



# Birmingham 2026

Our vision for the future













**Be Birmingham is the local strategic partnership that brings together partners from the business, public, community, voluntary and faith sectors to deliver a better quality of life in Birmingham.**

**Be Birmingham is committed to:**

- **delivering this sustainable community strategy and the accompanying local area agreement**
- **uniting Birmingham's family of partnerships to improve the social and economic well-being of Birmingham residents**
- **involving individuals and community groups to help deliver Birmingham 2026 – the city's sustainable community strategy.**

**For further information visit  
[www.bebirmingham.org.uk](http://www.bebirmingham.org.uk).**



**Birmingham City Council is committed to clear communication. This document has been awarded the Clear English Standard by Plain Language Commission.**

**For information on the Standard and the accreditation process, please visit  
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# Contents

<u>Foreword</u>	<u>06</u>
<u>The Vision</u>	<u>08</u>
<u>Uniquely Birmingham</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Preparing Birmingham 2026</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Our vital statistics</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>What you said</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>What should Birmingham be like in 2026?</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Achieving the vision</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Five clear outcomes and four key principles</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Outcome 1: Succeed economically</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Outcome 2: Stay safe in a clean, green city</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Outcome 3: Be healthy</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Outcome 4: Enjoy a high quality of life</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Outcome 5: Make a contribution</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>Breakthrough changes</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>Delivering the vision</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>Glossary</u>	<u>65</u>



# Foreword

## Five outcomes

### Birmingham people will be enabled to:

- 1. Succeed economically
- 2. Stay safe in a clean, green city
- 3. Be healthy
- 4. Enjoy a high quality of life
- 5. Make a contribution

Our vision is to make Birmingham the first sustainable global city in modern Britain. It will be a great place to live, learn, work and visit: a global city with a local heart.

Birmingham 2026 will transform the ‘connectivity’ of the city – a new high-speed rail link will connect the city with continental Europe and bring London within just 45 minutes’ journey time. Birmingham will have direct air links to the world’s major destinations and key growth points such as China, India and North America. Travellers will be able to reach the airport on a dedicated high-speed airport rail link.

Birmingham 2026 will be the UK’s first sustainable global city. We will have dramatically reduced our reliance on expensive gas and oil. Our low-carbon energy infrastructure will provide reliable and affordable heat, power and cooling to our homes and businesses. As a city we have also been well prepared for the impact of climate change and demonstrated our resilience in the face of floods and heat waves. Our new parks on the ground and ‘parks in the sky’ will keep us cool and will absorb rain water. People will be able to move

easily around the city by walking, cycling or making use of efficient public transport services. We’ll be world leaders in environmental technology, including hydrogen-fuelled vehicles.

Our new regenerated local towns and extended city centre will be a sustainable home to up to 100,000 more people, preserving and taking pressure off the green counties surrounding the city. Sustainable communities are at the heart of Birmingham 2026.

Birmingham 2026 is built around delivering five ‘key outcomes’ developed through research and analysis, debate and discussion with Birmingham people. You spoke. We listened!

Birmingham 2026 includes major physical development like the transformed New Street Station, £18 billion of investment in the city, new businesses and homes across the city, and a runway extension to Birmingham International Airport.

Birmingham 2026 sets out ten ‘breakthrough changes’ that will accelerate the city’s achievements of our key ambitions. These will give a massive

boost to skills, enable us to take the lead in new technologies, and help us prepare for major population growth.

We will also be working with Birmingham residents – many of whom have already made pledges about their contribution to the 2026 vision. Some of the comments you made are quoted throughout this strategy.

Birmingham 2026 sets the direction and focus for the city’s Local Area Agreement, which is the delivery plan for this strategy. We adopted four key principles for this work:

- **Prevention** – redirecting our energies and resources into working with communities to stop problems developing and reducing dependency.
- **Targeting** – protecting and nurturing vulnerable people, and addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities in the city. We call this ‘closing the gap’ between different sections of the city, in terms of issues like prosperity, safety, health, education, and social and digital exclusion.

- **Personalisation** – ensuring we tailor our services to people’s needs.
- **Sustainable development** – improving the quality of life of our citizens and achieving a sustainable economy while living within our environmental limits.

Progress will be reviewed annually and reported publicly – ensuring that the city is meeting the needs and aspirations of Birmingham people. The ideas here reflect what people have told us matters to them. Our challenge is working together with everyone in the city and region to achieve these ambitions.

Birmingham 2026 continues our journey to make Birmingham a city second to none.

*Mike Whitby*  
*Paul Tilsley*



From left,  
Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council,  
Paul Tilsley, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council  
and Chair of Be Birmingham – Local Strategic Partnership.

### Ten breakthrough changes

There are important breakthrough changes that will accelerate our progress to achieve the vision:

1. All together now
2. Understanding and responding to Birmingham people
3. Preparing for major population growth and change
4. An extensive new home-building programme
5. A massive boost to skills
6. Science City: transforming our economic base
7. Continued high levels of investment in the city centre and city suburbs
8. Making it much easier to get around
9. Making better use of public-sector procurement and employment
10. Global city with a local heart

These are described in detail on pages 58 and 59

# The Vision



# It's 2026...

Birmingham is the first sustainable global city in modern Britain. It is a great place to live, learn, work and visit:  
**a global city with a local heart.**

Birmingham people are healthy and enjoy living together.

Birmingham is a safe, clean and friendly city tackling climate change and enhancing the local environment.

Birmingham people have high aspirations, skills and the opportunities they need to succeed.

Birmingham is globally competitive, contributing fully to the thriving, prosperous and sustainable region.

# Uniquely Birmingham

...making Birmingham a great place to live, learn, work and visit.

A safe city with crime rates lower than other core cities in Britain.



A caring city with a rich heritage of innovative and pioneering voluntary and community action.



The regional capital with a world-class economy, in the top 80 global cities.



Britain's meeting place, with over 30 million visitors each year for business and pleasure, offering world-class facilities including the NIA, ICC and NEC.



An inventive and creative city whose credits and legacy include gas lighting, the use of radiography in operations, hole-in-the-heart operations, James Watt's steam engine, and Tolkien's Lord of the Rings.



Leading on climate change with local energy generation from Combined Heat, Power and Cooling schemes; Birmingham Cutting CO<sub>2</sub> – over 24,000 pledges made in the first year, saving over 6,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>; and the country's only hydrogen-gas vehicle-fuelling station.



The city of a thousand trades – now a city of over 42,000 businesses and an international centre of business and professional services.



The best-educated big city with Birmingham students achieving higher GCSE grades than any other major city in Britain and increasing levels of skills attainments by adults.



A city of culture, home to the internationally acclaimed musical companies of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Birmingham Royal Ballet; famous art collections and organisations; and excellent theatrical venues including the Hippodrome, The Rep and The Drum.

A city that welcomes newcomers - where diverse communities live comfortably together.



Europe's youngest city with the highest percentage of young people.



Britain's biggest city outside London with over a million residents.



A city of faith with more people saying they follow a faith than most other cities.



A city of sport, with a fantastic range of professional and amateur sporting events. Birmingham – home of Aston Villa and Birmingham City football clubs and Warwickshire Cricket Club.



A city that has extensive grass-roots sports opportunities and has staged more world and European championships than any other UK city, earning the reputation for delivering 'the best ever' international indoor athletics events

A welcoming home to people from other nations and cultures, with a proud history of and vision for immigration and people living together in harmony – soon to be Britain's first core city with no ethnic group forming a majority of the population.



A strong historic environment, with almost 30 conservation areas and over 400 listed buildings. Archaeological sites of national importance – such as Metchley Roman Fort, prehistoric burnt-out moulds at Moseley Bog and 13 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.



The 'best business environment' in Europe and one of the top three 'most dynamic European cities' when it comes to encouraging entrepreneurship.



A leading 'Science City' and 'Digital City' inspiring innovation, delivering nationally leading research with our five universities and keeping our diverse community informed and connected.



# Preparing Birmingham 2026

This strategy sets out the single vision for the future of the city, which is the basis for all other strategies in the city (for example, the Core Strategy and Big City Plan which form part of the Local Development Framework).

All local authorities are required by law to demonstrate how they are going to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and contribute to achieving sustainable development in the UK. This strategy has been written by the city council and its partners who make up Be Birmingham, the Local Strategic Partnership. It embodies the whole vision for the city, which provides the basis and direction for improving the quality of life of people in Birmingham. Be Birmingham has spent over a year listening to local people, businesses, and public and voluntary organisations to identify and agree this overall and long-term ambition. Achieving the vision will make a difference to the people of Birmingham.

This strategy identifies clear priorities and targets that respond to what local people have told us is important.

The strategy will help us and our partners to:

- work towards creating a better Birmingham through the same ambitious long-term goals
- work together to make sure services reflect local people's needs and preferences and provide value for money
- develop innovative and effective solutions to achieve the best results
- clearly align resources with priorities.

This document is intended mainly for partners and individuals who need a detailed understanding of the strategy. We will publish and distribute a summary highlighting the key messages and ways in which individuals can contribute to the success of Birmingham 2026.







