Sefton Council

Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment 2014/15 Environmental

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Environmental

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Summary

The quality of our living environment has a profound effect on our health and wellbeing. These matters are often called the wider determinants of health. Inequalities in health, as seen in Sefton, are very much linked to environmental inequalities.

Environmental inequalities may be defined as the unequal impact of environmental influences on health and wellbeing. These environmental influences may include healthy early years/education/care settings, housing, public spaces, environmental planning, travel and transport, access to nature and environmental problems arising from unsustainable lifestyles and climate change such as poor air quality or increased heating costs.

The Marmot Review pp78-81 makes the following comment:

“The more deprived the neighbourhood, the more likely it is to have social and environmental characteristics presenting risks to health. These include poor housing; higher rates of crime, poorer air quality, a lack of green spaces and places for children to play and more risks to safety from traffic… Creating a physical environment in which people can live healthier lives with a greater sense of well-being is a hugely significant factor in reducing health inequalities.... Investing public funds in measures such as active travel, promoting green spaces and healthy eating will impact positively on health as well as on carbon emissions.”

The following pages expand on a number of these wider determinant themes.

Air Quality & Pollution

Average across Monitoring Sites	Latest Month	Same Month Last Year	Last Month	Year to Date	Year to Date Last Year	Annual Average Last Year
Nitric Oxide	32.96	37.26	32.34	35.24	39.44	28.16
Nitrogen Dioxide	39.82	43.76	41.38	41.88	45.78	37.08
Oxides of Nitrogen	53.68	59.8	53.76	56.86	63.04	47.32
PM10 Particles	28.2	24.3	33.95	26.15	34.3	28.3
PM10 Particles BAM	24.9	25.8	32.95	24.95	32.55	27.35
Total Mass of Fine Particles	848.1	1421.4	1473.8	1099.7	1141.7	764.9

Pollutant	Health effects at very high levels
Nitrogen Dioxide, Sulphur Dioxide, Ozone	These gases irritate the airways of the lungs, increasing the symptoms of those suffering from lung diseases
Particles	Fine particles can be carried deep into the lungs where they can cause inflammation and a worsening of heart and lung diseases
Carbon Monoxide	This gas prevents the uptake of oxygen by the blood. This can lead to a significant reduction in the supply of oxygen to the heart, particularly in people suffering from heart disease

http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/effects

Air quality is reported to cause 29,000 premature deaths nationally per year.

Sefton council has a statutory duty to undertake regular review and assessments of air quality across the borough to determine whether or not the objectives set by the Government in the National Air Quality Strategy will be complied with. If objectives are not complied with, the Council must declare the area an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), and develop an action plan to work towards achieving compliance.

The Council has declared **five** air quality management areas, for which action plans are required to reduce resident exposure. The main issue is Nitrogen Dioxide and fine particulate emissions from road traffic.

The council monitors air pollution in the five AQMA's in line with national obligatory measurement standards. It uses a variety of techniques including real-time monitors to support the review and assessment process and provide information on current pollution levels and warnings of pollution episodes. There are five real-time monitoring stations:

- St Joan of Arc station measures: oxides of nitrogen and fine particles
- Crosby Road North station measures: oxides of nitrogen and fine particles
- Millers Bridge station measures fine particles (PM10) and oxides of nitrogen
- Princess Way station measures oxides of nitrogen and fine particles
- Hawthorne Road and Church Road junction measures oxides of nitrogen

In addition there are also 78 diffusion tubes, borough wide, measuring oxides of nitrogen and providing monthly average figures.Under the Clean Air Act certain areas within Sefton have been declared Smoke Control Areas. Within these areas there is a restriction on the types of fuel that may be burnt. This restriction only applies to the smoke produced from chimneys and does not apply to bonfires.Additional monitoring of large particle "nuisance" dust is also undertaken around the Port of Liverpool to assist pollution control. Officers find the individual sources of the dust and ensuring the best practicable means are employed by businesses to minimise emissions.

Food Hygiene & Prescriptive Health Related Regulation

Food poisoning makes 500,000 people sick each year in the UK. For the weak the effects can be fatal. Food Authorities such as Sefton Council, have statutory duties to enforce legislation relating to food, including the primary production of food. The aim is to protect consumers by ensuring that food produced, manufactured, sold and consumed is both safe and wholesome. The activity strives to:

- Reduce the incidence of food related infectious disease by providing a comprehensive inspection and investigation service.
- Devise and implement an effective and equitable inspection programme for food hygiene and food standards to ensure compliance with the law.
- Provide opportunities to business to access information and advice to help them find the most effective way of complying with the law and promote good practice.

