



**WEST
MIDLANDS**
GROWTH COMPANY

INVESTING IN **OUR FUTURES**

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

FOREWORD

The role of the West Midlands Growth Company is to create sustainable, quality growth in this incredible region we call home.

Our core purpose is in our name, ‘Growth’, and our work is ultimately about inclusive growth. We attract the right kinds of opportunities that make a lasting impact on the lives of people across all of our communities.

Growth is our mission, working in partnership with our shareholders and regional networks: the West Midlands Combined Authority, our local authorities, our universities and the region’s private sector, particularly our Partners West Midlands network.

Together we work to increase the volume and value of the businesses, start-ups and SMEs being created here, providing the right environment for them to thrive. Working in partnership, we attract and nurture firms in high-growth, high-value sectors, creating business demand that matches our rich talent supply. We support the growth of our region’s existing businesses and sectors by helping them to connect with the wider ecosystem, facilitating their engagement with domestic and international investors.

In attracting capital investment, we contribute to the advancement of innovation in our businesses and universities, and to our local areas and high streets, bringing impactful social and economic value to our region. It’s important that we build the profile of our region so that we attract major business and sports events; events that create economic impact for our venues and our visitor economy.

We are building our region’s future and developing skills to match the challenges of tomorrow, enabling diversity of thought and talent to thrive.

This Annual Review provides a summary overview of just some of the work we have undertaken in the 12 months from April 2023 to April 2024, and an insight into what comes next.

We’d like to express our thanks to the West Midlands Growth Company Board, the West Midlands Combined Authority, Local Authority and University shareholders.



Matthew Hammond, Chair,
West Midlands Growth Company



Neil Rami, Chief Executive,
West Midlands Growth Company

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GLOBAL WEST MIDLANDS

Our business plan, Global West Midlands 2023 – 2025, is structured around four strategic objectives:



CREATE AND SUSTAIN GOOD JOBS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

Growing and increasing productivity of the regional economy by attracting inward investment to the region.



FACILITATE THE REGENERATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Securing transformational capital from global and domestic investors on brownfield real estate and regeneration projects.



CREATE AND SUSTAIN VIBRANT DESTINATIONS

Harness sustainable domestic tourism, and growing demand for inbound international tourism, to enhance the region’s quality of life by growing and strengthening the visitor economy.



ENHANCE THE PROFILE AND REPUTATION OF THE REGION

Improving perceptions of the region as a place to invest, visit and host events.

CREATE AND SUSTAIN GOOD JOBS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

THE STORY SO FAR

The West Midlands governmental region remains the top performing region for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), outside of London.

In the last financial year, our inward investment team continued to promote the region as a business investment location, adding nearly 1500 new leads to the region's pipeline, and working across more than 150 new qualified investment projects.

We have been involved in the completion of 77 inward investment projects, delivering 6453 jobs in this financial year. More than half of these investment projects came from foreign direct investors.



HARVEY NORMAN

Harvey Norman's first UK store will open in Merry Hill, Dudley during Summer 2024, with more planned to open in the region.

We played an integral role in securing 100 jobs for Dudley. This is the first global expansion for the Australian retail brand.

Having facilitated a productive familiarisation visit, we connected the company with property agents for additional site acquisition and to our regional partners, ensuring seamless integration into the region's growth ecosystem. We also led PR and communications for the Merry Hill store announcement.

NORTON MOTORCYCLES

Indian-owned Norton Motorbikes in Solihull are creating new manufacturing, testing and assembly roles as part of their expansion which provides 120 new jobs.

HEXAWARE TECHNOLOGIES

Hexaware Technologies, a global provider of IT and digital solutions, have opened a new Birmingham-based facility, with plans to create 250 jobs.

TATA ELXSI

Tata Elxsi - a global leader in design and technology services - is creating a wave of high-value technology and engineering jobs at its Coventry-based design hub, as the firm strategically expands its UK footprint. The investment plans reinforce Tata Group's strategic commitment to the UK's West Midlands region, which represents its largest presence outside of India.

AUBAY

French-owned IT management company, Aubay Group, has expanded its team, adding up to 100 people in Solihull. With roles covering a range of areas, from development to project management, the expansion will support the firm in providing its services to a major banking client and other financial services / FinTech and energy players.

THANK YOU TO PARTNERS WEST MIDLANDS AND OUR UNIVERSITIES, FOR FACILITATING INTRODUCTIONS TO KEY ENABLING AGENTS AND NETWORKS. IT MADE THE EXPERIENCE OF LANDING AND EXPANSION HERE SMOOTHER.

“I joined IPG Automotive, based on my passion for virtual test driving. There are so many opportunities here, so many companies, and such a high level of engineering talent here as well.”

Emma Penney, IPG Automotive



INVESTMENTS CREATING LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

“Working at HCA Healthcare has really broadened my horizons. It’s developed me in so many ways. It’s really built my confidence and shown me how much I can actually achieve.”

Saima Aziz, HCA Healthcare

“I was at a bit of a dead end. I didn’t know what my purpose was. And then I saw that First Source were advertising for a customer service agent. I start with a morning commute from Dudley to Birmingham. When I get to work, I’m working directly with my team of advisors, taking phone calls from customers and doing coaching sessions to improve their performance, ultimately ensuring fair customer outcomes.”

