

Birmingham City Council's Levelling Up Strategy

Prosperity and opportunity for all



Levelling up Birmingham – Boosting the UK

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This is Birmingham's contribution to the government's goal of levelling up and a voice from the heart of the country



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Contents

	Foreword	p2
1	Summary: Levelling up and the Birmingham opportunity	p4
	Why Birmingham	
	Defining levelling up	
	Our vision and objectives	
	Our strategy	
	Our levelling up offer to government	
2	Birmingham City Council's Levelling Up Strategy	p12
	What levelling up is and why it matters	
	Our current need for levelling up	
	Comparing Birmingham with other cities	
	Inequalities within Birmingham	
	Our challenges, opportunities and threats	
	Birmingham's strategic response	
	The strategy	
	Our offer to central government	
	Value to be delivered	
3	Appendices	p44
	Key indicators	
	Existing plans and relationship with levelling up	
	Case study: Three Cities Retrofit	

Foreword



Councillor Ian Ward
Leader of Birmingham City Council

I am pleased to introduce **Prosperity and opportunity for all: Birmingham City Council's levelling up strategy**.

Birmingham is on the cusp of great things with exceptional **opportunities** for growth and economic development. The Commonwealth Games is less than nine months away and HS2's arrival towards the end of the decade provides long-term momentum for the city. Prior to COVID-19, the city was growing faster than the rest of the country, with record levels of inward investment and a pipeline of strategic sites for housing and employment. Birmingham presents a great investment opportunity.

We must use the opportunity of growth to meet the **challenge** of levelling up: over 40% of Birmingham's children live in relative poverty, the rate of unemployment is currently well above the national average and significant and ingrained inequalities exist across the city. Too many people and communities are excluded from the benefits of our economy, often through deeply embedded inequalities that have been starkly highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The size of our city means the number of people facing disadvantages and who would benefit from levelling up is significant.

We are in a time of great **change**. We are recovering from the pandemic and previously hidden impacts of Brexit are coming to the fore. Climate change poses the greatest threat of our time. The drive to reduce carbon emissions and the ongoing digital revolution will dramatically change the nature of our economy and the skills required to keep it growing. It means that we must **think** and **act** differently, shifting our emphasis from crisis to early intervention and prevention, investing in people and places and empowering communities by creating the conditions for success.

Our vision of levelling up is rooted in the belief that we must encourage growth and stimulate investment in our city, whilst at the same time making Birmingham a **fairer and more equal** place. Economic growth makes it possible to tackle deep seated inequalities by giving more people access to good jobs and higher incomes. Levelling up must mean our citizens share in the economic benefits of Birmingham's development and live longer, healthier and happier lives. This is a vision rooted in the potential of Birmingham's people and a commitment to empowering citizens to build our future.

To achieve this will take a more strategic, joined up, long term and sustainable approach with leadership to bring together Birmingham City Council with its partners to make it happen. It can only be achieved by improving public services, renewing our local centres, boosting skill levels, enhancing connectivity and infrastructure, building more affordable homes, creating more green jobs, challenging discrimination and making the most of the tremendous diversity of our city.

This strategy is an important step in setting our ambitions to level up Birmingham. But we cannot achieve this alone. We will engage and involve citizens and organisations to develop these ideas and reshape how we act together. We are committed to working constructively and collaboratively with central government and our key stakeholders. More resources and devolved powers will be needed, alongside stronger partnerships, joint ventures and commitments at scale and pace. This will unlock a golden decade of opportunity for our citizens with the impact felt for generations to come.

I hope that you will join us on this journey.



1

Summary: Levelling up and the Birmingham *opportunity*



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Why Birmingham

Birmingham must be an essential part of any successful strategy for levelling up the country.

As the **country's second largest city** with a population of 1.15 million people¹, Birmingham has the potential for a golden decade of opportunity ahead.

Birmingham is at the **epicentre of exceptional opportunities** with the Commonwealth Games taking place next year, which we bid for and won. The Games provide unique prospects for our city in hosting the world's third largest sporting event and through its legacy programme. HS2 is already bringing investment and jobs now, but when it opens it will deliver a huge economic boost for the city and set a long-term positive direction. There are major developments that Birmingham City Council is bringing forward with partners including the £1.9bn Smithfield programme, the 42-acre Digbeth development, the Perry Barr plan, Peddimore and the Birmingham Health Innovation Campus.

We are a **global city** with an economy larger than some countries. We are the nation within a city and the youngest and most diverse city, which is our strength and foundation for innovation. This combination of space for development, growing connectivity, and high levels of diversity and creative energy is a compelling argument for private sector investment. It also means that current and future public investment in Birmingham is working with the grain of powerful economic forces. It provides the foundation for levelling up in an economically and fiscally sustainable manner.

Levelling up is both possible at scale in Birmingham and is an imperative, to overcome **widespread, deep-rooted and long-term inequalities** and enable everyone in Birmingham to share in the opportunities.



Birmingham’s **size and scale can make a substantial difference nationally** in the delivery of levelling up. We have examined the disparities that exist between people, places and communities in Birmingham and elsewhere in the country to develop a set of key indicators to underpin our approach. The case for levelling up in Birmingham is clear and significant as it is currently the third most deprived core city in England², among the least prosperous 10% of local authorities in the UK³ and 90% of wards in Birmingham are more deprived than the national average⁴. We are the country’s youngest city yet more than 40% of our children are living in relative poverty⁵. There is a chasm of more than a decade’s difference between the life expectancy of the poorest areas of our city and the most affluent.

The city has been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating these inequalities. Birmingham City Council has spent additional resources in response while at the same time has experienced reduced levels of income, which has added further financial pressure when needs have increased.

Birmingham is the country’s second largest city and at the centre of the West Midlands with a significant portion of its population. Levelling up the country, must include the West Midlands with Birmingham at its heart. Birmingham City Council therefore welcomes the government’s commitment to levelling up and seeks to work on a comprehensive and ambitious programme with government and in particular the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

¹ Population estimates, Office for National Statistics (2020)
² Based on the English Indices of Deprivation which provide a measure of relative deprivation at small local areas across England based on seven different domains, or facets, of deprivation and ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). They are produced by the DLUHC (formerly MHCLG)
³ UK Prosperity Index, Centre for UK Prosperity (2021)
⁴ English Indices of Deprivation 2019, MHCLG (2020)
⁵ Social Metrics Commission (2020)

Birmingham’s opportunity to level up

- 1.15 million people, UK’s second largest city – an at scale opportunity
- Active council approach to attract investment to level up – record levels secured
- Unique opportunities including HS2 and Commonwealth Games
- Leading inclusive growth and place approaches

Significant need in the city for levelling up

- 3rd most deprived core city
- More than 40% children in relative poverty
- Decade gap in life expectancy between poorest and most affluent areas
- 90% of wards more deprived than national average

Defining levelling up

There is no commonly agreed definition of levelling up. We have sought to outline what it means for Birmingham. 'Levelling up' is not a new idea for us. We can trace our radical heritage of improving the physical environment, public services and people's prospects and living standards back to the 'civic gospel' and leadership of Joseph Chamberlain. Today, levelling up remains at the core of our ambitions for the city, we are actively levelling up, and Birmingham will be even bolder in its approach.



For Birmingham, levelling up is about **'people powered change'** interdependent with **inclusive growth** to deliver **improved outcomes on key measures of economic and human development**:

- Increasing the pace and scale of growth and embedding in an inclusive and sustainable way so all people and places share in the benefits including through a just transition to net zero
- A joined-up focus on people and places while bringing together organisations that can make a difference to build progress sustainably
- A bottom-up empowering of communities and citizens to improve their quality of life and their communities – not top-down, one-size-fits-all solutions
- Improving public services and social infrastructure and enhancing transport, digital and green infrastructure; and
- Moving the dial on the outcomes and opportunities for all citizens and all parts of the city, addressing spatial disparities and long-standing structural inequalities.



Our vision and objectives

Our vision for levelling up is to increase growth and harness it to create a fairer, stronger city, where all citizens share in the benefits, including through a just transition to net zero, where our citizens live longer, healthier and happier lives with opportunities to shape their own lives and communities, and we overcome long-standing inequalities such as child poverty.

This means developing places where all residents regardless of their background, and especially those most in need, have the capabilities and access to shape and benefit from a good education, skills progression, fulfilling well-paid jobs, affordable and high-quality housing, effective public services, better health outcomes, high-quality and connected physical and digital infrastructure and a living environment, rich in culture, amenities and green open spaces.



Building Healthier Lives
Awards

**Heartlands Hospital and
Birmingham Chest Clinic**
Site Final 2019

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Our strategy

Levelling up is woven through our core purpose and we are developing a series of key approaches to support this.

We are developing **an integrated placed-based levelling up model** through the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy. East Birmingham, with a population of around 250,000, is larger than many cities and towns and has the highest levels of deprivation in our city⁶. This place-based approach involves bringing together local and regional bodies and national government, linking together funding where this is possible and developing projects to tackle the challenges. The focus includes addressing poor health, poor educational attainment, low skills and incomes, congestion and air pollution and bringing forward new homes, employment sites and community assets.

We are embedding an **early intervention and prevention approach** to empower people to achieve a better quality of life, build resilience and access learning and economic opportunities. Through our 'prevention first' pathways commissioning model and 'neighbourhood networks' we are changing the design of services. We are moving from a 'top-down' and addressing at the point of acute need, to instead working at an early stage with citizens on co-designing to prevent crises from happening. It will help address deep-rooted issues, secure better outcomes, and enable citizens to have more control of their lives. The approach, embedded initially in adult social care, has begun to see results with bed-based admissions to care homes reducing by 20% since April 2018 and a 5% increase in independent living following an initial care assessment. The approach is saving costs to the collective public purse as crisis interventions are much more expensive. In social care, since 2018 costs of more £27m have been avoided.

We have been applying the approach to vulnerable children, young people and their families too with the council funding targeted support services through voluntary, community and faith groups, a resilience fund for vulnerable families, an advice and guidance service, and additional mental health provision for young people aged 11 and above, as COVID-19 has led to a rise in mental health issues among young people. Results have included lower rates of children needing to go into care compared to other core cities⁷.

Our goal is to **drive growth across the city**, and we recognise that this is a critical driver of levelling up as it spurs sustainable jobs and business opportunities. We have been leading activity to secure investment and foster business growth bringing forward large development programmes. Connected to this is our wider **commitment to inclusive growth and community wealth building** to enable the benefits of growth to reach every corner of the city. This includes refocusing our procurement contracts on local businesses to help drive social value and retain wealth and employment in the city and to work with anchor organisations so public resources support local economic activity. Our approach will mean getting more from our assets, including land and property, to support local neighbourhoods and to provide the conditions for local business to thrive. We also are developing programmes to raise skill levels and connect people to opportunities.

With Birmingham leading work to bring back jobs and grow economic activity – and with the opportunities ahead – **public investment in Birmingham has a significant multiplier effect** and represents good value for money for public investment for levelling up and which can join with that of the private sector.

Our approach to levelling up will also involve challenging the **deeply ingrained structural inequalities** that determine the life chances available to different people and which creates divides across communities. We seek to take these inequalities head-on including how the council leads by example as an employer and how we develop a cohort of future leaders to ensure consistently diverse civic governance.

We work closely with our partners across the West Midlands including with the Combined Authority, to invest and develop the **transport, digital and green infrastructure as well as the skills and innovation programmes** to boost our productivity and close the gap with London and the South-East. Growth with development the opposite of a zero-sum game. The success of Birmingham will generate a stronger regional economy and opportunities for levelling up way beyond the city boundaries, across the region and country at large.

⁶ Indices of Deprivation, Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (2019)

⁷ DfE, Children in Care

Our levelling up offer to government

We will put our energy and resources into levelling up. As well as significant city budgets, we control extensive and valuable physical and intangible assets. We have skilled people, valuable relationships, unique data, and the ability to convene partners. This document is an initial strategy and we will now seek deeper engagement with partners, including central government, in the design and delivery of the next steps including specific actions, funding and financing, responsibilities and timelines.

We will take a leadership role in creating insight and understanding to inform strategies, plans and action to tackle the causes of deep-seated challenges, and we will share our understanding freely with partners and our diverse communities. Part of the strategy, and laid out further on in this document, involves an assessment of the key indicators that benchmarks the council's need for levelling. Furthermore, we will involve people in our work so that we understand better and generate deeper ownership of our collective efforts.

