



Making #WM2041 a reality

A collaborative approach to the
West Midlands' goal of zero carbon



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Foreword

Making #WM2041 a Reality

Matthew Howell, Managing Director, UK and Ireland, RICS

Historically, the West Midlands was at the heart of the Industrial Revolution which enjoyed significant growth through astounding technological, scientific and economic advances.

So much so that Birmingham was labelled “the first manufacturing town in the world” due to its diverse array of workshops and skilled trades, creativity and innovation, and economic prosperity.

Today, while we recognise the importance of those advances, not just to the UK but to the whole world, we also understand its dangerous legacy that continues to

play out as weather patterns change, ice caps melt and sea levels rise.

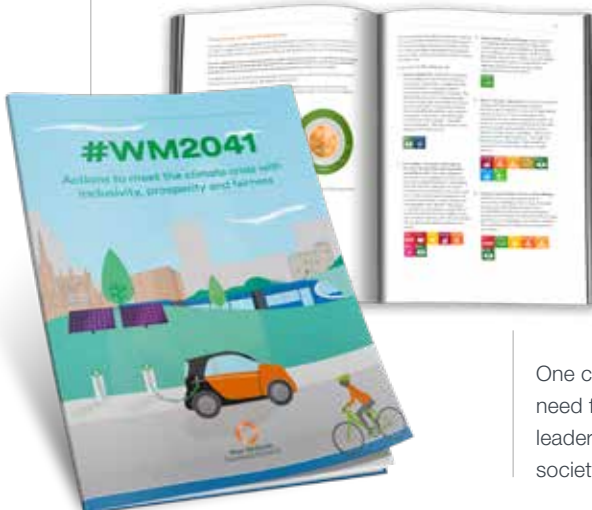
The world needs a new, clean and green revolution, and the West Midlands has taken the opportunity again to lead where others follow in tackling the most pressing problem of our time, the climate crisis.

That is why the **West Midlands Combined Authority Green Paper #WM2041** is such an important document; it is the region leading from the front.

Their wide-ranging report considers what actions the region needs to take to tackle global warming with inclusivity, prosperity and fairness and to establish a zero-carbon economy over the next 21 years.

There is no silver bullet to mitigating climate change; there is no exemplar of best practice; and no ‘one size fits all’ approach.

One common thread, however, is the need for us to work together. Regional leaders, the business sector and society in general, you and me, must





act as one to maximise and implement the opportunities that exist before us.

That is why RICS commissioned this response report, Making #WM2041 a Reality. It is a collaborative reaction to the green paper that brings together leading thinkers from the worlds of innovation, architecture, planning, infrastructure, transport, housing, construction, business and, of course, chartered surveying.

Each organisation applauds #WM2041 and many ask what are the next steps? How can these ideas be funded, do we have the skills we need, can we afford to wait for new legislation, can we change entrenched behaviours?

The responses and recommendations contained within the report provide a steer as to how the #WM2041 objectives can be achieved. This is relevant not just in the West Midlands but to metropolitan centres everywhere that need to continue to be at the centre of economic and social growth.

The combined authority's #WM2041 Green Paper is a call to action and this report pushes it to the next level.



[rics.org](https://www.rics.org)

Let's all get serious about a just transition



Richard Butler

Director – West Midlands and Oxfordshire, CBI

The setting of the UK's net-zero emissions target for 2050 was a watershed moment as it aligned our legal climate targets with the country's commitments made as part of the Paris Agreement. Five years on, it is right that all levels of government, business and civil society gets serious about these commitments and plans for a net-zero future.

While central government has a critical role to play in setting national policy frameworks, incentives and targets, it is clear that many of the solutions need to be planned and delivered by cities and regions. The WMCA's Green Paper on climate action is a welcome development as it maps out the actions that will need to be taken in the West Midlands to make the most of the opportunities afforded by the clean technology transition, alongside addressing the risks of climate change that need to be mitigated, and the vital importance of ensuring the transition is fair and equitable across society.

The green paper articulates both short-term and longer-term priorities that will help drive the transition. These align with many of the CBI's national priorities, such as continuing rapid decarbonisation of the

energy system through increased renewables electricity generation, and smarter flexible grids to enable energy storage and integration of electrified transport and future heating solutions.

Addressing the UK's reliance on natural gas for heating is one of the largest challenges to meet net-zero. The

green paper's recommendations on delivering a zero-carbon standard for new homes, alongside planning a joint regional investment plan for renewable heating and cooling are essential elements, as early assessments into the most cost-effective and practical low-carbon heat solutions are needed to support a national policy that is currently being designed.

To achieve net-zero, the CBI has identified a set of pathways that will help reduce emissions and maximise the transformative impact of the

business community. These include creating the right environment for investment; ensuring regulators prioritise decarbonisation; maximising economic benefits and low-carbon export opportunities; and, delivering a 'Just Transition'. Business fully backs the net-zero target and the deadline of COP26 gives all of society a deadline to raise ambition and develop plans to reach our 2050 goals.

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CBI has identified
a set of pathways
that will help
reduce emissions
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C|B|I

www.cbi.org.uk





This agenda is NOW!



Keith Hobden
Partner,
Arcadis

The WMCA Climate Action Plan is thought-provoking and will stimulate debate. It has some clear messages around the drivers that are going to take us forward towards the target that the WMCA has set. It outlines a framework, but our thoughts now have to turn to the implementation plan that is going to bring it to life.