Luke Taylor, FirstSource

“My career aspirations here have changed dramatically. I started here as a manufacturing engineer, expecting to be doing that for some time. Because of the amount of support and resource available, lots of opportunities arose.”

Adam Green, Norton Motorbikes

“I’ve been here for over ten years now. And the area has completely changed. There’s been a huge amount of investment. There’s so much development and a huge amount of companies moving here which creates great opportunities for you to build your career.”

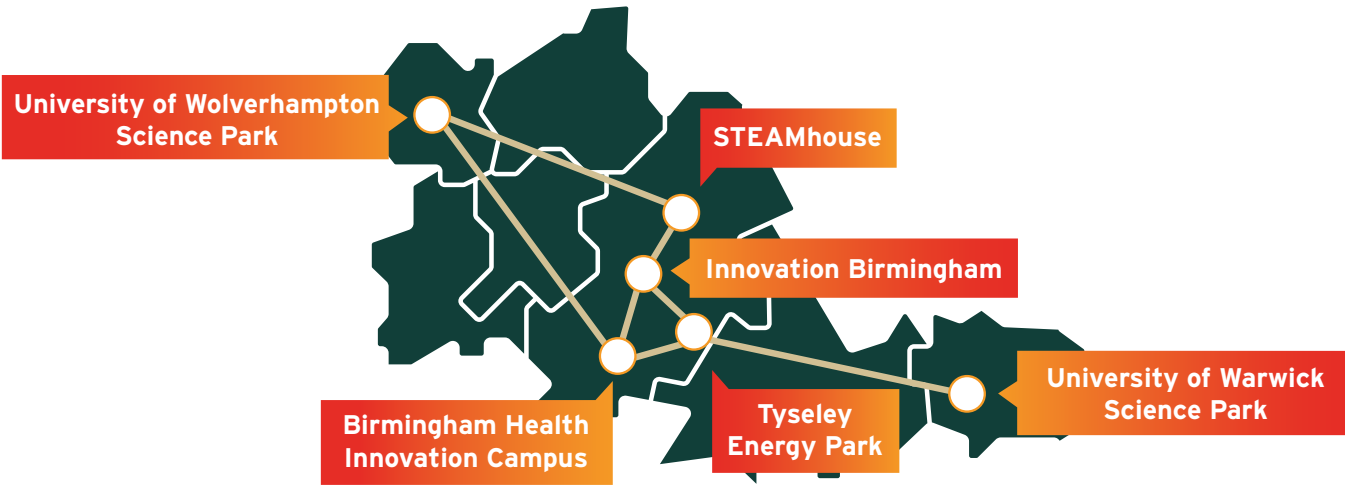
Vishal Karavadra, Goldman Sachs



WATCH
Hear from some of our
previous Global Growth
Programme participants

WHAT'S NEXT

Our region has stand-out capabilities and strengths in a number of sectors, such as advanced manufacturing (including electrification), creative and digital, life sciences, and business and professional services. We are actively engaging with high-growth potential, ambitious organisations, of all sizes, to create new commercial opportunities that lead to jobs and skills enhancement for people in our region.



GLOBAL GROWTH PROGRAMME

Our new Global Growth Programme is a supercharged version of our pilot, which saw 35 international innovation-led businesses land over 18 months.

Our unique market entry programme encompasses 20 different specialist support packages:

- Sponsored workspace in six partner innovation hubs across the region
- Direct access to six universities, 15 national research institutes and introductions to ten specialist cluster networks
- Access to extensive thought leadership, seminars and business support services through our extensive Partner West Midlands network

Participating firms will rapidly build new commercial pipelines and leverage unique regional innovation assets including:

- WMG's Energy Innovation Centre for battery technology
- University of Birmingham's new Precision Health Technology Accelerator
- Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre in Dudley

We have also partnered with the Connected Places Catapult, part of the Diatomic Accelerator Programme, to create a distinct and unique clean tech offer spanning Battery Storage, Decarbonised Heat, Bioenergy and Power, Turning Waste into Value and Land Remediation.

The new Global Growth Programme was officially launched at London Tech Week in June and 66 international businesses have enquired so far. 40 will be selected for this phase of the programme, closing in March 2025.

INVESTMENT ZONE

The West Midlands Investment Zone offers investors a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build presence within the UK's most vibrant ecosystem, bringing together world-leading academic research with next-generation manufacturing. The West Midlands Investment Zone builds on the region's historic strengths in advanced manufacturing, driving growth in battery, digital and sustainable construction technologies across three core sites:

- Coventry and Warwick GigaPark
- Birmingham Knowledge Quarter
- Wolverhampton Green Innovation Corridor

We are supporting the West Midlands Combined Authority and regional partners to create a differentiated proposition, attractive to national & international investors, and occupiers.



PUBLIC SECTOR RELOCATIONS

We supported major investments and relocations from Visit Britain and the Financial Reporting Council. Yet our region still has a lower level of civil service employment per capita than almost any other in the UK. Public sector relocations are proven to catalyse the private sector and create new employment opportunities for our communities. We are leading a significant programme of work to bring more civil service employment into our region.

