

= Runcorn =

Runcorn is an industrial town and cargo port in Cheshire, England, located within the Borough of Halton. In 2010, Runcorn's population was recorded to be 61,000. In May 2014, it became a member of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The town is on the southern bank of the River Mersey, where the estuary narrows to form the Runcorn Gap. Directly to the north across the River Mersey is the town of Widnes. Upstream and 8 miles (12.9 km) to the northeast is the town of Warrington, and downstream 16 miles (26 km) to the west is the city of Liverpool.

Runcorn railway station is on a branch of the West Coast Main Line and provides frequent services to the Liverpool Lime Street, Birmingham New Street, and London Euston stations. The A533 road passes through the town from the south, crossing the Runcorn Gap over the Silver Jubilee Bridge, the lowest bridge crossing of the River Mersey. The Manchester Ship Canal runs alongside the Runcorn bank of the River Mersey; the Bridgewater Canal terminates in the canal basin in the town centre, as the staircase of locks leading down to the ship canal was filled in many decades ago.

Runcorn was a small, isolated village until the Industrial Revolution. It was a health resort in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Towards the end of the 18th century, a port began to develop on the south bank of the River Mersey. During the 19th century, industries developed the manufacture of soap and alkali, quarrying, shipbuilding, engineering, and tanning. In the early 20th century, the prime industries were chemicals and tanning. The original village has grown to include what were outlying villages.

Except for chemicals, all of the old industries have disappeared and there has been diversification, in particular because of the close links to the motorway system and the development of warehousing and distribution centres. A new town was built to the east of the existing town in the 1960s and 1970s, and areas of private housing have been established farther to the east; this has resulted in the population more than doubling from around 26,000 to its present level of 70,000.

= = History = =

The earliest written reference to the town is in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where it is spelled "Rumcofan", literally meaning "a wide cove or bay". This word is derived from the Old English words "rúm" ("wide" or "broad") and "cofa" ("cave" or "cove"). Other historical spellings of Runcorn include "Rumcoven", "Ronchestorn", "Runckhorne", and "Runcorne".

Little is known about the early history of the settlement but isolated findings of objects from the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages have been made and there is evidence of a Roman presence in the area. The earliest recorded event in its history is the building by Ethelfleda of a fortification at Runcorn to protect the northern frontier of her kingdom of Mercia against the Vikings in 915. The fort was built on Castle Rock overlooking the River Mersey at Runcorn Gap.

Following the Norman conquest, Runcorn was not mentioned in the 1086 Domesday survey, although surrounding settlements were. William the Conqueror granted the earldom of Chester to Hugh d'Avranches who granted the barony of Halton to Nigel. It is likely that Nigel erected a motte and bailey castle on Halton Hill in the 1070s. In 1115, Nigel's son, William Fitznigel, founded an Augustinian Priory at Runcorn. In 1134 the priory was moved to Norton, about 3.5 miles (6 km) away. In 1391 the priory was raised to the higher status of abbey. In 1536 the monastery was dissolved, and around nine years later the buildings and some of the monastic lands were sold to Sir Richard Brooke who converted the habitable part of the abbey into a house.

During the Civil War Halton Castle was held for the Royalists by John Savage, 2nd Earl Rivers, the Steward of Halton. It fell twice to Parliamentary Roundheads. The first siege was led by Sir William Brereton in 1643; the second was during the following year. Following this, a "Council of War" was held in Warrington in 1646 at which it was decided that the castle should be slighted. In 1656, Runcorn was described as being "nothing but a fair parish church, a parsonage and a few scattered tenements". And so it remained for over a century, an isolated and poor hamlet. The only through traffic used the ferry which crossed from Runcorn to the north bank of the River Mersey. Towards the end of the 18th century and in the early years of the 19th century the town was a

health resort .

During the 18th century water transport had been improved in the area by the Mersey and Irwell Navigation , the Bridgewater Canal and the Trent and Mersey Canal . This gave Runcorn waterway connections with most of the interior of England through the canal system and with the sea along the River Mersey , thus forming the basis for the development of the Port of Runcorn . Later came the Runcorn to Latchford Canal linking with the Mersey and Irwell Navigation , and the Weston Canal which gave better access to the Weaver Navigation system . Industries began to develop within and around the town , in particular quarrying for Runcorn sandstone , shipbuilding , engineering , the manufacture of soap and chemicals and tanning . Runcorn was becoming an industrialised and highly polluted town . During the later 19th century the town became increasingly dominated by the chemical and tanning industries .

