

The State of the Borough

An Economic, Social and Environmental Audit of Warrington

August 2007

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In its Community Strategy *Warrington Towards Tomorrow* (2005), Warrington Partnership expressed its long-term vision for the borough, over the next 10 to 15 years. Recognising the existing strengths from the expansion of its local economy, the plan argued that Warrington would need to address the need for regeneration to create a sustainable future for the borough:

*The Strategy underlines the need to tackle inequalities and ensure that everyone, wherever they live and work in the Borough, is able to share the town's prosperity. There is also a need to influence behaviour, build self-esteem and encourage pride in Warrington.*¹

Since the strategy was published the Partnership made improvements to its structure and refocused its priorities and actions as a result of the introduction of the Local Area Agreement. These changes prompted an update to the strategy to reflect the current position.

This community strategy priorities and performance measures are focused around 4 themes :

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Transport, Enterprise and Economic Development

The plan also recognises the wider cross-cutting groups with whom they will maintain links through the thematic priorities, such as the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

The Warrington Partnership puts the 'Sustainable Communities' national agenda into a local context, highlighting Warrington's role in regional renewal plans. These include the Northern Way Strategy, which funds eight core city-regions to try to reduce the prosperity gap between the north of England and the rest of the country; the Regional Economic Strategy, within which Warrington is highlighted as a regional growth point, and acts as a 'gateway' to the regional economy; and the Regional Spatial Strategy, which highlights Warrington's need for further regeneration, waste management, and transport and ICT improvements.

This report is intended, in part, to monitor Warrington's progress towards the priorities outlined in the Community Strategy, its LAA, and broader regional plans. More generally, it is

¹ Warrington Partnership, *Warrington Towards Tomorrow*, 2007; p6

designed to inform a wider debate on the State of the Borough and the challenges faced by the Council and its partners.

1.2 The Local Futures Audit

The Local Futures Audit has been developed in collaboration with the Audit Commission, the Local Government Association, and individual local authorities and partnerships. The basic thrust of the Audit is to compare the performance of Warrington against benchmarks at different spatial levels.

Local Futures have agreed a selection of ‘comparator areas’, to reveal relative performance at the local district levels. These local comparators are: Chester, Congleton, Crewe and Nantwich, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton, Macclesfield, St Helens, Salford, Trafford, Wigan and Vale Royal. Warrington is then compared in relation to the average performance from its wider sub-region (Cheshire and Warrington) and region (the North West of England).² Finally, the borough is considered against the national benchmark of performance in Great Britain as a whole.

Performance is assessed according to how well the borough scores on a range of carefully selected benchmark indicators of economic, social and environmental well-being. The results of the Audit can be used to inform local policy development and to act as a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress towards its various policy goals. This report can also be used as an evidence base in order to advance Warrington’s economic and social development priorities with strategic and funding bodies.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

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

The main body of the report draws on a selected number of benchmark indicators. This should be considered in conjunction with a Data Annex, published as a separate report, that provides a wider and more detailed set of economic, social and environmental indicators for the Council to use at its own discretion.

² Please note that the sub-regional average is not the average of the comparator areas, which cover a number of different sub-regions.

1.3 Location Map

The following map shows the location of the comparator areas used in this report.

Map 1: Warrington and its comparator areas



Source: *localknowledge*, Local Futures

2 Economic Development

2.1 Introduction

We begin by assessing the state of the Warrington economy, in terms of its competitiveness at sub-regional, regional and national levels. Strong economic foundations are critical to the future success of the borough, creating quality employment opportunities for local people. The Audit examines five aspects of economic development that need to be 'joined-up' in the context of strategy, partnership and practical initiatives. The five aspects, each with their own benchmark indicators, are as follows:

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

The results of our analysis of how Warrington performs in respect of each of these aspects are presented below. At the end of the chapter we provide a composite picture which shows how they inter-relate, and summarise our key findings on economic development in the borough.

2.2 Macro-Economic Performance

Macro-economic performance has been examined using indicators for economic scale, productivity, and change. The indicators here are primarily to give context to the other findings in the economic section; they enable us to identify the areas that are the true economic drivers in the comparator group and their contribution to growth and productivity.

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

- **Warrington has an economy that is well above average in terms of scale, ranked as the 51st largest of 408 districts in Great Britain.**

Warrington is the third largest economy among the comparator group and two thirds larger than the national average for local authorities, when measured by a combination of its share of national Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment. The Warrington economy is twice the size of the sub-regional average, and over a third larger than the average local economy in the North West of England. The scale of the economies in the comparator areas is quite varied, with Trafford approaching double the national average size, whereas Congleton and Ellesmere Port and Neston are half the national average.

Table 1: Economic Scale

LAD	Share of national GVA, 2004	Share of total national employment, 2005	Economic scale score	Economic scale score rank (out of 408)
Trafford	0.46	0.47	187.92	38
Salford	0.42	0.44	174.19	48
Warrington	0.41	0.42	167.47	51
Wigan	0.32	0.39	142.22	69
Macclesfield	0.31	0.30	122.46	88
Chester	0.27	0.26	107.02	122
St Helens	0.20	0.23	86.14	159
Halton	0.21	0.21	83.47	167
Crew e and Nantw ich	0.20	0.20	80.74	174
Vale Royal	0.18	0.18	71.50	203
Ellesmere Port and Neston	0.12	0.12	49.94	302
Congleton	0.12	0.12	49.48	305
Cheshire & Warrington	1.54	1.60	83.07	33 of 11
North West	10.65	11.27	120.58	3 of 11
Great Britain	100.00	100.00	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*; GVA at Nuts 3; Annual Business Inquiry

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

- **Warrington scores above the national average on our productivity measure and is ranked 91st out of 408 districts in Great Britain.**

The figures in Table 2 show that productivity in Warrington is above the national average, and is well above that for the North West of England. However, it is only just above the sub-regional average, highlighting the generally good performance of Cheshire and Warrington as a whole. However, average workplace earnings in Warrington are below-average when measured by sub-regional, regional and national standards.

A similar pattern is found with respect to Warrington's record for GVA. Here the borough is again mid-table, placed sixth among our comparator group of local authorities. This is a slightly better performance, being above sub-regional, regional and national averages.

Looking at the comparator group, they generally perform well in terms of economic productivity – only St Helens and Wigan score below the North West average. However, the findings also reflect a rough north-south divide that emerges on productivity measures. Those areas that are linked to the regional hubs of Manchester and Liverpool, and connections via transport routes, seem to benefit from 'spillover' effects in terms of their economic productivity (namely Macclesfield, Trafford, Salford, Warrington, Halton, and Ellesmere Port and Neston). Together with Warrington they form a powerful corridor of economic productivity between the regional conurbations.

Table 2: Productivity and Earnings

LAD	Average gross weekly earnings (workplace based), 2006	Gross value added per head, 2004	Economic productivity score	Productivity score rank (out of 408)
Macclesfield	484.70	21,480.5	120.74	62
Trafford	459.00	22,129.2	118.49	69
Ellesmere Port and Neston	489.90	21,710.9	117.03	73
Halton	447.50	21,558.4	114.80	78
Warrington	398.90	19,217.1	109.38	91
Salford	422.30	20,359.8	108.64	95
Chester	400.30	17,740.1	99.08	129
Crew e and Nantw ich	399.40	17,700.2	97.44	137
Vale Royal	379.50	16,818.3	95.46	146
Congleton	373.70	16,561.3	93.56	158
St Helens	393.70	11,203.8	80.40	283
Wigan	377.60	10,568.0	76.25	329
Cheshire & Warrington	416.94	18,818.5	104.45	16 of 53
North West	408.90	14,795.4	92.30	8 of 11
Great Britain	442.80	18,272.5	100.00	

Source: Local Knowledge; GVA at Nuts 3; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

Our final measure of macro-economic performance is **economic change** in the past few years (see Table 3).

- **Warrington is ranked 202nd out of 408 districts in Britain for economic growth.**

Warrington has experienced slightly below-average growth according to our measure of economic change, scoring 95.0 on the index (where Great Britain = 100). This index is based on growth in the numbers of jobs, which increased in Warrington by 8.6 per cent over the 1998 to 2005 period. This is below the sub-regional and national averages, but compares more favourably with regional growth rates.

The borough is the only one of the comparator group that has seen a decline in average weekly earnings during 2005-06. This partly reflects the below-average growth in earnings within Cheshire and Warrington as a whole. Together with its average growth in GVA figures, there may be a slight cause for concern that economic growth may not, necessarily, be leading to greater economic prosperity.

Table 3: Economic Change

LAD	Change in gross value added per head, 1995-2004	% change in average gross weekly earnings, 2005-2006	% change in total employment 1998-2005	Economic change score	Economic change score rank (out of 408)
Crew e and Nantw ich	0.00	6.60	36.68	403.68	8
Salford	76.13	7.20	13.98	153.88	122
Chester	0.00	8.20	10.95	120.53	164
St Helens	65.03	5.10	9.55	105.10	188
Trafford	76.13	5.70	9.51	104.63	190
Wigan	31.25	4.00	9.35	102.88	193
Warrington	65.31	-6.40	8.63	95.03	202
Vale Royal	0.00	1.40	7.93	87.22	217
Macclesfield	0.00	4.10	2.68	29.51	305
Congleton	0.00	3.00	1.77	19.45	317
Ellesmere Port and Neston	0.00	9.40	0.16	1.74	335
Halton	65.31	6.90	-0.18	-1.93	340
Cheshire & Warrington	9.87	2.65	9.25	101.80	25 of 53
North West	44.61	3.90	7.09	77.99	9 of 11
Great Britain	56.76	4.40	9.09	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*; GVA at Nuts 3; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; Annual Business Inquiry

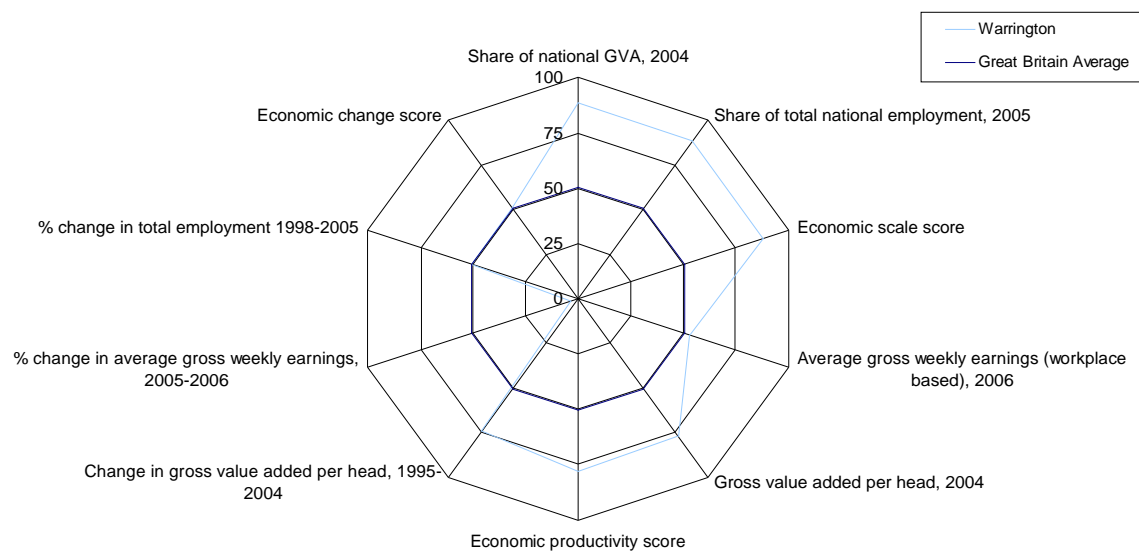
A summary of Warrington's macro-economic performance is shown in Figure 1. The spider chart is a way of showing how the borough rates against its peers. Every British district's data is converted into a percentile, with the top-ranked area scoring 100, and the bottom zero. These can then be plotted on the chart to give a 'web' for each area. In general the bigger the web, the better the area is performing on each set of indicators. In this chart, Warrington's scores are compared with the national median.

