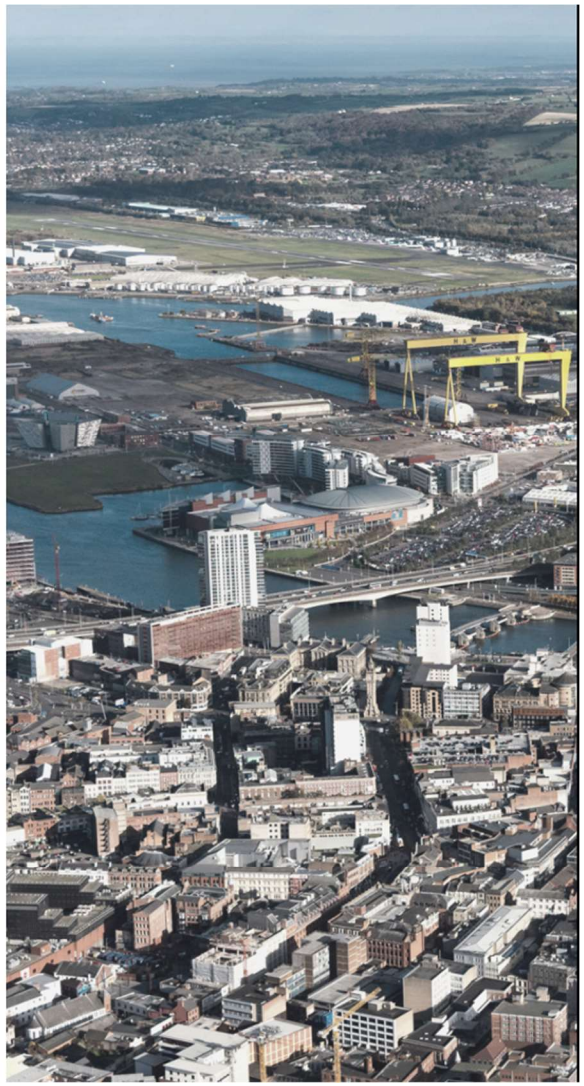


Belfast Place Based Growth Proposition

23 September 2025

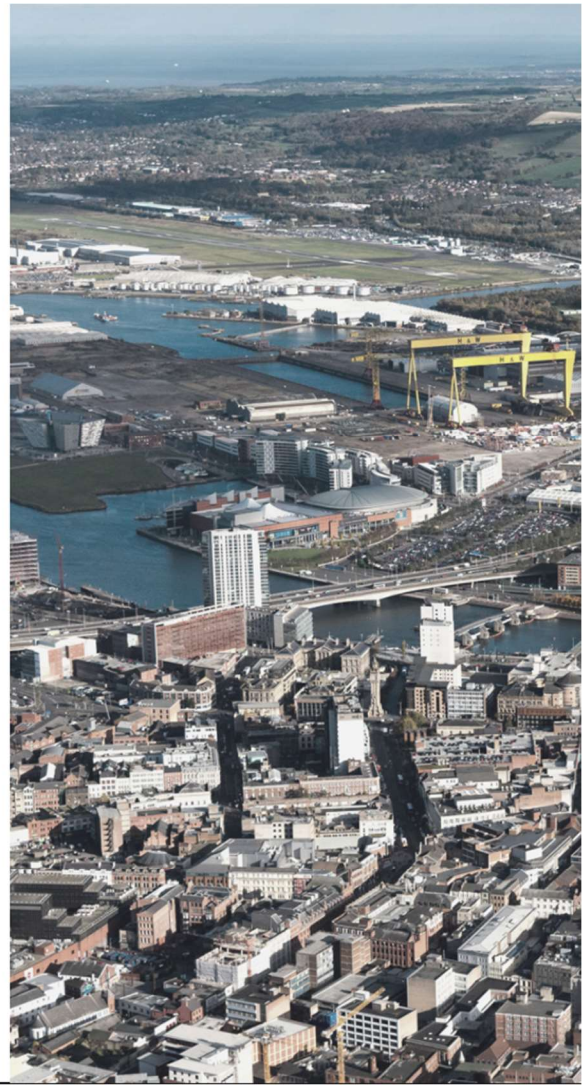
Agenda

- Introductions
- Belfast City & Region Place Partnership
- Belfast Place Based Growth Proposition
- Next steps



