The State of the Borough in Halton

An Economic, Social and Environmental Audit of Halton
January 2009

Most of the data in this report reflects the situation before the economic downturn as it is a snapshot of the latest data available.

Data is constantly being updated on the Halton Observatory website:

http://halton.localknowledge.co.uk/

and on the Research & Intelligence website:

www.halton.gov.uk/research

State of the Borough January 2009 update

This is an update of the January 2008 report. All the tables within the report have been updated, however as there has only been a year between the two reports the data will not have changed significantly and many of the messages remain the same. The larger changes have been highlighted below:

- Unemployment rate has risen to 3.6% (Oct 2008) from 2.9% (Oct 2007), however the long term unemployed rate has decreased to 10.4% from 11.3%, *table 7: labour market.*
- Offences per 1,000 population has increased since the last report to 63.7 (2007-2008) from 41.7(2006-2007). Halton's total crime score has increased with its ranking moving from 79 to 65 nationally, *table 16: crime.*
- Halton's commercial and industrial floorspace rank has fallen since the last report. Currently Halton is ranked 50 out of 375 (2007) compared to a rank of 22 (2006) in the last report, *table 18: commercial and industrial property.*
- Halton's local amenities rank has improved since the last report where it had a rank of 219 out of 376 (2007). Currently Halton is ranked 109 out of 376 (2008) although this is mainly due to improved GCSE results, *table 20: Services and Amenities*.

The final 'scorecard' – shown in Table 22 – assesses the state of Halton in terms of the three main dimensions of sustainable development. There have been no significant changes since the last report. The scores represent the quintile where the district falls on each of the measures ('A' representing the strongest performance, ranging to 'E' representing the weakest).

- Economic Development – Halton scores a 'C' overall, and against the region, however, its performance is mixed. Halton scores well on aspects of economic development relating to productivity (A – up from B in 2004), business and enterprise (A) and industrial structure (A). The Borough performs less well in terms of its human capital where the scores slip to an 'E'. There may be implications for future economic development, and the continued low score of an 'E' on economic change is still a cause for concern. The results in this sector are very similar to 2004.
- Social Development – In the context of Great Britain as a whole, Halton scores an 'E'. However Halton still performs poorly on most indicators of social profile. The borough also performs poorly when compared regionally, recording lower scores for all indicators except inequality where it is in the mid quintile.
- Environment – Halton's performance is mixed for the environment, with an overall score of a 'B'. It performs well in terms of housing affordability and floorspace change, scoring an 'A' in both, The Borough also performs above average in terms of connectivity, with a score of a 'B' when compared to the nation. It performs less well in terms of services, amenities and the natural environment, although it's mostly better than the region for these measures.

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1 Introduction

"Halton will be a thriving and vibrant borough where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfill their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and within safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods."[1]

1.1 Background

This is the fourth review of the State of the Borough that Halton has undertaken, following the first one produced in the year 2000, which was revised in 2002 and rewritten at the beginning of 2005 and updated in 2008. This is the second one prepared since the Halton Data Observatory was set up and populated with a wide range of indicators about Halton. This report has used the Observatory as its principal source of data for this review. It covers the same audit of economic, social and environmental conditions as the last edition and presents the key findings of this latest assessment of the challenges and issues that face the Borough of Halton.

Information found in this report is a snapshot of the latest data available. Data is regularly updated by on the Research & Intelligence's website: www.halton.gov.uk/research

The very first State of the Borough report in 2000 underpinned the process whereby the Council and its strategic partners agreed on 5 shared goals to improve the position of Halton and its people: These five aims covered health, regeneration, life chances, wealth and safer communities. They have been reviewed each time the State of the Borough has been produced and each time the analysis has concluded they were still the most relevant subject areas for the next part of the process. In 2006 the Council and its partners agreed a new sustainable community strategy for Halton, again based on the analysis of the State of Halton report. The Strategy articulates five priorities for the Borough:

- ***A Healthy Halton*** - *To create a healthier community and work to promote well being - a positive experience of life with good health.*
- ***Halton's Urban Renewal*** - *To transform the urban fabric and infrastructure, to develop exciting places and spaces and to create a vibrant and accessible borough.*
- ***Halton's Children and Young People*** - *To ensure that in Halton children and young people are safeguarded, healthy and happy.*
- ***Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton*** - *To create an economically prosperous borough that encourages investment, entrepreneurship, enterprise and business growth.*
- ***A Safer Halton*** - *To ensure pleasant, safe and secure neighbourhood environments where people can enjoy life.*

This will be achieved through the following approach:

[1] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.

- ***Closing the gap*** *between the most deprived communities in the borough and in Halton overall.*
- ***Tackling inequality*** *and promoting community cohesion, so that no community is disadvantaged.*
- ***Making what we do sustainable*** *so that our quality of life is protected and enhanced for the benefit off current and future generations.*
- ***Investing in preventative activity*** *that stops problems occurring rather than paying for actions to fix things that are going wrong. We need to invest more in success, rather than in failure.*

It will be delivered using these principles:

- ***Leadership*** *- the Partnership's role is to give clear strategic leadership to the borough and enable people to make the necessary contributions to make a difference.*
- ***Fair and inclusive -*** *promoting equal access to opportunities and facilities. This includes the need to positively target activity at the most deprived geographical areas or particular groups of people.*
- ***Good value -*** *being economical, efficient and effective in delivering 'Best Value' for the public.*
- ***Collaborative*** *- this is about collective responsibility for making things better and embedding partnership approaches in everything that we do.*
- ***Evidence-based -*** *ensuring we learn from best practice elsewhere and make good use of research about what works in addressing the borough's priorities.*

Given that these nearly all involve 10, 15 or even 20 year implementation programmes to achieve, it is not surprising that the same five goals remain constant. They also mirror the same aims and objectives of other similarly characterised areas in other parts of the country. These characteristics are of a mostly tightly populated urban area with a strong manufacturing heritage (in Halton's case the chemical industry – but it would be similar to many other old mining or steel towns of northern England where the old infrastructure is defunct and the town has had to look to new solutions to re-establish itself).

1.2 This Report

The Halton Data Observatory was commissioned in 2005 and introduced in 2006. Its platform is the same Local Futures system that was used in the last audit because Halton's Strategic Partnership was so impressed by the audit undertaken by Local Futures in 2005 that they commissioned them to use the same basis for the Halton Data Observatory. The Observatory therefore incorporates the same development history, i.e. it's based on the same platform that was developed in collaboration with the Audit Commission, the Local Government Association, plus individual local authorities and partnerships.

The basic thrust of this Audit is to compare and benchmark the performance of Halton against a selection of comparator districts, the Greater Merseyside sub-region, the North West, and the rest of Britain. Performance is assessed according to how well the borough scores on a range of carefully selected benchmark indicators of economic, social and environmental well-being.

The results of the audit can be used to inform policy development and reviews such as the Annual Performance Plan, and can also be used as an evidence base in order to advance Halton Council's economic development and regeneration priorities with the NWDA, NWRA, the Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and other strategic bodies.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 – Economic Development, covering: economic performance, industrial structure, business and enterprise, education and skills, and the labour market;
- Chapter 3 – Social Profile, covering: age and occupational structure, prosperity, deprivation and inequality, health, and crime;
- Chapter 4 – Environment, covering: housing, commercial and industrial property, transport and connectivity, services and amenities, and the natural environment;
- Chapter 5 – Synthesis and Conclusions, draws together the three broad sets of findings and discusses their implications for Halton Borough Council.

The main body of the report draws on a selected number of benchmark indicators. It is essentially a snapshot of the latest position in early 2009. However, because the data comes from many different original sources and collected at different time periods, it is a snapshot covering data ranging from the 2001 Census to the IMD 2007, with the majority centring around 2005/2006.

2 Economic Development

2.1 Introduction

This audit follows the same structure as the last one so it can compare or monitor the changes – both improvements and any worsening situations – since early 2005. It begins by assessing the present state of the Halton's economy in terms of its competitiveness at the sub-regional, regional and national levels. The Audit examines five aspects of economic development that need to be 'joined-up' in the context of strategy, partnership and practical initiatives. The five aspects, each with their own benchmark indicators, are as follows:

- Macro-economic performance;
- Industrial structure;
- Business and enterprise;
- Skills and education;
- Labour market.

This analysis of Halton's performance in respect of each of these aspects is presented below. At the end of the chapter, a composite picture is given which shows how these aspects inter-relate, and summarise the key findings on economic development in Halton. The latest data has been used in each case, even though in some cases it may still be several years old.

2.2 Macro-Economic Performance

Macro-economic performance has been examined using indicators for economic scale, productivity, and change.

Beginning with economic scale, the Audit assesses scale in terms of both output and employment (workplace-based). The results are presented in Table 1.

- Halton still has a relatively small economy and has improved in recent years, however from 2005 to 2006 its ranking has fallen from 167th to 171st out of 408 British districts for economic scale. Out of 10 Merseyside and North Cheshire Authorities, Chester, Knowsley, Vale Royal and Warrington have all improved.

- Halton's economy is relatively small by national standards (the economic scale score of 81.5 is below the national average which is benchmarked to a score of 100), with low shares of Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment. However all these measurements have improved slightly, relative to the national rank or share over the last 4 years. Not surprisingly, the economy of the sub-region is still dominated by Liverpool.

Table 1: Economic Scale

LAD	Share of national GVA, 2005	Share of total national employment, 2006	Economic Scale Score (GB=100)	Economic Scale Score Rank (of 408)
Liverpool	0.68	0.86	314.3	12
Warrington	0.42	0.44	174.3	46
Sefton	0.3	0.37	137.0	75
Wirral	0.3	0.37	136.2	76
Chester	0.27	0.27	109.1	116
Middlesbrough	0.21	0.24	91.8	149
St. Helens	0.19	0.23	86.6	159
Halton	**0.19**	**0.21**	**81.5**	**171**
Knowsley	0.18	0.21	79.4	180
Vale Royal	0.19	0.18	76.0	192
Ellesmere Port and Neston	0.12	0.12	50.0	311
Hartlepool	0.11	0.12	47.9	316
Greater Merseyside	1.85	2.24	108.5	18 (of 53)
North West	10.15	11.44	118.8	3 (of 11)
Great Britain	100	100	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

The second measure of macro-economic performance is productivity. Table 2 shows the results.

- Halton is the 76th most productive economy out of 408 in Great Britain.

This continues the improvement shown in the last audit. This represents a rise of 33 places from 109th to 76th in 4 years – a very good achievement. Its index score of productivity has dropped since the last audit from 112.7 to 108.6. However, Halton is doing better than the national average, which is indexed at 100. Halton's GVA per head is second only to Warrington in the list of 12 comparator authorities in table 2, at £21,371. Also up in relative terms are the workplace weekly earnings, from just below the national average 4 years ago to an index figure of 107.4, ie 7.4% above the national average.

These improvements are even more impressive when compared to the relative changes in Greater Merseyside and the North West. In the Merseyside sub region, conditions have improved since the last audit so that its rank has improved among sub regions from 36th to 33rd.