Figure 1 makes it clear that Warrington consistently scores above the national median across most of the indicators considered. Its decline in earnings over 2005-2006 is its major

drawback, putting the area in one of the lowest national percentiles. Its growth in employment over the past few years is also average when ranked nationally.

Nevertheless, its more modest performance in respect of growth is in the context of an already strong economy in terms of GVA per head, productivity and change in GVA per head. These place Warrington among the leading local economies nationally for overall economic performance.

Figure 1: Macro-Economic Performance



Source: *Local Knowledge*; GVA at Nuts 3; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; Annual Business Inquiry³

³ The chart displays the national ranking of Warrington, converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking districts scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

2.3 Industrial Structure

Throughout the global economy, the critical structural economic trend is the growth of the knowledge economy across and within all sectors. The Local Futures Audit assesses Warrington's industrial structure from this knowledge economy perspective. We distinguish between knowledge-based production (aerospace, electrical machinery manufacture, printing and publishing, and chemicals and energy), and knowledge-based services (telecommunications, computing, R & D, finance and business services, and recreational and cultural services). These industrial groupings are based upon European Commission and OECD definitions, where individual industries are classified as knowledge-based if graduates make up at least 25 per cent of their workforce. The results of our assessment are shown in Table 4.

- **Warrington ranks 50th out of 408 districts on our overall industrial structure score, indicating a healthy knowledge economy.**

The knowledge economy in Warrington accounted for 30.0 per cent of total employment in 2005 (compared to 23.7 per cent in Great Britain, 21.2 per cent in the North West of England and 26.5 per cent in Cheshire and Warrington). These figures place Warrington third among our comparator districts in terms of knowledge-based employment.

The significance of the Cheshire and Warrington knowledge economy to the region as a whole is clear, with the sub-region performing well above the North West average. Furthermore, many of the comparator areas with lower scores are moving in the right direction, with large increases in knowledge-driven employment since 1998 (e.g. Crewe and Nantwich, Wigan, and St Helens). The latter point highlights a note of caution for Warrington, as employment in knowledge-driven sectors is growing at less than half the national and regional rates.

Table 4: Industrial Structure

LAD	Proportion of employment in Knowledge-driven production, 2005	Proportion of employment in Knowledge-driven services, 2005	Proportion of employment in Knowledge-driven sectors, 2005	% change in knowledge driven sector employment, 1998-2005	Proportion of employment in public services, 2005	% change in public services employment 1998-2005	Industrial structure score, 2005	Industrial structure rank (out of 408)
Macclesfield	12.04	24.50	36.54	9.63	18.88	16.24	154.04	16
Halton	7.57	22.65	30.22	9.81	19.89	-3.45	127.37	48
Warrington	4.15	25.92	30.07	7.09	19.70	42.95	126.76	50
Chester	2.54	26.23	28.76	3.30	26.38	29.50	121.25	61
Trafford	3.00	25.30	28.30	32.63	14.98	6.84	119.30	64
Salford	2.59	21.45	24.05	72.45	31.41	30.17	101.37	104
Ellesmere Port and Neston	7.27	13.31	20.58	-8.90	17.94	34.28	86.77	167
Vale Royal	4.68	15.34	20.02	-9.95	25.06	56.14	84.40	174
Congleton	4.19	12.99	17.19	-3.44	21.41	53.84	72.44	239
Crewe and Nantwich	1.17	15.05	16.23	37.78	24.90	91.66	68.40	263
Wigan	1.94	14.20	16.14	48.15	24.38	11.80	68.05	268
St Helens	2.07	11.84	13.91	42.19	26.40	40.08	58.62	331
Cheshire & Warrington	5.30	21.24	26.54	5.49	21.87	41.51	111.90	10 of 53
North West	3.82	17.41	21.23	19.07	28.32	22.49	89.49	5 of 11
Great Britain	3.42	20.30	23.72	17.04	27.06	24.01	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*; Annual Business Inquiry

On the other hand, Warrington's reliance for jobs on the public sector is below the national, North West and Cheshire and Warrington averages. This gives the borough the fourth smallest public sector economy within the comparator group. Since reliance on public sector employment is often considered to 'crowd out' and have other adverse affects on private sector employment and productivity, the figures help to confirm a positive picture of the local economy. In fact, among the comparators, only Salford has a share of employment in public services that is larger than the North West and British average.

Nevertheless, Warrington's public sector has grown rapidly over recent years – the growth rate is almost twice that for the North West and for Great Britain. Many other comparators also show strong public sector growth – Crewe and Nantwich has nearly doubled its employment in the sector.

2.4 Business and Enterprise

A dynamic local enterprise culture is vital for the long-term competitiveness and overall success of any local economy. Table 5 shows the results of our Audit of business and enterprise in Warrington.

- **Warrington is ranked 44th out of 408 boroughs in Great Britain on our overall index of business and enterprise, coming second highest out of our comparator group.**

This ranking confirms that, according to a number of indicators, Warrington is a good place to do business. Business density in the borough is below the national and sub-regional average (33 firms per 1,000 population compared to 37 in Great Britain and 40 in Cheshire and Warrington) but above the North West of England. Conditions do not vary markedly across the comparator group, although Macclesfield stands out, with a business density over 50 per cent greater than the national average.

A dependence on larger businesses might be a cause for concern and among the comparator districts Warrington has one of the largest average business sizes, at around three times the national average size. However, this is in keeping with the average business size for many of the comparator areas, and not greatly in excess of those found elsewhere in Cheshire and Warrington or the North West as a whole.

There is a reasonably high business 'churn', with Warrington recording an above-average business formation rate (third highest among the comparator areas) and a slightly above-average business closure rate. This is, again, not vastly different to the other comparator areas and suggests there is an enterprising business environment in the Cheshire and Warrington as a whole.

Table 5: Business and Enterprise

LAD	Businesses per 000 population, 2005	Average business size, 2005	New business formation rates, 2005	Business closure rate, 2005	Self employment rate, 2006	Change in VAT registered business stock, 2001-2006	New business survival rate (24 months from 2000)	Business and enterprise score	Business & enterprise score rank (out of 408)
Halton	23.59	16.02	11.24	7.64	5.70	15.83	81.20	118.82	31
Warrington	33.01	14.55	11.26	8.35	7.10	12.65	79.21	115.55	44
Salford	30.10	14.78	11.67	9.11	5.60	10.99	75.91	113.67	54
Trafford	42.58	12.17	11.60	8.65	10.10	3.88	75.91	107.35	103
Vale Royal	38.33	9.87	9.93	7.84	6.80	7.13	79.21	106.52	114
Chester	40.84	12.72	10.03	6.89	9.20	8.73	79.21	104.53	138
Crew e and Nantwich	36.51	13.11	9.50	6.94	7.60	9.68	79.21	103.63	146
Congleton	43.71	8.08	9.49	7.04	12.00	8.08	79.21	103.52	149
Wigan	24.77	11.32	10.78	7.92	6.80	9.38	75.19	103.34	152
Macclesfield	58.60	9.02	9.83	7.76	14.70	10.08	79.21	102.19	166
Ellesmere Port and Neston	23.03	13.74	9.40	8.72	4.20	7.17	79.21	96.58	245
St Helens	21.85	13.05	8.58	7.44	7.10	11.61	81.20	95.51	259
Cheshire & Warrington	39.97	11.46	10.03	7.63	8.95	9.50	79.21	105.51	14 of 53
North West	31.51	12.26	10.08	8.22	8.10	6.54	78.71	98.60	5 of 11
Great Britain	37.39	5.69	9.82	8.43	9.20	5.70	79.34	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Annual Business Inquiry; Business Start-ups and closures

On the overall Local Futures business and enterprise index, where the Great Britain average is 100, Warrington scores 115.6. The index is composed of the new business formation rate, the sub-regional survival rate and the growth in business stock over the last five years. The borough's business survival rate (sub-regional) is around the national average and the stock of businesses has been steadily added to over the last five years, resulting in its good performance by all benchmarks.

2.5 Education and Skills

The knowledge economy is powered, above all, by human capital. A good blend of academic and vocational skills will therefore be critical to the future success of Warrington. In the Local Futures Audit, local levels of education and skills are assessed in terms of the qualifications profile of the working age population (i.e. the available workforce). The results are presented in Table 6.

- **Warrington performs moderately in respect of its education and skills profile, ranking 243rd out of 408 nationwide districts on our overall score.**

The Local Futures skills and qualifications score is a composite measure based on each of the four NVQ levels, with greater weighting attached to the higher levels. Despite the economically competitive edge presented above, Warrington has a very similar skills profile to the North West average.

The high share of pupils achieving five or more good GCSEs – the third highest within the comparator group – belies the adult skills challenge. While Warrington's education and skills profile, in general, is close to the national profile, there are notable differences. The borough has both a higher than average proportion of resident working population in skills poverty (below NVQ2) and a (slightly) higher than average with NVQ4 or above, indicating local polarisation of skills. Compared to Cheshire and Warrington as a whole its profile appears

poor, with the sub-region recording a significantly higher proportion of the resident population with NVQ4 and a lower proportion with NVQ2 and below. This implies that there is a considerable level of in-commuting to support the healthy share of knowledge-driven jobs in Warrington, possibly from the local sub-regional area.

