



BIRMINGHAM
2022
commonwealth
games

LIVE. LEARN. EARN.

An Introduction to the West Midlands

The West Midlands
One region, many worlds



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WELCOME TO THE WEST MIDLANDS

Located in the heart of the United Kingdom, home to 4.7m people - and with an economic output on a par with that of Croatia - the West Midlands is one of Europe's most dynamic, forward-looking and ambitious metropolitan regions.

It's also home to one of Europe's youngest - and most diverse - populations (which is set to grow significantly), and a place with a proud tradition of tolerance, friendliness and being supportive of all of its citizens.

Boasting three world-famous, distinctive and celebrated great English cities - Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton - the region is not only packed with incredible resources and amenities (including some of the UK's best schools, universities, cultural assets, entertainment centres, shopping malls, food & drink operators, sporting facilities and much more), it also has a uniquely warm and welcoming character.

Despite being less than 1.5 hours away from London (or quite a bit less, depending on where you're departing from) being directly connected to 400 global destinations by air, and with 90% of the UK population accessible within a four hour drive, the West Midlands is still a very affordable, flexible and spacious location.

By spacious we don't just mean physical space (although we have plenty of that, both in our cities and towns and in the huge swathes of countryside which surround them).

We mean space to grow professionally and personally, space to explore new opportunities, and space to think clearly about how you want to shape your future and live your life.

That's why more people looking to escape London decide to move here rather than anywhere else in the UK, why more than half of our graduates choose to stay on in the area after completing their studies, and why so many international companies, UK government departments - and other key organisations - increasingly choose to bring both their businesses and their people here.

Of course, major employers don't simply move because they feel like a change of scenery, graduate talent doesn't hang around if there aren't decent, high-calibre jobs on offer, and you don't tempt people away from a city as captivating as London without good reason.

So we've produced this handy document to help you discover exactly why so many people from outside the region decide to make it their home, why so many of our brightest young people chose to remain here after university, and why the West Midlands continues to be such a magnet for inward investment and company relocations - both domestically and internationally.

It's not the whole story; but hopefully it will give you a flavour of why the region is just such a fantastic place to **Live, Learn, and Earn.**

1.5hrs
travel from London

90%
of the UK population
is within a four
hour drive of the
West Midlands

Imagine a world without William Shakespeare, drinking chocolate, county cricket, Peaky Blinders, The Lord of The Rings, Forza, Typhoo Tea, the Dr Who theme tune, League Football, Two-Tone Records, Cadbury's Dairy Milk, The Archers, Chubb Locks, HP Sauce, Cluedo, Wimbledon, Norton Motorbikes, Jack Reacher, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, Balti curries, Rugby Union, the World Wide Web, the black London taxi and Bird's Custard.

That's a world without the West Midlands.

SO, WHAT HAS THE WEST MIDLANDS EVER DONE FOR US?

While our region has produced some of the world's greatest literary writing, beautiful jewellery, gripping crime novels, breakthroughs in science, best-selling motorcars, genre-defying pop music, fine leatherwork, radical politics, popular confectionery, reusable fountain pens, world-renowned fantasy-fiction, revolutionary computer games, modern cutlery, practical bicycles, contemporary comic book art, competitive sports, enlightened philosophy and delicious food, it has also given us a remarkable array of innovations, concepts and ideas and which have changed the way we all live today.

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first modern bicycle



The world's first football league



The world's first weather map



WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

A constant source of inspiration, innovation and progressive thinking

The West Midlands has always embraced new ideas, encouraged debate and challenged the status quo. It played a key role in the rise of the anti-slavery movement and in the growth of Quakerism and it has nurtured many other political, social and spiritual movements which have brought about positive change.

In the mid-18th century, it gave rise to The Lunar Society; a collective of enlightened intellectuals, scientists, philosophers, artists and academics who devoted their energies to improving the world around them. This group's influence reached around the globe and their work has left an indelible mark on the way we all live.

The West Midlands was also the cradle of the world's first industrial revolution; kickstarting a tradition of innovation, productivity and progressive thinking which remains ingrained across our region. Such curiosity, tolerance and inventiveness has helped make the West Midlands what it is today and it's these qualities and values which are set to underpin our exciting future.

WHAT WE ARE

A rich blend of different places, people and perspectives

Located right in the middle of the UK, the West Midlands is a place of immense contrasts which somehow just seem to gel.

It contains world-renowned cities - like Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Lichfield - while also being home to historic market towns like Dudley, West Bromwich, Solihull, Warwick and Walsall. But even then, much of the region is rural, meaning there are hundreds of villages - and thousands of acres of unspoilt English countryside - to explore, just minutes from your front door.

Equally diverse are the people and communities who proudly call the West Midlands their home. We've warmly welcomed settlers, immigrants, incomers and refugees for centuries, which is why we're one of the most ethnically diverse regions in the whole of Europe.

It's also why you'll find people from nearly 200 different countries rubbing shoulders on our streets, sharing their distinctive experiences, insights and traditions. Further, we're the UK's most popular destination for overseas business visitors - and we attract millions of foreign tourists every year - which adds even more international flavour to the atmosphere.

This not only means you get to enjoy a kaleidoscope of different cultures and countries, it also gives the region a uniquely global, multicultural and inclusive perspective on everything it does.



HOW IT SHAPES US

A place that never stands still and embraces change

Our region is constantly evolving, particularly over the last two decades where immense amounts of regeneration, investment and reinvention have completely transformed much of the region.

There's hundreds of ways we can demonstrate this, but having 11 Michelin-starred restaurants, globally celebrated artists like Carlos Acosta choosing to base themselves, and the likes of Goldman Sachs deciding we're the best place in the UK to create a new national HQ, seems like a good start. In fact, we're pretty confident that whatever preconceptions you may have about the region are potentially a bit out of date (see page 36 for some evidence of that - HSBC UK case study).

Exactly why we continue to be such a magnet for such a heady mix of creative and commercial talent, and communities from every corner of the planet, is still a bit of a mystery that we invite you to unravel for yourself.

But some think the very fact we are in the middle of the country - where historically the nation's waterways, railways and roads have always intersected, and where different people have always met, traded and exchanged ideas - means we've developed an instinctive flair for inventiveness and collaboration. We've also got a history of straight talking, negotiation and good old-fashioned deal-making.

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first digital computer



The world's first heavy metal music



The world's first automated traffic lights



Put simply, our trajectory is one of positive growth: socially, culturally and economically

WHERE WE'RE GOING



4.7m
Population

With ten years of uninterrupted growth (pre-pandemic), our £117bn economy is on target to continue to grow rapidly over the next decade. Our population of 4.7 million (which, with 32% of residents under 25, is one of the youngest in Europe) is also on the rise.

That's why the West Midlands is completely committed to investing even more into the region and into its people, unlocking everyone's potential and improving everyone's quality of life.

This includes a multi-million pound funding package which will allow us to:

- ⇒ Invest more in top quality education and skills
- ⇒ Invest more in free public healthcare
- ⇒ Invest more in 100,000s of newer, smarter, net zero homes
- ⇒ Invest more in protecting our natural environment
- ⇒ Invest more in sustainable public transport and greener infrastructure
- ⇒ Invest more in the arts and culture
- ⇒ Invest more in everything in between

With a commitment to be a net zero region by 2041, we're also at the forefront of a Green Industrial Revolution; championing clean and inclusive growth and delivering the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit.

