

Liverpool City Region  
Combined Authority

# ANNUAL REVIEW

2024 - 2025



**LIVERPOOL  
CITY REGION**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

**METROMAYOR**  
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION



Friends outside Shakespeare North Playhouse, Knowsley

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## Mayor's Foreword

When I was first elected, I said I wanted to build a region that offered the same chances to kids growing up here today as I had to go searching for elsewhere. That's still what drives me – and this past year, we've taken some massive steps forward.

**We've continued work on a new station in the Baltic Triangle, launched our biggest ever retrofit programme to make thousands of homes warmer and more affordable, and expanded our award-winning Cradle to Career programme to support even more kids across the region.**

We've rolled out free travel for care leavers – because no young person should miss out on opportunities just because they can't afford the bus.

We've piloted AI in local classrooms, helping teachers tailor learning and giving pupils more personalised support – part of our ambition to lead in tech that improves lives, not just bottom lines. And we've shown the world what we're about, too – from leading trade missions to the US and China, to bringing global firms like Kyndryl into the region.

We're putting ourselves on the map as a place that's serious about creating jobs, attracting investment, and building an economy that works for our people.

None of this happens by accident. It's the result of hard work, strong partnerships with our six local councils, businesses and institutions, and a much-improved relationship with government – one that recognises the value of decisions being made closer to the people they affect.

This review is a look back at what we've achieved – but for me, it's also a reminder of how far we can go. The Liverpool City Region's got the people, the ideas and the ambition. My job is to keep opening the doors to help us realise it.



Steve Rotheram  
**Mayor of the Liverpool City Region**

*Steve Rotheram*

## Cabinet Members' Foreword

As Cabinet Members of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Leaders of our city region's six Local Authorities, we are all extremely proud of the places that we lead.

A crucial part of that leadership is how we work together in partnership at a city region level. This partnership, through the Combined Authority, is enabling our region to create a prosperous future for our residents in each-and-every borough.

Prioritising growing our economy, jobs, skills, improving transport, housing, equality, delivering social value and dealing with the climate emergency are important to all of us. And doing this at a regional level with devolved powers, decision-making, funding and a collaborative relationship with government, makes us stronger – and means we can do more to improve our residents' lives.

That is why we are pleased to celebrate the progress being made to deliver on our region's priorities during 2024-2025.

This Annual Review once again demonstrates what we can achieve by working together at a regional level.

We want to continue to work with our communities and partners and empower them to continue to play an important role in how we deliver for our region, to make this the best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business – where no-one is left behind.



Cllr Mike Wharton

**Leader, Halton Council**



Cllr Graham Morgan

**Leader, Knowsley Council**



Cllr Liam Robinson

**Leader, Liverpool City Council**



Cllr Marion Atkinson

**Leader, Sefton Council**



Cllr Anthony Burns

**Leader, St Helens Council**



Cllr Paula Basnett

**Leader, Wirral Council**

## Chief Executive's Foreword

Every day I come to work, inspired by the brilliant, creative and hard-working team here at the Combined Authority, who are so committed to delivering the Mayor's vision and manifesto commitments.

**I am equally proud that their work is defined and delivered through incredible partnerships, collaboration and productive relationships across our six constituent local authorities, our businesses, institutions and communities.**

Together, we are dedicated to improving the lives of the 1.6 million residents of this great city region, underpinned always by principles of sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion, which are so fundamental to all of our work.

Working through the Combined Authority, we are using our devolved powers and funding to deliver so many amazing things that will grow our economy, create jobs, equip our residents with the skills they need to succeed, deliver improved transport, better housing, and so much more.

This annual review celebrates the highlights of what we have achieved together during 2024-2025, the first year of delivery under the Combined Authority's 2024-28 corporate plan and our Mayor's third term of office.



Katherine Fairclough  
**Chief Executive**  
**Liverpool City Region Combined Authority**

*Katherine Fairclough*



Family at New Brighton Beach, Wirral

## Our Vision

**The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority plays a central role in the economic development of our region.**

We are seizing the unique opportunity to use our devolved powers and funding to shape this city region's economy so that it creates wealth and prosperity for all our 1.6 million residents. In doing so, our city region will contribute to sustainable economic growth and greater prosperity for the North of England and the whole of the UK.

**Our vision is for the Liverpool City Region to be the best place to grow up, grow a family, and grow a business – where no-one is left behind.**

# Economy

The Combined Authority is primarily a strategic economic development organisation, with the economic needs of the region at the centre of everything it does.



Staff working at Montirex HQ, Liverpool.

## Innovation

Liverpool City Region's innovation agenda continues to develop at pace following the formal launch of the LCR Life Sciences Innovation Zone programme in April 2024.

The 10-year programme is expected to attract up to £800m of investment and to create 8,000 jobs as the city region strives towards the Mayoral ambition of spending 5% of GVA on research and development by 2030 – nearly double the national target.

Tens of millions of pounds have already been committed to Innovation Zone projects including the [creation of new AI-powered, robotic labs](#) that will accelerate development of treatments for deadly diseases.

The Combined Authority will provide £10m towards developing the high-tech, high containment labs at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), which will be supported by the Infection Innovation Consortium (iiCON).

The robotic laboratories are forecast to generate £40m of investment in the first three years – creating well-paid jobs and driving research.



The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine Accelerator Building.

## Other Innovation Zone investments included:

- Nearly **£10m for a new Civic HealthTech Innovation Zone (CHI-Zone)** that will drive investment and job creation, while tackling health inequalities in the Liverpool City Region.
- £4.16m to support a £9.44m POIZ will be at the forefront of developing, testing, and deploying **life-changing technologies to tackle some of the biggest health challenges faced by children and young people in the region.**
- More than £1m to support the creation of a **Microbiome and Infectious Disease Innovation Hub (MaID)** to harness the University of Liverpool's expertise in a rapidly expanding field for fighting disease and improving wellbeing.
- **LCR Ignite** – a training and skills programme run by award-winning St Helens company, Inovus Medical - which received £1m match funding.
- Knowledge Quarter Liverpool's groundbreaking **KQ Futures Programme** which is receiving £1.1m to inspire and prepare children and young people for high-tech careers in health and life sciences.
- £1.8m for a **HealthTech Business Incubation Centre (Health BIC)** at Sci-Tech Daresbury to drive innovation and commercialisation of research.

Last year also saw the first ever Liverpool City Region Innovation Investment Week which was so successful, it was held over a fortnight in May 2025.



Professor Iain Buchan, Mayor Steve Rotheram and National Institute for Health and Care Research CEO Professor Lucy Chappell, centre, with senior University of Liverpool representatives at the launch of Civic Health Innovation Labs.



Alder Hey's Paediatric Open Innovation Zone (POIZ) will be at the forefront of developing, testing, and deploying life-changing technologies to tackle some of the biggest health challenges faced by children and young people in the region.



