

## **PARK AT SMITHFIELD PETITION**

Birmingham does not have a large park in its city centre - a glaring omission for the UK's second city. However, we currently have a unique opportunity to address this and it's now or never! With the wholesale markets in Digbeth now relocated to another site, a large space of 14 hectares (about the size of 20 football pitches) has been created. This site, called Birmingham Smithfield, which is less than 5 minutes' walk from New Street station and the Bullring, is an ideal location for a green park that could truly transform our city's landscape.

Unfortunately, the council has had other ideas for Smithfield. Its [Visioning Document](#) released in 2015 had very little public space and certainly no park as part of its plans, which led to the launch of this petition by [CityPark4Brum](#). In March 2016, the council then released the [Smithfield Masterplan](#) and a new consultation, which this time included a proposal for a [new park](#) on one part of the site, as a direct result of this campaign. However the space allocated for this park is simply too small, being [smaller than the Cathedral Green](#) and is wedged in between other buildings. Therefore the CityPark4Brum campaign has continued and is now into its fourth year.

This petition presents an **alternative vision** for the site in accommodating cultural buildings, markets, homes and transport links connected to *one large area of open and green space*. See [here](#) for more details on the CityPark4Brum plan. Parks like the one we are proposing provide the lungs and fresh air for a city and are good for both the private and public purse. In particular they improve our physical and mental health, promote social cohesion, improve biodiversity, reduce pollution and provide a site for open-air events.

Did you know that the council's own [Parks and Open Spaces Strategy](#) (Section 5.4) highlights a lack of existing public open space in the city centre? In wards that cover the Digbeth area, the current open space provision is much lower than the council's target of 2 hectares per 1000 residents. Now 2000 additional homes are being proposed in the Masterplan with clearly an insufficient amount of new open space to go with it. Eastside Park and the Cathedral Green are the only green areas in or very near to the city centre for local residents and visitors.

Other global cities are known and celebrated for having signature parks at their centres, for example London, Berlin, New York and Washington. In fact, Central Park in New York is a [main visitor attraction](#) and generates \$1Billion annually to the local economy. There is no doubt that global cities benefit from having well-known parks at their centres. The wholesale markets site is the last area of large open space left in Birmingham's city centre, and one still in public ownership, that could be transformed in this way. So now it's our turn and our last chance to have a large city centre park. Situated right next to the Bullring, it would be the missing piece of the jigsaw, a green hub that connects different parts of the city, making a legacy for generations to come. So please join the campaign to turn a brownfield site into a green one by signing this petition and following updates on the [CityPark4Brum website](#), as well as on [Twitter](#), [FaceBook](#) & [Instagram](#).

The original petition was submitted to Birmingham City Council as part of its Smithfield consultations in 2015 and 2016. In July 2018 the updated petition, now with over 6000 names, was sent to both Birmingham City Council and to Andy Street, the West Midlands Mayor. Since then, and while we have been waiting on the council's next steps, we have received thousands more signatures. So now we have decided to send the petition to the council for a final time in January 2019, with a new target of 10,000 supporters.