

How To Use This Workbook

As Kate Raworth reminds us, complex things don't go away if we ignore them. We also know that an extensive, long form Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait dashboard packed with all the data, spreadsheets and methodologies will never be devoured in full by everyone (whilst we also have no doubt others of you will make yourselves right at home there).

Therefore, we invite you to explore this overview of the different ingredients from the first ever Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait here in Ladywood, Birmingham UK. With a spread for each chapter, these are there to give you a window into a wider picture. We hope you are able to get a lot from this document on its own, but the full dashboard is accessible with links on each page throughout this workbook to go deeper. Please explore with curiosity and creativity as you wish, moving towards the parts that speak to you or that you can envision formulating into action in your contexts.

Now it's your turn to redraw the economy with us on any part of this workbook. Make notes about what comes up as you look through. What ideas resonate and how might you take them off the page? Feel liberated to circle these to remind yourself, or as a way to share them with others, rather than being precious. You could also use it for making grocery lists or anything else, as the roots of economics is household management, after all! No matter what marks you make, we hope you enjoy your time spent within these pages.

Share your notes and sketches at [#NeighbourhoodDoughnut](https://twitter.com/NeighbourhoodDoughnut) and be sure to join the DEAL platform at: doughnuteconomics.org to connect with the community of renegade economists all around the globe.



Contents

INTRODUCTION

Historical & Current Context

2

ABOUT THE DOUGHNUT

Introduction to The Doughnut, Doughnut Economics & DEAL

6

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Welcome To Ladywood, Birmingham

8

CAN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD(S) GET INTO THE DOUGHNUT?

Introduction To The Four Lenses

10

HOW WE ORGANISE

The Matters & Crafts of Regenerative Organising

11

UNROLLING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DOUGHNUT

12 *Unrolling The Doughnut*
16 *Community Portrait of Place*
24 *Data Portrait of Place*
36 *Rerolling The Doughnut*

12

THOSE ALREADY GETTING US INTO THE DOUGHNUT

The Good News of B16

40

REIMAGINING ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES

16 Vision Essays

42

THE SCALE OF THE CHALLENGE

A Role For Everyone

44

WAYS FORWARD:

CIVIC SQUARE 2023-2030
– *Neighbourhood Doughnut*
– *Regenerative Infrastructure*
– *Neighbourhood Transitions*

46

BIG TEAMING

Co-Authorship & Gratitude

51

AN INVITATION

The Revolution Starts On Our Doorstep

53

REFERENCES

Dig Into The Data Portrait of Place

54

TOOLS

Let's Work In The Open

57



The numbers used throughout this document are photographs of metal door numbers in our neighbourhood; a small way to highlight the values of proximity, paying attention and appreciating what we discover together at the scale of our homes, streets and neighbourhoods, no matter where it takes us.

“We must understand where missions have come from, and why, and thus what they might be good for — and not so good for. Step zero, or even -1, is perhaps the most important of all.”

— Dan Hill, *Designing Missions*



Introduction

A warm welcome to the first Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait, as we celebrate the first three years spent collectively exploring the ideas of *Doughnut Economics* in the neighbourhood we call home: Ladywood, Birmingham UK.

The Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait is a community and data snapshot of our neighbourhood, co-created with neighbours and partners, enabling us to see a picture of ourselves — the challenges, opportunities, beauty, joy, dreams, data and stories of our place; who we

are, what we need to do to transform, who we could be, and what bold goals we are working towards. It seeks to act as a shared dashboard and open source compass to help us navigate together.

At the heart of this document and enquiry, as part of our wider work to date, is a key question:

“How can our neighbourhood become a thriving place, that is home to thriving people, whilst respecting the wellbeing of all people, and the health of the whole planet?”

Throughout this document we explore how we unrolled the doughnut framework and started to unpack this question in a range of participatory, qualitative, quantitative and creative ways with a bold movement of renegade economists, at the scale of their homes, streets and neighbourhoods.