Sefton delivers an annual Food Law Enforcement Plan that takes into consideration the Food Standard Agency's prescriptive obligatory statutory guidance. Residents of Sefton should expect to eat safe food from its **2400** food outlets, by the Council ensuring:

- Regulation is effective, risk-based and proportionate, is clear about the responsibilities of food business operators and protects consumers from food fraud and food borne pathogen infection and chemical poisoning risk.
- Enforcement is efficient, consistent, risk-based and proportionate and is focused on improving public health - Around one in ten of Sefton food businesses are not adequately compliant with food hygiene legislation.
- Taking appropriate interventions to provide information to caterers concerning Allergens and labelling requirements.
- That imported food is monitored and is safe to eat.
- Sefton consumers have the information and understanding they need to make informed choices about where and what they eat – through the locally administrated Food Standards Agency **Food Hygiene Rating Scheme**.

The Council is obliged to produce similar annual plans that detail the approach taken to discharge of a range of nationally prescriptive duties to protect the food chain that are tailored to the circumstances found in Sefton. Annual obligatory statutory plans are required for:

- Food Law Enforcement - to protect consumers from microbiological or chemical contamination or fraudulent description of food.
- Animal Feed Enforcement – to ensure a healthy food chain including animal feed manufacture and that imported through the Port.
- Animal Welfare – to ensure the health of livestock used for food.

Climate Change & Energy

Climate change is predicated to bring significant global environmental and health risks from increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as heat waves, drought, storms and flooding and an increase in vectors of tropical diseases. Climate change will also create more conflicts over resource shortages, such as water, with crop failures bringing localized food shortages and an increase in global food prices. In addition, as the availability of cheap fossil fuels declines the inevitable increase in fuel prices will have direct impacts on the affordability for our communities to heat their homes with the direct health consequences that arise from under heated accommodation. Increasing energy prices also impact on business viability and local employment.

We are obliged through legislation, linked to international agreements, to reduce our own and community use of fossil energy and reduce our overall CO2 emissions, which is commonly believed by climatologists and scientists to be the major cause of climate change

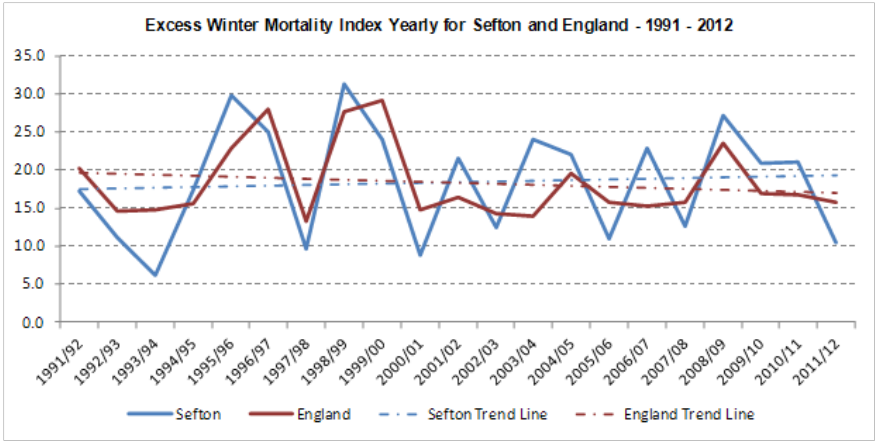
The Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan (LCR SEAP) has been developed to increase understanding of the issues associated between economic growth, energy consumption and CO2 emissions. The issues identified in the LCR SEAP should be used to inform the development of related projects, including those led by the private sector. The plan indicates the intention of LCR leaders to invite major investment in energy infrastructure, bringing jobs, prosperity and environmental benefits. The Sefton SEAP has been developed to provide a robust analysis of Sefton's energy use and carbon emissions and set's out ongoing, planned and potential measures to reduce emissions, particularly through the insulation of homes. . The Local Plan, development management and Building Regulations processes provide a framework to help achieve

Sefton has committed to a 20% reduction in CO2 by 2020 from a baseline year of 2005. This commitment equates to a fall in CO2 emissions of approximately 240,000 tonnes (2005 – 2020). Efforts to date indicate that we have already reduced CO2 emissions by over half of our required reduction. The most significant fuel consumed in Sefton is natural gas, mainly by households. To meet our targets we will require significant reductions both in demand through household energy efficiency actions and additional low carbon energy generation.