# Starting with the evidence

To start the process of creating and developing Birmingham 2026, the partnership looked at the major trends and issues affecting the city now and in the future. We worked with the Audit Commission, to develop an 'Area Profile' – a detailed picture of local services and the quality of life of Birmingham residents. To do this we used quality-of-life measures, statistics, inspection reports, and local residents' and service-users' views.

Using this information and analysing wider trends and issues facing the city, we developed our 'State Of The City' strategic assessment. We analysed what we already knew about local people's priorities, needs and preferences, including information from:

- over 14,000 detailed interviews with adult residents in their homes. By talking with people in their homes, we ensured that we included all parts of the community
- a 'Planning for the Future' conference in February 2007, which explored how the ideas would work in practice
- a two-day Birmingham 2026 conference with a wide cross-section of participants selected from the 'People's Panel' of over 2,000 Birmingham residents

- detailed focus groups with members of the People's Panel, looking at key issues and how life in Birmingham can be improved
- the City Shapers event in Victoria Square in the city centre in March 2007, where over 1,600 people considered the challenges facing the city and told us what they want for Birmingham in the future.

Over the last year we have consulted local people in more detail by:

- distributing almost 30,000 leaflets asking people's views on priorities. 1,200 responses and submissions were collated and analysed
- conducting discussions on Facebook and looking at the public's contributions to our website, and via email and phone
- holding public meetings in all ten constituencies
- having discussions with nine community groups across the city – organised on a geographic and 'communities of interest' basis.

The business community has made a considerable contribution to Birmingham 2026. Business leaders have worked – and continue to work – on the Birmingham Prospectus, which was produced after consulting stakeholders from the public, private and third sector at and after two conferences in 2006.

The Prospectus sets out a shared vision and priorities for the city's long-term development, in particular focusing on major growth and opportunities to develop the way the city's communications and services are organised.

We have also held discussions with the One Voice group, which brings together major business organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Birmingham Forward and the Institute of Directors.



## Refining the ideas

**In December 2007 the draft version of Birmingham 2026 went out for a four-month public consultation, to which a wide range of people responded.**

To refine the proposals, further work was conducted including:

- developing challenging targets for the next three years, which partners across the city and central government signed up to
- starting to develop shared approaches to assessing needs, involving the public, delivery planning and commissioning with partners
- analysing the way the city's residents, businesses and visitors form into segments so that we can understand better the needs and preferences of different communities
- analysing data about key outcomes in different neighbourhoods and discussion about these outcomes, in each of the ten constituencies
- assessing the impact of the strategy on equality-related issues, to determine how it could affect different communities, especially groups or communities that experience inequality, unfair or unlawful discrimination, social exclusion or disadvantage. This will allow us to take action to promote equality for all.

The Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) for the strategy will be published alongside the strategy on the City Council's website.

This strategy is the result of the agreed vision and priorities identified during this consultation process.



# Our Vital Statistics

## - key population trends affecting the city

After decades of decline, Birmingham is growing again, with a projected 100,000 more people by 2026.

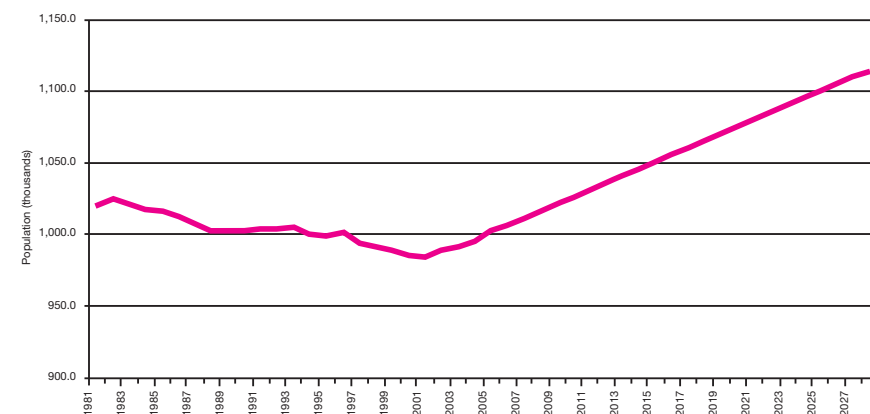
We are already the youngest European city, with 24,000 more under-18 year-olds expected by 2026. The greatest forecast increase is in over-85s – a 38 per cent increase by 2026 from 18,750 people to 25,950.

Our population is becoming increasingly diverse – by 2026 no single ethnic group will form a majority of the city's population.

By 2026, the city is likely to have 228,300 more people belonging to black and minority ethnic groups and 128,200 fewer white people.

Birmingham has undergone a renaissance over the last 10-20 years, and the picture of change can be best illustrated through some of Birmingham's impressive achievements:

- unemployment has halved: from over 71,000 in 1998 to 33,000 today (down from 17 per cent to 8 per cent)
- the visitor economy has tripled: business and leisure visitors have grown from under 22 million in 1996 to over 30 million in 2006. Visitor spending has increased from £760 million in 1996 to £2.5 billion in 2006
- the city centre has been transformed with the International Convention Centre opening in the early 1990s and Millennium Point in 2001
- Birmingham is now a leading shopping city: with the new Bull Ring shopping centre opening in 2003, Birmingham jumped from being the ninth biggest shopping city to the second.



## What you said...

### What are the most important issues?



Birmingham 2026 is based on what Birmingham residents and businesses think of their city.

A People's Panel survey in October 2007 identified climate change and terrorism as the two most important global issues concerning residents. In the survey, 63 per cent of residents said climate change was their main global concern – so we intend to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the city by 60 per cent and ensure it is ready for climate change. Far fewer (15 per cent) named terrorism as their main concern and we are working to prevent violent extremism affecting the city.

In our major survey of over 6,000 local people interviewed face-to-face, the local issues considered to be vitally important to quality of life in Birmingham were: crime levels, clean streets, parks and open spaces, health services, shopping and facilities for young children. People are already satisfied with many aspects of these quality-of-life indicators. However, further improvements are still necessary:

- crime levels – so our goal is to cut serious crime by a further 12 per cent in three years on our way to becoming Britain's safest city

- clean streets – so our goal is to be Britain's cleanest city

- facilities for children, including parks – so our goal is to have the best parks in the UK.

Respondents to our Birmingham 2026 survey concluded that the top priorities for themselves, their friends and their families for living in Birmingham were:

- feeling safe – so our goal is to ensure Birmingham people know they're in the UK's safest city

- integrated transport – so our goal is to have the best pedestrian, cycling, road, rail and air access to and within the city

- skills, education and employment – so our goal is to be Britain's best-skilled city

- recycling and reducing waste – so our goal is to recycle a high percentage of household waste.

In addition:

- For the city as a whole: people said attracting and keeping successful businesses is a priority – so succeeding economically is our first priority in this strategy.

- For individuals: people valued 'being able to influence local decision-making' – so our goal is to be Britain's most engaged city, involving residents as much as possible.

- For their families and friends: people highlighted 'decent and affordable housing' – so our goal is to deliver over 50,000 new homes and have the best housing in the UK.



# Listening to children

We asked some local schools what they thought about Birmingham 2026. Over 90 pupils from four of our primary schools shared an impressive body of art work portraying their ideas and ambitions for the city. The schools were Anderton Park School (Sparkhill), Oldknow Junior School (Small Heath), Summerfield Primary School (Winson Green), and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (Ladywood).

The students aged 10-11 said they particularly liked Birmingham's parks, the variety of shops and cinemas, and the opportunities to recycle. They disliked litter and graffiti, the threat of violence from gangs, and feeling intimidated. They were concerned about the negative role models that young people displaying anti-social behaviour provide for younger children. The students were also concerned about public transport and traffic congestion. These issues are covered in more detail in the 'Stay safe in a clean, green city' chapter.

Looking to the future, most children chose as their priorities staying safe in a clean, green city, plus open spaces, recycling, being able to cross roads safely, and picnic and play areas.

They recommended:

- glow-in-the-dark recycling bins
- free theme parks
- a star park, with different activities at each 'point' of the star (such as, football, baseball, crazy golf, a toddler area and netball)
- electric cars and trams
- healthy 'fast-food' shops.

Pupils taking part designed plans for their neighbourhoods in 2026...



Fazila, 11  
Anderton Park School (Sparkhill)



Nishat, 11  
Oldknow Junior School (Small Heath)

# What should Birmingham be like in 2026?

## Treasuring our past

Ninety members of Birmingham's 2,000-strong representative People's Panel attended a two-day event in July 2007. They highlighted the great pride they felt in:

- Birmingham as a city built on 1,000 trades without 'closed guilds'
- Birmingham as a friendly and welcoming city with good values
- Birmingham's grand landmarks such as Aston Hall and Cadburys
- Birmingham as a front-runner in developing canals.



# Shaping our future



The participants from the People's Panel also helped shape our future vision for Birmingham and generated a lot of ideas for action, including:

- **Succeed economically**

- diversifying business, including new creative and technological businesses; strengthening and nurturing small businesses; creating a 'Brum Bond' to provide local investment; establishing apprenticeships linked to real jobs; integrating the transport systems; cutting congestion by staggering school opening times; developing a highly skilled workforce; and valuing families through flexible working.

- **Stay safe**

- involving citizens to tackle gangs and knife crime; creating more activities for young people; encouraging better behaviour in schools; and leveling pavements to prevent falls.