We must also recognise and overcome the constraints that hold us back from what we can fully achieve. Our levelling up approach draws on our existing plans but seeks a step-change and acceleration above and beyond what we can do currently. We are now seeking central government and partner involvement in the support and development of five **'Levelling up Accelerators'** which will help make a deeper and more rapid advance in levelling up.

Birmingham City Council wants to be a strong partner for central government in the design and delivery of the levelling up programme nationally. The city provides a unique opportunity, given its strong economic fundamentals, its size and scale, and the level of need – and can and should be central to the government's plans.

Birmingham's five 'Levelling Up Accelerators' that central government should support

- 1**  Support **long-term, single pot funding and devolved powers** for the city to deliver greater levelling up outcomes and enable invest-to-save investment to be deployed alongside
- 2**  Back our **integrated local place delivery model demonstrator, the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy**, covering 250,000 people to tackle deep levels of deprivation
- 3**  Harness our **early intervention and prevention model** to assist the most disadvantaged citizens and move from dealing with crises to co-designed support and services to stop these arising
- 4**  Deliver **green and digital infrastructure** including a comprehensive green, reliable, frequent and affordable transport network
- 5**  Back an **at scale housing retrofit** across the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton to tackle carbon emissions and create jobs in areas that need it most

The scale of the potential prize is considerable. If we can level up Birmingham so that economic activity, unemployment and skills reach the England average, this could add an estimated £9bn to Birmingham's economy each year, as well as 74,928 more residents obtaining employment, including 53,458 residents becoming economically active, 21,470 residents who were already economically active moving into employment and a £3.3bn boost to average earnings per year⁸.

Increasing employment, wage levels and good quality jobs alongside skills progression to obtain them and connections to opportunities, as well as increased access to and availability and quality of public services included those focused on families and children, will help address the ingrained structural inequalities which sees more than 40% of our children live in relative poverty. Reducing this level to the England average would dramatically improve the life chances of children in what is the country's youngest city.

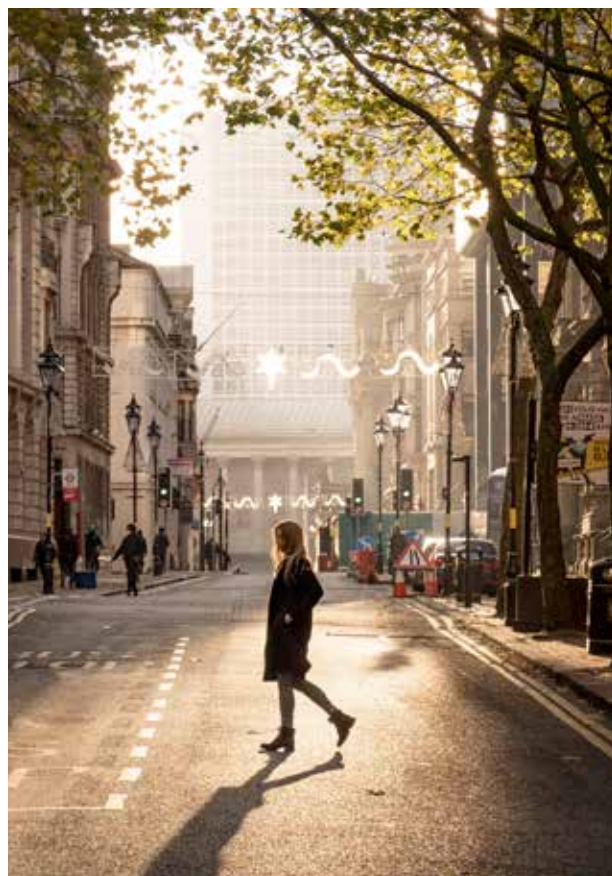
Our approach to levelling up will help us achieve our goal of a Birmingham that is Bolder, Brighter, Prosperous, Healthy, Green, Inclusive and Safe.

⁸ All estimates are based on data for the population aged 16-64 years from the ONS APS for January 2020 – December 2020, data for GVA per hour worked from the ONS for 2019 and average gross weekly earnings (residence based) from ASHE for 2019.



2

Birmingham City Council's levelling up *strategy*



What levelling up is and why it matters

Birmingham City Council is committed to addressing the high levels of deprivation and persistent inequalities, between people, places and communities in the city. It welcomes the government's commitment to levelling up every part of the UK and the creation of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). This document sets out what levelling up means for Birmingham and explains the council's vision, objectives and approach to help deliver it.

No commonly understood or agreed definition of levelling up exists. For Birmingham City Council, levelling up is about **'people powered change'** interdependent with **inclusive growth** to deliver **improved outcomes on key measures of economic and human development** and involves:

- Increasing the pace and scale of growth and embedding in an inclusive and sustainable way so all people and places share in the benefits including through a just transition to net zero
- A joined-up focus on people and places while bringing together organisations that can make a difference to build progress sustainably
- A bottom-up empowering of communities and citizens to improve their quality of life and their communities – not top-down, one-size-fits-all solutions
- Improving public services and social infrastructure and enhancing transport, digital and green infrastructure; and
- Moving the dial on the outcomes and opportunities for all citizens and all parts of the city, addressing spatial disparities at all levels and long-standing structural inequalities.



The definition is applicable to all places and groups of people, not just in Birmingham, and is aligned with the definition of inclusive growth used in our East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy, which connects generating economic growth and tackling inequality such as high levels of child poverty.

This approach means developing places where all residents regardless of their background, and especially those most in need, have the capabilities and access to live longer, healthier and happier lives with excellent opportunities to shape their own lives and that of their communities, and to shape and benefit from a good education, skills progression, fulfilling well-paid jobs, affordable and high-quality housing, effective public services, better health outcomes, high-quality and connected physical and digital infrastructure and a living environment, rich in culture, amenities and green open spaces.

Our current need for levelling up

We have examined the disparities that exist between people, places and communities in Birmingham and elsewhere in the country. No single measure of the need for levelling up is comprehensive so we have benchmarked Birmingham using several overall indices of 'need' and specific indicators underpinning our definition of levelling up (see appendix for complete list).

Whichever view we take, we see that Birmingham faces persistent and stark inequalities and high levels of deprivation. Given the size of Birmingham, the size of need in terms of numbers, is also substantial. Birmingham's poorer outcomes relative to other cities is not a recent phenomenon: the disparities have existed for long periods of time.



Comparing Birmingham with other cities

The multifaceted nature of what we believe levelling up should be about means that no single measure is ideal. We have taken a holistic approach broken into two parts:

- We have benchmarked Birmingham using several overarching indices; and
- We have analysed indicators of the specific components implied by our levelling up definition.

When comparing Birmingham with other cities, using a wide range of relevant indices and measurement indicators, two key conclusions emerged:

- Birmingham is among the most deprived local authorities in England, and has been for sustained periods of time; and
- Birmingham's under-performance spans across a wide range of indicators implied by our definition of levelling up, such as education, skills and the living environment.

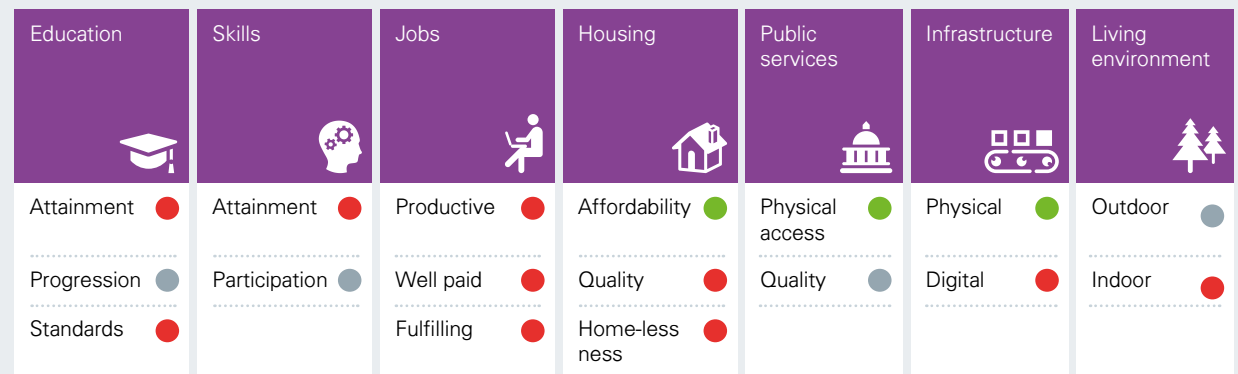
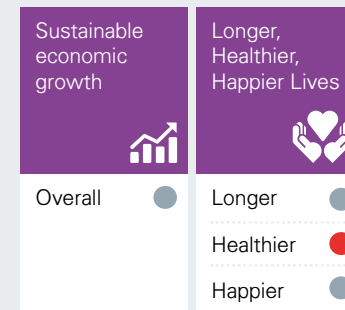
Several indices measure Birmingham's overall 'need' for levelling up and all show Birmingham's poorer outcomes **relative to other cities across the country**:

- **Birmingham is the most deprived local authority in the West Midlands and the third most deprived core city in England** – behind Liverpool and Manchester – based on the government's latest (2019) English Indices of Deprivation⁹. Birmingham is poorer than most local authorities in England in some of the priority elements of levelling up – notably employment, education and skills, and health.
- **Birmingham is also among the least prosperous 10% of local authorities in the UK** according to the Legatum Institute's 2021 Prosperity Index¹⁰. Society inclusiveness and people empowerment are key areas in which Birmingham falls behind, but on some aspects of the economy – such as infrastructure and enterprise – Birmingham performs better than other parts of the UK.
- **Birmingham performs poorly relative to the rest of the UK on key aspects of wellbeing**, according to the 2020 UK Thriving Places Index¹¹. On a wide range of indicators of local conditions – capturing people, place, health, education and the local economy – Birmingham residents are amongst the least well off in the country.
- **Birmingham has worse education and skill indicators than the England average**¹² and Birmingham residents are less likely to work in productive and fulfilling jobs compared to the average person in England; and
- **Birmingham's under-performance relative to other cities is not a recent phenomenon**. Disparities have existed for long periods of time. Birmingham's relative position compared to other local authorities has worsened in the last decade, by two places on the English Indices of Deprivation and by ten places on the Legatum Institute Prosperity Index. Birmingham's population has increased over the period, with the overall quantum of need increasing.

Figure 1 opposite summarises Birmingham’s position compared to England on each element:

- How far Birmingham is a place where all residents share in the creation and benefits of sustainable economic growth and live longer, healthier and happier lives is in the first row; and
- The underlying elements which influence the city’s ability to achieve this ranging from education through to the living environment are captured in the second row.

Figure 1: Key priorities for levelling up, based on our definition of levelling up – RAG (Red, amber, green) ratings to benchmark performance compared to England






⁸ The English Indices of Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (the most deprived area) to 32,844 (the least deprived area).

⁹ The UK Prosperity Index has been developed to help identify what action will help to unlock prosperity in the UK. The Index consists of 3 domains and 12 pillars. Pillars include inclusive societies (e.g. safety, governance); open economics (e.g. infrastructure, economy); and, empowered people (e.g. health, education). The higher the ranking, the stronger the performance of that local authority for the pillar or element, when compared with another authority lower down the rankings.

¹⁰ Five domains capture multiple indicators: Place and Environment; Mental and Physical Health; Education and Learning; Work and Local Economy; People and Community.