Table 6: Education and Skills

LAD	Proportion of working population qualified below NVQ 2 2004	Proportion of working population with NVQ 2 2004	Proportion of working population with NVQ 3 2004	Proportion of working population with NVQ 4+ 2004	Proportion of employees who have received job training in last 13 weeks, 2006	Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs grades A*-C 2005/06	Skills & qualifications score	Skills & qualifications score rank (out of 408)
Congleton	22.75	19.21	17.58	40.46	24.90	70.70	111.62	29
Macclesfield	24.16	17.30	18.81	39.73	24.00	63.10	111.28	30
Trafford	25.16	20.88	21.43	32.53	24.50	70.00	109.31	51
Vale Royal	26.59	18.15	20.80	34.46	24.90	64.10	108.88	54
Crew e and Nantw ich	28.55	28.82	23.37	19.26	19.60	54.90	102.83	157
Chester	31.78	17.10	15.43	35.69	21.90	61.20	102.76	163
Warrington	34.09	20.88	18.15	26.88	23.80	66.20	99.36	243
Wigan	35.94	25.16	18.98	19.93	19.50	56.90	95.81	302
Salford	40.30	20.36	21.30	18.05	23.60	50.80	93.95	326
St Helens	40.21	20.70	17.34	21.75	21.20	56.60	92.96	343
Ellesmere Port and Neston	38.32	23.94	14.29	23.44	16.30	52.90	92.80	345
Halton	42.28	21.77	17.46	18.48	18.50	52.50	90.40	373
Cheshire & Warrington	29.43	20.54	18.59	31.45	22.61	62.47	104.41	8 of 11
North West	35.14	21.78	18.93	24.15	21.40	56.34	98.09	6 of 11
Great Britain	33.30	21.60	18.71	26.39	21.70	58.50	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Annual Population Survey; Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

There is variation in qualification levels among the comparators, and the skill levels alone do not reveal the complete story of their local economies. For instance, Congleton has a very large share of highly skilled residents when compared to the North West and to Great Britain. However, the area does not have a high proportion of knowledge-driven jobs that demand these skills (see Table 4), suggesting there is a large level of out-commuting. In contrast, Macclesfield has a more balanced profile, with a similarly high level of well-qualified working residents *and* a high level of knowledge-driven employment.

2.6 Labour Market

The final aspect to be considered within the economic development section of the Local Futures Audit is the labour market conditions of Warrington. Compared to the EU average, Britain has a less regulated labour market and enjoys relatively high employment rates and low unemployment. Table 7 provides a labour market summary of Warrington.

- **Warrington's labour market performance is about average, ranking 243rd out of 408 districts in the country.**

The employment rate in Warrington stood at 77.8 per cent in 2006, a figure above that for the nation and the North West of England, and just above Cheshire and Warrington (77.0 per cent). The figure is some way ahead of the EU Lisbon Strategy target of 70 per cent.

Warrington's employment rate is combined with below-average unemployment figures, in relation to regional and national levels. These include Warrington's share of long-term unemployment, ILO unemployment, youth unemployment, and inactivity due to long-term sickness.

However, Warrington's labour market performance is not as good as its wider local area. Although its employment rate is marginally higher than in Cheshire and Warrington's, its overall unemployment rate(s) are all worse than the Cheshire and Warrington sub-regional average. In addition, there has been a higher contraction in Warrington's employment rate during 2005-06 than in Cheshire and Warrington as a whole.

Table 7: Labour Market

LAD	Employment rate, 2006	Inactivity due to long-term sickness, 2006	ILO Unemployed 2006 (res based)	Unemployment rate, March 2007	Long term unemployment as a proportion of all unemployment, March 2007	Proportion of 16-24 year olds who are unemployed, 2006 (res based)	% change in employment rate 2005 - 2006	Labour market score	Labour market score rank (out of 408)
Congleton	83.60	12.50	4.40	1.30	9.36	10.98	2.74	109.11	45
Chester	76.80	21.30	2.40	1.70	9.48	0.00	2.91	107.65	70
Crew e and Nantwich	77.70	20.00	2.90	2.20	11.46	7.58	6.14	102.89	165
Macclesfield	79.80	18.00	2.70	1.10	9.30	8.70	0.13	102.76	168
Warrington	77.80	18.80	4.20	2.00	13.08	12.24	-1.15	102.49	173
Trafford	76.70	19.90	4.20	2.00	10.27	13.33	1.60	100.78	205
St Helens	71.80	24.20	5.30	3.10	14.45	17.80	1.54	95.75	292
Wigan	71.50	24.90	4.80	2.70	15.48	13.27	-5.13	95.35	296
Vale Royal	71.70	25.60	3.70	2.20	12.19	0.00	-6.17	94.56	310
Halton	69.90	26.50	4.90	3.40	14.46	11.00	2.63	92.97	333
Ellesmere Port and Neston	70.30	27.20	3.50	2.30	8.87	0.00	-4.89	92.58	339
Salford	71.70	23.20	6.60	3.30	16.68	16.07	1.01	92.31	343
Cheshire & Warrington	77.03	20.22	3.42	1.82	11.06	7.08	-0.17	102.56	23 of 53
North West	72.50	23.50	5.20	2.80	14.85	14.23	-0.14	98.02	8 of 11
Great Britain	74.10	21.70	5.30	2.60	16.06	14.01	-0.27	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Annual Population Survey; Claimant count rates

When we compare the skills profiles and labour market performance of the comparator areas, we see some correlation. For instance, Congleton – which has the largest share of highly skilled residents – tops the labour market comparator table with an 83 per cent employment rate, and low share of residents who are unemployed or inactive due to long-term illness. Conversely, areas like Halton and Ellesmere Port and Neston have both large proportions of their working population in skills poverty and a relatively low employment rates – below the national average (and, in Halton's case, below the Lisbon Strategy target).

This reflects the growing demand for highly qualified workers, due to the growth in the knowledge-driven economy. This trend for high-skill jobs may be the reason for Warrington's high youth unemployment relative to its local area – over 70 per cent higher than the Cheshire and Warrington rate in 2006. The figures highlight the importance for Warrington to continue its focus on learning and skills (as outlined in its Community Strategy, 2005) and, crucially, demand-led skills development to meet skills gaps.⁴

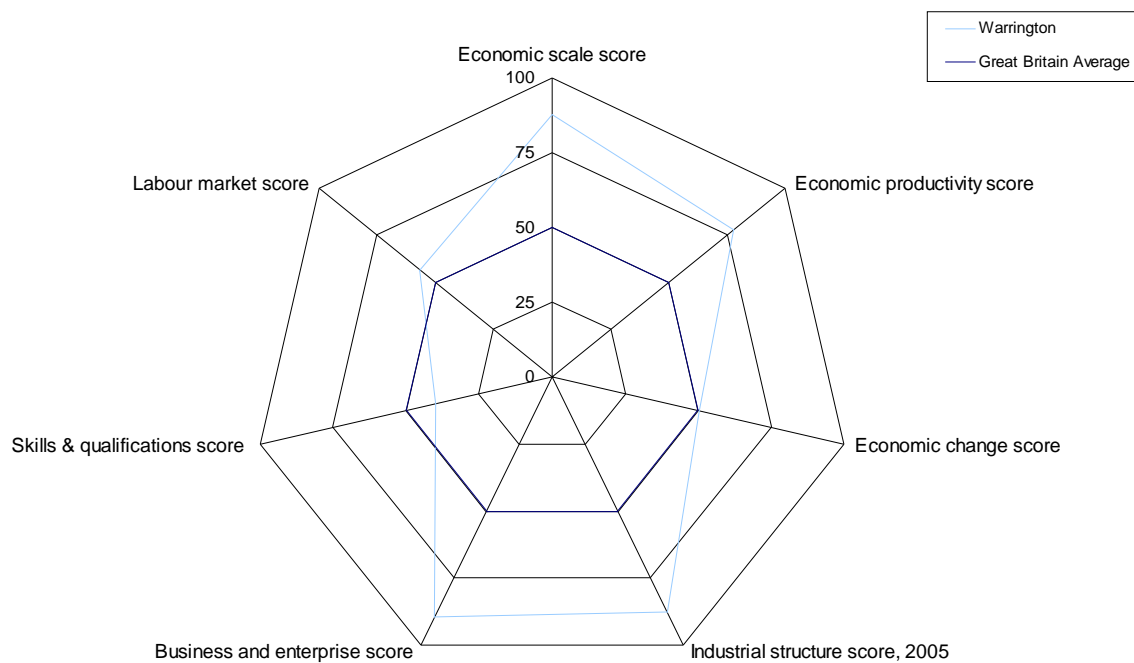
⁴ Warrington Partnership, Local Area Agreement, 2007; p7

2.7 Summary

A summary of Warrington's economic development profile is presented in Figure 2.

Warrington has a large, productive, and enterprising economy, with a good industrial structure that reflects some of the key attributes of a modern knowledge economy. However, its education and skills profile is more modest and, in view of its below average growth over recent years, may serve to undermine its longer-term development potential. The balance between local skills and local jobs is critical for the economic and social sustainability of localities. Given local strengths in residential skills within the sub-region as a whole, education and training within Warrington may be an issue for wider partnership-working in the future.

Figure 2: Economic Development Summary



Source: *Local Knowledge*, Annual Business Inquiry; Annual Population Survey; GVA at Nuts 3; Business Start-ups⁵

⁵ The chart displays the national ranking of Warrington, converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

3 Social Profile

3.1 Introduction

The Local Futures Audit assesses six aspects of Warrington's social profile, including:

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

The results of this analysis are presented below; at the end of the chapter we provide a composite picture of our findings and summarise the discussion.

3.2 Demography and Migration

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

- **Warrington is relatively young borough, and is ranked the 303rd out of 408 in Britain (where 1st is the oldest).**

At 38.1 years in 2001, the average age in Warrington is below the national average of 38.7 years in Great Britain, 38.6 years in the North West of England and 39.4 years in Cheshire and Warrington. As such, it is just outside the youngest quartile of districts in Great Britain.

The comparator group includes areas with a range of different age profiles, ranging from Macclesfield (in the oldest fifth of districts in the country) to Halton. Of the group Warrington has one of the lowest proportions of population aged 65+. Nevertheless, this is set to change, according to locally produced population forecasts. These indicate that whilst the total population of Warrington should stay more or less the same during the 2005-2021 period, the age profile will alter as a result of an increase in the share of older people (namely those aged 65 years and over), and a decrease in the share of children and young people.⁶

Table 8: Age Profile

LAD	Proportion of population aged 0-14, 2005	Proportion of population aged 15-24, 2005	Proportion of population aged 25-44, 2005	Proportion of population aged 45-64, 2005	Proportion of population aged 65+, 2005	Live births per 000 population, 2005	Dependency ratio, GB=100, 2005	Average age, 2001	Average rank (out of 408)
Macclesfield	16.95	10.24	26.26	27.73	18.82	9.91	105.31	41.15	76
Chester	16.44	13.07	26.81	25.72	17.96	10.74	101.28	40.04	137
Congleton	17.52	11.10	26.44	27.86	17.08	9.43	101.87	39.84	152
Crew e and Nantwich	18.66	11.62	26.85	26.06	16.81	11.61	104.44	39.10	212
Vale Royal	18.55	10.92	27.07	27.15	16.31	11.68	102.63	39.09	214
Ellesmere Port and Neston	18.32	12.00	26.49	25.62	17.57	11.27	105.67	39.08	215
Trafford	18.39	11.73	29.46	24.25	16.18	12.37	101.77	38.94	225
St Helens	18.32	12.48	26.89	26.04	16.28	10.89	101.87	38.74	245
Wigan	18.13	12.52	28.67	25.77	14.91	12.10	97.27	38.29	283
Salford	17.78	14.92	28.91	22.73	15.66	13.47	98.45	38.17	295
Warrington	18.58	12.17	29.00	25.36	14.89	11.39	98.54	38.06	303
Halton	19.16	13.70	27.39	25.97	13.78	13.88	96.98	37.24	344
Cheshire & Warrington	17.88	11.58	27.18	26.45	16.91	10.90	102.43	39.43	17 of 53
North West	18.18	13.49	27.44	24.76	16.13	11.97	101.01	38.61	9 of 11
Great Britain	17.87	13.02	28.48	24.52	16.09	12.12	100.00	38.65	

Source: *localknowledge*, Local Futures

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

- **The population of Warrington increased by 5.4 per cent between 1991 and 2005, ranking 207th out of 408 boroughs in Great Britain.**

The North West of England as a whole has remained fairly static over the 1991-2005 period (a 0.05 per cent increase). In this light, Warrington's above average growth appears

⁶ *Warrington Population Forecasts 2005 to 2021*, Cheshire County Council Research and Intelligence Unit, 2006

impressive, as does the growth of the wider sub-region of Cheshire and Warrington. The absence of data for the borough in Table 9 precludes a conclusive discussion on the components of this population change in Warrington, though the modest net in-migration suggests this may be one factor.

