



East Midlands
Combined County
Authority
Corporate Plan
2026–2029

CLAIRE WARD
MAYOR OF THE
EAST MIDLANDS



East Midlands
Combined County
Authority

Mayor's foreword



This Corporate Plan marks an important moment for the East Midlands. The past year has been about laying the foundations. We have developed and published the strategies that set our direction as a region. That work has been important because you cannot deliver lasting change without strong plans, clear priorities and sound stewardship of public money. The next phase - the phase set out in this plan - is about delivery and doing it at pace. It is about turning ambition into action that people can see and feel in their everyday lives. That is what the people of the East Midlands expect, and it is what we must do.

And we've made a strong start. We have secured £2.2 billion to transform transport across the region with spades already in the ground. We are now delivering £50 million a year for adult skills for the first time, launched programmes to support people back into work, and already helped hundreds of young people into education, employment or training. We have unlocked major opportunities in clean energy, including £1.3 billion of investment in the UK's first fusion energy plant at West Burton, Bassetlaw as part of the Government's £2.5 billion investment into fusion. We will support the delivery of thousands of new homes through brownfield regeneration and investment to support new employment.

These are big numbers, and they set us up for success for decades to come. But what I am most proud of is something simpler: the 100,000 journeys already made using the Peak Pass, saving families around £800 a year and helping young people get to college, training and opportunity. That is what delivery looks like. Real change, felt in everyday lives: and we will do more of it.

The scale of change we need is significant. Closing gaps in opportunity, improving transport connectivity, addressing skills shortages, improving health and wellbeing, and responding to the climate challenge are not small tasks but they are exciting. Because for the first time, we have the powers that will continue to evolve, and the funding and the leadership at a regional level to take them on together.

I am confident that we can deliver what this plan sets out. Not because the challenges are easy - they are not - but because the East Midlands is full of talent, ingenuity and determination. And because we now have an organisation, and a set of partners, capable of matching that potential with action.

This is our commitment to our residents: we will move from plans to progress, from ambition to impact, and that we will keep pushing - every day - to make the East Midlands a better place to live, work and thrive.



Claire Ward
Mayor of the East Midlands

Chief Executive's foreword



Welcome to the East Midlands Combined County Authority's Corporate Plan for 2026–29.

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) is a young, but fast-maturing organisation, we have moved quickly from building the foundations to delivery. In a short period of time, we have created the conditions for an established mayoral authority to serve its region, our communities, our businesses and our partners.

I am immensely proud to be the Chief Executive of EMCCA, and of the colleagues who are building an organisation that is professional, collaborative and focused on outcomes. We are system leaders and our responsibilities are significant and growing, spanning skills and employment, investment and regeneration, housing, and transport and operations. Every programme and every pound we invest is driven by a purpose to serve residents, businesses and communities who expect us to be effective, transparent and accountable.

As a region and as a partnership over the past year we have made important progress. We have set a clear strategic direction through our Growth Plan and Inclusive Growth Commission, established new investment pipelines, and taken on major new responsibilities, including becoming the region's single transport authority. Alongside this, we have strengthened how we work, putting in place robust assurance, performance and governance arrangements that ensure public money is spent well and delivers real impact.

This Corporate Plan sets out how we will build on that momentum over the next three years. It focuses on the priorities that matter most to the East Midlands: supporting businesses to invest and grow; developing high-impact clusters in areas where the region has real strengths from our defence capabilities to our visitor economy; improving skills pathways so more people can access good work; accelerating clean

energy and retrofit; unlocking housing and regeneration; and improving transport and digital connectivity so opportunity is easier to reach.

Combined authorities are a young construct nationally, still unfamiliar to many people. Building trust, credibility and a track record is therefore essential. We will do this by being clear about what we are here to deliver, working closely as a partnership with our colleagues and member councils, partners and communities, and being open about progress through our Outcomes Framework and monitoring and evaluation.

The East Midlands is a region of almost 2.3m people; we are diverse, we are distinct, we are makers, producers and innovators, with world-class assets, proud places and huge potential. EMCCA's role is to provide the leadership, coordination and investment that helps our potential to translate into better jobs, stronger communities and a higher quality of life for everyone.

I am confident in what EMCCA can achieve over the period of this plan, and grateful to our colleagues and partners whose commitment and collaboration will make it possible.



Amy Harhoff
Chief Executive
East Midlands Combined County
Authority

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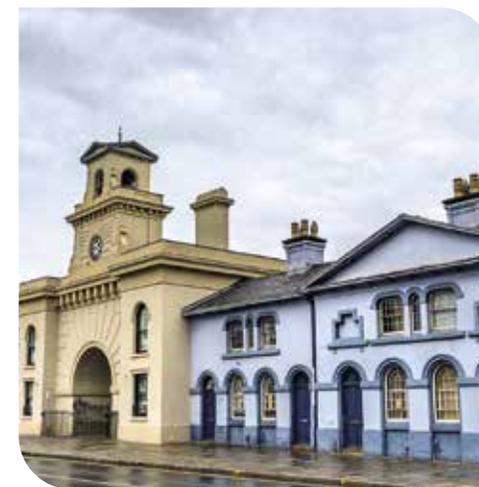
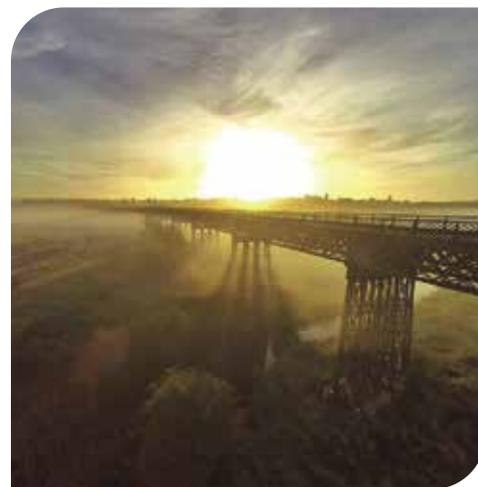
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1.1 EMCCA Corporate Plan 2026–2029

EMCCA overview

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) is led by our first directly elected Mayor of the East Midlands, Claire Ward. Our mission is to deliver inclusive growth for the people of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

EMCCA brings together the local authorities of Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire, and the 15 district and borough councils from across the region.

Having a mayor gives our region a strong voice at an international and national level, and ensures our investment, policies and partnerships help the people and places that we serve.

EMCCA has two roles:

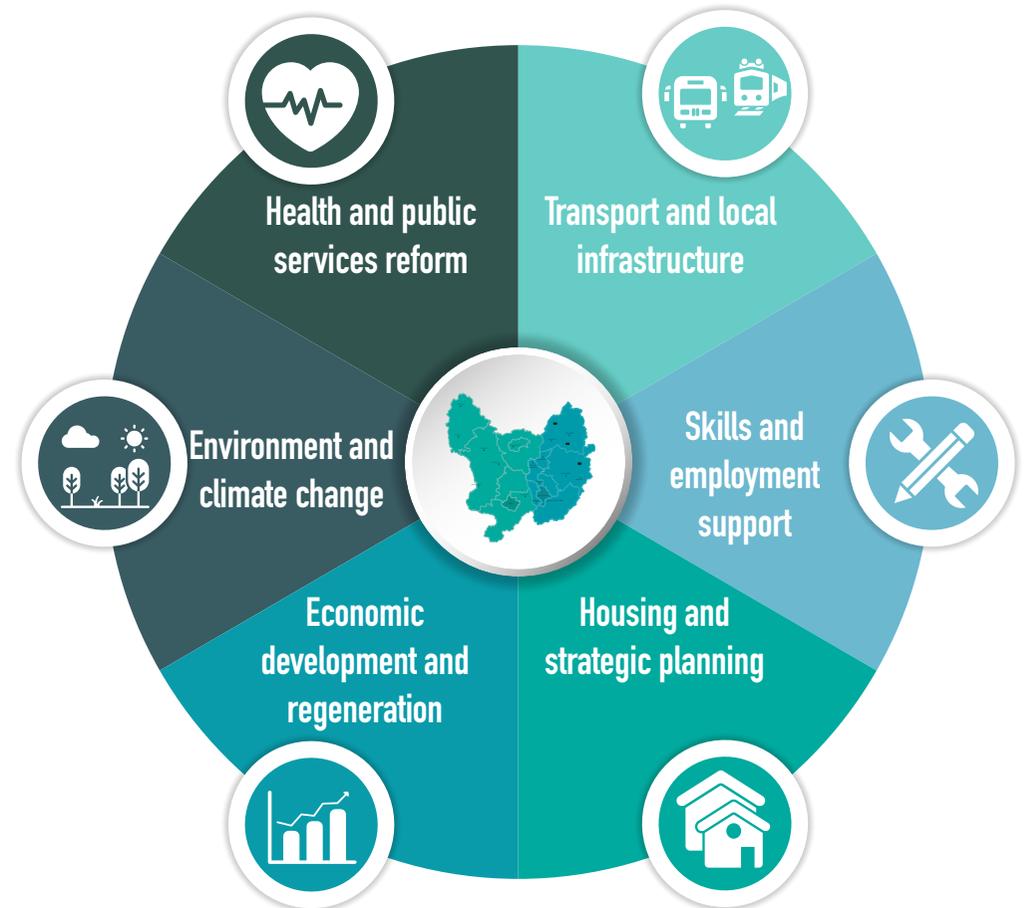


direct funding in, and commissioning in, for example, transport and responsibility for programmes such as adult skills



bringing together local, regional and national partners to support economic growth and better outcomes for people

EMCCA works across the following areas:



We will receive new powers under the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, including on public safety where we expect to take future responsibility for the region's police and fire services. We have applied to become an "Established" Authority which will make us eligible for an integrated funding settlement. This will mean greater flexibility in how we use our funding to deliver for the people of the East Midlands.

