# Police warn parents after young children break into listed Halton Transport depot



# Police Warning After Children Break into Derelict Bus Depot

Recent developments in Widnes have led local police to issue a stark warning following incidents involving children, some as young as six, breaking into a derelict bus depot. Officers have reported engaging with several schoolchildren who entered the former Halton Transport bus depot, located at the junction of Moor Lane and Caldwell Road. The police expressed grave concerns regarding the numerous potential hazards within the crumbling structure, underscoring the risks of serious injury.

In an emphatic message shared through social media, the local constabulary urged parents to discuss the dangers of such trespasses with their children. "Parents, can you please speak with your children and ask them to stay out of this building," a police spokesperson remarked, emphasising the urgent need for awareness before a serious accident occurs. This call to action reflects a growing concern for safety in the area, particularly as incidents of children entering unsafe buildings are not isolated.

The former depot, which has fallen into disrepair since its closure, was the home of Halton Borough Transport, a once-prominent bus service provider that succumbed to financial difficulties and entered liquidation in January 2020. As one of the last council-run bus companies in the UK, Halton Transport struggled with significant financial challenges, reporting a staggering loss of nearly £620,000 in 2019 alone. This was up dramatically from previous years, underscoring a troubling trend that ultimately led to its downfall, with the council having previously extended a £750,000 loan in attempts to stave off collapse.

The derelict structure itself is not merely a forgotten relic but a site of historical importance. Built in 1923, it was recognised as a Grade II listed building by Historic England in November 2020, marking it as a rare, largely intact example of a purpose-built bus depot. This designation provides it with planning protections and reflects its unique status in the history of public transport in England. According to Historic England, the building is an early surviving example from a time when motorised buses began to dominate public transport, highlighting its significance in the evolution of local transport infrastructure.

Widnes Corporation was among the pioneering local authorities in the UK to initiate a bus service, having gained approval for such services via parliamentary act in 1908. The creation of the bus depot further corroborated this commitment, serving as a testament to early investment in public transport. However, following the closure of Halton Transport and subsequent decline of the depot, Halton Borough Council acquired the building for £245,000 in December 2019, as part of broader regeneration plans for the Moor Lane area. Plans to sell the property for £950,000 were announced in 2023, highlighting ongoing efforts to explore the future of the site amidst rising local concerns.

Despite its closure, the former depot and similar abandoned sites pose significant risks for neighbourhoods, especially when children venture into these spaces. Police have previously noted the dangers of trespassing in unsafe buildings, urging communities to remain vigilant. Echoing this sentiment, an officer remarked that the potential for serious injury is high, an assertion that has been echoed in similar warnings regarding other derelict properties in Widnes, such as the former Birchfield Sports and Social Club.