Within the comparator group, there is considerable variation in performance. Vale Royal has seen nearly double the national rate of population growth, whereas Salford has seen a 6.2 per cent decline in its population – one of the largest declines amongst districts nationally. Areas such as Halton and Salford, which perform relatively poorly in terms of resident skills and labour market conditions, show the biggest declines in their population. They also have comparatively young populations who may be prepared to relocate to areas with better employment prospects. Conversely, Congleton – with a good skills profile and high employment rates – has seen significant in-migration and overall population growth over the same period of time.

Table 9: Migration and Population Change

LAD	Proportion of residents moved into the area from within the UK, 2001	Proportion of residents moved into the area from outside the UK, 2001	Proportion of residents moved out of the area, 2001	Net migration, 2001	Change in resident population 1991-2005	Population change score rank (out of 408)
Vale Royal	2.68	0.20	2.80	0.82	9.20	111
Crew e and Nantw ich	2.88	0.26	3.15	1.06	8.50	128
Congleton	3.90	0.28	3.13	0.44	7.87	140
Warrington	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	5.41	207
Chester	4.70	0.29	4.56	0.20	1.02	306
Wigan	2.79	0.11	2.99	0.20	0.36	324
Macclesfield	3.97	0.24	3.38	-0.19	-0.13	337
Ellesmere Port and Neston	3.86	0.50	4.55	0.00	-0.74	351
Trafford	2.19	0.19	2.19	1.40	-1.20	358
St Helens	2.30	0.23	2.76	-0.07	-2.11	369
Halton	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.68	-4.81	392
Salford	2.91	0.31	3.44	0.64	-6.24	402
Cheshire & Warrington	2.85	0.22	2.76	0.37	4.36	33 of 53
North West	2.84	0.30	2.95	0.34	0.05	10 of 11
Great Britain	3.57	0.51	3.50	0.65	4.75	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Census 2001; Mid-year population estimates

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

- **The non-White population in Warrington is very small, and the borough ranks 196th out of 408 boroughs in terms of ethnic diversity.**

Warrington, together with Cheshire and Warrington as a whole, has a very low proportion of non-White residents. In 2001, 97.9 per cent of the resident population of Warrington were classified as White, above the national and regional averages, though slightly below the sub-regional average. The breakdown of ethnicity indicates that Warrington has a relatively high

share of residents classified as of mixed ethnicity, and a very low share of Black or British Black residents (compared to the national population breakdown by ethnicity).

This indicator is highly skewed across Britain, with large ethnic populations in the large urban areas and few elsewhere. This helps to explain why it ranks in the top half of districts nationally, despite having a quarter of the national average share of non-White population.

Almost all of the comparator areas are similarly ethnically homogenous, with very low shares of non-White residents. Only Trafford matches national levels, and is in fact more ethnically diverse than Britain as a whole. This reflects its metropolitan status, as part of Greater Manchester, following the urban-rural pattern of ethnic diversity mentioned above.

Table 10: Ethnicity

LAD	Proportion of population classified as White, 2001	Proportion of population classified as Mixed, 2001	Proportion of population classified as Asian or British, 2001	Proportion of population classified as Black or British, 2001	Proportion of population classified as Chinese or Other Ethnic, 2001	Proportion of population classified as non-White, 2001	Proportion of population classified as non-White rank, 2001 (out of 408)
Trafford	91.64	1.52	4.05	1.95	0.83	8.36	69
Salford	96.13	0.99	1.38	0.58	0.91	3.87	133
Warrington	97.86	0.60	0.84	0.19	0.51	2.14	196
Crew e and Nantw ich	97.98	0.73	0.53	0.35	0.40	2.02	205
Chester	98.05	0.62	0.68	0.17	0.49	1.95	210
Macclesfield	98.07	0.60	0.69	0.16	0.48	1.93	212
Wigan	98.70	0.43	0.44	0.18	0.25	1.30	288
Vale Royal	98.77	0.45	0.29	0.09	0.40	1.23	297
Ellesmere Port and Neston	98.77	0.44	0.31	0.06	0.41	1.23	298
Halton	98.79	0.60	0.23	0.11	0.27	1.21	301
St Helens	98.84	0.38	0.39	0.10	0.30	1.16	308
Congleton	98.84	0.40	0.32	0.09	0.34	1.16	309
Cheshire & Warrington	98.26	0.56	0.57	0.17	0.44	1.74	42 of 53
North West	94.44	0.93	3.40	0.61	0.60	5.56	5 of 11
Great Britain	91.90	1.18	4.08	2.01	0.83	8.10	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Census 2001

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

- **Average household size in Warrington is above average; the borough is ranked 121st out of 408 districts in the country (where 1st has the largest household size).**

The average household size in Warrington in 2001 was 2.45 people, above the national and regional figures of 2.41 and 2.39 respectively. The factors behind the high 2001 average household size in part relate to the relatively low proportion of one person households, and high proportion of married couples with and without children. This family-based household structure is confirmed by the more recent figure of lone parent households, showing a low share relative to national and regional levels. The household structure is replicated in the wider sub-region of Cheshire and Warrington, which shows a below-average share of one person households and above-average share of married couple households. However, it should be noted that local forecasts suggest that the average household size is due to decline

over the years up to 2021, probably partly reflecting national changes in lifestyles as young adults marry later and have fewer children.⁷

There is variety in the household types of the comparator areas, with Halton, Ellesmere Port and Neston, and Vale Royal falling within the 'largest' quartile of districts nationally, whilst Macclesfield and Salford fall in the 'smallest' quartile. As with ethnicity, there is some correlation between urban areas and higher numbers of one person households – Manchester's neighbouring boroughs of Salford, Macclesfield, and Trafford all have higher shares of one person households, in relation to the other comparator areas. However, it is notable that only Salford has a higher share of one person households relative to the national average; overall, most of the areas are in the middle two quartiles, with roughly average household sizes.

Table 11: Household Structure

LAD	Proportion of one person households, 2001	Proportion of households comprising of married couples with no children, 2001	Proportion of households comprising of married couples with dependent children, 2001	Proportion of lone parent households, 2005	Average household size, 2001	Average household size rank, 2001 (out of 408)
Halton	27.32	12.73	18.03	5.40	2.47	91
Ellesmere Port and Neston	26.63	14.10	19.91	6.90	2.46	98
Vale Royal	25.21	16.00	20.86	3.40	2.46	99
Warrington	27.49	14.29	20.88	5.40	2.45	121
St Helens	27.74	12.91	17.93	9.10	2.43	154
Congleton	25.36	16.98	21.46	3.70	2.43	157
Crew e and Nantw ich	27.25	14.82	19.37	12.90	2.43	162
Wigan	27.69	14.02	19.17	8.10	2.41	202
Chester	30.10	14.23	17.82	2.90	2.36	280
Trafford	31.60	12.06	18.24	8.70	2.35	292
Macclesfield	29.63	15.37	19.31	6.80	2.34	318
Salford	36.70	9.79	13.64	10.30	2.29	364
Cheshire & Warrington	27.59	15.04	19.95	5.95	2.42	22 of 53
North West	30.94	12.29	17.10	8.70	2.39	7 of 11
Great Britain	30.27	12.97	17.48	7.20	2.41	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Census 2001; Regional Trends

3.3 Occupational Profile

The occupational profile of Warrington is a useful indicator of the borough's progress towards developing a diverse, prosperous, knowledge-based economy. Knowledge-driven activities generate increased demand for 'higher end' occupations including managerial, professional and technical workers. In the Local Futures Audit, occupational structure is considered in terms of the proportion of the resident workforce employed in the four main NVQ-linked occupational groups (based on the standardised competences and skills requirements of each occupation). Table 12 shows the results.

⁷ *Warrington Population Forecasts 2005 to 2021*, Cheshire County Council Research and Intelligence Unit, 2006

- **Warrington performs just above the national average in respect of the proportion of knowledge workers in the workforce, ranking 157th out of 408 boroughs in Great Britain.**

Warrington has an above national average proportion of knowledge workers amongst the employed workforce. However, the borough is outperformed by Cheshire and Warrington as a whole, with a number of the districts significantly exceeding the national average on this measure.

The figures are consistent with Warrington's slightly polarised skills profile, with the number of managerial and professional occupations comfortably exceeding the national and regional averages. However, there is an above-average share of workers in elementary occupations, relative to all three benchmarks.

Areas such as Macclesfield and Congleton have occupational structures skewed heavily towards higher skill levels. There is a North-South divide in knowledge workers within the comparator group, with Warrington in the middle – districts south of the Manchester-Liverpool axis have higher scores than those to the north (except Crewe and Nantwich).

Table 12: Occupational Profile

LAD	Manager and professional occupations (level 4), 2006	Skilled technical occupations (level 3), 2006	Lower skilled occupations (level 2), 2006	Elementary occupations (level 1), 2006	Knowledge worker score	Knowledge worker score rank (out of 408)
Macclesfield	39.77	25.23	24.84	10.17	136.58	20
Congleton	34.46	32.08	27.52	5.94	132.65	28
Vale Royal	38.77	26.32	22.98	11.93	131.31	33
Chester	30.98	29.35	28.08	11.59	120.73	67
Trafford	33.62	23.86	34.49	8.02	115.68	85
Warrington	30.91	21.33	35.38	12.38	102.40	157
St Helens	24.23	23.85	39.16	12.76	88.95	261
Crewe and Nantwich	23.56	23.91	38.74	13.79	88.63	263
Salford	24.66	23.00	41.31	11.03	86.44	288
Wigan	23.09	24.18	40.60	12.13	85.12	297
Halton	23.93	18.48	44.55	13.04	78.73	349
Ellesmere Port and Neston	22.25	27.75	36.54	13.46	78.48	350
Cheshire & Warrington	32.26	25.87	30.52	11.34	114.81	8 of 53
North West	25.94	24.67	37.91	11.48	94.19	6 of 11
Great Britain	27.79	25.41	35.46	11.33	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Annual Population Survey

3.4 Prosperity

The Local Futures Audit considers prosperity in terms of a range of indicators, including total income, house prices, and social data such as the number of cars per household. Table 13 shows the results.

