23.8% of all children in Wirral.
- Nationally, the average is 20.1%.
- There are very high concentrations of people living in poverty within Bidston, Birkenhead and Tranmere and Rock Ferry. These areas correlate strongly with other known deprivation markers.
- There are a range of local interventions that could improve the levels of child poverty and these are best considered across organisations and communities

Contents

Summary	1
Contents	1
What do we know?	1
Overview.....	1
Measuring Child Poverty.....	1
Targets.....	3
Performance	4
What is this telling us?	8
Overview.....	8
Local views	8
National and local strategies.....	8
Contact	9

What do we know?

Overview

It is recognised that poverty is damaging to children, families and entire communities and that actions should be addressed through a clear strategy and targeted intervention. Tackling child and family poverty is critical to wider efforts with partners to deliver long-term objectives for prosperity and a better quality of life for all in Wirral.

In order to address child and family poverty it is important to understand the extent and nature of needs in Wirral and also establish what resources are available to tackle poverty issues.

Measuring Child Poverty

There is extensive debate about the way in which child poverty is, or should be, measured. However, the use of household income to measure poverty is the most universally accepted method and provides us with statistics about levels of child poverty in England, Liverpool City Region and Wirral. This information is compiled annually on the basis of a snapshot of data taken on August 31 each year.

The data is always provided with a lag of 2 years. The data is provided by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and can be found here: (now at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-tax-credits-children-in-low-income-families-local-measure>)

On 27 September 2013, HMRC released the 2011 data for the "Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure". This is the formal title of the revised Child Poverty measure which was previously National Indicator 116. The proportion of children in poverty is calculated as:

*Number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits,
or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% median
income*

Total number of children in the area

For consistency, the figures cited within this briefing are for 'All Children' in the borough. HMRC also provides figures for the number and percentage of children under 16.

Use of Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) 2010

An alternative to the HMRC data is the use of the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) which is provided as part of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. IDACI and Child Poverty data correlate significantly. However, there are some notable differences between the two:

- Whilst both measures are based on parental income and the receipt of welfare benefits and tax credits, the IDACI measure only observes a 0-16 age range compared to 0-19 for the relative Child Poverty measure.
- Furthermore IDACI is published every 3 years in line with the IMD whilst the Child Poverty measure is produced annually.

A map outlining the relative values of IDACI 2010 can be found [here](#)

Comparative Analysis

Table 1: Percentage (%) of children in low-income families (Local Measure) by Local Authority values as at August 31 2011

Area	% of All Children	Number of Children
Liverpool	32.5%	30,405
Knowsley	31.2%	11,140
St Helens	24.6%	9,420
Wirral	23.8%	16,665
Sefton	20.2%	11,350
North West	22.1%	341,860
England	20.1%	2,319,450

Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

The table to the left shows that Wirral has the second lowest rate of child poverty in the Liverpool City Region. However, in terms of numbers, Wirral has more children living in poverty than any of the neighbouring authorities with the exception of Liverpool.