- **Be healthy**

- tackling drugs and alcohol misuse; making healthy, convenient food more readily available; providing quicker access to health care; developing a better understanding of mental health; creating spaces for people to relax in; designing better routes for cycling and walking; securing cutting-edge

research in local universities; and providing more affordable sports services.

- **Enjoy a high quality of life**

- providing an integrated transport system; discouraging cars to the city centre; designing and providing better housing; providing better activities for teenagers and helping them towards good mental health; reducing packaging and increasing recycling; and providing support for families.

- **Make a contribution**

- participants' personal pledges included respecting and valuing young people more; volunteering; making their language less sexist; composting and recycling; reporting local environmental problems; voting in elections; and starting an allotment. Their comments are included as quotes throughout this strategy.

Participants in the 'visioning days' created 2026 news stories about the city.





# Achieving the vision

The world economy will continue to see rapid changes driven by technology, increased mobility of people, and investment and greater competition from emerging economies. It will also face economic challenges linked to climate change and the long-term availability of natural resources. Birmingham must take a lead in meeting these economic challenges and grasping opportunities.

The Be Birmingham Partnership believes that a successful economy is the main impetus for delivering what matters to Birmingham people, ensuring the city is a great place to live, learn, work and visit. Indeed, Birmingham contributes significantly to the regional and national economy. This means the economy is given particular attention in this Sustainable Community Strategy.

Our goal is to create a sustainable city, by delivering:

- **economic** well-being by creating jobs through investment and growth
- **social** well-being by ensuring that all people and parts of Birmingham benefit from this economic success
- **environmental** well-being by using resources responsibly, and protecting and promoting the local and global environment.

This approach enables partners and Birmingham residents to address the challenges the city faces. The Birmingham Prospectus and the Birmingham Economic Strategy contain more detail about these challenges and their solutions.

We have placed considerable focus on the development and growth of the city centre. This is because the city centre is pivotal to the economic success of the whole city – it has a leading role in building a successful economy by attracting people to world-class office environments, retail facilities, major events, and education institutions. The Big City Plan takes this work much further, aiming to regenerate areas to the south (Digbeth/Highgate) and north (Jewellery and Gun Quarters). The Plan will ultimately expand the city centre, appropriate in size and scale to Birmingham as the regional capital and a global city of over one million people.

Developing the city centre will run alongside plans to create vibrant urban villages throughout the city. Our single neighbourhood programme and ‘achieving excellence with communities’ will help to build sustainable local communities, tackling deprivation and ensuring equality and fairness.

Birmingham 2026 sets the focus for our Local Area Agreement through clear targets and actions for the next three years. This is the agreement between local partners and central government to transform performance against key issues for the city.

# Five

## clear outcomes

We have defined our vision according to the five outcomes Birmingham people have identified.

We want to enable Birmingham people to:

- **Succeed economically** – benefit from education, training, jobs and investment
- **Stay safe in a clean, green city** – living in safe and clean neighbourhoods
- **Be healthy** – enjoy long and healthy lives
- **Enjoy a high quality of life** – benefit from good housing and renowned cultural and leisure opportunities
- **Make a contribution** – value one another and play an active part in the community.

# Four

## key principles

We have adopted four principles to guide our actions in working towards these five outcomes:

- **Prevention** – redirecting our energies and resources into working with communities to stop problems developing and to reduce dependency
- **Targeting** – protecting and nurturing vulnerable people, and tackling disadvantaged communities in the city. We call this ‘closing the gap’ between different sections of the city, in terms of issues like prosperity, safety, health, education, and social and digital exclusion
- **Personalisation** – ensuring we tailor our services to people’s needs
- **Sustainable development** – improving the quality of life of our citizens and achieving a sustainable economy while living within environmental limits.



**Succeed economically**



# Outcome 1: Succeed economically

A successful economy is fundamental to creating well-being in the city.

## Outcomes

Succeeding economically will mean:

- more people, including people with disabilities, will be in work  
– unemployment and worklessness will be reduced significantly
- more companies and employers will establish businesses,  
and will prosper and remain in Birmingham
- economic inequalities between communities will reduce,  
and disadvantaged people will have more opportunities
- educational performance and adult skills will continue to improve
- more young people will be in education, training and employment
- road, rail and air access to, and within, the city will improve  
– congestion in the city will be managed
- environmental impact will be minimised through sustainable development,  
including reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, preparing for the effects of climate change,  
using resources more efficiently, recycling more and protecting the natural  
environment
- satisfaction with, and cost-effectiveness of, recycling and waste-management  
services will improve.



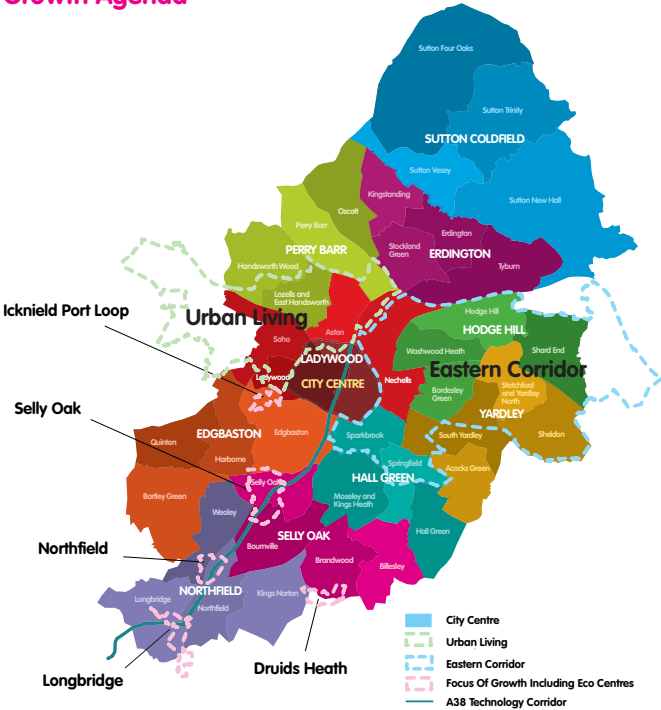
# Where we are now

## Growth and Employment

- Birmingham is the regional capital and the main driver for the Midlands economy – with over 42,000 businesses generating a fifth of the region's wealth (£18 billion last year), it is in the top 80 global cities.
- We have the potential to generate up to £4 billion extra wealth if we accelerate our growth to achieve national levels of employment and productivity.
- Considerable focus has been placed on the development and growth of the city centre. This has paid dividends over the last 20 years with significant changes in the commercial core and to the east (Eastside leisure and learning district), west (Broad Street) and the historic Jewellery Quarter, for which Birmingham is seeking World Heritage Status. These provide a fantastic 'shop window' for Birmingham, attracting more investors and visitors. The Big City Plan will build on this.
- We have clear plans for key centres elsewhere in the city, including regional investment sites in Longbridge and Aston, the Central Technology Belt through Selly Oak, Eastern Corridor developments, and the Digbeth creative centre.
- Birmingham's Science City status gives us the opportunity to develop essential innovative businesses and drive the West Midlands' economic growth – building on the expertise of our universities and business-led research partners.

- We have plans to tackle high rates of worklessness among certain groups.
- Employment in business services and in the public sector has increased significantly. Jobs in financial and business services, cultural and digital services, and high-technology manufacturing are forecast to increase in the next decade. We would benefit from this kind of diversification as employment in traditional manufacturing businesses continues to fall (by over 4 per cent a year on average in the last decade).
- Small and medium-sized businesses contribute the most to local employment. We are researching how we can understand their needs and support them more, by developing a 'segmentation' of all businesses in the city.
- We need to increase business enterprise, including social enterprise, particularly among young people, women, and communities with a history of low levels of business formation and growth.
- A commitment to high-quality urban design, public realm and streetscape improvements in and creating an environment in which people make a conscious decision to walk, cycle and stay a while.
- We need to focus effort on worklessness and homelessness, helping people who experience the greatest disadvantage and need intensive support to enter employment or training.

## Growth Agenda





## Skills

- About three in five young people leave school with the five 'good' GCSEs that businesses say are essential to obtaining good jobs – our children are achieving high educational qualifications compared to those in other big cities. However, some groups are still under-achieving (such as poorer white boys and African Caribbean pupils).
- Adult skills are below the national average, although the number of people achieving basic skills qualifications and NVQ Levels 2 and 3 is increasing.
- Relatively low numbers of graduates stay and work in the city.
- There has been excellent progress in reducing the number of 16-18-year-olds not in education, employment or training.
- Educational transformation continues through the Brighter Futures and Building Schools for the Future programmes.



## Transport

- Repairing roads and pavements and reducing traffic congestion were among the top five issues identified in our annual resident survey as needing improvement.
- Birmingham is at the heart of the UK's motorway and railway networks, giving us strong competitive advantages and a responsibility to ensure that key routes in and out of the city are maintained and continue to provide efficient access.
- Birmingham has some of the highest rates of car commuting. Key to transforming this are changes in people's behaviour, reducing the need to travel by developing vibrant urban villages within the city, and providing safer, more accessible public transport.
- Without intervention, key car commuting journey times are likely to increase significantly.
- Safe and efficient transport is also critical to Birmingham's businesses, enabling access to skills and jobs, as well as the flourishing night-time economy.
- There are major improvements planned to New Street railway station and further extensions of the Metro planned through to 2014.
- Plans have been announced to extend Birmingham International Airport's runway – key to the global connectivity of the city for encouraging economic growth.