I would like to see a programme-type approach that we can monitor and track. A programme that defines where we want to be by a certain timeframe and shows us the things we need to do in order to get there. Then we can start considering the risks and barriers.

Overcoming some of those barriers may need legislation. The sad reality is that, to a point, people's behaviour is only changed by legislation or financial impact. There's also a need for better alternatives. I would love to see Birmingham city-centre car free but to realise that we have to provide better mass-transit alternatives. There always has to be a catalyst to force a change.

We have to be cautious that demand for change doesn't outstrip our ability to provide the level of infrastructure required. For example, about 20 million electric vehicle charging points will be needed across the UK within the next 10 years, but we're nowhere near that number. On a positive note, I do see an opportunity for local authorities to steer away from the conditional way that external providers operate, and instead generate revenue for the good of all.

With regard to eco-friendly homes, the technology is already here but margins in some parts of the West Midlands can be tight. Developing potentially contaminated brownfield sites in an economically weak area is tough. In regions where property values are higher, and residents wealthier, this technology is more viable. Regulators have to plan for this inequality.

The construction industry has to be more pioneering in its thinking too. There may be less resistance to efficient, modular, factory-built homes, but we need to address the skills shortage before production can be ramped up.

We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to repurpose redundant city-centre commercial properties as greener housing stock. If we don't get it right now, we will have missed the boat, the opportunity will have gone and the climate crisis will have worsened. This agenda is now.



www.arcadis.com/en/global



Delivering clean growth by rail



Peter Miller
Environment Director, HS2 Ltd

The West Midland Combined Authority has demonstrated foresight and leadership to deliver inclusive, clean growth in the region.

Efficient public transport is essential to supporting local and regional growth and HS2 will play its part.

HS2 will be the most sustainable high-speed railway in the world, providing low and eventually zero-carbon connections that link people with

jobs and leisure opportunities and businesses with supply chains and research centres.

By unlocking opportunities for businesses to relocate from London and the South East, to expand and collaborate in the West Midlands, HS2 will act as a catalyst for regional growth and support the retention of highly skilled talent with more graduates choosing to live and work in the region. The WMCA's approach will help contain



the effects of climate change, encourage clean attractive places to live and work and offer a green legacy alongside HS2, that will enable the region to prosper.

Phase One of HS2 will free up capacity on existing regional commuter lines into Birmingham as well as to and from London, helping the city to build on its developing role as a professional services centre whilst also encouraging low carbon connectivity, cleaner air quality and a modal shift from cars to rail. This extra capacity on local 'frequent stopping' commuter lines will also enable people living in the region to access the training they need to re-skill and access jobs in the region's new green economy.

We are designing our train stations to reduce whole life carbon emissions. Our stations will use

low carbon materials, be highly energy efficient, generate zero-carbon energy and achieve zero-carbon emissions from day-to-day energy consumption. Our station designs will enable seamless links between our trains and local low and zero-carbon transport networks — such as the West Midlands Metro — providing end to end low and zero-carbon travel across the country and the region.

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We are designing our train stations to reduce whole life carbon emissions.

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Adapting to climate change and creating a highly productive, low and eventually, zero-carbon economy will be a joint effort, requiring us all to change the way we live, connect and work. We look forward to working with the West Midlands Combined Authority, neighbouring authorities and others along our route to support clean growth and achieve net zero by or before 2050.





David Jobling
West Midlands Regional Chair,
Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

Ambition, leadership and action are needed

We view the WMCA Climate Action Plan in a very positive light. Our local members support the drive to zero carbon and recognise that as civil engineers we have an important role to play. The Institution of Civil Engineers 2020 State of the Nation report will be focused on the zero-carbon challenge for exactly this reason.

We would, however, welcome even more ambition. The WMCA has a unique role between national and local government. We believe the WMCA

could leverage this role to develop firmer and more ambitious targets.

The first five years of the WMCA plan is mainly focused on learning and policy setting. We believe that in order to deliver the transformation needed some targets should be brought forward. Any delay makes it increasingly hard to deliver the transformation needed in time. After all, infrastructure interventions will take many years to implement. Furthermore, because infrastructure projects have lifespans of 50-100+ years, live projects must be used to challenge the status



quo. Increasing investment with more ambitious targets now is likely to radically improve the long-term impact. We cannot afford to spend the next five years acting with too little ambition.

As a profession we are ready to meet the zero-carbon challenge. We understand that infrastructure clients who procure projects often struggle with cost and risk as barriers to change. New solutions are often risky and more expensive, but over time as they become more widely adopted, they will become more cost-effective.

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Developing sustainable infrastructure will only have the required impact if people use it in higher numbers than they do now.

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We believe WMCA should do three things:

- Be braver in specifying more sustainable projects today, using its leverage to influence others. This will send a clear message that will drive innovation in regional projects immediately, as well as support regional economic growth in the future.
- The WMCA must positively influence consumer behaviour. Developing sustainable infrastructure will only have the required impact if people use it in higher numbers than they do now.
- Solutions, services and products to drive zero carbon must be developed and sourced locally.