The UK government also backs our ambition and our can-do attitude. This is why we were chosen to host both the UK's first multi-city 5G network and be the first Future Mobility Zone; a UK testbed for driverless cars on public roads.

It's also why 2021 saw Coventry named as the UK's City of Culture, why Birmingham was recently named the UK's Most Investible City, and why more people looking to escape from London chose to move to the West Midlands than anywhere else in the country.

Being given the privilege to host the Commonwealth Games in 2022 was another testament to our ability to deliver, and we used this once-in-a-generation opportunity to add even more value to the huge advantages and outstanding assets we already have.

We're also set to reap the significant benefits of HS2 - the new high speed rail link with London - which will significantly reduce travel times and increase public transport capacity.

Find out more about our economic strengths, fast-growing sectors and why our region is an attractive destination for investors in the Earn section on page 28.

WHERE WE ARE AND HOW TO FIND US

Getting around the West Midlands and beyond...

Wolverhampton to Birmingham – 16 minutes

Birmingham to Coventry – 20 minutes

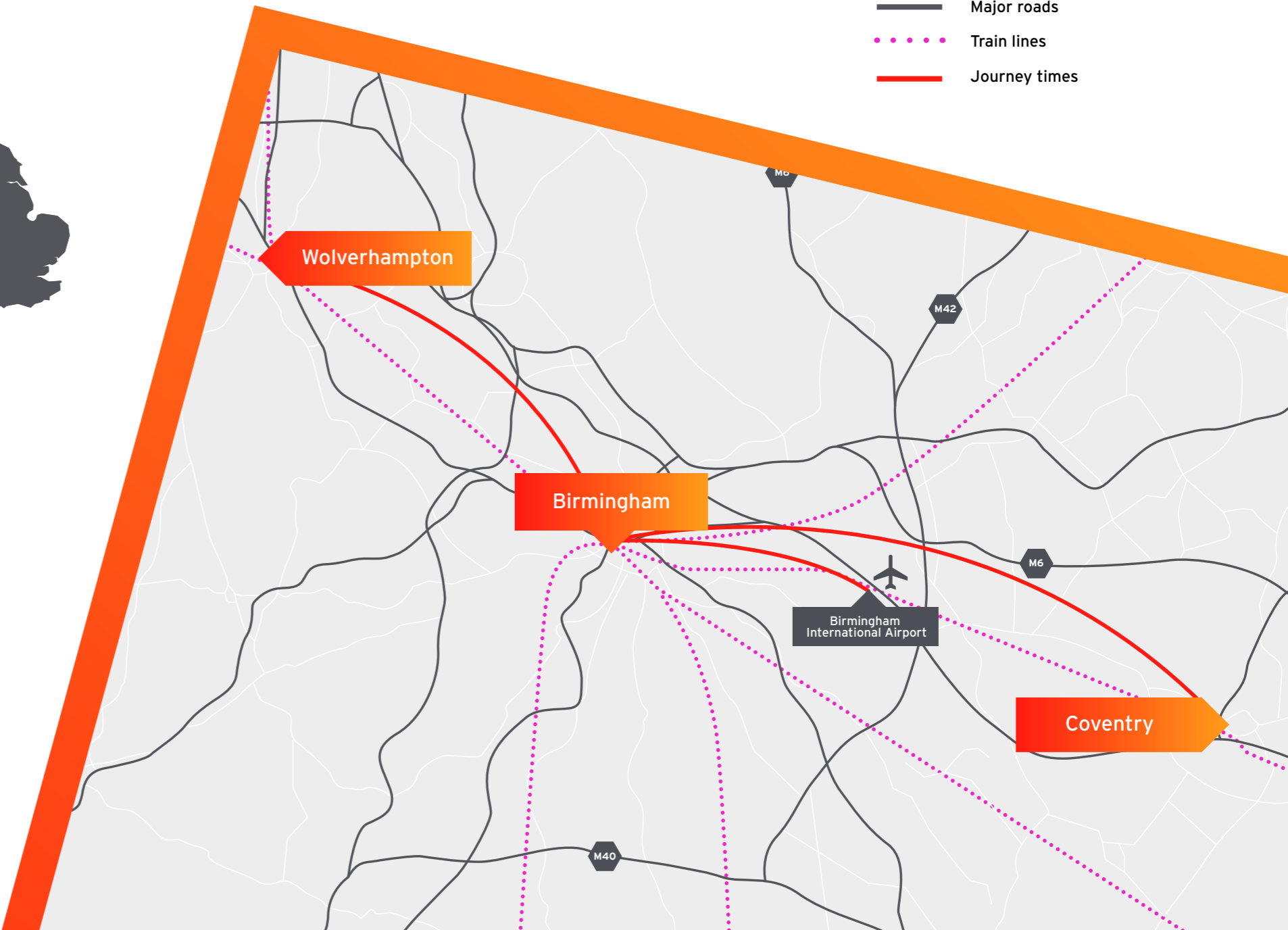
Birmingham to Birmingham International Airport – 9 minutes

Birmingham – London, Manchester, Oxford and Nottingham – <1.5 hours

Birmingham to Liverpool, Leeds and Bristol – <2 hours

Key

- Major roads
- Train lines
- Journey times



Discover why the West Midlands
is a place for high-quality living
which will cost you less

LIVE WEST

Maximising your hard-earned money

Your money goes a lot further in the West Midlands when compared to the South East and many other parts of the UK. Or to put it another way, the price of an average home here is 60% cheaper than in London, and rents are far less too (up to 50% lower in many cases).

In fact, the cost-of-living ratio between salary levels and the cost of accommodation means you are 40% better off living in Birmingham when compared to the South East, while the region overall offers you much better value for money when compared to the UK's average.

40%

better off living in
Birmingham when compared
to the South East

An abundance of locations and lifestyles

Enjoying more cost-effective living doesn't mean compromise, and the West Midlands offers you an incredible amount of choice when it comes to different lifestyle options.

We've every kind of home - from Victorian terraces to Edwardian townhouses, contemporary flats to falling-down follies, smart modular homes to modern maisonettes, and spacious suburban semis to city-centre skyscrapers - in every kind of location and neighbourhood.

We have also got a dizzying array of shopping, entertainment, eating, drinking and cultural options to enjoy, along with hundreds of sporting and leisure activities to experience.

And that's all on top of the expanses of glorious English countryside, rivers, lakes and parkland we have threaded throughout the whole region.

Oh, and it also rains less here than many other parts of the country (including the South East).



The world's first
variable pacemaker



The world's first
game of rugby union



The world's first
electric kettle

Whether you are a visitor or a resident, the West Midlands is a fantastic gateway to both the wider Midlands region (hello the glorious hills and valleys of Shropshire, Malvern, The Peak District and The Cotswolds and the historic counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Worcestershire and Leicestershire), the rest of the UK, and the rest of the world.

London, Manchester, Oxford and Nottingham are less than 1.5 hours by rail, with Liverpool, Leeds and Bristol reachable in under two (all by direct trains), while by car you can reach over 90% of the UK's population within a four-hour drive.

By air from Birmingham Airport, which itself is just ten minutes away from Birmingham city centre by train, you can fly to 400 international destinations.

ACCESS ALL AREAS



63% of universities in the region have been awarded the UK's Teaching Excellence 'gold' ranking.

