

The Birmingham Business Pledge 2021

History has proven that productivity and innovation happen when people come together, creating purpose, community and wellbeing. As a business community, we want to come together with a declaration of intent in support of our city's future.

The pandemic of 2020 served as a catalyst for hybrid working to become embedded in many organisations and this increased flexibility has helped support environmental goals, health and wellbeing as well as improved diversity and inclusivity in many organisations.

As well as harnessing those advantages, we want to ensure we continue to contribute to the future of our city, protect and nurture its character, its fabric and its ambition.

We, therefore, commit to:

1. **Contribute to the sustainability of the city** – we recognise the challenges of climate change and are committed to working with the authorities to ensure we find practical ways of accelerating our net zero journey, improving transport links, and creating ever more pleasant, safer environments
2. **Be inclusive leaders** – ensure our businesses reflect the communities we serve and actively seek out opportunities to consider how we can better promote equality, diversity, and inclusion
3. **Create & sustain spaces for people to grow** – as businesses we will harness hybrid working expanding the physical and virtual talent pool whilst also encouraging our people to collaborate, to innovate and come together in our city centre
4. **Embrace the city's unique offering** – we will seek to find new ways to support the character of our place, our Independents, our artists, and our cultural venues
5. **Celebrate our city** – we will do more to promote the strengths and opportunities that this city presents to our staff, customers and stakeholders.

Birmingham is a bold, forward-looking, and ambitious city.

The sheer scale of the city region has meant it has become a magnet for talent, international investment, and is now a national growth engine.

The cradle of the industrial revolution, Birmingham is founded on innovation, productivity, and progressive thinking, all of which remain ingrained into our civic and business communities today.

We are a culturally diverse and young city - home to one of the largest student populations in the UK in a region producing more than 58,000 graduates every year. The appeal to businesses locating and growing here is self-evident:

- Top 15 major European cities for affordable cost of living¹
- Top 40 city globally for perceived quality of life and deployment of new technologies to improve ease of living²
- Up 98 places year-on-year in the major measure of size, scale and growth of start-up ecosystem³
- Investment in tech firms up nearly 200% between 2019-2020⁴
- 3rd globally for ease of real estate transaction processes⁵

As businesses we cherish the fact that this city is home to some of the best cultural talent and institutions in the world. We boast some of the best independent restaurants, cafés and shopping facilities in the country and we have more people living and working in the city centre than ever before.

We recognise that the world has changed and will continue to do so. The pandemic hit hard, with some communities ill-equipped to respond to such challenges. We also recognise that our planet is precious, and we must work together to protect it and ensure we leave the right legacy for the next generation. But with the energy, imagination and action that you would expect from a city with the same motto, Birmingham is bouncing FORWARD.

We welcome Birmingham City Council's ambitious Future City Plan. We too want to see a green, liveable, equitable and distinctive city. We support the Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority on our collective journey to net zero.

Next year we will host the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games; one of the largest sporting events in the world, and an opportunity to celebrate our place and our communities, here and across the globe. We must showcase the people of this great city, its neighbourhoods and all it has to offer.

¹ Mercer

² IMD

³ StartupBlink

⁴ TechNation

⁵ JLL