Table 2: Productivity and Earnings

LAD	Average gross weekly earnings (wkpl), GB=100, 2006	GVA per head 2005	Economic Productivity Score (GB = 100)	Economic Productivity Score Rank (of 408)
Warrington	103.3	£22,945	116.6	57
Halton	**107.4**	**£21,371**	**108.6**	**76**
Ellesmere Port and Neston	110.4	£19,476	103.0	101
Chester	99.1	£19,003	100.5	114
Vale Royal	94.0	£18,372	97.2	126
Liverpool	98.5	£16,334	93.2	146
Knowsley	101.3	£12,762	87.4	189
Hartlepool	82.8	£12,715	78.1	265
St. Helens	86.6	£11,091	76.0	290
Middlesbrough	88.0	£11,399	73.2	323
Sefton	85.9	£9,949	70.3	353
Wirral	82.4	£8,949	67.9	369
Greater Merseyside	92.3	£12,981	82.1	33 (of 53)
North West	93.0	£15,571	90.7	6 (of 11)
Great Britain	98.3	£18,945	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

The final measure of macro-economic performance in this latest snap shot of Halton's performance is the degree of economic change between 1998 and 2007 (see Table 3).

- In terms of change in employment, Halton performs well below the national average and is ranked 339th of all districts nationally, out of 408 districts. This is primarily because of Halton's dependence on the manufacturing sector and this sector has been affected most in falling numbers. Despite this, Halton's ranking is 41 places higher than it was 4 years ago. All the other Merseyside and North Cheshire comparators have seen their position decline over the same period.

Total employment in Halton decreased by 0.7 percent during 1998 - 2007, well below the national increase of 10.1 percent, and the North West regional increase of 9.6 percent. Halton had the third lowest rate of change of all comparator areas with the exception of Ellesmere Port and Neston and the Wirral. This is a similar position to the last audit carried out January 2008.

Halton performed better in terms of change in gross weekly earnings, with a 6.9 per cent increase in wages between 2005 - 2006. This was 4th highest in the comparator towns and better than the sub regional, regional and national increases.

Table 3: Economic Change

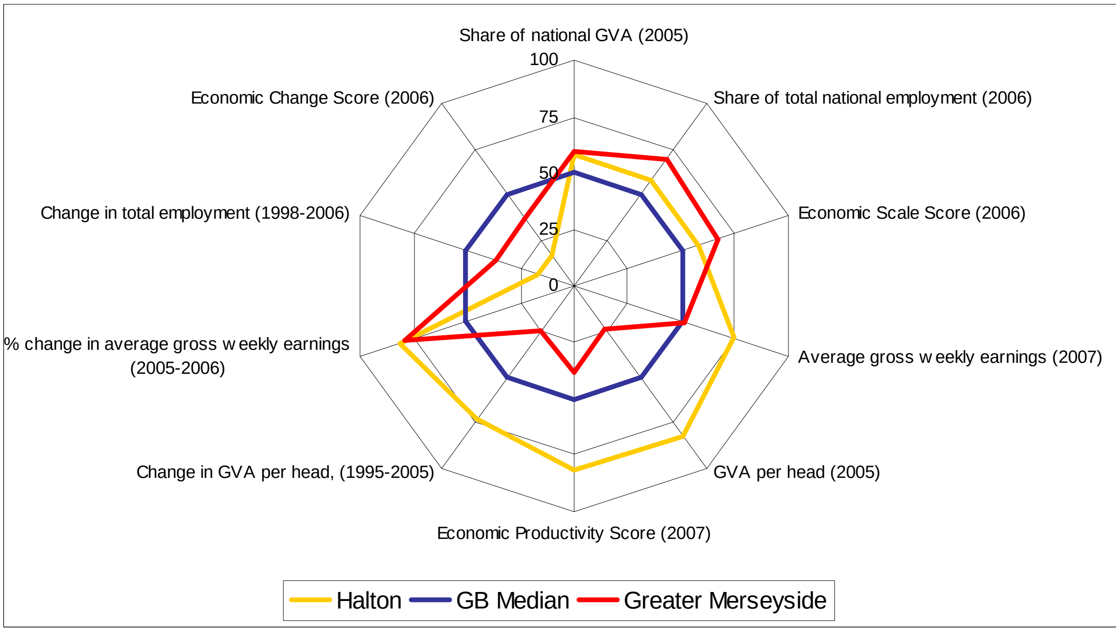
LAD	Change in GVA per head, (1995-2005)	% change in average gross weekly earnings, 2005-2006	Change in total employment 1998-2007	Economic Change Score (2006) (GB=100)	Economic Change Score Rank (of 408)
Knowsley	67.1	4.3	35.68	402.7	11
Middlesbrough	54.8	-0.5	23.2	229.1	67
Warrington	70.0	-6.4	10.66	168.5	127
Vale Royal	49.7	1.4	15.82	146.8	150
Liverpool	75.3	3.0	12.07	143.6	154
Chester	49.7	8.2	10.45	129.4	180
St. Helens	67.1	5.1	14.8	126.4	184
Hartlepool	32.8	-0.2	2.24	69.6	244
Sefton	55.1	8.3	2.11	47.9	275
Ellesmere Port and Neston	49.7	9.4	-3.23	-17.4	336
Halton	**70.0**	**6.9**	**-0.71**	**-19.0**	**339**
Wirral	56.9	0.7	-5.93	-86.9	391
Greater Merseyside	67.0	4.2	7.76	85.5	34 (of 53)
North West	57.4	3.9	9.58	98.3	7 (of 11)
Great Britain	64.1	4.4	10.11	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

A summary of Halton's macro-economic performance is shown in Figure 1. The spider chart shows how the borough rates against all 408 districts in Great Britain, and the Greater Merseyside sub region, where the top ranked areas score 100 and the bottom 0.

- Overall the borough of Halton is performing well. The economy is relatively small (particularly compared to nearby, larger settlements such as Liverpool), but productivity is above average. Trends in economic change are a cause for concern however, when increases in general employment are undermined by declines in the manufacturing totals, which leave Halton with one of the worst positions in the country.

Figure 1: Macro-Economic Performance



Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures [2]

2.3 Industrial Structure

In advanced economies, the critical structural economic trend is the growth of the knowledge economy across and within all sectors, marked by rising levels of innovation, technology, creativity, and entrepreneurship – and by a more skilled and educated workforce. Halton's Community Strategy emphasizes the need for a "more competitive economy with a wider, more diversified base for employment opportunities." [3]

This audit assesses the Halton's industrial structure from this knowledge economy perspective. This is done by separating:

- 'Knowledge-based production' – aerospace, electrical machinery and optical equipment, printing, publishing and recorded media, chemicals and energy; and
- 'Knowledge-based services' – telecommunications, computer & related services, R&D, finance and business services, air transport services, recreational and cultural services.

These industrial groupings are based upon European Commission and OECD definitions of 'knowledge-intensity' where individual industries are classified as 'knowledge-based' if graduates make up at least 25 per cent of their workforce. The results of the assessment of Halton's industrial structure are shown in Table 4.

[2] This chart displays the national ranking of Halton and Greater Merseyside; converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)
[3] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.

- Halton contains a high proportion of employment in knowledge-driven sectors, ranking it 34th out of 408 districts in the country. This is an improvement on last years audit when Halton was ranked 48th.

In 2006 some 33.1 per cent of employees in Halton were working in knowledge-driven sectors, compared to 22.4 per cent in the North West and 24.3 per cent in Great Britain. This was second highest among all the comparator districts and ranks Halton 34th nationally. A large proportion of the knowledge economy in Halton is composed of knowledge-driven production – 7.7 per cent – compared to 3.4 per cent in Great Britain as a whole, i.e. over double the GB average. The proportion of employment in knowledge-driven services in Halton is 25.4 per cent, again above the national average of 20.9%.

Employment in the knowledge economy in Halton has increased by 35.1 per cent between 1998 and 2007 (in contrast to a increase of 20.5% between 1998-2006). This is above the national, region and sub region figures.

The public sector is an important driver of the knowledge economy, and crucially provides a 'buffer' against economic downturns. The proportion of employment in public services in Halton was actually lower than most comparator areas and Great Britain as a whole in 2005 and again in 2006. (18.9 per cent compared to 27.1 per cent in Great Britain). Furthermore, between 1998-2007 employment in the public services actually declined by –4.1% in the Borough, in contrast to big increases nationally (14.2 per cent) and among all comparator towns. The largest increase was recorded in Knowsley at 48.1 per cent and 40.3% in Ellesmere Port & Neston.

Table 4: Industrial Structure

LAD	Employment: K-production (wkpl) (%) 2006	Employment: K-services (wkpl) (%) 2006	Employment: K-sectors (wkpl) (%) 2006	Employ change: k-sectors (wkpl) (%) 1998-2007	Employment: public services (wkpl) (%) 2006	Employ change: public services (wkpl) (%) 1998-2007	Industrial structure score (GB=100) 2006	Industrial Structure Score Rank (of 408)
Warrington	4.04	29.27	33.3	22.55	19.45	39.82	137.81	32
Halton	**7.67**	**25.39**	**33.06**	**35.06**	**18.88**	**-4.08**	**136.81**	**34**
Chester	2.04	28.69	30.73	31.69	26.29	19.59	127.16	47
Vale Royal	4.54	19.00	23.53	21.28	23.52	38.71	97.39	117
Ellesmere Port and Neston	7.37	14.73	22.1	35.06	18.78	40.29	91.46	151
Liverpool	1.73	18.69	20.43	26.54	39.31	12.16	84.53	171
Middlesbrough	1.53	18.54	20.07	21.81	38.57	13.09	83.07	180
Sefton	1.1	16.59	17.7	-12.31	39.15	16.02	73.24	231
Hartlepool	3.75	13.69	17.44	29.15	30.02	23.89	72.17	242
Wirral	3.26	13.72	16.99	38	36.15	16.63	70.29	254
Knowsley	4.69	11.50	16.19	114.28	32.89	48.1	66.99	274
St. Helens	2.2	12.26	14.46	35.87	25.95	28.33	59.85	330
Greater Merseyside	2.75	16.81	19.56	22.93	34.93	15.93	80.94	35 (of 53)
North West	3.9	18.51	22.41	29.57	27.79	14.53	92.74	4 (of 11)
Great Britain	3.42	20.90	24.32	22.72	27.10	14.18	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

2.4 Business and Enterprise

A dynamic local enterprise culture is imperative to the competitiveness and overall economic success of Halton. Business support is one of the three key 'focuses' of the Borough's Economic Development Strategy which emphasises the need to encourage start-ups and provide the necessary support to facilitate future growth. This latest audit's Enterprise Index accounts for new business survival, business formation and change, and change in VAT registered business stock. Table 5 shows the results of the latest audit of business and enterprise in Halton.

- Halton performs well in terms of business and enterprise, as its rank has improved from 119th to 19th out of 408 districts in the country for 2007 over 2003.

Business density (measured by the number of firms per 1000 population) in Halton has improved since 2004 but is still lower than the national and regional averages. In 2008 there were 26.7 businesses per 1000 population in Halton, compared to 34.5 per 1000 population in the North West and 40.2 per 1000 population nationally. Among comparator areas Chester and Vale Royal record the highest density of firms, at 46.8 per 1,000 and 42.4 per 1,000 respectively.

A positive sign is the increase in the number of VAT registered businesses in Halton between 1998-2008. The increase in Halton was 37.2%, well above the national average of 21.3 percent and above all the comparator districts except Knowsley at 40.9%. The level of entrepreneurship is slightly above average with a new business formation rate of 14.0 percent compared to the national average of 10.6 per cent. The 2 year survival rate of new business is not so good this time, - at 79% its down from 81.2% in 2000-2002 and below all the other comparators including the Great Britain average of 80.2 per cent.

The proportion of businesses in Halton operating in the knowledge economy has increased to just above the regional average. In 2007, the Halton figure was 30.7 while the North West figure was 29.7. The increase in business in knowledge driven sectors between 1998 and 2007 is 35.1%, higher than the national and regional averages of 22.7% and 29.6%. The share of employers who are SMEs in 2007 was 20.7%, higher than the national average of 14.9% and 2nd highest in the comparator group.