In 1868 the Runcorn Railway Bridge was opened across the Mersey , giving Runcorn direct rail links with Liverpool and the rest of the country . In the 1880s a pipeline was opened between Northwich and Weston Point , supplying brine to the salt and chemical works . In 1894 the Manchester Ship Canal was opened throughout its length . This allowed ocean @-@ going ships to travel inland as far as Salford , some of them calling at the port of Runcorn . The rise in population between 1881 and 1891 and the drop by 1901 is explained by the number of people involved in constructing the ship canal . In 1905 the Widnes @-@ Runcorn Transporter Bridge opened , giving a direct link for vehicular traffic for the first time between the two towns .

During the first half of the 20th century the industry of the town continued to be dominated by chemicals and tanning . This growth was largely due to government fixed @-@ priced cost contracts for tanned hides . In 1926 four chemical companies merged to form Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) . As the century progressed there was diversification of industry . In 1961 the Transporter Bridge was replaced by Runcorn Road Bridge (since named the Silver Jubilee Bridge) which allowed a more efficient means of road traffic across Runcorn Gap . The designation of Runcorn as a new town in 1964 brought major changes and more than doubled the population . Much of the architecture of the new town was innovative , especially the Southgate development designed by Sir James Stirling and built between 1970 and 1977 . Stirling 's housing development was beset with problems and it was demolished in the early 1990s . During the second half of the 20th century the tanneries closed (the last to close was the Highfield Tannery in the late 1960s) and the chemical industry declined . At the same time , light industry developed together with warehouses and distribution centres .

= = Governance = =

= = = Civic history = = =

At the time of the Domesday survey , Runcorn was in the hundred of Tunendune , but later , and until the early 19th century , Runcorn was part of the Bucklow hundred . Under the Runcorn Improvement Act 1852 , a board of Improvement Commissioners was established to administer the civil government of the town . By the Local Government Act 1894 , the administration of the town and the surrounding areas was divided into Runcorn Urban District and Runcorn Rural District . Initially the urban district consisted of only the built @-@ up area of Runcorn itself . By 1937 , this area had been extended to include the communities of Weston and Weston Point to the south . By 1971 it had been further extended to the east to incorporate the village of Halton .

In 1964 , Runcorn was designated as a new town . In 1974 , as part of the Local Government Act 1972 , Runcorn Urban District was abolished and its territory amalgamated with Widnes to form the borough of Halton . In 1998 , this borough became a unitary authority within the ceremonial county of Cheshire .

= = = Political representation = = =

Before the Reform Act 1832 , Runcorn was in the parliamentary constituency of Cheshire which was represented by two Members of Parliament . Following the Reform Act , the town was placed in the North Cheshire constituency and from 1868 in the Mid Cheshire constituency . From 1885 to 1950 the town was in the constituency of Northwich . By an act of Parliament in 1948 , the constituency of Runcorn was created , and in 1950 Runcorn 's first Member of Parliament , Dennis Vosper , was elected . He continued to represent the constituency until 1964 , when he was succeeded by Mark Carlisle .

Runcorn is part of two parliamentary constituencies . The western part of the town , which includes the old town area and part of the new town , is in the constituency of Halton and the eastern part , containing the rest of the new town and private housing to the east of this , is in the Weaver Vale constituency . Being a predominantly working class Labour area and shunted into a voting pool with affluent areas outside Runcorn , has caused much resentment in the town . As Runcorn and Halton as a whole hasn 't been a part of Cheshire since 1998 , locals oppose these changes . Since the 1997 general election the Member of Parliament for the Halton constituency has been Derek Twigg of the Labour party , and he continued to hold the seat in the 2010 general election . In the 2007 election the Weaver Vale constituency was won by Mike Hall , also the Labour candidate . Hall retired at the 2010 election when the seat was won by Graham Evans , the Conservative candidate . The local authority is the borough of Halton . The town is divided into ten electoral wards , with councillors serving for up to four years . Runcorn is in the European parliamentary constituency of North West England .