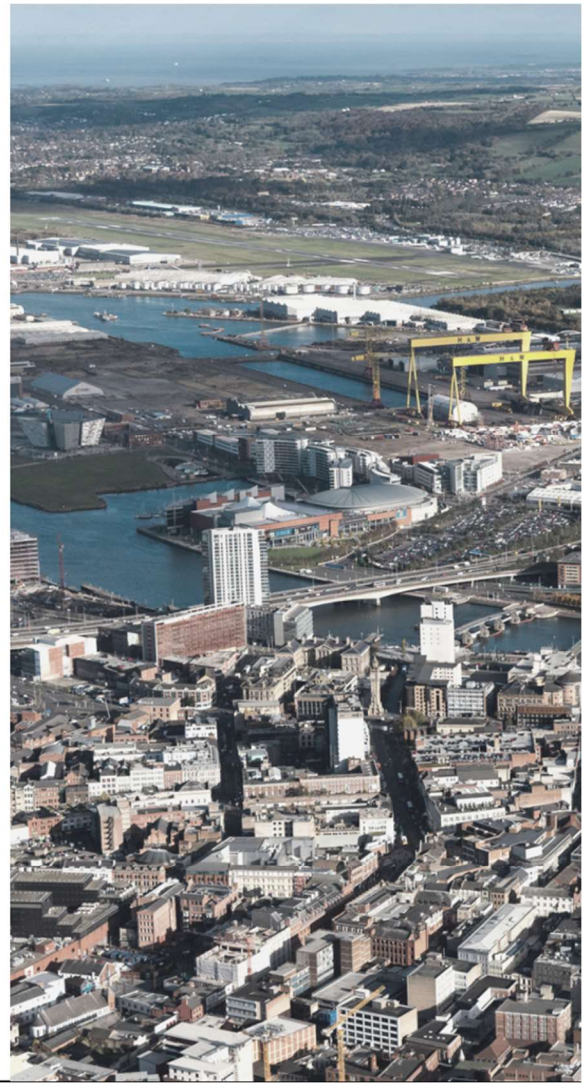
Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy (BCCRIS)

- **Adopted regeneration policy** which provides a roadmap of policies and key projects to drive regeneration and development in Belfast City Centre, with economic and social benefits for the entire city and region.
- Plays a crucial role in advancing many of the Executive's commitments, with **delivery sitting across central and local government and the private and third sectors**.
- **BCCRIS 10-Year Stocktake Review** highlighted key priorities including increasing **city centre living; delivering connectivity and infrastructure related projects; and unlocking stalled major regeneration schemes.**
- Highlighted criticality of **Innovative approaches to funding, new approaches to delivery and continued partnership working** across public, private, third sectors and communities needed to leverage the city centre's full potential.



Belfast City & Region Place Partnership

- A collaborative cross sector initiative
- Focussed on delivering a shared programme of work
- Aimed at attracting inclusive investment for the delivery of regeneration, infrastructure and a modern built environment for the Belfast City Region
- Shared ambition is to drive inclusive, sustainable growth

