



West Midlands
Combined Authority



Equality Scheme 2022 to 2024

Our plan about how to make
services fairer for everyone



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About us and the Equality Scheme



We are the **West Midlands Combined Authority**. In this plan we will call ourselves the **WMCA**.



We are 7 councils and other organisations that work together.

We look at important things like:



Transport: We work together with other transport organisations to make sure we have a good transport system that everyone can use.



Money: We make sure that the West Midlands is a good place for businesses to grow.





Work: We make sure there are lots of new jobs. We help people get the skills and support they need to get into work.



Housing and land: We support local councils to give land for new businesses to grow. And build more houses that people can afford to live in.



Public services: We make sure that services work well for local people and businesses.



The Equality Scheme looks at what we will do over the **next 3 years** to make sure everyone in our area gets the same chance to have a good life.

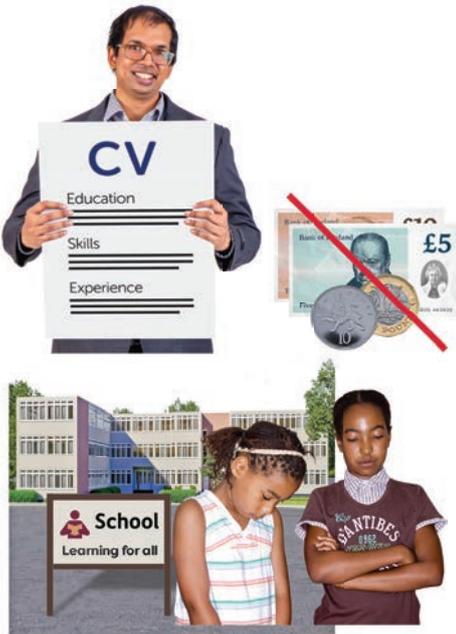
We call it our **Big Plan**.

Why we need the plan



Our society is not equal. There are lots of reasons people do not get the same chances in life.

In our area the main problems for people are:



- not having the skills they need
- people don't have enough money and cannot get a job
- children not doing well at school



COVID-19 has made life worse for lots of people in our communities who were already struggling.



We have written a COVID-19 plan as well to help us quickly make things better.

What the law says



The law says that we must make sure everybody has the same chances. We must protect some people from being treated unfairly.



People might be treated unfairly because of things like:

- disability



- race. This means your culture or the colour of your skin



- age



We must include everyone and protect the most vulnerable groups in our community.

People who live in the West Midlands



The West Midlands has the highest number of people from an ethnic minority outside London.



Nearly half of all people from an ethnic minority household are really poor. They don't have much money and don't live in very good housing.



We have the highest number of people under 16 in the UK. Lots of young people who leave school find it hard to get a job.



We have a lot of people who do not have enough money to live.



Lots of people live in poor areas and are not able to get a job.

Being poor and living in poor areas can also mean you:



- might not have access to a computer



- have more health conditions. Things like: diabetes, heart problems and being overweight



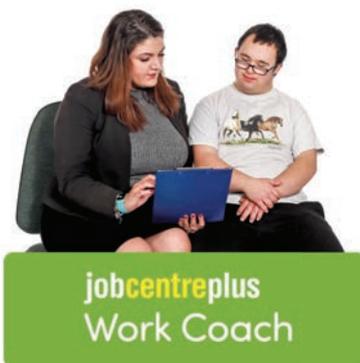
- have worse mental health like depression and worrying a lot

Things we have already done to make things better

Since 2017 we have:



- helped more young people get into work. We did this by working with local businesses



- started a new project to help support people from poorer backgrounds into work



- offered free fares to some women that have had their pension date changed



- made our bus stations and public transport safer and nicer places to be



More things we have done already:

- worked with local councils to make town centres nicer places to be



- made it easier for people from poorer backgrounds to get the skills they need



- built lots of new houses that local people from poor backgrounds can afford



- set up a group to look at how COVID-19 has affected people's health and wellbeing



- started the **Include Me** project. Local organisations worked together to help disabled people and people with health problems to be more active



- set up a special group to help people who are homeless. We have helped lots of people to get their own homes



- worked with local people to tackle **fuel poverty**. This is when people cannot afford the gas and electricity they need



- looked at what we can do to stop climate change. This is really important to us

The Equality Action Plan

Our important ideas for the future



We have 4 main **ideas**. In this plan we will call our ideas **objectives**.

Each objective has **actions**. **Actions** are the things we need to do to make our objectives happen.



Objective 1: Have accessible and safe transport that people can afford

Action 1: Make sure people can travel safely on public transport

Some of the things we will do:



- **Project Empower:** this is work to stop sexual abuse on our buses, trains and trams



- we will carry on using social media to spread the word about safe transport



- we will let more people know about Hate Crime and Road Safety. We will support victims to report hate crimes on public transport

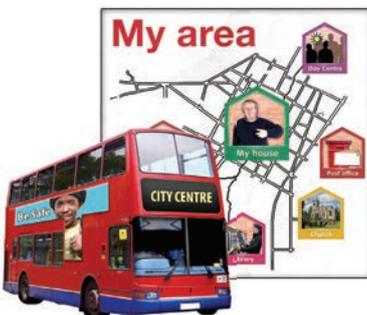
Action 2: Plan for the Commonwealth Games



The 2022 Commonwealth Games will be held in Birmingham. This is a big sporting competition.