This is a synthesis of where we are now. It is a fragment of the story so far and a record of our work to date, rather than an attempt to provide definitive solutions or answers. Explore the Portrait as a site of experimentation, a source of tools to pick up and a blueprint for a way forward, with the full Portrait available at: bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait.



Early Context

In 2018, Kate Raworth — author of *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist* — accepted an invitation to visit Impact Hub Birmingham, after one of the then Impact Hub Birmingham team had reached out to Kate on Twitter. We shared how inspired, curious and energised that we — a group who were yet to understand themselves as budding renegade economists — had been by the clarity and possibility of the ideas in the book.

Since 2011, Impact Hub Birmingham — which had grown from the city’s TEDxBrum movement — had been experimenting, nurturing and deeply believing in the fundamental idea that people were a foundational part of how we, as a city, were able to tackle our deepest, most entangled and complex 21st century social and ecological challenges.

Through a range of projects, experiments, movements and partners (in particular 00, Open Systems Lab, MAIA and Dark Matter Labs), people were beginning to courageously demonstrate what this could look like: from housing and land, to childcare, cultural infrastructures and intergenerational futures.

There was no shortage of movement, practice, creativity, energy, belief, or ideas. There was, however, a growing understanding of deeply entrenched systems, cultures, rules, norms and narratives that were truly suppressing these futures.

In 2018 and 2019, people of all ages were excited and curious whenever we shared our work and ideas around a new shape of the economy; whether that be in a systems workshop or over a cup of tea in our cafe.

Simultaneously, we witnessed communities, cities and entire nations all over the world sharing a similar enthusiasm for the simple beauty of the Doughnut framework, and the potential it has to create a new shape and story. Quite simply, we listened to this and started to explore more deeply. Honestly, it was difficult not to.



“Around the planet, we’re feeling the consequences of outdated institutions and inadequate infrastructures incapable of coping with planetary-scale challenges. We believe in taking on these challenges via a new, civic economy.”

— Dark Matter Labs



Current Context

The pandemic exposed the limits of our current institutional infrastructures, such as healthcare and social care, to deal with globalised crisis. The accelerated injustice and inequity revealed things we knew, or had long suspected, about the interconnectedness of our 21st century challenges and the mutuality of vulnerability they bring.

Today we are seeing how multiple globalised systems are entangled in ways that have cascading impacts on society and the natural world we rely on. This global “polycrisis” affects every aspects of our lives.

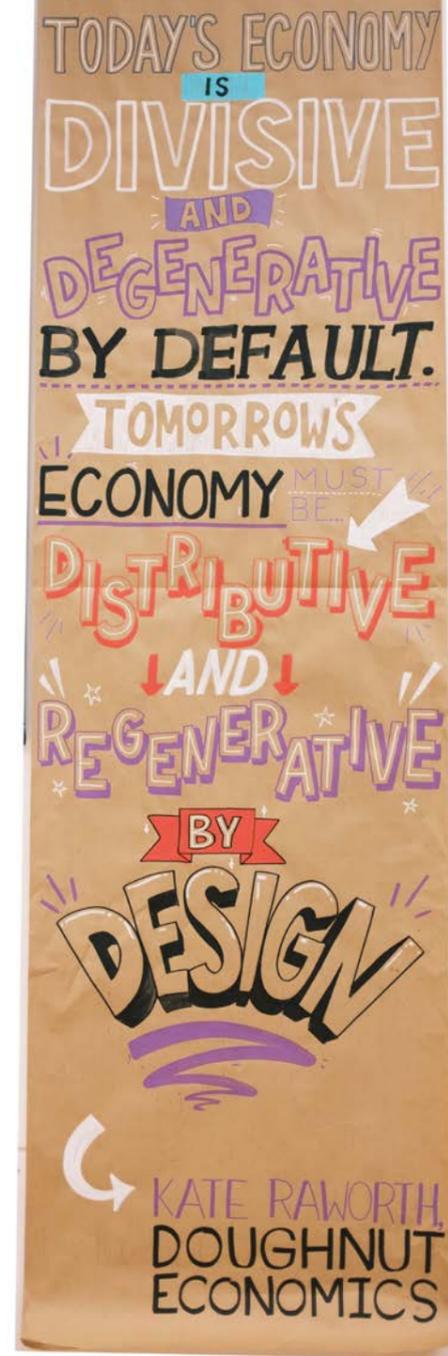
Movements, stories and organising for new economic possibilities are nurtured, demonstrated, and crafted through everyday actions. Our homes, streets and neighbourhoods can help to alleviate our grief and sense of powerlessness; they are the foundations of the hopeful, creative, just transition we know is in our hearts.