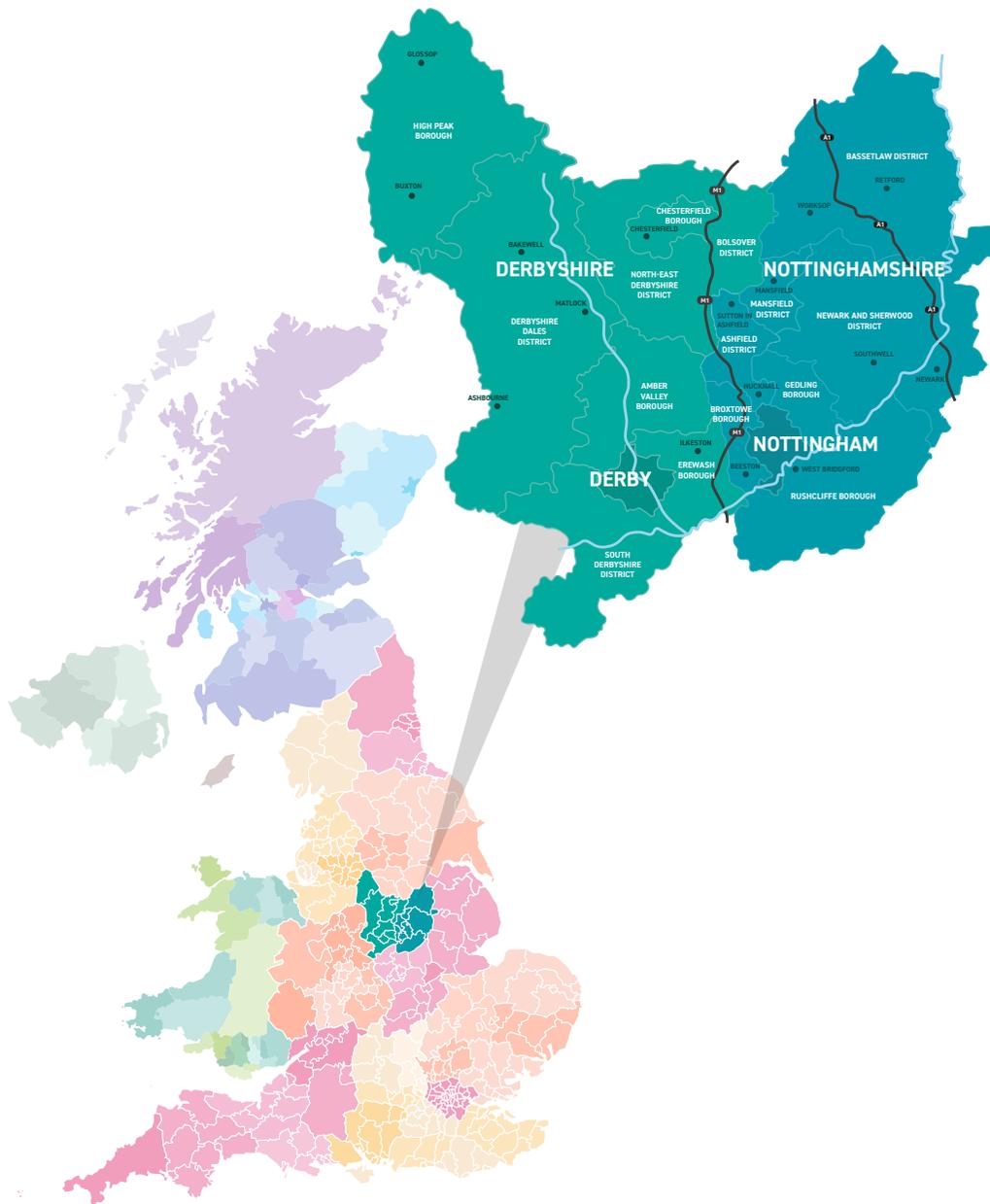


EMCCA Corporate Plan 2026–29

This Corporate Plan builds on our **Inclusive Growth Framework** and **East Midlands Growth Plan**. It sets out how we will deliver inclusive growth, where a stronger economy means better livelihoods for people and communities. This Corporate Plan is a basis for collaboration and partnership, to deliver meaningful change for the people of the East Midlands.



1.2 Our region



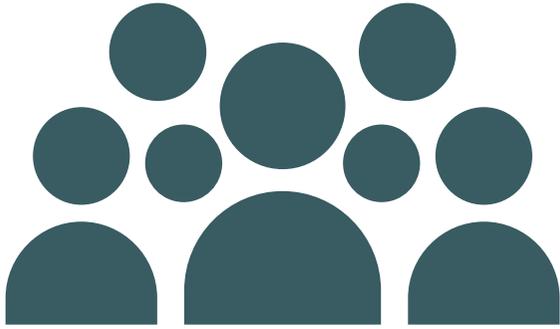
The East Midlands is a region of scale, character and opportunity. Comprising the historic counties of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, it is shaped by two dynamic cities of Derby and Nottingham, a network of industrious towns, and rural landscapes of national significance.

Rich in industrial heritage, the East Midlands powered Britain's industrial revolution through coal, rail and textiles, with the Derwent Valley Mills recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the birthplace of modern factory production. Today, that legacy continues through global names such as Rolls-Royce, Toyota, Alstom, JCB and Boots, alongside strengths in advanced manufacturing, clean energy, life sciences, the visitor economy and a fast-growing digital, creative and cultural sector.

The region is well connected at the heart of the country. The UK's only inland Freeport, centred around East Midlands Airport, provides a platform for international trade, logistics and innovation. Three top universities and seven further education colleges anchor a strong skills and research ecosystem, to support the next generation of talent and enterprise.

Natural assets are central to the region's identity and prosperity. The Peak District, England's first National Park, alongside Sherwood Forest, the National Forest and iconic waterside and heritage landscapes enrich quality of life and drive the visitor economy alike.

Our region: statistics



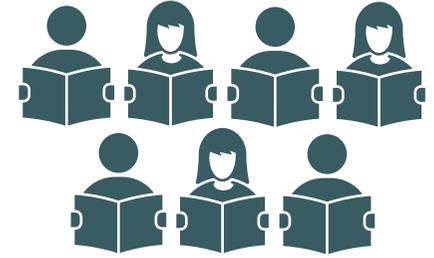
Population: **2,285,000**



Economic output (GVA):
£60bn



3 universities



7 further education
colleges



91% of the country within a
4-hour drive of the East Midlands



77 million
visitors each year



Employment rate:
73.9%¹

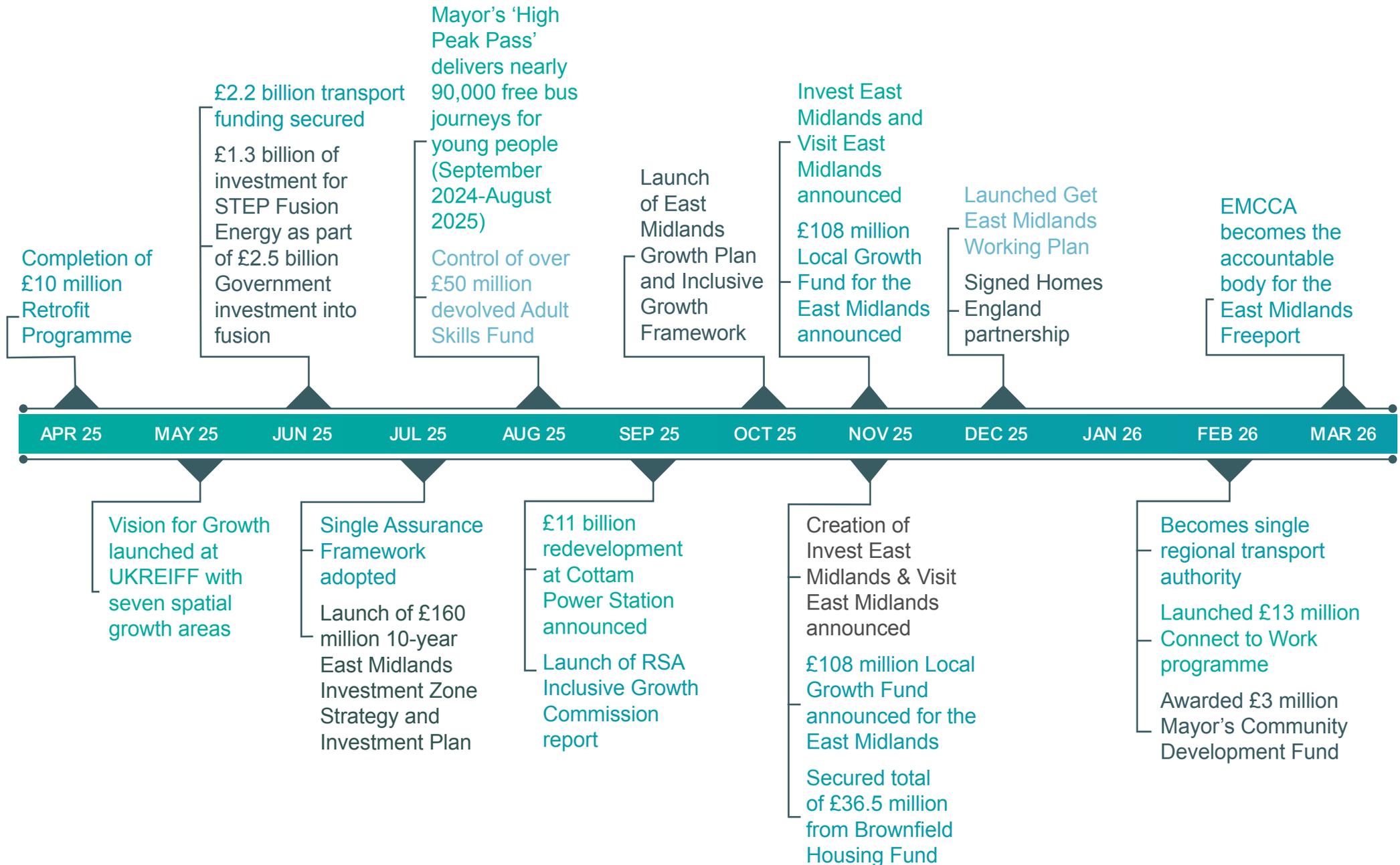


73,700
active businesses²

1 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey, October – December 2025

2 Office for National Statistics: Inter-Departmental Business Register, 2025

1.3 Our achievements in 2025-26



1.4 Mayoral leadership and partnership working 2026–29

We have built strong foundations, but we want to go further and faster to deliver inclusive growth that brings meaningful change for our residents.