We have an opportunity to nurture regional expertise, often within global organisations, that will define the West Midlands as the technological hotbed of the UK — perhaps the world — again. It is imperative we use it.



www.ice.org.uk

A new model fit for a new future



Eddie Tuttle

**Director, Policy, Research & Public Affairs,
Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)**

The WMCA Climate Action Plan, and the wider sustainability agenda, offers us the opportunity to embrace a positive change that will be felt well beyond the borders of the West Midlands.

If the ambitious challenges posed by #WM2041 are to be achieved, there are three fundamental issues within the construction sector that need to be addressed. Two of these issues are the lack of skilled labour and the prevalence of poor quality. They cannot be fixed until the third issue – a procurement system that drives us towards low cost – is turned on its head.

#WM2041 rightly calls for dramatic changes in the way that we construct new builds. It also calls for widespread retro-fitting to bring old stock up to standard. Technology, such as modular construction and innovations in digital management, can help us overcome these challenges but we simply don't have enough skilled people on the ground to implement it.

If we are serious about change, and the training that is necessary to provide it, then the public sector must transform its procurement processes so that they no longer favour low-cost solutions. Clients and suppliers must develop a business

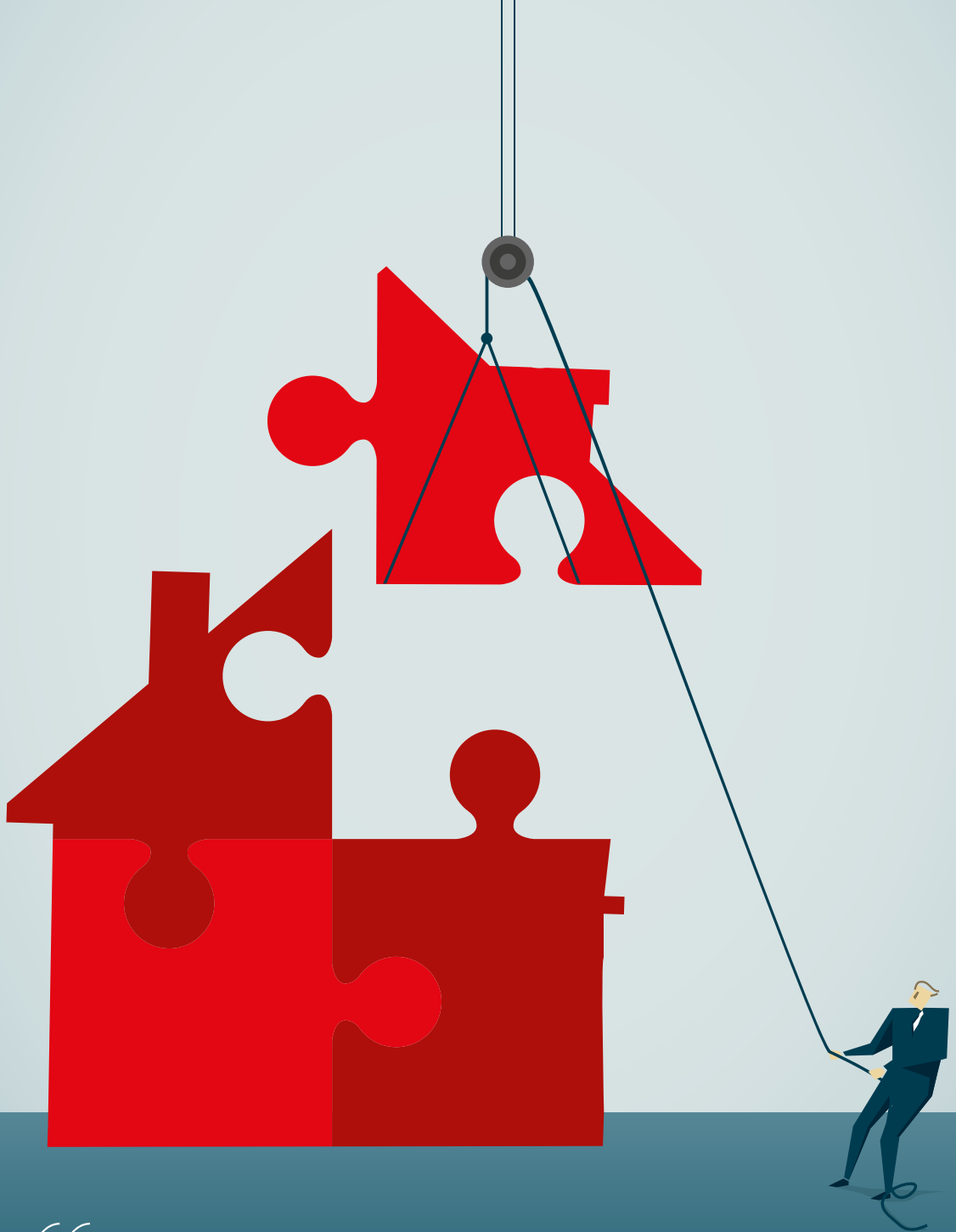
model where quality is valued as much as price, and collaboration is favoured over litigation. The days of contractors feeling competitively obliged to submit unrealistic bids that, if successful, leave them and their supply chain with little margin to re-invest back into training, are no longer sustainable.

Fortunately, the CIOB already enjoys a wonderfully strong relationship with all levels of government, and with our friends at RICS, RIBA and the other professional bodies. We have strong links with the universities in the region, not least Wolverhampton University's ground-breaking new School of Architecture and the Built Environment.