## Connectivity

- Good communication links and collaboration, with online access to information, giving citizens access to local services and opportunities, are essential to building a connected city. However, there is currently a 'digital divide' in the city, between people who have access to the internet and online services and those who do not.
- Birmingham is leading the way in providing home internet access. The computers for pupils/universal home access project, already launched in Aston, is being implemented across the city.
- Recently, Birmingham became the first 'wireless city' to provide citizens and businesses with an enhanced communications network and free information service in the city centre – 'Birmingham FIZ'.



**“Public transport should be more accessible and affordable”**

Barbara, Shirley - West Midlands



### The Environment and Climate Change

- Birmingham has over 3,200 hectares of parks and open spaces, including six Green Flag Parks. The city has 140 nature conservation sites including seven Local Nature Reserves and one National Nature Reserve, Sutton Park.
- Birmingham people consume almost three times their 'fair share' of the Earth's resources, in common with many cities in developed countries.
- In 2005 we produced 6,325kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per person.
- Carbon dioxide is produced by businesses (47 per cent), households (35 per cent) and road transport (18 per cent) – action is needed in each of these areas.
- There are environmental inequalities throughout the city, and people living in deprived areas are more likely to suffer from environmental problems.
- We need to prepare for the inevitable impact of climate change to ensure that our city can cope with more extreme weather, such as hotter summers and wetter winters.
- People who 'know a lot' about climate change (currently only 28 per cent of Birmingham citizens) are five times more likely to take significant action to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We have found that targeted information is critical to change – already, people using our Cutting CO<sub>2</sub> pledge website have saved over 5,000 tonnes of carbon.
- Birmingham universities are leading on renewable energy technologies, including the first hydrogen-gas vehicle-fuelling station.
- Air and noise pollution are significant problems in certain parts of the city – improving the local environment ranked in the top five challenges facing the city identified in our 2007 annual residents' survey.
- Our industrial legacy means that we have to deal with issues regarding contaminated land and water pollution.
- Environmental improvements will help to raise the profile of the city. Ensuring that streets, buildings and public spaces are safe, attractive, clean and accessible will help provide the right environment for attracting investment and supporting economic success.



**“We need to encourage  
small businesses and local  
enterprise in the high streets”**

Russell, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham



# What we want to achieve

## – our improvement targets

By 2026 Birmingham will achieve:

A 60 per cent reduction in key climate change emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> )				
CO <sub>2</sub> Tonnes/person	2005	6.3	2026	2.5
Reduce, reuse and recycle				
Recycling household waste (%)	2008	26	2026	>40
Volume of residual household waste (kg)	2006	927	2026	632
Britain's best skilled city - With adult skills that are ready for the new 'knowledge' economy and in line with the best core cities				
Level 4+ skills in working age population (%)	2006	24	2026	36
Virtually all 16-24 year-olds in education, employment and training				
16-24-year-olds (%)	2006	92	2026	95
Elimination of the productivity gap - Matching the economic competitiveness and employment rates of the best UK cities (generating up to £4 billion extra wealth)				
GVA/person (£)	2006	18,500	2026	25,500
Employment (%)	2005	63	2026	80
Over 50,000 new homes - To reduce overcrowding, to cope with changes in household composition, and to accommodate 100,000 more people in the city				

Our medium-term targets for the next one to three years are detailed in the Local Area Agreement and include:

Limiting peak road congestion to a 5per cent increase in journey times 2005–11				
Reducing worklessness in worst-performing neighbourhoods (%)	2006/7	31	2010/11	28
Increasing attainment at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (%)	2006/7	66	2009/10	74
Working age population qualified to at least Level 4 or higher (%)	2006/7	24	2010/11	29







# Early priorities for action

The following early priorities for action will help put us in a position to achieve our medium and long-term goals. These key actions will be delivered through our Local Area Agreement.

They include:

- 1. Create the conditions for sustainable economic and population growth and regeneration by transforming the city centre and local neighbourhoods.
- 2. Increase the city's economic output and productivity through expansion of key growth sectors, greater enterprise and innovation in high value-added activity.
- 3. Provide high-quality systems and services to support improved local and regional connectivity and accessibility, enhance global competitiveness and underpin future economic and population growth.

- 4. Increase employment and reduce poverty across all communities through targeted interventions to support people to move from welfare into work.
- 5. Create a vibrant low-carbon, low-waste economy, including the best use of environmental technologies, and ensure that Birmingham is prepared for the impact of climate change.

- 6. Improve Birmingham's educational attainment and skills base to meet the economic needs of the city now and in the future.

While implementing these actions, we will also investigate how to tackle the following priorities that fall outside the scope of the current Local Area Agreement:

- 7. Understand the needs and preferences of all major types of business in the city, and then create an environment where it is easy to start and continue doing good business in Birmingham, including small businesses serving local needs.
- 8. Reducing the need to travel, particularly by car, by developing local centres, businesses and facilities, encouraging cycling, and ensuring new housing development is well served by public transport. Encouraging flexible working, home working and virtual meetings to reduce congestion, the environmental impact of travel, and help people balance the pressures of family, home and work.

**Stay safe in a clean,  
green city**



**2**

## Outcome 2: Stay safe in a clean, green city



**Staying safe in a clean, green city is about living in safe and clean neighbourhoods.**

### Outcomes

A clean, green and safe Birmingham will mean:

- more people will consider their neighbourhood and city to be clean and safe
- crime rates will continue to fall, especially in wards where rates are highest
- crimes of particular concern will be reduced, including violent crime such as public-place woundings, gun and knife crime and incidents involving alcohol, drugs, guns and gangs
- the number of fire-related crimes will continue to decline
- fear of crime will be reduced, including tackling issues that people perceive as threatening and destructive, such as graffiti
- fewer children and young people will be victims of crime or will offend or become persistent offenders
- fewer people will sustain injuries as a result of road traffic accidents
- concern about hate crime will remain low or decrease further
- vulnerable people will be effectively safeguarded – including children, young people, older people, people with mental-health problems or learning and physical disabilities and victims of domestic violence.



## Where we are now

- There have been significant improvements in street cleanliness, waste management and recycling in 2007/8, although surveys of residents say that 'clean streets' remain the factor most in need of improvement locally.
- Crime rates have fallen by 20 per cent over the last five years, but like most cities, this is still seen as one of the top three factors needing more improvement in the city (after clean streets and activities for teenagers).
- Fear of crime has reduced but remains high in some areas and groups.
- Vulnerable people need better protection – domestic violence and bullying of young people remain significant problems.
- The number of children in care is increasing, as are referrals to children's social services.
- We have a recent history of a damaging developing guns and gangs culture.
- Drugs and alcohol misuse are significant factors driving crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Vulnerability of some people to getting involved in violent extremism is a challenge.
- The number of people killed or seriously injured in traffic accidents has fallen by a third in the last decade.
- The number of accidental fires has fallen.



# What we want to achieve

– our improvement targets

By 2026 Birmingham will achieve:

Britain's safest city				
Feeling safe during day (%)	2007	94	2026	99
Feeling safe outside after dark (%)	2007	61	2026	82
Crimes per 1,000 residents	2006/7	73	2026	44
Britain's cleanest city - with street cleanliness in line with the best UK cities				
Public satisfaction with cleanliness (%)	2006	60	2026	90
Land with unacceptable litter/detritus (%)	2006	15.2	2026	<10

Our medium-term targets for the next three years are detailed in the Local Area Agreement and include:

Cut incidents of serious crime in the next three years				
Serious violent crime	2007/8	1,419	2010/11	1,263
Serious acquisitive crime	2007/8	26,412	2010/11	23,507
Gun crime rate	2007/8	541	2010/11	481
Arson fires	2007/8	2,888	2010/11	2,176
Improved street and environmental cleanliness				
Graffiti (%)	2007/8	12	2010/11	9
Litter (%)	2007/8	3.8	2010/11	3.5
Detritus (%)	2007/8	8.85	2010/11	8.55
Fly posting (%)	2007/8	0.94	2010/11	0.79

# Early priorities for action



The following early priorities for action will help put us in a position to achieve our medium- and long-term aims. These key actions will be delivered through our Local Area Agreement. They include:

1. Reduce the most serious violence, including tackling domestic violence, gang and gun-related crime, and violence in public places.
2. Tackle serious acquisitive crime and increase public and investor confidence in neighbourhoods. We will do this by dealing with local crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and creating cleaner, greener and safer neighbourhoods and public spaces.
3. Reduce re-offending by improving the management of offenders and by effectively treating drug- and alcohol-using offenders.
4. Protect Birmingham's children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm.

5. Prevent the development of violent extremism.

6. Improve street and environmental cleanliness.

While implementing these actions, we will also investigate how to tackle the following priorities that fall outside the scope of the current Local Area Agreement:

7. Support young people to avoid them being drawn into gangs and criminality, or help them escape from this.

8. Increase personal safety on public transport and in the home.

9. Reduce the production of waste and increase recycling, including encouraging and promoting community-based recycling and reuse schemes such as Freecycle, Betel and the Ladywood Furniture Project.