Our **Inclusive Growth Framework** sets six long-term ambitions on which we want to work together with our partners, including local authorities, central government, public bodies, businesses, the voluntary and community organisations and residents.

EMCCA is committed to delivering value for citizens and businesses in the investments we make. Our funding alone can only go so far, and so we will:

- make the case to central government for more powers and funding for the region
- bring together partners and champion the region at a national and international level
- collaborate with other mayoral authorities on maximising the benefits of devolution

In the next section, we set out what we have done so far, and our priorities for 2026–29 for each of our long-term ambitions.



2.1 Growth and opportunity

Our ambition: By 2040, the East Midlands will be one of the fastest growing regional economies in the UK. People across the region will be in good, secure, and rewarding work, enabled by innovation rooted in our strengths in making, producing and movement, establishing the East Midlands as a leading destination for business investment.



What we did in 2025–26

- Launched our 10-year **East Midlands Growth Plan** and the RSA-led Inclusive Growth Commission report
- Supported the launch of the £160 million 10-year East Midlands Investment Zone Strategy and Investment Plan
- Launched EMCCA's £25 million Investment Fund pipeline, including town centre regeneration, and new business and community spaces, with £4 million investment into Ashbourne, Chesterfield and Staveley town centres
- Invested to support development of the Broadmarsh site in Nottingham, the Infinity Prototyping Centre in Derby and the South Derbyshire Growth Zone
- Invested in Midlands Mindforge which aims to raise £250 million of investment capital over five years to support early-stage university spin-outs and science-based companies
- Invested £1.4 million from our Early-Stage Angel Investor Fund to drive equity into five early stage and start-up businesses

Our priorities for 2026–29

We will back business growth and enable job opportunities through Invest East Midlands, Visit East Midlands, our £108 million Local Growth Fund and the East Midlands Investment Zone and Freeport sites. We will support innovation and develop clusters, by working with businesses and partners to support our high-impact sectors in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, life sciences, digital, creative and cultural, and the visitor economy.

Business growth and innovation

We will:

- Strengthen and better connect the regional business ecosystem and support services so SMEs and micro businesses can access high-quality, easy-to-navigate support aligned with national programmes and partnerships
- Support businesses and universities to develop innovative products and services, including through UK Research and Innovation's Local Innovation Partnerships Fund and with our Innovation Advisory Board
- Develop the technical skills pipeline needed to grow innovative businesses by working with universities, further education colleges and training providers to strengthen pathways to the commercialisation of research
- Support the growth of our high impact sectors by working with the private sector and other partners to develop and build on our regional innovation facilities, and leverage private sector investment

Investment, exports and productivity

We will:

- Attract business investment and promote the region to a domestic and international audience to drive foreign investment and exports, including markets such as the USA, Germany and Japan, by developing Invest East Midlands and delivering a joined-up investor offer
- Maximise the impact of our strategic investment funds and development work to leverage private sector investment and support good jobs, including through our £108 million Local Growth Fund, our annual investment fund, investment initiatives such as Team Derby and by exploring innovative finance vehicles
- Support long-term growth and investment in strategic sites, through the £160 million 10-year East Midlands Investment Zone Strategy and Investment Plan, becoming the accountable body for the East Midlands Freeport, and pursuing opportunities on business rates retention
- Maximise economic opportunities for our defence sector by delivering the **Defence and Security Blueprint for the Midlands** in partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority

Visitor economy, culture and creative

We will:

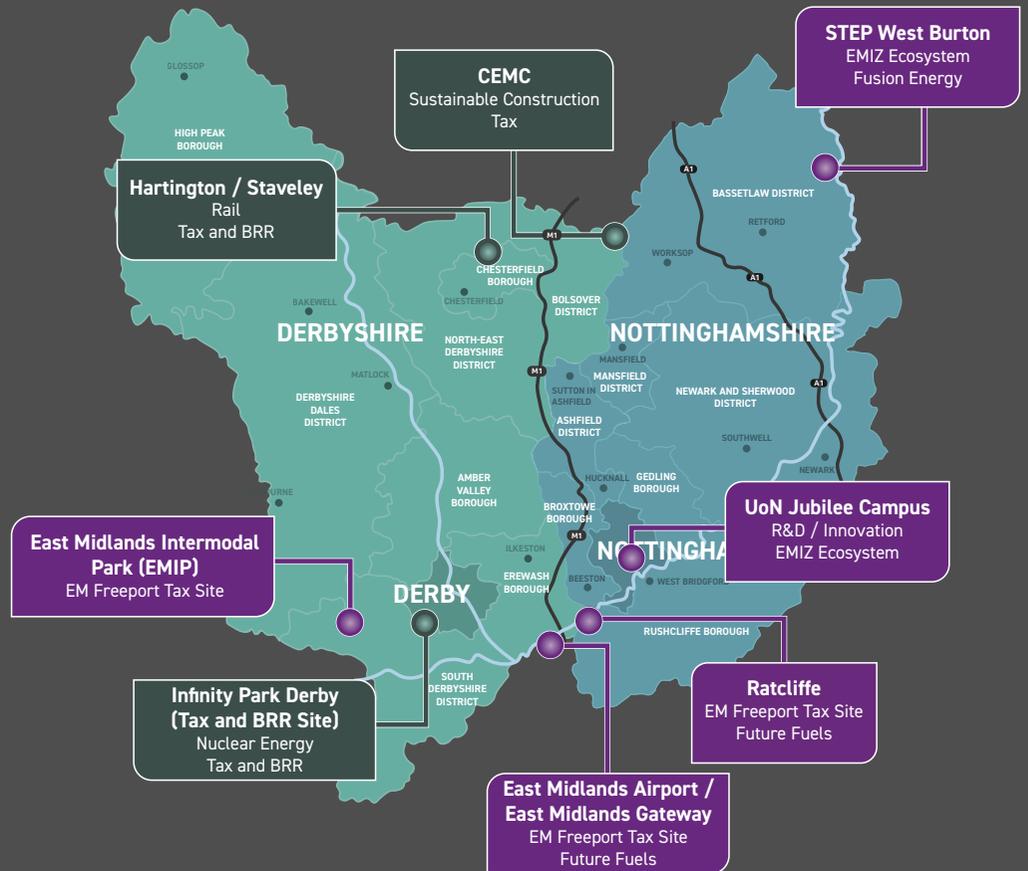
- Build and promote the region's visitor economy and cultural, heritage, sport and outdoor offer to national and international markets by launching Visit East Midlands
- Grow our visitor economy by developing new infrastructure and products, regenerating the Trent Sports District, promoting the development of new visitor accommodation, developing a regional place brand, maximising the potential of Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, and developing a major events strategy
- Maximise the potential of our creative and cultural sectors by driving targeted investment and innovation through strategic partnerships, including with universities and Arm's Length Bodies
- Unlock investment and growth in the East Midlands economy by shaping the development of the new overnight visitor levy



Case Study: East Midlands' Industrial Strategy Zones

Recognising the region's strengths in advanced manufacturing and clean energy, the Government has allocated £160 million over 10 years to create the East Midlands Investment Zone (green), supporting three major sites that together will attract £383 million of private investment, regenerate over 180 hectares of brownfield land, and support more than 4,000 high quality jobs. Early delivery highlights include funding 15 innovative businesses to accelerate the development of new clean-growth and advanced-manufacturing products; the delivery of regional skills and innovation roadmaps to strengthen local workforce capabilities; and contributing to the new Derbyshire rail innovation training centre at Barrow Hill.

The East Midlands Investment Zone sits alongside the East Midlands Freeport (purple) – the UK's only inland freeport – spanning nationally significant locations including East Midlands Airport and EMAGIC, Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, and the East Midlands Intermodal Park – a 173-hectare rail connected hub for sustainable logistics and advanced manufacturing and clean energy innovation. Harnessing the Freeport's central location and transport links, these sites are forming a modern, zero carbon industrial ecosystem backed by a £1 billion long-term investment strategy to accelerate global market competitiveness, innovation and investment.



2.2 Green growth and environment

Our ambition: By 2040, the East Midlands will be a UK leader in maximising jobs and opportunities from clean energy and green technologies. Improving everyone's environment will mean creating cleaner, greener communities – with warmer homes, better public transport, greater access to nature, and improved protection from flooding and the environmental impacts of climate change.



What we did in 2025–26

- Secured plans for an £11 billion redevelopment of Cottam Power Station to create the UK's first nuclear-powered data centre campus
- Secured investment of £1.3 billion to back STEP Fusion, the UK's first fusion energy plant at West Burton as part of Government's overall investment of £2.5 billion into fusion
- Submitted two Artificial Intelligence Growth Zone proposals to the Government at 1. Ratcliffe-on-Soar and 2. Cottam and High Marnham to catalyse major infrastructure investment in the region and attract high-value sectors and jobs
- Funded the development of England's largest Local Area Energy Plan with Digital Twin, for completion in summer 2026
- Secured £1.4 million from the Mayoral Renewables Fund to develop solar at Williamsthorpe Colliery in Derbyshire and on a leisure centre in Nottinghamshire, to reduce energy bills for local communities
- Supported two Local Nature Recovery Strategies led by Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council
- Established the Nature and Biodiversity Taskforce to protect and enhance the natural world and support healthier communities across the East Midlands

Our priorities for 2026–29

We will drive investment in clean energy infrastructure through our partnership working, from cutting-edge STEP fusion to renewable and community energy projects. We will take steps to improve our natural environment and develop projects to improve resilience against flooding and other environmental pressures such as water scarcity.