Our future workforce – young people in schools and colleges around the West Midlands – has an appetite for change and we need to harness that. With the WMCA's help we can transform construction into an industry fit to lead the charge against climate change, one the next generation will be proud to work in.



www.ciob.org



“ If we are serious about change, and the training that is necessary to provide it, then the public sector must transform its procurement processes



Consider whole life carbon for all new and existing buildings



Professor Alan M Jones
President, RIBA

To help tackle the climate emergency, the West Midlands Combined Authority must set embodied carbon targets for all new and existing buildings.

The West Midlands is a growing region, with 215,000 new homes needed by 2031. It is positive to see that the #WM2041 report sets out plans to make new and existing homes more energy efficient. However, the carbon emissions from a building's use make up only a portion of the carbon emitted; a key part of the puzzle is missing – embodied carbon.

Embodied carbon is the carbon emitted from the processes associated with sourcing materials, fabricating them into products and systems, transporting



them to site and assembling them. It also includes the emissions due to maintenance, repair, replacement, final demolition and disposal.

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The choice of materials can significantly impact the amount of carbon emitted



emitters of carbon, accounting for more than 8% of CO₂ emissions, globally.

The choice of materials can significantly impact the amount of carbon emitted. Concrete, for example, is one of the most widely used building materials in the world. It is durable, strong, and when combined with suitable insulation can make buildings incredibly energy efficient. Despite these positive qualities, cement – the key ingredient in concrete – is one of the biggest



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The WWF Living Planet Centre was one of the first office projects to conduct a whole life carbon assessment.

This shows designing low-carbon buildings is not cut and dry – and a whole life carbon approach must be considered to understand the full environmental impact of a project.

To understand a building's whole life carbon, embodied carbon must be calculated from the outset. This should be done in accordance with the RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment for the Built Environment.

The RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge sets targets for operational energy, embodied carbon and potable water usage for 2020, 2025 and 2030 for homes and non-domestic buildings. Adopting these targets will help ensure that any new building constructed in the West Midlands will meet net-zero whole life carbon by 2030.

For existing buildings, the West Midland's industrial heritage provides the opportunity to repurpose old buildings. Retrofitting allows the embodied carbon in a building to be preserved and decreases the amount of carbon emitted.

The WMCA should work with architects, surveyors, engineers and the wider built environment to prioritise the use of low carbon materials, the reuse of existing materials, and source materials locally when possible. This will significantly reduce the embodied carbon in a project and help tackle the climate emergency.



Lessons from around the World

Overcoming the climate crisis is a shared challenge of global significance. In order to save our planet, nations will need to come together to develop, trial and scale-up solutions.

Curitiba - Brasil

In recent years, the Brazilian government has been a source of frustration for environmentalists. Yet in southern Brazil, in what was traditionally cattle country, lies Curitiba – a city that has been positively influencing planners for the past 50 years.

In the 1960s the country's new capital Brasília was heralded as the future, with planner Lúcio Costa and architect Oscar Niemeyer celebrated as visionaries. Without doubt, Brasília was a blueprint for the modern metropolis and its influence spread far and wide. It was, and still is, a remarkable city but it was built on a false assumption – that the private motor car would dominate city transportation forever.

When, in the 1970s, architect and mayor Jaime Lerner was given the task of transforming a rapidly growing Curitiba he was put under intense pressure to replicate the success of Brasília by driving wide highways throughout the city. Lerner refused. Iconic old buildings were saved, to retain a sense of place. Green spaces were treasured – it's still one of the 'greenest' cities in the world – and a comprehensive yet affordable bus network was introduced.

Planners have been learning lessons from Curitiba for decades – can this 1970s city still offer us any wisdom? Perhaps it's that transformation demands bravery, and a stubbornness to accept nothing less than what's right for the long-term good.



New York - USA

New Yorkers are acutely aware that if sea levels rise they will take the brunt. It's not the greenest city in the world, not by a long way, but over the past decade or so New Yorkers have consistently implemented a large number of worthy schemes such as modernising infrastructure, the provision of community green spaces, large-scale tree planting and a pioneering acceptance of electric vehicles.

Last year the city council introduced its Climate Mobilization Act, heralded as the largest single legislative mandate to cut climate pollution by any city in the world. At its core are aggressive measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adopt clean energy generation.

These include setting strict emissions caps for buildings over 25,000 square feet and assessing the feasibility of replacing the city's gas-fired power plants with battery storage powered by renewable energy sources.

Solar and wind is another focus. The Act aims to triple the state's solar capacity from 1.7 gigawatts to 6 gigawatts by 2025, and calls for 9 gigawatts of offshore wind power by 2035. The goal is for all electricity to be generated from emission-free sources by 2040.

New York City Council also looked to Oslo when developing its own climate budget. Legislation was introduced in September 2019, based on Oslo's model of budgeting its emissions the same way it budgets its finances.



Oslo - Norway

European Green Capital 2019 winner Oslo may be the capital of Norway, but with a population of just 650,000 it's tiny – about half the size of Birmingham. But that makes it all the more interesting because ideas tested here may be ripe for scaling-up elsewhere.