Note – actions for hate crime (such as racist or homophobic abuse) are included in Outcome 5: Make a contribution.



Be healthy





## Outcome 3: Be healthy

### Outcomes

A healthy Birmingham will mean that we will:

- improve health for all, in particular for people who belong to the least healthy groups, narrowing the gap in life expectancy between the least healthy areas and the city average
- have more people choosing healthy and active lifestyles, lowering levels of obesity, increasing levels of physical activity, stopping smoking and encouraging healthier eating
- enable more people to live independently for longer
- have more people living in warm homes with modern facilities
- improve residents' mental, physical and emotional well-being.





# Where we are now

## Vital statistics

- Life expectancy in Birmingham is up to three years below the national average.
- There are differences in life expectancy between some areas of the city. Men can expect to live about eight years less in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas of the city. For women the difference is almost seven years.
- Birmingham is expected to see a significant increase in the number of people aged 85 or over.
- Babies in Birmingham are almost twice as likely to die in their first year of life compared to the England average, with some parts of the city experiencing particularly high levels of infant mortality.
- The rate of teenage conceptions in Birmingham has historically been well above the national average. The rate varies across the city, with some areas having particularly high rates.

## Health and well-being

- Mental-health issues are important in Birmingham. The behaviour of many children and young people shows evidence of disorders or depression. Employers report issues regarding stress and managing work-life balance among their staff.
- Some older people often feel isolated. It is very important to their well-being to ensure they feel part of the community and can continue to live independently.
- Obesity is a significant public-health issue in Birmingham. An estimated 25 per cent of children aged five to 15 in the city are overweight and another 12.5 per cent are clinically obese. The highest levels are among black and minority ethnic groups.
- It is estimated that more than half of the adult population is overweight and 18 per cent are clinically obese. Some areas of the city have particularly high concentrations of people who are obese. There are clear lifestyle factors behind this to do with diet and exercise.



The new Birmingham Super Hospital

# Early priorities for action



The following early priorities for action will help put us in a position to achieve our medium- and long-term goals. These key actions will be delivered through our Local Area Agreement.

They include:

1. Reduce inequalities in health and mortality across Birmingham and support more people to choose healthy lifestyles and improve their well-being.
2. Develop personalised care and support for older people, and vulnerable children, young people and adults to live healthier and more independent lives. Provide better support for people with long-term conditions and their carers, including improving end-of-life care.
3. Improve the health of Birmingham's children and young people and protect them from potentially damaging lifestyles and behaviour.

While implementing these actions, we will also investigate how to tackle the following priorities that fall outside the scope of the current Local Area Agreement:

4. Value older people: improving support for elderly people of all ethnic groups, genders and sexual orientations, including extra-care villages; better access to health care, foot care and exercise; practical support to live independently at home, such as 'handy person schemes' across the city; and support for local befriending services which help reduce feelings of isolation. We also want to increase understanding and support across the generations.
5. Increase the physical activity of people in groups and areas with poor health outcomes, including their use of leisure facilities and access to physical training and exercise programmes.
6. Make healthier food more readily available, encouraging 'healthy fast-food shops' and the uptake of allotments.
7. Make efficient use of technology to help Birmingham people understand and manage their own health.





“Improved facilities  
for the elderly”

Jason, Birmingham Resident



# What we want to achieve

## – our improvement targets

By 2026 Birmingham will achieve:

Most physically active UK city - Active lifestyles in line with the best core cities. Taking moderate exercise at least three times a week				
Adults (%)	2006	17	2026	22
Children (%)	2006	50.6	2026	60
Longer life for all - Life expectancy at or above the national average across the city				
Male life expectancy in 'worst' ward (years)	2004	70.7	2026	77
Female life expectancy in 'worst' ward (years)	2004	78.1	2026	82
Low teenage pregnancy rates - Below the national average				
Rate per 1,000 15-17-year-old girls	2006	53.2	2026	<44
Best city in which to grow old				
Adult care packages being made available, when required, within four weeks of assessment (%)	2006	73.6	2026	94

Our medium term targets for the next 3 years are detailed in the Local Area Agreement and include:

Stop over 2,000 people from smoking by 2010/11.
Reduce the rate of increase in childhood obesity, to just under 22 per cent of year 6 primary school pupils.
Reduce the number of 15-17-year-old teenage girls falling pregnant from 1,148 to 1,013 by 2010/11.

Enjoy a high quality of life



## Outcome 4: Enjoy a high quality of life

Good housing and enjoying renowned cultural and leisure opportunities will help improve the standard of living.

### Outcomes

By a high quality of life we mean:

- more people will be satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- local centres will be thriving, clean and attractive
- more residents will be satisfied with the range of housing available to them to meet their needs and wants
- the city's housing stock will be modernised to ensure it is of the best standard
- more older people will be active and involved in the community
- people providing informal care to relatives and dependants will receive better support
- more people will be satisfied with our parks and open spaces and will have access to cultural activities (such as libraries and museums) and enjoy our leisure and entertainment facilities at a time and place that suits them.





# Where we are now



## Housing

- A wide range of housing is available, although there is a shortage of larger family homes and appropriate communal play space. Our housing strategy shows how housing will be managed to help achieve the five key community strategy outcomes.
- In some areas there is a shortage of affordable homes and a lack of housing options for young people.
- The city's social housing is on track to reach the 'decent homes standard' by 2010.
- A shared preventative approach between the public and third sector has reduced homelessness by half in three years. Our Homelessness Strategy clearly sets out our future approach in this area.
- An estimated 53,000 households live in 'fuel poverty' where a household cannot afford enough fuel for comfort and good health.
- More affordable housing is needed to reduce high levels (26,000 households) of overcrowding. Almost 20 per cent of children in Birmingham live in overcrowded households.
- To take account of the forecast population growth and the Regional Spatial Strategy, over 50,000 new homes will be needed in the next 20 years.

## Culture and leisure

- There is a wide range of private- and public-sector leisure facilities in Birmingham, although many of these need modernising.
- The city has outstanding cultural facilities and architectural heritage, including some internationally famous companies such as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) and the Birmingham Royal Ballet, and venues such as the Symphony Hall, The Drum and the Town Hall.
- Tourism is a £2.5 billion-a-year business for the city; the needs and preferences of business and leisure visitors, day-trippers, and people visiting friends and family all need to be understood and met.
- Use of leisure and cultural services is low in some areas and among some groups, for example retired and disabled people.

## Care and carers

- Care services in the city are improving from their previous low base and are now considered to be serving people well.
- Informal carers provide vital support to people across the city; about 100,000 people (10 per cent of Birmingham's population) are unpaid carers.

# What we want to achieve

## – our improvement targets

By 2026, Birmingham will achieve:

Best housing in the UK - Decent standards, with efficient heating systems and insulation				
Social housing (%)	2006	40	2010	100
Private housing (%)	2006	48	2026	77
Best parks in the UK				
Resident satisfaction with parks and open spaces (%)	2006	68	2026	80
Best culture in the UK - Resident satisfaction with cultural facilities inline with the best UK cities				
Resident satisfaction with libraries (%)	2006	70	2026	82
Resident satisfaction with museums (%)	2006	56	2026	77

Our medium-term targets for the next three years are detailed in the Local Area Agreement and include:

Providing 2,530 new homes, including at least 1,000 'affordable' homes.
Increasing satisfaction with the local area by 3 per cent (23,000 people).
Increasing the number of adults participating in sport and active recreation by 3 per cent (23,000 people).

# Early priorities for action

The following early priorities for action will help put us in a position to achieve our medium- and long-term goals. These key actions will be delivered through our Local Area Agreement.

They include:

- 1. Raising the quality, choice and affordability of housing across Birmingham, maintaining high levels of ‘decent homes’ and ensuring more people choose to live and stay in the city and its communities.
- 2. Improving Birmingham's neighbourhoods, particularly the least affluent ones in terms of deprivation, service delivery and overall quality of life.
- 3. Raising Birmingham's profile and attracting more people, trade and opportunities through its renowned facilities and events across the cultural, sport and creative sectors, and ensuring residents have access to high-quality local facilities and programmes.

While implementing these actions, we will also start to tackle the following priorities that fall outside the scope of the current Local Area Agreement:

- 4. Celebrate being Europe's youngest city by valuing young people: developing better facilities and activities and ensuring all young people can access housing and a career. We will also build understanding and enjoyment across the generations in the city.
- 5. Create recreational havens: improving access to recreational facilities and raising the quality of, and satisfaction with, local parks, open spaces and waterways (including historic canals). We will create the new city park and involve the public in its design.
- 6. Improve accessibility of the city centre and city suburbs for people with physical disabilities – including pavements, buildings and car parks and access to public toilets, personal-care suites and park benches.
- 7. Enable more people to reap the benefits of the internet and online services to access learning, education, leisure and cultural experiences.





# Making a contribution



## Outcome 5: Make a contribution

Making a contribution is about valuing one another and actively contributing to the community.