Green growth

We will:

- Unlock investment across fusion, nuclear fission, hydrogen, wind, solar, heat networks and Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage, energy efficiency and their supply chains, including through the outputs of England's largest Local Area Energy Plan, pursuing AI Growth Zones, deploying East Midlands Investment Zone funding, aligning local projects with national funding and grid upgrade opportunities and developing a pipeline of projects
- Enable the delivery of at least 5MW of renewable energy generation, support community energy groups to deliver more community-led energy projects and support the decarbonisation of the public estate
- Drive collective regional efforts towards growth opportunities, by supporting East Midlands Hydrogen, Midlands Nuclear and the Midlands Green Growth Board

Environment

We will:

- Improve flooding and water resilience, including by progressing major infrastructure projects along the Derwent, Trent and Wye rivers, and supporting sustainable drainage schemes
- Improve biodiversity and the natural environment by supporting the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategies for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, supporting local authorities on programmes such as community forests, and exploring green finance opportunities
- Work with partners to develop regional priorities and approach on farming and rural affairs, and climate resilience adaptation and mitigation



2.3 Skills for good work

Our ambition: By 2040, the East Midlands will be a place where people can gain the skills they need for the jobs they want, with high-quality local training, better pay, and clear routes to progress. From first steps into work to careers at the forefront of industry, everyone will have the chance to realise their potential and more jobs will offer security, purpose and pride.



What we did in 2025-26

- Launched our Get East Midlands Working Plan to get more people into good work, with a 10-year goal for 80% of working age people in employment
- Set up and implemented over £50 million devolved Adult Skills Funding in the East Midlands for the first time
- Developed skills and employment programmes to support residents with new skills and provide them with support into work via the Adult Skills Fund, Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps
- Launched Connect to Work programme, to help thousands of people with long-term health conditions get back into employment through a dedicated £13 million annual fund
- Announced a 20-year collaboration with the UK Atomic Energy Authority on fusion energy development and skills training
- Supported Derby College Group to become a Construction Technical Excellence College for the East Midlands
- Developed an offer for our young people through careers support within schools via the Careers and Enterprise Company and with our Youth Guarantee, getting young people into education, employment or training. The £5 million Youth Guarantee Trailblazer has already supported 1,200 young people between April 2025 and January 2026
- Established a new Regional Youth Committee for young people to shape our work

Case Study: Mollie – Youth Guarantee Trailblazer

Mollie, who is 18 years old and was diagnosed with autism, ADHD and dyslexia, joined Derby's Youth Guarantee Trailblazer after struggling to transition from education into work. With tailored support from a Supported Employment Officer, she built her confidence, gained interview skills, and secured a placement through the six-week Journey to Work programme.

Mollie excelled at her placement with Leonardo Hotel, impressing her managers and overcoming initial barriers. She was offered a paid job and now works in Guest Services, proud of the progress she has made.





Our priorities for 2026–29

We will tailor our regional skills and employment offer to tackle barriers to employment and equip residents with the skills they need to access good work, through our partnership working and system-leadership and by embedding a co-design and co-commissioning approach. We will provide young people with support to realise their potential through our Youth Ambition.

Skills

We will:

- Create a more responsive, demand-led regional skills system including by developing and implementing a new Local Skills Improvement Plan, together with the Federation of Small Businesses
- Create accessible, targeted provision to where there is most need by developing a single skills and employment offer, funded through the Adult Skills Fund, Free Courses for Jobs, Skills Bootcamps and Connect to Work and Youth Guarantee, including apprenticeships and careers information, advice and guidance
- Keep employees and graduates in work and in the region by further developing our support to business on skills and training and employment support

Employment

We will:

- Tackle systemic barriers to employment, including health, transport and caring responsibilities, by implementing our Get East Midlands Working Plan with the goal of 80% of working age people in employment
- Address economic inactivity and unemployment by prioritising funding and support towards people facing challenges and disadvantage, including young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and people with health challenges
- Provide young people with the support, opportunities, and voice they need to thrive by delivering our Youth Ambition

Good work

We will:

- Maximise the job opportunities of our region, including the East Midlands Investment Zone, East Midlands Freeport, STEP Fusion, and high impact sectors by ensuring alignment of skills and training provision and employment support in collaboration with our anchor institutions
- Improve workplace practices and culture by launching an East Midlands Good Employment Charter
- Connect people to good jobs, and enable pathways for progression by scoping, developing and implementing our Opportunity Escalator



2.4 Connected communities

Our ambition: By 2040, communities in the East Midlands will benefit from reliable, inclusive and sustainable connectivity, through integrated transport and high-quality digital infrastructure, broadening access to opportunity and reducing reliance on private cars, while driving investment across the region.



What we did in 2025-26

- Secured £2.2 billion from the Government's Transport for City Regions fund to improve transport across the region – our first consolidated regional settlement
- Launched the first stage of public consultation on the Mayor's Transport Plan
- Established EMCCA as a single regional Transport Authority, including for bus services
- Renewed the successful High Peak student bus pass for 2025-26 academic year, enabling free travel to Manchester colleges for students in rural Derbyshire
- Supported Great British Railways, which will manage passenger services and rail infrastructure, to be headquartered in Derby
- Appointed Sustainable Travel Ambassador Alan Simpson

Case Study: Transport Investment Programme

Our Transport Investment Programme directs funding toward projects designed to ease congestion, improve safety, and support more reliable public transport and active travel. Our investments include:

- £115 million in 2025/26 followed by £121 million per year for the next three years to repair and maintain roads across the region, including fixing potholes, improving pavements, cycleways and lighting and repairing essential structures
- £21 million Bus Service Improvement Plan capital funding each year from 2025/26 to 2028/29 to improve facilities and services and for electrification of the bus fleet and depots
- Up to £11.7 million towards a £43m scheme for major improvements along the A614/A6097 corridor in Nottinghamshire
- £3 million for upgrades to the A514 junction in Derby, for more dependable bus journeys, new cycle lanes and safer crossings, and to reduce delays
- £2.5 million for groundworks to develop the Chesterfield Staveley regeneration route
- £1.8 million to make walking and cycling safer and easier in Nottingham
- £1.5 million for sustainable transport improvements in Derbyshire market towns

The Mayor's Transport Plan

EMCCA is now the Local Transport Authority which means we can join-up transport networks and services across the region, in tandem with our £2.2 billion long-term transport funding. We are developing the Mayor's Transport Plan for a reliable, inclusive and sustainable transport system over the next 15 years. In November 2025, we launched our Big Transport Conversation to shape our plan, with more than 36,000 people taking part so far. We value the input of people and organisations across the region as we work towards adopting our Transport Plan in 2027.





Our priorities for 2026–29

We will develop a more reliable, inclusive and sustainable transport system through the Mayor's Transport Plan and our £2.2 billion pipeline of long-term investment. We will ensure bus services meet the needs of residents, through our new role as the regional Transport Authority.

Transport networks

We will:

- Improve our transport network by adopting the Mayor's Transport Plan and delivering £2.2 billion of investment to 2032, including for buses, roads, rail and walking and cycling infrastructure
- Improve the resilience of our road network by investing in repair and maintenance, fixing potholes, and improving pavements, cycle infrastructure and lighting
- Advocate for rail investment and service improvements, support integration between rail and other modes of transport, and develop a pipeline of station investment by working in partnership with the Government and Great British Railways
- Make it easier to switch between trains, buses, trams, cycling, walking and wheeling by working with partners to connect services and stations, and by planning routes and timetables together
- Make it easier to plan and pay to get around the region by being at the forefront of adopting new technology, building on the success of our new 'Ride' app for integrated travel planning and tickets



Buses

We will:

- Strengthen integration and performance for passengers where gaps in network connectivity exist by conducting a comprehensive Bus Network Review
- Transform bus infrastructure and services to boost reliability and passenger satisfaction by creating a region-wide Enhanced Partnership Plan
- Improve service quality and community connectivity by targeting bus funding and subsidies where they deliver the greatest benefit
- Make fares easier to understand and use by developing a simplified, smarter ticketing strategy, including developing costed options for fare incentives to promote sustained bus use across the region
- Make the transport network more accessible and easier to use by enhancing, modernising, and standardising all passenger information, including continued roll out of real-time passenger information
- Create a greener and healthier bus network by accelerating bus decarbonisation across both tendered and commercial services

Digital infrastructure

We will:

- Better connect people and businesses by working with partners to support the rollout of digital infrastructure, including 5G and broadband networks

2.5 Homes and place

Our ambition: By 2040, the housing affordability gap in the East Midlands will be closing, with rents and house prices better aligned to local incomes. Communities will have access to safe and warm housing, suitable to their needs, enabling people to live healthy lives in connected communities.

Case Study: Domestic Energy Efficiency Programme

EMCCA delivered a £10 million retrofit programme to improve the energy efficiency of homes across the region, addressing fuel poverty and poor housing conditions. Working with local authorities, the scheme installed 837 energy saving measures, upgraded 574 homes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C or above, and delivered 218 whole house retrofits - exceeding all targets.

Residents reported warmer, healthier homes and lower energy bills, with wider benefits such as reduced pressure on health and social care services. The programme marks the start of our long-term ambition to retrofit 12,000 homes over the next decade.

What we did in 2025-26

- Launched our **Vision for Growth**, which sets the development potential across seven Growth Strategy Areas, from the Trent Arc to the Heartlands and Supercluster
- Signed our Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England to support our ambition for 100,000 new homes over the next decade
- Launched our East Midlands Retrofit Strategy to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty
- Championed the investment potential of the Peak Cluster, Supercluster and Trent Arc at the Regional Investment Summit in Birmingham
- Launched a review on access to support and services for people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, and secured funding to develop a blueprint for tackling rough sleeping across the East Midlands
- Launched the Peak Partnership between the Mayors of the East Midlands, Manchester and South Yorkshire to work together to maximise opportunities across the Peak District
- Tackled unsafe cladding and improved building safety through our Local Remediation Acceleration Plan

Our priorities for 2026–29

We will enable an integrated approach to place-based development, including housing, transport, communities, employment and education, through our first Spatial Development Strategy. We will work with partners to support more housebuilding, including affordable homes and homes on brownfield land, and lower energy bills through home retrofit. We will prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping, through joined-up services to help those most at risk into secure homes.