The city aims to cut emissions by 50% by this year (compared to 1990) and to be carbon neutral by 2050. It has introduced a range of integrated measures to achieve these targets, including improvements in cycling and public transport infrastructure, car-free zones and the use of electric vehicles.

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In 2016, Oslo introduced a ground-breaking ‘Climate Budget’ ”

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More than 30% of all vehicles now sold in the city are electric, and biogas produced from bio-waste and sewage fuels city buses and waste trucks. A ban on fossil heating fuels will come into effect in 2020 for the





building sector. In addition, the city's waterways are being actively re-opened for recreation, stormwater management and restoration of habitat.

Oslo has also established a 'Business for Climate Network' to foster cooperation between

its business community, citizens and NGOs in addressing the impact business operations have on the climate.

In 2016, Oslo introduced a ground-breaking 'Climate Budget', which sees carbon dioxide emissions being accounted for in the same way as the city's finances. It recognises that communication, involvement and active engagement of the population are essential for achieving its ambitious goals.



Watch and learn

The EU's European Green City Award has become a barometer for green ambition. Thirty-six cities and towns from 18 European countries are competing for the European Green Capital 2022 and European Green Leaf 2021 Awards, the highest number ever in their 13-year history.

Cities entered for the European Green Capital 2022 Award are: Belgrade (Serbia); Budapest (Hungary); Dijon (France); Gdańsk (Poland); Grenoble (France); Katowice (Poland); Kraków (Poland); Lyon (France); Maribor (Slovenia); Murcia (Spain); Parma (Italy); Pécs (Hungary); Perugia (Italy); Poznań (Poland); Sofia (Bulgaria); Tallinn (Estonia); Turin (Italy); and Zagreb (Croatia).

Past winners and runners-up have positively influenced and collaborated with other cities around the world. Cities to watch and learn from.

You've got the power – use it



Cian Bryan
Director, Planning Futures

With this green paper, the WMCA has made an honest and thoughtful opening statement in the development of a strategy to achieve a zero-carbon economy over the next 21 years.

It identifies many of the core problems and seeks workable solutions that fit with the history of the region as a manufacturing centre – one that must now evolve and write the next chapter in its story as an industrial powerhouse.

The paper is not short on ambition, nor is it short on ideas. However, as is noted within the section on creating places, many of these challenges are not necessarily technical in nature.

In the green paper preface, Cllr Ian Courts rightly cites the need for vision, innovation and industry, and for leadership. These will no doubt

be important factors in delivering on the WMCA's stated ambition. However, they are not, in themselves, sufficient. This is also about power.

The paper sets out a range of proposed “example actions” under each section, many of which call for greater devolution to the combined authority, changes to national legislation and policy and partnership working and collaboration with government departments.

There are, of course, good arguments for greater devolution over time and national policy will have to evolve in order to meet the challenges associated with climate change. However, in focusing so heavily on matters that are outside of its control, the green paper projects a vision that it will struggle to deliver.

This is unfortunate as in so doing it neglects some of the more important powers that it, as well as its constituent local authorities, already enjoys.

On this point, the document's treatment of planning policy is instructive. It calls for reform of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) “to ensure that local authorities have a robust basis on which to demand zero carbon/carbon negative developments”. Regardless of the merits of such a change, it is a national policy issue and not specific to the work of the WMCA.

Meanwhile, there is no mention of local plans. As the WMCA itself does not have any strategic planning powers, it is through these documents that the region can make its most important planning interventions.

Whilst we applaud the WMCA's ambition, we feel that future iterations of its zero-carbon strategy must focus on how it can deliver through its existing powers and structures.