Lots of people will come to the Games.



We will write a plan to make sure:

- everyone can get around to see the games



- people who live in the West Midlands can still get around to live their lives



Action 3: Make sure that services are good value for money and Make sure local people can access jobs, education and activities

Some of the things we will do:



- we will have a new app that helps people use transport easier



- lots of fares are different prices across the West Midlands. We will make all fares the same price in all areas



- we will make public transport tickets cheaper for people looking for jobs



- we will look at new ways we can support vulnerable people to use transport



Action 4: Get more people to travel around in a way that is better for the planet. Things like cycling and walking

Some of the things we will do:



- make sure all our transport services know about climate change and how transport affects this



- have events that support local people to walk and cycle more. We will help more people in poorer areas



- start the **West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme** to help people to cycle who do not have a bike



- spend money on community cycling sessions that include disabled people

Action 5: Listen to our customers and make sure we meet their needs

Some of the things we will do:



- make sure all our staff know about making services fair. And understand what the law says about this



- train staff on how to support vulnerable passengers and those with disabilities or hidden disabilities like Autism



- look at how to give extra support to young people who are not in school or don't have a job, or who have been in care



- have regular events in the community and talk to passengers. We will use what they tell us to keep making our transport services better

Action 6: Make using transport equal for everyone

Some of the things we will do:



- start new projects so that everyone can use our railways and it meets everyone's needs



- check all of our train stations. Look at ways to make them easier to use



- make our Metro Network bigger so people can get to more places easier

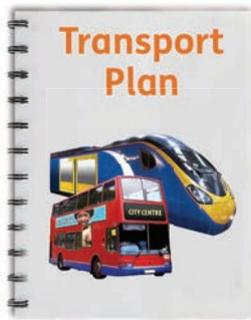


- make information easier for people when they travel

Action 7: Plans and policies

Some of the things we will do:

- update all our transport policies. Make sure they include everybody in our communities



- write a new transport plan that will help us to do all our ideas



- work with Mencap to make sure our new cycle routes can be used by everyone



Objective 2: Make sure everything we do makes the West Midlands a fairer place and helps the people who need it most

Action 1: Build accessible housing that local people can afford

Some of the things we will do:



- look for some more money to build more houses that people can afford



- when we give money for housing projects we will check:

- it is really well built



- and it is accessible



- make sure that when new houses are built, they also build houses that people with less money can afford



Action 2: More jobs and skills for local people

We will support local people to get the right skills and we will have lots of new jobs.



We will use more of our local land for houses and businesses to be built on.



We will do lots of things to support young people and people from poor backgrounds.

Action 3: Make our public services better for everyone

We will work with local organisations to:



- help end homelessness in our region



- support people in trouble with the police



- set up groups to look at what support **veterans** get in our area

Veterans are people who used to be in the armed services. This means things like the army, navy or air force.



- work with local councils to make sure local people can access the internet

Action 4: Be a place that supports local people to have a happy, healthy and a good life

Some of the things we will do:



- make sure there are lots of activities that local people can do to keep them healthy in their mind and body



- work with local councils to look at why some people have poor health and then give them extra support



Objective 3: Make sure equality is at the heart of everything we do

Action 1: Talk to local people and make everything equal

Some of the things we will do:



- talk more to our local communities. Find out what they need and what makes services hard to use



- use this information to make sure all our local services meet everyone's needs. Local people have a say in what happens

Action 2: Make change happen and have leaders from all of our Community Groups

Some of the things we will do:



- make sure everything we do is fair and gives everyone the same opportunities



- make sure our Local Leaders and people in the top jobs are a good mixture of people who live in our area



- support and work with local groups that know their communities well



- set up new groups to look at mental health and what makes things harder for young people



West Midlands

Objective 4: Make sure our staff are a good mix of local people who can help us be more equal

Action 1: Get a good mix of people

Some of the things we will do:



- make sure our staff are from all the different community groups in our areas

This means people from different areas, backgrounds, cultures, races and religions.



- we will give extra support to people who have less money and find it hard to get a job



- give more apprenticeships and chances to get some of the top jobs

Action 2: Give all staff the skills they need to be confident and happy in their jobs

Some of the things we will do:



- train all our staff to understand how important it is that we are fair and equal in everything we do



- run lots of local campaigns and events on different issues that people from our community groups might face

For example, language barriers, disability or women's issues.



- make sure all our staff feel supported with their mental health and wellbeing



- understand mental health and how it can affect our staff. We will find different ways to support them

Action 3: Look at who we have working for us

Things we will do:



- We will collect information about the mix of people who work for us. We will share it with everyone.



- We will look at the mix of people in different jobs and write a report.



- We will look at what makes things hard for people when they apply for jobs with us and try to make things better.



Contact us

If you want to tell us what you think about our plan or if you have any questions you can contact us:



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