“We are excited about the opportunities and perspectives that having our hub in Birmingham will bring, alongside its excellent transport links for both our international and Britain based staff and access to a broad talent pool. Basing our hub office in Birmingham also brings us closer to our regional stakeholders across England, including the West Midlands Growth Company. We are delighted that they have become a Destination Development Partnership pilot and will be working with them to drive the economic benefits from tourism across the nations and regions.”

Patricia Yates, CEO, VisitBritain



ELECTRIFICATION STRATEGY

As part of our Regional Inward Investment Strategy Review, we are working in partnership with the region’s Electric Light Vehicles & Battery Storage Cluster Group, we have developed a strategic targeting and engagement plan focusing on the following subsectors:

- Vehicle Innovation & Supply Chains
- Battery Manufacturing & Recycling
- Propulsion Systems
- Autonomous Vehicles
- Micromobility

We will now leverage Investment Zone propositions and proactively target prospective investors. This work is critical to ensure that our region retains its pre-eminent position in the future EV automotive and battery-led landscape.

STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

This is a new region-wide initiative developed in partnership with colleagues in our seven local authorities, the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Department for Business and Trade.

Our shared goal is the building of a deeper and more consistent relationship with businesses across the West Midlands.



FACILITATE THE REGENERATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

THE STORY SO FAR

We have a unique capital investment offer, with a dedicated team focused on brownfield real estate and regeneration, including the living, commercial and hospitality sectors. This year we’ve undertaken some significant projects to stimulate engagement between the public and private sectors, and generate new investment and development opportunities.

HOTEL PROVISION

Responding to public sector priorities around improving the region’s quality and quantity of hotel provision, we have continued to undertake significant market engagement to better understand the hotel investment market and perceptions of the West Midlands.

We have commissioned high level feasibility studies for a number of specific locations, including Dudley, Wolverhampton and Sandwell, along with a high-end offer for Birmingham. We continue to work with local authorities on hotel strategies, and the hospitality & leisure sector more broadly, including engaging with leisure and sporting operators key to driving regeneration.

Continuing into this financial year, we will be taking a sponsorship position at this year’s Annual Hospitality Conference, meeting with investors and developers, and communicating the region’s strong visitor economy pitch.



UKREiif

In May 2024, eight local authorities and the West Midlands Combined Authority, along with our new Mayor and 17 commercial partners including Arup, BDP, Cordia, Deloitte, E.ON, Mott Macdonald, WSP and Woodbourne, showcased the transformative power of the West Midlands at the UK’s largest real estate conference, UKREiif.

UKREiif brought together 13,000 delegates from across the regional public sector, national government, investors, architects, property developers and house builders. Our 140 strong delegation showcased real estate and regeneration opportunities worth more than £20 billion – town centre transformations, university-backed innovation campuses, affordable housing, next-generation mixed use schemes and a new wave of HS2 enabled projects.

In just four days, 3000 people engaged with 16 panels and spotlight sessions, and joined us for fringe offsite events. Building relationships between investors, developers and our regional representatives is one of the core reasons for attending UKREiif – we facilitated over 100 one-to-one meetings with potential investors. Following highly positive feedback, we are now evaluating opportunities for 2025.

West Midlands Growth Company also supported with the development of Investment Prospectuses for Sandwell, Walsall and Coventry. The launches of the West Midlands Combined Authority Investment Prospectus and the Coventry Investment Prospectus also took place on the West Midlands Pavilion, as well as the announcement of the revitalisation of Mell Square, Solihull.





**WEST MIDLANDS
AT UKREIIF 2024
IN PICTURES**

WHAT'S NEXT

INNOVATION LED REAL ESTATE

Innovation will be a major driver for large scale real estate developments over the next decade, with strong links to academia and industry at the core of a number of West Midlands schemes, including Arden Cross and all of the sites of the West Midlands Investment Zone. The team is directly engaged with public and private sector scheme promoters, including Muse, Bruntwood and Lendlease. Our investor networks have expressed a strong appetite to deploy capital into these transformational schemes, where the true value is not just in the buildings, but in the innovation-led eco-systems that occupy and grow in them, providing high skilled jobs and valuable home grown companies.