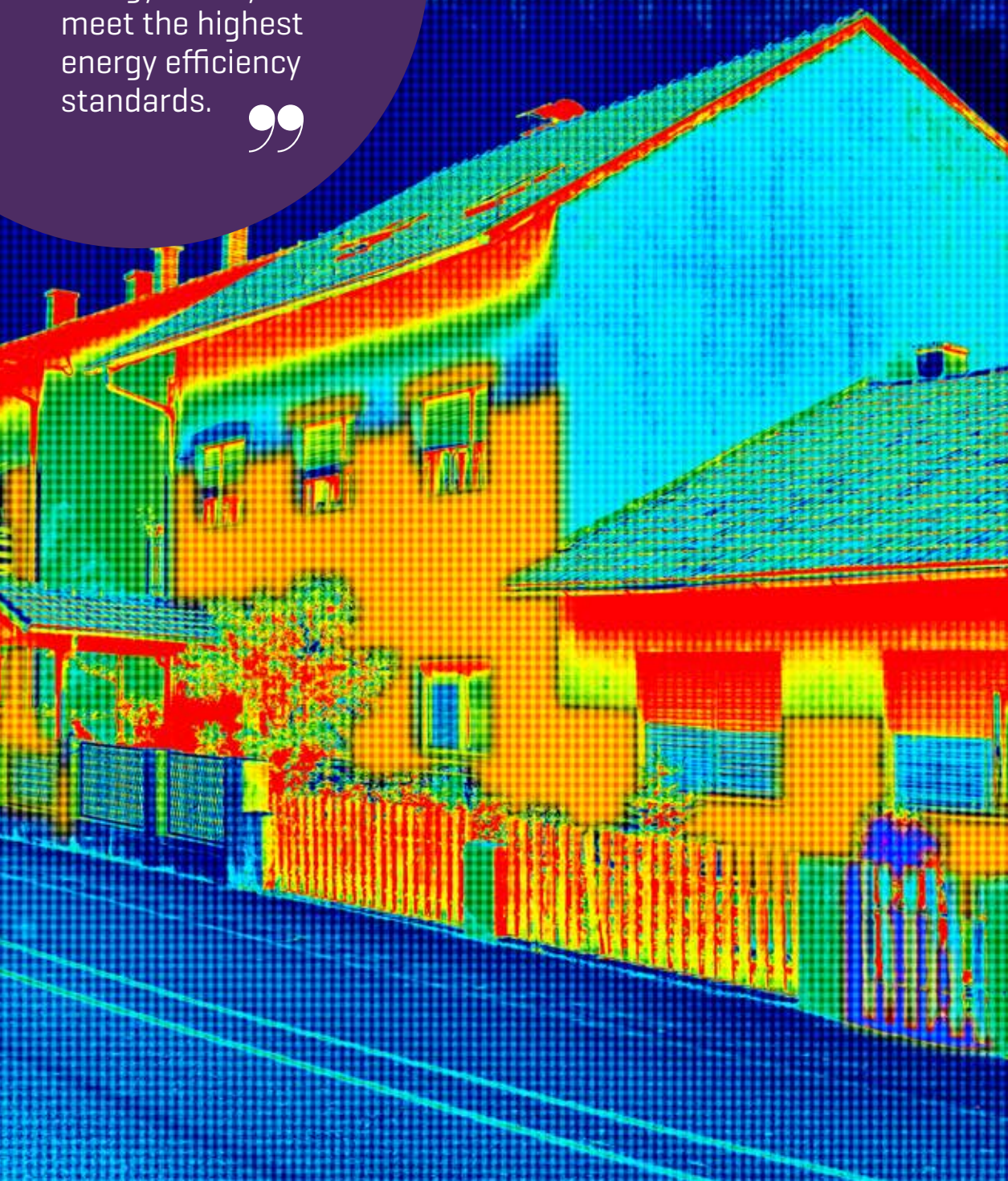
PLANNING FUTURES
A new conversation about planning

www.planningfutures.org

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The problem is that most homes leak energy — only 2% meet the highest energy efficiency standards.

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The £1bn a year retrofit challenge



John Perry FCIH

Policy Adviser, Chartered Institute of Housing

The key to achieving a low-carbon economy is energy efficiency, and work has to start in the home. In the West Midlands, some 28% of carbon emissions come from the energy used to heat, light and run our homes. The problem is that most homes leak energy — only 2% meet the highest energy efficiency standards. Getting domestic energy use to fall as close to zero as possible relies on three things. First, stopping energy wastage. Second, getting homes to produce their own energy, using solar panels for example. Lastly, replacing fossil fuels, like gas for central heating, with renewable energy sources like heat pumps.

The scale of the task is enormous. The West Midlands Combined Authority covers some 860,000 homes. Let's suppose 30% of these meet reasonable energy-efficiency standards (what's called Energy Performance Certificate Band C). This means that 600,000 need 'retrofitting' with insulation and other measures to bring them up to the standard. The WMCA wants to achieve this by 2035, which means tackling 40,000 homes per year. That's 160 per working day. Its ambition is to raise at least £1 billion a year to do this, which means spending about £25,000 per house, probably a reasonable estimate of what it will cost.

So far, so realistic. But where will the resources come from? It is a huge ask. It can only be done if planning starts now, not just to create the budget but also to gear up a retrofit industry that is currently much smaller than the task requires.

There is an even bigger problem — persuading people to have it done, because they will probably have to cover at least part of the cost. Some 20% of homes were built before the First World War, and most of these will need costly internal or external insulation to achieve the required standard. There will be consumer resistance, and a lot of work is needed to spell out the advantages and minimise the risks to householders.

No part of the UK has tackled a retrofit challenge like this so far, even though the country must do it if the government's carbon targets are to be met. Will the West Midlands be the first? It could be, but it needs a lot of careful planning and budgeting for this to happen.



www.cih.org



Innovation takes ambition



Dr Pam Waddell OBE
Director, Innovation Alliance
for the West Midlands

embrace the report, it has some really sound principles. The WMCA's choice of 2041 is ambitious but evidence-based, and to be welcomed. I also commend the relationship it draws between inclusiveness and sustainable growth because we need to take everybody with us for this to work.

We are the birthplace of the industrial revolution and have profited enormously from that legacy but we now have a duty to drive the new low-carbon revolution.

WMCA rightly recognises that there is real opportunity here for the West Midlands. We have innovation strengths that can be applied to the shared challenge of seeking net-zero, strengths that can bring huge economic and social benefits

to the region. Our region has massive capabilities in advanced manufacturing, in data and in integrated systems – exactly the expertise needed to develop ambitious zero-carbon solutions.

There is much in the report about enabling new technologies, and the WMCA commitment to the new West Midlands Innovation Programme will enable some of this. But in order for our innovation strengths to make a substantial impact on the 2041 goal, we must show more and more sustained ambition. The five to 15-year timescale is lacking – we should be seeking to predict and shape what will be implemented during this period.

