

KNOWSLEY  
2030

A long term strategy  
for Knowsley



LET'S TALK  
2030

## **KNOWSLEY 2030 STRATEGY**

### **Introduction**

The people who live and work in Knowsley know the borough better than anyone.

Throughout 2019, the organisations that make up the Knowsley Better Together Partnership worked closely with local residents, businesses, community groups and others to develop this long-term strategy.

Our “Let’s Talk 2030” project is an ongoing conversation with our communities to shape this strategy and the future of Knowsley. By talking with local people and businesses and by working closely with community groups, organisations and schools, we have been able to develop a clearer picture of life in the borough and establish what people’s aspirations are for Knowsley by 2030.

This invaluable local insight allowed us to develop shared aims for our future, establishing that by 2030, we all want Knowsley to be:-

- A place with welcoming, vibrant, well-connected neighbourhoods and town centres;
- A place with a thriving, inclusive economy, with opportunities for people and business;
- A place where people are active and healthy, and have access to the support they need;
- A place where people of all ages are confident and can achieve their full potential; and,
- A place where strong and safe communities can shape their future.

To achieve these aims and ensure that everyone can share in Knowsley’s future, there are some existing and new challenges which we will need to work together to address. As the evidence shows, Knowsley has made huge strides over the last 15 years, but there remains a need to address a number of longer-term issues and inequalities in the borough.

We know that Knowsley and the world around us continues to change and as such we are prepared to respond to new opportunities and challenges which may emerge. During 2020, the COVID-19 crisis has meant that people and communities in Knowsley have had to change the way they live their lives in order to protect themselves and each other. The Knowsley Better Together Partnership remains committed to supporting Knowsley’s communities throughout this crisis – standing alongside residents and businesses in an unprecedented time.

Whilst we do not know exactly how and when this crisis will end – we know that it will do. We also know that, when it does, a focus on our long-term ambitions will remain vital to ensure that inequality in the borough is further reduced and that all of our residents and communities can share in our exciting future, together.

Knowsley is an inclusive place, where people and organisations support each other – this has been evident in the local response to COVID-19 and will continue to be crucial in realising our long-term ambitions. Our Knowsley Better Together approach provides us with the best chance of harnessing our collective knowledge, influence and resources to do this in a responsive and sustainable way.

This long-term strategy will harness and build on that approach to ensure that our communities remain at the heart of the work which takes place over the next decade and are able to continue to shape our shared future together.

#### *Who we are*

The Knowsley Better Together Partnership is made up of Knowsley Council, Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group, LIVV Housing, One Knowsley, Knowsley Chamber of Commerce, Knowsley Community College, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. As partner organisations, by working together with local residents, businesses and community groups to shape the future of Knowsley we can ensure that high quality public services are in place and respond to local need.

#### *How we work*

Knowsley Better Together is a way of working which brings organisations and people together for the benefit of Knowsley's residents and the borough. Put simply, by working together, we can achieve more. This approach is underpinned by the of Knowsley Better Together principles:-

- Be a strong community leader and always champion Knowsley;
- Build better partnerships and work with others co-operatively to improve Knowsley;
- Spend locally, invest locally and recruit locally to build social value;
- Help people to be independent, doing more for themselves and each other;
- Prevent problems occurring or stop them getting worse;
- Listen to the community when making decisions; and,
- Use the best way of delivering services that leads to improved outcomes for Knowsley.

## **Knowsley Now**

The first step in developing the Knowsley 2030 Strategy was working together with our communities and businesses to develop a thorough picture of what it is like to live and work in the borough. We call this evidence base ‘Knowsley Now’.

‘Knowsley Now’ demonstrates that Knowsley is a great place to live, work, play, and visit. It also shows us that there remain a number of key challenges facing us all and that there is a need to reduce levels of inequality within Knowsley so that all of our residents and communities can flourish.

As a partnership, we are committed to reducing inequality within the borough and will build on our recent successes and future plans to ensure everyone can enjoy happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.

As the immediate and short-term impacts of the COVID-19 crisis have become evident in Knowsley, we are reminded of how important it will be to maintain a real-time understanding of how Knowsley is changing and how people’s thoughts about and aspirations for the borough are changing. In order to ensure that the strategy can remain current and allow the Knowsley Better Together Partnership to prioritise and respond to the right things at the right time, this evidence base will be reviewed and updated throughout the life of the Knowsley 2030 Strategy, ensuring that residents, business and community organisations remain involved and that their views inform our future plans.