Leveraging technology innovation centre CPI's facilities and deep expertise, MaID will provide end-to-end support for businesses and organisations seeking to de-risk and accelerate microbiome and phage therapeutics to market.



A demonstration of the RoboCrop project at MTC Liverpool.

# Liverpool City Region Freeport

## Liverpool City Region Freeport

continues to secure inward investment and deliver the completion of key infrastructure.

In total, £194m has been committed to investments within the Freeport since receiving formal designation from the government in January 2023, £72m of which was secured in 2024/25.

£67.8m of private sector funding has been invested in the xDock 549 site within the 3MG tax site in Halton. With an area of 550,000 sq. ft, the development is the largest speculative industrial and logistics hub in the North West and has now reached practical completion. The site is anticipated to create up to 500 jobs.

The £25m, 220,000 sq. ft. Viking Park was also completed at the 3MG site during the last year and should create a further 250 jobs. The two sites will generate £2.2m in business rates that Halton Borough Council will retain to invest in key projects and infrastructure, attracting further investment.

In St Helens, planning approval was granted for phase one of Parkside, the largest of the tax sites, securing £80m of investment to create 800,000 sq.ft of commercial floorspace and a forecast 1,330 jobs. The key Parkside Link Road, connecting the site to the M6, supported by £9m from the Combined Authority, is complete, enabling construction of Parkside Phase One to begin in Q4 2025.

At Wirral Waters, Finsa, a Spanish manufacturer of MDF products, broke ground on a new £20m UK headquarters in March 2025. This is expected to complete by December 2025.

The city region is one of only three areas in the UK to offer both an Investment Zone – known locally as the Life Sciences Innovation Zone – and a Freeport. With both designed to attract investment, create jobs, and drive innovation, the Combined Authority merged their governance under a joint Innovation Zone and Freeport board this year to streamline decision-making processes, align objectives and efficiently allocate resources.



LCR Freeport logo.

## Accelerate international investment and boost international trade

With the help of public and private sector partners from across the Liverpool City Region, the Combined Authority took major steps to accelerate international investment and to boost international trade, as it strives to increase Foreign Direct Investment by 25% by 2030.

In October, Mayor Steve Rotheram led a high-level [city region trade mission to Boston, New York and North Carolina](#), which included cultural and academic leaders.

The mission aimed to drive tens of millions of pounds worth of long-term investment, trade and tourism from the US, which is already Liverpool City Region's largest export market worth £1.8bn a year and is the biggest source of overseas investment.



Mayor Steve Rotheram at a meeting in New York during a high-level mission to the United States aimed at driving tens of millions of pounds of long-term investment, trade and tourism to the Liverpool City Region.



Deputy Mayor Cllr Mike Wharton during the Liverpool City Region trade mission to China.

In a packed schedule, the delegation met with civic and business leaders, emphasising the shared history and promoting the city region as an innovation powerhouse and must-visit cultural, sports and events destination, visited by more than 60 million people each year.

The Mayor met with Kyndryl, the world's largest IT infrastructure services provider, which in January announced it was to open a [tech hub in the city region with the creation of up to 1,000 AI jobs](#). The hub opened in the Royal Liver Building in May, with the company citing the Mayoral visit and the city region's first AI Summit in November among the reasons for the massive investment.

In March, Deputy Mayor [Cllr Mike Wharton led a Liverpool City Region delegation to China](#), joining a high-level trade mission from UK regions. At the same time leaders from the life sciences sector were promoting the city region in Vietnam.

Visiting the industrial mega-cities of Shenzhen, Chongqing and Chengdu, the China delegation forged new relationships with business and political leaders, building on Liverpool's historic links as home to Europe's oldest Chinese community.

Also in March, the [Liverpool City Region headed to MIPIM](#) – the world's largest real estate event - with a bold ambition to showcase £11 billion-worth of transformative real estate projects to the world's biggest investors.

The event is a cornerstone of the Liverpool City Region Capital and Real Estate Investment Programme, an ongoing strategy to showcase the region's investment potential at major industry events.

The programme is a collaboration between the six local authorities, the Combined Authority, strategic partners Starship Group and Peel Waters and private sector partners including Liverpool BID, Knowledge Quarter Liverpool, Sci-Tech Daresbury, Atkins Realis, and ION Developments.

Following a successful [Mayoral-led trade mission to Ireland in February](#), the city region's growing international status was enhanced in March when Liverpool hosted the inaugural UK-Ireland Summit, featuring the Prime Minister, Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Ministers.

A Memorandum of Understanding also heralded a [new era of economic and cultural cooperation with the Isle of Man](#) and the city region's growing ties with Hamburg were strengthened through a return visit by a delegation from Germany's largest port city.



Plans to create a new Mental Health Digital Research Centre at the 42-hectare Maghull Health Park were among the Liverpool City Region investment opportunities promoted at MIPIM.

## Business Support

The Combined Authority is committed to supporting local businesses to achieve their growth potential and create good-quality jobs. The Growth Platform and place-based teams provided support to 1,085 businesses in 2024/25.

Additionally, over 110 businesses benefited from supply chain support through procurement workshops and tailored one-to-one support. More than 240 businesses were supported in developing their export strategies, with 30 receiving grant funding to support their export growth ambitions.

In December 2024, Liverpool City Region innovation investment company [LYVA Labs celebrated its third anniversary](#). Established in December 2021, the Combined Authority has invested £10.5m in LYVA Labs to help innovators across the region turn great ideas into high-growth businesses and good-quality jobs for local people.



Liverpool City Region Mayor Steve Rotheram (3rd from right) and Lorna Green, LYVA Labs Chief Executive (4th from right) pictured at the LYVA Labs third anniversary event.

LYVA Labs has invested in 18 start-ups creating 475 local jobs so far, with another 15 people employed by LYVA Labs itself.

The team has also supported over 100 SMEs to develop and commercialise innovative technologies across key growth sectors.

In July 2024, eight innovative businesses received £765,000 funding, from the Innovate UK Biomedical Catalyst feasibility grant, after completing LYVA Labs' Microbials Accelerator programme - the first Innovate UK programme of its kind.

## Kindred

**Established with £5.5m from the Combined Authority and £1m from Power to Change, Kindred's mission is to help socially trading organisations (STOs) deliver lasting benefits for their communities.**

In October 2024, new figures revealed the transformative scale of Kindred's pioneering investment programme, with **£2m of funding** creating 126 new local jobs and generating an additional £14m in further investment.

Speaking at the time, Mayor Steve Rotheram hailed Kindred's success, noting that no other region in the UK is supporting community businesses in such an innovative way.

The social trading sector employs 50,000 people, one in 10 of the city region's workforce, with 1,300 STOs generating £2.9bn per year for the city region's economy.

The evaluation revealed that, collectively, the 44 STOs supported so far have grown their combined turnover by 77% over two years – money that stays in local communities.