Spatial development

We will:

- Focus future investment towards unlocking growth and supporting communities, businesses and the environment by developing the region's first Spatial Development Strategy to guide the development of homes, infrastructure, transport and business spaces
- Maximise spatial development opportunities, by developing plans for the region's Growth Strategy Areas outlined and taking steps to bring them to fruition, including through our Investment Zone and Freeport sites

Housing

We will:

- Support delivery of up to 2,000 new homes on previously used land, bringing empty or underused sites back into use by investing up to £36.5 million through the Brownfield Housing Fund
- Facilitate progressing sites and funding to support over 100,000 new homes over the next decade and developing a regional housing strategy, with an emphasis on affordable housing, by working with the Government, Homes England and local authorities and bringing empty homes back into use
- Retrofit 2,500 homes and install 5,000 energy-saving or generating measures so homes are warmer and cheaper by working with local authorities and the Net Zero Hub, and secure funding to deliver the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator Strategy and other innovative models

Homelessness and rough sleeping

We will:

- Prevent people reaching crisis point, including those at risk of rough sleeping or domestic abuse, by setting up a regional taskforce to prevent homelessness, coordinating services, and investing £1.5 million into prevention



Strategy Areas



KEY

- - - Growth Strategy Areas
- Growth Opportunities

Canal Corridor

- CC1 – Explore Park Investment Zone
- CC2 – Markham Vale Enterprise Zone
- CC3 – Chesterfield Town Centre
- CC4 – Hartington and Staveley Investment Zone

Supercluster

- SC1 – West Burton Power Station
- SC2 – Cottam Power Station
- SC3 – High Marnham Power Station

Trent Arc

- TA1 – Nottingham City Centre
- TA2 – Toton and Chetwynd
- TA3 – Ratcliffe Power Station (Freeport)
- TA4 – Infinity Park Investment Zone & South Derbyshire Growth Zone
- TA5 – Willington Power Station
- TA6 – EMIP (Freeport)
- TA7 – Derby City Centre

Derwent Valley

- DV1 – Derwent Valley Mills

Peaks and Dales

Heartlands

The Loop

Growth Strategy Areas

Our Vision for Growth sets Growth Strategy Areas (see map on the previous page) for delivering development at scale into our places, capitalising on the region's unique mix of grid, road, rail, water and natural infrastructure, and underpinned by our Investment Zone and Freeport sites. We will:

- **Trent Arc:** unlock development, connect communities and grow our economic clusters, across an area that includes Derby and Nottingham city centres, the Freeport, the Infinity Park Investment Zone, BioCity Nottingham, three universities and two former coal-fired power stations
- **Canal Corridor:** create a joined-up business and visitor offer connecting areas around Chesterfield station and our East Midlands Investment Zone sites at Staveley and Worksop to the Supercluster
- **Supercluster:** drive private sector investment in cutting-edge clean energy infrastructure and ensure residents benefit from these new job opportunities
- **Heartlands:** support local authorities to develop a plan that harnesses the industrial heritage of the area and creates opportunity
- **Peaks and Dales:** enhance our visitor offer and ensure job opportunities and transport connections that benefit residents
- **Derwent Valley Mills:** maximise the opportunity of our UNESCO World Heritage Site as a major site for regeneration at the heart of our visitor economy
- **The Loop:** enable people to benefit from the waterways and trails that unite Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and foster a shared regional identity



2.6 Health, wellbeing and belonging (including public services)

Our ambition: By 2040, we will significantly reduce the gap in healthy life expectancy between our most and least advantaged communities and improve health and wellbeing for all residents by focusing on prevention, treatment and support, enabling people to participate fully in their communities and benefit from opportunities around them.

Case Study: Nottingham Test, Learn and Grow

Nottingham City Council is one of ten areas working with the Government on the £100 million Test, Learn and Grow programme to develop innovative approaches to delivering better public services.

The Nottingham pilot supports people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) into employment, by bringing together a multidisciplinary team including partners and practitioners to test new and innovative approaches. The goal is for learnings on “what works” to be scalable across the region.

What we did in 2025–26

- Launched the £3 million Mayor’s Community Development Fund to improve community resilience, improve skills and help people shape their neighbourhoods
- Supported the Government’s Pride in Place investment in neighbourhoods in Nottingham, Derby, Broxtowe, Mansfield and Ashfield
- Convened leaders and professionals at the *Healthy East Midlands* conference to shape a preventative health system





Our priorities for 2026–29

We will improve health and wellbeing for all residents by bringing partners together to tackle health inequities and focus public services on prevention. We will support safer, healthier and more cohesive communities, and ensure residents have an effective voice in shaping our work.

Health

We will:

- Ensure everyday choices make it easier for people to live healthier, longer lives by building health outcomes into all our major plans, including where we build homes, target employment and skills support and how we design transport networks
- Narrow the health gap between communities and improve healthy life expectancy by convening partners across the region to focus on a shared set of health priorities
- Identify evidence-based, innovative approaches to improving health outcomes through our research partnerships and working with the Office for Life Sciences to support our thriving life sciences sector

Communities and inclusion

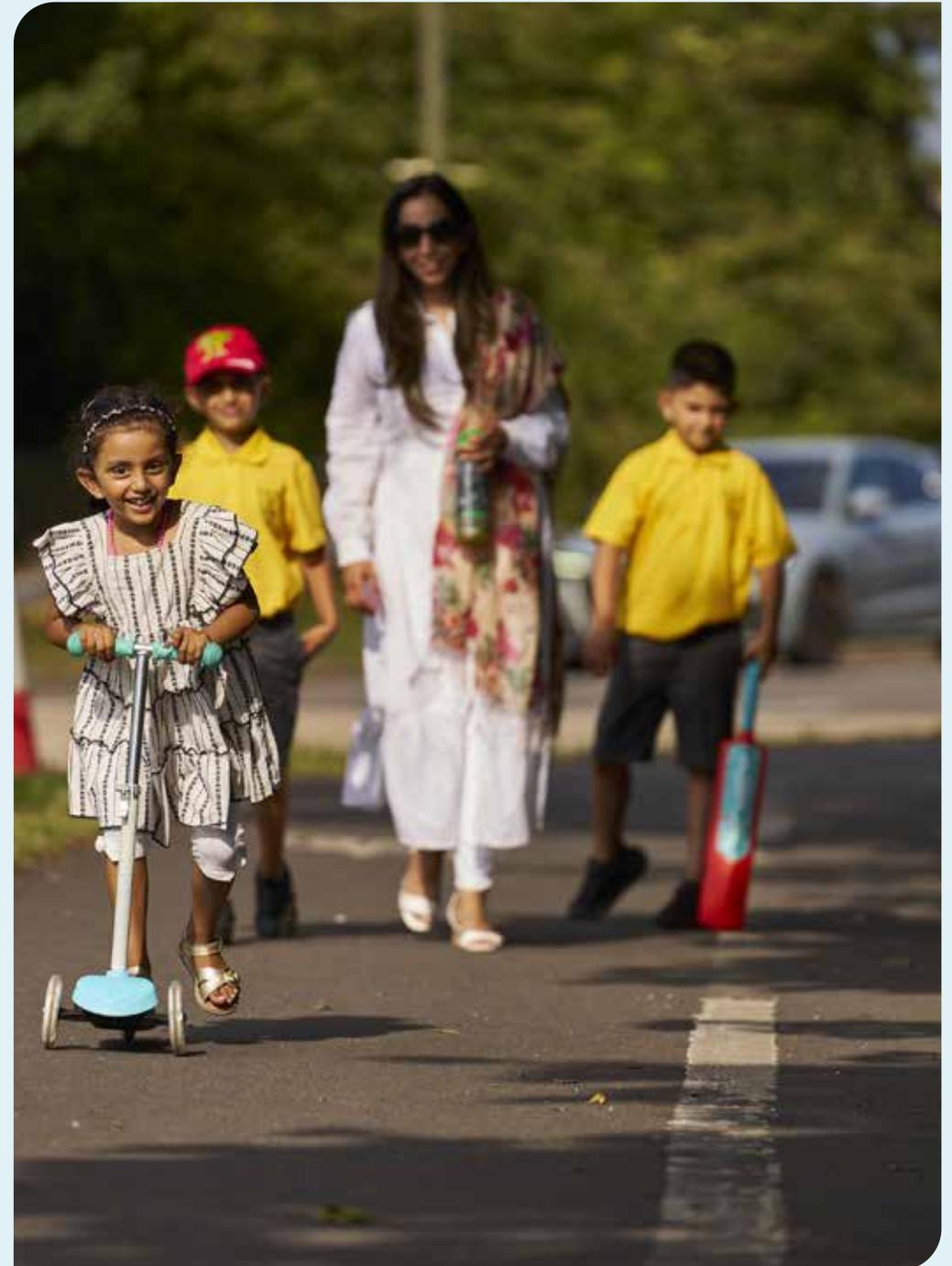
We will:

- Ensure we are reaching all communities and bringing their voice into policy and delivery by developing an Inclusion Framework
- Support community cohesion by directly funding capacity in some of our most deprived communities through our Mayor's Community Development Fund
- Drive social investment in the region to grow the impact economy and strengthen social capital

Public services

We will:

- Improve access to public services, with a focus on prevention, early intervention and healthy living, by developing a Public Service Reform programme and delivery plan that maximises the opportunities of Local Government Reorganisation and learnings from Test Learn and Grow pilots
- Join up our efforts to keep people in the East Midlands safe, and explore opportunities for more connections with areas such as transport, employment and health, by working with Police and Crime Commissioners and Fire and Rescue Authorities to integrate these services under Mayoral leadership