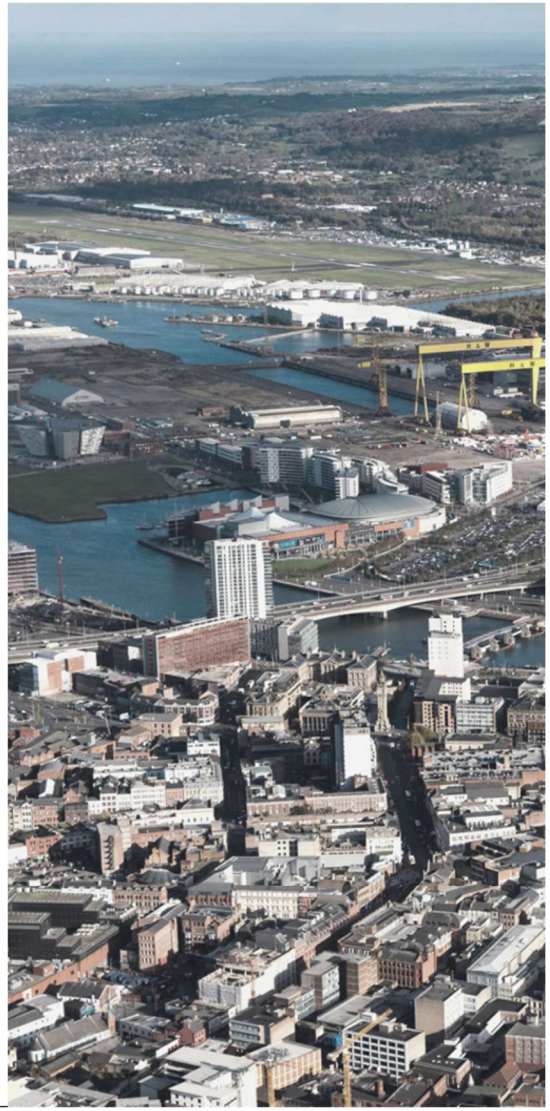


Belfast has experienced a regeneration deficit

- Northern Ireland has amongst **the lowest spend on regeneration and local growth per head of population**, compared to Scotland, Wales and English regions – nearly half the regional average spend per capita.

- **Excluded from major funding programmes** that have built-up expertise and capability in English cities and delivering on regeneration and growth e.g. Towns Fund, Transforming Cities Fund, Local Growth Fund etc).

- Complexity of funding availability, funding powers and decision-making in Belfast means that **the city struggles to engage with investors on the same basis as other UK core cities**.



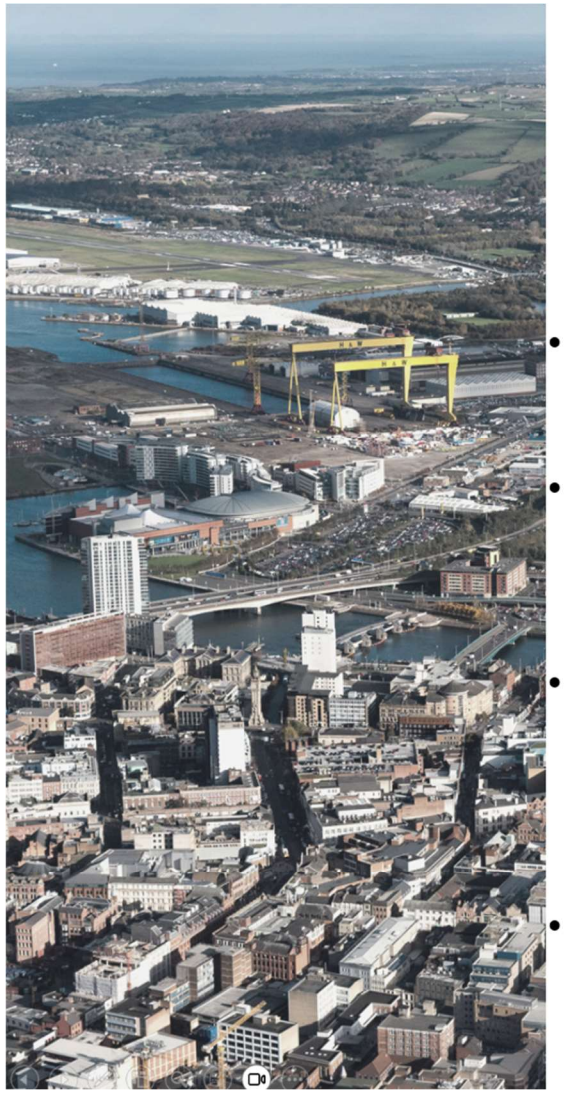
Belfast has experienced a regeneration deficit

- **Homes England has Strategic Place Partnerships** with combined authorities which reflects Homes England remit to deliver on regeneration ambitions. £16bn funding to deploy by 2028, equating to £3.2bn PA.