¹¹ % of adults with less than NVO2 level qualifications: Birmingham 24.2%, England = 21.8% (Annual Population Survey, ONS: 2020)

-  All indicators are more than 5% worse than England average
-  All indicators are more than 5% better than England average
-  Mixed – mix of relationships to England average

Key conclusions include:

- Birmingham under-performs England on most indicators related to education and skills.** The average child or teenager in Birmingham has fewer opportunities to go to a school ranked ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ as our schools have a relatively lower standard: in March 2021, 81% of state funded schools were ranked good or outstanding, 5% lower than the England average¹³. A teenager is also less likely to complete at least two A-levels¹⁴ and the average young person in Birmingham is less likely to obtain good grades at GCSE and to participate in lifelong learning¹⁵.
- Children in Birmingham experience poorer social outcomes compared to the England average.** Nearly twice as many children in Birmingham are born into poor families than the England average and more than 40% of children in Birmingham live in relative poverty¹⁶.
- Birmingham residents are less likely to work in productive and fulfilling jobs compared to the average person in England.** The proportion of residents in Birmingham who would like to have a job but are unable to find one – measured by the unemployment rate – and the proportion of workless households, is much higher in Birmingham than in England¹⁷. Birmingham residents who are employed are less likely to work in higher skilled jobs (i.e. managerial, professional or technical occupations)¹⁸: around 42% of residents in Birmingham work in high skill occupations compared to 50% across England as a whole. This feeds through to productivity and average wages¹⁹.
- Birmingham’s workforce is relatively low skilled:** in 2020, 75.2% of working age residents were qualified to NVO2 and above (a commonly used proxy for a capable workforce), 2.9 percentage points less than Great Britain as a whole²⁰.
- Birmingham has relatively high rates of economic inactivity and lower employment rates:** almost 50,000 more people aged 16-64 would be economically active in Birmingham if we matched the average rate across Great Britain²¹. Birmingham’s unemployment rate of 10.1% between July 2020 and June 2021 is double the England average of 5.2%²². Productivity is £30.6 per hour worked, 17% less than the average across England²³.
- Residents have poorer health outcomes in Birmingham than England averages²⁴;** and Birmingham has relatively high rates of homelessness: in 2019, almost 3 in every 100,000 households were homeless, over 50% more than the England average²⁵.
- Birmingham performs better than the English average in terms of its physical infrastructure,** supporting the positive conclusions brought out by the UK Prosperity Index. The average resident in Birmingham has relatively better access to high quality roads and timely bus services and lives relatively closer to primary schools²⁶. Birmingham, however, still lags on measures of digital connectivity²⁷.



- ¹³ % of state-funded schools ranked good or outstanding: Birmingham 81.0%, England = 86.0% (Ofsted, 2021)
- ¹⁴ A Level and Other 16 to 18 Results, Explore Education Statistics, Department of Education (2021)
- ¹⁵ Key Stage 4 Performance, Explore Education Statistics, Department of Education (2021)
- ¹⁶ DWP and HMRC data
- ¹⁷ Annual Population Survey
- ¹⁸ Annual Population Survey
- ¹⁹ Annual Population Survey
- ²⁰ Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics (2021)
- ²¹ Economic inactivity: Birmingham = 28.0%, England = 21.2% (Annual Population Survey, ONS: Jun 2021); Employment rate: Birmingham = 64.8%, England = 74.4% (Annual Population Survey, ONS: 2021)
- ²² Annual Population Survey, ONS, Jul 2020-Jun 2021
- ²³ Sub-regional Productivity, Office for National Statistics
- ²⁴ Infant mortality rate: Birmingham 7/1,000, England = 3.9/1,000% (2017-2019) Public Health England, ONS and Under 75 mortality rate from all causes: Birmingham worse than England for: cardiovascular diseases, heart disease, stroke, cancer, liver disease, respiratory disease, and, injuries (2017-2019) Public Health England, ONS
- ²⁵ Homelessness rate: number of households assessed as homeless, per 100,000 households: Birmingham 2.81, England = 1.85 (2019) Prosperity index
- ²⁶ UK Prosperity Index; DfT; English Indices of Deprivation
- ²⁷ Birmingham nearly 10% worse for digital connectedness and people using the internet, mobile phone usage, unbanked residents and 4G availability Birmingham = 59.6, England = 68.2 UK Prosperity Index, Centre for UK Prosperity (2021)

Inequalities within Birmingham

Although it is not a perfect matrix and recognising the limitations that exist with the underlying data²⁸ the English Indices of Deprivation provides the clearest picture of the place-based disparities within Birmingham across seven ‘domains’ and incorporates a broad range of indicators²⁹. The breadth of the indicators included, and their granularity means it is a strong source. We analyse the English Indices of Deprivation across Birmingham’s 69 wards.

We can see that stark inequalities exist when we compare people and places within Birmingham particularly for employment, and education and skills:

- **Widespread deprivation exists across the city relative to England as a whole.** The need for levelling up is broad – see Figure 2 below, where the darker colours are wards that are significantly more deprived than other parts of England. Overall, 90% of wards in Birmingham are more deprived than the national average³⁰. Outcomes in the most affluent wards are in line with, or even exceed, the England average, while the poorest wards fall far behind.
- **The wards of East Birmingham are more deprived than other parts of the city, in all dimensions relevant for levelling up.** Residents generally have shorter lives, lower qualifications, and higher rates of unemployment compared to those living in other parts of the city. This is a decade’s difference between the life expectancy of the poorest areas of our city and the most affluent³¹. The scale is such that even if action were taken to level up East Birmingham relative to other parts of the city, Birmingham would still be in the 10% most deprived local authorities in England.
- **Health outcomes and the quality of the living environment can be improved in most parts of Birmingham, even in the relatively less deprived wards.** As illustrated in Figure 3, for these domains – which include mental and physical health measures, as well as housing and air quality indicators – 90% of wards are more deprived than the national average. There is significant housing need with more than 19,000 people on the housing register in Birmingham, higher than the level of around 14,000 two decades ago.
- **Many children in Birmingham are born into poor families.** Over 30% of children under the age of 16 in Birmingham are born into absolute low-income families, compared to 16% in England³². This has implications for their wellbeing, livelihoods and educational attainment.
- **Children living in Birmingham experience poorer social outcomes compared to the England average.** A high proportion of children born in Birmingham do not survive past their first birthday, almost double the national average. Children that do survive and grow up in Birmingham are likely to experience poorer attainment at school³³, face higher rates of obesity, and have low sexual health awareness³⁴. Our residents have poorer health outcomes: between 2017 and 2019³⁵, the healthy life in Birmingham expectancy was 4-5 years lower than the England average, and 30% more people had work limiting illnesses or disabilities in 2016³⁶.
- **Large within city inequalities exist for education, skills and training** (Figure 3). Nearly 28% of Birmingham’s wards – largely those in Sutton Coldfield and some southern pockets of the city – experience relatively low levels of deprivation on this domain compared to England. This is also true, although to a lesser extent, for income and employment. Residents in these areas generally have much better educational attainment, skills and labour market outcomes than the poorest parts of the city. Children, young people and ethnic minorities face large disparities with regards to social and economic outcomes.

- **There are large ethnic inequalities in labour market outcomes in Birmingham.**

White residents are less likely to be unemployed, and more likely to be actively looking for work, than those from non-white ethnic groups. This has been true historically, but even more so because of COVID-19. For example, the 16+ unemployment rate for ethnic minorities was 16.1% between July 2020 – June 2021, compared to just 5.6% for the white ethnic group³⁷.

²⁸ Some indicators date back to 2015/16 and not all relevant to our definition of levelling up
²⁹ Domains include income deprivation; employment deprivation; education, skills and training deprivation; health deprivation and disability; crime; living environment
³⁰ English Indices of Deprivation (2019); MHCLG (2020)
³¹ East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)
³² DWP and HMRC data
³³ 16-19 attainment – % of students achieving at least 2 A levels – is lower than England average
³⁴ STI diagnoses and the % of teenage mothers in Birmingham are higher than the England average, according to Public Health England
³⁵ Infant mortality rate: Birmingham 7/1,000, England = 3.9/1,000% (2017-2019) Public Health England, ONS and Under 75 mortality rate from all causes: Birmingham worse than England for: cardiovascular diseases, heart disease, stroke, cancer, liver disease, respiratory disease, and, injuries (2017-2019) Public Health England, ONS
³⁶ Public Health England (2017-19)
³⁷ Annual Population Survey

Figure 2: Overall deprivation across Birmingham compared to England as a whole (English Indices of Deprivation)

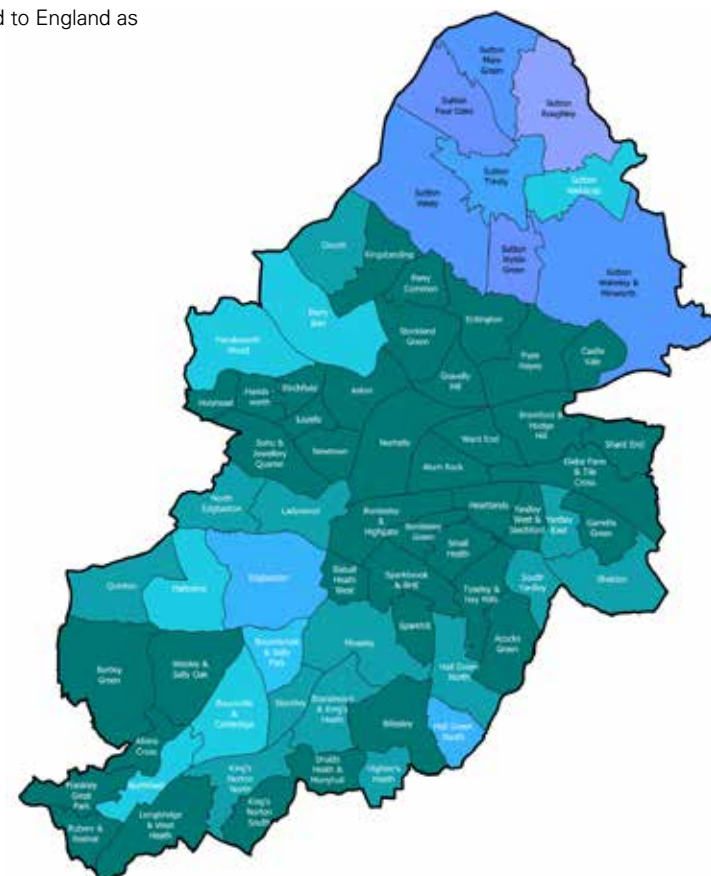
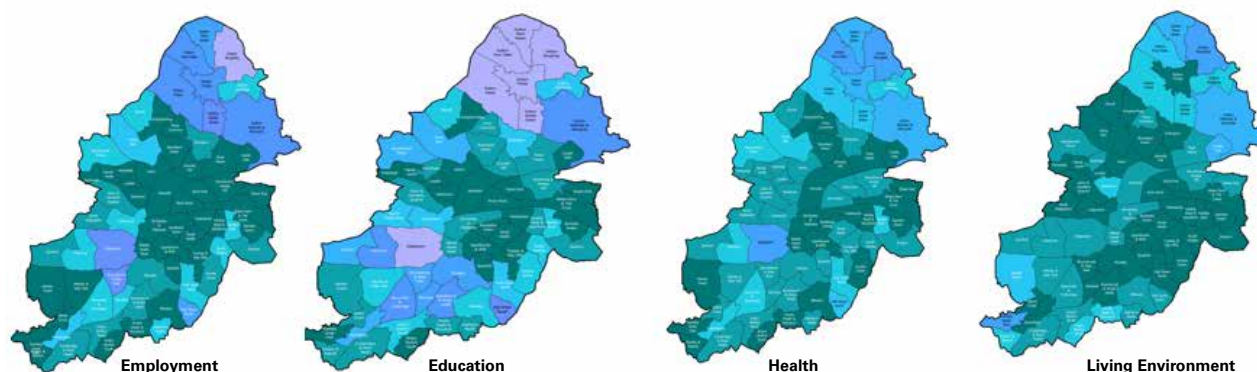


Figure 3: Deprivation (English Indices of Deprivation) - Employment, Education, Health, Living Environment - across Birmingham compared to England as a whole



BE BOLD BE BIRMINGHAM



Our challenges, opportunities and threats

Grand challenges

The levelling up key indicators and our strategy for levelling up in Birmingham are rooted in addressing five key challenges that we face, what we call the 'grand challenges':

- Boosting skills, employment and the local economy
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Strengthening community resilience and cohesion
- Addressing the climate emergency; and
- Creating fairer and better opportunities for children and young people.

All are interconnected in the tackling of the variance in opportunities and outcomes and specifically in how we deal with 'structural inequalities.' The nature and scale of the challenges facing Birmingham demonstrate the fundamental and transformational changes needed across the city if it is to level up. Our grand challenges shape our Corporate Plan and other plans and strategies and our work with partners through the Birmingham City Board.

Looking ahead, Birmingham has some significant opportunities which we want to capitalise on, but we also want to mitigate the threats that exist. Some are the result of 'megatrends' which affect places other than Birmingham.

Long term impact of COVID-19

We are mindful of the potential longer-term implications of COVID-19 for health, education and the economy including the rise in inequalities that it has provoked. We know that COVID-19 has the potential to leave long lasting impacts on our economy if investment and innovation are deferred and businesses capital and knowledge are lost due to business failures.