Approaches from the neighbourhood up are not only a moral imperative, nor simply a “nice to have” or a way to consult on decisions that have already been made. Our neighbourhoods are a fundamental unit of change that we need to understand, without which we will render

ourselves unable to meet the challenges of this century. Just as the founding of the NHS brought national and regional infrastructure, but also required crucial democratic access to healthcare at the neighbourhood level through GPs, and as public libraries and social housing movements acted as a means to distribute access to knowledge and safety, such is true for 21st century transition infrastructure to be built at the scale of our streets and neighbourhood in this time of deep transformation. These are the drivers that carry this Portrait forward, and we invite you to carry these words with you as you explore this picture painted by many people.

“Perhaps the astonishing changes of the past equip us to imagine that more lie ahead, and not to confuse the inability to imagine a future with the impossibility of having one.”

— Rebecca Solnit



About The Doughnut

eco-home

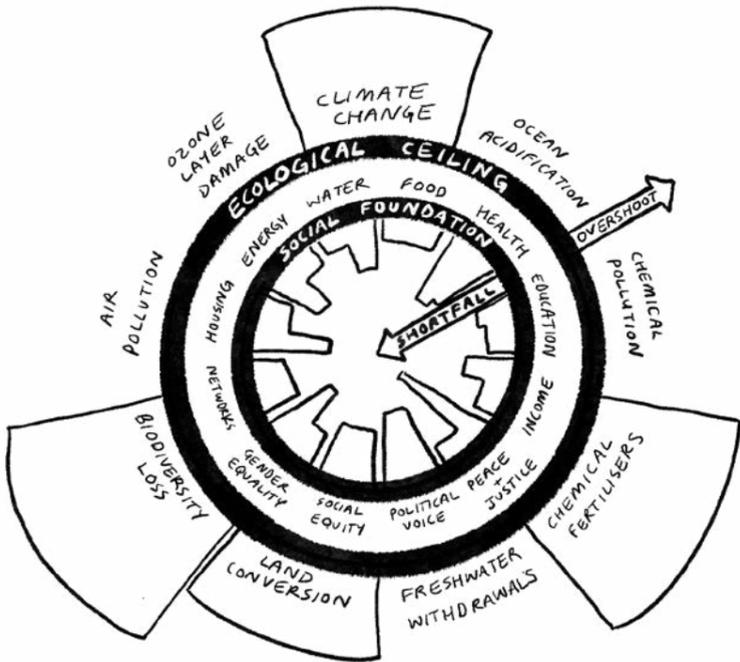
-nomos
rules and norms

economics
the art of household management

¹ **The Doughnut** proposes a vision of what it means for humanity to thrive in the 21st century.

² **Doughnut Economics** explores the mindset and ways of thinking that may help us to get us there.

³ **Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL)** positions *Doughnut Economics* amongst an emerging global movement of new economic thinking and doing.



"THE MOST POWERFUL TOOL IN ECONOMICS IS NOT MONEY, OR ALGEBRA. IT IS A PENCIL. BECAUSE WITH A PENCIL YOU CAN REDRAW THE WORLD."
— Kate Raworth

The Doughnut offers a compass for the 21st century, setting us the goal to find a way for the economy to thrive in between two concentric circles; a safe and just space for humanity to prosper within the means of the living planet.

The outer ring — aka the ecological ceiling — represents the planetary boundaries: Earth's life-supporting systems, as defined by the Stockholm Resilience Centre. These are what we need to protect and not collectively overshoot.