134m

people visit the region each year

4,000

doctors and health centres based within local communities

High quality public healthcare

The West Midlands passionately believes that 'health is wealth', and we are committed to providing all our citizens with the highest quality - and free - public healthcare. Along with over 4,000 doctors and health centres based within local communities, the region also has 80 NHS hospitals.

Our excellent public healthcare provision includes the world's largest single-floor critical care unit, the largest organ transplant programme in Europe, the UK's largest renal transplant programme, and one of the country's largest teaching hospitals.

Such extensive NHS healthcare provision is further complemented by a wide range of private health providers, specialist clinics and wellbeing services.

Outstanding schools and Internationally ranked universities

By choosing the West Midlands, you also get access to superb education for yourself, your family and your colleagues. The region is home to over 400 schools rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, and we're one of the highest-ranked places in the UK for secondary and primary academic attainment.

Our universities are similarly high performing and include four of the world's top universities, and four of the world's top business schools.

Further, of the 20 higher education institutions which are within a one-hour drivetime of the region, 63% have been awarded the UK's Teaching Excellence 'gold' ranking.

You can find out more about our fantastic schools, colleges and universities in the Learn section.

400

schools rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted

A great place to visit (as well as to live)

Such outstanding transport links also helps explain why so many people (134 million each year in fact) chose to visit the region for both business and leisure purposes. But clearly no-one would bother to come if we didn't have amazing places to explore, exciting activities to try, events to get involved in, or great accommodation to stay in. So, if you do decide to live here, you'll be able to confidently invite friends and family to stay with the knowledge they'll have a fantastic time.

A safe, accessible and inclusive place

The West Midlands' famous reputation for tolerance, friendliness and being welcoming to others, is as highly valued today as it's ever been. That's why we're extremely proud that Birmingham was recently ranked as one of Europe's most inclusive cities (which considered factors such as wheelchair accessibility and LGBTQI+ friendliness), and that the city is consistently named as one of the UK's safest.

In addition, Wolverhampton has just been ranked by MoneySuperMarket's Family Living Index as one of the top two best places to raise a family in the whole of the UK.

Unlike most other UK regions, the West Midlands is anchored by three dynamic cities - Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton.

And while all three happily co-exist as independent and 'self-sufficient' neighbours, when viewed together as an inter-connected metropolitan region their collective offer becomes much greater (culturally, socially and commercially) than the sum of their parts.

A CITIES REGION, NOT A CITY- REGION

Coventry: a city of incredible regeneration and reinvention

Since being heavily bombed during the Second World War over 80 years ago - and as a recognised International City of Peace - Coventry's social, commercial and cultural renaissance has been a truly remarkable 'phoenix from the flames' story.

While the ruins of its 14th century Gothic cathedral still stand (albeit in the shadow of the city's magnificent 'new' cathedral which opened in 1962), Coventry continues to constantly reinvent itself to meet the ever-changing demands of the 21st century.

For example, it's one of the top five locations in the UK for fast and ultrafast full-fibre and broadband, on the road to becoming the UK's first all electric busy city by 2025. Coventry was recently ranked as being the best place in the UK to own an electric car. Coventry is home to the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre providing UK manufacturing scale-up and skills to commercialise advanced technologies in the battery sector.

The city is also on a mission to transform old commercial buildings into stunning contemporary cultural, leisure and residential spaces (check out the plans for the IKEA building, Fargo Village and what's been achieved with The Telegraph Hotel). Millions is being invested in green, low-carbon and net-zero technologies.

There's far too much to say about each place in a just single document like this, but here's just a few things we feel help give you a sense of each city's distinctive character:

But this doesn't mean Coventry neglects its rich and fascinating heritage.

The famous 11th century legend of Lady Godiva lives on through what has grown to become the UK's biggest free family festival, and the city's council recently transferred the ownership of over 20 historic buildings to a preservation society to ensure their long-term protection.

It that wasn't enough, the city is only an hour from London by train, boasts two of the best universities in the county, is home to both a professional football club and a Premiership rugby union team, has one of the fastest growing economies in the UK, and in 2021 became the UK's official City of Culture.

It also gave birth to Two-Tone, one of the most celebrated and multi-cultural music scenes in the world and whose immense influence can still be felt (and heard) today.



Image courtesy of Coventry City of Culture 2021

Birmingham: A world-class hub of culture, fine cuisine and contemporary living

Birmingham is the UK's second largest city, and brings with it all the amenities, services and benefits you would expect from a busy, fast-growing, energetic and internationally renowned conurbation.

In fact, the Mercer 2019 Liveability Report ranked Birmingham as one of the world's top 50 most liveable cities. This puts it on an equal ranking with Tokyo, and placed it above international capital cities like Washington DC, Rome, Belfast, Hong Kong and Prague.

Birmingham is also where you'll find the world-famous City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Birmingham Royal Ballet, the busiest UK theatre outside the West End, Europe's biggest library and the continent's largest leisure and entertainment complex.

It also has over 300 miles of canals (which can be used for commuting if you've got a canoe or kayak), more public parks than anywhere in Europe, a train station busier than London Euston and five Michelin-starred restaurants - as well as one of the UK's most popular shopping centres.

But if you should ever want or need to go elsewhere (which can happen, apparently), it's only a short train journey to Birmingham International Airport and an hour and 20 minutes by train to London.



Wolverhampton: a place full of options, originality and opportunity

As mentioned earlier, Wolverhampton was recently ranked the second-best place in the whole of the UK to raise a family by the consumer experts over at moneysupermarket.com (only being edged out of the top spot by the city of Bath), and the city has experienced a tremendous transformation over recent years.

With excellent schools, colleges and its own university; a great choice of cost-effective housing (including modern city apartments, classic suburban semis and smart, contemporary new builds); and superb local, regional and national connectivity; it's earned a deserved reputation as one of the best kept secrets in the UK with regards to a high-value (yet still highly affordable) quality of life offer.

It's also a place bursting with history, creativity and originality.

For example, its art gallery houses one of the finest collections of Pop Art in the world, its Premier League football club (Wolverhampton Wanderers) has launched its own international record label, and in 2022 the city hosted the globally acclaimed British Art Show.

In addition, Wolverhampton is home to the award-winning Halfpenny Green vineyard and winery, the famous Civic Halls live music venue, a beautifully preserved (and fully working) traditional Victorian theatre, and the stunning 19th century Wightwick Manor.

If you're a fan of Thomas Shelby and his clan, you'll be delighted to discover much of the BBC's blockbuster show Peaky Blinders was filmed around Wolverhampton (as were episodes of Steve McQueen's acclaimed Small Axe TV drama series).

So, whether it's locally made wine, wonderful Warhols, or the mighty (and now music-making) Wanderers which piques your interest, Wolverhampton undoubtedly lives up to its reputation as the City of Opportunity in lots of different, interesting and surprising ways.



80mins

train journey to London

The West Midlands' concentration of big, bustling cities and major towns has created one of the most exciting urban destinations in Europe.

Whether a devotee of 24/7 city life, a frequent high-street shopper, an occasional culture vulture, a day-out dabbler, or a part-time tourist, the region offers anyone who loves the buzz of big cities and busy town centres everything they could wish for.

We've also invested millions to reclaim and repurpose former commercial districts to create new, low-carbon, resident-centred neighbourhoods.

Many of these regenerated areas come with green space, parks and waterways as standard (allowing for lots of car-free activities and high-quality '15-minute' compact living). Also, with a population density per square kilometre 92% lower than that of somewhere like London, the region is significantly less cramped than the capital and many major international cities.