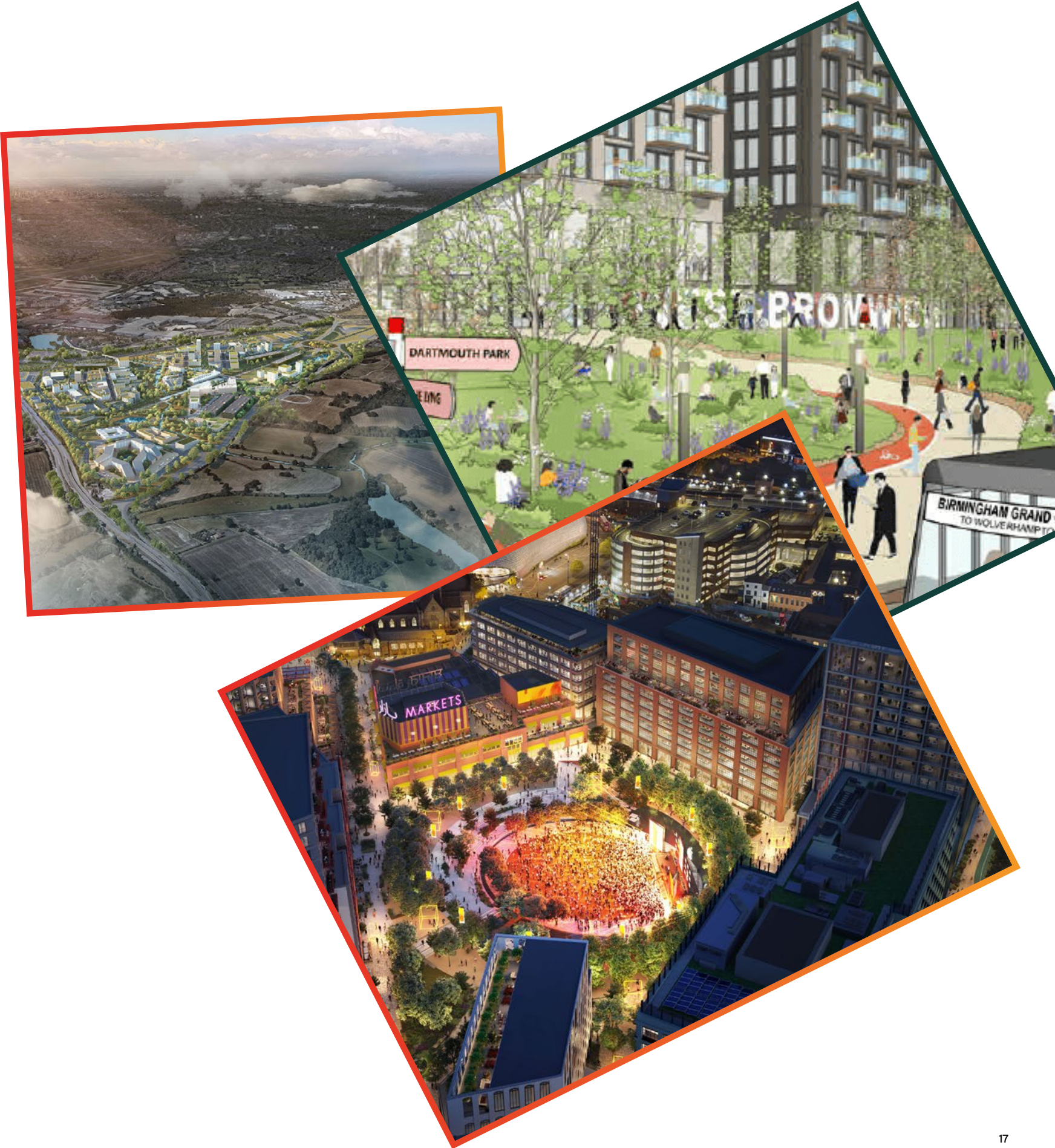
We will look to engage the market appropriately where there are requirements for additional development expertise and debt/equity partners. These opportunities, alongside the strong regional innovation narrative, will be key to systematic market engagement through the year, including at large scale real events, such as MIPIM.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The West Midlands has a major priority around the delivery of residential developments, and in particular affordable housing. Bolstered by the significant enablement funding, managed by the West Midlands Combined Authority, the region has a fantastic opportunity to continue its strong record in this space.

We are working closely with our local authorities to identify key residential-led opportunities and to bring leading developers into the region to accelerate sustainable and inclusive delivery of new homes, and broader regeneration of our urban centres.

Priorities for this year include Portersfield in Dudley, West Bromwich Town Centre and a number of regeneration opportunities identified in Coventry's new Investment Prospectus, with investor-developer visits already in the diary.



CREATE AND SUSTAIN VIBRANT DESTINATIONS

THE STORY SO FAR

The visitor economy is the UK's third largest service sector export and, in the West Midlands, worth a record £16.3 billion, supporting more jobs than ever before. Tourism is a critical enabler of the region's inclusive economy, creating significant opportunities for talent development and growth and offering employment for school-leavers, through to managerial and professional careers.

The West Midlands welcomed a record 145.4 million visitors in 2023, up 3% from 2022, when the region hosted the Commonwealth Games. Last year we landed six significant business conferences and six major sporting events. This year, we are already working on 17 sporting event bidding opportunities and 52 business conference opportunities.