## Listening to Business

The Combined Authority continues to be committed to listening to local businesses and ensuring they are at the heart of policy making.

To that end the Business and Enterprise Board and the three cluster boards, representing the city region's key growth sectors of Advanced Manufacturing, Creative Industries and Health and Life Sciences, continue to meet and inform the Combined Authority's approach to delivering growth. In May, a new regeneration board was established to help give confidence to investors, landowners, developers and occupiers.

Made up of leading figures from the business community, the purpose of these bodies is to influence policy, stimulate economic growth, productivity and competitiveness whilst supporting the city region in its ambitions for inclusive growth and sustainability.

In June the Combined Authority held its annual **Talking Business Conference**, that brings together the wider business community to hear the Combined Authority's plans and make its voice heard.



A panel discussion at the LCR Talking Business conference.

# People

The city region's economy is powered by the diverse, innovative, creative and hard-working people who live and work here. There is real strength and depth in the region's workforce.



Staff working at Knauf, St Helens.

## Ensuring the Best Start in Life

Providing residents with the right skills and access to opportunities will unlock potential within city region communities and enable people to thrive. Fundamental to achieving this goal is enabling more young people to have the best start in life, including access to high quality childcare and early years provision.

The Combined Authority is currently building towards the launch of a commission to identify the systemic challenges around childcare. As part of this, it has [launched a regional masterplan](#) to tackle staff shortages in Early Years education and care provision.

This included £470,000 for new Skills Bootcamps for Early Years and Childcare, the appointment of five dedicated Early Years Employment Officers to help job seekers into new careers in the sector and more than £650,000 of Apprenticeship Levy transfer money to support training costs for over 100 new apprenticeships.

 [Watch Early Years as a career choice](#)



The groundbreaking Cradle to Career programme which tackles inequality in families across the Liverpool City Region's most deprived areas wins a prestigious national award from the Institute of Economic Development.

The inspirational [Cradle to Career programme](#) picked up a prestigious national award from the Institute of Economic Development for its collaborative work. Its roll out across the city region's six local authority areas is continuing, with a target of supporting 36,000 children by 2030. The programme is currently supporting more than 15,000 children and young people a year and is set to reach 18,000 in 2026 when delivery expands into Speke, in Liverpool. The phased roll out of the programme continues to positively impact on literacy levels and social care outcomes with wider benefits expected over the next year.

 [Watch How Cradle to Career is changing lives](#)

The Households into Work programme has supported more than 4,900 out-of-work residents since its launch in 2018, most of whom were long term unemployed. This year it has

helped 1,208 economically inactive people – passing a target of 200 – with 510 accessing skills training and 161 going into work activity. As part of efforts to make the service more diverse and inclusive, four trainee Employment Advocates have been recruited and given bespoke training, which has led to a 34% increase in engagement with people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This was recognised with a nomination to the Local Government Awards.

A new initiative has been launched giving [care leavers free access to public transport across](#) the city region. The Care Leavers MetroCard is available to around 1,500 residents aged between 18 and 21 years old and allows unrestricted travel on the city region's buses, trains and ferries. The MetroCard will help care leavers continue their education, employment, and social activities without the barrier of transport costs.



Mayor Steve Rotheram launched a new initiative giving care leavers free access to public transport across the Liverpool City Region.

# A City Region of Learning – delivering employment and skills

The Combined Authority this year set out its vision for employment and skills with the delivery of a new Long-Term Skills Plan running to 2028. The plan is designed to tackle inactivity and low productivity by equipping the workforce with the skills and resilience necessary to unlock the economy’s global potential.

**A record 37,680 learners** were supported through the Combined Authority’s devolved Adult Skills Fund in the 2023/24 academic year – with 75% living in disadvantaged areas.

Diversity and inclusion remain at the heart of the programme with a 34% increase in learners funded through the Low Wage Pilot (6,300) and a 9% rise in people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, who now make up 29% of adult skills learners. Learners with difficulties, disabilities, or health problems, make up 23% of the total. The pioneering Test and Learn initiative again dedicated around £2.7m to trial innovative schemes with 2,590 learners - a 65% annual rise in students.

This year, plans were unveiled to invest a total of £68m in 2025/26 - with £52m for FE colleges and training providers, more than £12m for Skills Bootcamps and £3.6m for Free Courses for Jobs. New powers were secured to fund and design technical qualifications based on local employer needs, ensuring the workforce is fit for the future.

An additional £12m was invested into employment and skills support over the past year thanks to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This resulted in a wide range of provision at local community level via smaller voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups, local

authorities and support organisations such as Households into Work and Careers Support within the Combined Authority. People and skills funding via UKSPF came online in 2024 and the funding has already helped 6,596 city region residents who are economically inactive and face significant barriers to work.

Amid a push for devolution of the Apprenticeship Levy and the power to reintroduce Foundation Apprenticeships, the Combined Authority’s scheme to maximise unused training funds goes from strength to strength and the number of big local employers contributing to the initiative continues to grow.

Large employers are required to pay 0.5% of their wage bill towards the Apprenticeship Levy – collected by the government to fund apprenticeships - however levy payers that do not spend their allocation on in-house apprentices



Left to right: Abdul Yusuf Youth Projects Executive, Premier League; Gillian Shaw, Head of Partnerships, Bauer Academy; Joe Keegan, Employer Brokerage Manager, LCR Combined Authority; Caroline Watkinson, Commercial Director, Bauer Academy; Helen Cross, Cluster Manager for Digital & Creative, Growth Platform, LCR Combined Authority.

can gift up to 50% to other organisations. Otherwise, the money is lost to the area.

The Combined Authority has successfully secured **£9.2m in unused Apprenticeship Levy** to create 1,521 roles, and now works with Liverpool FC, Airbus, Amazon, Matalan and QVC among other large employers. Liverpool FC is the largest contributor, donating £596,500 of unused Levy to fund 120 new apprentices, while the BBC now spends more Levy in the city region than anywhere else in the UK – so far transferring £326,000 to create 37 apprentice roles.

 [Watch the LFC apprentices at our Anfield event.](#)

The LCR Careers Hub supported 147 schools and colleges with quality education provision, beating a target of 142 colleges and increasing its benchmark achievement to 6.2 compared to the national average of 5.9. The Combined Authority’s skills brokerage services continued to support regional employers to access funding and government incentive schemes to help up-skill or re-skill employees, working with 778 employers to create 651 apprenticeships.

The Mayor’s Young People’s Guarantee was turbocharged when the city region was chosen as one of eight national Youth Guarantee Trailblazers ahead of a ministerial launch in the city region. The groundbreaking £5m programme contains a raft of extra measures to help local young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) get a job, training or apprenticeship opportunity within six months.

The award-winning [LCR Be More](#) online careers portal took another step forward with the launch of Course Finder – an integrated online course and qualification tool which lets users build a personalised learning prospectus. A new ESOL course access point has also been added to help users find information in all six local authority areas, supported by a language widget for people who do not speak English as a primary language.