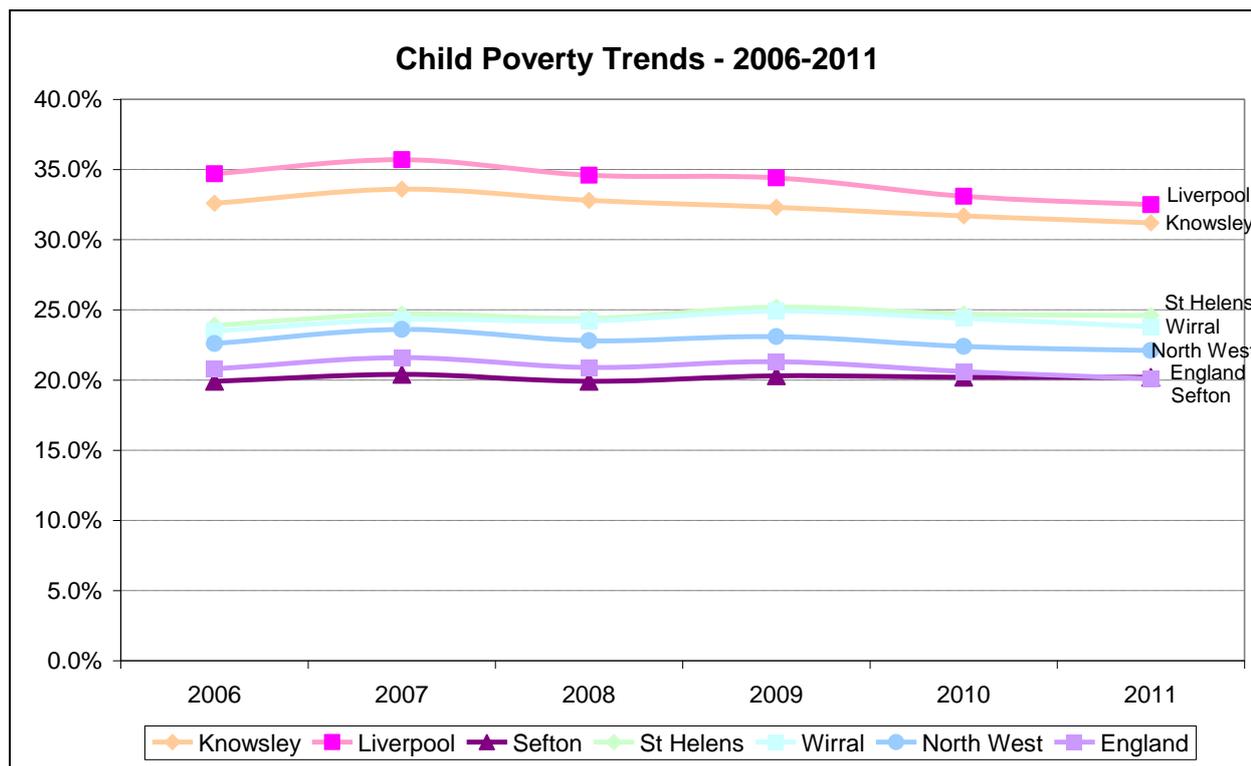
Wirral's child poverty rate is 1.7% higher than the north west average and 3.7% higher than the England rate.

Child Poverty is usually discussed in terms of the 'rate' or 'percent' of children living in poverty. However, it should continue to be highlighted that an estimated total of 16,665 children in the borough are living in Poverty.

Trends since 2006

There is now comparative data available from HMRC starting from 2006 that enables us to identify trends over five years.

Figure 1: Child Poverty Trends (%) percentage of children in low-income families, Merseyside Local Authority values as at August 31 2011



Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

Targets

The Child Poverty Act (2010) is the Government's approach to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The provisions of the act place a duty on the Secretary of State to ensure less than 10% of children nationally are considered to live in relative poverty by 2020, as per the 'Children in Low-Income Families' measure.

There are no intermediate targets or milestones. However, the Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Life Chances Strategy outlines two strategic aims to addressing and alleviating Poverty in the sub region:

- Aim 1 - Ensure the best possible start in life for children and young people to improve their life chances
- Aim 2 - Maximise Family Income

