

State of play

How the West Midlands can make the most of the Commonwealth Games and learn lessons from other host cities



Andrew Slattery

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BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S PROGRAMME MANAGER,
COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2022

Legacy needs to drive every decision around the Games. We need to look at the next 20 or 30 years in everything we plan. A city usually has seven years to prepare for the Games; we have four. London, Glasgow and the Gold Coast told us they wasted the first three years planning for the wrong thing and had to start again. We don't have time to waste.

The athletes' village will have 1,400 homes just after the Games, and 5,000 in total after ten years. At the Gold Coast Games, volunteers got training and qualifications. In Birmingham, we're expecting 10,000 to 15,000 volunteers.

David Warburton

HEAD OF LAND AND DEVELOPMENT,
WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY

The Games, particularly investment in the Perry Barr athletes' village, is a chance to transform that part of the city. We must do it in an inclusive way, benefitting the area.

This is a chance to change the market and housing supply, in terms of mix and quality.



David Warburton

The West Midlands can be showcased as a centre for modular construction techniques. We will have to use these techniques for the athletes' village. If we get it right, it will act as a benchmark for the West Midlands. Yes, time is short. But having a tight deadline can focus the mind.

Darren Clarke

PARTNER - RESIDENTIAL, ARCADIS

At Perry Barr, we want to create a sustainable community, like at Castle Vale. We want to ensure we have the right space, occupiers and operators. We don't want to create commercial sites in the village and within six months they close. We're looking to create a long-lasting legacy.

Private rented sector providers see a lot of opportunities on the back of the Games, and registered providers are interested in taking over stock after the Games. We're looking to create a lot of green space around the athletes' village. A big legacy



Darren Clarke

for the Games could be to tackle child obesity in the city.

There can't be a better time to invest into Birmingham when we have the Commonwealth Games and everything around HS2.

David Tonks

INTERNATIONAL PARTNER & HEAD OF BIRMINGHAM OFFICE,
CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD

The Games' legacy and brand will only be enduring if we find an ongoing use for the facilities. It can't just be "Birmingham had a great Games in 2022", we've got to create an association with sporting excellence. If we hit that mark then the brand will endure for 20 years, like it has with Manchester.

If we can associate Birmingham with the use of smart technology – data transfer, smart energy use, clever homes – it will be a major shot in the arm for the city. It will also help retain graduates. The opportunity is huge, but it's how we showcase that.

Jon Hunt

COUNCILLOR FOR PERRY BARR, BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

I'm concerned about the haste to get things in place. It creates the risk of



Rebecca Pendlebury

concepts not being realised on the ground. My fear is that all the employment land in Perry Barr is going for housing, particularly around the athletes' village site. The new sprint routes will put people in residential dormitories and transport them into the city centre. There are plans for a 15-storey tower block, when people have said that residential tower blocks have been a failure over the past 40 years. I'm worried that there's a rush to meet the housing targets, but we're not creating a community.

Tim Allen

PARTNER, PETER BRETT

The danger is that the regeneration of Perry Barr will get broken down into a series of projects with specific targets, and the community creation part will get lost.

Glasgow created a successful community on the back of their Commonwealth Games, but very few of the people who lived there before live there now. The area has been gentrified and the criticism has been that there are no facilities, no pubs.

The transport legacy needs to be a big focus. We were involved in Games lanes during the London Olympics. We could see the wider benefits of keeping some of them afterwards, but the structure wasn't in place to allow us to do that. We need to look at that more carefully in Birmingham.

Professor Julian Beer

DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

The legacy should not be just sports, but also the wellbeing agenda. We should also take advantage of the fact that the



Tim Allen

West Midlands has just been named as a 5G test bed. We need to look at how we're going to connect buildings with this technology, and how this can be an employment opportunity. 5G could be used to guide people around the different Games sites.

My colleague Kathryn Moore has proposed an urban national park for Birmingham as a legacy from the Games, which would join up waterways and green spaces, rather like the Highline in New York. This is a great opportunity.

Stuart Buckley

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, HOMES ENGLAND

There will be three new sprint routes across the city. It will give us a direct link from the city to Walsall. This wouldn't have happened at the same pace if the Games weren't here. We will have 12 months or more when there will be a big focus on the Midlands, thanks to the Coventry City of Culture 2021 and the Commonwealth Games. We have to make the most of it.

James Cubitt

HEAD OF BIRMINGHAM OFFICE, COLLIERIES INTERNATIONAL

The real benefit of the Games is the chance to showcase the brand of Birmingham on a global scale. This will help Birmingham compete against other cities of the world.

Manchester has two things that put them ahead of us on a global scale; Manchester United and Manchester City



James Cubitt



Jon Hunt

"I'm worried that there's a rush to meet the housing targets, but we're not creating a community."

Jon Hunt

football clubs. The Games will hopefully give us a similar sporting legacy.

We also shouldn't ignore the cultural aspect. I'd like to see an event which showcases Birmingham and Coventry's music as part of the Coventry City of Culture and Commonwealth Games.

Nick Gibb

DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR, WILLMOTT DIXON

If you want to retain graduates in the city centre you need a balanced community.



Sandy Munroe

It's not like 20 years ago, when it was all about what you're earning. It's now about the experiences provided. Autonomous vehicles will be a game-changer in the property industry. The Horiba MIRA vehicle technology centre in Nuneaton is saying totally driverless cars are only nine years away. We're talking about not having to invest in massive transport facilities in the future because they'll be largely redundant. We need to bear it in mind.

Richard Norgove

PROPERTY DIRECTOR, HORTONS' ESTATE

The welcome into Birmingham is something we're keen to see improved. You come out of New Street station and the environment is very poor. Investors and occupiers are concerned about this. We have had occupiers come to us who have said they

will never come into Birmingham again, because of the first impression you get outside New Street station from a safety and security point of view.

It's a pity, because Birmingham has a great story to tell.

Jonathan Devaney

PARTNER, KNIGHT FRANK

The Games will give us an opportunity to showcase the city to clients who have been avoiding coming here for ten to 20 years. It's an opportunity to show them how the city has changed. I'm excited about the huge opportunities it will provide.

Richard Whittaker

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, WM HOUSING GROUP

Good quality housing should be the legacy we should look for from the Games. We need to attract people to come to Birmingham and stay here, and we can only do that with quality accommodation. You won't get all your construction work locally, but it's about ensuring there is plenty of training and apprentices around the Games.

Paul Mountford

HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION, DUDLEY COUNCIL

We would like to see some sort of expo aligned to the Commonwealth Games to be held at our enterprise zone. We'd also like to see the local supply chain benefit from the construction opportunities that come out of the Games. We would look at how we can attract visitors to Dudley on the back of the Games.



Professor Julian Beer

“The West Midlands has been named as a 5G test bed. 5G could guide people around Games sites.”

Professor Julian Beer

Sandy Munroe

PARTNER, BEVAN BRITTAN

The city is trying to encourage more people to use public transport, but it still has its flaws. You can't get a good wi-fi signal on trains and they are often late. It's about getting that interconnectivity of what people want. Doing so is an important part of creating that legacy.

Rebecca Pendlebury

PARTNER, BEVAN BRITTAN

We can learn from previous Olympics and Commonwealth Games. It's about taking residents' needs on board and following it through. Only then can a sustainable legacy be created. Another aspect which could increase the 'halo effect' from the Games is how the increased hotel requirement in Birmingham is addressed. New hotels will need to be built in time for the Games. There's an opportunity to change them to apartments after the Games, much like what's happening in the athletes' villages.