= = Geography = =

Runcorn is situated on a spur projecting into the River Mersey , which flows to the north and then to the west of the town . On the north bank of the river is another spur forming the West Bank area of Widnes ; together these form Runcorn Gap , a narrowing of the River Mersey . Runcorn Gap is crossed by the Runcorn Railway Bridge , which carries the Liverpool branch of the West Coast Main Line , and the Silver Jubilee Bridge , which carries the A533 . To the south of the town is the River Weaver and the Weston Canal . Both open into the ship canal . To the southeast of the town run the M56 motorway , the Chester ? Manchester railway line , and the main branch of the West Coast Main Line . The town has a system of " expressways " , roads designed to divert traffic away from the residential areas . The Central Expressway runs through the centre of the town in a north @-@ south direction . To the west of it lie most of the former settlements which formed the older part of the town , namely Runcorn , Higher Runcorn , Weston , Weston Point and Clifton (formerly Rocksavage) , and the new town areas of Halton Brook and Halton Lodge . To the east are the village of Halton , the old settlements of Norton and Stockham , and the new town areas of Castlefields , Palacefields , Windmill Hill , Murdishaw , Brookvale and Hallwood Park .

The density of housing is generally high , but there are open green areas , in particular heathland on Runcorn Hill and the extensive Town Park created as part of the new town . The older industries , particularly the remaining chemical factories , are concentrated mainly to the southwest of the town bordering the Mersey , while newer industries , including warehousing , are to the northeast and southeast .

= = = Geology = = =

The Runcorn area drains into the River Mersey to the north and the River Weaver to the south . The bedrock of the western and northeastern parts of the town is made up of rock from the Sherwood sandstone group ; in the other areas the bedrock is from the Mercia mudstone group . In places there are prominent outcrops of sandstone , particularly at Runcorn Hill and Halton Hill . Elsewhere the bedrock is covered by drift . At the northwestern periphery of the town the drift consists of recently blown sand . Farther to the east and bordering the River Mersey is recent alluvium . Elsewhere the drift consists of till .

== Climate ==

Being close to the west coast and the Irish Sea , the climate is generally temperate with few extremes of temperature or weather . The mean average temperature in the years 1971 to 2000 was 9 @. @ 4 to 9 @. @ 7 ° C , which was slightly above the average for the United Kingdom as was the average amount of annual sunshine at 1 @, @ 391 to 1 @, @ 470 hours . The average annual rainfall was 741 to 870 mm , which was slightly below the average for the UK . The average number of days in the year when snow is on the ground is 0 to 6 , which is low for the United Kingdom . The average number of days of air frost is 2 to 39 , which is also low .

== Demography ==

Since the borough of Halton became a unitary authority in 1998 , demographic statistics have been collated for the authority as a whole , rather than separately for the towns of Runcorn and Widnes . While the two towns have different histories and come from different historic counties , their demographic features are similar .

The population of Halton in 2011 was 125 @, @ 700 . The change in population during the 20th and 21st centuries is shown in the following table .

In 2003 Halton had the largest proportion of the population in Cheshire in the age groups under 5 , 5 to 15 and 16 to pension age and , at 16 @. @ 1 % the lowest proportion of people at pension age or older . At 1 @. @ 2 % the proportion of non @-@ white ethnic groups in 2001 equalled the lowest in all local authorities in Cheshire . At 11 @. @ 5 per 1 @, @ 000 population , the live birth rate in Halton and Warrington is the highest in the county . At 121 the standardised mortality ratio is the highest in Cheshire , as is the percentage of persons with limiting long @-@ term illness (21 @. @ 5 %) .

There has been an increase in the number of households from 47 @, @ 214 in 1991 to 52 @, @ 501 in 2006 . The average household size has fallen from 2 @. @ 70 in 1991 to 2 @. @ 44 in 2001 . In 1991 , 75 @. @ 8 % of houses were centrally heated , compared with 89 @. @ 8 % in 2001 . The type of housing has also changed , with an increase from 15 @. @ 5 % to 19 @. @ 2 % in detached houses from 1991 to 2001 , an increase over the same years in semi @-@ detached houses from 30 @. @ 0 % to 33 @. @ 0 % , and a corresponding decrease in terraced houses from 44 @. @ 0 % to 37 @. @ 5 % . The percentage of dwellings in council tax bands A ? B is , at 69 % , the highest in any Cheshire local authority . The percentages in bands E ? F (8 %) and G ? H (1 %) are the lowest .