Birmingham's economy has been harder hit by the impact of COVID-19 than the UK. Research by Oxford Economics and the Centre for Progressive Policy Research indicates that we are more vulnerable than other areas due to the concentration of exposed sectors such as hospitality, retail and manufacturing³⁸. Before the pandemic, Birmingham was a key destination for tourists and at the heart of the region's live events sector. The visitor economy, which supported 76,000 jobs³⁹, was closed longer than many others, and 70% of cultural and hospitality staff are estimated to have been furloughed during the pandemic⁴⁰. Retail and leisure employed 133,000 workers and saw around half furloughed in the pandemic⁴¹. The aviation sector has been particularly hard hit by the pandemic, which has a concentration in Birmingham.

Whilst many businesses benefitted from central government support, around 10,000 to 15,000 small and medium-sized enterprises missed out.

In terms of unemployment claimants, in Birmingham these increased by over 35,000 (+73%) between February 2020, just before the pandemic commenced and May 2021, where it reached its highest level since 1987⁴². The impacts have fallen hardest on unemployment hotspots, areas of high deprivation, and those residents with lower skill levels, young people and Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents⁴³. The value of people's skills and knowledge fades due to sustained unemployment. In addition, the disruption to education and changing education and training choices by employers and individuals because of COVID-19 have the potential for long term constraints to the recovery and thereby levelling up.

Pressure on the public finances

COVID-19 has increased pressure on the public finances. It has also placed significant pressure on local authorities which were already under strain before COVID-19 and we were asked to make a major contribution to the national response while continuing to deliver existing services as needs increased too. Central government grants covered some but not all additional costs. Birmingham City Council has also experienced a cumulative fall of £730 million in funding for public services over the decade⁴⁴, which impacts the ability to respond to growing needs as well as the scope to address long-standing inequalities. The wider context is that the broader public sector in the city is also under pressure providing further challenges to public services and addressing needs.

Long term impact of EU exit

The impact of the UK's exit from the EU is likely to be felt for longer than that of COVID-19 because it is a long-term process rather than a single event. As the Birmingham Economic Review outlines, manufacturing is 30% more concentrated in the city-region than nationally and underpins the export base which is impacted more heavily by EU exit⁴⁵. The Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce found that nearly half of exporters had faced difficulty from the changes from leaving the EU. Automotive, aerospace, pharmaceuticals and chemicals sectors are particularly affected in the city.

³⁸ COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

³⁹ Birmingham Economic Review, Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce and City-REDI (2019)

⁴⁰ COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

⁴¹ COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

⁴² COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

⁴³ NOMIS

⁴⁴ Birmingham City Council's Delivery Plan and appendices report to Cabinet November 2020

⁴⁵ Birmingham Economic Review 2021, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce (2021)

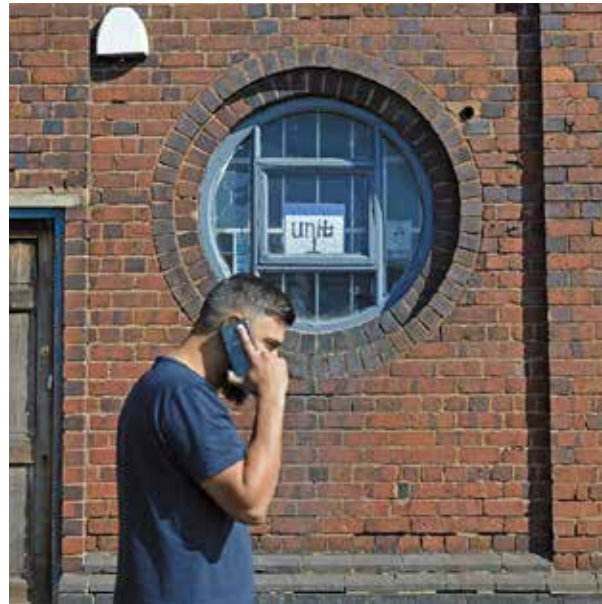
The 'new economy'- the climate imperative and digital transformation

Even before COVID-19, a 'new economy' was emerging driven by digital technologies, the need to decarbonise and the growth of more purpose driven businesses.

Birmingham City Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019 with a commitment to reach net zero by 2030, based on a 'just transition' that reduces inequalities in the city. It means embedding climate action in our decision-making process so that all service areas contribute, and it will require major, rapid systems changes to transition to a low carbon economy and deliver the jobs needed to sustain our economy. Some action lies outside the direct control of the council, so we are looking to find new ways to work with our partners to drive change.

We will not do this through incremental changes or nudging people to make slightly different choices. We need to be bold. The scale of the changes needed to achieve decarbonisation is unprecedented. As one of the birthplaces of the Industrial Revolution and a global player in the development of green technology, we want to and are well placed to lead this new Green Industrial Revolution to deliver clean and inclusive growth.

Digital technologies have proved to be invaluable during the pandemic as well as potential catalysts of change in the way we live and work in future. COVID-19 has accelerated aspects of the digital transformation but have also highlighted the significant digital divide⁴⁶. Digital change poses challenges to our economy with nearly one quarter of jobs in Birmingham (23.2%) in occupations that are likely to shrink by 2030⁴⁷. However, adapting to the challenges represents an opportunity to make Birmingham's economy more resilient if digitally upskilled and enhance our high-growth sectors. Many businesses need to transition too, to realise the opportunities too in the future digital economy.



Significant local opportunities

We also have two significant but distinct opportunities in Birmingham.

Building on recent record levels of investment, HS2 will catalyse further physical development and growth in the next decade:

- Two new world class, high speed rail stations at Curzon Street and Interchange will be built creating high speed rail links accessible by two million people in the West Midlands
- More than 100,000 new jobs will be generated⁴⁸
- The development of more than 200,000 new homes will be stimulated⁴⁹
- New high skilled industries will be attracted to the Midlands as part of expected inward investment of more than £10bn⁵⁰; and
- New development zones will be created to drive the economy forward.

Birmingham's position as the host city for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, which the council bid for and won, offers important opportunities:

- Delivering an unforgettable Games to showcase the best of Birmingham and the West Midlands to the Commonwealth and the world with more than one billion eyes are expected to be on us
- Delivering a carbon neutral Games, and catalysing change and aspiration within the city and beyond including with new facilities and jobs; and
- Bringing people together to embrace and champion the youth, diversity, humanity and pride of the region and the Commonwealth.



The council supports and is taking forward the Games legacy programme which will:

- Boost investment in Birmingham, creating thousands of jobs and become a world-leader in hosting international events
- Increase community, social and economic opportunities such as apprenticeships leading to a better skilled workforce and creating thousands of volunteering roles that will build capacity for future events
- Strengthen capacity building and social capital across communities
- Engage every child and young person in Birmingham in the Games, including all 400+ schools in the city
- Deliver world-class sports venues and improve facilities to kickstart an accessible fitness and wellbeing boom
- Open our city to the world and connect our communities during and after the Games
- Launch an era of green growth to support Birmingham's goal to be a carbon neutral city by 2030 through thousands of new sustainable homes and green transport links, and enhancing the natural environment including through better and more sustainable public spaces; and
- Celebrate the wonderful heritage of Birmingham and the wider region and promote the city as world-class destination for tourism across the West Midlands, UK and beyond.



Birmingham has a legacy programme to maximise the benefits of hosting the Commonwealth Games and brings new opportunities and supports levelling up

⁴⁶ For instance, even prior to the pandemic, only 51% of households with earnings between £6,000-£10,000 had access to the internet at home, compared to 99% of households with earnings of over £40,001

⁴⁷ Centre for Cities, Cities Outlook, 2018

⁴⁸ HS2: Realising the Potential, Department for Transport (2018)

⁴⁹ HS2: Realising the Potential, Department for Transport (2018)

⁵⁰ Investment Prospectus, West Midlands Combined Authority (2020)

Birmingham's strategic response

The council's vision and objectives

The council's bold and ambitious vision for levelling up Birmingham is to:

Increase growth

and harness it to create a

fairer, stronger city

where all citizens share in the benefits, including through a just transition to net zero, where our citizens live longer

healthier and happier

lives with opportunities to shape their own lives and communities and long-standing inequalities are overcome such as child poverty.










Objectives which underpin the vision are aligned to the key elements of our definition of levelling up and the key indicators:

- **Sustainable economic growth:** Increase the GVA per hour work and increase the levels of economic activity and reduce income deprivation
- **Longer, healthier, happier lives:** Increase healthy life expectancy, life expectancy and life satisfaction indices
- **Education:** Increase the proportion of children in Birmingham attending good or outstanding schools and increase the proportion of young people in Birmingham progressing on to higher and further education and training
- **Skills:** Increase the proportion of adults in Birmingham who can speak English well and have at least NVQ3 qualifications and enable more residents of Birmingham to access skills development and lifelong learning opportunities that progresses their likelihood of being employed in a good job (e.g. vocational training)
- **Jobs:** Increase the proportion of working age residents in Birmingham able to access more productive, fulfilling and higher paid jobs

- **Housing:** Increase the proportion of Birmingham residents living in high quality, affordable housing which meets their needs
- **Public services:** Increase the proportion of residents in Birmingham actively engaged in shaping public services and improve the satisfaction of residents with the public services available and provided
- **Infrastructure and connectivity:** Improve access to high-quality and well-connected green physical and digital infrastructure and services for all Birmingham residents; and
- **Living environment:** Increase the proportion of residents in Birmingham benefitting from a high-quality living environment, rich in culture, amenities and green open spaces.

Figure 4 brings together the vision, objectives and key measurement indicators to be monitored which help us show where we need to focus resources to reduce inequalities in opportunity and outcome.

Figure 4: The Council's vision, objectives and key measurement indicators for levelling up Birmingham

Vision	Increase growth and harness it to create a fairer, stronger city, where all citizens share in the benefits, including through a just transition to net zero, where our citizens live longer, healthier and happier lives with opportunities to shape their own lives and communities, and long-standing inequalities are overcome such as child poverty						
	Sustainable economic growth Increase the GVA per hour worked and increase the levels of economic activity and reduce income deprivation 			Longer, healthier, happier lives Increase healthy life expectancy, life expectancy and life satisfaction indices 			
Measurement indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GVA per hour worked Business start-ups Economic shrinkage Economic activity Income deprivation Child poverty 			Longer lives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age standardised avoidable mortality rate Life expectancy Infant mortality rate 	Healthier lives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment rate for disabled persons Disability free life expectancy at 65 Healthy life expectancy 	Happier lives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxiety Happiness Life satisfaction Worthwhile 	
Objectives	Education Increase the proportion of children in Birmingham attending good or outstanding schools and increase the proportion of young people in Birmingham progressing on to higher and further education and training 	Skills Increase the proportion of adults in Birmingham who can speak English well and have at least NVQ3 qualifications. Enable more residents of Birmingham to access skills development and lifelong learning opportunities that progresses their likelihood of being employed in a good job 	Jobs Increase the proportion of working age residents in Birmingham able to access more productive, fulfilling and higher paid jobs 	Housing Increase the proportion of Birmingham residents living in high quality, affordable housing which meets their needs 	Public services Increase the proportion of Birmingham residents living in high quality, affordable housing which meets their needs 	Infrastructure and connectivity Improve access to high-quality and well-connected green physical and digital infrastructure and services for all Birmingham residents 	Living environment Increase the proportion of residents in Birmingham benefitting from a high-quality living environment, rich in culture, amenities and green open spaces 
Measurement indicators	Attainment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 to 19 attainment Progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry to higher education NEET rate (ages 16-17) Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School effectiveness 	Attainment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults with low or no qualifications English language proficiency Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults participating in lifelong learning Adults participating in further education 	Productive jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job density Higher skilled jobs Well paid jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average gross weekly earnings (residence based) Gender pay gap Fulfilling jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment Workless households 	Affordability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing affordability Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household overcrowding Housing in poor condition Homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness 	Accessibility of services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road distance to a primary school Quality of services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with making a GP appt Access to preferred GP Satisfaction with social care support 	Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport reliability Proximity to nearest town Principal road condition Digital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital connectedness Index (inc. internet users, mobile usage, unbanked residents, 4G availability) 	Inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy efficiency of housing stock Outside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air pollution C02 emissions Proximity to public green space Proximity to nearest food store Frequency of walking or cycling



The strategy

Birmingham City Council is already moving forward with its levelling up objectives through a range of existing and planned initiatives. Key anchors of the council's levelling up strategy are as follows:

1. An integrated delivery model for local places

We are developing a placed-based levelling up model through the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy in partnership with the WMCA, Solihull Council and a wide range of local and regional partners and stakeholders. East Birmingham, with a population of around 250,000, is larger than many cities and towns and has the highest levels of deprivation in our city. Such is the need that even if action were taken to level up East Birmingham relative to other parts of the city, Birmingham would still be in England's 10% most deprived local authorities. East Birmingham offers a combination of opportunities with the Midlands Metro extension and the advent of HS2 as well as council programmes to address entrenched deprivation.