Table 5: Business and Enterprise

LAD	Proportion of businesses in Knowledge-driven production, 2007	Proportion of businesses in Knowledge-driven services, 2007	Proportion of businesses in Knowledge-driven sectors, 2007	Change in businesses in knowledge driven sectors, 1998-2007	Business per 1000 population (Number) 2008	Average business size 2007	share of employers who are micro 2007	share of employers who are SME 2007	share of employers who are large 2007	New business formation rate (%) 2007	Change in VAT business stock (%) 1998-2008	New Business Survival Rate (24 months) (%) 2003-2005	Business Enterprise Score 2007 (GB=100)	Business Enterprise Score Rank
Knowsley	1.5	31.7	33.2	114.3	17.0	15.5	80.0	19.1	0.9	12.9	40.9	83	124.3	17
Halton	**2.9**	**27.9**	**30.7**	**35.1**	**26.7**	**15.1**	**78.3**	**20.7**	**1.0**	**14.0**	**37.2**	**79**	**124.0**	**19**
Warrington	1.6	36.0	37.6	22.6	37.0	13.9	82.4	16.5	1.2	14.0	32.6	84	123.6	20
Ellesmere Port and Neston	2.4	28.6	30.9	35.1	25.0	13.2	78.8	20.6	0.6	14.7	23.1	85	120.4	27
Hartlepool	1.6	22.5	24.0	29.2	20.4	13.6	80.2	18.9	0.9	14.1	24.7	82	117.6	36
St. Helens	1.7	22.8	24.5	35.9	23.8	13.0	80.0	19.1	0.9	12.7	27.4	83	114.2	44
Middlesbrough	1.1	26.9	28.1	21.8	18.6	17.9	77.6	21.2	1.2	14.3	19.8	80	114.0	46
Wirral	1.6	28.2	29.8	38.0	24.1	11.1	82.6	16.7	0.6	12.2	22.4	81	107.7	96
Chester	1.4	35.6	37.0	31.7	46.8	11.7	83.6	15.8	0.6	11.5	21.7	84	106.0	118
Sefton	1.4	25.5	26.9	-12.3	26.3	11.1	83.0	16.5	0.6	11.7	19.8	84	105.7	121
Liverpool	1.2	27.8	29.0	26.5	25.1	16.5	79.6	19.3	1.1	12.0	21.2	80	105.5	127
Vale Royal	1.5	32.6	34.1	21.3	42.4	9.8	85.9	13.5	0.6	10.5	27.2	81	104.2	146
Greater Merseyside	1.6	27.2	28.8	22.9	24.3	13.7	80.9	18.3	0.9	12.3	24.4	81.54	109.8	6 (of 53)
North West	1.6	28.2	29.7	29.6	34.5	12.0	83.1	16.2	0.7	10.9	19.7	82	101.4	4 (of 11)
Great Britain	1.7	30.6	32.3	22.7	40.2	11.1	84.5	14.9	0.7	10.6	21.3	80.19	114.4	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

2.5 Education and Skills

This is where the good news about the economic prosperity ends. The local economy may be doing very well, but the ability of local people to access that prosperity is governed by their skills and qualifications – or lack of them.

The knowledge economy – a key policy goal of NWDA – is powered by human capital, itself measured according to the knowledge, skills and other attributes of the workforce. The importance of education and training is recognised by the Halton Strategic Partnership which, in the community strategy for the Borough, stresses that personal development and training are important "to promote the ability of local residents to ensure they have the skills and means to access a range of good quality secure job opportunities, and encourage residents to seek employment". [4]

In this latest audit, local levels of education and skills are assessed in terms of the qualifications profile of the working age population (i.e. the available workforce) and the results are presented in Table 6.

- Halton performs poorly in terms of skills and qualifications levels, ranked 387th out of 408 districts in the country, 21st worse in GB. This is down from 370th in 2006, illustrating that other LAs are outperforming Halton and overtaking it.

The proportion of working age people with 'higher end' skills in Halton is lower than Great Britain, the region and the Greater Merseyside sub region. In 2007, 16.2 per cent of people were qualified to at least NVQ level 4 (a university degree), compared to 28.6 per cent in Great Britain, 25.4 per cent in the North West and 21.6 in Greater Merseyside.

[4] Halton Borough Council, Halton Community Strategy

At the other end of the scale, 20.1% of people in Halton possessed either no qualifications, or were qualified to NVQ level 1 equivalent in 2007. This was a big improvement from the 2002-03 figure when it was 41.7 per cent of the working age population. However, other areas have improved even more to leave Halton in a worse rank in 2007 than it was in 2002. Both Liverpool and Hartlepool, plus the Greater Merseyside average have all overtaken Halton in the past 4 years. In 2002-2003 Knowsley was over 10 percentage points worse than Halton; by 2007 Knowsley had overtaken Halton.

Table 6: Education and Skills

LAD	Proportion of working population qualified below NVQ 2 Jan-Dec 2007	Proportion of working population with NVQ 2 Jan-Dec 2007	Proportion of working population with NVQ 3 Jan-Dec 2007	Proportion of working population with NVQ 4+ Jan-Dec 2007	Change in working age population with no qualifications, 1997-2003	Change in working age population with nvq4+, 1997-2003	Training in last 13 weeks (res) (%) March 2008	GCSE's A*-C (%) 2006/07	IMD - Education score (Av score) 2007	Skills and quals score (res) (GB=100) Jan-Dec 2007	Skills and quals score rank (of 408)
Chester	15.17	16.18	19.95	36.11	11.81	16.27	18.58	61.1	12.13	106.05	113
Warrington	16.76	20.09	18.97	32.2	-5.28	24.14	21.8	69.7	16.99	103.56	162
Vale Royal	21.71	22.19	13.53	34.24	16.87	3.34	16.84	67.1	16.29	102.36	187
Ellesmere Port and Neston	21.16	21.63	19.35	26.92	-33.27	1.92	17.81	54.9	23.59	100.64	211
Wirral	16.73	23.97	20.79	24.95	-2.54	5.82	16.06	60.9	20.52	99.98	229
Sefton	17.35	24.78	17.09	25.87	-4.98	24.09	17.09	64.1	19.02	96.45	283
Middlesbrough	16.62	23.53	22.39	19.49	-28.61	30.16	21.68	53.9	38.82	94.44	311
Hartlepool	17.86	26.27	22.42	17	-20.44	23.47	21.88	61.6	33.1	94.26	316
St. Helens	18.29	24.37	17.38	22.28	18.01	4.3	20.65	62.3	26.32	92.01	346
Liverpool	17.22	21.81	18.49	20.15	2.31	23.68	19.41	58.3	38.08	87.8	381
Halton	**20.14**	**26.92**	**17**	**16.18**	**-12.06**	**46.8**	**17.35**	**61.9**	**30.12**	**86.28**	**387**
Knowsley	20.13	22.66	17.28	15.5	23.01	47.88	17.94	50.8	43.89	81.74	403
Greater Merseyside	17.82	23.6	18.32	21.59	3.41	18.53	18.14	59.95	29.29	91.57	52 (of 53)
North West	18.04	22.32	19.34	25.35	-5.2	13.26	19.22	60.13	24.89	97.37	8 (of 11)
Great Britain	18.43	21.16	18.70	28.59	-12.63	17.53	20.28	62.00	22.67	100.00	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

2.6 Labour Market

The final aspect to be considered within the economic development section of this audit is on the labour market characteristics of Halton. Compared to the EU average, Britain has a less regulated labour market and enjoys relatively high employment rates and low unemployment (most of the country exceeds the minimum 70 per cent employment rate target set by the European Commission in the EU Employment Action Plan). Table 7 provides a summary of labour market conditions in the borough and the comparator towns.

- Halton still performs poorly with respect to the labour market, but its ranking out of 408 districts in the country has risen slightly from 357th in 2006 to 346th by 2008 and the gap between it and the national average has narrowed.

With an employment rate of 70 in 2008 (up from 66.7% in 2002/03, Halton is now only 4.7 percentage points below the national average compared to 7.5 percentage points in 2002. This is a continued improvement since the last audit in January 2008. Employment rates are fairly low across the comparator areas, with only Chester, Ellesmere Port & Neston and Warrington above the national average. The level of unemployment in Halton as a proportion of working age population was 3.6 per cent compared to 2.6 per cent nationally, and 3 per cent regionally – a slightly wider gap than previously. Encouragingly, Halton's proportion of long term unemployment compares favourably to National, regional and sub region rates. The Self employment rate has fallen since the previous audit from 7.6% (2007) to 6.1% (2008).

Table 7: Labour Market

LAD	Full-time employ (M) (res) (%) March 2008	Part-time employ (M) (res) (%) March 2008	Full-time employ (F) (res) (%) March 2008	Part-time employ (F) (res) (%) March 2008	Employment rate (res) (%) March 2008	Unemployment rate (%) October 2008	Unemployment - Long-term (%) October 2008	Self employment rate (res) (%) March 2008	IMD - Employment score (Av score) 2007	Economic activity (res) (%) March 2008	Labour market score (GB=100) March 2008	Labour Market Score Rank (of 408)
Warrington	89.52	10.08	57.04	42.96	77.2	2.5	10.3	8.4	0.11	80.1	103.4	185
Ellesmere Port and Neston	89.05	11.44	52.02	48.55	75.8	2.5	7.6	4.8	0.12	78.3	101.5	224
Chester	93.77	6.56	52.42	47.98	75.7	1.8	7.1	12.64	0.1	79.0	101.4	227
Vale Royal	93.18	6.49	53.93	46.44	74.5	2.3	8.9	10.78	0.1	77.8	99.8	258
Sefton	85.46	13.73	57.62	42.38	71.7	3.6	15.5	12.17	0.16	76.1	96.0	320
Halton	**93.82**	**6.18**	**59.45**	**40.55**	**70**	**3.6**	**10.4**	**6.05**	**0.18**	**75.4**	**93.8**	**346**
Wirral	86.68	12.87	54.32	45.68	69.6	3.7	9.9	10.17	0.18	74.8	93.2	351
St. Helens	93.23	6.27	54.27	45.43	66.9	3.6	9.5	8.68	0.19	72.6	89.6	380
Middlesbrough	89.74	9.6	53.93	45.69	66.3	5.4	20.9	6.85	0.21	72.0	88.8	384
Hartlepool	92.27	7.22	56.73	43.27	66.1	4.9	10.7	7.12	0.23	74.7	88.5	388
Knowsley	90.88	8.49	59.93	39.72	65	4.7	11.4	6.12	0.25	71.4	87.1	394
Liverpool	88.91	10.45	63.1	36.9	64.6	5.7	21.8	9.63	0.25	69.9	86.5	397
Greater Merseyside	88.94	10.5	58.58	41.35	67.75	4.39	15.7	9.45	0.21	73.0	90.7	50 (of 53)
North West	89.94	9.9	60.47	39.5	72.3	3	10.5	11.87	0.15	76.8	96.8	8 (of 11)
Great Britain	90.20	9.64	59.26	40.69	74.66	2.55	10.2	11.9	0.11	78.8	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