== Economy ==

Of Runcorn 's former industries , all but the chemical industry have disappeared . The industry was dominated for many years by ICI 's Chlor Chemical division ; since divested and taken over by Ineos . In Runcorn , Ineos manufactures chemicals including chlorine , chlorine @-@ containing compounds including vinyl chloride , heavy chemicals including alkalis , and fluorine @-@ containing compounds . A separate business within the same company manufactures salt from brine transported by pipeline from the saltfields of central Cheshire . The former ICI offices and laboratories now comprise the Heath Business and Technical Park , which provides office , laboratory , conference , and leisure facilities . To the east of the town , diverse industries have been developed including , because of the proximity to the motorway system , warehouses and distribution centres . The town continues to act as a port on the Manchester Ship Canal . There are two adjacent ports . Runcorn Docks is owned by the Manchester Ship Canal Company , which is part of the Peel Ports Group . The Port of Weston is owned by the Stobart Group . In March 2014 the UK 's largest incinerator for burning refuse @-@ derived fuel , managed by Viridor , commenced operation in Weston Point .

There has been a shift in employment from manufacturing to service industries . In 1991 , 34 % worked in the manufacturing sector and 61 % were in the service sector . By 2004 17 % were in

manufacturing jobs and 78 % were in service jobs . This trend in the local region is demonstrated in this chart which shows the regional " gross value added " of Halton and Warrington at current basic prices , with figures in millions of pounds .

^ includes hunting and forestry

^ includes energy and construction

^ includes financial intermediation services indirectly measured

^ Components may not sum to totals due to rounding

Runcorn has two shopping centres . The original shopping area was in the older part of the town on High Street , Regent Street and Church Street . This centre continues to exist , but with the coming of the new town , has declined . There is a small supermarket and some specialist shops , but with a higher @-@ than @-@ average proportion of charity shops and take @-@ away food outlets . A small market has been rebuilt adjacent to the old town bus station . In the centre of the new town area Runcorn Shopping Centre (formerly Halton Lea) is an enclosed shopping mall with an attached bus station . Adjacent to it is Trident Park containing shopping outlets and a cinema and further away is an Asda supermarket .

Servisair has its head office in Runcorn .

= = Landmarks and places of interest = =

The major landmark in the town is Halton Castle on the top of Halton Hill near the geographical centre of the town . Only ruins of the castle exist , but there are widespread views from the top of the hill . The interior of the castle grounds is open at advertised times . Incorporated in the castle walls is the Castle Hotel , which used to include a courthouse on the first floor . Another landmark is Norton water tower , built of Runcorn sandstone , 112 feet (34 m) high , which holds 672 @,@ 000 imperial gallons (3 million litres) of water and supplies water to Liverpool .

An important historical site and the major visitor centre in the town is Norton Priory , now a museum . The site contains the remains of a priory with adjacent gardens , formerly of a country house . Nearby are a walled garden , including a national collection of tree quinces , and an ice house .

Much of the architecture of the town is undistinguished , but there are listed buildings of some importance . The listed churches are All Saints Parish Church and Holy Trinity Church in the centre of the older part of the town , St Mary 's in Halton village , St John 's in Weston , and Christ Church in Weston Point . All Saints ' Church , a Grade II * listed building , dates from 1849 and was built by Anthony Salvin in red sandstone . The oldest existing houses are the Seneschal 's House in Halton village (1598) , Weston Old Hall (1607) , Brookfield Farmhouse (1691) and Halton Old Hall (1693) . Other outstanding houses include Runcorn Town Hall (formerly Halton Grange) , Camden House and Cottage in High Street and Bridgewater House near the ship canal .

A war memorial to those who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars , as well as those killed later conflicts , is located at the end of Moughland Lane . There is a memorial in Castle Road , Halton village , commemorating residents of the village who served in the Boer War .

= = Culture = =

= = = Theatre and cinema = = =

The Brindley is a theatre and arts centre which opened in 2004 . It is situated in the old town centre and named after James Brindley , engineer of the adjacent Bridgewater Canal . It contains a proscenium theatre seating 420 and a multi @-@ purpose theatre seating 108 , The Studio , which doubles as a cinema . There is an exhibition space for art installations , a small café and multi @-@ purpose rooms . The centre is owned and administered by Halton Borough Council which runs community events in the building . In 2007 , it won the title of " Best Arts Project in the UK " at the National Lottery Awards . A multiplex cinema run by Cineworld is in Trident Park .