One aspect of the West Midlands Innovation Programme, which the WMCA itself will be taking



a lead on, is foresighting work. If we are going to achieve the visions of the WMCA's 2041 report, then we need to increase our appetite for future-gazing, leading to future-shaping. For example, the proposed introduction of zero-carbon standards for new builds is applaudable. But in other parts of the UK, net-negative buildings are already the new aspiration.

The report has many examples of public sector action. More emphasis needs to be placed on engaging with and facilitating opportunities for the private sector. Solutions to the climate challenge will come both from the private sector and markets that will drive inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Innovation Alliance WM is evangelical about challenge-led innovation, demonstration and

testing innovations at scale. This can identify and knock down the barriers to implementation and scale-up of new products and services, thereby kick-starting commercial opportunity. We need to engage the private sector from the start, so it is West Midlands' companies exporting solutions to the rest of the world and not vice versa.



Solutions to the climate challenge will come both from the private sector and markets that will drive inclusive and sustainable growth.



Achieve big by embracing the small



Nigel Mason
FRICS, Director
Nigel Mason
Consulting and
Chair, RICS
West Midlands
Regional Board

Reading the WMCA proposal it is clear that we can achieve big improvements with a few small changes.

Millions of us across the region waste untold hours of our day commuting to work by car. I live just 15 miles from Birmingham but driving into the city centre in the morning will take an hour or more. So, although I miss the freedom that a car provides, I try to use public transport when I can.

I find public transport clean, cost-effective and often quicker than travelling by car. The barrier for me is not being able to get a seat. We desperately need to increase capacity on routes where it is needed, perhaps by introducing Metro systems in some parts of the region to reduce pressure on rail.

However, a quick win to lessen the pressure on public transport (and car journeys) is to reduce the number of travellers. There needs to be an immediate cultural change within corporate management that embraces

employees working from home. We need to rout out weak middle managers who insist that their team members turn up to the office day after day.

Yes, many major companies and institutions have already introduced hot-desking but this was always more about cost-cutting than sustainability. Due to lack of management training we've ended up with twenty-first century office buildings handicapped by twentieth century management practices.



In the property and construction consultancy sector the joint pressures of commuting and suffering the management burden has fuelled the trend for experienced consultants to seek job satisfaction elsewhere. We're seeing more and more small start-ups — efficient hubs employing fewer than a handful of skilled practitioners — working from home or close to home. My own consultancy is a typical example. Furthermore, I am part of a network of similar hubs that mesh together when additional capacity or expertise is required.

There will always be a place for the big consultancies but these smaller, more agile, collaborative hubs are proving

to be just as capable. We're better focussed, more driven and we have a much smaller carbon footprint. But, because on paper we look insignificant we often fail to meet procurement thresholds when pitching for new business. With its vast buying power, I would like to see the public sector show more imagination by actively procuring more services

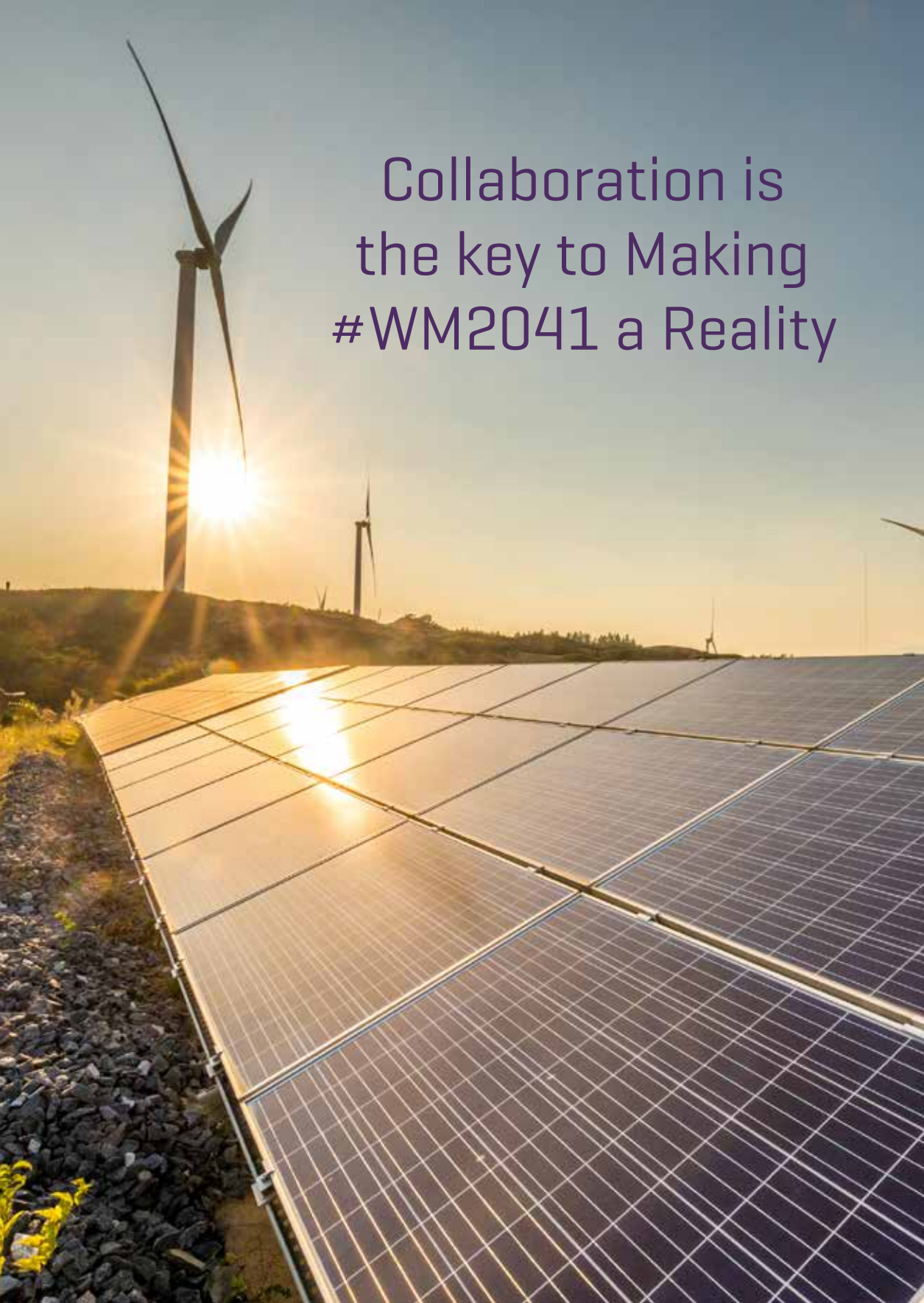
from sustainable small consultancies and start-ups.