2.7 Summary

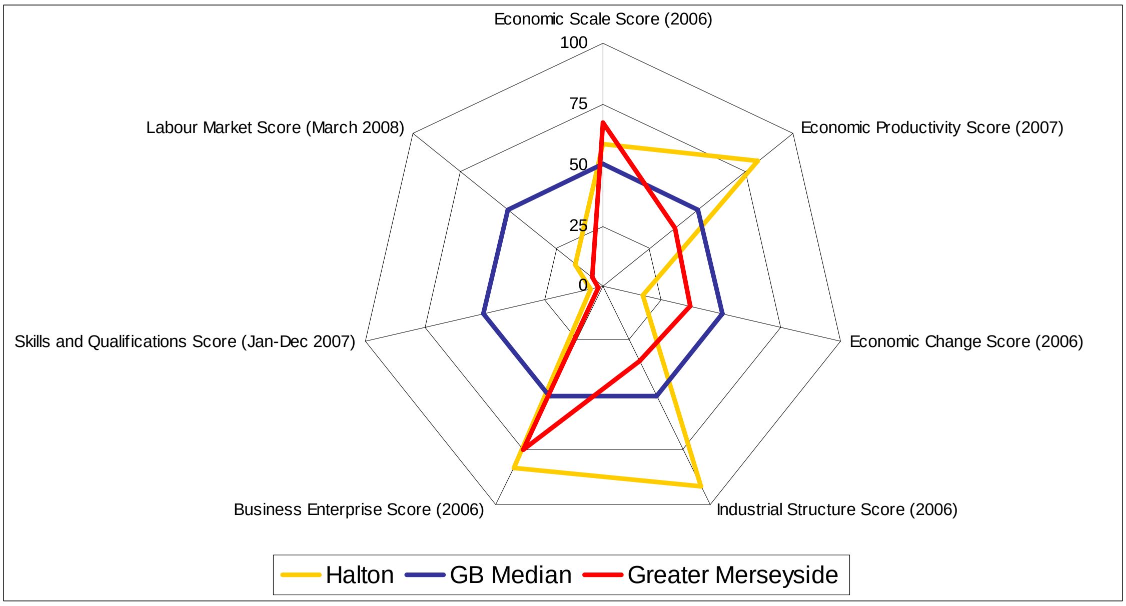
A summary of Halton's economic development profile is presented in Figure 2, comparing it with Greater Merseyside as a whole. The district has a relatively small economy (largely a result of its small geographical area), but productivity is above average. Business density is growing strongly, and the change between 1998 and 2006 for the knowledge driven sectors is above average.

The growth in businesses per 1000 population has been reflected in employment trends. Employment has remained steady, while unemployment has increased slightly. The borough's very low skills base is reflected in the lower than average employment rates and the higher levels of unemployment.

In order to improve levels of growth, further improvements will be needed in the skills and qualifications base of the workforce – the district's human capital. The proportion of the resident population with at least a first degree – more important in a modern knowledge economy than ever before – is well below the national average. The number of people with no qualifications is falling, but not as much or as fast as elsewhere.

One of the strengths of this audit is that it allows for the comparison of geographical areas in order to benchmark relative performance. Most of the comparator districts perform poorly against the national average, particularly on key indicators of economic productivity, industrial structure, skill levels, employment and unemployment. The next diagram summaries the main points in one diagram to provide an overview of complex issues. .

Figure 2: Economic Development Summary



Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures[5]

[5] This chart displays the national ranking of Halton and Greater Merseyside; converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

3 Social Profile

3.1 Introduction

Social issues are recognised as important considerations within the Community Strategy for Halton. An understanding of the social profile of the borough ties in with several of Halton's priorities, with the overall aim of "improving the quality of life for today's Halton residents." [6]

This audit assesses six aspects of Halton's social profile that are of relevance to the Council's aims and objectives, including:

- Demography and migration;
- Occupational structure;
- Wealth;
- Deprivation and inequality;
- Health;
- Crime.

The results of this analysis are presented below; at the end of the chapter a composite picture of the findings is provided.

3.2 Demography and Migration

Halton's demographic characteristics have a fundamental influence on the district's social and economic development. Table 8 shows the age profile of the borough.

- The average age in Halton is 38.0 years, placing the Borough in the bottom quintile (20%) out of 408 districts in the country (where the top quintile has the oldest populations).

Halton's younger than average population is a legacy of the Runcorn New Town era when many young families were attracted to the Borough in the 1970s. Despite these families growing up, Halton still has a slightly younger population than Great Britain as a whole (average age 39.2), although the gap between Halton and GB is narrowing. This characteristic is reflected at both ends of the age band spectrum by having a higher proportion of population in the younger age cohorts than the national average, and a lower proportion of population over age 65+. However Halton's proportion of over 50s is changing at one of the highest rates – an increase of 18.9% between 1991 and 2007, compared to a national change of 15.4% and a regional change of just 10%.

[6] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.

Table 8: Age Profile

LAD	Proportion of population aged 0-15, 2001	Proportion of population aged 16-24, 2001	Proportion of population aged 25-44, 2001	Proportion of population aged 45-64, 2001	Proportion of population aged 65+, 2001	Dependency Ratio, 2007 (GB=100)	Change in proportion of population aged 50+, 1991-2007	Average Age (2006)	Average Age Score (2006) (GB=100)
Sefton	18.5	11.4	23.8	26.4	19.8	0.7	5.8	41.5	105.6
Wirral	19.4	11.3	24.4	26.4	18.5	0.7	5.9	40.7	103.7
Chester	17.5	12.5	26.6	25.7	17.9	0.6	13.6	40.5	103.2
Ellesmere Port and Neston	19.3	11.0	26.4	26.0	17.5	0.6	20.2	40.2	102.5
Vale Royal	19.4	9.9	27.1	27.2	16.4	0.6	31.0	40.2	102.5
St. Helens	19.3	11.4	26.8	26.1	16.2	0.6	12.8	39.6	101.0
Warrington	19.5	11.1	28.5	25.7	15.1	0.6	21.6	39.1	99.6
Hartlepool	20.4	12.1	26.3	25.0	16.3	0.6	9.8	38.8	98.8
Halton	**20.4**	**12.4**	**27.1**	**26.3**	**13.8**	**0.6**	**18.9**	**38.0**	**96.8**
Knowsley	20.8	13.1	27.1	23.8	15.2	0.6	9.8	37.9	96.5
Liverpool	17.9	16.7	27.5	22.8	14.8	0.5	-8.0	37.7	96.0
Middlesbrough	20.3	14.7	26.3	23.6	15.1	0.6	6.3	37.7	96.0
Greater Merseyside	19.4	12.7	26.1	25.3	16.4	0.6	3.8	38.7	98.6
North West	19.3	12.4	27.1	25.0	16.3	0.6	9.8	39.2	99.8
Great Britain	18.9	11.9	28.4	24.9	16.1	0.6	15.4	39.2	100.0

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

The second aspect of Halton's demographic profile relates to migration and population change. The results are displayed in Table 9.

- Between 2000-2007 Halton's population increased by 0.34% - the 6th highest in the comparator areas but only 351st nationally.

With a small population increase of 0.34 per cent between 2000-2007, Halton's increase was less than the North West average of 1.3% but more than Greater Merseyside which fell by 1.6% over the same time period. Population increased in seven comparator areas and decreased in five. The highest growth was recorded in Vale Royal and the biggest falls in urban areas such as Sefton, Middlesborough and Liverpool. Between 2001-2007 the migration element of Halton's population increased by 0.17% - the 5th highest of the comparator areas.

Table 9: Migration and Population Change

LAD	Proportion of residents moved into the area from within the UK, 2001	Proportion of residents moved into the area from outside the UK, 2001	Proportion of residents moved out of the area, 2001	Net migration, 2001 % change in resident population, 2006	Net migration, 2001 % change in resident male population, 2006	Net migration, 2001 % change in resident female population, 2006	Change in Net Migration Population Score (GB=100)	% change in population, 2000-2007	Rank of Population Change, 2000-2007
Vale Royal	4.0	0.2	3.4	0.66	0.67	0.64	1,119	4.38	156
Warrington	3.2	0.3	3.1	-0.05	0	-0.1	-85	2.41	250
Hartlepool	1.9	0.2	2.1	0.23	0.23	0.22	390	1.78	283
Chester	5.0	0.7	5.5	-0.08	-0.18	0	-136	1.27	314
St. Helens	2.2	0.1	2.4	0.23	0.23	0.22	390	0.34	349
Halton	**2.1**	**0.1**	**2.9**	**0.17**	**0.18**	**0.16**	**288**	**0.34**	**351**
Ellesmere Port and Neston	2.9	0.3	3.1	0.24	0.25	0.24	407	0.12	364
Knowsley	2.8	0.1	3.0	-0.2	-0.28	-0.13	-339	-0.33	377
Wirral	1.8	0.2	2.1	0.03	0.07	0	51	-1.99	399
Liverpool	3.4	0.6	3.5	-0.86	-0.76	-0.96	-1,458	-2.38	401
Sefton	2.3	0.2	2.8	0.11	0.07	0.13	186	-2.51	403
Middlesbrough	2.9	0.3	3.8	-0.89	-0.93	-0.86	-1,508	-2.53	404
Greater Merseyside	2.5	0.3	2.9	-0.21	-0.18	-0.23	-356	-1.57	53 (of 53)
North West	3.4	0.4	3.5	0.05	0.05	0.04	85	1.33	10 (of 11)
Great Britain	4.0	0.6	4.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	100	3.52	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

The third aspect of Halton's demographic profile assessed in the Audit relates to ethnicity. Table 10 shows the results.

- The non-white population in Halton is relatively small, with the district ranking 337th out of 354 (English LA's) in terms of its ethnic diversity in 2006

Despite a small increase in the proportion of non-white population between 2001 and 2006 from 1.2 to 1.9 %, other areas have increased by a greater amount. The GB average is 10.6% and the North West average 7.1%. Of the comparator areas, Middleborough and Liverpool are still the most ethnically diverse districts, with the proportion of population classed as non white accounting for 7.8 per cent and 7.5 per cent of the total population respectively.

In keeping with many parts of the UK, Halton has seen an influx of migrant workers in recent years, especially from the EU accession countries. Reliable estimates of numbers are not currently possible from official statistics. However, data from the Workers registration scheme suggest there are a total of 1,585 registrations in Halton, representing 22.2% of the total registrations in Greater Merseyside. In comparison Liverpool has the largest number and percentage of WRS applicants in Greater Merseyside, with 2,620 and 36.7% respectively. However the number of migrants within Sefton is rising and they too have over 2,000 within the Borough. The modal age group for migrants to Halton is 18-24 this is also reflected in the Merseyside, North West and national figures.

Table 10: Ethnicity

LAD	Proportion of population classified as White, 2006	Proportion of population classified as Mixed, 2006	Proportion of population classified as Asian or British Asian, 2006	Proportion of population classified as Black or British Black, 2006	Proportion of population classified as Chinese or Other Ethnic group, 2006	Change in proportion of population classified as non-white, 1991-2001	Proportion of population classified as non-White, 2006	Proportion of population classified as non-White, 2006 index (GB=100)	Proportion of population classified as non-White, 2006 rank (of 354)
Middlesbrough	91.7	1.2	5.3	1.0	0.4	42.0	7.8	73.4	100
Liverpool	91.9	1.9	2.1	1.9	1.6	50.7	7.5	70.7	105
Chester	96.0	0.9	1.8	0.5	0.4	88.3	3.6	33.8	204
Warrington	96.7	0.9	1.3	0.4	0.5	62.3	3.0	28.6	246
Wirral	97.3	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.5	64.9	2.5	23.6	294
Knowsley	97.4	1.1	0.6	0.4	0.3	56.3	2.4	23.0	301
Sefton	97.4	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.4	66.6	2.4	22.1	305
Vale Royal	97.5	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.4	72.1	2.4	22.4	308
Hartlepool	97.7	0.7	1.1	0.3	0.2	65.1	2.3	21.8	324
Ellesmere Port and Neston	97.8	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.4	94.9	2.1	19.5	329
St. Helens	98.0	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	73.2	1.9	18.1	335
Halton	**98.0**	**0.8**	**0.6**	**0.3**	**0.3**	**59.9**	**1.9**	**18.1**	**337**
Greater Merseyside	95.9	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.8	55.8	3.8	36.0	34 (of 47)
North West	92.5	1.2	4.2	1.0	0.6	51.6	7.1	66.8	6 (of 9)
Great Britain	88.68	1.63	5.49	2.76	0.74	36.8	10.6	100.0	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

The fourth and final aspect of the Halton's demography to be considered is household structure (see Table 11).