- **Prosperity in Warrington is again just above the national average, with the borough ranked 125th out of 408 boroughs on our overall score.**

Nationally, there is a strong correlation between the presence of knowledge workers and levels of prosperity in the local population. Despite the general strength of the local economy, and in particular its industrial structure, Warrington's residents have a polarised skill and occupational profile. This is reflected in the borough's just above-average performance on the prosperity indicators below.

In 2004/05, the average income in Warrington was higher than national and regional levels; however, it was slightly below the sub-regional average, highlighting Warrington's slightly below-par socioeconomic performance relative to the sub-region as a whole. Nevertheless, the borough appears to be moving in the right direction, with the largest increase in average total income during 2004-05. Given the slight decline in average workplace-based earnings (see Table 3), this improving prosperity appears to be from employment located outside the borough's boundaries.

Once again, there is considerable variation among the comparator group. Warrington marks the dividing line between the top and bottom half of the table. As with its occupational profile, those districts south of Manchester enjoy higher average annual incomes than those to the north (excepting Crewe and Nantwich).

Table 13: Prosperity

LAD	Average annual income, 2004/05	Average house price, October - December 2006	Proportion of all households with 2+ cars, 2001	Average number of rooms per household, 2001	% change in average total income 2004 - 2005	Prosperity score	Prosperity score rank (out of 408)
Macclesfield	31,200	252,822	42.48	5.91	4.35	137.91	32
Chester	25,600	216,449	34.73	5.74	6.22	113.16	81
Trafford	24,700	233,698	31.66	5.60	2.07	109.18	99
Vale Royal	23,900	185,527	40.96	5.79	5.29	105.64	115
Congleton	23,800	192,003	44.93	5.86	5.78	105.20	118
Warrington	23,400	183,675	35.72	5.52	10.38	103.43	125
Crewe and Nantwich	21,400	169,073	33.74	5.66	0.47	94.59	191
Ellesmere Port and Neston	21,200	169,772	32.72	5.63	0.95	93.71	199
Salford	19,400	131,243	18.89	5.07	0.52	85.75	288
St Helens	19,200	131,709	26.18	5.32	6.08	84.87	298
Halton	19,200	131,917	26.23	5.32	9.09	84.87	298
Wigan	18,700	128,792	28.18	5.23	3.89	82.66	327
Cheshire & Warrington	24,691	197,998	37.95	5.72	5.36	109.14	9 of 53
North West	20,500	153,112	26.25	5.36	5.13	90.61	7 of 11
Great Britain	22,623	189,538	28.77	5.29	3.68	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Personal Income statistics; Property Prices; Census 2001

3.5 Deprivation and Inequality

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

- **Overall levels of deprivation are just above average – Warrington is ranked as the 147th most deprived district of 354 in England.**

Warrington has a deprivation score of 102.7 (where GB = 100), making it considerably more deprived than the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, though less so than the North West of England as a whole. The borough appears to have pockets of deprivation, as demonstrated by its relatively high inequality score – a score of 122.0 on a GB = 100 index.

Breaking down the IMD measure, Warrington's health and living environment deprivation scores stand out as above-average, relative to national levels as well as sub-regional levels. This matches priorities already highlighted by the Warrington Partnership and the council's Corporate Plan – noting health inequalities between inner and outer wards, the need to regenerate the local physical environment, and the need to minimise local waste and pollution.

As we have seen previously, the deprivation profiles of the comparator districts vary enormously. At one end, Salford and Halton fall into the most deprived decile of districts nationally, with St Helens ranked just outside. At the other end of the scale, Congleton and Macclesfield are amongst the least deprived nationally.

One of the overarching themes of Warrington's Community Strategy is social inclusion. This reflects concern over pockets of deprivation in parts of the borough. The Local Futures inequality score is designed to highlight any large differences in deprivation, as borough-wide data can sometimes mask the inequalities of deprivation at the small area level. The indicator is measured as the difference between the highest and lowest ranking SOA in each district. On this measure, Warrington is relatively unequal, with a much higher score than the sub-regional, regional and national benchmarks. In fact, on the index, its inequality score is much higher than its overall deprivation score, ranking it the fourth most unequal borough out of the 12 comparator areas.

Table 14: Deprivation and Inequality

LAD	Index of Multiple Deprivation, Average SOA Score, 2004	Inequality (range of IMD ranks), 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Income Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Employment Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Health and Disability Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, Crime Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Indices of Deprivation, The Living Environment Deprivation Domain Average SOA Score, 2004	Inequality score	Deprivation score	Deprivation score rank (out of 354)
Salford	38.19	29,320	0.22	0.17	1.23	36.74	15.43	0.93	34.29	116.93	202.32	12
Halton	34.29	27,322	0.22	0.18	1.24	30.12	16.73	0.12	21.66	108.96	181.66	21
St Helens	31.95	26,061	0.18	0.19	0.94	26.32	16.30	0.26	27.52	103.93	169.26	36
Wigan	29.26	27,223	0.15	0.17	0.94	27.03	17.78	0.30	21.47	108.57	155.01	53
Trafford	20.15	29,881	0.12	0.10	0.21	11.98	14.75	0.56	27.46	119.17	106.75	136
Ellesmere Port and Neston	19.80	31,078	0.12	0.12	0.28	23.59	14.55	-0.33	15.64	123.94	104.89	141
Warrington	19.39	30,582	0.11	0.11	0.43	16.99	14.10	-0.40	22.47	121.96	102.72	147
Crew e and Nantw ich	17.09	30,763	0.10	0.09	0.03	18.62	16.39	-0.57	22.18	122.69	90.54	174
Vale Royal	17.06	30,849	0.10	0.10	0.05	16.29	16.47	-0.25	20.01	123.03	90.38	176
Chester	17.03	30,388	0.11	0.10	0.13	12.13	17.58	-0.06	16.31	121.19	90.22	177
Macclesfield	11.13	28,482	0.07	0.07	-0.36	7.77	16.96	-0.46	14.04	113.59	58.96	276
Congleton	9.51	25,438	0.07	0.07	-0.42	7.55	15.77	-0.76	10.02	101.45	50.38	305
Cheshire & Warrington	16.01	32,045	0.10	0.09	0.04	14.47	15.92	-0.40	17.83	102.72	78.31	31 of 47
North West	28.44	32,454	0.17	0.15	0.72	24.89	15.78	0.13	27.60	100.45	127.92	2 of 9
Great Britain	18.88	25,075	0.12	0.10	-0.16	19.76	21.79	-0.22	18.59	100.00	100.00	

Source: Local Knowledge, Indices of Multiple Deprivation

3.6 Health

Nationally, there have been major improvements in public health over the course of the last century, with big increases in life expectancy. However, this overall picture masks significant geographical variations and health inequalities. Poor health has a detrimental impact on quality of life and restricts peoples' ability to participate fully in the labour market. Table 15 presents a set of key indicators showing the state of public health in Warrington.

- **Warrington is about average in terms of its residents' health, as measured by life expectancy, ranking 278th out of 408 boroughs in Great Britain.**

Although above the regional average for life expectancy, Warrington still falls below the Cheshire and Warrington average and just below the national average life. The borough's slightly poorer life expectancy is reflected in the above-average standardised mortality ratio (i.e. the number of deaths relative to the number expected given national health trends).

Table 15: Health

LAD	Infant Mortality Rate, 2004	Average life expectancy (years)		Standardised Mortality Ratio, 2005	Proportion of residents who smoke, 2001	Proportion of residents who are obese, 2001	Cancer mortality rates per 100,000 population under 75 years, 2003-05	Circulatory disease mortality rates per 100,000 population under 75 years, 2003-05	Incapacity benefits claimants per 1000 working age population, August 2006	Health score	Health score rank (out of 408)
		2003-2005	2003-2005								
Macclesfield	5.50	80.25	91.00	20.38	20.02	97.80	76.20	43.48	101.90	98	
Congleton	1.10	79.94	92.00	20.65	22.94	116.00	74.70	46.51	101.51	134	
Chester	8.00	79.60	95.00	23.33	20.66	118.80	75.70	61.38	101.08	166	
Trafford	4.40	79.20	100.00	22.12	20.46	121.40	99.10	71.33	100.57	200	
Ellesmere Port and Neston	6.00	78.95	96.00	27.19	23.53	134.20	84.70	69.50	100.25	226	
Vale Royal	5.40	78.90	105.00	23.63	22.24	107.00	98.00	61.73	100.19	229	
Warrington	7.70	78.40	106.00	23.02	21.92	119.80	105.40	62.06	99.55	278	
Crewe and Nantwich	4.10	78.40	103.00	26.97	23.20	126.60	91.00	64.03	99.55	278	
St Helens	7.10	77.35	119.00	27.02	22.59	131.50	106.20	106.68	98.22	352	
Wigan	4.40	77.25	117.00	26.38	23.86	129.30	119.40	96.92	98.09	361	
Halton	5.50	76.40	125.00	29.14	22.65	168.00	111.90	117.94	97.01	383	
Salford	6.10	76.10	119.00	29.83	22.27	157.20	138.00	106.84	96.63	394	
Cheshire & Warrington	5.72	79.17	98.99	23.32	21.88	115.87	88.29	58.06	100.53	24 of 53	
North West	5.90	77.65	110.00	26.99	22.12	134.12	110.59	90.70	98.60	8 of 11	
Great Britain	5.07	78.75	100.00	24.18	20.49	102.94	79.14	245.24	100.00		

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Regional Trends; SMR statistics; Synthetic Health estimates; Neighbourhood Renewal

If we look at some of the main determinants of good health, we see that Warrington has other key factors driving a below-average health performance. The borough has an above-average proportion of residents who are obese (though not excessively higher than the national/sub-regional average), and an above-average rate of mortality from cancer and circulatory disease, relative to the Cheshire and Warrington and national averages. The only indicator where Warrington performs well is its below-average proportion of residents who smoke (in 2001), relative to the three benchmarks.

Nevertheless, this slightly poor record on health does not fully translate into 'worklessness': the incapacity benefit claimant rate is slightly above the Cheshire and Warrington average, but significantly below the regional average, and only about a quarter of the national rate. This rates Warrington about mid-table on worklessness, with only St Helens, Wigan, Halton and Salford reaching incapacity benefit rates above the North Western average.

3.7 Crime

Crime levels affect an area's 'liveability', and reflect the socioeconomic conditions of the area and its surroundings. Nationally, there have been some national reductions in crime, although the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002 boosted national crime figures; the importance of the issue is emphasised by the 2004 PSA target to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Table 16 considers a set of indicators regarding crime within Warrington.

- **Overall crime levels are just below average in Warrington, ranking the borough 131st out of 354 districts in England (where 1st has the highest level of crime).**

In 2005/06 there were 39.5 offences per 1,000 of the population in Warrington, compared to 41.8 in England and Wales and 46.1 in the North West. However, the borough again performs poorly by Cheshire and Warrington standards, which recorded 35.3 offences per 1,000 people. As its overall crime score suggests, Warrington's breakdown of crime records roughly average rates for the separate offence types of vehicle crime, violent crime, and burglaries. As before, the comparator areas cover a range of scores, resulting in another mid-table performance for Warrington.