- **Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund (BIL**) - a £1.0bn capital programme.

- Example of a mixed use / housing led regeneration scheme - **Forth Yards, Newcastle - £121m** to bring forward new homes, public realm and commercial space on a 50 acre brownfield site though a **Strategic Place Partnership between Homes England, Newcastle City Council, North East Combined Authority and Network Rail**. Funding will allow site remediation, groundworks and infrastructure activity, fixing complex land issues in advance of procurement process to appoint a private sector delivery partner.

- **New £39bn affordable housing programme recently announced via Spending Review** to be funnelled through Homes England as primarily investment funds.



Devolution in England puts Belfast at a competitive disadvantage

- The **English Devolution White Paper** promises a new level of autonomy for Places, making it easier for them to work with private sector investors.
- **Transfer of additional funding and power to Strategic Authorities (SAs**) will allow English Councils to set and deliver on priorities that better respond to local needs and drive growth.
- **Increased funding pots** and flexibilities are to be afforded to SA, with **single pot integrated settlements and access to consolidated funding pots, covering local growth and regeneration**. E.g. West Midlands Combined Authority will receive £388.6m for 2025-26 and Greater Manchester will receive £630m for 2025/26.
- This could **make it even harder for Belfast to attract the resources needed to unlock demand and growth.**

Catalysts for Transformational Change

- Housing Led Regeneration
- Green Urban Infrastructure and Place Making
- Unlocking Major Regeneration Schemes



Ask to Westminster

Ask: c.£250m Investment Fund seeded by UK Government and via a **Barnett 'Bypass'.**

Scope: Interventions include enabling works and gap funding to overcome viability issues with major regeneration and housing developments; direct funding of public realm, connectivity and infrastructure related works.

Rationale: Unlock catalytic drivers of change identified in BCCRIS Stocktake, citywide priorities aligned to PfG and Belfast Agenda:

- Enhanced housing provision across all tenures
- Improved infrastructure, connectivity and public realm
- Unlocking stalled development and regeneration schemes
- Delivery of public and green spaces.

Impact: Draft Business Case demonstrates good value for money and deliverability with quantifiable benefits exceeding £350m.

Non quantifiable benefits include housing delivery and enhanced sustainable travel provision, better public spaces, improved community wellbeing and cohesion, addressing deprivation and continued regeneration.

Aims to put Belfast on a similar basis to English Core Cities and provide a growth premium for Northern Ireland.

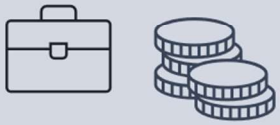
Belfast generates growth

Belfast has a vital role to play as a centre for commerce, culture, tourism, recreation, entertainment, learning and employment. Investment and regeneration of the city centre can drive both economic and social benefits that are felt across the entire city and the wider region.