- The average household size in Halton is marginally larger than elsewhere in the country, with the district having a score of 102.1 in 2004 (cp to 102.2 in 2001) and GB=100

The source of most this data is the 2001 census and so the position cannot easily be updated. The average household size in Halton in 2001 was 2.47 people, slightly higher than the regional average of 2.39 people and the national figure of 2.41 people. By 2004, Halton's average household size had dropped to 2.43, but its index score had only changed by 0.1. In terms of household structure, Halton is in line with the national averages for households consisting of married couples with dependent children and married couples with no children. The proportion of one person households is slightly lower than average (27.3 per cent compared to 30.3 percent nationally and 30.9 per cent regionally).

Table 11: Household Structure

LAD	Proportion of one person households, 2001	Proportion of households comprising of married couples with no children, 2001	Proportion of households comprising of married couples with dependent children, 2001	Proportion of one parent households, 2005	Percentage change in average household size, 2001-2004	Average Household Size 2004	Average Household Size Score (GB = 100)
Liverpool	36.9	7.6	12.7	12.5	-2.99	2.27	95.4
Wirral	32.3	11.5	16.6	8.1	-1.28	2.31	97.1
Chester	30.1	14.2	17.8	2.9	-1.27	2.33	97.9
Sefton	30.6	11.1	17.3	6.4	-1.65	2.38	100.0
Warrington	27.5	14.3	20.9	5.4	-2.86	2.38	100.0
Hartlepool	30.5	12.6	16.8	4.1	0.84	2.39	100.4
St. Helens	27.7	12.9	17.9	9.1	-1.23	2.40	100.8
Vale Royal	25.2	16.0	20.9	3.4	-2.44	2.40	100.8
Halton	**27.3**	**12.7**	**18.0**	**5.4**	**-1.62**	**2.43**	**102.1**
Middlesbrough	30.9	10.8	16.7	14.4	-0.41	2.43	102.1
Ellesmere Port and Neston	26.6	14.1	19.9	6.9	0.41	2.47	103.8
Knowsley	29.0	8.8	16.3	14.7	-0.40	2.47	103.8
Greater Merseyside	32.1	10.2	15.8	9.3	-2.09	2.34	98.3
North West	30.9	12.3	17.1	8.7	-1.26	2.36	99.2
Great Britain	30.3	13.0	17.5	7.2[7]	-1.24	2.38[8]	100

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

3.3 Occupational Profile

The occupational profile of Halton is a useful indicator of the district's progress towards developing a diverse, prosperous, knowledge-based economy. Chapter 2 showed that the number of jobs in the knowledge based industries was growing in Halton. This section examines whether local people are employed by these same industries.

Occupational structure is considered in terms of the proportion of the *resident* workforce employed in each of the nine Standard Occupational Groups. Table 12 shows the results.

- Halton is one of the lowest ranking districts in the country (362nd out of 407) in terms of the proportion of knowledge workers in the resident population. In 2006 it was 347th.

Despite Halton having a good level of jobs in the knowledge economy, (see section 2.3), a low proportion of the workforce in Halton is engaged in knowledge intensive activities and occupations. In 2008, 32.5% per cent of the employed workforce was

[7] England

engaged in knowledge intensive occupations down from 38.5% in 2006, the regional and national figures are 40.2% and 43.1% respectively.

Closer analysis of the occupational breakdown reveals that 'higher end' occupations (managerial, professional) have almost closed the gap to the regional and national averages. In 2008, 11.9 per cent of the employed workforce were working in managerial and senior official occupations (compared to 14.2 per cent in the North West). With the technical occupations, the gap is still significant with 11.7% in Halton and 14.6% for Great Britain. The proportion of lower skilled (and by implication, lower paid) occupations has increased in Halton since the last audit. In 2008 the proportion of the employed workforce working in elementary occupations was 13% compared to 11.7 per cent in 2006.

Table 12: Occupational Profile

LAD	Proportion of Manager and Senior Official occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Professional occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Associate Professional and Technical occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Administrative and Secretarial occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Skilled Trades occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Personal Service occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Sales and Customer Service occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Process, Plant and Machine Operatives amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of Elementary occupations amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Proportion of 'Knowledge Workers' amongst employed workforce, March 2008	Change in 'Knowledge Workers', Jan-Dec 2005	Knowledge Worker Score (March 2008) (GB=100)	Knowledge Worker Score Rank (of 407)
Chester	17.02	18.25	17.89	10.35	9.12	3.51	11.4	4.21	8.25	53.16	4.3	123.26	53
Warrington	17.71	15.52	14.17	12.4	7.08	6.46	8.75	7.4	10.52	47.4	-6.29	109.9	108
Wirral	13.73	15.01	17.27	13.35	7.09	7.24	5.58	8.22	12.52	46	-1.27	106.67	128
Sefton	17.3	13.01	12.51	13.18	8.56	8.23	9.74	6.3	11.17	42.82	8.69	99.29	173
Vale Royal	13.2	14.33	12.24	8.86	10.95	10.79	8.37	7.25	14.01	39.77	-1.86	92.23	241
St. Helens	11.95	11.29	14.48	9.56	11.29	9.16	9.43	9.16	13.68	37.72	-6.37	87.46	278
Hartlepool	11.41	10.08	15.92	9.81	12.2	9.02	10.88	8.22	12.47	37.4	7.27	86.72	284
Ellesmere Port and Neston	9.43	15.14	11.17	11.41	8.19	9.18	11.91	10.17	13.4	35.73	24.55	82.86	316
Liverpool	10.51	10.67	14.04	14.43	9.74	9.53	8.33	7.68	15.08	35.22	10.35	81.67	326
Halton	**11.93**	**8.81**	**11.74**	**13.21**	**9.17**	**8.44**	**13.03**	**10.64**	**13.03**	**32.48**	**-1.18**	**75.31**	**362**
Middlesbrough	7.72	9.43	14.75	12.35	9.43	10.46	7.2	11.32	17.32	31.9	-3.89	73.98	371
Knowsley	9.08	6	13.78	13.29	12.16	10.86	9.56	11.35	13.94	28.85	5	66.9	398
Greater Merseyside	12.63	11.49	14.26	13.16	9.33	8.79	8.68	8.33	13.34	38.38	3.49	88.99	42 (of 53)
North West	14.18	12.11	13.94	12.44	10.46	8.24	8.48	8.46	11.68	40.24	2.06	93.3	6 (of 11)
Great Britain	15.42	13.11	14.6	11.67	10.87	8.02	7.62	7.62	11.47	43.13	1.22	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

3.4 Prosperity

Maintaining and enhancing existing levels of prosperity in Halton are seen as key goals for the Borough, as set out in both the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan. This audit considers prosperity in terms of a range of indicators, including: total income, house prices, and social data such as the number of cars per household. Table 13 shows the results.

- Halton's prosperity is improving, albeit slowly. Its current ranking of joint 284th is higher than the 298 ranking it had last year. (out of 408 LAs in Great Britain)

In 2005-06 the average income in Halton was £20,400, lower than the regional figure of £21,700 and the national figure of £24,241. House prices are relatively low by national standards, £134,703 compared to £223,976 in Great Britain, although this advantage is off set somewhat by the lower average incomes of the district. Deprivation, measured by the Income Deprivation Domain Average (SOA) score is higher than the national average at 0.21, compared to the national average of 0.16, though again the gap has closed to half it was 3 years ago (0.05 points cp to 0.10 points 3 years ago.).

Table 13: Prosperity

LAD	Average Total income, 2005-06	Average house prices, September 2008	Proportion of all households with 2+ cars, 2001	Average number of rooms per household, 2001	Indices of Deprivation, Income Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Prosperity Score 2005-06 (GB=100)	Prosperity Score Rank (of 408)
Chester	£26,900	£218,168	34.7	5.7	0.12	111.0	89
Warrington	£25,700	£179,239	35.7	5.5	0.12	106.0	114
Vale Royal	£25,300	£194,869	41.0	5.8	0.12	104.4	120
Ellesmere Port and Neston	£22,800	£176,006	32.7	5.6	0.13	94.1	186
Sefton	£22,300	£167,915	25.0	5.7	0.17	92.0	198
Wirral	£21,300	£167,360	25.4	5.7	0.2	87.9	246
Halton	**£20,400**	**£134,703**	**26.2**	**5.3**	**0.21**	**84.2**	**=284**
St. Helens	£20,400	£132,125	26.2	5.3	0.19	84.2	=284
Liverpool	£20,300	£129,382	13.5	5.2	0.3	83.7	292
Knowsley	£18,800	£126,144	17.4	5.2	0.29	77.6	367
Hartlepool	£18,700	£118,486	18.3	5.3	0.24	77.1	372
Middlesbrough	£18,500	£107,035	18.4	5.2	0.27	76.3	380
Greater Merseyside	£20,754	£145,195	21.1	5.4	0.23	86.7	43 (of 53)
North West	£21,700	£160,063	26.3	5.4	0.18	90.6	=7 (of 11)
Great Britain	£24,241	£223,976	28.8	5.3	0.16[9]	100.0	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

3.5 Deprivation and Inequality

Deprivation and inequality is a priority for the Borough which aims to "increase wealth and to narrow the gap for those who are most disadvantaged if residents of the Borough are to enjoy the quality of life ...."[8]

The Government's standard measure of deprivation and inequality in England is the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), recently updated in 2007. The IMD covers a number of aspects of deprivation including disadvantage in: education; income; employment; health; and housing. In this audit we consider the IMD as a whole, as well as each of the individual aspects. Table 14 displays the results.

- Halton is still one of the most deprived districts in England, but its ranking has improved from 21st in 2004 to 30th in 2007 (out of 354 districts in England).

Using the average score of all SOAs in the district[9], Halton ranks as the 30th most deprived district in England. The average SOA score – 32.6 – is higher than the figure

[8] Halton Borough Council's Community Strategy

[9] SOAs (Super Output Areas) are small geographical units used as the building blocks for the IMD. Since they are smaller than wards, SOAs enable a finer level of data analysis to be carried out.

for the North West (27.7) and England as a whole (21.7), indicating a high level of deprivation in the district. Most comparator areas have higher than average SOA scores for overall deprivation.

Inequality within Halton – measured by the difference in ranking places between the most and least deprived SOAs – is higher than in England as a whole (105 against the national benchmark of 100), suggesting the presence of some pockets of less fortunate areas within the district. Comparator areas, with the exceptions of Knowsley and Liverpool are above the national bench mark, indicating greater inequality.