The inner ring represents the social foundation; the essentials such as health, education, housing and equity, as defined by the Sustainable Development Goals. In the middle of the Doughnut is the proportion of people that fall below the social foundation, lacking access to these essentials.

Between these two sets of boundaries lies a space that is both ecologically safe and socially just, inviting a new story of what it means to thrive in balance. This new shape for the economy is one we get to co-create. In fact, doing so is the challenge of our generation.

thriving
adj.

successful, healthy and strong

See also:
flourish, prosper, grow, develop, bloom, blossom

(At least) Seven ways to think like a 21st century economist

Doughnut Economics introduces seven transformations that we need to make in our thinking to move towards an economic mindset fit for the challenges and opportunities of this time. Liberatory in the invitation, these were given as *at least* seven ways, to be explored, added to and expanded creatively and contextually.

Taking the ideas off the page and into action

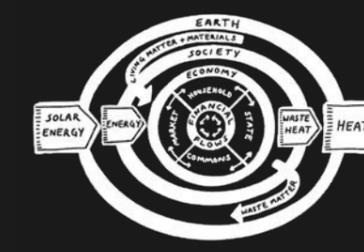
In our particular context at CIVIC SQUARE, the work and ideas of *Doughnut Economics* have intersected in four main ways in our work over the last five years:

- ¹ The doughnut as a compass for a 21st century neighbourhood
- ² A movement and emerging field of new economic possibility
- ³ Open learning, experimentation and sharing in the commons
- ⁴ The Doughnut as an organising framework



Change The Goal

From GDP growth to the Doughnut



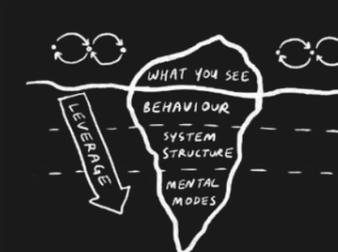
See The Big Picture

From self-contained market to embedded economy



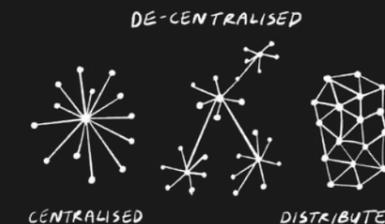
Nurture Human Nature

From rational economic man to social adaptable humans



Get Savvy With Systems

From mechanical equilibrium to dynamic complexity



Design To Distribute

From 'growth will even it up again' to distributive by design



Create To Regenerate

From 'growth will clean it up again' to regenerative by design



Be Agnostic About Growth

From growth-addicted to growth-agnostic

How will you take the ideas off the page?

Doughnut Economic Action Lab (DEAL) do not see themselves as the movement, but *part* of a broader movement of thinking and doing around the world mobilising around economic transformation.

They are focused on action and always learning through experimentation.

Explore the DEAL platform and join the community at: doughnuteconomics.org



Our Neighbourhood

"It could be that the neighbourhood, not the individual, is the essential unit of social change. If you're trying to improve lives, maybe you have to think about changing many elements of a single neighbourhood, in a systematic way, at a steady pace."

— David Brooks

"I have a personal dream that something will happen on the Loop and have for a long time, so don't stop believing that something is there, and don't give up on it."

"Ladywood is a tough, loud crowd."

"I was thinking about my neighbourhood and how much I don't know anyone."

CIVIC SQUARE sits in the heart of Birmingham B16, in Ladywood, in the middle of two voting boundaries. It is surrounded by many different communities and geographies that are fluid and shifting, as well as deep and historical. People connect and relate in many different ways to this place; to the canals, the large bodies of water, to their own childhood experiences, a single street or estate or a whole area. There is no single people-defined neighbourhood to draw a hard boundary around.

In a range of ways, Ladywood exemplifies many inner city areas. Its proximity to the city centre often masks what the data shows about under-investment in the area. The social disparity is often purposely hidden by the inclusion of data from the extremely wealthy city core, making the lack of neighbourhood infrastructure less evident.

"I want more recognition of Black communities' contributions to Ladywood."