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We've ended up with twenty-first century office buildings handicapped by twentieth century management practices.

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Collaboration is
the key to Making
#WM2041 a Reality



Hew Edgar
Head of UK Government Relations
and City Strategy, RICS

Passions and positivity shine through in thought leadership from ten organisations vital to battling the climate crisis.

Today's fire, flood and climate change headlines are frighteningly similar to 30 years ago when governments around the world first started taking global warming seriously*.

But what has changed is that climate change has now become a crisis and is front and centre of our work, home and social lives. It was one of the – if not the – most prominent issues in the last UK general election.

As we look to what's next, it is fair to assume that climate change will increasingly be incorporated into societal and political discourse, debate and discussion; and #WM2041 will play a dominant role in that conversation.

There is one clear message from the organisations that have contributed to this document; the time for discussion is over, we need to take action today as tomorrow may be too late. ►

* The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was set up in 1988.

#WM2041's direction, ambition and practicability is welcomed, and through the ten contributions in this report, it is clear the innovators, designers, planners, developers, constructors and the business community are fully behind this call to action to change the world through 'vision, innovation, and industry'.

In these collective reactions, there is an overwhelming sense of optimism and passion for the planet's future as well as an understanding that we must raise our game and incorporate inclusivity, fairness and prosperity into the plan.

Contributors identified recurrent themes – most notably the requirement for an educational drive to maintain the regional skilled work and labour force that will deliver net zero projects. Without capable people, how can we deliver?

RICS would add that we also need to ensure all work is completed to the highest standards, such as those promoted by the International Construction Measurement Standards Coalition, in which we are a leading member.

Step change needed

Similarly, there were concerns raised around funding mechanisms and the costs of developing net-zero buildings and infrastructure, with some ambitious projects needing a step-change if they are to be achievable;



While a long-term strategy is clearly needed, there is also a keen recognition that action must start now



namely the 40,000 EV charging stations, low carbon tech in all new building and retrofitting in existing stock.

While a long-term strategy is clearly needed, there is also a keen recognition that action must start now.

Making #WM2041 a Reality is not an RICS policy report; it belongs to the contributors and West Midlands as a whole. The views, opinions and comments made within its pages are not necessarily endorsed by all organisations here but we are confident that the enthusiasm for this report, and the call for action, is clear and shared.

We hope this report will spark even closer collaboration between regional leaders, the business community and sectoral stakeholders to tackle the climate challenges we face.







RICS Values the Planet

Surveying embraces sustainability and a responsible approach to business

In a rapidly changing world, RICS has a responsibility to ensure our profession is leading from the front. As the only profession involved at every stage of the life cycle of a project, programme or development, surveyors are uniquely placed to provide real leadership within the built and natural environment.

To ensure that we maintain trust and influence and are seen to champion change, our strategy in the UK is focused on RICS taking a leadership position on positive social impact and sustainability.

Tools to help

Through our Value the Planet campaign, RICS is promoting and providing tools to the profession to support the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which encourage our profession's commitment to delivering social benefit through responsible and sustainable business practices.

The campaign also offers a great opportunity to highlight the public interest responsibility of RICS and demonstrate the benefits that our profession provides in offering solutions to society's most challenging issues.

The Value the Planet campaign launched in October 2019 with an online resource to support the profession.

The resource includes:

- Guide to Implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Responsible Business in Real Estate – Industry Leaders Insight Report
- Webinar series hosted by sustainability experts
- Industry case studies on sustainable practice
- SDG checklist
- Checklist of RICS standards and research supporting climate action
- RICS sustainability training and resources.

Discover more: rics.org/valuetheplanet

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the West Midlands

Delivering confidence

We are RICS. Everything we do is designed to effect positive change in the built and natural environments. Through our respected global standards, leading professional progression and our trusted data and insight, we promote and enforce the highest professional standards in the development and management of land, real estate, construction and infrastructure. Our work with others provides a foundation for confident markets, pioneers better places to live and work and is a force for positive social impact.

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