In September, a pilot project was launched around the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in schools to help teachers tailor lessons for individual children and to mark their homework. The scheme, run by Century Tech, is expected to roll-out nationally.

In February, an [ambitious national plan](#) to reinvent work experience for schoolchildren began testing in the city region. The equalex pilot put into practice a new framework to improve work experience for every pupil by replacing the traditional two-week block with multiple experiences totalling 10 days throughout secondary education.



(L-R) CEO of The Careers & Enterprise Company Oli de Botton, Strategic Careers Hub Lead Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Gill Walsh and Mayor of the Liverpool City Region Steve Rotheram at the launch of the equalex work experience programme.



Mayor Rotheram showing his plastering skills at the equalex launch.

Prominent city region employers are supporting the scheme, which is aimed at filling skills gaps and equipping local children for tech jobs in the pioneering Life Sciences Innovation Zone.

[Watch the launch of equalex at the SPL plastering academy](#)

The Combined Authority's [Digital inclusion programme](#) is more than halfway to its ambitious target of getting 10,000 people online by 2028. The pioneering scheme has now supported more than 5,200 digitally excluded residents with a free tablet, connectivity and training – working with Lloyds Bank, Vodafone, Assurant and our network of delivery partners to donate a total of 1.2m gigabytes of free mobile data.

Using UKSPF Digital Connectivity Grants for Community Facilities, £1.4m in grants was delivered to improve or establish over 170 Digital Inclusion Hubs and the LCR Digital Inclusion Network now has over 230 members.

In the last year, 500 people across the authority's Households into Work and Housing First schemes were supported with a combination of a recycled Combined Authority iPhone and a National Databank Sim card. More than 200 Digital Champions have now been trained across the city region, helping thousands of others online. The authority's IT team donated more than 800 digital devices to the National Devicebank to be recycled and repurposed to tackle digital exclusion and save 100,000KG in carbon emissions.

[Watch Residents get new tablets and data at Mann Island event](#)



A resident receives training as part of Liverpool City Region's Digital Inclusion programme.

# Place

The Liverpool City Region is a place of diversity and vibrancy. Culture is at the very heart of what makes our city region unique, and we are taking a coordinated, strategic approach to tackling place-based challenges impacting our residents like access to quality housing, homelessness and climate change.



Salt & Tar, Sefton. Credit: Sefton Council.



In January this year, a five-year masterplan was unveiled to make the Liverpool City Region the best place in the UK to ‘visit and stay for a day, a week or a lifetime’ by 2030.

The [Destination Management Plan](#) developed by the pioneering Local Visitor Economy Partnership, now known as the Liverpool City Region Destination Partnership, sets out a unified vision to further accelerate growth across the city region over the next five years.

The city region is already a must-visit destination for visitors from around the globe. Its thriving visitor economy generates £6.25bn a year, employing more than 58,000 people and welcoming around 60 million visitors who enjoy its world-renowned cultural, musical and sporting attractions.

Since the first meeting of the Partnership Board in May 2024, which is chaired by former BBC director general, Tony Hall CBE, the Destination Partnership has become instrumental in harnessing the city region’s potential as the UK’s ‘culture capital’ and shaping its strategic vision for the future.

Part of this vision is contained in the Major Events strategy which has been developed and is now progressing through the Combined Authority’s approval process.

The strategy explores how to attract and stage more showpiece events, [like Eurovision](#).

It focuses on enhancing visitor experiences, creating sustainable growth in visitor numbers and boosting jobs. The sector could consequently contribute an extra £309m to the economy - Gross Value Added each year.

Famous visitor sites in Liverpool City Region’s six local authority areas – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral.



A new study has revealed how the Liverpool City Region is continuing to reap the rewards of hosting Eurovision 2023, with repeat visitors bringing an additional £11.1m to the local economy over the past year alone.

While work continues toward this vision, the annual [LCR Culture and Creativity Awards](#) took place at Wirral's Floral Pavilion in March, honouring artists, creatives, volunteers and community groups in 15 categories.

Winners included The Flower Streets Mural Project, which scooped The People's Choice Award with nearly 3,000 votes, ten-year-old break dancer Khalil Aydemir who was named Inspirational Young Person and Arts Organisation Make CIC for its outstanding transformative work in Birkenhead.



[Watch the Culture Awards video](#)



Mayor Rotherham has revealed that the city region will pursue a barrage between the Wirral and Liverpool as the preferred option for the city region's flagship Mersey Tidal Power project.

## Place – Net Zero

The Combined Authority is committed to hitting its target of becoming [net carbon zero by 2035](#) and continues to implement its [Five Year Climate Action Plan](#), published in **2023**, which sets out the road map for achieving the goal.

From continuing to develop the **Mersey Tidal Power Project** to retrofitting thousands of homes with energy efficiency measures, from insulation to heat pumps, huge progress has been made over the last year.

## Mersey Tidal Power Project

The last year has seen significant steps forward for the [Mersey Tidal Power Project](#), which would create the world's biggest tidal power station.

The scheme is being developed as a barrage across the River Mersey that will deliver enough clean, predictable energy to power hundreds of thousands of homes for 120 years.

Over the last year, the project has entered the formal planning process, and in October, the project launched its first public consultation on the plans. More than 3,000 responses were received with 84% backing the project and 92% supporting the need for more renewable energy to be produced in the Liverpool City Region.



[Watch a fly through of how the barrage will look: Flythrough of a potential Mersey Tidal barrage](#)

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

**Earlier this year people across the Liverpool City Region were asked to have their say on a new strategy to restore habitats, protect species and boost biodiversity.**

The comprehensive [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) (LNRS) was created against a backdrop of declining biodiversity and a loss of habitats across the UK which has seen many common species put at risk.

The recovery strategy identifies and maps opportunities to create, enhance and restore habitats with the biggest benefit for nature and people.

Nearly 400 people responded to the in-depth consultation and the campaign around the public consultation was showcased as 'best in class' by Natural England.

The strategy is now being finalised.



The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has been appointed by DEFRA to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the city region. Image copyright: Dave McAleavy.



A young activist explains why the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is important.

 **Find out more about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy [HERE](#)**

## Ambitious plan for a cleaner Mersey

In March 2025, the Mayor announced [a landmark agreement with United Utilities and the Mersey Rivers Trust](#) to help deliver the government's national water quality goals and accelerate the clean-up of the River Mersey.

The agreement, in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), builds on the government's plan for the water sector, aligning with national efforts to tackle pollution and reduce storm overflows, and the Mayor's ambition to deliver a discharge-free Mersey.

The MOU commits the three partners to a joint five-year action plan aimed at reducing sewage discharges, improving water quality, and boosting biodiversity across the Liverpool City Region.