The range amongst the comparators is seen on the one hand in Salford, which records a rate of total offences that is almost 50 per cent higher than the national rate. On the other hand, Congleton – with the lowest levels of both crime and deprivation amongst the comparator areas – records a total offence rate that is about 50 per cent *below* the national rate.

Table 16: Crime

LAD	Total offences per 1000 population, (2005/06)	Vehicle crimes per 1000 population, (2005/06)	Violent crimes per 1000 population, (2005/06)	Dwelling burglaries per 000 population, 2005/06	% change in total offences per 1000 population, 2000-2005	Crime score	Crime score rank (out of 354)
Salford	60.55	25.17	25.26	10.12	1.06	144.76	34
St Helens	48.41	14.45	27.60	6.36	6.54	115.74	74
Halton	47.69	15.84	25.98	5.87	1.92	114.01	78
Chester	41.53	13.15	23.37	5.01	19.17	99.29	113
Trafford	41.28	15.23	18.99	7.06	-5.10	98.69	117
Ellesmere Port and Nes	41.05	13.23	22.32	5.50	11.33	98.14	119
Warrington	39.51	12.34	21.91	5.25	9.23	94.45	131
Crew e and Nantw ich	38.30	11.22	22.57	4.51	26.55	91.56	138
Wigan	37.12	16.27	15.22	5.62	-7.51	88.74	154
Macclesfield	31.57	11.63	15.42	4.51	11.85	75.47	195
Vale Royal	31.49	8.68	19.39	3.42	4.98	75.29	196
Congleton	21.25	7.30	10.21	3.74	8.27	50.81	309
Cheshire & Warringt	35.34	11.22	19.53	4.60	12.90	84.49	26 of 47
North West	46.12	15.25	23.98	6.89	-0.88	110.27	3 of 10
Great Britain	41.83	13.51	22.66	5.67	-1.12	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Recorded crime statistics

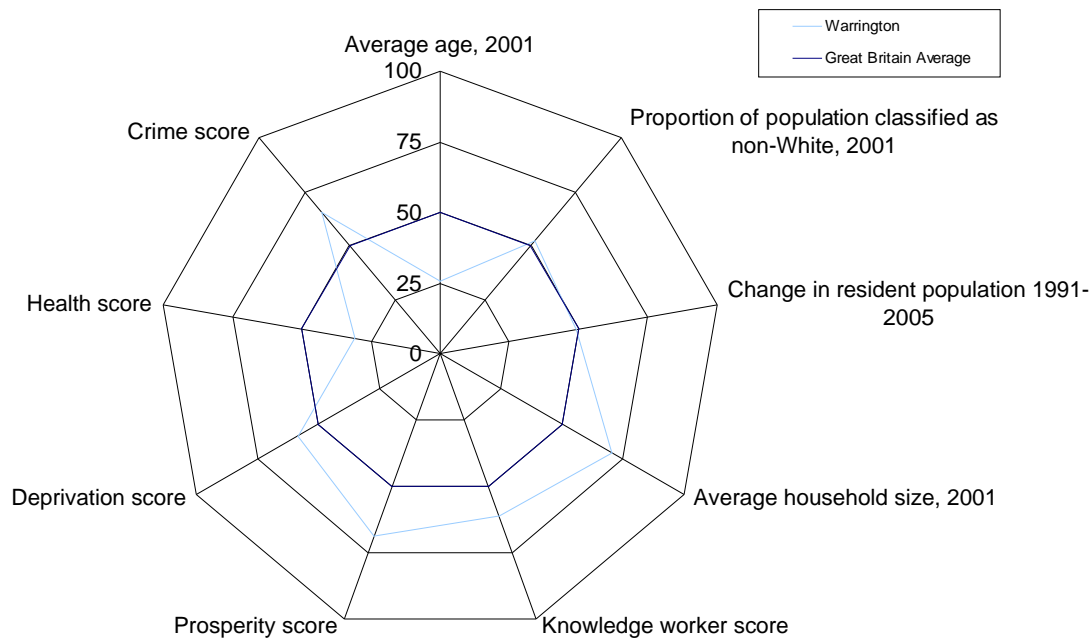
3.8 Summary

As with the borough's economic profile, Figure 3 presents a summary spider diagram showing key indicators of Warrington's social profile.

Warrington is a generally prosperous part of the nation, with a mix of underlying social conditions. Strikingly, its population is quite young by national standards (unlike many prosperous areas), and has been growing at an average rate over the last 14 years. The borough has a reasonably large average household size, possibly partly reflecting the area's relatively large share of married couples with and without children.

Warrington's social weaknesses lie in its levels of deprivation, health, and crime. Pockets of deprivation are particularly a problem, with comparatively high levels of inequality between Super Output Areas within the borough, despite the relatively high levels of overall prosperity. The lower life expectancy of the area – reflected in higher mortality rates by the 'big killers' of heart disease and cancer – and higher total offence rate, when compared to national levels, may be reflections of this inequality.

Figure 3: Social Profile Summary



Source: *Local Knowledge*, Census 2001; Personal Incomes; APS; Mid-year estimates; Regional Trends; Local Futures⁸

⁸ The chart displays the national ranking of the borough, converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%, except for Crime and Deprivation which shows the inverse)

4 Environment

4.1 Introduction

The third and final section of the Local Futures Audit looks at a number of aspects of the environment and quality of life in Warrington. In this Audit we consider the environment in terms of:

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

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

Housing Affordability, Tenure and Condition

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

- **Warrington performs well in terms of housing affordability, ranked 69th of 354 districts in England and Wales (where 1st is the most affordable).**

The average house price in Warrington was £183,675 in October-December 2006, less than the national and Cheshire and Warrington averages, although significantly higher than the average house price in the North West region. Combining the average house price with average earnings yields an affordability index; the higher the score the more affordable housing is in the area. Warrington performs quite well with a score of 120.9 on this measure (where GB = 100), ranking the borough in the most affordable quintile of districts in England and Wales. Combined with this relative affordability is a good quality of housing stock, as shown by the low share of housing which was rated unfit (in 2004) in relation to local, regional and national levels. This supply of relatively good quality and affordable housing could be a factor behind the net in-migration of residents shown previously (see Table 9).

However, it must also be borne in mind that this figure is relative to the GB average, which is itself very high. The ratio of house prices to earnings in Warrington stood at about 7.8 to 1 (taking latest figures available); less than the national figure of around 8.4 to 1, but still far higher than the mortgage lending rule of thumb of four times earnings. In addition to this, the borough has followed national trends of increasing house prices, with a rise of 155 per cent since 1998 – the third highest increase among the comparator group, and higher than the three benchmark figures.

Table 17: Housing

LAD	Average house price, October - December 2006	Proportion of total dwelling stock which is unfit, 2004	Proportion of owner occupied households, 2001	Proportion of rented households, 2001	Proportion of households sold, October - December 2006	% change in average house price, 1998-2006	% change in affordability index, 1998-2006	Affordability ratio	Affordability ratio rank (out of 354)
Wigan	128,792	3.30	72.18	27.82	1.36	145.17	83.50	134.77	26
St Helens	131,709	7.50	69.10	30.90	0.99	146.72	100.74	128.62	40
Salford	131,243	6.70	56.35	43.65	1.24	150.37	113.61	126.53	47
Warrington	183,675	2.50	76.00	24.00	1.32	154.99	58.04	120.87	69
Ellesmere Port and Neston	169,772	3.40	73.20	26.80	0.99	124.94	78.00	120.56	73
Halton	131,917	1.60	65.80	34.20	1.19	125.89	111.91	119.53	76
Crew e and Nantwich	169,073	2.80	76.12	23.88	1.58	138.45	76.20	116.12	92
Congleton	192,003	5.90	82.09	17.91	1.33	131.15	46.61	110.37	121
Vale Royal	185,527	3.00	77.58	22.42	1.35	139.60	67.22	108.87	125
Macclesfield	252,822	2.00	78.05	21.95	1.43	131.71	38.00	108.24	130
Chester	216,449	2.50	73.03	26.97	1.26	169.51	69.12	100.91	175
Trafford	233,698	0.00	72.34	27.66	1.26	174.44	92.29	89.72	246
Cheshire & Warrington	197,998	2.96	76.56	23.44	1.34	142.51	58.74	106.42	15 of 53
North West	153,112	6.07	69.26	30.74	1.20	152.25	83.78	138.52	1 of 9
Great Britain	189,538	4.08	68.29	31.71	1.38	151.57	96.32	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Land Registry Property Prices; DCLG unfit property statistics; Census 2001

Warrington follows the national trend of higher home ownership than rental, although with a stronger weighting towards owner occupied households than regional and national levels: about three quarters of households were recorded as owner occupied in 2001, and around a quarter recorded as rented. This perhaps reflects the combination of relative affordability and overall prosperity in the local area. For example, Salford and St Helens had much lower average house prices in 2006, but also much lower average earnings (see Table 13).

4.2 Commercial and Industrial Property

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

- **Warrington has seen below average growth in its stock of commercial and industrial floorspace over recent years, ranking 203rd out of 370 boroughs in England and Wales.**

The supply of commercial property in Warrington is geared towards industrial space. Its share of office floorspace is slightly less than the national average, whereas retail space is below average.

Between 1999 and 2006, Warrington's supply of commercial and industrial property has seen modest growth relative to local and national levels, although much higher than regional levels. The borough follows the national trend in floorspace change, with the largest proportionate increase in office floorspace, followed by small growth industrial and retail floorspace. In fact, the borough has seen a slight decline in its share of retail floorspace since 1999. Further, the increase in office space was still below local, regional and national levels. This may be a cause for concern when trying to attract knowledge-drive businesses to the local area; its modest growth places Warrington mid-table among the comparator areas.

Table 18: Commercial and Industrial Property

LAD	Retail floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2006	Office floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2006	Industrial floorspace as a proportion of all commercial & industrial floorspace, 2006	% change in retail floorspace, 1999-2006	% change in office floorspace, 1999-2006	% change in industrial floorspace, 1999-2006	% change in commercial & industrial floorspace, 1999-2006	Proportion of total area that is derelict land and buildings, 2003	Business Rateable Value 2005	Floorspace change score	Floorspace change score rank (out of 354)
	Halton	9.34	12.07	78.60	-5.71	69.54	25.34	25.43	0.61	87,420	443.30
Crewe and Nantwich	16.23	9.53	74.24	-7.26	45.16	14.60	12.55	0.00	67,475	218.78	89
Ellesmere Port and Neston	10.69	4.03	85.28	-6.47	7.14	12.50	9.90	2.54	61,037	172.53	112
Vale Royal	13.76	10.45	75.79	-3.05	21.85	8.23	7.76	1.34	63,427	135.35	142
Macclesfield	18.10	21.13	60.77	-11.01	16.72	10.69	7.13	0.01	105,963	124.36	154
Warrington	14.67	16.15	69.18	-0.46	14.52	3.62	4.60	0.45	181,969	80.19	203
Wigan	17.26	7.83	74.91	0.00	22.82	3.11	3.86	0.00	139,901	67.22	214
Salford	12.36	17.63	70.01	0.00	14.68	0.99	3.03	3.92	168,747	52.86	226
Trafford	16.70	15.06	68.24	9.71	5.06	-1.45	1.21	0.22	293,443	21.16	268
Congleton	9.82	7.67	82.52	7.55	36.92	-5.80	-2.27	0.33	44,646	-39.62	324
Chester	27.60	28.26	44.14	3.86	16.62	-17.85	-4.34	0.13	124,474	-75.69	351
St Helens	16.44	8.47	75.09	6.31	13.79	-17.35	-12.10	0.00	90,150	-210.93	370
Cheshire & Warrington	15.78	14.37	69.85	-2.80	18.94	4.36	4.99	0.42	648,991	86.95	33 of 47
North West	17.47	13.51	69.02	1.37	22.55	-1.26	1.87	0.32	4,126,332	32.68	10 of 9
Great Britain	18.13	17.31	64.56	1.17	19.76	3.79	5.74	0.06	38,033,292	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Commercial and Industrial floorspace statistics

There is quite a wide variation of changes among the comparator group. Halton experienced an increase in its business floorspace well above the national average. At the other end of the scale, St Helens saw a significant reduction in commercial and industrial floorspace.