Devolution and partnerships



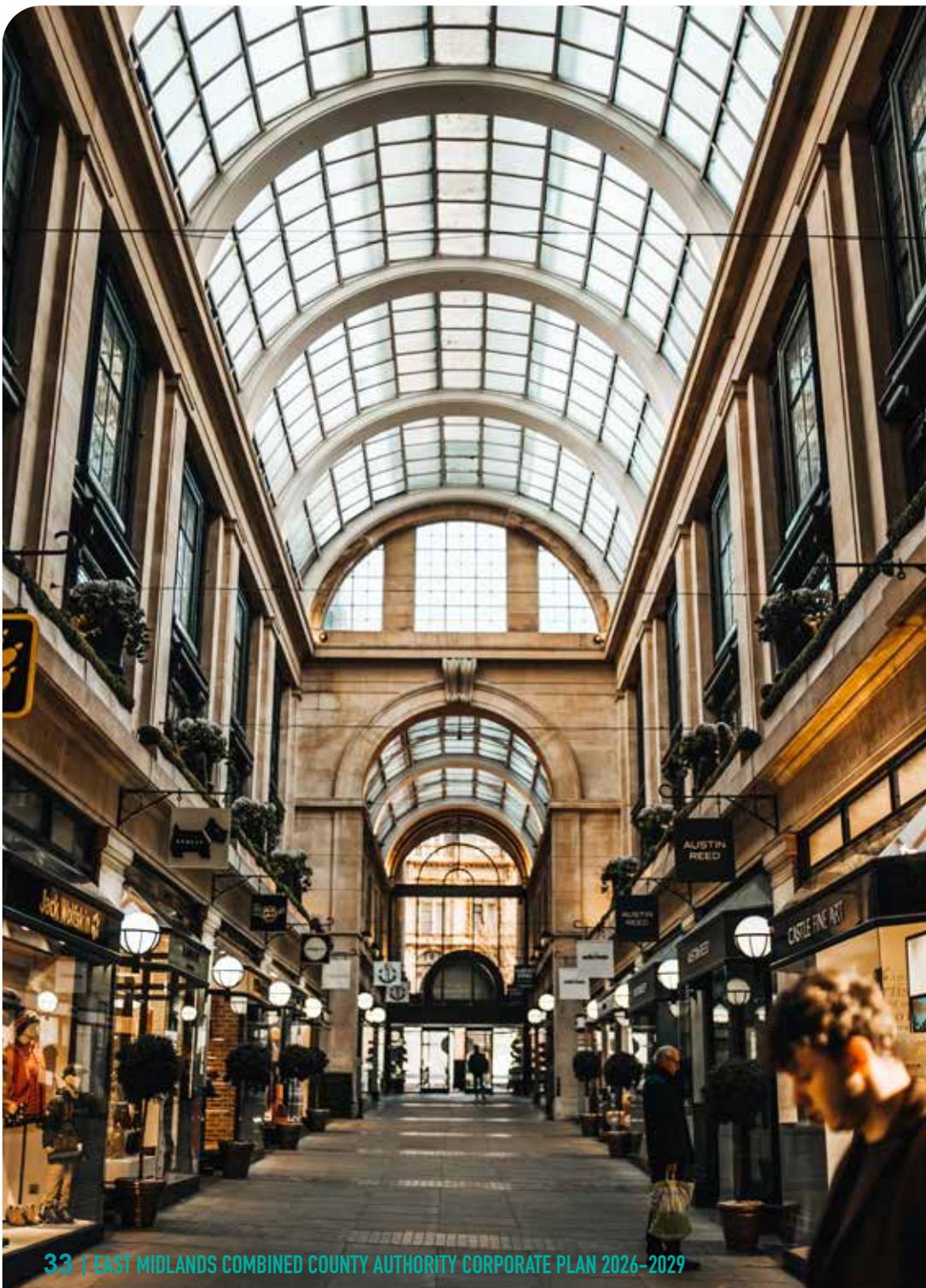
3.1 Deepening devolution

We want devolution to deliver real benefits for the East Midlands. We will work with partners and communities to make the most of our powers and funding and explore opportunities to innovate and do things differently. We will continue to make the case to Government for more powers and funding to improve people's lives.



What we did in 2025–26

- Applied to become an “Established” Mayoral Strategic Authority, to give EMCCA more powers, more funding opportunities, and a long-term funding deal
- Engaged with local authorities on their proposals to reorganise local government and what this means for residents and future devolution in the region
- Put in place a Single Assurance Framework to make sure the money we spend delivers value and makes a real difference
- Worked closely with other Mayoral Strategic Authorities, and championed the priorities of the East Midlands at a national and international level



Our priorities for 2026–29

We will:

- Secure more powers and funding opportunities for the region by maximising the benefits of becoming an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority, including working with other Strategic Authorities to request new powers for the Mayor
- Secure an “integrated” long-term funding settlement from Government, so we can join up our investments and programmes to deliver better outcomes for people and communities
- Harness opportunities from the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill with new powers across areas such as transport and spatial development
- Maximise the opportunities of Local Government Reorganisation including new models for integrated public services, and support a smooth transition to new arrangements, by working closely with local authorities across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire
- Ensure value for money and enhance the positive impact of our investment by embedding our Single Assurance Framework and Outcomes Framework

3.2 Working with our constituent authorities

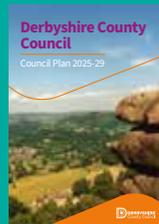
This EMCCA Corporate Plan complements the plans and strategies of local authorities across the region who we work in close partnership with, in particular our four constituent authorities.

Derby City's **Council Plan 2025-2028** focuses on five priorities: Inclusive City, Green City, City of Growth, Vibrant City, and Connected Council. Derby City's emphasis on community engagement and financial sustainability aligns with EMCCA's commitment to inclusive growth and regional partnership.



Derby City Council

Derbyshire County Council's **Council Plan 2025-29** is built around three outcomes: People, Place, and The Council. Derbyshire County Council's focus on resident consultation and partnership working complements our approach to shaping a region that works for communities and businesses alike. Derbyshire County Council is currently updating its Council Plan, with the new version to be launched in April 2026.



DERBYSHIRE
County Council

Nottingham City Council's **Council Plan 2025-29** sets out three missions: A renewed council, Delivering for local people, and Leading Nottingham forward. Nottingham City Council's priorities of governance reform and sustainability reinforce our shared ambition for transparent leadership and a greener East Midlands.



Nottingham
City Council

Nottinghamshire County Council's **Council Plan 2025-2029** centres on stronger families, thriving communities, and a connected county, with a practical focus on education, health, and local jobs that mirrors our goal of creating opportunities that matter most to residents. EMCCA will work with the Council to improve transport and fix roads, making it easier for people and businesses to get around.



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Leaders of our constituent authorities



Councillor Nadine Peatfield,
Leader of Derby City Council



Councillor Alan Graves,
Leader of Derbyshire County
Council



Councillor Neghat Khan,
Leader of Nottingham City Council



Councillor Mick Barton,
Leader of Nottinghamshire County
Council



3.3 Community engagement and partnership working

Our approach is based on collaboration, co-design and shared responsibility for shaping the future of our region. Every partner, whether a resident, local authority, public sector organisation, voluntary group, business or employer, plays an important role in delivering our shared vision.

Working with partners is central to how we deliver for the region. We want to bring together the organisations who shape daily life in the East Midlands, from public services to businesses, voluntary groups, housing partners and educators, to develop and deliver our regional priorities. These partnerships help us join up services, unlock investment, support stronger communities and ensure that decisions are informed by those closest to the people and places we serve.

The diagram opposite shows some of the organisations we work with who contribute towards improving outcomes across the region.



RESIDENTS

We will give people real opportunities to shape what happens in their communities, listen to their experiences, and use that insight to inform decisions. We will build trust by working openly with residents and backing decisions with both local knowledge and evidence.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

We will work closely with voluntary and community groups to help people feel more connected, to hear from voices that are often missed, and to use their local knowledge to shape our decisions, so our policies benefit people across the whole region.

3.4 Our governance

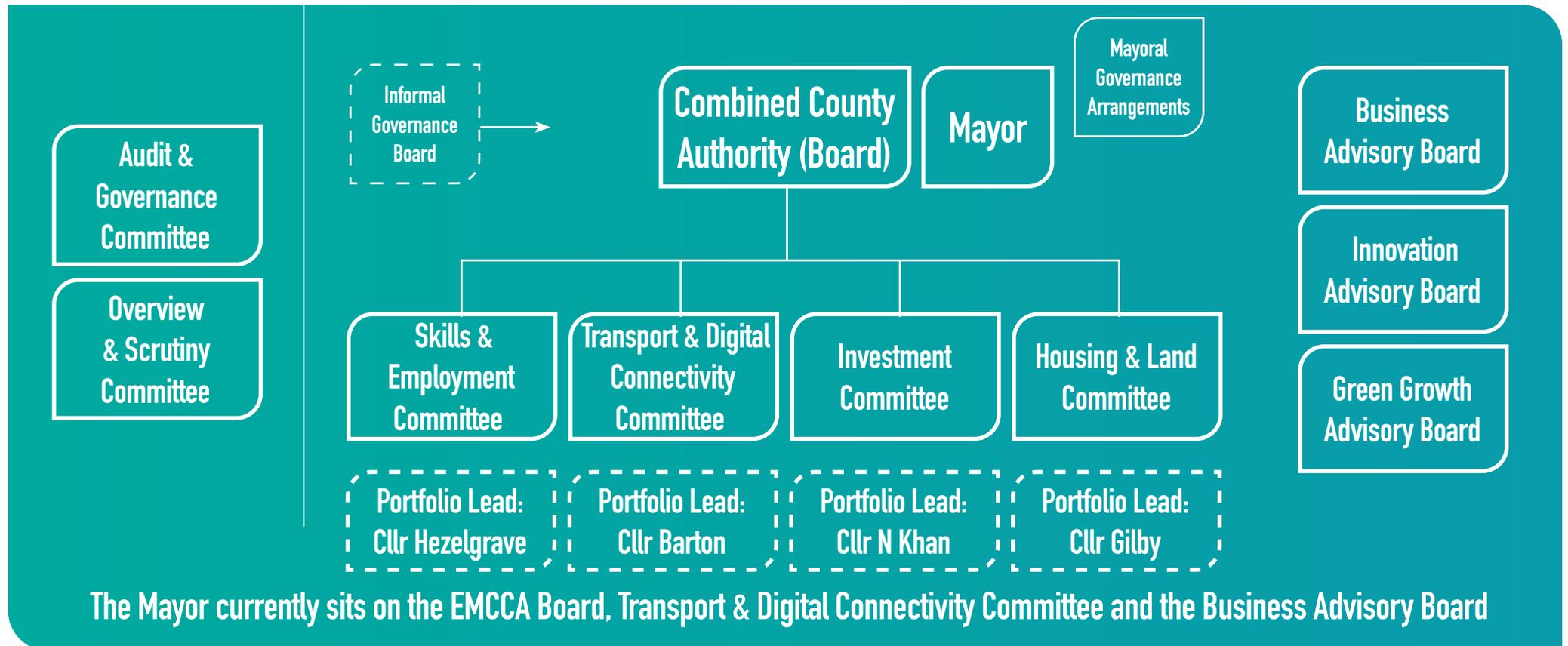
Our governance ensures democratic accountability and transparency for the decisions we make. Mayor Claire Ward chairs our Board, supported by members from our constituent authorities, district and borough representatives, and associate members representing areas such as business, further and higher education, trade unions and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. The Mayor assigns responsibilities to members to chair thematic committees, covering areas such as investment, skills and transport.