Table 14: Deprivation and Inequality

LAD	Index of Multiple Deprivation, Average SOA Score, 2007	Inequality (range of IMD ranks), 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Income Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Employment Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Crime Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Indices of Deprivation, Living Environment Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Inequality Score (Eng=100)	Deprivation Score Rank (of 354)
Liverpool	46.97	25,812	0.30	0.22	1.59	36.31	17.10	1.05	48.06	97.0	1
Knowsley	43.20	21,007	0.29	0.21	1.50	41.76	16.98	0.64	32.11	78.9	5
Middlesbrough	38.94	30,277	0.27	0.18	1.16	39.35	12.00	1.02	19.08	113.8	9
Hartlepool	34.10	29,325	0.25	0.19	1.06	31.74	9.85	0.40	13.68	110.2	23
Halton	**32.61**	**27,926**	**0.21**	**0.17**	**1.16**	**31.79**	**16.81**	**0.36**	**19.05**	**105.0**	**30**
St. Helens	29.82	28,247	0.19	0.16	0.93	27.10	13.51	0.40	22.19	106.2	47
Wirral	27.90	31,842	0.19	0.16	0.84	19.79	10.91	0.10	23.71	119.7	60
Sefton	25.13	31,045	0.17	0.14	0.78	18.75	9.82	0.00	21.66	116.7	83
Ellesmere Port and Neston	19.92	30,171	0.13	0.11	0.35	25.64	12.47	0.15	12.07	113.4	147
Warrington	17.89	31,199	0.12	0.10	0.28	17.19	12.71	-0.15	18.96	117.3	165
Chester	16.86	31,676	0.12	0.09	-0.01	14.65	21.37	-0.09	14.61	119.0	184
Vale Royal	16.18	31,511	0.11	0.09	-0.03	17.44	14.51	-0.18	17.77	118.4	196
Greater Merseyside	35.21	28,043	0.23	0.18	1.15	28.59	13.95	0.47	30.83	105.4	1 (of 47)
North West	27.60	28,293	0.18	0.14	0.67	25.08	15.78	0.22	25.15	106.3	2 (of 9)
England	21.67	25,626	0.16	0.10	0.00	21.69	21.69	0.00	21.69	100.0	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

3.6 Health

Health is a key determinant of a good quality of life and the first priority of Halton's Community Strategy states that 'statistics show that health standards in Halton are amongst the worst in the country and single it out as the aspect of life in the Borough in most urgent need of improvement.'[10]

Table 15 presents a set of key indicators relating to health in Halton.

- Halton remains relatively unhealthy, ranked 371st out of 408 districts in the country, compared to 384th four years ago. .

Average life expectancy in Halton was 76.7 years in 2004-06, compared to 78.1 years regionally and 78.6 years nationally. Life expectancy was relatively low among most comparator areas as it's linked to deprivation and low incomes. Only in 5 comparator areas do residents live longer than the national average. In all the other health indicators used in this audit, Halton performs below average. For example, Halton's mortality ratio in 2006 was 127 (GB=100), and its health index was 97.5 compared to Great Britain being 100, meaning its rank is little changed since 2004.

Table 15: Health

LAD	Infant Mortality Rate, 2003-2005	Standardised Mortality Ratio, (GB=100) 2006	Share of all persons with limiting long-term illness, 2001	Average life expectancy (years) 2004-2006	Average hours worked, residence based, 2008	Indices of Deprivation, Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Health Score, 2004-2006 (GB=100)	Health Score Rank (of 374)
Chester	6.8	95	17.5	80.1	32.6	-0.01	101.9	190
Vale Royal	5	98	18.1	79.7	33.5	-0.03	101.4	224
Ellesmere Port and Neston	4.6	101	18.9	79.7	32.4	0.35	101.3	230
Sefton	4.6	100	22.21	78.9	33.6	0.78	100.4	287
Warrington	5.8	114	17.9	78.8	34.7	0.28	100.3	292
Wirral	5.2	106	22.52	78.5	34.7	0.84	99.9	306
St. Helens	7.2	110	23.56	78.1	35.0	0.93	99.3	333
Middlesbrough	5.9	116	22.31	77.2	32.7	1.16	98.1	365
Knowsley	4.9	124	24.66	77.1	33.3	1.50	98.0	366
Hartlepool	4.3	123	24.36	76.8	35.9	1.06	97.7	369
Halton	**6.2**	**127**	**21.52**	**76.7**	**34.8**	**1.16**	**97.5**	**371**
Liverpool	6.5	128	24.64	76.3	33.2	1.59	97.0	373
Greater Merseyside	4.87	115	23.4	77.6	34.0	1.2	98.7	47 (of 49)
North West	5.9	109	20.7	78.1	34.0	0.7	99.3	9 (of 10)
Great Britain	5.07[11]	100	18.4	78.6[11]	34.0	0.0[11]	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

[10] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.
[11] England

3.7 Crime

"Crime is a major concern according to a survey of Halton residents." [12]

As another important quality of life factor, crime and personal safety are identified as key considerations within the Community Strategy for Halton and in its latest Community Strategy. Table 16 considers a set of indicators regarding crime within Halton.

- Levels of crime in Halton are fairly high; in 2007-08 Halton's rank is 65th out of 376 in terms of total offences per 1000 population. This is compared to 140th for 2003-04.

By 2007-08, the total crime score had risen from 103.6 to 118.7 a figure just above the regional average and 18% above that for England and Wales. Middlesborough and Liverpool record the highest proportions of crime at 5th and 30th highest in the country. Halton's offences per 1000 residents and violent crimes per 1000 population are both higher than the regional averages.

Table 16: Crime

LAD	Offences per 1000 population (incl. Vehicle Crimes, Violent Crimes, Burglaries) (2007-2008)	Vehicle crimes per 1000 population, (2007-2008)	Violent crimes per 1000 population, (2007-2008)	Dwelling Burglaries per 1,000 residents (2007-2008)	Indices of Deprivation, Crime Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Total Crime Score (2007-2008) (E&W=100)	Crime Score Rank (of 376)
Middlesbrough	102.3	17.7	34.1	11.8	1.02	190.4	5
Liverpool	78.2	15.4	22.8	10.3	1.05	145.6	30
Halton	**63.7**	**10.8**	**20.0**	**4.9**	**0.36**	**118.7**	**65**
Hartlepool	62.6	10.3	22.4	5.6	0.40	116.7	77
Ellesmere Port and Neston	56.2	10.0	18.1	3.8	0.15	104.6	107
Warrington	52.8	11.1	17.2	4.5	-0.15	98.2	133
Knowsley	52.6	13.5	10.2	5.2	0.64	97.9	135
Chester	49.8	8.7	17.0	4.4	-0.09	92.7	155
St. Helens	48.1	8.9	13.9	4.7	0.40	89.6	162
Vale Royal	42.4	8.6	13.1	3.3	-0.18	79.0	211
Sefton	40.5	7.7	10.8	4.7	0.00	75.5	227
Wirral	40.4	6.4	12.2	3.2	0.10	75.2	230
Greater Merseyside	55.7	10.7	15.7	6.1	0.47	103.7	16 (of 49)
North West	56.8	11.8	19.7	6.0	0.22	105.7	4 (of 10)
England & Wales	53.7	25.0	17.6	5.2	0.00	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

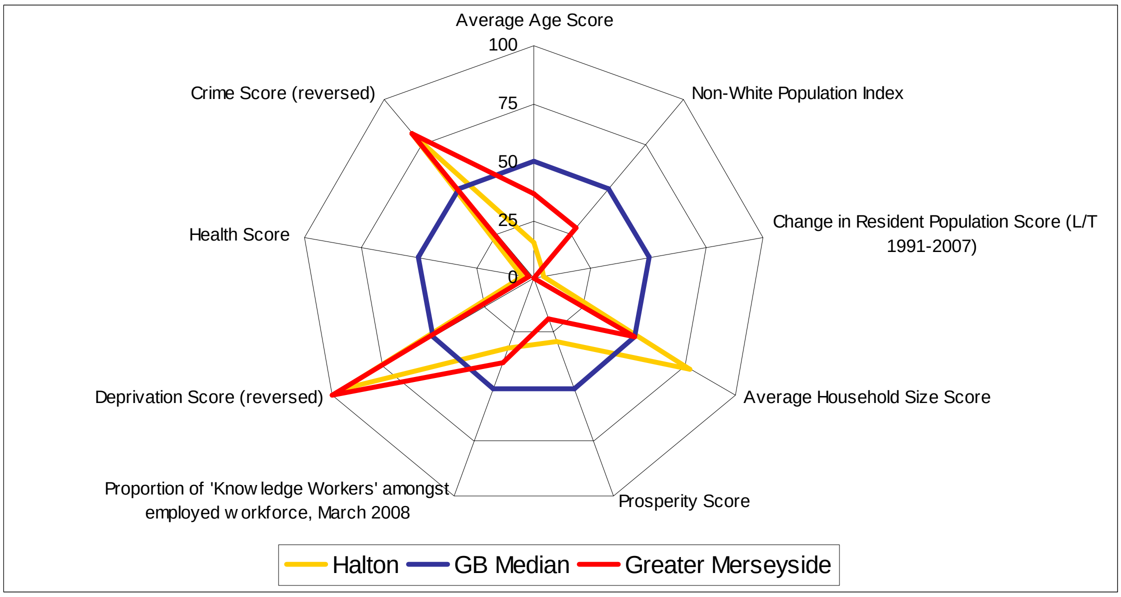
[12] Halton Borough Council, Halton Community Strategy,

3.8 Summary

Figure 3 presents a summary spider diagram showing key indicators of the social profile of Halton compared to the Greater Merseyside and GB median positions.

The social profile of Halton is very much tied to the economic profile of the borough, as set out in Chapter 2. The diagram can be confusing as both its crime and deprivation scores are reversed- in other words they are both near the worse positions rather than the top that the others show. Prosperity, crime, health, deprivation and population growth are all in the bottom quartile. The proportion of knowledge workers among the workplace employment is healthy, but as chapter 2 showed, they are not necessarily occupied by local people.

Figure 3: Social Profile Summary



Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures[13]

[13] The chart displays the national ranking of the district; converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

4 Environment

4.1 Introduction

The third and final section of this audit looks at a number of aspects of the environment and quality of life in Halton. It considers:

- Housing;
- Commercial and industrial property;
- Transport and connectivity;
- Access to services and amenities;
- The natural environment.

The results of this analysis are presented below. As previously, we provide a composite picture of the environment in Halton at the end of the chapter, together with a short summary of the key points.

4.2 Housing

In this audit, housing is considered in terms of affordability (assessed on the basis of the ratio between average earnings and average house prices), housing tenure, and housing condition information. Table 17 shows the results.

- Halton still contains some of the most affordable housing in the country, its ranking has risen from 30th in 2004 to 16th in September 2008, out of 361 LAs in England and Wales.

The average house price in Halton was £134,703 in September 2008, below the regional average of £160,063 and the national average of £223,976. The comparator areas as a whole are quite affordable, with the exception of Vale Royal and Chester. The source for housing tenure is still the 2001 census, so these proportions won't have changed in this analysis, but in reality there have been changes due to the number of new houses built in the Borough being almost exclusively for sale rather than rent.

Table 17: Housing

LAD	Average house prices, September 2008	Proportion of Local Authority housing stock declared non-decent, 2005/06	Indices of Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Housing Affordability score (GB=100) 2007	Proportions of rented households (2001)	Housing Affordability Score Rank (of 361)
Knowsley	£126,144	-	16.98	190.8	62.8	6
Halton	**£134,703**	**59**	**16.81**	**169.2**	**26.9**	**16**
Liverpool	£129,382	59	17.10	164.2	50.5	20
Hartlepool	£118,486	-	9.85	164.0	36.4	21
Middlesbrough	£107,035	-	12.00	155.3	36.5	33
St. Helens	£132,125	-	13.51	150.3	30.9	37
Ellesmere Port and Neston	£176,006	15	12.47	141.9	22.3	60
Warrington	£179,239	28	12.71	138.4	24.0	69
Wirral	£167,360	-	10.91	131.0	27.1	87
Sefton	£167,915	64	9.82	110.7	25.8	165
Vale Royal	£194,869	-	14.51	105.4	22.4	184
Chester	£218,168	-	21.37	103.6	33.9	188
Greater Merseyside	£145,195	34.58	13.95	148.4	35.1	4 (of 53)
North West	£160,063	24.35	15.78	134.9	30.7	2 (of 10)
England & Wales	£223,976	21.51	0.00	100.0	31.7	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

4.3 Commercial and Industrial Property

Table 18 considers land use within Halton, showing how the amount of industrial and commercial floorspace has changed over time.