== Filmography ==

Runcorn has been used for the shooting of films and television programmes . Some of the sequences in the first two series of the BBC police drama Merseybeat were filmed in and around the town . The BBC situation comedy Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps was set in Runcorn . External shots of the Waterloo Hotel in the area of High Street known as Top Locks (which is known in the show as The Archer) appear as well . The opening credits show the Silver Jubilee Bridge and Halton Castle . Drop Dead Gorgeous , a drama on BBC Three , was set in Runcorn . Norton Priory has been used as a location in films and television programmes .

== Media ==

Runcorn is served by two weekly papers , the Runcorn Weekly News and the Runcorn World . The town is also home to Halton Community Radio , which broadcasts over the Runcorn and Widnes area on the frequency 92.3FM. This is a non @-@ commercial radio station which is run by volunteers . HCR was launched on 8 August 2008 , and currently has a five @-@ year licence to broadcast .

== The Runcorn Ferry ==

Before the building of Runcorn Railway Bridge and its attached footbridge , the only way to cross the Mersey at or near Runcorn Gap , other than by the dangerous method of fording , was by ferry . The ferry has a history going back to the 12th century . The ferry was celebrated in the monologue entitled The Runcorn Ferry , written by Marriott Edgar and popularised by Stanley Holloway . It includes the lines :

== Community facilities ==

The main library is at Halton Lea with a branch library in the old town centre . Runcorn has two locations offering One @-@ Stop @-@ Shop facilities ; one is Halton Direct Link in Halton Lea , and the other is in the old town library . Runcorn Direct Link also includes a Tourist Information Centre .

Runcorn Hill Local Nature Reserve has been developed on the site of a quarry and consists of heathland . Adjacent to it is a park which includes a bandstand , a model boating lake and sports facilities . Wigg Island is a nature reserve on a former industrial site . The reserve is on an island between the Manchester Ship Canal and the River Mersey and consists of open spaces and woodland with bird hides and pathways . Other nature reserves in the town are Murdishaw Valley , Oxmoor Woods and Ponds , and Dorchester Park . Further public open areas are Rock Park , Town Hall Park and Phoenix Park . Open areas in Runcorn form part of Mersey Forest , one of Britain 's community forests .

Runcorn 's hospital is Halton General Hospital , which is administered by the Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust . Originally planned as a District General Hospital , it was never large enough to provide a full range of services . Acute medical services have been transferred to Warrington Hospital and Halton General has become a centre for non @-@ emergency surgery and rehabilitation . Although it never had its own accident and emergency department the hospital has a minor injuries unit for basic emergency care . On the same site is the Cheshire and Merseyside NHS Treatment Centre , a purpose @-@ built hospital for orthopaedic surgery . Halton Haven Hospice is in the Murdishaw area of the town . The body responsible for planning health services in Runcorn , including primary care , is the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group .

== Transport ==

When plans for Runcorn New Town were drawn up , they included three distinct types of road : local roads , expressways and the Busway . The expressways are intended to keep all through

traffic off the local roads . This system links to the north by the A533 over the Silver Jubilee Bridge to Widnes and Merseyside , to the northeast to Warrington by the A56 , to the east to Northwich and north Cheshire by the A533 , and to the southeast by the A557 to the M56 and to Frodsham . The M56 links to the M6 and , to the north of Widnes , the A557 links to the M62 . The Busway is a system of roads for use by buses only , and bears no resemblance to guided busways or bus lanes in use elsewhere , as it is a totally separate road system , not running alongside (or down the middle of) existing roads . In addition , there is a network of dedicated cycleways in the town .

There are two railway stations . Runcorn Mainline Station , located in the old town , is on the Liverpool branch of the West Coast Main Line , and is managed by Virgin Trains , who provide services between Liverpool Lime Street and London Euston . London Midland run a service between Liverpool and Birmingham New Street that calls at the station . Runcorn East station , located in the Murdishaw district of the new town , is managed by Arriva Trains Wales , and provides services to Warrington , Manchester and Chester . Bus services are provided by Halton Transport and Arriva . National Express coaches call at Runcorn , and other coach services are provided by Selwyns Travel , and Anthony 's Travel , who are both based in the town .