### Outcomes

People valuing one another and playing an active part in the community will mean that:

- more people in general (and hard-to-reach groups in particular) will feel that they can influence local decisions and have a say in their services
- people will have a range of ways to communicate, interact and take part in local decision-making and influence their neighbourhoods and services
- people will celebrate the city's diversity, culture and history and be proud of its achievements – including acting as ambassadors for the city
- the community and voluntary sector will increase the scope of their activities so that they feel they are full partners in the life of the city and are making a particular contribution
- newly arrived and established communities will be able to communicate, share experiences and exchange information throughout the city. Communities will be at ease with themselves and each other; people will value the increasing diversity of the city's population; people will enjoy positive relationships
- more people will be clear about how they are expected to behave, will take responsibility for their own and their children's behaviour and will respect others and their neighbourhood
- more people will be able to choose how they get involved and feel they have a voice in their community.



# Where we are now

## Influencing decision-making

- In 2006, 40 per cent of people agreed that they can influence decisions that affect their local area, an improvement of 22 per cent from 2004.
- The number of residents voting in local elections in the UK is low, and Birmingham has one of the lowest voting rates of all European cities. We need to increase voter turnout and ensure that residents feel empowered.

## Voluntary sector

- Nearly 40 per cent of residents in Birmingham volunteer, for example by giving advice, helping to organise a local event, giving sports coaching, doing household jobs, looking after the city's heritage sites, or caring for children.
- The city has Beacon status for working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector, making funding and commissioning opportunities fairer and more accessible, and appreciating the sector's roles in lobbying and working with the public.

## Community cohesion

- Before 2026, Birmingham is likely to become a city without a 'majority' ethnic group.
- Birmingham has a proud tradition of welcoming immigrants.
- Over three quarters of people in Birmingham think their local area is tolerant – a place where people from different backgrounds get along well together. This figure has risen in recent years, while the proportion of people who think the city does not have strong communities has fallen.
- Racial crime has been identified by 6 per cent of Birmingham residents as a current issue. In the Community Safety Strategy, agencies have identified as a priority the need to reduce hate crimes directed at different ethnic communities or other groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- Birmingham schools take pride in promoting community cohesion among children and young people from a rich pool of diverse cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds.





Faith

- Faith communities are important in Birmingham – the proportion of the population who identify with a faith is higher than the national average.
- There are almost 578,000 Christians, 140,000 Muslims, 29,000 Sikhs, 19,000 Hindus, 3,000 Buddhists and 2,000 Jews in Birmingham (as at 2001).
- People of faith on average make a higher contribution to voluntary activity and giving.
- Birmingham's unique Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education introduces young people to 24 'dispositions' – a set of shared values – creating a greater awareness and cross-cultural understanding of why people choose to follow a particular faith.

Digital inclusion

- In Birmingham, 36 per cent of residents have never accessed the internet and only 48 per cent of households have access to broadband. In the UK, 56 per cent of households have access to broadband.
- A digital divide remains among socially excluded communities. Socially excluded communities are three times more likely to be non-users of the internet.
- The number of people accessing the internet at home will change with new initiatives like the Computers for pupils/Universal Home Access project, already launched in Aston, and being implemented throughout the city.
- The Birmingham Bulletin was successfully launched in 2007 and communicates regularly with over 100,000 Birmingham residents via email.



# What we want to achieve

## – our improvement targets

By 2026, Birmingham will achieve:

Most cohesive city in the UK				
Residents who feel that people from different communities can get on well together in line with the best UK cities (%)	2006	79	2010	84
Most engaged UK city				
Residents who feel they can influence local decision-making in line with the best UK cities (%)	2006	40	2010	48
Most digitally included city				
Residents who are digitally excluded (%)	2006	39	2010	20

Our medium-term targets for the next three years are detailed in the Local Area Agreement and include:

Up to 82 per cent of Birmingham people will believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality will rise to 44 per cent over the next three years.

# Early priorities for action

The following early priorities for action will help put us in a position to achieve our medium- and long-term goals. These key actions will be delivered through our Local Area Agreement.

They include:

- 1. Strengthening community cohesion and integration between residents of different backgrounds.
- 2. Encouraging Birmingham citizens to participate more in neighbourhood and citywide organisations, events and civic institutions.
- 3. Increasing satisfaction with the local area.

While implementing these actions, we will also attempt to tackle the following priorities that fall outside the scope of the current Local Area Agreement:

- 4. Increase the scope of voluntary, community and faith sectors' activities – taking stock of current contributions of faith groups and identifying how to enhance their positive contributions.

- 5. Make expectations of behaviour clear to all, for example showing respect and tolerance to those with different beliefs or lifestyles, perhaps through a Birmingham Charter.

- 6. Celebrate the city's gay community, including improvements to the Gay Village.

- 7. Increase public-sector accountability by explaining how money is spent.

- 8. Treat newcomers, including asylum seekers and refugees, with fairness and respect, maximising their contribution to city life and integration with existing communities.

- 9. Making effective use of digital technology to help more people contribute to local decision-making through digital channels. We will also increase opportunities to access digital channels to reduce social and digital exclusion.









# Breakthrough changes

We have identified ten important breakthrough changes that will accelerate our progress to achieve the vision:

## 1. All together now

Services don't change cities, people do. Many of the ambitions in this strategy involve people changing their behaviour. Public services can provide incentives, create an environment conducive to change and promote responsible campaigns to help effect change.

We will work with residents to see how community-generated improvements can be maximized.

## 2. Understanding and responding to Birmingham people

By knowing the needs and preferences of Birmingham residents we can deliver more cost-effective public services. Through research and consultation, we will understand better each household, neighbourhood, business and visitor in the city. We will then use this information to design and develop better services.

## 3. Preparing for major population growth and change

Birmingham can make a major contribution to the region – not just the city itself – creating sustainable low-carbon communities. Taking the pressure off the surrounding rural areas will help protect the balance between town and country across the West Midlands.

The demographic make-up of the city will also change. Celebrating and planning for an increasingly diverse city provides Birmingham with the opportunity to be a market leader in the UK.



## 4. An extensive new home-building programme

Strong growth requires a substantial and significant amount of decent and affordable housing. Birmingham needs to transform disadvantaged neighbourhoods so that there is a mix of high-quality, sustainable, low-carbon, and mixed-tenure homes.

Neighbourhoods need centerpieces—mixed-use facilities for young and old alike with plenty of green spaces and natural elements. Birmingham also needs suitable housing to attract and retain higher socio-economic groups, including family-friendly ‘Birmingham’ homes for the city centre.

## 5. A massive boost to skills

The labour market has to prepare itself for the jobs of the future. Birmingham needs to go further in improving skills, boosting adult working skills and working more closely with Birmingham’s universities for teaching, research and job creation.

## 6. Science City: transforming our economic base

Building on Birmingham’s strengths in manufacturing, we will focus on key new industries, including low-carbon products and services, medical devices, advanced materials and nanotechnology.

We will reduce our reliance on imported energy and fossil fuels by working with the Energy Technology Institute at the University of Birmingham and the European Bio-Energy Research Institute at Aston University to deliver secure low carbon energy for homes, business and transport.

We will enhance and support high-growth sectors in the city including digital, cultural and business services.

7. Continued high levels of investment in the city

The city has made tremendous progress over the last 20 years, regularly hailed as one of Europe’s success stories and continues to progress with over £10 billion of planned investment in the city alone.

Birmingham’s Big City Plan is a masterplan that will draw on that legacy to shape and revitalise the city centre over the next 20 years. Residents, businesses and other stakeholders will contribute to the plan to create a greener, smarter, fairer and more beautiful city.

The Core Strategy will address the needs of the growing population with a particular focus on climate change, housing and economic growth. Suburbs will be modernised, so that they are more sustainable, affordable and offer an improved mix of schools, high-quality transport links, health-care, leisure, and retail facilities.

8. Making it much easier to get around

Getting around cities is crucial. To do so in an environmentally friendly way is increasingly important. There is an urgent need to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and tackle road congestion in a city where levels of commuting by car are among the highest in Europe. Birmingham must develop integrated transport that includes safe and secure walking and cycling for commuting to work as well as for leisure.

We need better public transport across the city region, improved rail capacity, an expanded Metro network, and improved local bus services. Birmingham needs to manage demand through innovations like flexible school days and home working.

Externally, priorities are developing a high-speed rail link between Birmingham and London and improving the motorways around Birmingham through active traffic management.

9. Making better use of public-sector procurement and employment

The public sector is a major employer – equivalent to a top FSTE 500 company spending over £6 billion in the city annually. The new Sustainable Procurement Compact will ensure that our purchasing power supports the local economy in an environmentally and socially friendly way.

We are changing our own recruiting procedures to encourage greater diversity and offer opportunities for people from disadvantaged groups to move into the labour force.

10. Global city with a local heart

Birmingham will showcase what it offers with an improved international marketing campaign that will raise its reputation and influence in leading markets and attract the necessary inward investment. Volunteer business ‘ambassadors’ will be equipped to promote the city to their peers, nationally and internationally.





# Delivering the vision

## Funding our ambitions

This strategy sets out our shared ambitions for Birmingham. Public-sector partners are committed to cooperating and directing their funds towards these aspirations and the key actions identified. The public sector alone controls about £6 billion of spending in the city each year.