## **Working in a Knowsley Better Together way to realise our opportunities**

This strategy is the starting point of our work together over the next ten years. It sets out our long-term ambitions for the future, along with an overview of the type of actions we will take in order to achieve them. Much of the specific detail will sit within delivery plans and strategies which are developed and implemented by the organisations across the Knowsley Better Together Partnership.

Even with these plans in place, we know that we need to go much further by 2030 to improve outcomes for everyone in the Borough. Our “Knowsley Now” analysis reveals some complex, long-term issues which are often related closely to each other and to the wider challenges faced by some of our residents. The impacts of the COVID-19 crisis add to these challenges and addressing them will require concerted action if we are to realise our shared ambitions for Knowsley over the next ten years.

The crisis also gives us an opportunity to consider the lessons learnt in responding to COVID-19 and allow us to build on new, innovative approaches to work closely with our communities in shaping the services we provide.

We have always known that we can achieve more through our Knowsley Better Together approach - by pooling our ideas, skills, and commitment. These principles have been put into action through the Partnership’s response to the COVID-19 crisis and will continue to be vital going forward.

We also know that the best solutions are those which have been co-designed locally and these taskforces will therefore involve residents, businesses, and social sector and community groups. Using our Knowsley Better Together approach, we will work together with local people and organisations to address key issues, giving us the best chance of meeting our shared goals for the future together.

## **Knowsley 2030: A place with welcoming, vibrant, well-connected neighbourhoods and town centres**

*Local residents express pride in their communities, heritage and culture and are excited to see regeneration in town centres creating new opportunities and bringing neighbourhoods together. Good quality, affordable and reliable public transport links within the borough, and to our neighbouring areas, is considered crucial.*

### In 2030, Knowsley will be a place with a diverse housing offer that is attractive to current and future residents

Across the borough, there will be an increase in high quality housing of different types and tenure. Our neighbourhoods will be attractive with first class amenities, including good public transport links and green spaces for people to enjoy.

### In 2030, Knowsley will be a place with thriving high streets which are well used by local residents, businesses and visitors

Our town and district centres will offer a mix of independent businesses alongside major national brands. Building on their distinct identities and strengths, Knowsley's town centres will have their own unique cultural and leisure offer to attract visitors throughout the day and evening.

We will deliver more than 4,000 new homes across the borough between 2020 and 2030. These will include the prestigious Halsnead Garden Village in Whiston which brings an additional 1,600 new homes, a new country park and 22.5 hectares of employment land, creating highly skilled and well-paid jobs. The East of Halewood development brings up to 1,500 new homes across 80 hectares, with new investment transforming public spaces, including Finch Woods.

Knowsley Council will continue to lead the regeneration of Huyton Village, revitalising the Village's retail and leisure offer.

The Council is committed to delivering the long-awaited regeneration of Kirkby Town Centre. A new retail and leisure offer, anchored by a new supermarket and cinema complex will be complemented by a range of new homes. Transport links in Kirkby will be boosted through the development of a new railway station at Headbolt Lane, improving connectivity, both within the borough and across the wider city region.

The iconic Shakespeare North Playhouse will open in Prescot, coinciding with Knowsley's year as Liverpool City Region's 'Borough of Culture'. Knowsley Council will continue to lead the regeneration of Huyton Village, revitalising the retail and leisure offer and improving the look and feel of the village.

Community spaces will play a key part in the success of Knowsley's vibrant high streets and town centres, bringing together people of all ages and reducing social isolation. There will be investment in parks and green public spaces as well as improved sustainable transport provision, including new cycle routes which will connect the borough.

Knowsley Council has declared a Climate Emergency, recognising the need to act on climate change. This will be achieved through a Climate Change Strategy in 2021, ensuring that current and future generations can live their lives in a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

## **Knowsley 2030: A place with a thriving, inclusive economy with opportunities for people and business**

*Knowsley has firmly established itself as a place where people can successfully invest, work, and do business. Local residents are clear that jobs in the borough need to be inclusive and provide a range of opportunities for all residents in terms of sectors, salaries, and skills requirements.*

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place which continues to seize current and future economic growth opportunities.

Building on Knowsley's existing strengths and taking advantage of exciting opportunities in new growth sectors, the local economy will be a diverse mix of industries offering an extensive range of jobs at all skill levels.

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place where all local people can share in the opportunities created by economic growth

More residents will have the relevant skills to secure the job opportunities here in Knowsley, across the Liverpool City Region and beyond, supported by affordable and efficient transport links. More residents will be in employment, leading to an increase in family income levels more closely aligned to the national and regional averages.