The Silver Jubilee Bridge was widened in the mid @-@ 1970s by bolting a new pedestrian way to the side of the original structure and widening the roadways over the old footpaths . It is a bottleneck and becomes congested at peak travel times , and in the event of a breakdown or accident on the bridge , traffic in the area comes to a standstill . To resolve this problem , a second crossing of the Mersey is planned , to be known as the Mersey Gateway .

Runcorn is 8 miles (13 km) from Liverpool John Lennon Airport and 22 miles (35 km) from Manchester Airport .

= = Education = =

There are 29 primary schools in the town and one nursery school at the Grange . The five secondary schools are Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy (formerly Halton High School) , St Chad 's RC & CE High , the Grange , and the Heath and Sandymoor School . Two institutions , Halton College and Runcorn Sixth Form College , merged in 2006 to form Riverside College . There is one special school in the town , Cavendish School . There are opportunities for adult education in information technology at the Acorn Lifelong Learning Centre . Other courses for adults are held at different venues in the town .

= = = Performance table = = =

The following table shows the percentage of pupils gaining five GCSE A * ? C level grades , including and excluding English and Maths in 2007 .

= = Religion = =

The 2001 census showed , that of the people living in the borough of Halton , 83 @.@ 8 % declared themselves to be Christian , 8 @.@ 7 % stated that they had " no religion , " and 7 @.@ 0 % made no religious claims at all . Those stating their religions as Buddhist , Hindu , Jewish , Islam or Sikh amounted to 0 @.@ 5 % .

The Anglican churches are part of the Diocese of Chester and the deanery of Frodsham . In Runcorn , the parish church is All Saints in the old town centre . Ten other Anglican churches are in the town . Five Roman Catholic churches can be found in Runcorn and are administered by the Diocese of Shrewsbury . There are three Methodist chapels and one Welsh Presbyterian chapel . Wicksten Drive Christian Centre is shared between the Church of England and the Methodists . Hallwood Ecumenical Parish in Beechwood and Palace Fields consists of 3 churches all recognised by the Church of England , the Methodists and the United Reformed Church . Norton Ecumenical Parish , covering Windmill Hill , Norton and Murdishaw , is served by an Ecumenical Partnership between St Berteline 's Church (Anglican) and Murdishaw Ecumenical Church (Methodist run) .

There is an Independent Baptist chapel , three independent Christian churches , and a LDS Church . The Jehovah 's Witnesses have two Kingdom Halls , and there is a Spiritualist church . In 2013 the former Waterloo Hotel was converted into a Buddhist temple by Wat Phra Singh UK .

= = Sports = =

The main sport played in Runcorn is football , with the town having two senior football teams ? Runcorn Linnets FC and Runcorn Town FC ? both playing in the North West Counties League , with the town also having a thriving Sunday League and Junior League . There is also an open age women 's team Runcorn Ladies FC , who have recently formed . They are affiliated to Liverpool FA , and play in the Liverpool County Women 's Open Age Division .

Runcorn Linnets were formed as a trust @-@ based team in 2006 from the now defunct Runcorn F.C. Halton . It has existed in various guises since 1918 , and its performance peaked in 1982 when it won the Alliance Premier League , then the highest division below the Football League . The club initially did not have their own ground so , up until the 2009 ? 10 season , they took part in a groundshare with Witton Albion to play their home matches at Wincham Park , Northwich . In their first season the club gained promotion to Division 1 of the North West Counties League . In October 2009 planning permission was granted for the club to build a new ground in the Murdishaw area of Runcorn .

Runcorn Town was formed in 1970 as Mond Rangers FC with the club changing their name in 2005 in order to " try and bring a more professional look to the club in general , and increase support from both businesses and individuals in the local community . " After finishing in third place in the West Cheshire League at the end of the 2009 / 10 season , the club were elected to join the North West Counties League at their AGM , the highest level that they have ever played at .