Together we are implementing a 'sustainable procurement compact' that enables partners to align their spending to strategic priorities and the Local Area Agreement.

Private and third-sector partners will be encouraged to invest their financial and non-financial resources in the shared plan of action.

Birmingham 2026 sets the focus for our Local Area Agreement through clear targets and actions for the next three years. The agreement is the 'deal' between local partners and central government to transform performance against key issues for the city. Our Local Area Agreement and its associated Delivery Plans will set out how specific key actions will be funded over the period 2008 to 2011.

Further details of the targets and actions will be available in the agreement's Delivery Plans, including:

- analysing the current position, trends and issues
- neighbourhood composition, including equalities issues
- understanding the challenge, assessing whether current approaches are sufficient
- agreeing interventions, based on the evidence of 'what works?'
- an outcome plan, including interventions, funding, milestones, outputs and responsibilities.



# Achieving excellence with communities

Local people and elected councillors will strongly influence the delivery of this strategy through the ten Constituency Strategic Partnerships and public meetings of Constituency Committees across the city by:

- agreeing local priorities – based on evidence and local knowledge
- sharpening local delivery – using local information
- holding to account – an annual report to make sure local improvements remain on track.

Local public services are starting to refocus their organisations so that they can work with residents in their own neighbourhoods. Good examples include the introduction of effective and friendly neighbourhood policing across the city and projects such as Safer Neighbourhoods, Safer Estates and the New Deal for Communities programmes in Aston and Kings Norton.

The City Council and the Be Birmingham Strategic Partnership are consulting on a Birmingham Green Paper – Vibrant Urban Villages. This proposes a 'Single Neighbourhoods Programme' to bring together the wide range of local initiatives to tackle issues ranging from litter to anti-social behaviour, crime, health and employment.

Priority neighbourhoods (those most in need) will receive special attention from different agencies working together and from 'neighbourhood management' arrangements.



# Working with partners

Within Be Birmingham (the Local Strategic Partnership) there is a family of ‘thematic partnerships’ working together to make a reality the ambition of Birmingham 2026 and the delivery of this Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. The thematic partnerships are made up of key public-, private-, voluntary- and community-sector organisations, and they include:

- Economic Prospectus Group – driving forward the city’s economic development and prosperity
- Birmingham Community Safety Partnership – keeping the city safe from crime and anti-social behaviour, and making it feel safe
- Children and Young People’s Board – supporting children and young people to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy life, make a contribution and achieve economic well-being

- Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership – helping improve the health of Birmingham’s population and reduce health inequality
- City Housing Partnership – improving the quality of Birmingham’s housing
- Birmingham Environment Partnership – working to improve Birmingham’s environment in its widest sense
- Birmingham Cultural Partnership – supporting and developing Birmingham’s cultural and sports facilities and events.

In addition, a cross-partner Neighbourhoods Board is being developed. It will work to improve service delivery and tackle deprivation at a neighbourhood level. In particular it will focus on our most disadvantaged communities.





Key strategies to help achieve the five outcomes are listed as follows:



- Birmingham Prospectus
- Birmingham Economic Strategy
- Science City Prospectus
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Core Strategy
- Area Investment Prospectuses
- Housing Strategy
- Local Transport Plan
- City Region Joint Investment Plan
- Worklessness Delivery Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Adult Skills Plan
- Climate Change Strategy
- Sustainable Procurement Compact
- Connectivity Strategy
- Regional Skills Action Plan



- Community Safety Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- Alcohol Strategy
- Drug Treatment Strategy
- Hate Crime Reduction Strategy
- Domestic Violence Strategy
- Anti-Graffiti Strategy
- Environmental Quality Strategy
- Municipal Waste Management Strategy



- Housing Strategy
- Housing Plan
- Homelessness Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Empty Property Strategy
- Constituency Community Plans
- Culture Strategy
- Supporting People Strategy
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy
- The Digital Charter



- Commissioning Strategies for Older People
- Commissioning Strategy for People with Learning Disability
- Commissioning Strategy for Mental Health for Adults
- Children and Young People's Plan
- PCT Local Development Plans



- Community Cohesion Strategy
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Integration Strategy for Newcomers
- Compact with Voluntary Sector
- Agreed Syllabus on Religious Education

# It's 2026...

Birmingham is the first sustainable global city in modern Britain. It is a great place to live, learn, work and visit:  
**a global city with a local heart.**

Birmingham people are healthy and enjoy living together.

Birmingham is a safe, clean and friendly city tackling climate change and enhancing the local environment.

Birmingham people have high aspirations, skills and the opportunities they need to succeed.

Birmingham is globally competitive, contributing fully to the thriving, prosperous and sustainable region.

# Glossary

## Annual Residents Survey

An annual survey conducted by consultants for the Be Birmingham partners to understand and listen to the views of local residents.

## Area Profile

Detailed picture of the quality of life and local services using quality-of-life measures, context statistics, inspection reports, and local residents’ and service users’ views.

## Audit Commission

An independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve high-quality local services.

## Be Birmingham

Formerly the Birmingham Strategic Partnership, an organisation made up of Birmingham’s main public-sector agencies and representatives from the private, voluntary and community sectors, which work together to bring about improvements in the local community.

## Beacon Status

An award given to local authorities and their partners for outstanding work in a particular field or service area.

## Betel

Betel of Britain is a caring, not-for-profit Christian community in the heart of the UK dedicated to restoring homeless and substance-dependent people to productive, independent lifestyles.

## Big City Plan

A 20-year vision for the future of Birmingham City Centre.

## Birmingham Charter

A document outlining the standards Birmingham citizens should expect from governing bodies, and their rights and privileges.

## Birmingham Economic Strategy

An economic policy framework securing the continuing regeneration and growth of Birmingham to ensuring future economic development, well-being and prosperity to Birmingham citizens.

## Birmingham FIZ (Free Information Zone)

Publicly accessible free information zone, giving access to Birmingham - specific information.

## Birmingham Green Paper on ‘Vibrant Urban Villages’

A consultation report which proposes better ‘neighbourhood working’ by focusing on better local services, better local democracy and stronger communities.

## Birmingham Prospectus

The Birmingham Prospectus sets out the shared vision of local partners for the future economic development of the city. It represents an ambitious long-term strategy to secure Birmingham’s position as a leading world city and as a place in which people wish to live, learn and work. The vision sets out to ensure the long-term prosperity of Birmingham, providing a framework for public- and private-sector investment.

## Brighter Futures

Our strategic approach to changing the way we think about planning and commissioning services for children and young people. Brighter Futures focuses on outcomes, which are informed by need, are evidence-based, address the needs of all children and those in need, and embraces system-wide change.

## Building Schools for the Future

National building programme giving Birmingham the opportunity to rebuild or refurbish secondary and special schools over the next decade.

## Central Technology Belt [www.centraltechnologybelt.com](http://www.centraltechnologybelt.com)

The Central Technology Belt is about economically transforming an area running from Birmingham, through Worcester, to Malvern along the A38. The transformation involves moving the economy away from a reliance on motor manufacturing and related industries towards new sectors, including medical technologies and advanced materials.



The initiative is achieving this by providing locations for new and existing businesses that are close to the knowledge supply chain at Aston, Birmingham and Worcester Universities.

The initiative is providing funding to turn ideas into reality, and to help established businesses to diversify. It is ensuring that local colleges are ready for this transformation by training the current crop of young people with the right skills for the future. The Central Technology Belt is an area where businesses that want to embrace new technology and ideas can thrive.

**Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

Non-political, not-for-profit membership-based business support and networking organisation serving the local business community through lobbying, networking and business support services.

**Communities of Interest**

Groups of people connected by a common interest in a specific subject or endeavour. The level of interest may range from passing to intense, and

over time develop into expertise on a subject.

**Community Groups**

A social organisation/group based on some distinguishing characteristics or affinity that may be defined by ethnic and language ties or common interests such as age, gender, sexuality, disability or geographic boundaries.

**Community Safety Strategy**

The strategy was prepared to meet the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act requires Community Safety Partnerships (or Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, as they are described in the Act), to conduct an audit of crime and disorder every three years, to inform and refresh strategies to address the issues that have been identified. The Community Safety Strategy sets out to clearly identify the local priorities for Birmingham, the national targets that need to be met in the City over the next three years, and what needs to be done to make Birmingham a safer and better place to live, work and play by reducing crime and disorder.

**Constituencies**

An area for which a MP is elected as a parliamentary representative. Birmingham is divided into ten constituencies. Each constituency has four wards each with three councillors who sit on the constituency committee. Constituencies aim to provide high-quality, cost-effective local services that meet the needs of the diverse communities they serve. They enable local residents to influence the shape and quality of the services they receive, and participate fully in running their local community.

**Constituency Committee**

A committee made of the local councillors who represent each ward in the constituency. They have delegated powers from the Council that give them responsibility for some local services and budgets.

**Constituency Strategic Partnership**

Council and other public agencies, the business sector and voluntary community organisations that develop a shared vision for the area, and plan for local people in a coordinated way.

**Core Cities**

The Core Cities group is a network of England's major regional cities: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield. They form the economic and urban cores of wider surrounding territories, the city regions and are the economic drivers of their regions. The umbrella theme for the joint activity of the Core Cities Group is economic development.