Performance

Wirral

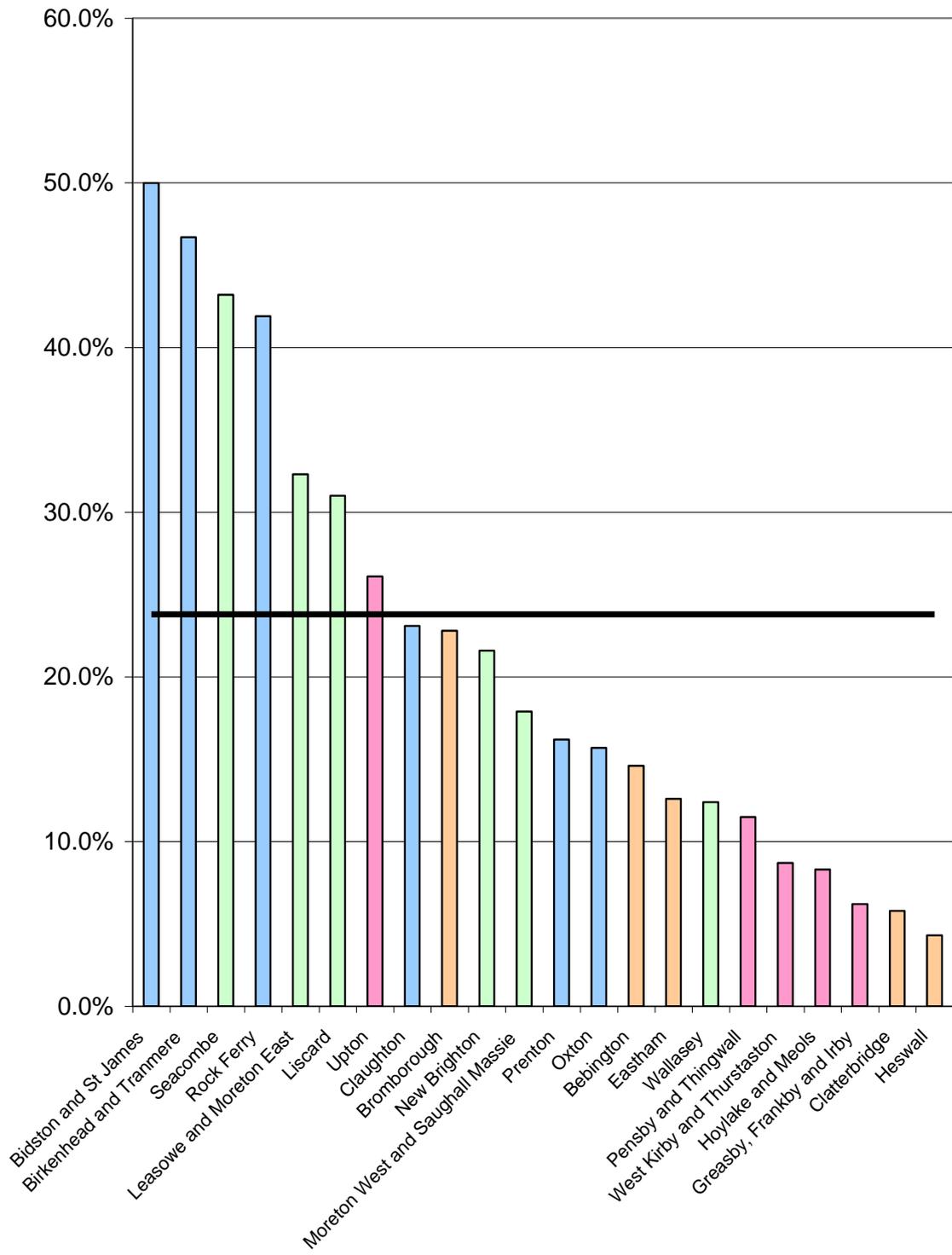
Wirral Council completed an initial Child Poverty Needs Analysis in 2011 and has contributed to a refreshed version compiled for the Liverpool City Region. Wirral participates in various working groups with colleagues from across the City Region to deliver the aims and objectives of the Child Poverty and Life Chances Strategy.

Ward Analysis

When considering the borough and region-wide averages, the Child Poverty rate differs marginally from the national rate. However when the data is examined at Ward-level and below, relative concentrations of poverty and deprivation become more apparent.

The below chart shows that although there are only seven Wirral Wards with Child Poverty levels above the borough's average of 23.8%, the concentrations within these Wards are significant. These concentrations follow established patterns of deprivation, with higher levels of Poverty experienced in the Birkenhead and Wallasey MP Constituencies and less in the more affluent areas of Wirral South and Wirral West.

Figure 2: Percentage of Children in Low-Income Families Local Measure, Wirral Ward values for August 31 2011.



Birkenhead	Wallasey	Wirral South	Wirral West	Wirral Average
-------------------	-----------------	---------------------	--------------------	-----------------------

Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

Lower Super Output Area Analysis

HMRC Child Poverty data is also provided for Wirral's 207 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) [\[Click here for an explanation of Lower Super Output Areas\]](#). 74 of these LSOAs (35.7% of the total) have Child Poverty levels that are above the Wirral average of 23.8% of children in poverty.

Another illustration of how Child Poverty is concentrated into pockets of deprivation in Wirral is to consider where the highest levels of child poverty are apparent. This are currently 3 LSOAs in which there are more than 60% of children are living in child poverty and there are 17 LSOAs where the figure is more than 50% of children.