East Birmingham is at the heart of where Birmingham City Council is developing and testing its approach to levelling up and inclusive growth and is underpinned through:

- Local and regional bodies and central government working in a joined-up way, where possible linking together funding, and bringing forward projects to tackle the challenges
- A focus on poor health, poor educational attainment, low skills and incomes, congestion and air pollution and bringing forward new homes, employment sites and community assets
- Adopting the council's approach to localism and anchored in community engagement and participation to bring forward improvements; and
- Partnership arrangements providing a model for delivery at scale and a model for other neighbourhoods across the city and the country.

Our levelling up approach for East Birmingham includes achieving the following:

- Establishing the East Birmingham and North Solihull Inclusive Growth Corridor
- Expanding the local economy for the benefit of local people with more than 6,000 new jobs and more than 5,000 new homes
- Bringing forward development sites such as Wheels, a key element of the much larger opportunity around the Bordesley Park Area Action Plan
- Increasing local skill levels and connecting people to jobs and opportunities including through creating an enhanced skills and digital training hub at Ward End and Cole Valley to support local small and medium sized enterprises and social enterprises; and developing a locally designed employment support scheme for young people and businesses
- Improving local services including health, social care and education to reduce demand for acute services, reduce sickness absence, chronic illness, health inequalities

- Bringing together a new, cutting edge hospital in East Birmingham with a research facility to establish a combined health and innovation campus at Arden Cross
- Reducing crime and fear of crime
- Decreasing fuel poverty and retrofitting homes
- Increasing connectivity including through the rail network with improved existing and new stations and better service frequency; and developing the Midland Metro East Birmingham to Solihull extension and the wider connections to the Metro corridor
- Improving local places and green spaces with a joined-up approach to development and the physical environment including green investments in the Cole Valley Corridor for walking, cycling and green and blue infrastructure delivered with partners such as the Environment Agency; and
- Enhance the innovation ecosystem around Tyseley Energy Park whilst spearheading urban regeneration and catalysing the wider use of green physical infrastructure including low and zero carbon refuelling and recycling.

2. Investing in prevention and early intervention

We are establishing an early intervention and prevention approach to empower people to achieve a better quality of life, build resilience and access learning and economic opportunities, thereby levelling up life chances and outcomes.

Through our 'prevention first' pathways commissioning model and 'neighbourhood networks' which link individuals to local services and resources, we are changing the design of services from a top-down addressing at the point of acute need to instead work at an early stage with citizens on co-designing to prevent crises from happening. It will reflect the life journeys of residents, addressing deep-rooted issues, securing better outcomes, and enabling citizens to have more control of their lives. Local assets are being developed in partnership with the community and the voluntary sector to deliver the prevention priorities for the city.

Adult social care is at the vanguard of this approach and involves distributed leadership in the delivery of services to drive up performance coupled with investment in community assets to anchor better services. The 'three conversations' social care assessment approach alongside a number of other initiatives such as the neighbourhoods network scheme, is bringing beneficial outcomes for citizens. Since April 2018, diversion rates to support independent living obviating the need for long-term packages following the initial assessment increased from 48% to 53%, bed-based admissions to care homes reduced by 20% and the number of new care packages that were needed decreased by 6%. It has also helped avoid costs of more than £27m per annum since April 2018.

We have a focus on the pay of care workers who are among the lowest paid workers in the country. Birmingham Council care staff and agency workers that the council employs are paid the real living wage as a minimum. However, for the independent commissioned sector outside the council's control, covering some 27,000 care workers, we are developing a series of measures to help improve pay. This includes developing a charter to encourage the commissioned sector to increase pay to the real living wage, and through training and development to enhance skills which boosts esteem and earning power as well as helps stabilise the workforce which is under severe pressure. As workers tend to work locally, they spend locally, helping to retain money within local areas and level up.

We have been applying the early intervention and prevention approach to vulnerable children, young people and their families too, to identify and act on issues to stop these growing and taking hold. It includes the council funding targeted support services through voluntary, community and faith groups, a resilience fund for vulnerable families, an advice and guidance service, and additional mental health provision for young people aged 11 and above. COVID-19 has seen a significant increase in mental health issues among young people.

Results of the approach have led to lower rates of children needing to go into care compared to other equivalent core cities⁵¹. Over the past 12 months 17,000 families have been supported who otherwise would not have received help and in so doing has reduced demand for acute services. Around 4,000 community groups across the city have also been mapped to enable families and organisations to access and use them for support.

⁵¹ DfE, Children in Care



Our early intervention and prevention approach is rooted in helping address the inequalities people face and is part of how we help address the large numbers of children in poverty. Helping to raise wellbeing and improved health and social outcomes of families and children and connecting people to opportunities helps increase living standards and removes barriers. We are seeking to build on the early intervention and prevention approach through:

- Expanding the neighbourhood networks and prevention first approach to other services, including housing and homelessness and to a wider population such as families and younger adults 18-49 with learning disabilities, autism, mental health, physical disabilities and sensory impairment or loss
- Investing in community hubs to better connect citizens to assets and resources within their local communities
- Investing in digital inclusion
- Investing in our systems and prediction analytic tools, including better use of data
- Expanding our asset-based community development programme
- Extending partnerships to lever in more investment; and
- Developing an employer's covenant around domestic abuse to help change attitudes and affirm our commitment to eradicating domestic abuse from our city.

The early intervention and prevention approach is expected to yield further positive outcomes for citizens as well as reduce the costs to the collective public purse given crisis interventions are much more expensive. The council is still at an early stage of delivering the full financial benefits and savings attributable to the approach, but further benefits will flow – outcomes and financial – including from a combination of adaptations to promote independence at home, deploying domestic abuse specialists to work alongside social workers, supporting family and friends carers, expanding the stronger families programme, reducing the use of B&B to shift to upstream prevention and harnessing the community hub model.

3. Helping to create a growing, more inclusive economy across the city

Our goal is to drive growth across the city, and we recognise that this is the most important driver of levelling up, bringing as it does, jobs and business opportunities. We have been playing our part, with Birmingham City Council leading activity to secure investment and foster business growth.

We are a regional business centre with nearly half a million people in employment in the city and at the heart of the national road and rail network with growing links to international markets. We have strong sectors that support high quality jobs:

- Our business, professional and financial services sector employs 130,000 people, including highly skilled, well-paid occupations and is around one third of the city's economic output⁵²
- We are home to a burgeoning group of around 10,000 digital and creative firms employing nearly 50,000 people⁵³; and
- Our healthcare and life sciences sector has a growing reputation as a centre for clinical trials and the wider region has a significant cluster of medical technology businesses



Birmingham's Investment Prospectus lays out the opportunities to invest and grow in the city

Alongside we have the benefit of five universities, the second largest student population in the country, a huge research-intensive hospital, and a strong and growing digital and tech economy and a rich mix of cultural assets – Birmingham has the largest public library in Europe and the busiest theatre in the UK with half a million visitors each year⁵⁴.

We have attracted significant global businesses to locate and grow in the city. Our region continues to attract foreign direct investment, despite the impact of the pandemic, with 20 projects secured in 2020⁵⁵. Before COVID-19 our economy was growing quickly too⁵⁶.

Our city offers an unparalleled investment opportunity with the youngest and most diverse city in the UK. We have a pipeline of growth programmes anchored by HS2 and through the Commonwealth Games and legacy programme, as well as major projects that the council is taking forward such as the £1.9bn Smithfield development to deliver 3,000 new homes and over 8,000 jobs in the city centre and in Digbeth, with a 42-acre development to support over 16,000 jobs and 1,850 homes alongside shops, restaurants, cafés, and additional leisure facilities. The Perry Barr programme, part of the Games legacy, is well underway and will deliver thousands of new homes while the Peddimore employment development will anchor thousands of jobs. By June 2022 we will have appointed a partner to progress one of the UK's largest city centre estate renewals covering Ladywood Central of 150 acres and Ladywood Broad Street of 6 acres.

To help deliver this, we have developed a series of strategies and masterplans such as for our city centre (Future City Plan) and Perry Bar in relation to the Commonwealth Games. In addition, our Transport Plan charts the path to more sustainable transport modes such as tram, bus, walking and cycling for the city to become a centre of active and sustainable travel.

Delivery of affordable housing through these plans is critical as there is a significant and rising housing need with more than 19,000 households currently on the housing register in Birmingham, compared to nearly 16,500 in 2011 and around 14,000 in 2001.

The Birmingham Health Innovation Campus is taking shape to create high value jobs in the region and accelerate the development and deployment of new drugs, diagnostics and health technologies. It will be the only science park in the Midlands dedicated to translational health and life sciences and be located in a cluster of health, clinical and academic excellence including the University of Birmingham, Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation, the Bio Hub Birmingham, and Birmingham and Children's NHS Foundation Trust.

We have produced a Birmingham Investment Prospectus for the city to outline the key opportunities and developments. It is part of how we champion our city to secure more businesses and maximise investment. Our Investment Prospectus is in lockstep with our Levelling Up Strategy. With Birmingham City Council leading work to bring back jobs and grow economic activity, public investment in the city has a significant multiplier effect and represents good value for money for public investment for levelling up and which can join with that of the private sector.

Particularly important is that we recognise that the benefit of growth must be shared and harnessed to level up disadvantaged people and places, so that investment – public and private – provides the opportunities and changes lives; and that future investment we are seeking through the government's levelling up programme can create the biggest difference. It is also why, as outlined, we have a placed-based model to focus on the areas of greater need and an early intervention and prevention model to enable people to benefit from opportunities.

Given Birmingham's persistently high unemployment, concentrated among young people, women and Black, Asian and minority ethnic citizens, as well as specific places across Birmingham, we are developing a new labour market approach to tackle these entrenched issues and link people to economic activity and opportunities.

We are working with sectors to establish new pathways for entry level roles and collaborating with University Hospitals Birmingham, Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust and social care providers to offer work experience and entry level training, new entry pathways and local employment.

Working with employers, skills providers, schools, Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP and the WMCA we are seeking to create a one-stop-shop online hub for young people to access job vacancies, apprenticeships, work experience, volunteering, mentoring and careers advice across the city. We are seeking to secure sufficient childcare for working parents and free early year childcare entitlements for two, three and four-year-olds, for eligible parents.

We are working with anchor institutions, community organisations, skills providers and Department for Work & Pensions to join up community and local service support for residents to move into work, upskill or increase their incomes such as through digital inclusion, transport, social or childcare, health, employability or financial support and training. Recent funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, will enable a locally designed scheme for employment support for young people and businesses, piloted in East Birmingham, and which will be assessed as to how it can be scaled across the city.

⁵² COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

⁵³ COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy, Birmingham City Council (2021)

⁵⁴ Visit Birmingham website

⁵⁵ EY 2021 UK Attractiveness Survey

⁵⁶ The total number of private sector enterprises in Birmingham grew between 2020 and 2020 by 36% (24,655 to 38,275), compared to growth of 25% in England

We are seeking to increase wages of the low paid to help level up. Part of this is through enabling low paid employees to receive the 'real living wage' as set by the Living Wage Foundation. The real living wage puts more money into people's pockets as well as helps keep spending local to create a virtuous spiral that can treble its value to the local economy. It is intended to recognise the dignity of work and the ability to earn a living. As an employer Birmingham City Council became a real living wage employer in 2012, lifting 1,700 council employees and more than 600 non-council employees out of low pay.

Birmingham City Council has been joined by more than 100 employers with headquarters in Birmingham paying the real living wage, leading to incomes rising for around 7,000 people. These efforts have recently seen Birmingham recognised by the Living Wage Foundation as a 'Living Wage City'. Our goal is to further increase the paying of the real living wage. Over the next three years we want to double the number of lower paid receiving the real living wage to address the 20% of the city's workforce (with an even higher proportion in relation to women) who still do not receive this level of pay.