We publish information on all our key decisions and meetings to ensure openness. Our Single Assurance Framework sets out how we manage public money responsibly, achieve value for money and deliver impact across the region. Our Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee review decisions and financial controls to maintain high standards.

We are committed to evolving our governance as our responsibilities grow. Further information can be found at:

[Governance - East Midlands Combined County Authority](#)

Our governance structure

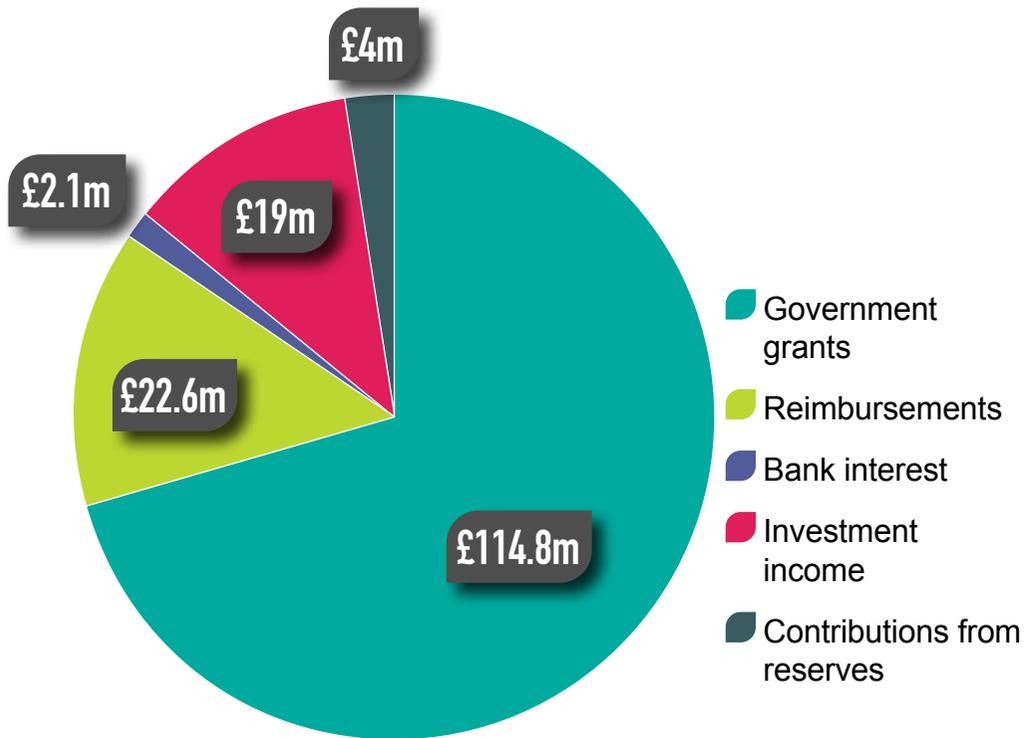


Resources, people and values

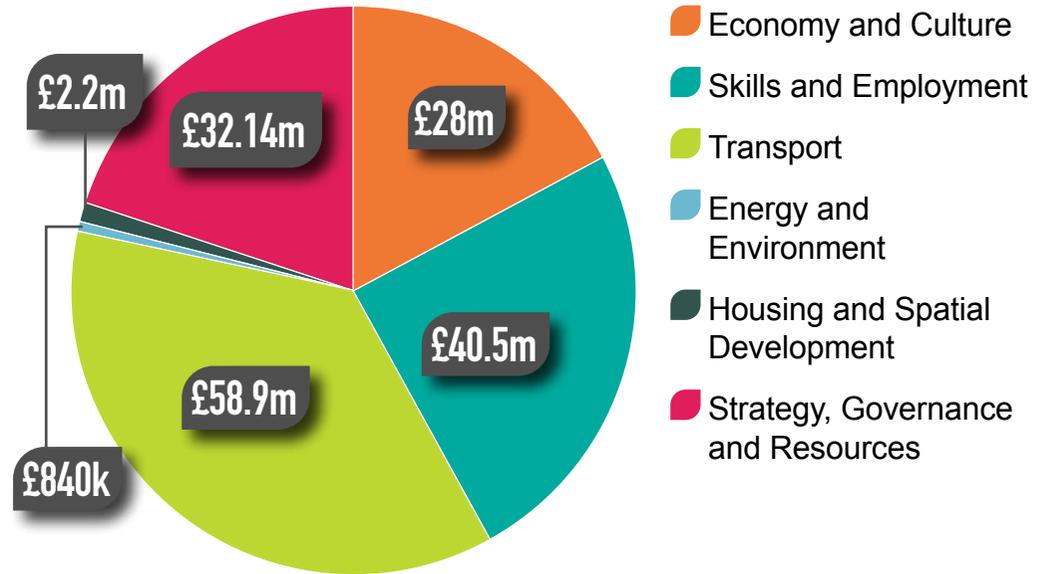
4.1 How we spend our money

In 2025-26, EMCCA took on many new responsibilities. As a result, the revenue budget for that year rose considerably, with gross expenditure reaching £162.5 million, compared to £20.5 million in 2024-25. The diagram below shows our income sources.

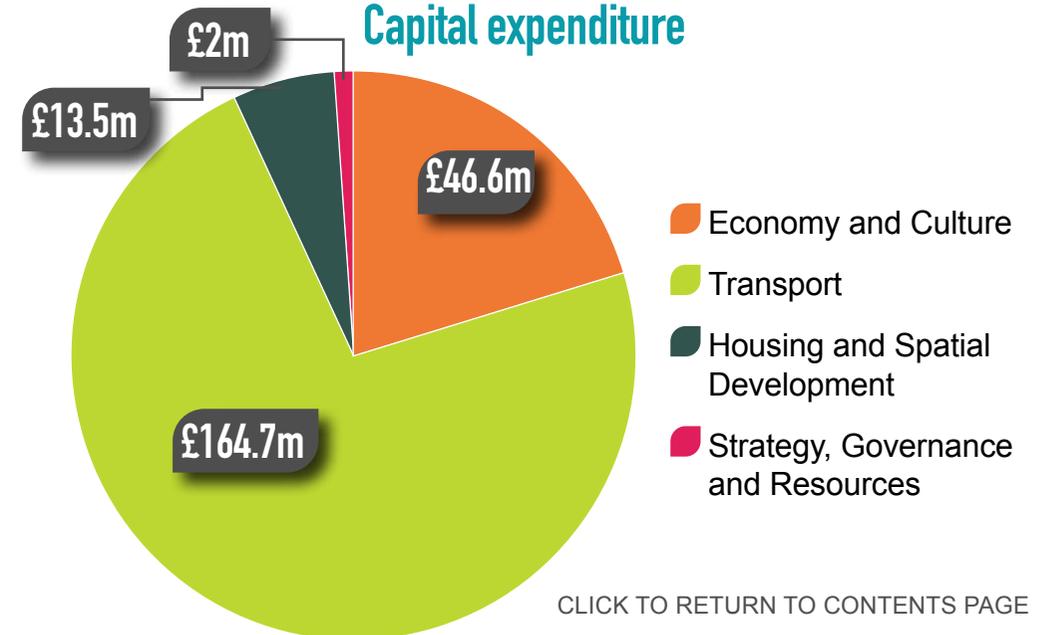
2025-26 Income Sources



Our 2025/26 Budget



Capital expenditure

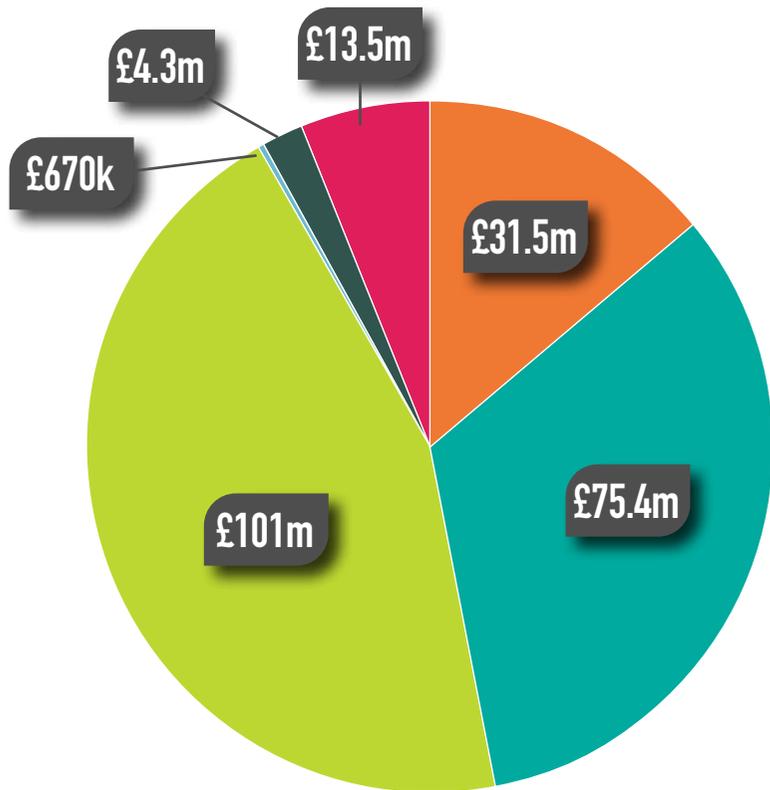


Our 2026/27 Budget

As EMCCA continues to grow and takes on more responsibilities for the region, most notably local public transport, planned revenue expenditure for 2026-27 rises to £227.4 million. In addition, £289.6 million of capital expenditure is planned for 2026-27 to fund a range of projects to support inclusive growth.