"I worked in this school, I was there for 3 days and on the second day I push through the door and the lady said 'same as yesterday' to me. [...] This made my coffee the best thing ever because I already felt part of something. I wasn't a foreigner anymore."

"Our street is quite an amazing little microcosm of Birmingham."

"This is the first time I actually feel at home."

"We come down on the days we go to the food bank because the kids have started saying: 'We want to go to the saiboot!'"

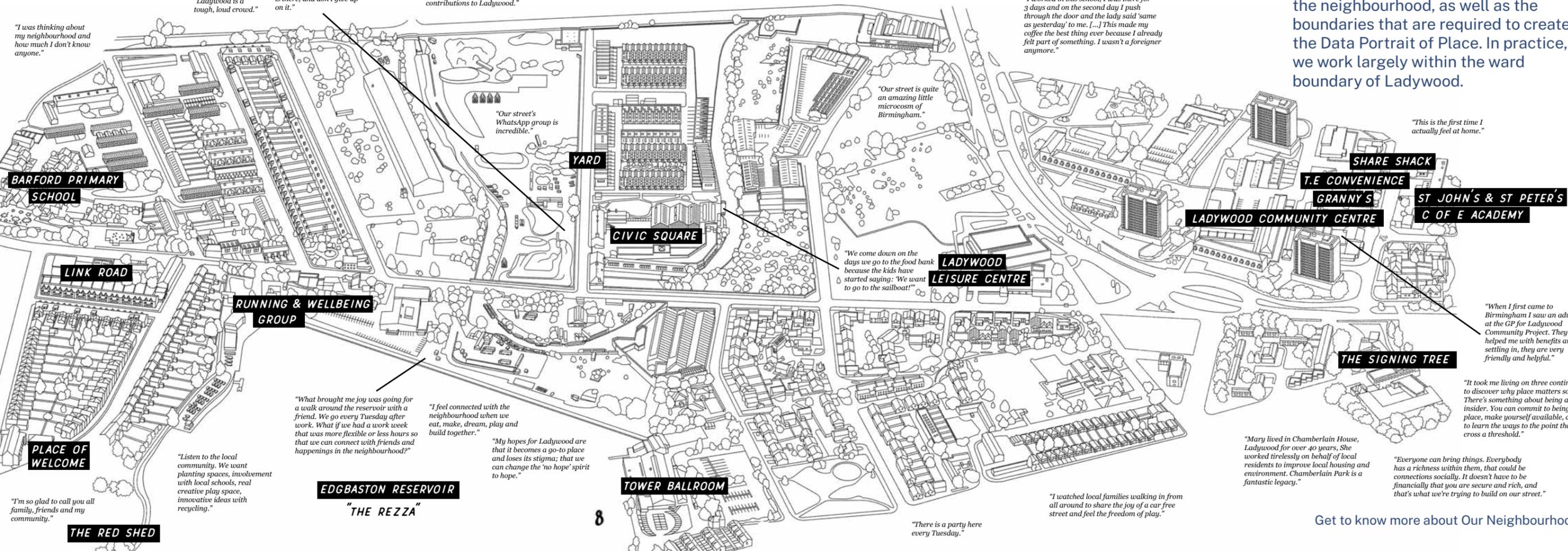
"When I first came to Birmingham I saw an advert at the GP for Ladywood Community Project. They helped me with benefits and settling in, they are very friendly and helpful."

"Mary lived in Chamberlain House, Ladywood for over 40 years. She worked tirelessly on behalf of local residents to improve local housing and environment. Chamberlain Park is a fantastic legacy."

"Everyone can bring things. Everybody has a richness within them, that could be connections socially. It doesn't have to be financially that you are secure and rich, and that's what we're trying to build on our street."

"I watched local families walking in from all around to share the joy of a car free street and feel the freedom of play."

"There is a party here every Tuesday."



We have learned a lot by not using ourselves as a centre point, but encouraging starting from where you are; recognising the assets and potential for change, defining what the word *neighbourhood* means to you, and practically working at multiple scales: from household, to street, to neighbourhood.