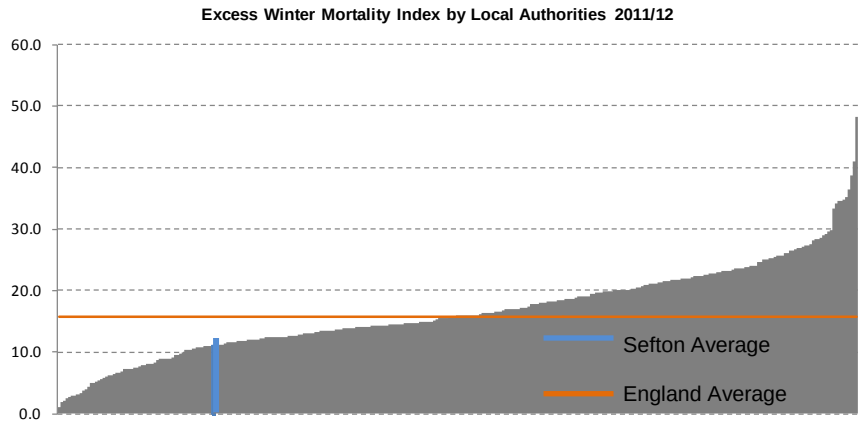
A significant proportion of existing properties in Sefton are at risk of surface water flooding (1 in 100 year plus climate change rainfall event) and some properties are at risk from river, sea or other flooding. Climate change is likely to lead to more intense rainfall events, which may affect flood risk. Flooding of homes, business or other properties has economic, social and health (stress) implications for those affected. The Council works with partners such as the Environment Agency and United Utilities to manage and reduce flood risk and to increase community resilience, and the Local Plan and development management process complements this for new development. It is also important that local people recognise the importance of their role.

Affordable Warmth and Excess Winter Deaths

"The ONS standard method defines the winter period as December to March, and compares the number of deaths that occurred in this winter period with the average number of deaths occurring in the preceding August to November and the following April to July: EWM = winter deaths - average non-winter deaths This produces the number of excess winter deaths, which is then rounded to the nearest 10 for final data and to the nearest 100 for provisional data." Public Health England



- Within Sefton there were 100 excess winter deaths this equates to a excess winter mortality index of 10.4
- The excess winter mortality index is lower than the England index (15.8)
- There is a difference of 37.9 when comparing the excess winter mortality index of Sefton to that of the local authority with the highest index (Adur)
- Sefton is the 53rd lowest local authority for the excess winter mortality index (there are 317 local authorities that have an index available)
- The excess winter mortality index has shown fluctuations across the past 20 years (1991/92 to 2011/12) for both Sefton and England
- When looking at the trend lines over the two years Sefton's excess winter mortality index appears to be increasing with England's showing a decrease
- With the Sefton 2011/12 figure being the lowest in the past 11 years
- Sefton has been below the England average 11 out of the past 20 years
- In 2011/12, residents aged 85 plus have the highest excess winter mortality index within England (22.7) and the North West (21.5) with those aged 0 – 64 having the lowest index
- In 2011/12 nationally (England and Wales), females had the highest excess winter mortality index (16.9) compared to males (14.1)



Please note that age and gender breakdowns are not available by local authority geography

Housing Decency and Affordability

Sefton contains over 100,000 private dwellings and its housing stock is older than the national average. The age of a home is strongly associated with its condition and its cost of heating. Poor housing conditions are closely related to chronic respiratory illness and are one of the most significant wider determinants of health. Housing should provide an environment that is as safe and healthy as possible. Tackling problems of poor housing to protect the health, safety and welfare of the occupants is a key environmental health priority. Environmental Health Practitioners focus primarily on helping tenants living in private sector housing, by requiring landlords to carry out necessary repair or improvement works.

16% of Sefton dwellings fail the Decent Homes Standard compared to 22% of private sector housing nationally. Geographically, the highest rates of Decent Homes failure are recorded for East Southport 26%, North Southport 22% and Linacre and Derby ward area 27%.

South Sefton has an imbalanced housing stock with an under representation of owner occupation and an oversupply of social housing. The housing stock is dominated by terraced dwellings which make up 67% of the private housing sector.
An analysis of South Sefton's housing market identified two specific sub-areas as displaying high levels of market stress; the Klondyke estate and Queens Rd neighbourhood. These have been the focus of major Housing Market Renewal funded interventions.

North Sefton comprises the classic Victorian resort of Southport and the established neighbourhoods of Ainsdale, Birkdale and Hillside The housing stock consists mainly of owner occupiers at 78% which is above the national average of 68% and a large private rented sector at 11% In direct contrast the social rented sector is extremely low equating to 7.5% compared to 16% for Sefton as a whole. Terraced properties account for a significantly low proportion of the housing stock at 6% against the national average of 26%. The private rented sector is dominated by houses in multiple occupation (3000 units), particularly central Southport, with flats, bedsits and apartments making up 23.5% of the housing stock.