4.3 Transport and Connectivity

The Local Futures Audit assesses an area's accessibility and connectivity using a composite of measures including distance from London, a 'Local Hub' Index (the concentration of transport hubs such as motorway junctions, airports, ports and mainline railway stations), and the 'Contiguity Index' (a score based on an area's proximity to transport hubs in neighbouring boroughs). Table 19 shows the results for Warrington.

- **Warrington has a relatively good score on our overall connectivity index, ranking the borough 108th out of 408 districts nationally.**

Our overall connectivity score is heavily skewed, so that cities and large towns do very well and rural areas do very poorly, with little in between. As might be expected, Warrington's accessibility score is buoyed by its strong transport links – the town is close to the M6, M62, and M56 motorways, has good railway links, and is located between the Liverpool and Manchester airports.

These transport links are reflected by the high net-commuting score – over 40 per cent of Warrington's jobs were taken by non-residents (in 2001), just above local, regional and national levels. This supports our earlier conclusions regarding the balance between Warrington's knowledge-driven employment base and its low skills profile.

Despite its good connections, a relatively small share of residents in Warrington worked elsewhere in 2001. In fact, it had the second smallest proportion of out-commuters and, at 33.9 per cent, was below all three benchmark shares. This perhaps reflects the relatively large scale of Warrington's economy, in relation to its surrounding areas – it can provide employment for both its residents and a significant share of non-residents.

Table 19: Transport – Accessibility and Mobility

LAD	Proportion of people who travel to work by car, 2001	Proportion of people who travel to work by public transport, 2001	Proportion of people who travel to work by foot or bicycle, 2001	Net Commuting, 2001, GB=100	Journeys per sq km, 2001	Proportion of jobs taken by non-residents, 2001	Proportion of residents who work elsewhere, 2001	Average travel to work time (in minutes), 2002-2003	Connectivity score, GB=100	Connectivity Score rank (out of 408)
Salford	62.36	13.96	13.54	119.36	1054.70	52.32	45.76	20.00	139.40	74
Trafford	66.01	12.93	10.70	135.40	1066.87	52.37	45.67	21.00	97.55	102
Warrington	72.72	6.64	10.45	133.27	566.46	41.11	33.85	20.00	91.18	108
Wigan	71.34	8.20	11.40	71.88	565.59	22.27	39.02	20.00	77.21	122
Ellesmere Port and Neston	73.57	6.03	10.74	92.13	391.78	46.84	50.46	17.00	67.79	133
Halton	71.48	8.42	11.81	96.32	668.08	39.67	36.79	22.00	60.41	138
St Helens	71.14	10.11	10.24	86.22	427.74	30.42	44.56	17.00	38.01	186
Macclesfield	70.96	4.46	11.18	121.84	151.46	42.04	36.84	21.00	30.68	203
Congleton	75.14	2.90	9.87	75.44	160.85	38.66	53.18	20.00	27.33	211
Vale Royal	74.92	3.31	9.87	83.47	122.02	29.83	42.98	20.00	26.16	215
Crew e and Nantw ich	67.18	4.23	16.44	95.90	118.85	27.21	27.86	20.00	22.20	234
Chester	66.06	7.74	14.18	132.96	148.25	47.95	37.59	19.00	19.09	249
Cheshire & Warrington	71.46	5.17	11.72	111.20	183.10	39.71	38.91	19.57	55.47	24 of 53
North West	65.93	10.99	12.54	102.30	205.80	37.13	36.80	19.44	69.83	3 of 11
Great Britain	61.18	14.81	13.03	100.00	155.82	39.37	39.62	20.32	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Local Futures; Census 2001; Labour Force Survey

However, the good connectivity score belies the over-reliance on cars. Table 13 shows that over a third of Warrington households have at least two cars. As shown in the table above, despite the borough's rail links and the large shares of residents working locally, nearly three quarters of residents are travelling by car to work – above local, regional and national levels. This is reflected in the relatively high levels of congestion, as the proxy measure of journeys per sq km shows. Warrington and its broader sub-region have far lower proportions of residents travelling by public transport, or by foot/bicycle than in the North West or Great Britain as a whole. Given the level of internal commuting and the environmental pressures of car use, the Warrington Partnership is therefore right to single out local infrastructure and transportation as a priority for its Community Strategy.

4.4 Local Services

A number of indicators are used to evaluate the quality or attractiveness of local services. We look at school exam results, recycling levels, and Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scores. A summary is presented in Table 20.

- **The standard of local services in Warrington is just above average – the borough ranks 139th of 354 districts in England and Wales on our overall score.**

The standard of local services is above the national average in Warrington, though below that found in the broader sub-region, and the North West as a whole. The council's 2004 assessment (the latest full dataset) was very good, as were most of the other comparator areas – rated 4 out of a possible 5 – and higher than the averages found in the three benchmark areas. Moreover, this good performance has been sustained, with the latest assessment in 2006 rating the borough 4 stars out of a possible 4. Access to local services (e.g. GPs, schools, and supermarkets) was also above average, particularly in relation to the borough's wider sub-region. This score ranked the borough third again, among the comparator areas, reflecting its urban environment and good transport links.

Table 20: Local Services

LAD	Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs grades A*-C 2005/06	% household waste recycled, 2005-06	Access to services 2005	CPA 2004	Local services score	Local services score rank (out of 354)
Chester	61.20	14.22	89.77	5.00	117.89	47
Wigan	56.90	12.59	104.80	5.00	113.70	78
Vale Royal	64.10	18.30	88.97	4.00	110.78	93
Ellesmere Port and Neston	52.90	21.35	104.79	4.00	110.31	98
St Helens	56.60	9.00	107.60	5.00	108.42	113
Macclesfield	63.10	16.55	93.53	4.00	107.84	120
Warrington	66.20	13.58	106.40	4.00	104.92	139
Crewke and Nantwich	54.90	14.72	89.39	4.00	101.67	171
Halton	52.50	13.58	103.21	4.00	99.00	199
Trafford	70.00	16.97	110.67	3.00	97.20	212
Congleton	70.70	12.81	94.79	2.00	77.32	322
Salford	50.80	12.97	106.25	2.00	68.96	338
Cheshire & Warrington	62.47	15.63	95.80	3.93	111.24	16 of 47
North West	56.34	13.99	101.76	3.73	107.91	8 of 9
Great Britain	58.50	14.33	100.00	3.10	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Local Futures; Neighbourhood Renewal Unit; Audit Commission CPA; BVPIs

School performance is above local, regional and national averages, coming third highest among the comparator groups with 66.2 per cent of pupils achieving at least five GCSE grades A*-C in 2005/06 (compared to 58.5 per cent nationally). This is a good performance, considering the more prosperous boroughs of Macclesfield and Chester do not score as highly. The level of household recycling – 13.7 per cent of waste in 2005/06 – is about average, and broadly in line with the average of the comparator districts. Only Ellesmere Port and Neston stands out on this indicator, recycling over a fifth of its household waste.

4.5 Local Amenities

In this Audit we consider local amenities through a combination of indicators, including the density of national heritage sites and listed buildings, the availability of cultural amenities (such as cinemas, theatres and libraries) and a café culture, and employment in hotels and restaurants. A summary is presented in Table 21. The figures should be considered in light of the fact that the indicator is heavily skewed towards large cities, particularly London.

- **Warrington is ranked 137th out of 408 boroughs in Great Britain, by the quality of its local amenities.**

In terms of local amenities, Warrington's modest score of 60.0 (where Britain = 100) nevertheless places it in the top half of districts ranked nationally. The main strength is the borough's cultural amenities, scoring above the local and sub-regional averages. This strengthens the borough's cultural offer and its identity, improving residents' quality of life.

Table 21: Local Amenities

LAD	National Heritage sites per 1000 sq km, 2002	Cultural Amenities per 1000 sq km, 2002, GB=100	Proportion of employment in Hotels and Restaurants, 2005	Listed Buildings per 1000 sq km, 2004	Café culture, July 2004	Local amenities score	Local amenities rank (out of 408)
Salford	0.00	132.39	5.30	4.75	0.00	69.34	112
Trafford	28.30	86.44	4.66	4.75	1.00	66.64	116
St Helens	0.00	134.77	7.07	2.10	0.00	65.85	118
Ellesmere Port and Neston	22.73	42.86	6.64	4.50	2.00	62.91	125
Warrington	0.00	87.51	6.43	4.16	1.00	59.96	137
Wigan	10.64	82.12	6.45	3.98	0.00	56.38	156
Macclesfield	22.86	6.72	7.51	5.76	1.00	52.88	180
Chester	4.46	8.55	10.12	7.94	2.00	52.31	188
Congleton	9.48	3.95	8.19	4.83	0.00	41.11	272
Crew e and Nantw ich	9.30	12.32	6.65	3.57	0.00	37.40	312
Halton	0.00	48.41	6.22	3.35	0.00	36.38	318
Vale Royal	0.00	4.38	6.62	3.78	0.00	31.62	359
Cheshire & Warrington	9.72	21.94	7.41	5.18	0.86	41.51	31 of 53
North West	9.07	70.73	6.87	3.81	0.77	55.81	3 of 11
Great Britain	9.96	100.00	6.75	14.22	1.69	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Treasures of Britain; Annual Business Inquiry; Starbucks; Café Nero; Local Futures

Nevertheless, there are some weaknesses – in particular, the borough has a minimal number of national heritage sites, compared with the three benchmarks. The same is true for listed buildings, although it is to be expected given that the wider Cheshire and Warrington area and North West region have below the national average share of listed buildings. However, this

weakens the profile of local attractions and its pull on tourism trade, particularly with local competition from Liverpool and Manchester.

None of the comparator areas have particularly strong local amenities scores. However, there is a range of provision within the group, from 69.3 in urban Salford to 31.6 in rural Vale Royal.