EXPLORE THE URBAN PLAYGROUND

Retail and recreation

Being one of the largest metropolitan regions in the UK, it's a given that we've got plenty of clubs, bars, live music venues, arenas, cinemas, theatres, galleries, museums, eateries, pubs, cafes and coffee shops to frequent. Then there's theme parks and activity centres - like Cadbury World, The Wave waterpark and Legoland Birmingham - and lots of other family-friendly great days out to enjoy.

If you're feeling daring, you can also kayak in our city-centre canals, snowboard on our dry ski slopes, or try your hand at bouldering on one of our climbing walls, without having to venture very far.

On top of that, we've plenty of famous stores and big brand shopping, plus hundreds of independent retailers, upmarket boutiques, hidden Victorian arcades, antiques emporiums, outdoor markets, thrift shops, convenience stores, well-stocked neighbourhood supermarkets and kiosks.

Having a student population of over 170,000 (plus nearly a third of the region's population being aged under 25), also means that our retail offer is always changing to keep up with the latest trends and styles. While our city and town centres are extremely walkable, we've excellent public transport to get you to and from where you need to be. That includes lots and lots of buses, trams and local light-rail services.

We're also fully Ubered-up, and have all the rapid 'to the door' delivery services you could want when you need the high street to come to you.

92%

lower population density than London



280

events made up the 2022 Commonwealth Games which took place in Birmingham

A world-class centre of sport

We're a bit obsessed with sport in the West Midlands (which is probably why the region gave birth to the football league, lawn tennis, rugby union and the world's first ever cricket world cup).

Our football teams - including Coventry City, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Aston Villa, Birmingham City, West Bromwich Albion and Walsall - are all followed intensely and passionately.

Cricket enthusiasts are equally well-served - with county, one-day, test and international cricket being regularly hosted at Birmingham's legendary Edgbaston Stadium (which is also home to Warwickshire County Cricket Club). For those preferring a more oval-shaped ball, Premiership Rugby Union club Wasps is also here.

Golf is also a very big deal in these parts. We have two championship golf courses on our doorstep (including the world-famous Belfry), and we're home to the UK's Professional Golfers Association.

The Ryder Cup is a regular visitor (it's been hosted here more times than anywhere else in the UK), as is the PGA European Tour, the British Masters and the English Open.

We're also one of the few places in the UK where you can see top international athletics (including the Wanda Diamond League) and we host WTA tennis, world championship snooker, international badminton, professional boxing, horseracing and many other popular spectator sports.

2022 saw us host the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and featured 6,500 athletes from over 70 countries competing in over 20 different sports. Many of the events (of which there are over 280) took place in brand new sporting facilities, and these same elite sporting facilities will continue to host world-class competitive sport for many years to come.

For sports that are perhaps emergent in the UK, the inaugural Commonwealth eSports championship was held here in summer 2022, and the 2025 Kabaddi World Cup will be held in the West Midlands - the first time in history that it will have been held outside of Asia.

From fine dining to fish & chips

It shocks some people we know, but we've now got eleven Michelin-starred restaurants on our patch (one of the highest concentrations in the UK). This is further testament to how we're continually upping our game in everything we do.

Foodies will also love our artisan bakers, micro-brewers and slow food producers, as well as our wholefood delis, vegan cafes, organic grocers, butchers and fishmongers. It doesn't end there. From our fine wine merchants and backstreet boozers to tasty streetfood vendors and world food superstores, you can also enjoy our busy Balti houses, delicious thai takeaways and upmarket Chinatown restaurants. Add to the mix sushi counters, shawarma shacks, dining clubs and gourmet gatherings, jerk chicken joints and Middle Eastern meze to get a feel for the rich culinary culture we have in the West Midlands.

And if you've still got room for a bit of bratwurst (or a glug of glühwein), we're also home to the largest authentic Germanic Christmas markets outside of both Germany and Austria.

Explore the Urban Playground

Celebrating our different cultures and communities

What really makes the urban experience incredibly special in the West Midlands is the fusion of cultures and communities which continually shapes it.

With residents drawn from 190 different nationalities, the West Midlands is where Europe meets South East Asia, Africa meets the Middle East and China meets the Caribbean. The result is a rich blend of faiths, friendships and festivities which we actively encourage, nurture and celebrate.

Where else would you find one of world's largest St Patrick's Day celebrations, one of the world's biggest Bengali boat races and the UK's biggest LGBTIQ+ Pride parade?

And where else would you find Desi Pubs? Indian-run hostleries which have taken the traditional English public house and infused it with South Asian culture, cuisine and character.

We also enjoy lively Caribbean carnivals, dazzling South Asian Melas and explosive Chinese New Year celebrations. Then there's an extensive programme of international festivals (covering everything from dance, jazz, folk, and theatre to books, science, design, comedy, digital culture, food and drink, and film), Bhangra and Bollywood showcases, military tattoos, street theatre and just about every other artform you could wish for.

Basically, whatever you're into - or whatever you want to get into - you'll most likely find it here.

The outdoor adventure

One of the most compelling reasons why the West Midlands draws in so many people is not having to choose between the city or the countryside.

Just travel a few miles outside any of our urban centres and you'll be plunged into a world of rolling hills, rivers, valleys, waterfalls and pastures. Along the way, you'll stumble over ancient monuments, crumbling castles, medieval churches, Anglo-Saxon hamlets, civil war battlefields, mysterious stone circles, folklore-filled forests, abandoned abbeys and strangely named settlements.

We're also home to one of the UK's very few UNESCO Global Geoparks. These are sites of international geological, natural and cultural significance which are managed by a community-led partnership to ensure they are protected, nurtured and developed sustainably.

If the great outdoors is where you like to get active, you'll find all the wide-open spaces, paths, bridleways, country lanes, lakes, ponds and pools you could possibly want.

So, whether it's rambling, hiking, cycling, canoeing, fungi foraging, scrambling, horse riding, mountain biking, wild swimming, bird watching, kite-flying, fly-fishing - or simply sunbathing or picnicking - that you enjoy, the West Midlands has acres of outdoor space where you can pursue your outdoor passions to your heart's content.

190

different nationalities come together to call the West Midlands home

30%

of the region's population are under 25

LIVE THE COUNTRY LIFE FOR LESS

The West Midland's gorgeous countryside not only allows you to indulge outdoor pursuits as part of a great day out, you could also make it your home.

The region is peppered with hundreds of friendly rural villages and welcoming market towns, many of which can be traced back to the 11th century Domesday Book. As in our cities, having lower priced properties means living your best-ever country life here is much more affordable when compared to many other UK regions.

RAMBLING, HIKING, CYCLING, CANOEING, FUNGI FORAGING, SCRAMBLING, HORSE RIDING, MOUNTAIN BIKING, WILDSWIMMING, BIRD WATCHING, KITE-FLYING, FLY-FISHING - OR SIMPLY SUNBATHING OR PICNICKING



In addition to the wealth of historic gems tucked away in our countryside, we're also home to some of Britain's most popular heritage attractions.

HERITAGE, HISTORY & HOBBITS

The medieval magnificence of the mighty Warwick Castle - built by William the Conqueror - is close by, as is the home of William Shakespeare at Stratford-Upon-Avon. Stratford is also where you can see classic Shakespearean plays performed by the world-famous Royal Shakespeare Company.

