

City of Nature Plan
Executive Summary
February 2022

Over the next 25 years we want to see Birmingham recognised as a city of nature where its parks and green spaces are both sustainably managed and funded.

The City of Nature Plan will change the way Birmingham treats its natural environment and how it thinks about the future of its parks and green spaces. It will involve the whole council and its core third sector partners through a City of Nature Alliance; whilst reaching out to the citizens of Birmingham to facilitate significantly more involvement.

Although Birmingham has 600 blue and green spaces, many of these were inherited from our Victorian past. We need to see Birmingham as a 21st century green and blue city, not a city that looks backwards to its past but one that looks forward to the future addressing climate change, nature recovery and inequity of access. We also need to increase the number of publicly accessible green spaces by 400 to achieve this. This will then mean Birmingham will not only be a city of 1000 trades but also a city of a 1000 green spaces.

This Delivery Plan will deliver the City of Nature envisioned in Our Future City Plan and beyond; and so, make Birmingham recognisable as a City of Nature on a world stage.

The City of Nature Delivery Plan has looked at how other cities around the world have responded to the issue of unequal access to green space; and is the first UK local authority to develop a measurement tool for Environmental Justice. Environmental justice is defined as: the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. We have also developed a map that shows where in the city compound issues are being felt most. The red wards show those areas of the city where there is the least environmental justice for citizens living there.

This presents a real challenge to the city. Over the course of this 25-year Delivery Plan, the Fair Parks Standard will be applied to all parks, ensuring all those falling below the threshold are brought up to that standard; starting with those scoring lowest, ensuring our parks network moves from red to green by 2047. From 2022 to 2027, we will be focusing our efforts on the following 6 wards – Balsall Heath West, Bordesley and Highgate, Nechells, Gravelly Hill, Pype Hayes and Castle Vale. However, we will work with all wards in the City to provide support on how they can do more to support their green

Birmingham as a city of nature is:

A GREEN CITY

WHERE:

- Net Zero ambitions are fulfilled
- Sustainable, inclusive, green and resilient development is delivered

A HEALTHY CITY

WHERE:

- People will easily find places to enjoy nature safely to enable nature connectedness for their wellbeing
- Growing in the community will be supported leading to at least one community garden in every ward of the city

A FAIR CITY

WHERE:

- There is increased equality of access to and use of green space across our city, through the Birmingham Fair Park Standard
- Citizens will be equipped with the skills to fulfil the future green jobs needed to deliver this vision

AN INVOLVED CITY

WHERE:

- Our most passionate advocates of nature will become Green Champions – recognising the importance of their work looking after our blue and green spaces
- Our children learn about the wonders of nature as Little and Young Green Champions
- Citizens will be encouraged to bring their local green spaces to life using nature focused activities

A VALUED CITY

WHERE:

- The city adopts a sustainable finance framework and a circular economy model for the future funding of the city's blue and green spaces
- We make visible the invisible benefits to the city and citizen of good quality blue and green space