MAJOR EVENTS FUND

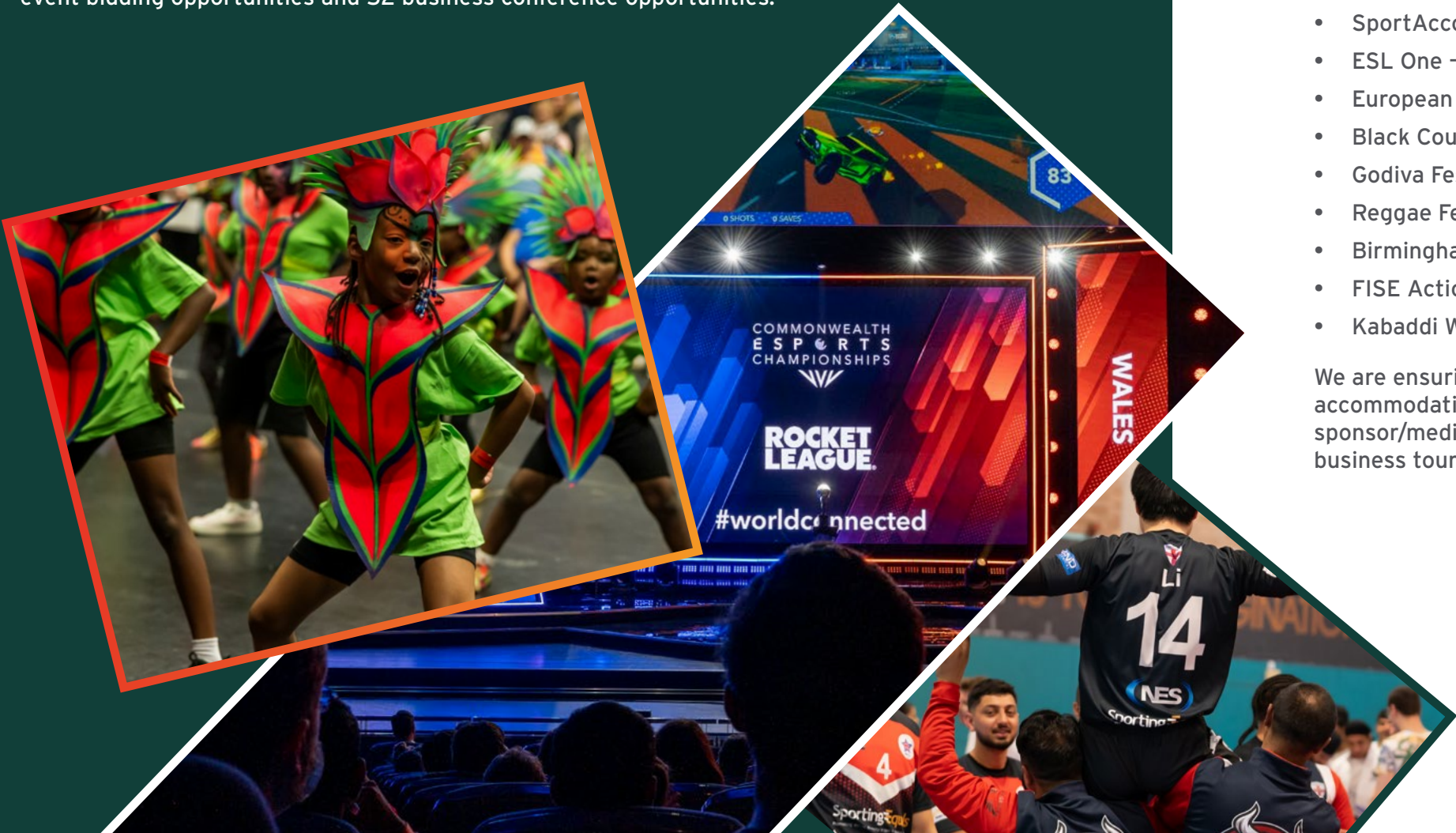
West Midlands Growth Company acted as the Secretariat to the Major Events Fund, a £6 million fund created from the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund. During a four-month period, local authorities were invited to apply for funding to support the attraction of new, or growth of existing, major events that would support the visitor economy within the region.

Ten cultural and sporting events were selected, bringing hundreds of thousands of people together in the region, and providing an estimated direct £11.5 million boost to the local economy.

Almost 700,000 competitors, performers and spectators have been projected to attend the events taking place in 2024/25. These include:

- SportAccord World Sport & Business Summit, Birmingham, 8-12 April 2024
- ESL One - Dota II esports tournament, Solihull, 26-28 April 2024
- European Judo Union Junior Cup, Walsall, 15-19 June 2024
- Black Country Festival, 1-31 July, 2024
- Godiva Festival 'Worldwide Welcome', Coventry, 5-7 July 2024
- Reggae Fever - Celebration of Caribbean Culture, Coventry, 20 July 2024
- Birmingham Weekender Festival, 22-25 August 2024
- FISE Action Sports Festival, Wolverhampton, 6-8 September 2024
- Kabaddi World Cup, 24-31 March 2025

We are ensuring the success of each of these events by providing Convention Bureau accommodation services, advisory and ambassador support, partnership management, sponsor/media engagement, and marketing promotions through our leisure and business tourism channels.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP (DDP)

This year, we secured 'Destination Development Partnership' (DDP) status, one of only two pilots in the UK. The partnership is comprised of Birmingham, Solihull & Black Country Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and Coventry & Warwickshire LVEP. DDPs are designed to drive economic growth, across local authorities, through the visitor economy.

DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY LEADING TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM

West Midlands Growth Company partnered with the Global Destination Sustainability (GDS) Movement, alongside the Birmingham, Solihull, and Black Country Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and the Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP. The GDS-Movement is an international change agency with a mission to redefine the future of destinations tourism and events for more smart, sustainable cities. Our shared aim is to co-create sustainable and circular strategies, and skillsets, to support a more sustainable future for the region's tourism industry.

We are also collaborating with sustainable tourism certification scheme provider, Green Tourism, to help regional businesses achieve Green Tourism accreditation.