Talking of great literature, you can further explore some of the mystical landscapes which inspired JR Tolkien. He spent his childhood in the region, and many of the places he experienced later became enshrined in his vivid descriptions of The Shire in both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of The Rings*. There's even a special Tolkien Trail which attracts hundreds of 'Hobbit-heads' from around the world each year.

Also not far away is Royal Leamington Spa, a town made famous in Victorian times for its restorative waters and which today plays an integral role in the West Midlands producing 25% of the UK's entire games market output.

Living history opportunities - where you can see and hear how people actually used to live and work - are also available. These include the popular Black Country Museum in Dudley and Birmingham's fascinating, hidden-away Victorian workers' homes (known locally as the 'back-to-backs').

Another fantastic example of the region's rich history being preserved is the late 19th century garden village of Bournville. Located just outside of Birmingham, Bournville was conceived, designed, and built by the Quaker Cadbury family in the 1890s specifically for its chocolate factory employees, and today it looks almost exactly as it did when first occupied over 120 years ago.

60

galleries and museums are located in the West Midlands

Where the present meets the past

When it comes to outstanding examples of English history, the towns and cities of the West Midlands are as equally blessed as its rural cousins.

For example, many of our major public parks feature botanical gardens, boating lakes and bowling greens which have been in public use for nearly 200 years.

If you look up, you'll see our city streets are brimming with stunning Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian, art-deco and mid-century architecture, together with incredibly well-preserved medieval buildings. In between you'll also see striking examples of more contemporary design from award-winning and world-renowned architects.

While hundreds of our buildings are now officially listed (meaning they can't be significantly altered), many are publicly accessible spaces you can still visit and explore.

That includes Birmingham's magnificent Town Hall - where Charles Dickens gave the first ever reading of *A Christmas Carol* - which is now used for public events, and the majestic Coventry Cathedral.

Originally constructed in the 14th century, Coventry Cathedral was infamously destroyed in World War II. While its imposing ruins remain, a completely new cathedral was built adjacent to the original site in the 1950s. The second incarnation of the cathedral has since gone on to become one of Britain's most loved buildings.

Add to that the 60 or so other galleries and museums which the West Midlands is home to (including the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery which hosts the most important collection of Pre-Raphaelite art anywhere in the world and Wolverhampton Art Gallery's amazing Pop Art archive), and you'll see that history and heritage is very much alive in every single part of our region.

Gold standard study

With over 400 schools rated Outstanding by Ofsted, when it comes to primary and secondary provision the West Midlands is one of the highest performing in the country.

Such exceptional schools - including state comprehensives, state grammar, and private schools - can further be found throughout the region, meaning you are not tied to a particular location to be near to an excellent education provider.

Similarly, our nine world-class higher education institutions - including Aston University, University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University,

Coventry University, University of Warwick and University of Wolverhampton - are located across the West Midlands.

Four of these are officially ranked as being some of the best universities in the world.

If you venture a bit further out, you'll also find 22 universities, 14 of which hold the highest higher education teaching standards available in the UK.

When you then factor in the region's twenty further education colleges and Sixth Forms, you soon realise that the volume and quality of our academic provision is some of the very best in Europe.

LEARN.

Benefits far beyond the classroom

When we talk about the West Midlands being an exceptional place to learn, we don't just mean passing exams.

One thing which unites all our education providers is a belief that all learners should be 'rounded and grounded', and vocationally focused, as well as academically skilled.

That's why our whole education ecosystem - from primary to post-graduate - is underpinned by an appreciation of the wider factors which shape and influence young people's lives.

Consequently, academic studies are blended with both personal enrichment and 'preparedness for work' experiences - ensuring that every student is inspired and empowered to take whichever pathway they chose.

The region's graduates are also extremely employable. For example, in 2021, graduates from the universities of both Warwick and Birmingham were ranked among the top six most sought-after graduate employee cohorts in the whole of the UK.

This ranked them higher than Oxford, Cambridge, London Imperial, LSE, Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh Exeter and Bath (see more about graduate employability on page 31).

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first smelting furnace



The world's first patented windshield wiper



The world's first referee's whistle



60k

graduates every year

Higher Education in the UK has always been very competitive with universities all fighting to attract the best and brightest to their campuses.

The West Midlands is no different and all our HE providers are continually striving (and investing) to improve their academic, research and student satisfaction standings. As a result, many of our institutions are today very highly ranked - domestically and internationally - across a number of key university performance indicators.

UNIVERSITIES UNITED



Aston, Warwick and Birmingham Business Schools are part of an elite group of triple accredited global business education institutions.

100
centres of
excellence

This probably also explains why the region is home to one of the largest student populations in the UK (over 185,000) and produces more than 60,000 graduates every year.

Our universities and colleges also understand that in today's world taking a partnership approach is a key element of success, both academically and commercially.

Working closely with industry and policy makers is a key element of this approach, and the region's universities and business schools have between them over 100 centres of excellence directly related to real-world social, environmental and economic issues.

In the technology and innovation space alone, the region has over 30 business accelerators, incubators and support programmes - many of which are based at our universities - which are

tackling some of the world's biggest challenges (including how we successfully migrate to a zero-carbon future, manage an ageing population and help to combat future pandemics).

Not only do our key institutions all work closely with business, government and other key stakeholders, they also collaborate with each other both through formal arrangements and via informal, peer-to-peer collaborations.

Such a commitment to joint working, sharing best practice - and genuinely supporting each other - is a very West Midlands approach, and one which stretches far beyond the libraries, lecture halls and labs of our great halls of learning.

30

business accelerators,
incubators and
support programmes

Power up your professional performance

The West Midlands' high-performing academic sector is complemented by an extensive business training offer which offers you - and your colleagues - direct access to globally-ranked executive education.

For example, Warwick Business School was recently named the second most influential business school in the world (after Harvard) in a new ranking model devised by The Financial Times. This was based on how often books written by Warwick's teaching staff were recommended to students at other leading international business schools.

Aston, Warwick and Birmingham Business Schools are also part of an elite group of global business education institutions which hold the gold standard of 'triple-crown' accreditation from AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS.

Aston appears in 2021's Top 150 providers of Business and Management studies (based on the QS World University Rankings), as does Warwick and the University of Birmingham. Having three such globally recognised business schools accounts for why the region produces more qualified business graduates than any other part of the UK outside of London.

More than just amazing MBAs

The relationship between the region's academics and the world of business does not end with world-class Executive MBAs, Management PhDs or post-graduate degrees in Finance.

Our universities work directly with global corporations and major UK firms - such as PwC, Vodafone, The Bank of England and HSBC UK - to develop bespoke business training programmes for staff at apprenticeship, degree and master's levels.

Our universities and colleges also offer a wide range of Continuing Professional Development programmes (CPD) directly aligned to specific sector needs and have an extensive array of Degree Apprenticeships, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships - and other initiatives - which are informed by the demands of employers and industry.

You can also boost your business skills - and grow your professional network - by plugging into the huge range of both formal and informal peer-to-peer events, sector-specific meetups, and industry forums. There's also stacks of fully-funded development programmes business support schemes and skills initiatives, available across the region designed to boost individual professional performance.

**TOP
150**

providers of Business
and Management
studies



We know many people not only want to learn and grow academically and professionally, but also personally. If that sounds like you, you'll be spoilt for choice if you decide to give the West Midlands a try.

The region has hundreds of different groups and classes to get involved in, both as organised activities or at a more casual level, whichever suits you best.