Unlocking the Belfast Agenda ambitions will deliver…



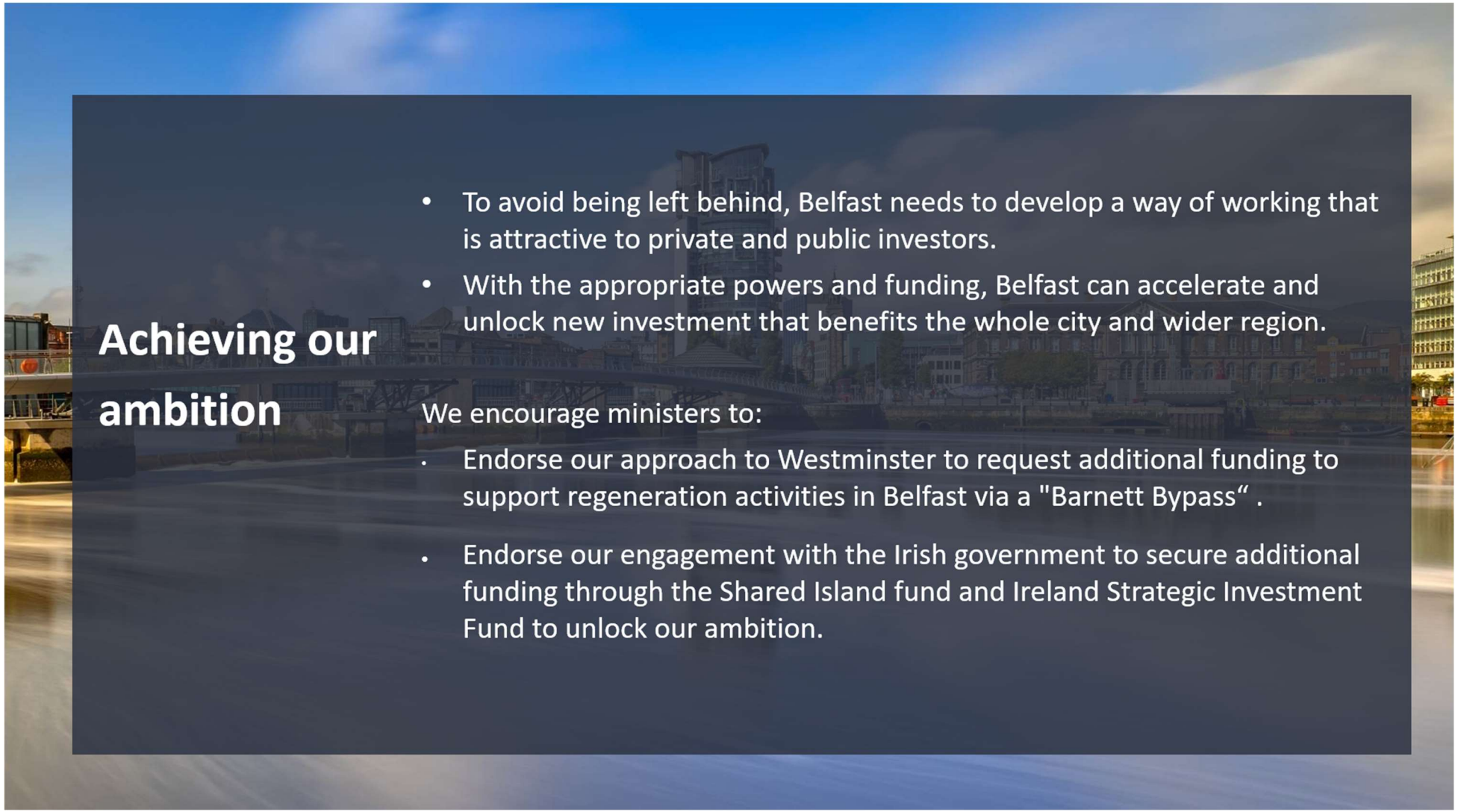
11,500 new homes in the city core will raise **£11.7m additional domestic rates income each year and up to 2,300 affordable homes**



£2.5bn GVA added to the regional economy each year from 66,000 additional employees supported



Spending by additional employees in the city core would result in **£318m additional expenditure annually** on goods and services



Achieving our ambition

- To avoid being left behind, Belfast needs to develop a way of working that is attractive to private and public investors.
- With the appropriate powers and funding, Belfast can accelerate and unlock new investment that benefits the whole city and wider region.

We encourage ministers to:

- Endorse our approach to Westminster to request additional funding to support regeneration activities in Belfast via a "Barnett Bypass“ .
- Endorse our engagement with the Irish government to secure additional funding through the Shared Island fund and Ireland Strategic Investment Fund to unlock our ambition.