- Halton experienced the 50th highest rate of growth in commercial and industrial floorspace between 2003 and 2007 out of 375 districts in England & Wales.

Between 2003-07, the amount of industrial and commercial floorspace in Halton grew by 6.5 per cent, higher than the national rate (1.7% per cent) and the regional rate (1.1 per cent). This growth has primarily been driven by big increases in the amount of office and industrial floor space in the district.

Looking in more detail at the floorspace profile of Halton shows that there is a slightly above average proportion of commercial and industrial space. In 2007, industrial floorspace made up 76.1 per cent of the total in Halton, compared to 66.3 per cent in the North West and 62.1 per cent in Great Britain as a whole. Retail and office space are under represented, at 9.5 per cent and 12.6 per cent of the total respectively. Its substantially lower than the national average of 17.7 per cent of the total in retail floor space and 16.9 per cent of the total in office floor space.

Table 18: Commercial and Industrial Property

LAD	Retail floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2007	Office floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2007	Industrial floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2007	% change in retail floorspace, 2003-2007	% change in office floorspace, 2003-2007	% change in industrial floorspace, 2003-2007	% change in commercial and industrial floorspace, 2003-2007	Proportion of total area that is derelict land and buildings, 2006	Commercial and industrial floorspace score (2007) (GB=100)	Commercial and Industrial Floorspace Score Rank (of 375)
Knowsley	7.2	5.3	85.3	8.1	15.3	-1.4	2.3	0.80	525.84	4
Halton	**9.5**	**12.6**	**76.1**	**-9.6**	**6.4**	**6.3**	**6.5**	**0.82**	**252.1**	**50**
Hartlepool	17.7	6.3	72.7	-12.7	-3.7	5.9	4.8	0.00	226.13	65
Vale Royal	13.2	10.4	72.4	-7.7	28.0	-12.5	-4.9	1.20	135.91	148
Ellesmere Port and Neston	11.5	4.2	81.4	-11.9	-1.6	26.7	22.6	2.32	100.38	200
Warrington	14.6	16.0	67.0	-7.5	-1.8	-4.9	-2.5	0.40	64.72	257
Wirral	23.3	11.2	61.5	-1.2	-2.4	-4.5	0.5	0.84	60.6	262
Middlesbrough	24.6	21.5	49.0	-21.2	1.0	-2.6	-2.7	0.01	34.43	303
Sefton	29.1	17.9	49.2	-5.9	12.4	-5.0	1.4	1.48	25.71	316
Chester	26.3	26.5	43.8	-3.8	6.4	-16.2	-4.2	0.06	11.54	325
Liverpool	24.4	23.1	48.4	-6.1	-4.8	-10.2	-3.9	3.01	-2.82	335
St. Helens	16.0	8.0	72.4	-8.0	-2.4	-18.1	-12.4	1.47	-99.02	369
Greater Merseyside	19.2	14.6	62.9	-4.9	0.4	-6.0	-1.6	1.42	83.52	39 (of 49)
North West	17.3	13.3	66.3	-2.4	4.5	-3.2	1.1	0.31	50.74	10 (of 10)
Great Britain	17.7	16.9	62.1	-4.0	0.8	-1.8	1.7	0.91	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

4.4 Transport: Accessibility and Mobility

This audit assesses an area's accessibility and connectivity using a composite of measures including distance from London, the 'Local Hub' Index (the concentration of transport hubs such as motorway junctions, airports, ports and mainline railway stations), and the 'Contiguity Index' (a score based on an area's proximity to transport hubs in neighbouring districts). The Community Strategy for Halton sees the borough as having 'an excellent network of roads and footways that provide safe and accessible transport routes for motor vehicles, public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.'[14]. Table 19 shows the results for Halton.

[14] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.

- Halton is ranked 138th out of 408 districts in Great Britain, for accessibility and connectivity, down slightly from its 2002 rank of 120th.

Using our composite measure, Halton has an overall connectivity score of 60.4 (indexed against Great Britain), slightly below the regional figure of 66.7, and below the national benchmark of 100.

The Audit also sheds some light on commuting patterns in Halton. The 2001 census commuting data is used to get an index score between local employment and the local resident workforce, indexed against Great Britain as a whole. The 2001 score for Halton was 96.3 which indicates that the area is likely to be a net exporter of labour (a score above 100 would indicate that the number of local jobs exceeds the available workforce, accepting that people can hold more than one job). Of the comparator districts, Liverpool, Warrington, Middlesbrough and Chester are all net importers of labour.

Analysis of data on the mode of travel to work show that use of the car is more common in Halton than in either Great Britain or the rest of the North West; in 2001, 71.5 per cent of people travelled to work using a car in Halton, compared to 65.9 per cent regionally and 61.2 per cent nationally. The proportion travelling to work by public transport, at 8.4 per cent is below the national average of 14.8 per cent. Of the comparator districts Liverpool in particular has a high proportion travelling by public transport (24.6 per cent) as is expected in a large urban area.

Table 19: Transport: Accessibility and Mobility

LAD	Proportion of people who travel to work by car, 2001	Proportion of people who travel to work by public transport, 2001	Proportion of people who travel to work by foot or bicycle, 2001	Net Commuting, 2001 (GB=100)	Average travel to work time (in minutes), 2002- 2003	Connectivity Score (2005) (GB=100)	Connectivity Score Rank (of 408)
Middlesbrough	64.8	12	14.3	101.5	21	121.5	83
Knowsley	62.9	17.5	10.9	86.4	24	106.4	95
Liverpool	55.1	24.6	12.3	111.5	20	104.8	97
Warrington	72.7	6.6	10.4	133.3	20	91.2	108
Wirral	65.9	13.9	10.1	77.2	21	77.3	121
Ellesmere Port and Neston	73.6	6	10.7	92.1	17	67.8	133
Sefton	63.1	14.1	12.4	90	24	65.0	134
Halton	**71.5**	**8.4**	**11.8**	**96.3**	**22**	**60.4**	**138**
St. Helens	71.1	10.1	10.2	86.2	17	38.0	186
Vale Royal	74.9	3.3	9.9	83.5	20	26.2	215
Chester	66.1	7.7	14.2	133	19	19.1	249
Hartlepool	66.5	9	14.4	90	19	12.7	276
Greater Merseyside	63.3	16.2	11.4	95.2	21.3	157.7	7 (of 53)
North West	65.9	11	12.5	102.3	19.4	66.7	3 (of 11)
Great Britain	61.2	14.8	13	100	20.2	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

4.5 Services and Amenities

Easy access to quality services is one of the key aims of the Halton Strategic Partnership, as set out in the Community Strategy. In particular this relates to the quality of the services that the Partner agencies themselves provide. Good local amenities are another objective, including high quality accessible historical, arts, recreational and entertainment facilities. This is particularly relevant to Urban Renewal Priority of the Community Strategy which aims to transform the urban fabric and infrastructure, to develop exciting places and spaces and to create a vibrant and accessible borough that makes Halton a place where people are proud to live and see a promising future for themselves and their families.'[15]

In this audit, a number of indicators are used to assess the quality or attractiveness of local services and amenities. For services, we take account of school results, recycling levels, and CPA results. Amenities are considered in terms of a combination of indicators including the density of National Heritage Sites and Listed Buildings, the availability of cultural amenities (such as cinemas, theatres and libraries), employment in hotels and restaurants, and what has been termed the 'café culture'. The results are presented in Table 20.

[15] Halton Borough Council Halton Community Strategy,

- In 2007, Halton ranks as the 199th best performing district out of 352 in terms of the quality of its services, down from 158th in 2004, primarily because of the choice of putting GCSE results in the package defining local services. Its rank for local amenities rose from 318th to 109th out of 376 for the quality of its local amenities- reflecting the new Brindley theatre.

With an index score of 99, Halton is just below par with the national average in terms of the quality of the local services. School performance in 2006/07 was slightly below the national average, as is the level of household recycling (13.6 per cent of waste was recycled in 2005/06 compared to 14.3 per cent in Great Britain as a whole). Of comparator districts Chester scores well on local services ranked 47th out of 354.

In terms of the quality of its local amenities, Halton performs well, with an indexed score of 137 (compared to 100 nationally). Cultural amenities in Halton are now well-represented in comparison to the national average (207.7 amenities per 1000 sq km, against the national benchmark of 100). Listed buildings at 3.4 per 1000 km, match the national average, whereas Liverpool is ranked 16th out of 376 in terms of local amenities as is expected of a large urban area.

Table 20: Services and Amenities

LAD	Percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs Grades A*-C, 2006-2007	% household waste recycled, 2005-2006	CPA Scores 2007[18]	Local services score (GB=100) 2007	Local Services Score Rank (of 352)	National Heritage sites per 1000 sq km, 2007	Cultural Amenities per 1000 sq km, GB=100 2007	Proportion of employment in Hotels and Restaurants, 2007	Listed Buildings per 1000 sq km, 2007	Café culture (number), June 2007	Local amenities score (GB=100) 2008	Local amenities score Rank (of 376)
Chester	61.1	14.22	4	117.89	47	8.93	199.1	10.2	7.9	3	103.4	142
Hartlepool	61.6	13.84	4	115.75	61	10.64	294.2	5.6	3.4	0	71.5	227
Vale Royal	67.1	18.3	4	110.78	93	0	130.7	6.5	3.8	0	88.0	181
Ellesmere Port and Neston	54.9	21.35	3	110.31	98	0	287.7	6.8	4.5	1	88.2	180
St. Helens	62.3	9	4	108.42	113	0	317.6	7.4	2.1	0	179.0	81
Warrington	69.7	13.58	4	104.92	139	0	226.8	5.6	4.1	2	160.8	92
Sefton	64.1	13.78	4	103.26	154	6.54	453.3	7.4	9.7	2	201.8	64
Knowsley	50.8	7.35	3	102.65	157	0	251.1	3.3	2.2	0	143.3	104
Halton	**61.9**	**13.58**	**4**	**99**	**199**	**0**	**207.7**	**4.4**	**3.4**	**0**	**137.4**	**109**
Middlesbrough	53.9	11.47	4	94.38	225	18.52	741.3	5.9	4.9	0	201.3	65
Liverpool	58.3	8.64	1	92.52	240	107.14	1010.8	6.8	28.4	6	481.8	16
Wirral	60.9	7.87	2	78.76	313	25.48	485.0	6.8	9.2	0	195.4	68
Greater Merseyside	59.95	9.8	2.6	99.3	37 (of 47)	23.5	470.1	6.4	9.5	8	540.3	5 (of 49)
North West	60.13	14.0	2.9	107.9	8 (of 9)	10.4	171.5	6.8	3.8	33	1394.5	1 (of 10)
Great Britain	62	14.3	2.9	100		65.4	100	6.7	3.4	689	100	

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

4.6 Natural Environment

The final aspect to be considered under the Environment section of the Local Futures Audit is the quality of the natural environment in Halton. Clearly, the natural environment is a subjective topic which makes benchmarking problematic; nevertheless it is an important consideration in any attempt to carry out a comprehensive audit of conditions in an area. The knowledge economy is characterised by a more decentralised geography of employment and population change. Behind this counter-urbanisation trend is house price inflation and a range of quality of life and work-life balance factors that influence residential and business location decisions. In this context, an area's natural environment has become an important consideration in economic development. The natural environment is important to Halton, which aims to create an attractive borough with quality accessible open space that is valued by the local community, and strategic routes through the borough which are well landscaped and create an image which will be attractive to new investors and potential new residents.[16]

Table 21 shows the results of this part of the audit of the natural environment in Halton. Indicators of weather, tranquillity (population density) and natural beauty (the presence of woodland and special landscape designations such as AONBs) have been included.