Our inclusive growth approach with community wealth building at its heart seeks to ensure that the strengths of a growing economy reach every corner of the city, that wealth is retained within communities and assets are utilised and created to drive local value creation. Elements include:

- Strategically managing our assets, particularly land and property, to protect and create neighbourhoods that provide positive economic conditions for local business including in manufacturing, arts and creative sectors
- Actively supporting the development of community assets, community enterprises, community leadership and economic resilience by investing in social infrastructure
- Refocusing our procurement contracts to use local businesses, helping drive social value and retain wealth and employment in the city; and building explicit commitments into major development and construction contracts to employ local labour
- Working with anchor organisations to ensure public resources support local economic activity
- Expanding activity to improve wages and conditions of employment including through the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility
- Transferring and scaling up the successful USE-IT! Project which connects micro-assets such as local entrepreneurs and community research with macro-assets such as housing developments
- Developing a policy lab on community economic development in East Birmingham
- Working with the WMCA on the embedding of the 'circular economy'
- Linking large scale infrastructure provision, such as transport to areas of deprivation and disadvantage to provide opportunities for growth and job creation
- Ensuring that investment in a greener city creates new skills, quality jobs and new opportunities for local people and the costs and gains of the net zero transition are fairly distributed; and
- Backing the campaign to establish a national £1bn Community Wealth Fund endowed by dormant accounts and assets for left behind areas to build community infrastructure.

4. Challenging and tackling ingrained inequalities

The unequal opportunities and outcomes we see in our city do not happen randomly. They are often the result of deeply ingrained structural processes that determine the life chances available to different people and places. They divide us as a community and create barriers to the more equal, fairer city we want to see. If we are to make real progress on levelling up, we must also tackle these inequalities head on.



Our Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business report sets out how we will seek to do this within our organisation and through our civic leadership, and states:

"Our approach will need to be both

long term and systemic.

We will need to rethink how we stimulate the right kind of

economic growth

in our city so

everyone can benefit

We will need to think about how our Council and other public services work, so that they focus on those

families and communities

that we all too often describe as hard to reach, when in fact they are hidden in plain sight."



Our approach includes:

- Delivering our existing Community Cohesion Strategy, including within the Commonwealth Games Legacy Strategy
- The council leading by example as an employer
- Working with marginalised communities on an asset-based approach to address challenges
- Developing a cohort of future leaders to ensure consistently diverse civic governance; and
- Celebrating and sharing our city's stories of diversity and dynamism.

5. Connecting local people and places into strategic investment

Levelling up in Birmingham requires a levelling up of the economy across our city region, closing the productivity gap between the West Midlands and London and the South East. Achieving a more prosperous West Midlands is the foundation for creating the opportunities we want to bring to our local communities within the city.

We work across the West Midlands including with the Combined Authority, to invest and develop **transport, digital, and green infrastructure, and skills and innovation** programmes. Connecting these strategic investments to local places where needs are concentrated is a vital part of a strategic approach to levelling up. For example, we seek to align local action on skills and employment and housing with the provision of transport infrastructure that connects people to jobs.

East Birmingham is viewed as a strategic inclusive growth corridor by our regional partners, and the recent funding secured by the Combined Authority in its transport settlement will likely support key investments in the area (although the settlement received was less than the full-bid submitted).

Regional transport plans that are likely to move forward through this funding and that will directly support growth in East Birmingham include:

- The East Birmingham to Solihull Metro extension – a vital catalyst for the other regeneration we want to see
- Three new bus priority cross-city routes connecting East Birmingham to the rest of the city
- The A45 Sprint route; and
- Active travel and other road improvements on the A45 corridor.

We are also seeking the approval of the £2bn Midlands Rail Hub plan to improve rail services in Birmingham and across the Midlands, which would provide more and faster services across the Midlands with 24 trains per hour more on the Midlands Passenger network. It would also link Moor Street Station to the HS2 station at Curzon Street and allow more services on the Camp Hill line stopping at Mosely, Kings Heath and Hazelwell. The scheme will drive more jobs and opportunities.

Our Route to Zero plan is seeking to make the city net zero by 2030 with a suite of programmes. This includes installing clean energy from waste to power, enabling electric public and commercial sector heavy waste vehicles, investment in a fleet of hydrogen buses, developing an electric charging point network to support the shift to zero-emission modes of transport, including a network of hubs at Erdington and Perry Barr to act as demonstrators and catalysts.

We are aiming to be the region with the highest availability of 5G full-fibre broadband to support business growth and tackle the extensive digital exclusion in areas such as East Birmingham. We are looking to enhance digital connectivity through:

- West Midlands 5G Ltd – a new vehicle set up to deliver the nation’s first 5G testbed – focused initially on accelerating the creation of 5G infrastructure and on developing applications in health, mobility and industry, and working closely with manufacturers, small and medium sized enterprises, hospitals and universities
- The West Midlands Digital Roadmap setting out plans for improved connectivity, including improved access prioritising the most disadvantaged
- The West Midlands Digital Skills Partnership driving programmes to improve digital skills and enable access to opportunities, including the Digital Retraining Fund; and
- Identifying opportunities for digital investment in improving public services, a vital part of the drive to focus on early intervention and prevention.



Our offer to central government

Birmingham City Council is determined to deliver long-term transformational change across the whole of the city. To do this, we need to accelerate progress by being bold, thinking big, and easing the existing constraints on the council. To achieve this step-change above and beyond what we can currently do, we have put forward five **'Levelling Up Accelerators'** for which we are seeking central government support and backing. We recognise that the scale and significance of Birmingham means that it can be a model for other cities and for the government's levelling up approach. We are seeking to be an effective partner for the government, and to work with local and regional partners.

Levelling up accelerator 1: Support a long-term single pot funding and devolved powers

We require a more flexible approach that allows ambitious and responsible places such as Birmingham to bring greater coherence to policies and resources and to instil a 'place based' focus. Birmingham's local leaders are best positioned to adapt to economic shocks and long-term shifts. This is through our stewardship role over the city, our convening power, our understanding of our strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and challenges, and the relationships with citizens and organisations.

Our ability to deal with our challenges and to level up is constrained by the current funding model and the allocation of powers and responsibilities:

- The resources we can raise locally are limited and a long period of declining funding has squeezed finances and scaled back local public services
- Barriers exist to deploying innovative funding models for service improvement
- Pooling of resources with our partners has been restricted; and
- Government funding has been allocated too narrowly on a piecemeal, time-limited, often competitive, short term basis to specific projects rather than as part of longer term, strategic programmes. The means funding is constrained in the addressing of the breadth of issues at the heart of the need for levelling up and inhibits ambitious, holistic programmes, centred around collaboration and co-creation, and authorities cannot make plans to address levelling up with any certainty.



To level up at scale and more rapidly, Birmingham City Council therefore requires:

- **More devolution of budgets, greater and longer-term funding and a single pot of funding which is bigger, more certain and stable, less fragmented and more flexible than is currently the case to enable more effective use of funding and to maximise the benefits of the existing projects and programmes in our city from the Commonwealth Games to HS2⁵⁷.**
- As an example, central government could create a Community Wealth Fund, a new, £1bn independent endowment over ten years created from the next round of dormant assets and accounts including stocks, shares, bonds, insurance and pension policies. It would be used to invest in community infrastructure to build the capacity of 'left behind' neighbourhoods. The concept is supported by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Left Behind Places and an alliance of 400 organisations from civil society, public and private sectors, and 30 local and combined authorities from across England including Birmingham.
- A devolved, single pot funding approach will help us encourage more private investment and unlock other innovative forms of finance such as **invest-to-save, impact investment and social impact bonds**, which need joined up long-term, joined-up approaches to be effective.

- **Recognition and trust in our local leadership**, and the ability to take the actions at both city and community level that we see as critical to delivering levelling up in Birmingham successfully; and
- **Devolution of the powers and responsibilities to transform the city** – for example, we are doing what we can with partners managing the challenges around exempt accommodation which have increased significantly (and led to barriers to levelling up) but the council does not have all the powers such as enforcement and licensing to fully resolve the issues longer-term.

Evidence suggests that devolving powers and budgets brings results including:⁵⁸

- More equal outcomes and more equal income distribution, improved wellbeing, better education outcomes and improved social welfare
- Investment decisions that boost education and infrastructure
- Greater allocative and productive efficiency because local authorities are incentivised to be more responsive and effective
- Improving community buy-in and connections and use of local assets; and
- Catalysing further investment

Birmingham City Council is keen to work with central government to define and implement a programme of coherent and inclusive devolution and levelling up projects, plans and programmes and the city can be an at scale demonstrator.

⁵⁷ The Levelling up Fund, the Community Renewal Fund and the Community Ownership Fund could be seen as transitional pending the introduction of the Shared Prosperity Fund, but they do allocate significant central government resources of £4.8bn. Funding that could be included in a single pot includes: Infrastructure and levelling up. Allocations via Mayors from the local portion of the affordable housing fund and allocations from the National Homebuilding Fund (with Homes England partnership); Levelling Up Parks Fund; Levelling Up Fund; Towns Fund; Community Ownership Fund; Shared Prosperity Fund (a specific allocation for local place based programmes led by local authorities for employment, place-based skills programmes, high streets, culture and social infrastructure); Community Wealth Fund created from the next round of dormant accounts; Public services; Healthcare – community diagnostic centres funding; Start for Life Fund; Supporting Families Programme; NHS supporting tech funding; Shared Outcomes Fund; Youth Investment Fund; Targeted funding for adult social care (i.e. neighbourhood networks support)

⁵⁸ IPPR, The Devolution Parliament, 2020

Levelling up accelerator 2: Back our integrated local place delivery model demonstrator, the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy

With our East Birmingham place-based approach, we are doing what we can within our current means and through this model. We are seeking an acceleration and greater increase in what we can do through central government support of our approach. This would be through active engagement and involvement in the model with government departments and agencies deployed as part of the structures to enable localism in action and multi-layered levelling up teams. Central government funding could be directed through this place-based model in a single pot approach. In turn this could help enable invest-to-save models and secure additional private sector investment. The government can use the East Birmingham approach as a ready-made place model for levelling up and a demonstrator for other places.

Levelling up accelerator 3: Harness and support our early intervention and prevention model

We invite the government to support, harness and help develop our early intervention and prevention approach to anchor levelling up in a model of citizen empowerment and which makes public funding work harder in securing long-term social benefits as well as make savings for the collective public purse. The approach also provides a way to lever in invest-to-save and social bond arrangements. The size of Birmingham provides an at scale demonstrator for this delivery of public services which help the most disadvantaged and remove barriers to levelling up, such as those related to health and skills disparities.



Levelling up accelerator 4: Deliver green and digital city infrastructure

Like other places we require infrastructure investment including for transport improvements, and digital and green infrastructure. This is to deliver a comprehensive green, reliable and frequent integrated transport system with new Metro links and services including through East Birmingham, and to connect with HS2, expanded bus services, and with integrated smart-ticketing. Similarly, we are seeking digital infrastructure fit for a modern society, and to address some of the highest levels of digital exclusion in the country, and investment to accelerate the net zero transition. We welcome the funding secured by the Combined Authority in its transport settlement which will help take forward the East Birmingham Metro extension although we continue to put forward the full envelope of investment needed, including the Midlands Rail Hub, which will underpin the growth of Birmingham, the economic heart of the West Midlands economy.



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Levelling up accelerator 5: Back an at scale three cities housing retrofit

We offer a social housing retrofit at scale demonstrator across the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton.

The three cities are looking to retrofit their social housing stock as well as work with housing providers. There are nearly than 61,000 council homes in Birmingham alone, while across the three cities there nearly 166,000 council and social homes⁵⁹. The scale provides a critical mass and the scale and diversity of the programme project provides a step change that can also be shared beyond the three cities at a regional and national level, supporting approaches and methodologies that will accelerate retrofit solutions.

The programme is not just about reducing net zero emissions but achieving levelling up goals. It would deliver a range of benefits for years ahead bringing warmer, cheaper to run homes and housing that supports healthier outcomes, in communities with some of the worst health outcomes.

We would utilise the research and development capabilities of our excellent local further and higher educational institutions and private sector anchor companies to grow the skills base of our population and enable local people to undertake this work.