**Core Strategy**

The Core Strategy will provide a framework for new development and land-use change in Birmingham up to 2026 and will be central to delivering the 'Growth Agenda'. It is a statutory plan and will be subject to extensive public consultation and involvement, including an independent examination. The Strategy is expected to be adopted by 2011.

**Cutting CO<sub>2</sub> Pledge**  
[www.birminghamcuttingCO2.org](http://www.birminghamcuttingCO2.org)

An online initiative to support, record and count individual, organisational and business actions to reduce Birmingham's carbon footprint.

**Decent Homes Standards**

A legal minimum standard for social housing.

**Detritus**

Waste material or rubbish, especially that left after a particular event.

**Digital Inclusion**

The use of technology, either directly or indirectly, to improve the lives and life chances of people and the places in which they live.

**Eastern Corridor**

Birmingham City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council partnership setting out a framework for housing and regeneration investment in the eastern side of Birmingham into North Solihull.

**Eastside**

Regeneration project in Birmingham.

**Environmental Limits**

The limit to which an environment or eco-system can cope with the population, resource exploitation and

pollution pressures placed on it. Beyond the environmental limit, there is a risk of causing long-term damage to the health and productivity of an environment.

**Facebook**

[www.facebook.org](http://www.facebook.org)

A social networking website.

**Freecycle**

[www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

A private, not-for-profit organisation that provides recycling services to individuals and businesses.

**Green Flag Awards**

Green Flag Awards are the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales and are presented to organisations for their high-quality green space.

**Green Paper**

A tentative government report of a proposal without any commitment to action; the first step in changing the law.

**GVA - Gross Value Added**

Economic measure of wealth generation.

**Handy Person Schemes**

A Scheme that provides help with small repairs and minor adaptations for older people, people with disabilities and those on low incomes.

**Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

An assessment produced by local authorities and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) around the future health and well-being of the local community.

**Ladywood Furniture Project**

A project set up to collect old furniture for reuse in Birmingham.

**Local Area Agreement (LAA)**

A set of targets agreed with local partners and central government, giving greater local flexibility and freedom to innovate to achieve the city's vision. It is a three-year plan of how partners aim to implement the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Local Development Framework**

Part of a two-tier plan system made of up Local Development Frameworks and Regional Spatial Frameworks to determine how the planning system will help shape communities. The system was introduced in England and Wales by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Local Development Frameworks are the first part of the two-tier system – these are local development documents that outline how planning will be managed in an area.

**One Voice Group**

A group that brings together major business organisations in Birmingham.

**Parks in the Sky**

A 'green roofs' scheme providing sustainable 'living' roofs on city buildings. The aim is to help provide environments for wildlife and plants to flourish, keep cities cool and absorb CO<sub>2</sub> and rain water.

**People's Panel**

A selection of Birmingham residents representing residents from all parts of the city.

Procurement

Procurement is the process of obtaining supplies, services and construction work.

Procurement has a broader meaning than purchasing (or buying) alone. It is concerned with obtaining the best services, supplies and construction work to meet the needs of citizens and service users.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Part of a two-tier plan system that is made up of Local Development Frameworks and Regional Spatial Strategies to determine how the planning system will help to shape communities. Regional Spatial Strategies form the second tier of a regional level planning framework prepared by regional planning bodies (or in London, the spatial development strategy is prepared by the Lord Mayor of London). These set out the broad spatial planning strategy of how a region should look in 15-20 years' time and possibly longer.

Renaissance

A new growth of activity or interest.

Residual Waste

Residual waste is any collected household waste that is not sent for reuse, recycling or composting.

Segmentation

Breaking down the customer base into more manageable groups to gain a deeper understanding of each group. Customer segmentation enables the identification of groups of customers with similar characteristics, needs, expectations, preferences and behaviours.

Serious Acquisitive Crime

Theft and robbery, including street crime, business and retail crime and vehicle crime. This can be theft from the person, theft from vehicles, theft of vehicles, cycle theft, vehicle interference and domestic burglary.

State of The City – Strategic Assessment

Strategically assesses and presents statistical evidence about Birmingham; the people who live here; the jobs they do; their health and education; and their perceptions of the city.

The assessment has up-to-date information and analysis that concentrates on capturing information that suggests important issues and challenges for Birmingham.

Sustainable Communities

The residential and workplace surroundings in which people live and thrive, where there is a balance and integration of the social, economic and environmental components that define a community area. Central government, councils, partner agencies and local people are working together to create 'sustainable communities', reflecting their own local circumstances.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

The purpose of a SCS is to set the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area. The City Council is the accountable body in leading the development and production of the SCS in consultation with key partners.

Sustainable Development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Sustainable Procurement Compact

A compact to ensure sustainable procurement – organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money in terms of generating benefits to the organisation, society and the economy, while minimising damage to the environment.

Third Sector

This includes charities, voluntary, community and faith organisations and social enterprises.

Wards

The city is split up into wards. Each ward is represented by three councillors who are elected by local people to represent the area they live in. A group of four wards form a constituency.



Worklessness

Defined by the Department for Work and Pensions as ‘people of working age who are not in formal employment but who are looking for a job (the unemployed), together with people of working age who are neither formally employed nor looking for formal employment (the economically inactive)’.

World Heritage Status

World Heritage Status is an award conferred upon sites of ‘outstanding universal value’. It is awarded by Unesco on behalf of the United Nations to monuments, buildings or landscapes that are important for their cultural or natural heritage value.

Obtaining further copies

Write to:

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The Council House  
Victoria Square  
Birmingham  
B1 1BB

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## Arabic

إن لم تكن تتحدث الإنجليزية وترغب في قراءة هذه المطبوعة أو النشرة باللغة العربية، فالرجاء الطلب من شخص يجيد التحدث بالإنجليزية أن يتصل بنا ويعطينا اسم اللغة المطلوبة وعنوانكم.

## Bengali

আপনি যদি ইংরেজীতে কথা বলতে না পারেন এবং এই প্রকাশনাটি বাংলা ভাষায় পড়তে চান, তাহলে ইংরেজীতে কথা বলতে পারেন এরূপ কাউকে অনুরোধ করুন আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করে আপনি কোন ভাষায় এটা পেতে চান তা এবং আপনার ঠিকানা আমাদেরকে জানান।

## Chinese Traditional

如果你不懂英語，希望閱讀這份刊物的中文版，請找一位會講英語的親友與我們聯係，告訴我們你需要的文字和你的地址。

## Farsi

اگر انگلیسی صحبت نمی کنید و می خواهید این نشریه را به فارسی بخوانید، لطفاً از کسی که انگلیسی صحبت می کند بخواهید تا با ما تماس بگیرد و اسم زبان مورد نظر و آدرس شما را به ما بدهد.

## French

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## Gujarati

જો તમે અંગ્રેજી ન બોલતાં હો અને આ પ્રકાશન ગુજરાતીમાં વાંચવા ઈચ્છતાં હો, તો કૃપા કરીને અંગ્રેજી બોલતી કોઈ વ્યક્તિને કહો કે અમારો સંપર્ક કરે અને તમને કઈ ભાષા જોઈએ છે તે જણાવીને તમારું સરનામું અમને આપે.

## Kurdish

له څه رښتینګلوی نژانیت وده ځوازیت نه م بلواکړاوه په به کوردی بوځوښته وه، تکلیه پرسپار له که سینگ بکه که رښتینګلوی بژانیت یو نه وه ی په یوه ندیمان پڼوه بکات، و له څه له پیدایي ناوی زماته که و ناوښسته که تدا.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੜ੍ਹਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਹੋ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਨਾਂ, ਪਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਬੋਲੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਦੱਸੇ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੜ੍ਹਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ।

## Polish

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## Pushto

ڪه به انگليسي خبري نڪوي او غواڙي جي دا خبرونه به پڙهڻو ڪي وولي ، نو مهرياتي وڪڙو او د يو داسي ڪن نه جي به انگليسي پوهيڙي غوڻڻه وڪڙه جي خمونڙ سره اڙيڪي ونيس جي مونڙ نه د اڙياڙي نوم او سٺا پنه راڳري.

## Somali

Hadii aadid ku hadlin afka Ingiriiska aadna rabto inaad af Soomaali ku akhrisato qoraalkan, fadlan weydiiso qof ku hadla afka Ingiriiska inuu noola soo kaa xidhiidho, noona soo sheeg magaca luqada aad u baahan tahay iyo ciwaankaaga.

## Urdu

اگر آپ انگریزی بولنے یا پڑھنے سے ناواقف ہیں اور اس اشاعت کو اردو زبان میں پڑھنا پسند کرتے ہیں تو براہ کرم کسی ایسے فرد سے کہیں جو انگریزی کی زبان بولے کہ وہ ہم سے رابطہ کرے اور ہمیں مطلع کرے کہ آپ کی زبان کا نام اور آپ کا پتہ ہے۔

## Vietnamese

Nếu bạn không biết tiếng Anh và muốn đọc tài liệu này bằng tiếng VIỆT, bạn hãy nhờ một người biết tiếng Anh liên lạc với chúng tôi và cho biết tên, địa chỉ của bạn và ngôn ngữ mà bạn cần.