The 2013 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) shows a net borough need of 361 affordable dwellings per year, equivalent to 6,490 dwellings over the anticipated Local Plan period to 2030 . The net need for affordable housing is greatest in Southport, which has 52% of borough needs, followed by Maghull/Aintree 24%, Formby 14% and Crosby 10%. It is recommended that a policy target of 30% affordable housing on sites of 15 or more dwellings is appropriate for Sefton. The 2013 SHMA indicates that of overall housing requirements (market and affordable), there is a need /demand of 15% for 1-bed properties, 30% for 2-bed properties, 40% for 3-bed properties; and 15% for 4 or more bed properties ..

Whilst great improvements have been made in recent years through the Decent Homes programme, Housing Market Renewal and Regional Housing Strategy, too much of the borough's existing stock is not fit for purpose nor sustainable. The Local Plan and housing interventions will help provide a further drive to ensure that our existing homes play a full role in raising the quality of place and become part of neighbourhoods where people choose to live, work and invest.

Transport & Accessibility

The Local Transport Plan for Merseyside Governed by the Combined Authority for Merseyside sets out six key objectives:-

- Help create the right conditions for sustainable economic growth by supporting the priorities of the Liverpool City Region, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnerships.
- Provide and promote a clean, low emission transport system which is resilient to changes to climate and oil availability.
- Ensure the transport system promotes and enables improved health and wellbeing and road safety.
- Ensure equality of travel opportunity for all, through a transport system that allows people to connect easily with employment, education, healthcare, other essential services and leisure and recreational opportunities.
- Ensure the transport network supports the economic success by the efficient movement of people and goods.
- Maintain assets to a high standard.

Within the context of this longer term Strategy and current funding levels, the current priorities are:-

- Prioritise maintenance programmes. This will meet the priorities of the LCR by ensuring that the network allows for the efficient movement of people and goods, provides a safe environment for vulnerable members of the community and encourages cycling and walking. It must also become more resilient to extreme weather.
- Expand the range of public transport services including examining the role of other providers. This could expand service availability and seek to continue initiatives such as Neighbourhood Travel Co-ordinators. It will also see the introduction of Statutory Quality Partnerships on key bus corridors. These measures will also have a direct impact in disadvantaged areas, creating greater opportunities to travel, access employment and foster wellbeing.
- Begin to implement the next generation of technology. This will improve information systems for all users and will maintain free flowing networks, increase journey opportunities and integrate a wide range of transport uses. The introduction of smart cards will offer a range of benefits to a wide spectrum of users.
- Work with the Freight Quality Partnership and other parties to develop and enhance the freight and logistics network. This will strengthen Merseyside‟s competitiveness, support SuperPort and access to the Port, reduce the impact of freight movement on local communities, promote the use of rail and make a major contribution to reducing carbon outputs.
- Implement the Active Travel Strategy. This will improve and expand facilities to encourage cycling and walking, which will have major health benefits, contribute to reducing carbon and increase accessibility to employment and services. The Local Plan and development management process can help achieve this.
- Implement the Low Emissions Strategy. This will reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and health and provide a stimulus to the creation of new jobs in support of the low carbon economy.
- Increase promotion of sustainable travel and behaviour change, including through the Local Plan and development management process, and support the Decade of Health and Wellbeing. This will reinforce the advantages of change to create a healthier and low carbon Merseyside and develop the foundations for the area to join other sustainable and successful city regions.

Waste Management

Waste is collected and disposed of to remove urban environmental health hazards that would otherwise arise from rotting refuse and vermin. But we must not merely remove waste and dispose of it safely, concern rests around the environmental impact of managing waste. The amount of finite resources we inefficiently use in products and packaging and how the materials we no longer want are managed is of increasing international concern and is highly regulated by Europe. Waste is increasingly being considered as surplus resource in the wrong place. Improving our material use, reuse and recycling circular economy will be of increasing economic and environmental importance.

The Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside RESOURCES Merseyside 2011-2041, provides the headline strategic route map to deliver sustainable waste management on Merseyside, transform the waste agenda and move towards greater resource efficiency. The Strategy has been developed by Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority and the districts of the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership in consultation with residents, elected members and other stakeholders. The strategic focus is to move waste management higher up the Waste Hierarchy by supporting activities on waste prevention, re-use, recycling and composting whilst recognising the impact these actions have on the amount of residual waste requiring treatment or disposal. This programme of work needs to be cost effective, affordable and deliver value for money whilst optimising environmental benefits and removing waste related health hazards.