John Sanders, Co-Director of the Mersey Rivers Trust, Louise Beardmore, Chief Executive Officer of United Utilities and Mayor of the Liverpool City Region Steve Rotheram in Widnes at the launch of an MOU to create a cleaner River Mersey.

## Decarbonising our homes and public buildings

Thousands of homes are to be made warmer and more energy efficient as part of an £80m investment secured by the Combined Authority in March 2025.

£31.8m will come from the Warm Homes: Local Grant fund and will be distributed to low-income homeowners and private renters. The funding was secured by a Combined Authority-led consortium of Liverpool City Region's six local authorities – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral – and was the third highest award in England.

A further £48m has been secured through the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund which will be distributed among 24 housing associations operating in the city region and the wider north west.

The investment – which will enable energy-efficiency improvements to around 10,000 homes - is part of a five-year carbon action plan to make the city region net zero by 2035. It comes on top of £105m already secured by the Combined Authority to retrofit 10,000 homes with energy-efficiency upgrades including wall and loft insulation, new roofs, solar panels, heat pumps and ventilation.

 Find out more about one of our retrofit schemes here: [Mayor Rotheram visits project to make North Liverpool homes warmer, and more affordable.](#)



Onward Homes Chief Executive Bronwen Rapley at a £25m retrofit project to make 400 homes more energy efficient in Kirkdale, Liverpool.

## Brownfield Land Fund

The Liverpool City Region [exceeded its target for homes built on brownfield sites, with 4,521 to be built through the Combined Authority's £59.5m Brownfield Land Fund.](#)

Established to support the creation of new homes on previously developed brownfield sites, the £59.5m in Government funding came with a target for enabling the construction of 3,970 new homes.

With around 3,000 homes set to be built through the Brownfield Land and Infrastructure Fund and 427 through the Brownfield Land Release Fund 2, almost 8,000 new homes will be built on brownfield sites across the city region, with £147m of government funding.

 Find out more about one of our Brownfield Land Fund projects [HERE](#)

## Future Homes LCR

In September last year, the Mayor launched a groundbreaking initiative aimed at transforming the housing sector through innovative, zero-energy-bill homes.

The [Future Homes LCR project](#) was unveiled as a trailblazing programme that positions the Liverpool City Region at the forefront of sustainable, affordable housing in the UK.

A newly constructed house, built outside the ACC Liverpool in a matter of days, showcased innovative Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) that not only promise faster build times but also drastically reduce energy consumption.

Using (MMC) such as offsite manufacture, houses can be completed within a week and have estimated heating, hot water and lighting bills of £124-a-year – or even zero, in some cases.



Minister for Energy Consumers Miatta Fahnbulleh pictured with local leaders outside the "zero bills" home built at Liverpool's ACC.

The homes are constructed and part-assembled off site. The Future Homes LCR waterfront house was built using a light-gauge steel frame, clad with insulation and brick slips to create a super-insulated, airtight building with an energy performance (EPC) rating of 100%. The Future Homes LCR scheme is a public-private alliance which aims to accelerate the development of ultra-low-carbon housing across the region, offering a sustainable solution to the housing crisis.

## Strategic Place Partnership

Also In September, the Combined Authority and Homes England **established a Strategic Place Partnership**.

The SPP model is one of the ways Homes England is advancing locally led housing growth and regeneration. Designed to support regions with the most ambitious proposals for housing growth, the SPP is a long-term commitment, centred around a shared plan for bringing those proposals forward.

 [Watch Strategic Place Partnership \*\*HERE\*\*](#)



Mayor signs agreement with Homes England which will see Liverpool City Region shape its own housing future.

## Tackling Homelessness

**An additional £4.1 m in government funding was secured in December for the Combined Authority to continue and expand its work tackling homelessness.**

The funding supports the pioneering Housing First programme and a range of targeted interventions, including specialist outreach teams, a dedicated homelessness social worker, and a community psychiatric nurse - all delivered in partnership with the region's six local authorities and frontline organisations.

Housing First has provided 220 people facing the most complex barriers with a permanent home and the tailored support they need to address issues such as mental health, trauma and addiction. The Accommodation for Ex-Offenders initiative has helped more than 200 service users move forward into private sector rented tenancies and over 120 rough sleepers have been assisted through street-based interventions by a dedicated outreach team.

Plans to create a cross-sector homelessness task force are also now moving forward with the Centre for Homelessness Impact. Consultation with the homelessness leads from local authorities and wider partners is underway to ensure a coordinated approach, ensuring that all relevant sectors work together to address the root causes of homelessness. The task force is expected to launch during this financial year.

 [Watch: Homelessness Outreach](#)

 [Watch: 5 years of Housing First](#)

# Transport

The city region has seen improvements in its transport network, with significant investments such as the delivery of new stations and trains. It will continue to innovate to deliver improved mobility through a modern, integrated and publicly-controlled transport system.



Passengers using the new trains for the Merseyrail network.

This has been another year of major milestones for Liverpool City Region’s public transport, with significant investment in new infrastructure and further progression towards the goal of greater local control of the network.

This continued development was recognised in October 2024 when the Combined Authority was named **Regional Transport Authority of the Year at the National Transport Awards**, with judges praising the organisation for setting ‘a new standard for public transport’ in the UK.

## Rail

**The project to deliver a new deep-level railway station in the heart of the ‘UK’s coolest neighbourhood’ and one of the city region’s fastest growing areas – the Baltic Triangle – has continued to progress.**

Planning permission for Liverpool Baltic station was granted by Liverpool City Council in April 2025, with initial highways works around the site set to begin later this year.

A series of public engagement events last summer saw high quality CGIs revealed, along with a **virtual reality walkthrough** showing the completed station up close.

The new station will feature step-free access from street to train, fully accessible passenger toilets, secure cycle parking and links to an enhanced local active travel network.

The scheme is the latest element of Mayor Rotheram’s “Merseyrail for All” commitment to reach communities that are currently not connected to the local rail network.

Liverpool Baltic will be served by the region’s £500m fleet of state-of-the-art, publicly-owned trains and in February 2025,



Liverpool Baltic is part of Mayor Steve Rotheram’s vision to improve the public transport network across the Liverpool City Region.

Legendary Paralympian **Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson highlighted the best-in-class accessibility of the fleet** as evidence of ‘what can be done’.

Work also continued to improve the accessibility of stations on the Merseyrail network, ensuring more stations are step-free from pavement to platform.

In November 2024, £9.5m of Combined Authority funding was released to allow construction to begin on **lifts for Aigburth station in Liverpool and Rock Ferry station in Wirral.**

This will bring the total number of stations in the region with planned or delivered step-free access schemes to 65, or around 80% of the network, making it the most accessible in the country.

Alongside investment in accessibility, a new scheme was launched to make rail stations more attractive, welcoming and sustainable.

Launched in July 2024, **‘Merseyrail in Bloom’** recognises and builds on the work done by community volunteers across the region to maintain station buildings and gardens.