BUSINESS EVENTS

Birmingham and West Midlands Convention Bureau is the home of all meeting, event and accommodation services for the region. Our team develops major bids in support of our region's venues, creates new leads for major events into those venues, provides venue and accommodation sourcing free of charge to partners and works alongside our vibrant hospitality sector to ensure positive visitor experiences. This year, we attended major industry events, including IMEX America, IBTM and The Meetings Show, and joined international delegations to meet global major event organisers.

Since April 2023, we have secured 6 high profile business conferences with a total economic impact on the region of £34.5million. These conferences include:

- **Powering Net Zero Conference 2024 with the Institution of Engineering and Technology**
- **Society of Vertebrae Palaeontology European Conference 2025**

MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

As part of our work to deliver the Major Sporting Events Delivery Plan for the West Midlands, West Midlands Growth Company commissioned research on this valuable sector to better inform our activity. The research suggested that 19.6 million people came to the region to watch or participate in sporting events during 2022, which equates to 1 in 7 of all visitors. It also showed that sport-related visits accounted for more than 13% of total visitor spending, added £1.9billion to the region's economy and supported 18,352 jobs.

Key activity in this sector included engagement with major sports events seeking a new location to bid for Major Events Fund support, the hosting of SportAccord 2024, an event which hosted sporting federation leaders from around the world to the region for a week, profiling of the region in Lausanne and Scotland to sports leaders, and support for growth of esports, urban sports and Kabaddi particularly.



The West Midlands has the highest proportion of inbound business visitors of any UK region.

WHAT'S NEXT

VISITOR PASS

Research undertaken in 2022 by Birmingham City Council, showed that 92% of attractions wanted to work more collaboratively with other attractions in our region. The research also showed that 82% of visitors would use a pass that included multiple attractions in one ticket.

We are working with Open Pass, a cloud-based online system for selling and managing tickets, destination passes, and events, to create the new official Visitor Pass. The pass will offer a one-stop shop for visitors and we will be working with tour operators and travel agents to create suitable packages for the travel trade and international visitors.

We are in discussions regarding onboarding with 55 companies across the region, and are planning to launch a marketing campaign in Autumn 2024 to promote and drive sales of the new pass.



KABADDI WORLD CUP

One of our greatest opportunities is to connect our diverse communities with potential to host international events here. 2025 sees 16 nations compete in Wolverhampton at the Kabaddi World Cup. Kabaddi is played in fifty countries worldwide and this is the first time that this important event has been hosted outside of India. We're working with the British Kabaddi and World Kabaddi Federation to create a plan for raising awareness for the Kabaddi World Cup 2025 across the expansive India market.

"Awarding the 2025 Kabaddi World Cup to the West Midlands was a straightforward decision and a very exciting milestone in the global growth and expansion of the sport across Europe. Kabaddi is a sport for everybody, regardless of age, gender or social background. The West Midlands is a region which promotes positive community engagement, celebrates cultural diversity and inclusion, and loves its sport."

Ashok Das, President of the World Kabaddi Federation and England Kabaddi

TOURISM AWARDS 2025

Our awards celebrate the success and accomplishments of tourism businesses across the West Midlands region, promoting the impressive strength of the business and leisure tourism offer, its venues, people, experiences and accommodation. 2024 saw the highest number of applications to date and we're now looking forward to our biggest Tourism Awards ever in 2025. Judging is underway and will continue over the next four months with desk-based and site visit assessments.

This regional success was replicated at a national level, as the West Midlands doubled its number of winners at this year's VisitEngland Excellence Awards.

Warwick Conferences and Telford International were shortlisted for the VisitEngland National Awards for Excellence in the 'Business Events Venue of the Year' category.

Pete Chambers from Coventry Music Museum won the public vote for Tourism Superstar of the Year.



BUSINESS EVENTS

We are working on 52 new and additional conference bidding opportunities including: the European Sports Association Conference 2025 and the Institute of Export and International Trade 2025.

We are identifying the best option events to pursue from a prospect list of over 250 conferences identified in the last six months, we are growing our Conference Ambassador Network through increased profile and regular event opportunities, and we developing a new marketing campaign to strategically target mid-size events for venues across the West Midlands region.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Development of the region’s creative industries is growing at pace. Since April 2023, we have seen the announcements of the BBC’s new Birmingham headquarters in Digbeth’s Tea Factory as well as their support for the relocation or expansion of production firms such as Spun Gold and Banijay UK into Birmingham. BBC’s Masterchef will also relocate to Birmingham bringing 130 jobs and we have also since two series of Late Night Lycett, filmed at The Bond in Digbeth.

Moving forward, we look forward to production for the Peaky Blinders movie beginning in 2024 across the West Midlands. We will also be partnering with Visit Britain’s Set Jetting campaign, we will showcase our region’s famous film locations to international audiences this Summer.

WATCH



Digbeth Creative Quarter film



ENHANCE THE PROFILE AND REPUTATION OF THE REGION

THE STORY SO FAR

Developing campaigns and events that maintain and improve our global profile is imperative. Communications, marketing, engagement and event delivery services, provided on behalf of all of the region, are a significant enabler of awareness and attraction, supporting growth.