The Strategy deals with the important role that we need to play to address broader environmental challenges such as sustainable waste management, climate change and reducing carbon emissions whilst providing value for money services in the current financial climate. Merseyside has come a long way since the establishment of the Merseyside Waste Partnership and all partners have shown innovation and commitment with the introduction of new collection regimes, improved facilities and infrastructure. This hard work is clearly demonstrated in the positive way residents have made significant increases in recycling and reduced the amounts of waste they throw away.

Waste prevention, re-use and higher recycling targets will be key priorities for Merseyside whilst making better use of our natural resources in supporting our local economy.

Merseyside has committed to achieve 50% household waste recycling by 2020. Sefton currently recycles around 38% of its household waste.

The Merseyside waste strategy and supporting evidence can be found at http://www.merseysidewda.gov.uk/waste-strategy/

Environmental Anti Social Behaviour

Everyone wants to live in a safe, secure and welcoming environment and to not be a victim of anti-social behaviour in their own neighbourhood. Yet environmental anti-social behaviour and nuisance are perceived to be a problem by members of the public across the country. According to the most recent figures in the Office for National Statistics' Crime Survey for England and Wales (2013), 29 per cent of people think that litter is a big problem in their area. Graffiti and other criminal damage also rank highly with 19 per cent saying it is an issue.

The effects of anti-social behaviour (ASB) are most visible when the results of that behaviour ruin the places that we visit as we walk out of our front doors. Litter and dog fouling in our streets and parks, graffiti and fly posting covering our shopping centres, and waste fly tipped on vacant land and passageways signals to the community that anti-social behaviour is taking hold. As the distance from the front door to the enviro-crime reduces and local streets, gardens, and even homes are degraded by litter, graffiti and abandoned cars, the community's confidence in all public services becomes severely undermined and community well-being suffers.

Tackling the problem is not impossible, but is resource intensive, unless communities rise to challenge such antisocial behaviour in their own neighbourhood. Tackling environmental ASB pays real dividends as people feel safer when their streets, parks, schools and wider community are clean and maintained. Once public services have established that they can tackle these problems quickly, the local community can regain a sense of pride in, their area. This makes them more willing to act responsibly, take care of their neighbourhood and to have a greater sense of wellbeing and belonging. Sefton has a two pronged approach to these issues, through its direct street cleansing activity and through enforcement of responsibilities and offences with statutory action to remove offensive waste from private land.

Overall across Sefton the number of calls for service in relation to Environmental ASB has increased year on year by 1%: More than half of wards (12 of 22) have seen an increase in calls. Linacre ward accounts for 15% (1,450) of all calls in relation to environmental issues across Sefton, followed by the neighbouring ward of Derby, which accounts for a further 11% (1,094). This means more than a quarter of all environmental calls are made from these two wards.

The biggest environmental issue reported to Sefton MBC remains fly tipping, which accounts for almost a third (3,066 of 9,476) of all calls: There has been a year on year increase of more than 7%. In fly tipping calls to Sefton MBC
As with total calls, Linacre accounts for the highest number of fly tipping calls with 583, which equates to almost one in five of all fly tipping calls.

Coast & Greenspaces

There is evidence that living close to areas of blue and green space such as parks, nature reserves, woodland, open water or the sea can improve health. Numerous studies point to the direct benefits of green and blue space to both physical and mental health and wellbeing. A 2009 study, for example, examined the difference between green space being three kilometres or one kilometre from one's home, and found that having green spaces within one kilometre reduced disease prevalence. A more recent study in 2013 identifies the health benefits of the coast.

The presence of outdoor spaces also has indirect benefits such as providing space for physical activity, sport and play, improving air quality and moderating temperatures locally. Children's physical activity levels are increased when they live closer to parks, playgrounds, and recreation areas. The Call to Action on Obesity suggests local authorities should use opportunities to ensure the widest possible access to opportunities to be physically active through the use of parks and other outdoor spaces, as well as drawing upon sport and leisure services.

Sefton has around 150 public parks and playing fields, including tennis and bowling greens, 2 municipal golf courses and 61 equipped play areas. Statutory wildlife areas reserve in 3 Local Nature Reserves and 3 National Nature Reserves.

Along its 22 miles length, most of the Sefton Coast is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation. Important nature sites, as well as recreation sites, community woodlands and beaches, are accessible at Crosby Coastal Park, Formby and Ainsdale on Sea; Marshside and Southport Seafront are also very important resource for local people and visitors. Networks of paths and cycle routes, the canal towpath, help to provide access to areas of green space and the coast. An indicator of use of open space for exercise/health reasons is included in the Public Health Outcomes Framework