For example, many of our local colleges offer part-time and flexible adult courses meaning you can study everything from accountancy to art, food safety to flower arranging, cake baking to childcare and contemporary dance to web-design.

Then there's the vast range of volunteering options which you can access via hundreds of local charities, community projects and faith groups.

On top of all this, there's plenty of health, exercise and wellbeing provision - such as Yoga, Pilates, Thai Chi, Zumba, Boxercise, Spin, Aquafit and Circuits - available through our gyms, leisure centres and community centres. Plus we've over 20 Park Run events across the region every Saturday morning (so there's really no excuse).

GRAB A LICENCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Explore, Discover, & Get Involved

You can also broaden your horizons, discover different things and explore the region's exciting cultural, historical and architectural wonders.

The cities and towns of the West Midlands are all packed with superb libraries, galleries, theatres, arts centres, museums, places of worship, listed buildings, Sites of Scientific Importance, medieval monuments and countless other gems.

Many of our residents (both old and new) also love to immerse themselves in the diverse, multi-cultural and multi-national opportunities the region offers.

After all, there's rarely a weekend that goes by when there isn't some sort of fun festival, noisy carnival, colourful parade, firework-filled national holiday or community-led occasion being staged somewhere nearby. The fact so many of these are rooted in different

national, cultural and spiritual traditions, means you get to enjoy lots of different, authentic and global celebrations without having to go very far.

If that wasn't enough, don't forget that we're home to the Birmingham NEC, the UK's largest exhibition venue.

With over 125 business and leisure events throughout the year - including the BBC Good Food Show, Horse of the Year, Crufts, Grand Designs Live and Comic-Con - plus exhibitions dedicated to crafting, cake making, photography, classic cars, caravans, babies, weddings, outdoor sports, running, photography, collectibles and model railways, this incredible space welcomes 2.4 million visitors every year from across the UK and far beyond.

But for those living in the West Midlands, it's just 15 minutes from Birmingham New Street station.



From backgammon to BMX

If you're looking for something a bit more adventurous or sporty, the region is also brimming with clubs, associations and societies dedicated to specific pastimes.

The region is home to well over 500 individual sports and social clubs which offer a massive range of activities to try out. These include popular team sports - such as football, cricket, rugby, korfbal, basketball, snooker, volleyball, hockey, handball and netball - and more individual pursuits such as athletics, squash, darts, golf, table tennis, archery, badminton, cycling, trampolining, shooting, pétanque, tennis, fencing and gymnastics.

For people who also enjoy being on (or even under) the water there are also opportunities to try kayaking, sailing, sub-aqua diving, rowing, swimming, canoeing and octopush. Those keener on martial arts and combat sports can access the likes of Aikido, Kick Boxing, Judo, Taekwondo, Karate and Wing Chun.

Thrill-seekers may of course prefer to try their hand at roller-derby, indoor rock-climbing, snowboarding, BMX - or even Dodgeball - while for enthusiasts of more sedate pastimes there are also numerous clubs for games like bridge, scrabble and backgammon.

We've even some clubs devoted to slot-car racing (aka Scalextric, if you're old school), which given the region's long and proud history of automotive design and production probably shouldn't be that surprising.

500

individual sports and social clubs make the region their home

Ever since the 18th century - when the West Midlands was first globally acknowledged as the 'workshop of the world' - enterprising, talented and hard-working people have always earned a very good living in the region and today is no different.

The region's booming £117bn economy, highly skilled talent-pool and lower operating and living costs than the capital and other international cities have made the region one of the UK's most compelling locations to do business. Combined with that, unprecedented levels of investment into the region's infrastructure (including transformational schemes such as HS2) means we really are on a roll when it comes to creating and maximising new commercial opportunities.

So, whether starting a business, making an investment, or taking advantage of the superb employment opportunities our region has to offer, we offer a mix of ingredients which allows everyone the chance to earn a fantastic salary, achieve an outstanding qualification and generate a great return on their investment.

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first pneumatic tyre



The world's first modern coinage



The world's first cricket league



£117bn

regional economy

Earn a great salary (which goes a lot further)

Great jobs and accelerated career development are generated by consistently strong performing economies. That's why we are incredibly proud of our track record of uninterrupted (pre-pandemic) growth over the last decade. In the five years to the end of 2019, the West Midlands region boasted the largest five-year GVA growth rate of any UK region, ahead of London and the South East.

This adds up to one of the largest regional economies in the UK, which in turn supports 200,000 businesses. Even then we have a workforce of 2.9million people, all economic indicators suggest many of our businesses are going to need many more staff.

Further, in terms of salary levels, the West Midlands is on a par with the UK average (excluding London), which means you won't be losing out financially if you chose to work here. Even then, earning a great living is also not just about what's printed on your payslip - it's intrinsically linked to what it costs you to pursue the life you want to live.

That's why people in the West Midlands are, in real terms, far better off than many others in the UK, as the ratio between their earnings and their cost of living means their money goes much further.

In fact, residents of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton enjoy a cost-of-living ratio which is not only far superior to that of London, but one which is much better than the UK's overall average.

EARN



GREAT JOBS GREAT LIFE



Aston graduates earned £8,000 more per year than the UK graduate average.

55%
graduates decide to stay in the region

UK'S NO.1

The University of Birmingham was ranked the number one institution most frequently targeted by the country's top employers wanting graduates.

Earn a top qualification (and one which employers are prepared to pay for)

Being home to a region featuring numerous excellent universities - including four officially ranked as being some of the best in the world - we have tens of thousands of high-calibre students graduating every year

Of these, well over half (55%) decide to stay in the region after finishing their studies, the third highest regional retention rate in the country (and considerably higher than the South East's). For such a traditionally transient community, this is a fantastic testament to the quality of life we have to offer.

To retain such talent having high quality careers on offer is obviously a key factor, but most employers today only want graduates who will excel in such roles. This is where our region's outstanding graduate employability track record really stands out.

For example, in 2021, the University of Birmingham was ranked by HE research specialists High Flyers as the UK's number one institution most frequently targeted by the country's top graduate employers. Warwick also made the top six, beating the likes of Oxford, Cambridge, London Imperial, LSE, Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, York and Bath. Graduates from Aston University (voted The Guardian's University of the Year in 2020) are also hotly sought after by top employers. The 2020 Longitudinal Education Outcomes Survey revealed that after five years Aston graduates earned £8,000 more per year than the UK graduate average.

The same research also found that Warwick students ranked within the UK's top twelve for highest earnings - in over eleven different subjects - five years after graduating.

In addition, Coventry University is one of ten universities in the UK which has a five-star QS rating for Employability, including the KPI of 100% graduate employment.

Earn a great return on your investment

The West Midlands' mix of sustained economic growth, access to a highly skilled workforce, a strong pipeline of graduate talent, world-class R&D activity and a highly competitive cost-base, makes it a prime destination for investment.

The region is the country's leading centre for advanced manufacturing, responsible for a third of all British-made cars and one in four engines. Despite its long-standing manufacturing heritage, the region is firmly positioning itself as the forefront of the UK's Green Industrial Revolution, with low carbon industries now representing its fastest growing sector generating £12bn p.a with 5,100 low carbon businesses employing a 94,000 strong workforce.

Meanwhile, as the UK's first multi-city 5G testbed, the region boasts a rich supply chain of technology companies, spanning key sectors such as Telecoms, FinTech, Cybersecurity and Gaming.