▶ Watch: **[Liverpool Baltic CGI HERE](#)**

▶ Watch: **[Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson](#)** was impressed with the accessibility of the city region’s fleet of new trains **[HERE](#)**



Step-free access from pavement to platform is available at 61 of the city region’s 87 railway stations.

## Bus

**Work to bring the Liverpool City Region’s bus network into public control for the first time in more than a generation gathered pace, with Mayor Rotheram accelerating the timeline for delivery of bus franchising.**

The new system, allowing greater local control of fares, timetables and routes, will be introduced in St Helens in 2026 before rolling out across the region by the end of 2027 – a year ahead of the original schedule.

In February 2025, it was confirmed that passengers will benefit from [more frequent services, extended routes, and better links to hospitals and railway stations](#) from day one of franchising.

In November 2024 it was announced that [express bus services would return between Liverpool city centre and Runcorn](#) with the support of the Combined Authority. A new express service is also planned between St Helens and Liverpool John Lennon Airport, with further enhancements across each borough as franchising progresses.



From day one of the rollout, passengers will benefit from more frequent services, extended routes, and better links to hospitals and railway stations.



An express bus service has been reintroduced between Liverpool City Region and Runcorn.

This followed the announcement, in July 2024, that more than [£110m would be invested in the region’s bus network](#) as part of plans to radically improve services.

The funding is helping reduce journey times and reliability, upgrade and purchase depot facilities and procure dozens of new zero-emission buses, in addition to the [more than 100 electric double-deckers already secured for the region.](#)

Over £32m has also been committed to the construction of a brand-new transport interchange for St Helens, with improved links to rail and active travel.

In line with Mayor Rotheram’s pledge to create rapid transport links for areas not currently served by the rail network – including Liverpool and Everton FC stadiums and Liverpool John Lennon Airport – [an articulated ‘glider’ vehicle was brought to the region.](#)

The vehicle, which can carry 30% more passengers than a standard double decker bus, was tested on key routes and road infrastructure.

The Combined Authority continued to ensure that bus travel in the Liverpool City Region is as affordable as possible, with [Mayor Rotheram committing to extend the £2 adult single fare](#) well beyond the end of the national scheme in January 2025.

As part of the Combined Authority’s 2024 budget, the cost of the under-19s unlimited dayrider pass, [MyTicket, was frozen for the seventh year running](#), remaining one of the lowest-priced young person’s bus tickets in the country

 [Watch - Glider comes to Liverpool City Region](#)



Almost £110m is being invested in the Liverpool City Region bus network, as part of plans for service improvement.

## Active Travel

Investment in high-quality active travel infrastructure continues to hit new heights, with more than £70m committed over the past year.

This takes the total funding for bike lanes, footpaths, junction improvements and associated highways works to well over £150m.

Schemes funded over the last twelve months include £18.8m for cycleway upgrades east of Southport town centre in Sefton and [£22.3m for new walking and cycling links at the flagship Birkenhead Central Gateway project](#) in Wirral.

The investment is part of a pledge from Mayor Rotheram to create a 600km network of walking and cycling routes across the region, encouraging more people to leave the car at home for short journeys.

Working closely with local authority partners, 148km has already been completed to date, with dozens more schemes under planning and in construction.

Funding has also been committed to projects which improve access to walking and cycling – from support for [‘bike libraries’ in Everton](#) and Toxteth in Liverpool - to [the delivery of free cycle safety training for more than 10,000 young people](#) across the region every year.

 [Watch Everton bike library](#)



More than £70m was committed over the last year to deliver active travel schemes.



Backing for the L5 Bike Library is just one of the many ways Mayor Steve Rotheram and the Combined Authority are working to make active travel in the Liverpool City Region easier and safer.

## Ferries

The Mersey Ferries, world-famous icons of the region, have continued to benefit from major investment by the Combined Authority this year as part of a strategy to secure their future for generations to come.

£26m has been committed to deliver the first new Mersey Ferry in more than 60 years, with [construction work getting underway in November 2024](#).

The vessel is being built entirely at the historic Birkenhead shipyard Cammell Laird in Wirral, supporting apprenticeships and bringing jobs and skills to the region.

The new ferry, which is set to enter service in 2026, has been designed to provide passengers with greater comfort, accessibility and an improved customer experience.

[Photorealistic CGIs](#) released in December 2024 revealed that the vessel would feature stylish modern interiors whilst retaining the traditional Mersey Ferries exterior colour scheme.



The virtual flythrough – accessible on the Mersey Ferries website or at the ‘Future of the Ferries’ exhibition at Seacombe Terminal – allows passengers to experience the new high-spec ferry.



As part of the refurbishment of the Woodside Ferry Terminal, it took five days to install two piles eight metres into the Mersey’s riverbed, using a barge with specialist drilling equipment.

In January 2025 the [name of the new vessel was announced as the Royal Daffodil](#) at a special keel-laying ceremony – it will be the sixth Mersey Ferry to carry the name since the 1900s.

Work also began on a [major refurbishment of Woodside Ferry Terminal](#) in November 2024, as the 39-year-old landing stage and linkspan bridge was removed during a complex early-morning operation on the River Mersey.

The terminal’s new landing stage and linkspan bridge are in construction ahead of installation later in summer 2025.

 [Watch - New ferry keel laying ceremony at Cammell Laird](#)

## Transport tickets

The development of a simplified transport ticketing system, automatically giving passengers the cheapest fare for their journeys, has continued to progress this year.

In May a [pilot of “tap and go” ticketing was launched on the Merseyrail network](#), with 50 volunteers testing the new system that will link a Metro smartcard to their bank account.

A second phase will launch later in 2025 with passengers able to use a bank card, phone or smartwatch to pay for their journeys.

Elsewhere across the region, access to transport for those in most need was expanded when the [care leavers’ travel pass](#) was launched by Mayor Rotherham in March 2025, offering unrestricted travel on the region’s buses, trains and ferries.

Young apprentices, people with disabilities, and those over the age of 60, also continue to benefit from generous discounted and free travel schemes across the region.

 [Watch - Care leavers travel card](#)



Up to 50 volunteers will pilot a new ‘tap and go’ system on Merseyrail that will guarantee the best fare and remove the need to queue for tickets.

## Tunnels

With over 80,000 journeys a day through the Mersey Tunnels, continued investment in their maintenance and modernisation is needed to keep them running both efficiently and safely.

Things got a lot brighter in the Queensway (Birkenhead) Tunnel in December 2024, as an [£11m project to install new LED lighting was completed](#).

The tunnel is now fitted with 1,058 new LED lights, 230 new electricity distribution boards and more than 100,000 metres of power cabling all of which will cut the tunnel's carbon output by 60% each year – another step towards the city region's ambitious target to be net zero by 2035.