Runcorn Cricket Club and Runcorn Hockey Club are based at the Runcorn Sports Club in Moughland Lane . Runcorn Rugby Union FC is based at Halton Sports Club in Murdishaw . There is an 18 hole golf course at Runcorn Golf Club in Clifton Road and a golf driving range at Sutton Fields . Runcorn Sports Club is a privately run sports club in Moughland Lane and provides facilities and coaching for cricket and hockey . Halton Sports Club is in Murdishaw Avenue . Privately run swimming pools are at Beechwood local centre and Stockham Lodge Raquet and Health Club . Adjacent to the latter are two artificial ski slopes administered by Runcorn Ski Centre . The Runcorn Rowing Club rows on the River Weaver Navigation near Clifton Village . The local authority runs several sports centres , including : Runcorn Swimming Pool ; Brookvale Recreation Centre , offering indoor sporting facilities ; and Phoenix Park , with outdoor sporting facilities . Other sports are also catered for . Runcorn also has its own professional wrestling training @-@ school (The Runcorn Wrestling Academy) based in Grangeway , set up in 2005 by Andy Baker and Neil Davis .

In the late 19th century , and prior to the 1895 schism , rugby union footballers from the now defunct Runcorn , Harry Collinge Speakman played during the 1888 British Lions tour to New Zealand and Australia and Samuel Houghton played for England . When the rugby football schism occurred in 1895 , Runcorn became founder members of the Northern Rugby Football Union (now Rugby Football League) . Runcorn played from the 1895 ? 96 season through to the end of 1914 ? 15 season , they won the Lancashire League in both the 1895 ? 96 and 1899 ? 1900 seasons , and were losing semi @-@ finalists in 1906 ? 07 Rugby Football League Championship , and during the early part of the 20th century five rugby league players from the now defunct Runcorn played for both Great Britain , and England . Runcorn finish bottom of the league in the 1914 ? 15 Northern Rugby Football Union season , and did not recommence playing following the aftermath of the First World War . Rugby league in the town is now represented by Runcorn RLC .

= = Notable people = =

= = = Arts and entertainment = = =

John Bishop (born 1966) , comedian , spent part of his teenage years in Runcorn
Francis William Bourdillon (1852 ? 1921) , poet born in Runcorn
Hall Caine (1853 ? 1931) , novelist and playwright
Lewis Carroll (1832 ? 1898) , writer of Alice 's Adventures in Wonderland , born near Runcorn
Phil Collins (born 1970) , artist
Anna Keaveney (1949 ? 2004) , actress
Kym Marsh (born 1976) , singer and actress
Susan Nickson (born 1982) , television writer and producer
Alistair Taylor (1935 ? 2004) , assistant to Brian Epstein and General Manager of Apple Corps
Nicola Roberts (born 1985) , singer and member of girl band Girls Aloud
Martin Roscoe (born 1952) , classical pianist
Raymond Waring (1977) , actor

= = = Medical = = =

Nathan Alcock (1707 ? 1779) , physician

= = = Military = = =

Thomas Alfred Jones (1880 ? 1956) , awarded the Victoria Cross and Distinguished Conduct Medal during World War II

= = = Other = = =

Richard Brooke (died 1569) , bought the manor of Norton
Sir John Chesshyre (1662 ? 1738) , lawyer
Sir William Edward Dudley (1868 ? 1938) , president of the Co @-@ operative Wholesale Society
Thomas Hazlehurst (1779 ? 1842) , founder of soap and alkali manufacturer Hazlehurst & Sons
John Riley Holt (1918 ? 2009) , Professor of Experimental Physics at Liverpool University who played a part in the development of the atom bomb
John Savage , 2nd Earl Rivers (c . 1603 ? 1654) , royalist

= = = Religious = = =

Thomas Alcock (1709 ? 1798) , Vicar of Runcorn , writer , cider maker
Thomas Hazlehurst (1816 ? 1876) , Methodist who paid for the construction of 12 chapels and three schools in the area

= = = Sports = = =

Graham Abel (born 1960) , footballer
Scott Brown (born 1985) , footballer
Shauna Coxsey (born 1993) , professional rock climber
Robert Done (1904 ? 1982) , footballer
Ray Dutton (born 1945) , rugby league player
Jack Fish (1880 ? 1940) , rugby league player
Samuel Houghton (1870 ? 1920) , rugby union and rugby league player
Michael Jackson (born 1973) , footballer
Kenny Lunt (born 1979) , footballer
James McNulty (born 1985) , footballer
Dick Padbury (1886 ? unknown) , rugby league player
Harry Speakman (1864 ? 1915) , rugby union player
Robin Reid (born 1971) , boxer

Lorna Webb (born 1983) , professional cyclist