Leamington Spa is dubbed 'Silicon Spa' for the nationally significant concentration of gaming companies. Twenty-five per cent of all the UK's computer games are produced here, which generate an estimated £224 million in GVA for the region each year.

Over 53,000 Financial and Professional Services companies are based in the region and employ over 331,000 people, making it the largest regional cluster outside of London.

Birmingham in particular is a destination of choice for major headquarters, including the Big Four - PwC, KPMG, Deloitte and EY - who all have their largest regional offices based in the city.

Other major international brands also call the region home, with HSBC UK, Goldman Sachs, Jaguar Land Rover, KUKA, Lotus Cars, ASOS, Gymshark and BT all expanding major operations here in recent years.

53,000

Financial and Professional Services companies are based in the region



It is no surprise that in recent years the West Midlands has ranked as one of the UK's leading regions for attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Birmingham in particular, sitting at the heart of our unique three city-region, is a major magnet for investors and was recently ranked the UK's Most Investible City by PwC, which also saw it ranked as having the best investment prospectus by over 800 European real estate professionals.

The city has also been home to the highest number of start-ups in the last seven years and has the largest regional city economy in the UK. Yet despite this, Birmingham's office space costs remain highly competitive (for example, it's 14% lower than Manchester for new stock and 45% less for secondary stock).

The region's economic success, growth potential and investibility doesn't stop at Birmingham.

Solihull was recently ranked as one of the UK's most productive locations with a GVA-per-filled-job ratio on a par with London (and one far higher than most major UK cities).

By the same measure, the West Midlands overall has a considerably higher GVA-per-job rate than many other UK regions, including the South West and Greater Manchester.

A VERY INVESTIBLE DESTINATION

£31.6bn

The highest value of exports outside of London and the South-East

Nº.1

The city has also been home to the highest number of start-ups in the last seven years and has the largest regional city economy in the UK.

Earn the chance to give something back

Today many people, businesses and organisations are as focused on purpose as they are on profits. The West Midlands is committed to generating both economic and social value for everyone who lives here. With the establishment of a cross-cutting Inclusive Growth Unit in 2018, we were a regional pioneer in embedding the principles of inclusive growth and social value in everything we do.

This includes all priority-setting, capital investment decisions and procurement procedures.

Another key initiative is our Inclusive Leadership Pledge. This asks organisations and senior leaders from across the region to commit to promoting diversity and embedding inclusion. Longer term, its aim is to build a movement for inclusive leadership: spreading the message of why diversity and inclusion matters and supporting change.

Then, in 2019, we launched a Social Values Charter specifically aligned to the Commonwealth Games which was hosted in Birmingham in 2022.

Focused on five key areas: sustainability, health & wellbeing, inclusivity, human rights, and generating local benefits, it's our way of setting out what's important to us both before, during and after the games.

In 2019 we also declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious zero-carbon target for the West Midlands by 2041.

This was followed in March 2021 by the publication of comprehensive five-year action plan setting out our priorities for decarbonising the region, and our aim to become a global trailblazer at the heart of a global Green Industrial Revolution.

Birmingham is soon to become home to Western Europe's largest hydrogen bus fleet. With already 20 hydrogen buses in operation, Transport for West Midlands recently secured £30m funding from the Department for Transport for a further 124 new, environmentally friendly hydrogen fuelled buses. Plus Coventry is scheduled to be the first UK city with an all-electric bus fleet.

But even without such formal policies and frameworks, the people, businesses and communities of the West Midlands have always looked out for each other.

If that's something you also believe in, there are hundreds of ways that you can contribute to improving our society and our environment if you chose to come here. Or in other words, if you want to live and work in place which champions the idea of putting something back for the benefit of everyone, the West Midlands has this principle written into its DNA.



THE WEST MIDLANDS YOUR TOP REASONS TO... LIVE. LEARN. EARN.

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first Building Society



The world's first automated copier



The world's first postage stamp

40%

A region where people are 40% better off than those living in London, and where your money goes further than many other parts of the UK



A place renowned for being safe, welcoming, family friendly and inclusive



A unique three city metropolitan region in the heart of the UK



Superb regional, national and international connectivity



Home to people from 190 different countries

ONE

Of the youngest and fastest growing populations in Europe



A great mix of affordable urban and rural lifestyle options



Amazing blend of cultural, heritage, leisure, sport, retail and entertainment opportunities



A region enjoying a multi million pound investment programme across civic amenities, housing, public transport, the local environment, health & wellbeing, skills & education, and much more

20

Universities within an hour's drive, 14 of which hold the UK's highest education excellence ranking



A region that produces the most employable graduates in the UK

60k

Graduates and 200,000 students a year

20

Vocationally focused FE collages

400+

Schools rated Outstanding by Ofsted

100+

University tech hubs, collab spaces and centres of excellence

3

World class business schools all with AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS accreditation



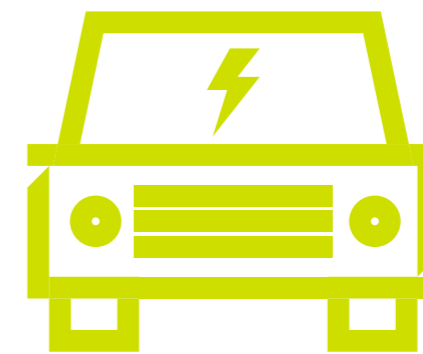
Amazing lifelong learning and personal development opportunities



Unbeatable academic, vocational and business education offer

4

Of the world's highest ranked universities



Home to fast growing sectors including Professional & Financial Services, Advanced Manufacturing, Gaming, Enterprise Tech, Future Mobility, 5G, Industry 4.0/5.0, Digital Health and Low Carbon Innovation



A place rapidly becoming the 'alternative HQ' capital of the UK, with many global corporate names choosing to come here

ONE

Of the UK's biggest recipients of inward investment, and sources of UK global exports

£117bn

Regional economy, one of the highest in the UK

10

Years of uninterrupted (pre pandemic) growth with a 21% increase in 2014-19



Fantastic commercial and professional ecosystem underpinned by a proactive, joined up and ambitious private public partnership

200k

Businesses in the region and a workforce of 2.9m people



Masses of high grade commercial property available at incredibly cost effective rates

Three years ago, HSBC UK, one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations, chose to relocate its UK head office to Birmingham in the West Midlands. The £200 million investment - which included opening a new, low-carbon 11-storey office complex in the heart of the city - has resulted in 2,500 HSBC UK staff now working in the region.

A FUTURE YOU CAN BANK ON



"Birmingham's growth as an attractive hub for business, culture and people continues, and we are incredibly proud to be headquartered here at the heart of the UK as we build a bank fit for the future.

"We are playing a leading role in supporting the UK's transition to net zero, embedding new and flexible ways of working across our business, and using our position in society to champion diversity and inclusion in all its forms. We are here to open a world of opportunity for our customers, our colleagues, our communities and the planet we all share." CEO, Ian Stuart.

One year on and a cross-section of HSBC employees who had relocated were interviewed by an independent consultancy about how they felt about having taken the plunge.

Here's some of the opinions expressed by HSBC staff who relocated:

"Surprised at the transformation of the city."

"The choice and quality of food is better than you get in London."

"Far better work and career opportunities than expected."

"There's a genuine buzz and excitement about the place."