New [tap and go card payment technology for the Mersey Tunnels](#) was also introduced in November 2024, improving journey times and helping to cut carbon emissions.

 [Watch Mersey Tunnels keeping the city region moving](#)



Clr Steve Foulkes officially switches on the new LED lighting system alongside members of the project team who made it happen.



The new contactless system will almost halve the transaction time for card payments – improving traffic flow on the toll plaza during busy periods and cutting air pollution.

# Digital Infrastructure

In today's rapidly evolving world, digital connectivity is paramount for driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and enhancing quality of life for our residents.



Hartree Centre high performance computing, Sci-Tech Daresbury, Halton.

Last year saw the completion of the flagship 214km gigabit-capable LCR Connect network, delivering some of the fastest internet speeds in the country.

**Work continues to market the many benefits of the network – a half-publicly owned joint venture between the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, ITS Technology Group and NGE - and nearly 800 businesses are now connected.**

And work continues to ensure that the Liverpool City Region is the **most digitally connected region in the country**. In November last year the Combined Authority approved a Digital Connectivity Vision and Roadmap setting out how it would reach that goal.

The roadmap details how the Combined Authority is working with the public sector, industry and academia, to ensure it is well positioned for a future economy and society which are reliant on comprehensive digital connectivity.



Mayor Steve Rotheram pictured at the celebration event to mark the completion of LCR Connect with members of the Combined Authority's project team and representative of their joint venture partners, ITS and NGE.

## 5G High Density Distribution project

Since August 2024 the Combined Authority has been collaborating on the £9m [5G HDD project](#), led by the University of Liverpool.

The project has been developing and trialling innovative 5G technology to deliver improved connectivity in crowded environments, such as entertainment and sports events. It was successfully trialled at Salt & Tar in Bootle and Comic Con at the ACC.

The project supports the Combined Authority's aim to identify and trial ways in which advanced wireless technologies, such as 5G, can be used and explore the potential benefits of widespread uptake of 5G by sectors across the city region.

It supports the Government's 5G Supply Chain Diversification Strategy which aims to grow the telecoms supply chain, whilst ensuring it is resilient to future trends and threats and lays the foundations for a world-class telecoms security framework.



An innovative digital project has conducted the first trial of new technologies aimed at improving digital connectivity in busy settings, such as last summer's Tom Jones concert at Salt & Tar.



The Combined Authority is pioneering the use of data to improve public services.

## Big Data for Public Good

Unlocking the power of data is a key foundation of the digital economy and fundamental to the development of large language models within artificial intelligence.

Additionally, as the Local Government Association makes clear, "The use of data plays an increasing role in designing, delivering and transforming public services to improve outcomes and drive efficiencies within current financial constraints".

Through the creation of the [Civic Data Co-operative](#) the city region has already begun to invest in the infrastructure and capability required, connecting organisations, and citizens, in the region to appropriate data in order to help improve service delivery and solve big problems.

It is this data driven approach that is informing the Combined Authority's work on the [Office for Public Service Innovation](#) – OPSI – a strategic initiative that aims to transform public services by leveraging data, fostering innovation and promoting collaboration across local government, health, education and community sectors.

OPSI is envisioned as a catalyst for public sector reform, creating a body that supports innovation and evidence-based decision-making in public services. Working with the city region's six local authorities and wider public services, it will see the Liverpool City Region become an innovator in public service reform, enabling improvements in outcomes for residents and the delivery of more sustainable and efficient public services.

Data is also key in developing Connected Places applications, also known as smart cities. For example, the Combined Authority is working with the University of Liverpool and counterparts in South Korea to create a 'digital twin' - [a digital replica of the city region's transport system](#).



A new high-tech collaboration with South Korea is aimed at improving Liverpool City Region bus services.

The 'digital twin' will use state-of-the-art data modelling techniques and real-time vehicle location data to help transport leaders achieve greater connectivity across the region, benefitting residents and helping reduce transport inequalities. Hundreds of thousands of people use Liverpool City Region's bus network each day, with around 82% of public transport journeys currently taken by bus.

It builds on strong links with South Korea's second city and the Mayor has now signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mayor of Busan Metropolitan City, Park Heong-Joon, to promote active co-operation in areas relating to digital innovation and smart cities, net zero and clean energy and health innovation.



Liverpool City Region showcased global AI leadership at its pioneering international AI Summit.

## AI for Good

**It's becoming increasingly clear that AI has the potential to transform entire sectors, offering possibilities to improve people's quality of life and grow the economy through automating repetitive tasks and processes and speeding up decision making whilst reducing human error.**

Along with the benefits of AI come a myriad of challenges, and the Combined Authority has committed to harnessing the potential of AI for good.

In November 2024, the Combined Authority hosted the first [Liverpool City Region AI Summit](#), bringing together some of the brightest minds in Artificial Intelligence.

More than 300 people from a range of organisations, sectors and regions attended the landmark event which highlighted how AI is being used to solve real-world challenges – from transforming healthcare to revolutionising education – and to how it can drive a fairer, more inclusive society.

It also showcased the city region's world-leading Artificial Intelligence expertise, while addressing ethical issues. It strategically positioned the Liverpool City Region as a prime location for technology companies, profiling the area's infrastructure, innovative spirit and thought leadership to key industry figures.

The event highlighted the city region's openness to business and investment-readiness, building on world-leading assets such as the STFC Hartree Centre, and the University of Liverpool's Materials Innovation Factory, Digital Innovation Facility, and Civic Health Innovation Labs, working with major industry partners IBM, Unilever and Microsoft.



[Watch: the video HERE](#)



Mayor Steve Rotheram and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, hosted the region's first ever AI summit in November last year, welcoming innovators and leaders from across the country.



The segregated cycleway on the Silver Jubilee Bridge in Widnes.

## Case Study -

### Halton: Active travel investment

The past year has seen more than £22m committed by the Combined Authority to the delivery of new active travel infrastructure across Halton, supporting housebuilding and employment in the borough.

In July 2024, it was announced that more than [£17.5m would be invested in a new pedestrian and cycle link for East Runcorn](#), while in November a further [£4.9m was released from CRSTS \(City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement\) funding for new cycleways](#) linked to the Runcorn busway scheme.

The routes will join up Sci-Tech Daresbury and the planned residential sites at Daresbury Garden Village and at Palacefields, where more than 400 new homes are to be built as part of a major regeneration scheme backed by the Combined Authority's Brownfield Land Fund.

The new footpaths and bike lanes will be connected to existing active travel infrastructure in Halton, including the best-in-class segregated cycleway on the Silver Jubilee Bridge in Widnes, as part of plans to deliver a 600km network across the whole city region.



An artist's impression of the £163m Huyton Village project.

## Case Study –

### Knowsley: Huyton Town Centre regeneration

**Ambitious plans to transform Huyton town centre - known as Huyton Village - are under way, supported by a [£2m investment](#) from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.**

Huyton Village is a £163m project between Knowsley Council and urban regeneration specialists Genr8/Kajima.