BIRMINGHAM TECH WEEK

In October 2023, West Midlands Growth Company held the Global West Midlands: the Tech That Makes Tomorrow Work event at Birmingham Tech Week.

The showcase event displayed the very best of cutting-edge advanced technologies being developed in the UK's second-largest city and in the wider West Midlands region. Delegates from 24 countries, including Australia, Canada, India, Poland and the USA, came to The Bond Studios in Birmingham to experience a series of keynote talks, debates and demonstrations from leading tech experts, entrepreneurs and investors including Shoosmiths, Arup, HSBC and PWC.

FACTS:

- 50 speakers
- 650+ pieces of media coverage secured including a wave of syndicated international coverage
- 642 delegate registrations representing 24 different countries
- 1000 new tech jobs announced

During Birmingham Tech Week, we showcased several innovative businesses and assets from across the West Midlands, and took potential investors on familiarisation visits to key sites such as Tyseley Energy Park and WMG at the University of Warwick.



Over the period, 5,000 bed nights were generated, contributing **£1.01 MILLION** to our region's economy in visitor spend.



SPORTACCORD 2024

The SportAccord World Sport & Business Summit, dubbed ‘the Olympics for sporting event organisers’, brings together leaders and key decision-makers from the world of sport over the course of five days. Two years on from the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, the ICC welcomed 1700 delegates from over 65 countries - including 46 national governing bodies, 125 International Federations and 650 different organisations.

Having led the bid to bring SportAccord to the region, we co-delivered this large-scale and globally significant event in partnership with Birmingham City Council. The event was the perfect opportunity to position our incredible region, rich in sporting history and credentials, on the global stage as the beating heart of UK Sport.

Delegates were introduced to region-wide sporting and cultural activities, and we connected local authorities, partners and international sporting federations, generating a pipeline of over 150 sport and sport business events opportunities that could be hosted in the region in the coming years.

Media coverage included a steady flow of positive stories about the West Midlands’ sporting credentials, reaching over 899 million people worldwide.



WATCH
Our Heart Of Sport film

SportAccord President, Prof Dr Uğur Erdener, and outgoing Association of Summer Olympics International Federations (ASOIF) President, Francesco Ricci Bitti, both proclaimed the 2024 edition as ‘THE BEST SPORTACCORD TO DATE.’

SPORTACCORD 2024 IN PICTURES



MEDIA COVERAGE

Our communications activity has spanned heavy-duty, integrated campaigns, as well as a strategic media relations programme. The team has made a concerted effort to create positive stories for the region, securing significant levels of coverage across a wide range of key media, international, sector focused, national broadsheet, broadcast and local.



788 MEDIA ARTICLES
PUBLISHED IN PRINT
AND ONLINE MEDIA



MEDIA REACH OF
1,181.6 BILLION



1.97 MILLION UNIQUE
USERS HAVE VISITED
OUR WEBSITES



PARTNERS WEST MIDLANDS

Our Partners West Midlands (PWM) programme gives Partners unrivalled access to a triangulated network of other businesses in the region, public sector shareholders and our impressive university network. It creates opportunities, for organisations across the region, large and small and from a broad range of sectors and industries, to work with both West Midlands Growth Company and our stakeholders to raise profile, facilitate connections with other organisations and provide insight into activity, trends and policies.

The PWM programme consists of 110+ Partners, and has welcomed new Partners including And.Digital and E.ON since April 2023. Since the start of Global West Midlands 23-25, we have made a number of changes to the programme's activity including a review of account management processes, more informative and relevant content through the monthly newsletters and the Quarterly Economic Digest and greater awareness of partner opportunities.

WEBSITE UPGRADES

We have invested in upgrades to a number of our key digital platforms. Websites for the VisitBirmingham, Birmingham and West Midlands Convention Bureau, and our corporate website, have all been upgraded to provide new and improved user experiences. We are now better positioned to serve relevant content to key markets.

The VisitBirmingham website is a vital asset and the site has had 1.7m users since the Global West Midlands programme began.

WHAT'S NEXT

INTERNATIONAL SALES MISSIONS

We are exploring opportunities around two sales missions to India and Japan. These will focus on key sector strengths in a bid to strengthen relationships and attract further foreign investment and tourism into the region.

India has long been a key market for the West Midlands region, with its large diaspora and commercial ties with firms such as Tata and TVS. The forthcoming UK-India free trade agreement, strong travel trade and film industry links, and the Kabaddi World Cup will create new timely opportunities to engage.

Japan, hosts of the World Expo, offers significant long-term opportunities for trade, investment and R&D collaborations. CBSO and Birmingham Royal Ballet will also tour Japan in 2025.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM CAMPAIGN

Data tells us that US visitors are the third largest group of visitors to the UK by volume, with the highest average spend ranking. Working with BBC StoryWorks, we will be promoting the region's diverse tourism offer, people and venues to North American audiences and have partnered with VisitBritain on their co-operative marketing campaign - both in support of opportunities to grow routes into Birmingham Airport.

The campaign aims to increase awareness and consideration of the West Midlands as a destination to visit, with digital content distributed across the BBC's digital ecosystem.

A West Midlands Welcome Hero film

A high-impact digital hero film will shine a light on this exceptional region, showcasing the unique people, places and experiences that exist in the West Midlands.