4.6 Natural Environment

The final aspect to be considered in this section of the Local Futures Audit is the quality of the natural environment in Warrington. Clearly, the natural environment is a subjective topic which makes benchmarking problematic, yet the knowledge economy is associated with a more decentralised geography of employment and population change as knowledge workers try to find a good work-life balance. Table 22 shows the results of our audit of the natural environment in Warrington. Once more, indicators on the quality of the local environment are heavily skewed across the country with towns, cities and urban areas scoring badly and areas of outstanding natural beauty scoring well.

- **Warrington has a below average score on our natural environment measure, ranked 152nd of 354 boroughs in England and Wales.**

While the overall quality of the natural environment in Warrington is below average, the borough nevertheless ranks in the top half of districts in England and Wales.

Table 22: Natural Environment

LAD	Natural Beauty (access and contiguity), GB=100	Tranquility, 2004 (GB = 100)	Average weather, 2006	Air quality 2001	Natural environment score	Natural environment score rank (out of 354)
Trafford	32.70	60.31	100.05	1.32	100.73	108
Vale Royal	70.17	270.83	92.58	0.92	84.56	137
Warrington	48.07	89.49	100.05	1.28	79.91	152
Halton	32.39	68.20	97.85	1.26	76.34	160
Macclesfield	36.35	347.30	99.74	0.94	73.86	170
St Helens	39.47	80.81	97.85	1.15	73.06	171
Crew e and Nantw ich	8.50	363.47	91.71	0.75	70.58	184
Chester	11.82	362.68	91.63	0.80	70.16	188
Congleton	7.84	210.51	100.02	0.96	58.91	233
Wigan	50.83	66.23	98.10	1.12	54.57	264
Salford	31.38	53.22	99.79	1.44	52.46	280
Ellesmere Port and Neston	18.89	105.65	91.71	1.03	51.83	286
Cheshire & Warrington	22.92	157.52	95.93	0.91	68.77	24 of 47
North West	63.67	55.98	96.45	0.70	69.09	4 of 9
Great Britain	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.80	100.00	

Source: *Local Knowledge*, Population estimates; Indices of Deprivation; Countryside Commission

Levels of tranquillity in Warrington are high relative to the North West region, although the borough's more urban environment relative to the rest of its sub-region means that it is outperformed by Cheshire and Warrington as a whole. In line with the findings on car use and

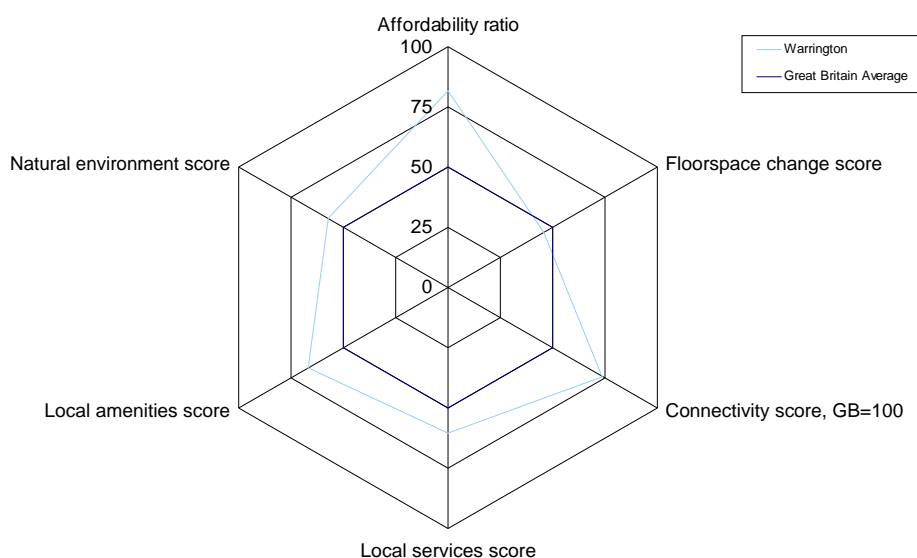
journeys per sq km from the transport section, the poor air quality in Warrington in to be expected (the higher the score, the worse the air quality). In fact, it has the third worst air pollution among the comparator boroughs – over 50 per cent higher than national levels. Thus, lifestyles and local infrastructure (such as the surrounding motorway network) have a clear impact on Warrington’s local environment.

4.7 Summary

A summary of Warrington’s environmental profile is presented as a spider chart in Figure 4. The borough has generally favourable results in this section of the report. The only composite measure on which it scores below the national median is its change in floorspace. This will have implications for its future economic growth, and should be considered in line with its modest economic change score found in section 2.2.

However, with respect to the bulk of the indicators – affordability, connectivity, local services, local amenities, and even the natural environment – it has a position above the national median. The borough’s particular environmental strengths relative to other boroughs lie in its affordability and its connectivity. While there may be scope for improvement in the provision of local services and local amenities, these are nevertheless good by national standards. There is a slight dip in Warrington’s ranking by its natural environment score but, considering its volume of car traffic and urban locality, it performs reasonably well.

Figure 4: Environment Summary



Source: *Local Knowledge*, Population estimates; Indices of Deprivation; Countryside Commission; Commercial Floorspace statistics; Treasures of Britain; House prices; Personal income statistics; Local Futures⁹

⁹ The chart displays the national ranking of the borough, converted to a percentile score (i.e. the top ranking district scores 100% and the bottom ranking 0%)

5 Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This Local Futures Audit of Warrington has captured the ‘State of the Borough’ at a particular point in time – it is a set of snapshots of local economic, social and environmental conditions. It also provides a ‘woods from the trees’ perspective on the state of Warrington by looking at how the borough compares with local comparator areas, its wider Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, the North West of England as a whole, and the rest of Britain. The results of the Audit, therefore, provide a basis for an informed discussion on the challenges and issues facing Warrington – now and over the coming years.

The final chapter of this report provides a synthesis of the Audit findings in the form of a final ‘scorecard’, which shows how Warrington stands within Britain (relative to 408 districts), and in relation to the North West (43 districts), and Cheshire and Warrington (7 districts).

5.2 The Final ‘Scorecard’

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

- **Economic Development** – Warrington’s economic performance is clearly its strength, with all but one of the scores rated ‘A’, ‘B’ or ‘C’. Its large and enterprising economy, which includes a significant share of knowledge-driven employment, results in the borough sitting in the top quintile whether benchmarked by the local area of Cheshire and Warrington, the wider North West region, or nationally. This is impressive, given the local competition from the large economic hubs of Liverpool and Manchester, and their immediate surrounding areas. However, despite these strengths, the borough has not managed to significantly grow, relative to wider regional and national standards. Most worryingly, the resident skill levels are relatively low – the borough is in the bottom quintile relative to the local area of Cheshire and Warrington, and only average relative to the wider areas. This will have knock-on effects for the local economy and local prosperity.
- **Social Profile** – Social conditions in the borough are much weaker when compared to the economic indicators. When benchmarked nationally, Warrington has an average performance: it is a reasonably prosperous borough that has attracted a good share of knowledge workers, thus reflecting its economic strengths. Nevertheless, its inequality score stands out, with the borough falling within the most unequal quintile of districts nationally; this is again reflected in its below-par performance with respect to health and crime. When compared to the North West of England, Warrington has a mixed

performance. This benchmark highlights the pockets of deprivation within the borough, with a very prosperous population overall ('A') but also a very unequal one ('E'). Finally, the borough performs relatively poorly when compared to Cheshire and Warrington, indicating the sub-region's strengths. One future test will therefore be to ensure that Warrington's favourable industrial structure fully translates into broader economic prosperity for its residents,

- **Environment and Quality of Life** – The nature of the environmental indicators used in this analysis give rise to an above average profile for Warrington, with the borough never falling into the bottom quintile relative to the three benchmarks. Housing is one of the most affordable in the country, and in Cheshire and Warrington, although it is about average for the North West region. Connectivity is its other main asset with the borough rated very good or above average by the benchmarks, although this has had a negative knock-on effect on local air quality and congestion. There are other weaknesses in the borough, particularly growth in commercial and industrial property, with the floorspace change indicator rated average at best. The report card also suggests that the borough has strong local competition with regard to access to services, with Warrington rated 'D' relative to Cheshire and Warrington, although rated above average compared to the broader benchmarks. However, the borough enjoys good access to amenities and a good quality of natural environment relative to its sub-region – these indicators are round about average by regional and national standards.

Table 22: The Sustainable Development 'Scorecard' for Warrington

District Report Card – Warrington			
	Sub Region	Region	National
Economy			
Economic scale	A	A	A
Productivity	B	A	B
Economic change	B	C	C
Industrial structure	A	A	A
Business & enterprise	A	A	A
Skills & qualifications	E	C	C
Labour market	B	B	C
Society			
Knowledge workers	D	B	B
Prosperity	D	A	B
Deprivation	E	B	C
Inequality	C	E	E
Health	E	B	D
Crime	D	C	D
Environment			
Housing affordability	A	C	A
Floorspace change	D	B	C
Connectivity	A	B	B
Services	D	B	B
Amenities	A	C	C
Natural environment	A	B	C

5.3 Policy Implications

The knowledge economy sits at the heart of the Government's economic development and competitiveness policy agenda. Through the former ODPM's sustainable communities programme, the knowledge economy is also filtering into social and environmental policy, and acts as the driving force behind a number of local authorities' Community Strategies. Several of the eight priorities contained in the Warrington Sustainable Community Plan (2005) can be reinforced under a number of themes to emerge within this report:

- *An educated, skilled and flexible workforce* – built around the LSC strategic area reviews and workforce development strategies, including improvements in IT skills and reducing education deprivation;
- *Infrastructure* – although not covered by the Audit, Warrington's knowledge economy will require an advanced electronic infrastructure and a variety of e-services for a more technology-based economy and society.
- *Entrepreneurship, business clusters and networks* – strengthening the supporting economic institutional framework (economic partnerships, and service agencies such as the Small Business Service/Business Link, and Jobcentre Plus) which is essential to residents' ability to participate in the knowledge economy;
- *Improvements in social and environmental conditions* – there is some scope for broad-based improvements such as health, deprivation and crime, as well as improvements to the urban environment and conservation of the natural environment can help make Warrington a better place for creating and sharing prosperity, playing their role in improving the environment for investment.

Interestingly, the emphasis in *Warrington Towards Tomorrow* is not on the economy. Whilst the Local Futures Audit reveals significant economic strengths, these should not be taken for granted and are the basis for the socially inclusive nature of local prosperity. Importantly, these 'pillars' of Warrington's knowledge economy need to be synchronised – that is, policies need to be joined up across all four areas of economic development strategy.

The future knowledge economy of Warrington must remain **socially inclusive**. To date, Warrington has enjoyed significant levels of prosperity which have not necessarily been shared equitably. The focus within *Warrington Towards Tomorrow* on learning and training for all ages and improving health and well-being therefore remain appropriate.

The final strategic imperative is to ensure that economic and social development in Warrington is **sustainable**. Improvements in certain facets of the natural and physical environment of the borough can assist in further strengthening the already significant Warrington economy. The environment and quality of life in Warrington will be critical to attracting and retaining the workers that the borough needs in order to develop its future knowledge economy.