It aims to regenerate the town centre by creating a new leisure and retail space alongside the existing shopping area. The first phase includes plans for 72 new affordable one and two-bed homes for rent, a 130-bed hotel and 85,000sq ft of commercial office space.

To enable the first phase, old expensive-to-run council buildings that occupy a large part of Huyton town centre will be demolished, releasing almost seven acres of land for development.

In December last year the Combined Authority agreed to invest £2m to fund the purchase and refit of a row of office and shop units on Cavendish Walk which will be converted into a community hub, library and temporary offices for relocated council staff.

New modern, energy-efficient office accommodation and a vibrant new 'village green' will then be created on the site of the former council offices, which include the seven-storey Huyton Municipal Building.



Aerial shot of the new Everton Stadium – known as the Hill Dickinson Stadium – at Bramley-Moore Dock.

## Case Study – Liverpool: - Bramley Moore Dock

**Helped by a £15m Strategic Investment Fund grant, Everton Football Club's new stadium at Bramley-Moore Dock was completed this year.**

The first test event in February – an Under-18 friendly against Wigan Athletic watched by 10,000 fans – marked the culmination of a three-and-a-half-year construction phase, recognised as the UK's largest single-site private sector development employing thousands of Liverpool City Region residents.

The result is a 52,888-capacity waterfront stadium that will act as a catalyst for wider regeneration across Liverpool's north docks and deliver millions of pounds in social value.

Combined Authority funds supported heritage and public realm work around the stadium including the infilling of Bramley-Moore Dock and completion of the fan plazas and pedestrian routes.

As well as becoming Everton's new home, the stadium will provide a stunning venue for concerts and other major sporting events including UEFA Euro 2028 and the Rugby League Ashes this autumn and is expected to attract 1.4 million visitors to the city annually.

A second test event with 25,000 fans was held at Bramley-Moore Dock in March with rail, shuttle bus and ferry services stepped up to safely and efficiently transport fans to and from the stadium.

Under the co-ordination of a Transport Working Group chaired by Everton Football Club, the Combined Authority continues to work closely with local partners including Liverpool City Council, Merseyrail, bus operators and Merseyside Police ahead of the 2025/26 Premier League season which starts in August.



An artist's impression of the planned new £73m Marine Lake Events Centre in Southport.

## Case Study – Sefton: Marine Lake Events Centre

**Work has now started on an ambitious new events centre in Southport.**

The new £73m Marine Lake Events Centre will include a theatre, exhibition hall, a Strictly Come Dancing-style dance floor, a signature restaurant, and a 180-degree view of the Marine Lake. It will also feature a water and light show.

The new centre will be built on the site of the former Southport Theatre and Convention Centre (STCC) following its demolition. GRAHAM, one of the UK's leading contractors, [has been contracted](#) to deliver the project.

The STCC was closed in 2020 amid the Covid-19 pandemic, but Sefton Council quickly put forward proposals to develop the site and replace the theatre with a 'world-class' events facility.

Funded through a Town Deal and a £17.7 million contribution from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority the venue is forecast to create 200 jobs and attract more than 500,000 visitors to the town.

Construction work has now started, with the project aiming for completion by spring 2027.



Artist's impression of the proposed St Helens Transport Interchange.

## Case Study – St Helens: St Helens Transport Interchange

**Work is underway to build a brand-new transport interchange for St Helens which will better connect bus and rail services as part of a wider regeneration of the town centre.**

Backed with £32m funding from the Combined Authority, the new interchange will deliver improved walking and cycling links, creating a greener, more accessible and comfortable hub for bus passengers.

The development will benefit from highly sustainable design which includes using recycled, natural and local materials. Solar panels on the main roof will capture energy from the sun and each building will feature a green living roof, helping increase biodiversity.

The interchange will also create capacity for St Helens to welcome larger and more sustainable buses in the future and move all bus operations into a safe and controlled environment – reducing congestion around the town centre.

The project is set for completion in 2026, coinciding with the introduction of the first franchised bus services in St Helens.



[Watch - St Helens Bus Station](#)



Artist's impression of the planned Hind Street Urban Village in Birkenhead.

## Case Study – Wirral: Hind Street Urban Village

Plans for the [regeneration of a former gasworks](#) in Birkenhead have made huge progress over the last year thanks to funding approval from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Homes England.

Hind Street Urban Village, a major transformation project in Birkenhead, will see derelict land around Hind Street turned into a new community of around 1,600 homes, a new park along the old Dock Branch railway line, improved transport and active travel links, commercial space and leisure facilities.

The government's housing and regeneration agency has agreed a £29 million investment in the project, following a £22 million commitment from the Combined Authority. This investment will fund vital infrastructure works needed to unlock the site and deliver the first 633 homes.

The Combined Authority's funding will enable complex remediation work on the site, which will include moving Birkenhead's gas supply to a new, improved location, as well as the removal of the Borough Road (A5227) and Queensway Tunnel flyovers.

Planning approval was granted for the development by Wirral Council in January this year. Work on site will begin in November this year with the first homes completed in 2028.



**Watch - the video to find out more about the project [HERE](#)**

# Cabinet Members

Steve Rotheram  
**Mayor of the Liverpool City Region**

Cllr Mike Wharton  
**Deputy Mayor  
 Leader, Halton Council**

Cllr Graham Morgan  
**Leader, Knowsley Council**

Cllr Liam Robinson  
**Leader, Liverpool City Council**

Cllr Marion Atkinson  
**Leader, Sefton Council**

Cllr Anthony Burns  
**Leader, St Helens Council**

Cllr Paul Stuart  
**Leader, Wirral Council**

Emily Spurrell (non-voting member)  
**Police and Crime Commissioner**

David Meyerowitz (non-voting member)  
**Chair, Business and  
 Enterprise Board**

PORTFOLIOS	POLICY LEAD
Transport	Mayor Steve Rotheram
Net Zero	Cllr Anthony Burns
Housing and Regeneration	Cllr Graham Morgan
Employment, Education and Skills	Cllr Marion Atkinson
Health & Inequalities	Cllr Paula Basnett
Innovation	Cllr Liam Robinson
Business, Investment and Trade	Cllr Mike Wharton
Policy, Resources and Reform	Mayor Steve Rotheram

# Deputy Cabinet Members

During 2024-25 and continuing for 2025-26

PORTFOLIOS	POLICY LEAD
Net Zero	Cllr Gill Wood
Housing and Regeneration	Cllr Paulette Lappin
Employment, Education and Skills	Cllr Shelley Powell
Health & Inequalities	Cllr Sharon Thornton
Innovation	Cllr Portia Fahey
Business, Investment and Trade	Cllr Kate Groucutt
Policy, Resources and Reform	Cllr Carla Thomas
Crime and Policy	Cllr Jennie Bell



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