In conclusion, the intersection of historical preservation and public safety remains a critical concern in Widnes. While the former bus depot serves as a reflection of the town’s transport legacy, the risks it poses demonstrate an urgent need for community engagement and preventative measures to protect vulnerable populations, particularly children, from the dangers of trespassing.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMinAFBVV95cUxPaV8wVWxpazVKdXpMQ2U3Nmc3VmVfVDQ4S0JRV3dKUkpkOU1aaWJJckJxVUprT0pHQVZFMk80emVxYThXSFBkSFJqSVVBeTd5eVFuTTIzQnpqSzZXVmRNdlhVQzMtOXlTcTZSR1pLVXFRakVFY0JDXzlwYUZSR0JLQ3g5ZEFzaU1reEdZLXlYRXl2aHlBbmFSRWR5NGfSAaIBQVVfeXFMUC1Ed2plTk9KdWZJbTZUcGptT2UybDFtWHRjU01SRHhILWFrR25xN0N4dGJFUXZ6VkY2eDhTam9oeXdaN0Q1cHBINlU1LXpuaW05TDVXXzc0MXE1MzM0bUN4V3dJYnhmRXI2NGxudXNYaWhhRVVKUGJ1eHltLThpbFpHcTIzTXptSlQ4S2xWajE3WlJPSnZJVnJ4c0d1Nkh6cjNB?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en), [[6]](https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMinAFBVV95cUxPaV8wVWxpazVKdXpMQ2U3Nmc3VmVfVDQ4S0JRV3dKUkpkOU1aaWJJckJxVUprT0pHQVZFMk80emVxYThXSFBkSFJqSVVBeTd5eVFuTTIzQnpqSzZXVmRNdlhVQzMtOXlTcTZSR1pLVXFRakVFY0JDXzlwYUZSR0JLQ3g5ZEFzaU1reEdZLXlYRXl2aHlBbmFSRWR5NGfSAaIBQVVfeXFMUC1Ed2plTk9KdWZJbTZUcGptT2UybDFtWHRjU01SRHhILWFrR25xN0N4dGJFUXZ6VkY2eDhTam9oeXdaN0Q1cHBINlU1LXpuaW05TDVXXzc0MXE1MzM0bUN4V3dJYnhmRXI2NGxudXNYaWhhRVVKUGJ1eHltLThpbFpHcTIzTXptSlQ4S2xWajE3WlJPSnZJVnJ4c0d1Nkh6cjNB?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en), [[5]](https://www.keybuses.com/article/halton-folds-after-111-years)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-51237490), [[3]](https://www.busandcoachbuyer.com/financial-problems-cause-halton-transport-closure/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/legal-documents-reveal-full-story-19047239), [[6]](https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-51237490), [[4]](https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/legal-documents-reveal-full-story-19047239)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMinAFBVV95cUxPaV8wVWxpazVKdXpMQ2U3Nmc3VmVfVDQ4S0JRV3dKUkpkOU1aaWJJckJxVUprT0pHQVZFMk80emVxYThXSFBkSFJqSVVBeTd5eVFuTTIzQnpqSzZXVmRNdlhVQzMtOXlTcTZSR1pLVXFRakVFY0JDXzlwYUZSR0JLQ3g5ZEFzaU1reEdZLXlYRXl2aHlBbmFSRWR5NGfSAaIBQVVfeXFMUC1Ed2plTk9KdWZJbTZUcGptT2UybDFtWHRjU01SRHhILWFrR25xN0N4dGJFUXZ6VkY2eDhTam9oeXdaN0Q1cHBINlU1LXpuaW05TDVXXzc0MXE1MzM0bUN4V3dJYnhmRXI2NGxudXNYaWhhRVVKUGJ1eHltLThpbFpHcTIzTXptSlQ4S2xWajE3WlJPSnZJVnJ4c0d1Nkh6cjNB?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en), [[5]](https://www.keybuses.com/article/halton-folds-after-111-years)
* Paragraph 7 – [[6]](https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/), [[7]](https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/)

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2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-51237490> - Halton Transport, a council-run bus company in Cheshire, UK, entered liquidation in January 2020 after reporting a loss of nearly £620,000 in 2019, up from £50,500 in 2017. The company operated over a third of bus services in the area and employed 150 staff. Halton Borough Council had previously provided a £750,000 loan to support the company, but financial difficulties persisted, leading to the cessation of services and urging passengers to seek alternative arrangements.
3. <https://www.busandcoachbuyer.com/financial-problems-cause-halton-transport-closure/> - Halton Borough Transport ceased trading on January 24, 2020, entering liquidation after facing significant financial challenges. The company reported a loss of £619,695 for the period ending March 31, 2019, compared to a loss of £361,822 in the same period in 2018. Despite being owned by Halton Borough Council and operating as an 'arm's length' company since 1986, Halton Transport struggled to achieve financial sustainability, leading to its closure.
4. <https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/legal-documents-reveal-full-story-19047239> - Legal documents have revealed systemic dysfunction leading to the collapse of Halton Transport, one of Britain's last municipal bus companies. Arguments submitted ahead of a public inquiry describe a rift between executive directors and councillors, with accusations of mismanagement, nepotism, and negligence contributing to the company's downfall in January 2020. The Traffic Commissioner's inquiry concluded with the revocation of the company's operator's licence due to maintenance failures that 'prejudiced' public safety.
5. <https://www.keybuses.com/article/halton-folds-after-111-years> - Halton Transport, serving the towns of Widnes and Runcorn, ceased operations and entered liquidation on January 24, 2020, after 111 years of service. The company faced financial difficulties, including a loss of £619,695 for the period ending March 31, 2019. Despite receiving a £750,000 loan from Halton Borough Council, the company was unable to achieve financial sustainability, leading to its closure and leaving just eight arms-length municipals in the UK.
6. <https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/> - Police in Widnes have issued a warning after children, some as young as six, broke into the former Birchfield Sports and Social Club. Officers highlighted numerous hazards inside the building that 'could cause serious injury' and urged parents to speak with their children about the dangers of entering such properties. The building is currently in a state of disrepair and is considered dangerous.
7. <https://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/23444635.police-warning-derelict-birchfield-sports-social-club/> - Police in Widnes have issued a warning after children, some as young as six, broke into the former Birchfield Sports and Social Club. Officers highlighted numerous hazards inside the building that 'could cause serious injury' and urged parents to speak with their children about the dangers of entering such properties. The building is currently in a state of disrepair and is considered dangerous.