Reducing unemployment in Birmingham to the level of the national average would mean 74,928 more people in employment, with the retrofit a jobs-rich opportunity in areas that need it most. We will also integrate our manufacturing base to help design and build the kit for the retrofit, bringing back and creating the opportunities for those skilled jobs and establishing green manufacturing at the heart of what is the industrial centre of the country. Alongside we would support the building of the local supply chains of small and medium sized firms in the manufacturing supply chain as well as fitters and tradespeople essential to installing and maintaining the low carbon systems of the future. In addition, we would bring together the skills system to train up people for this work including our young people and from a diversity of backgrounds.

This at scale programme provides an opportunity to develop the funding and financing models and mix of funding that will be needed for what is a market making opportunity. Alongside is the opportunity to maximise and capture the financial return in jobs, upskilling and business support which offsets the costs.

A summary of the Levelling Up Accelerators is shown right.

Birmingham's five 'Levelling Up Accelerators' that central government should support

- 

Support **long-term, single pot funding and devolved powers** for the city to deliver greater levelling up outcomes and enable invest-to-save investment to be deployed alongside
- 

Back our **integrated local place delivery model demonstrator, the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy**, covering 250,000 people to tackle deep levels of deprivation
- 

Harness our **early intervention and prevention model** to assist the most disadvantaged citizens and move from dealing with crises to co-designed support and services to stop these arising
- 

Deliver **green and digital infrastructure** including a comprehensive green, reliable, frequent and affordable transport network
- 

Back an **at scale housing retrofit** across the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton to tackle carbon emissions and create jobs in areas that need it most

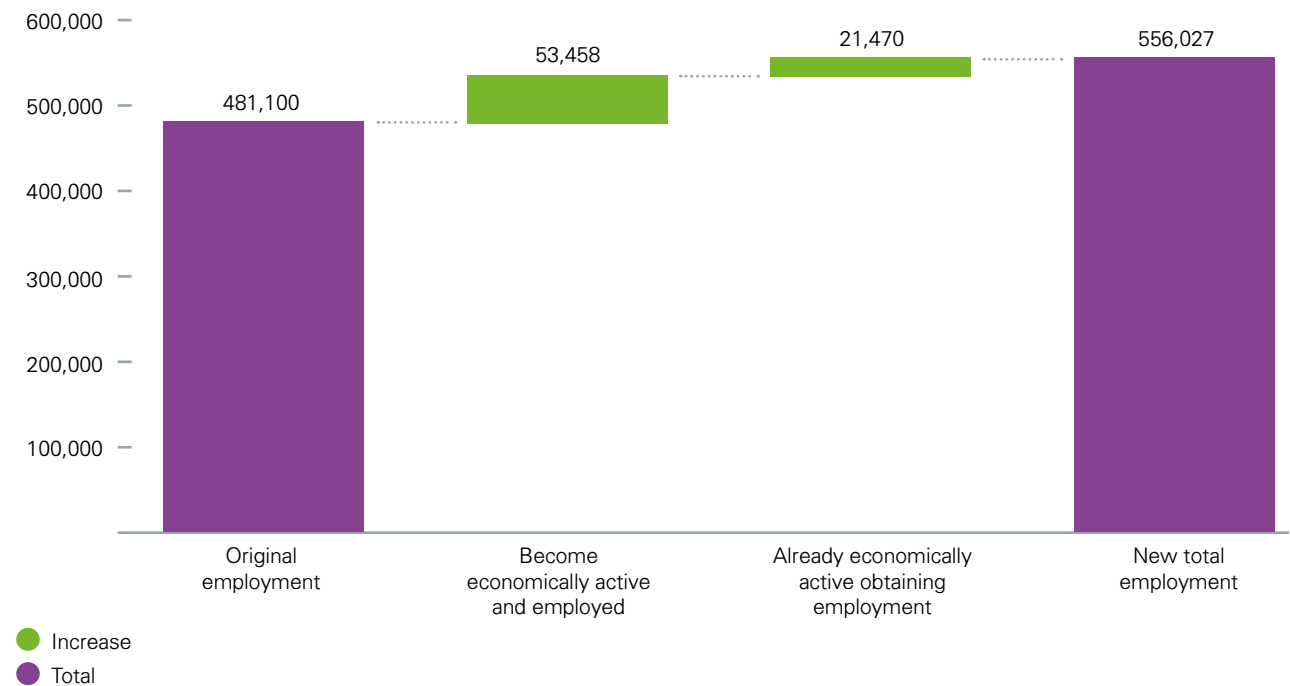
Value to be delivered

If Birmingham receives the support it is seeking and the backing of our approach, the resulting transformation will deliver significant value and the city will be able to tackle more cost-effectively the root causes of our key challenges and the inequality in opportunities and outcomes.

The scale of the potential prize is considerable. If we can level up Birmingham so that economic activity, unemployment and skills reach the England average, this could add an estimated £9bn to Birmingham’s economy each year, as well as 74,928 more residents obtaining employment, including 53,458 residents becoming economically active, 21,470 residents who were already economically active moving into employment and a £3.3bn boost to average earnings per year⁶⁰.

Increasing employment, wage levels and good quality jobs alongside skills progression to obtain them and connections to opportunities, as well as increased access to and availability and quality of public services included those focused on families and children, will help address the ingrained structural inequalities which sees more than 40% of our children live in relative poverty. Reducing this level to the England average would dramatically improve the life chances of children in what is the country’s youngest city.

Graph 1: Increasing employment in Birmingham to the England average and gain in employment this would bring



⁵⁹ DHCLG: Table 100 Dwelling stock: Number of Dwellings by Tenure and district: England; 2020

⁶⁰ All estimates are based on data for the population aged 16-64 years from the ONS APS for January 2020 – December 2020, data for GVA per hour worked from the ONS for 2019 and average gross weekly earnings (residence based) from ASHE for 2019.

If Birmingham were to rise to the England average in other measurements, there would be important benefits for the health of residents and their quality of life:

- An increase in average life expectancy for men and women of two and one years respectively⁶¹
- An increase in average healthy life expectancy for men and women of five and four years⁶²
- A 3% increase in average life satisfaction⁶³; and
- Improving education and skills will enable more of the city's residents to become economically active and access productive, fulfilling and well-paid jobs

In addition:

- Supporting businesses to start-up, innovate and expand will help to create these jobs for the city's residents obtain and to attract inward investment to the city
- Increasing access to, and the quality of, health and social care services and green open spaces will improve the health and well-being of Birmingham residents; and
- Delivering local infrastructure and services connecting people and places to jobs and amenities will enable more of the city's residents to access employment and the services they need.

Focusing resources and action on the people and places most in need in Birmingham where the scope for improvement in opportunity and outcome is largest, will be crucial in maximising the scale of benefits and return on investment.

Furthermore, the benefits of levelling up Birmingham will not be confined to the city's boundaries and will spill over to neighbouring local authorities, delivering value for the rest of the West Midlands and UK.

Levelling up Birmingham will reduce pressure on demand for public services and in turn public finances. Our commitment to an early intervention approach to achieving a healthier, more economically active and skilled population will reduce dependence on public services and resources and bring higher tax revenues, including income tax, corporation tax and national insurance contributions which will flow to the Exchequer.

Embedding environmental sustainability such as through an at scale retrofit and green transport will reduce environmental costs and reap benefits in terms of a cleaner, greener environment, helping to realise both the city's and the country's net zero ambitions.


This combination of space for development, growing connectivity, and high levels of diversity and creative energy is a compelling argument for private sector investment. It means that future public investment in Birmingham will work with the grain of powerful economic forces. It provides the foundation for levelling up in an economically and fiscally sustainable manner.

The scale and social, cultural and economic diversity of Birmingham mean that the city provides an ideal test bed for developing and delivering successful new approaches to tackling inequality and levelling up. East Birmingham presents a prime opportunity to be a pilot programme for an at scale place-programme, implementing and evaluating transformational interventions to deliver levelling up, which can also be introduced across the city and elsewhere in the UK.

⁶¹ Calculated by taking the difference between the England average and the Birmingham average

⁶² Calculated by taking the difference between the England average and the Birmingham average

⁶³ Calculated by taking the percentage difference between the England average and the Birmingham average



We are now seeking deeper engagement with partners, including central government, in the design and delivery of the next steps including specific actions, funding and financing, responsibilities and timelines.

3

Appendices

Additional analysis








Tap & Spile

Appendix A:

Key measurement indicators



In the development of our levelling up approach we recognise that we must measure the need for levelling up and in turn determine progress. The council has identified a set of key measurement indicators aligned to its levelling up vision and objectives. These have been assessed to benchmark Birmingham's current performance including the city's performance compared to the WMCA area and England as a whole. The colour coding summarises Birmingham's position compared to England:

-  Birmingham score is more than 5% worse than the England average
-  Birmingham score is within 5% of the England average; and
-  Birmingham score is more than 5% better than the England average.

As we develop the approach, we will engage with our partners and central government on these indicators and refine as well as integrate with our wider set of targets and our plans and strategies. This includes our goals through the Birmingham City Council's Transformation Plan, the development of the Corporate Plan and the shared programmes we are developing with the Birmingham City Board which brings together key partners across the region.

Table 1: Initial set of key indicators

Vision	Measurement Indicator	Description / Unit	Year	Source	Inc in English Indices of Deprivation	England	WMCA	Birmingham	
Sustainable economic growth	General	GVA per hour worked	£	2019	ONS	No	35.7	31.3	30.6
		Business start-ups	Number of new businesses per 1,000 of population	2019	ONS	No	5.86	5.17	7.86
		Economic shrinkage	Number of years in the last five when GVA per capita is less than the year before	2018	ONS	No	1.3	0.53*	0.00**
		Income deprivation	% of the population having an income less than 60% of the median income	2020	MHCLG	No	11.67%	19.48%	22.18%
		Child poverty	Children growing up in households where the family income is less than 60% of the median income as % of total population	2019/20	DWP	No	3.7%	10.1%	10.2%
		Economic activity	% of the working age population who are either in work or actively seeking work	Apr 2020 - Mar 2021	ONS	No	74.7%	73.5%	64.8%
Longer, healthier, happier lives	Longer	Age standardised avoidable mortality	per 100,000 of population	2019	PHE	No	224.4	241.5	295.2
		Life expectancy	Years at birth	2017-19	PHE	No	79.76 (M) / 83.37 (F)	79.02 (M) / 82.86 (F)	77.85 (M) / 82.35 (F)
		Infant mortality	per 1,000 live births	2017-19	PHE	No	3.9	5.6	7
	Healthier	Employment rate for disabled persons	% of population with disability	Jun 2020 - Jun 2021	ONS	Yes	55.4	54.5	43.0
		Disability free life expectancy at aged 65	Years at aged 65	2017-19	PHE	No	9.9 (M) / 9.7 (F)	9.4 (M) / 9.1 (F)	8.7 (M) / 8.1 (F)
		Healthy life expectancy	Years at birth	2017-19	PHE	No	63.2 (M) / 63.5 (F)	61.5 (M) / 62.6 (F)	58.5 (M) / 59.3 (F)
	Happier	Anxiety	Average score for question 'Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday', scored between 0 and 10 whereby 10 represents completely anxious	2020/21	ONS	No	3.31	3.34	3.54
		Happiness	Average score for question 'Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday', scored between 0 and 10 whereby 10 represents completely anxious	2020/21	ONS	No	7.31	7.28	7.16
		Life satisfaction	Average score for question 'Overall, satisfied are you with your life nowadays', scored between 0 and 10 whereby 10 represents completely anxious	2020/21	ONS	No	7.38	7.39	7.20
		Worthwhile	Average score for question 'Overall, to what extent do you feel that things you do in your life are worthwhile', scored between 0 and 10 whereby 10 represents completely anxious	2020	ONS	No	7.71	7.72	7.70