Despite the diverse backgrounds of the staff questioned, including people from places like London, Southampton, St Albans, Milton Keynes, Hemel Hempstead, Kent, Essex (and even one all the way from Toronto), what came across almost universally was how perceptions of the region had dramatically changed since moving.

Before arriving, most shared the view that Birmingham in particular was in need of significant modernising, that it was a heavily industrial area, and that they would be spending lots of time in gridlocked traffic. There was also a belief that both lifestyle and career opportunities would be limited when compared to somewhere like London.

Twelve months later, and having experienced everything the city and the wider region has to offer, the consultants found that many of these views had altered significantly.

When it came to more specific factors, like the cost of living, work life balance and the overall quality of life, feelings were equally positive:

"A much better working environment, and a better work-life balance."

"My social life has expanded, and I'm doing many more different things outside of work."

"I'm proud to say I'm based here."

"Better quality and more affordable housing across the region, especially when compared to the South."

90%

Of course, the ultimate test is whether they intended to stay in the region, and the researchers found that among the more senior and experienced HSBC staff who had made the move, 90% had no intention of going anywhere else.

⇒ For more examples of how people feel about living and working in the West Midlands - including short video interviews and case studies - visit [LiveLearnEarnWM.com](https://www.hsbc.co.uk/liveworkearn)

SOME OTHERS WHO'VE DECIDED WE'RE THE RIGHT PLACE FOR THEM

HSBC UK isn't the only organisation which, having weighed up all the options, has decided that the best place for both their business and their people is the West Midlands.

Another major international financial firm, Goldman Sachs, has opened a new regional centre in Birmingham employing several hundred people - many of whom have transferred from existing Goldman Sachs offices around the world.

In addition, Wolverhampton has been chosen by the UK government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to be its new national base.

Upon opening in April 2022 and relocating 250 staff with it, DLUHC's move has seen it become the first ministerial offices to be located outside of London.

More civil servants will join those based at DLUHC when the Department of Transport opens its second national HQ in Birmingham in 2025, bringing with it new jobs and hundreds of relocating staff.

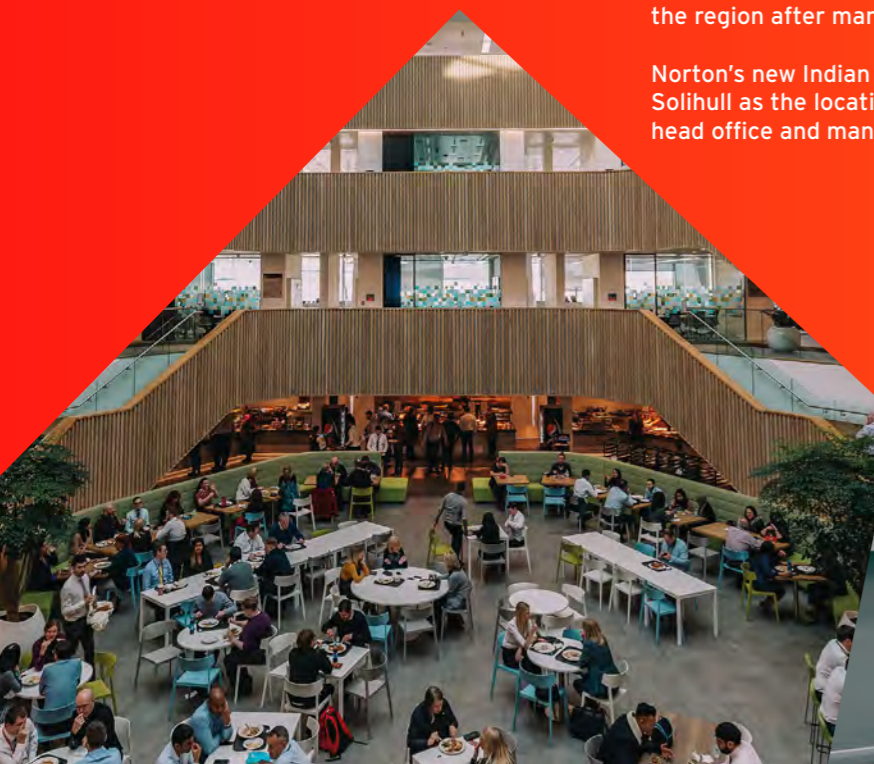
Technology, engineering and advanced manufacturing businesses are also all looking to the West Midlands as place to anchor and expand their operations.

These include tech business Kagool, which plans to increase headcount at their Coventry HQ by over 300 in the next few years; and US-based aerospace firm STS Aviation, who are going to create a new maintenance facility in Solihull which will bring 150 new jobs.

Further, water polymer specialists Aquapak have announced plans to significantly expand in Birmingham, while German-based advanced materials company Thyssenkrupp Materials has committed to setting up a new advanced manufacturing centre in Sandwell.

We're also proud that iconic British motorbike brand Norton - which was originally founded in the West Midlands in 1898 - has come back to the region after many years away.

Norton's new Indian owners, TVS, have chosen Solihull as the location for a new, hi-tech UK head office and manufacturing base.



IN GOOD COMPANY

These aren't the only big names who West Midlands home. Here's some others who are already enjoying all of the great things the region has to offer:



We all know that just moving house locally can be a daunting and complex process, so if you are interested in relocating to the West Midlands be assured that help is at hand.

HELPING YOU TO MAKE THE MOVE

Support from the West Midlands Growth Company

The West Midlands Growth Company knows how to support people, organisations and businesses who are relocating to the West Midlands region and can offer a bespoke Relocation Services package which both employees and employers can access.

Some West Midlands Firsts...



The world's first chocolate bar



The world's first automated copier



The world's first practical electric car

About the West Midlands Growth Company

West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) was established in 2017 to realise the Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy, focusing on securing investment in key sectors and driving major market opportunities, attracting transformational capital; and promoting the region as a great place to visit and work.

Its experienced team offers a comprehensive package of support, from helping to shape a business case for expansion to raising the profile of companies locating here.

With links to property agents, recruitment consultants, public agencies and universities, the WMGC helps businesses establish their operations in the region with ease.

Whether the task is finding the right location, helping to source staff, or connecting with leading academic and research institutions, the WMGC team is dedicated to helping new businesses settle and thrive in The West Midlands.

Relocation Services Support for You and Your People:

- ⇒ A dedicated relocation team and enquiries service so that people can connect with the same individuals and feel personally looked after
- ⇒ Signposted information relating to homes, schools, leisure and culture and anything else needed to plan daily life in a new location
- ⇒ Access to a bespoke 'Relocation Tool' (accessible via web browser and smart phone) which has all the information needed by anyone relocating based on our insightful knowledge of the region
- ⇒ Tailored familiarisation events for staff to find out more about the West Midlands area

Relocation Support for Your Business:

- ⇒ One-to-one business and sales support
- ⇒ Immigration support and DIT working VISA connections
- ⇒ Commercial property search and assistance including viewings
- ⇒ Free PR support to amplify your brand with our global press contacts
- ⇒ Supply chain introductions and external support programmes
- ⇒ Business network introductions and speaking opportunities
- ⇒ Free initial accounting and legal advice with a WMGC partner
- ⇒ Detailed local economy data reports
- ⇒ COVID-19 and EU exit guidance including import/export and financial support
- ⇒ Links to local and national government

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you are looking to find out more about our Quality of Life and potential opportunities, please get in touch via our website.



LiveLearnEarnWM.com



Department for
International Trade



VisitBritain™



West Midlands
Growth Company