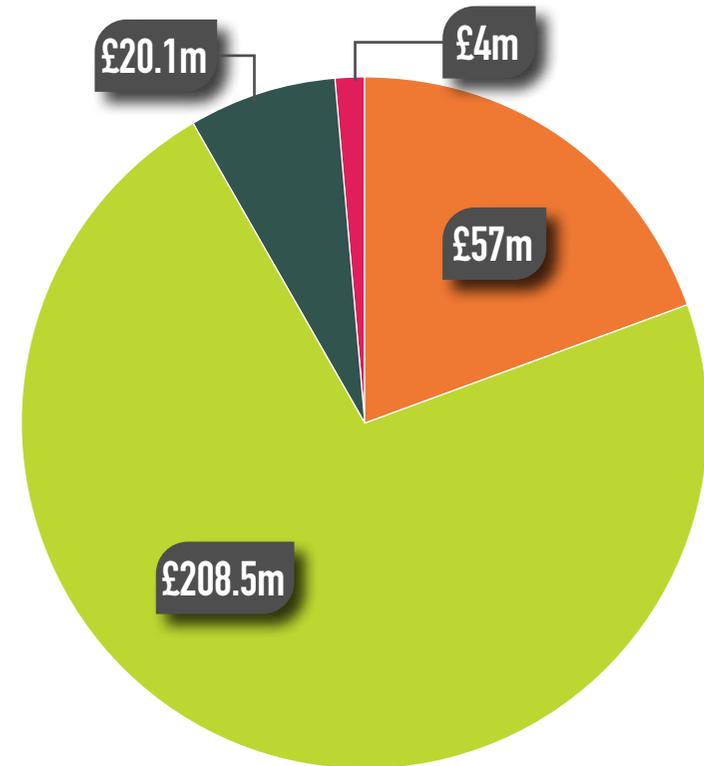
Once EMCCA achieves Established Status, we will be eligible for a future integrated funding settlement. Once agreed, an integrated settlement will give us greater flexibility in how we spend our money to deliver outcomes for residents. We will continue to work with the Government on next steps towards an integrated settlement.

Revenue expenditure



- Economy and Culture
- Transport
- Skills and Employment
- Energy and Environment
- Housing and Spatial Development
- Strategy, Governance and Resources

Capital expenditure



- Economy and Culture
- Transport
- Housing and Spatial Development
- Strategy, Governance and Resources

4.2 Our people and values

Our people and values are central to EMCCA’s ability to deliver for the region. As we take on more powers and responsibilities, we are building an organisation that is high-performing, values-driven and equipped with the skills and capability to deliver inclusive growth.

As part of our organisational development, we will set out a dedicated Workforce and People Strategy to guide how we attract, and develop talent, strengthen leadership, and bring our values to life as EMCCA grows and matures.



Public Sector Equality Duty

In delivering our work EMCCA meets the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring our policies and investment have regard to those with protected characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, age and disability. Our commitment to delivering inclusive growth also means tackling poverty and deprivation and supporting people from disadvantaged backgrounds to fulfil their potential and considering geographic impact so that benefits of our work are felt across the region.

Our commitments (2026–29)

Skills & development

- Targeted learning and capability building
- Professional development for everyone
- Modern tools and ways of working

Workforce planning

- Strategic approach to capacity and skills
- Planned integration of new functions
- Right people, right skills, right place

Equity, diversity & inclusion

- Inclusive, values-led employer where everyone belongs
- Fair, flexible and transparent practices
- Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty

Organisational strength

- Strong governance and performance culture
- Better systems, digital tools and data
- Building a resilient organisation ready for Established Status and an integrated funding settlement

Leadership

- Visible, inclusive and accountable leaders
- Leadership pathways for emerging talent
- Shared expectations of “one EMCCA” behaviours

4.3 Digital and operations

As EMCCA takes on more powers and responsibilities, we are building strong digital, customer and operational foundations. This means we are well equipped to support delivery and operate as an effective and mature organisation.

We will develop a dedicated digital and operations strategy and roadmaps to set out how we will strengthen internal capability, improve service design and delivery, and embed consistent, user-focused ways of working.



Our commitments (2026–29)

Digital capability

- Build digital, data and customer capability across EMCCA – maximise efficiency and reinvest savings
- Provide secure, modern and reliable digital and AI systems, and reduce avoidable manual work
- Strengthen EMCCA's operational independence

Customer promise

- Make our customer promise clear and public
- Deliver consistent, joined up customer experience – 'digitally first, inclusive always'
- Use feedback to improve delivery and ensure continuous improvement

Operational effectiveness and resilience

- Support staff wellbeing and safety
- Protect people, data and trust, and remain operational during disruption
- Reduce environmental impact

Performance and impact

5.1 Outcomes Framework

Alongside this Corporate Plan we are publishing an **Outcomes Framework** which sets the outcomes we want to achieve in the region for our six long-term ambitions.

The Outcomes Framework will help us to prioritise our work, guide decisions on investment, and drive collective action together with our partners. The Framework sets our approach to monitoring progress towards outcomes and measuring impact.



GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Inclusive economic growth across the region, with more good jobs

More businesses across the region to grow, innovate and scale

More investment, to accelerate exports and increase productivity



SKILLS FOR GOOD WORK

People gain the skills and qualifications they need to thrive

Address barriers to employment, and reduce economic inactivity and unemployment

Residents access secure, fair paid work with opportunities to progress



HOMES AND PLACE THAT ENABLE A GOOD LIFE

Everyone has access to a decent, secure, and affordable home

Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping

Vibrant places that connect people and communities to work and opportunity



GREEN GROWTH AND A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

Green growth, with more clean energy generation and increased energy efficiency

A better, healthier, and more resilient environment



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Strengthened and extended public transport that is reliable, easy to use, and affordable for people and communities

Greener, healthier, and more resilient transport networks

Everyone can access fast and reliable digital infrastructure



HEALTH, WELLBEING, AND BELONGING

People live healthier lives, with reduced health inequalities between people and communities

Safe and inclusive spaces to live and work, that support everyone's wellbeing

Tackle poverty and inequality between people and communities, including by reforming public services

5.2 Performance and delivery

We will regularly monitor and evaluate EMCCA-funded projects and programmes to track performance, measure impact, and ensure that our investments are delivering value for money.

Performance reports will be compiled for EMCCA Boards and Government departments on progress made in delivering strategic priorities, spend, outputs and outcomes.

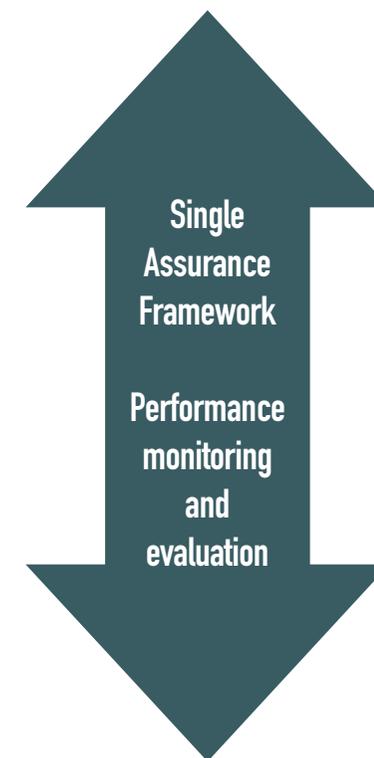
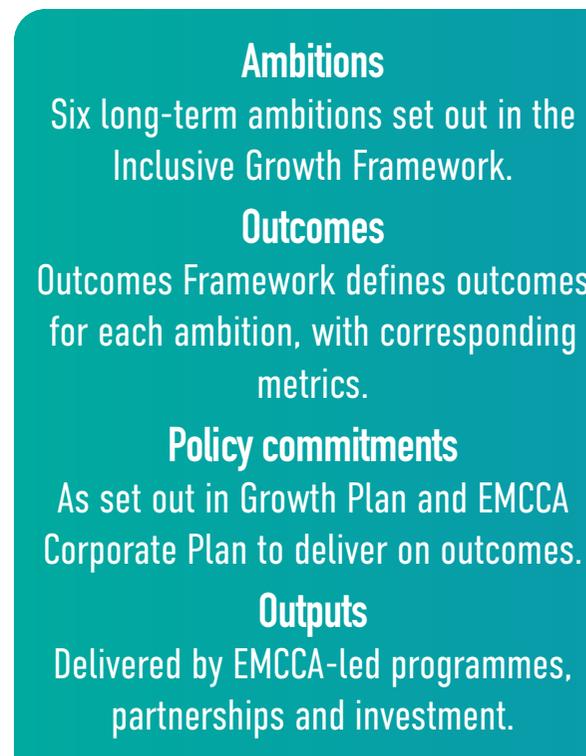
Independent evaluation will use data, evidence and feedback from partners and customers to analyse the design, delivery and impact of our investments.

We will deliver our commitment to openness, accountability and transparency by publishing evaluation reports that enable the public to see how public funding has been invested, what we have delivered and the difference it has made to our people and places.

This diagram illustrates how the Outcomes Framework sits within EMCCA's wider performance reporting and governance structure. For each of our six ambitions, we have defined up to three outcomes with corresponding metrics. Policy commitments in this Corporate Plan set out how we intend to deliver outcomes.

Our programmes and investment will deliver defined outputs which contribute towards outcomes. For example, a skills programme would have outputs such as "course completions" which contribute towards the outcome of people gaining skills and qualifications.

By taking a holistic approach to our work, we can, for example, consider how transport investment can support access to employment or improved health outcomes.



Review and development

We will publish annual updates on progress towards the objectives in this Corporate Plan for each of our six ambitions, and on how we are maximising the benefits of devolution.

We welcome feedback from organisations and residents on how we can deliver this plan together. Please visit our [website](#) to contact us.



Image © Howard Heeley Down-to-Earth Promotions



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