The story will showcase the array of travel opportunities by spotlighting the diverse mix of people found across the region. From the buzzing streets of Birmingham to the rural idylls, and calming canals to historic castles.

Warm, light-hearted and full of character, this whistle-stop tour of all the unmissable experiences will show you how you can do as the locals do, whether you are a culture buff or an experience seeker.



[Film example](#)



THE GREEN POWER REVOLUTION...

THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY...

LIFE CHANGING SCIENCE...

GAME CHANGING TECH...

IT STARTS HERE^{WM}



For over two centuries, the global economy has been shaped by West Midlands-borne technologies.

Today, the region's unmatched history of invention is defining the twenty-first century as we know it.

From steampower to battery technology.

From Ibuprofen to life-saving diagnostics.

The West Midlands remains the place where breakthroughs begin and the tech revolution, always, starts in the West Midlands.

Our new investment campaign is designed to increase the visibility of our region's innovation ecosystem, driving interest that will convert to investment.

It Starts positions our region as innovative over industrial and targets firms in four key sectors – advanced manufacturing, business and professional services, life sciences and creative and digital technologies.

The campaign will deliver a drumbeat of rich content and sector specific spotlights, coordinated to media announcements, events and policy initiatives that link to UK innovation.

The campaign approach is purposefully simple and flexible to facilitate easy adoption across the region. Extensive engagement with shareholders and partner networks has taken place to inform the campaign to date.

THE CAMPAIGN WILL FOCUS ON THREE DEFINING THEMES:

TRANSFORMATIONAL TECH HUB

As the UK's fastest-growing tech sector, the West Midlands region is accelerating technological transformation at scale and pace.

A TRUSTED HEARTLAND OF R&D EXCELLENCE

Centrally located at the heart of the UK, the West Midlands offers a world-significant cluster of R&D. A historic proving ground to test and validate – to make and scale; today the West Midlands remains the place where breakthroughs begin.

A MINDSET FOR DISRUPTION

Home to one of Europe's most young, diverse and dynamic talent pools, the West Midlands' disruptive mindset is inventing the products and services of the future.

APPENDIX A

The Global West Midlands business plan is driven by four strategic objectives, each of which carry their own set of deliverables. West Midlands Growth Company activity and delivery is measured against these deliverables to ensure we are on track and providing value to support the region’s wider economic ecosystem.

Below you will see some key outputs and outcome measures that are being used by West Midlands Growth Company to track and report on the Global West Midlands business plan delivery. Data shown reflects results from 1st April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The lower figure is the minimum requirement and the higher figure is the stretch target.

End of programme targets (31st March 2025)			
Metric	Current achievement	Minimum requirement (Stretch)	% achievement
Outputs			
Inward investment leads	1,471	1,050 (1,500)	140%
Inward investment opportunities	156	140 (200)	111%
Sporting event bidding opportunities	17	22 (32)	77%
Business conference bidding opportunities	52	30 (100)	173%
Outcomes			
Business conferences landed	6	8 (11)	75%
Sporting events landed	6	8 (12)	75%
Inward investment projects landed	77	82 (117)	94%
Jobs created or safeguarded by inward investment	6,453	5,148 (8,000)	127%
Capital investment landings	0	2 (3)	0%

APPENDIX B

Special thanks go to our West Midlands Growth Company Board which comprises of expert voices from across 20 organisations, including local authorities, West Midlands Combined Authority, private sector and universities.

THE BOARD



Matthew Hammond,
Chair,
West Midlands Growth Company



Neil Rami,
Chief Executive,
West Midlands Growth Company



Tim Johnson,
Chief Executive,
City of Wolverhampton Council



Paul Thandi,
Chair,
Student Energy Group/Boxpark



Tom Westley,
Chairman,
Westley Group Ltd



Cllr Patrick Harley, Leader,
Dudley Metropolitan
Borough Council



Rob Valentine,
Director of Birmingham,
Bruntwood



Sally Scott,
Chief Marketing Officer,
One Advanced



Jane Whitlock,
Senior Partner
Deloitte



Prof Adam Tickell,
Vice-Chancellor and Principal,
University of Birmingham



Andrew Lovett,
Chief Executive,
Black Country Living Museum



**Andy Williams, Director for
Business, Investment and
Culture, Coventry City Council**



Laura Shoaf, Chief Executive,
West Midlands
Combined Authority



Cllr Ian Courts, Leader,
Solihull Metropolitan
Borough Council



Cllr John Cotton,
Leader,
Birmingham City Council



Cllr Adrian Andrews,
Deputy Leader, Walsall
Metropolitan Borough Council



Shokat Lal, Chief Executive,
Sandwell Metropolitan
Borough Council



Prof David Mba,
Vice-Chancellor,
Birmingham City University



Nick Barton,
Chief Executive,
Birmingham Airport



Monica Fogarty,
Chief Executive,
Warwickshire County Council



Melanie Smith,
Chief Executive,
NEC Group

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



Neil Rami,
Chief Executive



Michelle Inkpen,
Director of Operations
and Culture



Dan Storer,
Chief Investment Officer



Pip Abercromby,
Finance and
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Katie Trout,
Director of Policy
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