Table 2: Quintile analysis of Child Poverty by Wirral lower super output areas (LSOAs) 2011.

Deprivation Quintile (Measured in terms of the % of All Children living Child Poverty)		Number of LSOAs
0 - 20%	[Most Deprived in England]]	58
20 - 40%		33
40 – 60%		34
60 – 80%		45
80 – 100%	[Least Deprived]	37

Deprivation is often described in terms of 'quintiles' of deprivation when compared across England. This table shows the number of LSOAs falling within each 20% range:

Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

In table 3 the relative number of LSOAs within the 20% most deprived are highlighted. There are 10%, or 21, of Wirral LSOAs who fall within the 3% of all children living in child poverty across England..

Table 3: Summary of the Wirral Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) as breakdown falling within 20% most deprived LSOAs in England for 2011

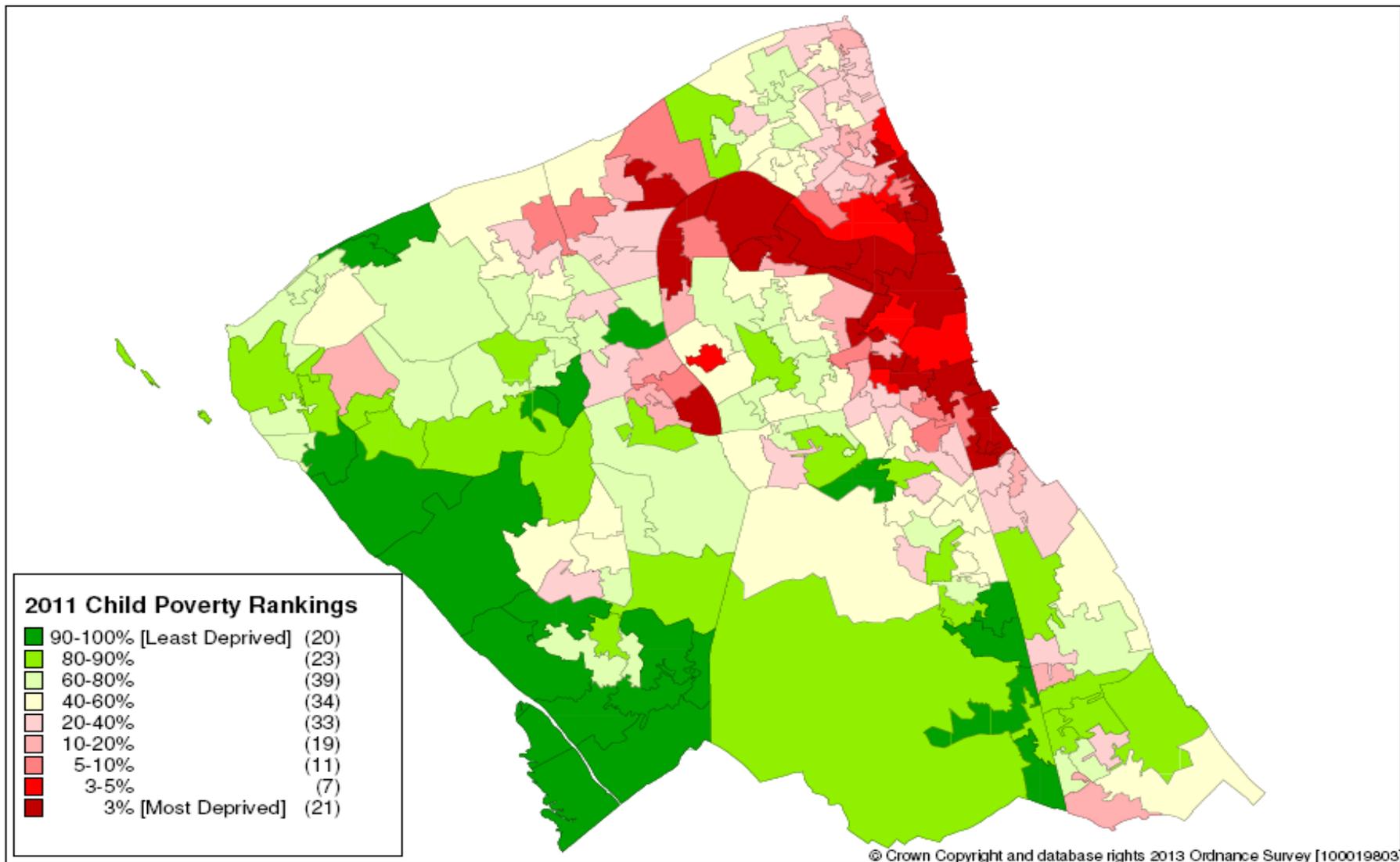
Deprivation Percentile (Measured in terms of the % of All Children living Child Poverty)		Number of Wirral LSOAs [% in brackets]	Cumulative [% in brackets]
3%	[Most Deprived in England]	21 [10%]	21 [10%]
5%		7 [3%]	28 [13%]
10%		11 [5%]	39 [18%]
20%	[Least Deprived]	19 [9%]	58 [27%]

Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

The LSOA with the highest level of Child Poverty in Wirral is 63.8% is in a small area in Bidston & St James ward. The second highest level is 61.9% and is can be found in an area of Rock Ferry. The third highest area is around Central Birkenhead, with a Child Poverty rate of 61.2%. England is split into 32,482 LSOAs and these three Wirral areas are ranked 12th, 31st and 38th respectively. A full breakdown of the Wirral LSOAs and their England child poverty ranking is available [here](#).

In Map 1 below highlights the concentrations of Child Poverty and relative affluence in Wirral. The ranges correspond to each LSOA's position in the England ranking.

Map 1: Wirral lower super output areas (LSOAs) in relation to their England ranking for Child Poverty, 2011.



Source: [HMRC, 2013](#)

What is this telling us?

Overview

In isolation, the data suggests that Child Poverty levels within the borough and nationally is falling. However, Poverty is complex. The use of household income to measure poverty is the most universally accepted method, however it is still only provides insight into one factor.

Whilst introducing a 2012 consultation on 'Measuring Child Poverty', Secretary of State for Work and Pensions stated that:

.....*"The most recent child poverty statistics [September 2010] revealed that 300,000 children were moved out of relative income poverty. However, this was largely due to a fall in the median income nationally which pushed the poverty line down. In fact, absolute poverty remained unchanged and the children who were moved out of poverty were no better off, nor saw any meaningful improvement in their lives".....*

Local views

To inform the development and implementation of Wirral's strategy and action plan, the local authority has established a local independent advisory group, the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group.

The Group has been tasked with providing narrative for this section on the range of positive developments that work towards decreasing the contributors of Child Poverty. This update will be available Autumn 2014.

National and local strategies

Wirral contributes to the development and delivery of the Liverpool City Region:
www.liverpoollep.org/docs/Child-Poverty-and-Life-Chances-Strategy.pdf

There is also a national strategy
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-new-approach-to-child-poverty-tackling-the-causes-of-disadvantage-and-transforming-families-lives>

Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Life Chances Commission (LCR)
LCR response to Child Poverty Strategy 2014-2017 Consultation can be accessed [here](#)

Wirral's Child and Family Poverty Group
Wirral's Child and Family Poverty Group information can be accessed [here](#)

In 2011 Child and Family Poverty Local Needs Assessment was undertaken in order to understand its extent and nature. These original background and detailed needs assessments can be accessed [here](#). Although produced in 2011 many of the issues covered in the assessment remain relevant.

Contact

For further details please contact

Rebecca Mellor, Public Health, at rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk

John Highton, JSNA Programme Lead at johnhighton@wirral.gov.uk

To access a range of Wirral JSNA easy read documents

Please use this link to access easy read content or go to

<http://info.wirral.nhs.uk/easyread.html>

To download the Wirral JSNA logo to your desktop



Go to <http://info.wirral.nhs.uk/default.aspx> or via this [link here](#) and click on 'Download the JSNA desktop icon here'

To subscribe to Wirral JSNA Bulletin

Email your contact details to SubscribeJSNA@wirral.gov.uk

To give us feedback

Let us know your views or if you need to find out more about a particular topic or subject then go to <http://info.wirral.nhs.uk/Contact.aspx> or contact us [here](#)