[16] Halton Borough Council (2006) Making it happen in Halton – A Community Strategy for a Sustainable Halton.

- Halton scores 72 as an index where the English average is 100, ranking it 249th out of 354 districts in England for the quality of its natural environment.

Halton has a low score in terms of the quality of its natural environment, with its overall score on the natural environment being 72 (indexed against England). Halton scores 100.1 for natural beauty, and 68.2 for tranquillity, both indexed against England. The weather is slightly below the English average at 97.9 compared to 100 for England.

Table 21: Natural Environment

LAD	Natural Beauty - access and contiguity (GB=100) 2007	Tranquility (GB=100) 2004	Average Weather Score (GB=100) 2006	Indices of Deprivation, The Living Environment Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2007	Natural Environment Score (GB=100) 2007	Natural Environment Score Rank (of 354)
Sefton	543.39	63.07	97.85	21.66	170.11	37
Liverpool	209.15	25.62	97.85	48.06	85.87	181
Hartlepool	103.91	96.58	90.86	13.68	83.62	196
Chester	3.81	362.68	91.63	14.61	83.58	197
Vale Royal	45.64	270.83	92.58	17.77	82.93	200
St. Helens	112.62	80.81	97.85	22.19	82.43	203
Knowsley	96.53	64.65	97.85	32.11	76.12	232
Warrington	82.99	89.49	100.05	18.96	73.83	241
Halton	**100.09**	**68.2**	**97.85**	**19.05**	**71.99**	**249**
Wirral	64.35	62.29	92.58	23.71	66.69	275
Middlesbrough	64.35	43.76	90.86	19.08	63.45	288
Ellesmere Port and Neston	19.25	105.65	91.71	12.07	63.35	290
Greater Merseyside	562.23	50.76	96.74	30.83	160.91	5 (of 47)
North West	154.53	55.98	96.45	25.15	91.59	3 (of 9)
Great Britain[20]	100	100	100	21.69	100	

[20] IMD Rank for England only

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

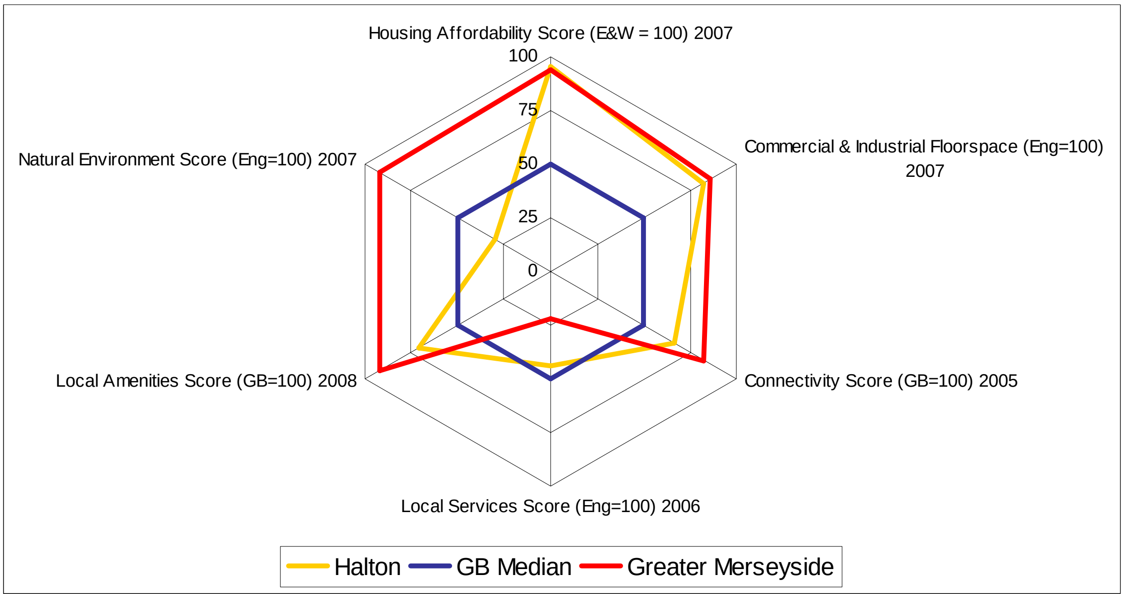
4.7 Summary

A summary of Halton's environmental profile is presented as a spider chart in Figure 4.

Overall the environmental performance of Halton is mixed. By national standards, housing in the area is affordable, although the slightly lower levels of home ownership attest to an imbalance of house prices and wages. The supply of commercial property, although weighted towards industrial space, is expanding. Most growth has been in industrial floorspace, followed by office floorspace.

The borough performs quite well on accessibility and connectivity, although there is a slightly larger proportion of workers' commuting out of the borough, than in. Local services are more limited when compared to the national average, although local amenities are more accessible. The quality of the natural environment is as expected of a built up area, falling below the national average, with limited tranquillity and limited access to areas of natural beauty.

Figure 4: Environment Summary



Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures[17]

[17] The chart displays the national ranking of the district, converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

5 Conclusions: The Final 'Scorecard' and Policy Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This audit of Halton has captured the 'state of the district' at a particular point in time. It is basically a set of snapshots of local economic, social and environmental conditions, for the latest data available, which varies between 2001 and 2007, but concentrates on 2005 and 2006. It also provides a different perspective on the state of Halton by looking at how it compares with other districts, how it rates within the North West region, and also how it performs compared to the country as a whole. The results of this audit, therefore, provide a basis for an informed discussion on the challenges and issues facing Halton – now and over the coming years.

This final chapter of the report provides a synthesis of the audit findings in the form of a final 'scorecard' which shows how the district stands within Britain (compared to a total of 408 districts), and within the North West region (compared to 43 districts). These different levels of assessment and benchmarking should be helpful in Halton's discussions with Government on developing the new Local Area Agreement, NWDA, and other public sector funding bodies.

5.2 The Final 'Scorecard'

The final 'scorecard' – shown in Table 22 – assesses the state of Halton in terms of the three main dimensions of sustainable development. The scores represent the quintile where the district falls on each of the measures ('A' representing the strongest performance, ranging to 'E' representing the weakest).

- Economic Development – Halton scores a 'C' overall, and against the region, however, its performance is mixed. Halton scores well on aspects of economic development relating to productivity (A – up from B in 2004), business and enterprise (A) and industrial structure (A). The Borough performs less well in terms of its human capital where the scores slip to an 'E'. There may be implications for future economic development, and the continued low score of an 'E' on economic change is still a cause for concern. The results in this sector are very similar to 2004.
- Social Development – In the context of Great Britain as a whole, Halton scores an 'E'. However Halton still performs poorly on most indicators of social profile. The borough also performs poorly when compared regionally, recording lower scores for all indicators except inequality where it is in the mid quintile.
- Environment – Halton's performance is mixed for the environment, with an overall score of a 'B'. It performs well in terms of housing affordability and floorspace change, scoring an 'A' in both, The Borough also performs above average in terms of connectivity, with a score of a 'B' when compared to the nation. It performs less well in terms of services, amenities and the natural environment, although it's mostly better than the region for these measures.

Table 22: The Sustainable Development 'Scorecard' for Halton

Sustainability Indicators	National Grade (408 Districts)	Regional Grade (43 Districts)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	**C**	**C**
Economic scale	C	C
Productivity	A	A
Economic change	E	E
Industrial structure	A	A
Business & enterprise	A	A
Skills & qualifications	E	E
Labour market	E	D
SOCIAL PROFILE	**E**	**D**
Knowledge workers	E	E
Prosperity	D	D
Deprivation	E	D
Inequality	D	B
Health	E	E
Crime	E	E
ENVIRONMENT	**B**	**C**
Housing affordability	A	A
Floorspace change	A	A
Connectivity	B	C
Services	C	C
Amenities	B	C
Natural environment	D	E

Source: Halton Data Observatory, Local Futures

5.3 Policy Implications

Although much progress has been made over the past three to four years, the Halton Strategic Partnership (HSP) still needs to include the knowledge economy at the heart of Halton's modernisation and economic development agenda. In practical terms this would mean building policy and capacity in four competitiveness areas of the knowledge economy:

- Entrepreneurship, business clusters and networks – strengthening the supporting economic institutional framework (economic partnerships, NWDA, and service agencies such as the Small Business Service/ Business Link, and Jobcentre Plus);
- Local innovation – improving product and process innovation across the business economy, based on collaboration between firms, the public sector, universities, colleges and other key players;
- An educated, skilled and flexible workforce – built around the LSC strategic area reviews and workforce development strategies, as well as the NWDA-led

Framework for Skills and Employment Action, including improvements in IT skills and reducing education deprivation;
- Infrastructure – although not covered by the Audit, Halton's knowledge economy will require an advanced electronic infrastructure and a variety of e-services for a more technology-based economy and society.

Importantly, these four 'pillars' of Halton's modern and future knowledge economy need to be synchronised – that is, policies need to be joined up across all four areas of economic development strategy. In addition, any inter-area disparities within the borough also need to be considered – something we have not been able to explore as part of this borough-level analysis – so that problem areas do not cause the economical, social and environmental gaps between the best and worst performing areas to become wider still. Any future economic benefits need to be distributed fairly.

As the current Community Strategy for Halton makes clear, the future knowledge economy of the district needs to be socially inclusive. Recent years have seen increasing recognition of the link between poor economic performance and wider social problems; indeed the main underlying objectives of the Community Strategy are to maximise local wealth creation whilst ensuring that any benefits are distributed fairly.

This audit reinforces the need for priority to continue to be given to addressing worklessness. Actions are needed on job creation, education and skills, and job brokerage to connect local people into the wealth being created in the increasingly vibrant local economy.

The final strategic imperative is improving the quality of Halton's environmental assets. Housing and the environment are some of the key determinants of social well-being, health, safety and overall quality of life. Improving the level of services and amenities, particularly housing, schools and shops, and upgrading the quality of the natural environment are all important in order to attract key knowledge workers.

5.4 Next Steps

The completion of this audit provides an opportunity for Halton Borough Council to revisit its existing Community Strategies to ensure they are still relevant and pertinent to the needs of the district. We have demonstrated that the borough is performing well in terms of its current economic performance and structure. However, the level of human capital and trends in economic growth may present problems for the future. This is particularly so given the districts poor performance in terms of social and environmental indicators, which may create difficulties attracting the best qualified people to the borough. Halton's performance on education and skills, and low levels of home ownership points to problems of inclusiveness, with groups of residents not sharing in the current levels of economic prosperity.

Finally, we have touched on the need to ensure that Halton takes its place within the modern knowledge economy and part of this process may require a more detailed and thorough understanding of the borough's knowledge economy as it currently stands. Thus far we have not touched on the geographical extent of the physical infrastructure that underlies the knowledge economy, nor have we considered research strengths in and around the district, and how well these are being transferred to local businesses (part of what we term the 'knowledge infrastructure'). Does the skills profile of the borough reflect the fact that people live in Halton but work elsewhere? What does this mean for the quality of local job opportunities and the ability of Halton to retain young people?

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