Objective	Measurement Indicator		Description / Unit	Year	Source	Inc in English Indices of Deprivation	England	WMCA	Birmingham
Education	Standards	School effectiveness	% of state-funded schools ranked good or outstanding	Mar-21	OFSTED	No	86.00%	83.00%	81.00%
	Attainment	16-19 attainment	% of students achieving at least 2 A-levels	2018/19	DfE	No	80.00%	77.50%	74.00%
	Progression	Entry to higher education	% of state-funded school leavers who sustained a level 4 or higher destination	2017/18	DfE	Yes	66.2%	67.0%	74.1%
		NEET rate	% of young people aged 16-17 who are not in education, employment or training	Dec 2020 - Feb 2021	DfE	No	2.80%	2.60%	2.80%
Skills	Attainment	Adults with low or no qualifications	% of adults with less than NVQ2 level qualifications	2020	ONS	No	21.80%	24.90%	24.20%
		English language proficiency	% of people who cannot speak English well or at all	2011*	ONS	Yes	1.70%	2.00%	4.60%
	Participation	Adults participating in job-related training	% of all who received job-related training in last 4 weeks (aged 25-64)	Jul 2020 - Jun 2021	ONS	No	10.9%	10.3%	10.3%
		Adults participating in further education (all levels)	% adults participating in further education (all levels)	2018/19	DfE	No	4.74%	4.91%	6.67%
Jobs	Productive Jobs	Higher skilled jobs	SOC 1-3, % of people aged 16+	Jul 2020 - Jun 2021	ONS	No	50.2%	46.2%	42.8%
		Job density	Number of jobs per person aged 16-64	2019	ONS	No	0.87	0.82	0.82
	Well Paid Jobs	Average gross weekly earnings	Average gross weekly earnings for full time workers	2021	ONS ASHE	No	£738.2	£717.9	£698.7
		Gender pay gap	Average difference between men's and women's hourly earnings as % of men's earnings for full time workers	2021	ONS ASHE	No	13.0%	13.8%	14.1%
	Fulfilling Jobs	Unemployment rate	Unemployment rate aged 16-64	Apr 2020 - Mar 2021	APS	No	5.2%	5.6%	10.1%
		Workless households	% of workless households	Jan - Dec 2020	APS	No	13.0%	14.8%	17.4%
Housing	Affordability	Housing affordability ratio	Ratio of median house price to earnings	2020	ONS	Yes (older)	7.84	6.78	6.37
	Quality	Household overcrowding	% of households which are overcrowded	2011*	English Indices of Deprivation	Yes	8.60%	6.80%	12.50%
		Housing in poor condition	% of housing stock in poor condition	2015	English Indices of Deprivation	Yes	19.40%	22.80%	22.20%
	Homelessness	Homelessness	Number of households assessed as homeless, per 1,000 households	Apr - Jun 2021	DLUHC	Yes (older)	1.47	1.61	2.03

* to be updated when latest Census data is released

Objective	Measurement Indicator	Description / Unit	Year	Source	Inc in English Indices of Deprivation	England	WMCA	Birmingham	
Public services	Physical Access	Road distance to primary school from place of residence	Km	2018/19	English Indices of Deprivation	Yes	0.86	0.89	0.65
	Quality	How often patients are able to speak to preferred GP when needed (% reporting 'always' or 'a lot of the time')	% reporting always / a lot of the time	2021	NHS	No	45%	n/a	39%
		% of survey respondents answering 'good' to the question, 'Overall, how would you describe your experience of making an appointment?'	% reporting good	2021	NHS	No	71%	n/a	63%
		Satisfaction of service users of social care support (% reporting 'extremely' or 'very')	% extremely / very	2017/18	NHS	No	65.00%	65.20%	62.10%
Infrastructure	Physical	Public transport reliability	Excess waiting time for buses (minutes)	2018/19	DfT	No	1.7	n/a	1.2 ⁶⁴
		Proximity to nearest town centre	Average travel time in minutes to nearest town centre by public transport or walking	2019	DfT	No	20.4	17.7	16.7
		Principal road condition	% of principal classified roads where maintenance should be considered	2019	DfT	No	3.2	2.48	3
	Digital	Digital connectedness Index	Includes internet users, mobile phone usage, unbanked residents, 4G availability	2021	Prosp. Index	No	68.2	55.9	59.6
Living Environment	Indoor	Energy efficiency of housing stock	Annual median energy cost (£)	2019	MHCLG	No	£544	£546	£573
	Outdoor	Proximity to nearest food store	Average travel time in minutes to nearest food store by public transport or walking	2019	English Indices of Deprivation	Yes	8.7	7.2	7.4
		Air pollution	Average fine particulate matter (mg/m3)	2019	DEFRA	Yes (older)	9	9.4	10.3
		Proximity to public green space	Average number parks and playing fields within 1 km radius	2020	ONS	No	2.46	4.23	4.1
		C02 emissions	Total carbon dioxide emissions produced (kt per capita)	2019	ONS	No	4.9	6	3.6
		Walking or cycling at least once a week	% of adults who do any walking or cycling, for any purpose	2018-2019	DfT	No	73.22%	67.80%	67%

⁶⁴ This value relates to the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority, which covers Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton

Appendix B: Existing plans and relationship with levelling up and the accelerators

Birmingham City Council has already started to take steps to meet its levelling up objectives through a range of existing and planned initiatives. Table 2 maps our levelling up objectives against a selection of our key existing strategies and plans as well as the links through to the accelerators.

● objectives covered by existing and in development strategies and plans and the accelerators

in development

Table 2: The council's existing strategies and plans and the accelerators

	Economic Recovery Strategy	Our Future City Plan	Urban Centres Framework	Community Recovery Framework#	Jobs and Skills Action Plan#	Community Cohesion Strategy / Everybody's Battle, Everybody's Business	Delivery plan 2020-22	Other	Accelerator 1: Single pot	Accelerator 2: East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy	Accelerator 3: Early intervention and prevention	Accelerator 4: Green and digital infrastructure	Accelerator 5: Three City Retrofit
Sustainable economic growth	●	●	●		●		●	(Plans below under skills, jobs, infrastructure)	●	●	●	●	
Longer, healthier and happier lives	●			●		●	●	Health and Wellbeing Strategy Transformation plans for shift to prevention Hate Crime Strategy Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods White Paper	●	●	●	●	●
Good education						●	●	SEND Strategy and Joint Commissioning Framework	●	●	●		
Developing skills	●				●	●	●	Breaking Down Barriers CWG Legacy Strategy Digital Inclusion Strategy (in development)	●	●	●		●
Productive, fulfilling and well-paid jobs	●				●	●	●	Various masterplans for specific development areas CWG Legacy Strategy	●	●	●	●	●
Affordable, high-quality housing	●	●	●			●	●	Route to Zero action plan Various masterplans for specific development areas Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan BMHT Delivery Plan	●	●			●

	Economic Recovery Strategy	Our Future City Plan	Urban Centres Framework	Community Recovery Framework#	Jobs and Skills Action Plan#	Community Cohesion Strategy / Everybody's Battle, Everybody's Business	Delivery plan 2020-22	Other	Accelerator 1: Single pot	Accelerator 2: East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy	Accelerator 3: Early intervention and prevention	Accelerator 4: Green and digital infrastructure	Accelerator 5: Three City Retrofit
Valued, effective public services	●				●	●	●	Digital Inclusion Strategy (in development) SEND Strategy and Joint Commissioning Framework Children's Trust Strategic Business Plan Health and Wellbeing Strategy Carers Vision Corporate Parenting Strategy Transformation plans for shift to prevention	●	●	●		●
High-quality physical/digital infrastructure	●	●	●				●	Digital Inclusion Strategy# Birmingham Transport Plan Various masterplans for specific development areas CWG Legacy Plan	●	●		●	●
High quality environment	●	●	●				●	Route to Zero Action Plan CWG Legacy Plan Birmingham Development Plan Air Quality Action Plan Birmingham Transport Plan Future Parks Accelerator Plan Waste Prevention Plan	●	●		●	

Appendix C:

Case study: Three Cities Retrofit

The three cities of the West Midlands want to come together to deliver a large-scale pilot programme to develop and test a model for decarbonising the social housing stock. It uses the path to net zero to work collaboratively with an at scale programme and to derive every bit of value – including cutting emissions, transforming housing, improving social outcomes through improved housing, and growing local jobs and training in areas of high unemployment and local skills – the very places that need levelling up. The programme presents a huge opportunity for the government to make good on the twin goals of levelling up and net zero.

The Three Cities Retrofit represents a step-change in approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from housing and specifically responds to the government’s Heat and Buildings Strategy to achieve 600,000 heat pump installations by 2028, a huge increase on the current circa 35,000 pa rate⁶⁵.

The three cities of the West Midlands represent the majority of the regional population of 2.9 million. The three cities would be looking to retrofit their housing stock as well as work with housing providers in their localities. There are nearly than 61,000 council homes in Birmingham alone. Looking at council and social homes across the three cities there are nearly 166,000 homes and many more across the West Midlands as a whole⁶⁶. Each home has a contribution to make to achieve the UK’s net zero and of the three cities.

The scale provides a critical mass and the scale and diversity of the programme project provides a step change that can also be shared beyond the three cities at a regional and national level, supporting approaches and methodologies that will accelerate retrofit solutions.

The programme is not just about net zero but levelling up.

First, it would bring a range of benefits for those living in the homes and for years ahead bringing warmer, cheaper to run homes and housing that supports healthier outcomes, in communities with some of the worst health outcomes.

Second, we would utilise the research and development capabilities of our excellent local further and higher educational institutions and private sector anchor companies to grow the skills base of our population and enable local people to undertake this work – our area has some of the highest unemployment levels combined with low skill levels.

Third, we will integrate our manufacturing base to help design and build the kit for the retrofit, bringing back and creating the opportunities for those skilled jobs and establishing green manufacturing at the heart of what is the industrial centre of the country. Alongside we would support the building of the local supply chains of small and medium sized firms in the manufacturing supply chain as well as fitters and tradespeople essential to installing and maintaining the low carbon systems of the future. In addition, we would bring together the skills system to train up people for this work including our young people and from a diversity of backgrounds.



Reducing unemployment in Birmingham to the level of the national average would mean around 75,000 more people in employment, with the retrofit a jobs-rich opportunity in areas that need it most.

We will pool and share existing knowledge, skills and experience, within the three cities, as well as draw on the expertise which already exists within the region across the housing sector, higher and further education, public and private sector organisations such as the Birmingham Energy Institute and Energy Systems Catapult, and the Tyseley Energy Park, businesses organisations including the LEPs and Chambers of Commerce, regional bodies including the West Midlands Combined Authority, and private sector expertise across the built environment and energy systems and the integration with EV charging, district heating and solar arrays. The impact on improving these housing assets will also have a ripple effect in laying the ground to boost other trends such as digitalisation and connecting communities.

To embed levelling up and achieve the most benefit, local partners and community representatives will identify and target opportunity at the most disadvantaged members of society.

We will work through the multiple simultaneous challenges including identifying the most appropriate solutions for use in different situations and covering manufacturing capacity, supply-chain assembly, best value procurement, training a workforce which can install and maintain the new systems and developing at scale funding and investment models.

In addition, we will work with the Department for International Trade and the West Midlands Urban Growth Company to identify opportunities to commercialise the intellectual property generated and to identify overseas sources of investment and export.

This at scale programme provides an opportunity to develop the funding and financing models, and blend of public and private sector investment, and mix of funding, including the emerging green finance mechanisms. The scale of the pilot presents a market making opportunity. Alongside is the opportunity to maximise and capture the financial return in jobs, upskilling and business support which offsets the costs and well as the social return in outcomes.

The pilot will identify and lay out the scale of the opportunity and develop an implementation plan – how far we go and how fast. We can assess the right blend of solutions for the housing stock including the heat technologies that will develop over time and ways to accelerate technological maturity to benefit the wider UK decarbonisation programme such as the removal of domestic gas boilers, use of PV for water heating, the development of district heating networks, heat pumps and future solutions such a hydrogen, optimising building performance and solutions which minimise disruption to occupiers.

The pilot would prepare a strategic business case and test the assumptions as part of this programme. We are seeking central government to support the Three Cities Retrofit as at scale project combining levelling up and net zero goals, and is an opportunity to deploy and bring together government departments and agencies in the programme including BEIS, DLUHC, DIT, DFE and the DWP – and Homes England has been engaged on the potential of this approach. The immediate next step beyond any announcement would be for the three cities to work with partners to prepare and submit a bid for funding to support the pilot and to further develop the programme.

⁶⁵ BEIS Heat & Buildings Strategy Oct 2021

⁶⁶ DHCLG: Table 100 Dwelling stock: Number of Dwellings by Tenure and district: England; 2020

Birmingham City Council's levelling up strategy

Prosperity and opportunity for all

Levelling up Birmingham – Boosting the UK

NOVEMBER 2021