Invest Knowsley will continue to provide a "single front door" solution for all investment, development and business support opportunities, complemented and strengthened by continued close collaboration between Knowsley Council and Knowsley Chamber of Commerce.

Our Inclusive Growth Statement sets out how strategic partner agencies and large employers in Knowsley, will work together to maximise opportunities for residents, businesses and the social sector to benefit from Knowsley's growth. It will also provide local businesses with specialist recruitment support, ensuring that Knowsley residents have the chance to compete for new job opportunities in the borough.

The 22.5 hectare Halsnead employment site will provide a wide range of new jobs in key growth sectors, namely advanced manufacturing and logistics. This will complement the borough's existing strengths in freight and logistics, including the vital role which Knowsley Business Park already plays within this sector.

We will continue to refresh our Economic Growth Plan for Knowsley, which will be continually reviewed and refreshed - setting out growth ambitions right through to 2030 and taking into account the changes in the national economy and the UK's changing relationships with Europe and the wider global marketplace. The plan will continue to clearly articulate the support that businesses, developers and investors will receive to ensure that they achieve their own growth aspirations.

## **Knowsley 2030: A place where people are active and healthy, and have access to the support they need**

*Whilst life expectancy has improved in Knowsley, the borough still remains behind the national average and there remains a range of health inequalities between our communities. Knowsley residents have spoken widely about the importance of good health in their own lives, and the wider contributing factors of education and income in enabling them to adopt healthier lifestyles.*

In 2030, Knowsley will be a healthy place where people are just as likely to be healthy, no matter where they live.

People of all ages will be able to access personalised health and social care services matching their individual needs. The most vulnerable residents will be well-supported and able to make healthy choices for themselves.

In 2030, Knowsley will be an active place which enables people to live happier, healthier lives.

High quality amenities, including green spaces, will provide opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy being active and will underpin improvements to positive mental wellbeing. The borough will be an environmentally sustainable place with increased rates of recycling, cleaner air quality, and a reduced impact on the wider environment.

We will transform the ways in which people receive health and social care by embedding a greater focus on early intervention and prevention throughout Knowsley, utilising a range of creative and innovative solutions. We will work directly with families and carers to help them to look after their loved ones and will make sure that there is advice and support in place for them when they need extra help.

We will work in partnership to deliver better, more joined-up community-based health and care services for Knowsley residents.

We will continue to focus on improving Mental Health and Learning Disability Services for all age groups. We will embed personalised care (including specialist support) within NHS mental health services and create a comprehensive offer for children and young people up to the age 25, ensuring that transitions of care work for their future lives.

We are committed to working collectively with residents to stop health and wellbeing problems from occurring or getting worse as early as possible and will place a special emphasis on young people in the Borough to ensure they can plan ahead for a healthy future.

We know how important Knowsley's green space is to local communities and how it can positively contribute to people leading healthy and happy lives. Our Green Space Strategy will set out how we can best utilise our attractive and accessible green spaces to help people to remain healthy.



## **Knowsley 2030: A place where people of all ages are confident and can achieve their full potential**

*From a child's earliest years, education and learning are crucial to ensuring that the next generation develop broad horizons and aspirations for their future. Knowsley's current generation of adults are the most skilled ever in the Borough but there remains a skills shortfall, when compared to national skills levels. Residents have indicated that creating opportunities for people to achieve and establish their place in the community is a priority for many.*

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place where people of all ages can develop the skills required to fulfil their aspirations.

Children will be supported to get the best start in life, with effective pre-school support for families, high-quality education provision and improved attainment levels. Residents of all ages will have improved skills levels, including core English, Mathematics and Digital Skills, as well as increased confidence and employability skills.

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place where lifelong learning and development is valued and celebrated.

Residents will have the confidence to develop their own personal goals and the opportunities to work towards them. People of all ages will have access to continuous learning and expert advice to support them to achieve their ambitions. More people will be economically active, with the people furthest from the labour market being able to access tailored support.

To ensure that all Knowsley children get the best start in life, we will provide high quality nursery and children's centre provision which helps children and their families to develop key learning and life skills.

We know that, to address the Borough's skills gaps, we must drive educational improvement in Knowsley. Through the work of the Education Strategic Partnership Board, we will ensure that every Knowsley school has the expertise and capacity which it needs to improve.

We are committed to providing good quality post-16 learning provision, including an A-level offer within the Borough, and will continue to work with schools, colleges and other organisations in order to achieve this. We recognise that further education and lifelong learning take many forms and we will continue to work with learning providers and businesses to ensure that their courses and provision respond to current and future skills needs over the next decade.

We will ensure that people have impartial advice and guidance about the best learning routes for them in order to capitalise on opportunities available in the borough, the wider City Region and beyond.

We will continue to invest in English, Mathematics and Digital Skills, as well as community learning opportunities for adults. Building on the success of existing employment support programmes, we will provide bespoke advice, support and training for residents looking to get back to work or progress further within their careers.

## **Knowsley 2030: A place where safe and strong communities can shape their future**

*Through conversations with our communities, it is evident that Knowsley is home to people who care strongly for one another and where they live. It is clear that the social sector in Knowsley is deeply valued and the knowledge, flexible approach and ideas to problem-solving within this sector will be hugely important for the future, in terms of building community capacity and shaping and delivering services.*

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place where people feel safe and secure and have a sense of pride and belonging.

There will be a strong community spirit, where people of all ages and backgrounds get along together and support each other.

In 2030, Knowsley will be a place where people are encouraged to participate in developing and delivering our plans and shared ambitions for the borough's future.

There will be increased community involvement in shaping and delivering the borough's ambitions, with more people and organisations working together, embodying the principles of Knowsley Better Together to help to realise our shared goals.

We will continue to ensure that Knowsley is safe and feels safe for all the people who live, work, and visit the Borough.

Knowsley's Crime and Communities Team will continue to work on a multi-agency basis with Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, and other agencies to identify and address the causes of potential crime and anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods. We will take a joined-up approach to tackling domestic abuse and all forms of criminal exploitation in Knowsley, taking an early intervention approach in order to stop issues emerging as early as possible.

We will launch a new Community Safety Partnership Strategy for Knowsley which will identify our priorities and set out a long-term approach to addressing them.

One Knowsley and other partner agencies will continue to work with social sector groups to support and enable the sector to grow.

We want to ensure that our communities' experiences and ideas are harnessed to help us to co-design efficient and effective public services which respond effectively to local needs. To enable this, we will explore new, innovative and people-led ways to ensure that everyone can have their say in influencing our work and the future of the borough.

People and organisations can all play their part in helping us to achieve our shared goals, whether by creating job opportunities for local people, offering meaningful work experience to young people, volunteering at a local reading group, shopping at local businesses, or looking out for a lonely neighbour.

Alongside the development of our new Culture and Creativity Strategy for Knowsley, this work will help to harness and further develop the well-established sense of local identity, pride and community spirit within our neighbourhoods and communities.

## **Year One Strategic Priority – COVID-19 Recovery Plan**

It is essential that our focus for the first year of this strategy will be the implementation of our Knowsley Better Together COVID-19 Recovery Plan. This Recovery Plan is designed to address the immediate and short-term impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, whilst capitalising on new opportunities to improve and maintaining a focus on the long-term ambitions for Knowsley.

In order to enable this, the Knowsley Better Together Partnership will use the five Strategic Outcomes outlined within this strategy to respond to the direct and indirect local impacts of COVID-19.

Actions delivered across the five Strategic Outcomes will be underpinned by the Knowsley Better Together principles and ensure that the Partnership can:-

- Develop a detailed understanding of the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19 on Knowsley residents and communities, using this to inform the way services and support are provided;
- Support businesses and residents in remaining resilient against the economic impact of the pandemic – helping to minimise the impact by providing tailored business, employment and skills support;
- Maintain progress on our ambitious development and regenerations projects across the breadth of the Borough;
- Work together with businesses to ensure Knowsley’s retail, hospitality and leisure offer is COVID-secure and can be enjoyed by all – encouraging residents and visitors to safely make the most of the Borough’s town centres and broader cultural offer;
- Build on the fantastic work of our community and voluntary sector during the response to the crisis - taking collective action to enable the sector to continue to play an important role in the Borough’s future;
- Establish new approaches to the provision of services and support for residents and businesses across the partnership that ensures needs can be met safely;
- Engage with residents to ensure they have the confidence and assurance to connect with the key services and support that they need in a safe, “new normal” context; and,
- Remain vigilant to the risks of future outbreaks – using established services and plans to mitigate against them and minimise their impact.

In the spirit of the partnership’s Knowsley Better Together approach, we will dig deeper to address the borough’s complex, long-term issues which have been exacerbated by the impacts of COVID-19 crisis. We will work on this together using dedicated taskforces to progress the Recovery. This will include engagement with residents, businesses, and social sector and community groups to harness our ideas, skills and energy to overcome the challenges and enable Knowsley to achieve the long-term vision it deserves.