In this Portrait, we recognise the balance between the endless plurality of lived experiences in the neighbourhood, as well as the boundaries that are required to create the Data Portrait of Place. In practice, we work largely within the ward boundary of Ladywood.



The one min, five min and 20 minute neighbourhood, as framed in Dan Hill's work, builds on a global movement towards putting attention on neighbourhood infrastructure in the era of climate breakdown.

CIVIC SQUARE is located at the heart of an ex-industrial site within an emerging 'new neighbourhood' development. For the most part, in our first three years we have focused on a 20 minute active travel radius, as well as the areas where our neighbours and collaborators live or are most rooted.

There is no one scale that's correct, or holds the solution to the entangled and interdependent challenges we face. However, in our experience, these definitions help to define a certain breadth of everyday experience, identify the access to infrastructure, and understand a distributive by design networked neighbourhood.

From the school playground to our front gardens and local wildlands, proudly standing alongside partners doing amazing work, we'd like to focus on what it means to look at where energy, work, assets and space already exist in our neighbourhoods and what roles there are for us all to play there.



Can Our Neighbourhood(s)

Our mission is for our neighbourhood to be a safe, just and thriving place for all. To help us explore how to make this a reality, DEAL created the Doughnut Unrolled concept. This gives us four lenses that enable us to explore the interplay between local aspirations and global responsibilities in the neighbourhood, both ecologically and socially.

Get Into The Doughnut?

How can our neighbourhood become a thriving place, that is home to thriving people, whilst respecting the wellbeing of all people and the health of the whole planet?

We can break this question down into the four lenses as recommended in the DEAL methodology, exploring each in depth, as well as their interdependences.



Ecological



Social



Our Neighbourhood



The World

Ecological Ceiling — Earth's Capacity

How can this place be as generous as the wildland next door?

How can we respect the health of the whole planet?

How can all of the people in this place thrive?

How can we respect the wellbeing of all people?

Social Foundation — Human Needs

The lenses are a way to start conversations, identify creative entry points, build a Community and Data Portrait of Place, design immersive experiences, discover existing actions and make connections between these, as well as finding leverage points for transformative action, and so much more.



How We Organise

“E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G—is connected. The soil needs rain, organic matter, air, worms and life in order to do what it needs to do to give and receive life. Each element is an essential component. Organizing takes humility and selflessness and patience and rhythm while our ultimate goal of liberation will take many expert components..”

—Adrienne Maree Brown
Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds

Fundamentally, the idea that how we organise is just as important as what we organise is at the heart of our philosophy. Where possible across all of our work — from governance to procurement, language to storytelling — we seek to experiment with and structurally embed regenerative principles into our theory of organising, and share the learnings across our ecosystem of partners and the field of configurations for complex system change.

Over the last three years, three fundamental properties have emerged that have been fundamental in our work;

Dream Matter: Going beyond today, the current systems and limitations, imagining bold radical futures, over the long time.

Dark Matter: Demystifying, making visible and designing anew the structures, norms and deep codes of existing systems.

Everyday Matter: Making the work relevant, noble, practical, relevant, legitimate and open.

We describe practices from our initial co-design period as a series of ‘crafts’; things to be manifested and woven together. These ‘crafts’ are skills, values, activities and ways of being and knowing, not fixed truths. We can apply these crafts anywhere. We need to develop them in ourselves and respect them in others. We have learnt over and over that we have to return to some of them in order to course correct, or to spread the practice beyond ourselves.



Grounding

A humble, supportive, critical space to return to, to (re)discover, (re)design and (re)establish value, and ground back in to the mission.



Starting Where We Are

Getting our own home in order, centring the neighbourhood, the existing expertise and ideas of its histories, wisdom and assets.



Research, Reframe

A space to keep interrogating and shaping the scope of the work, and continually reframe the challenge from deficit to opportunity.



Making Visible, Reimagining

Collectively making visible the best of what already exists, revealing, surfacing, platforming, celebrating as we go.



Nurturing Collective System Consciousness

Building collective consciousness of the system through data, research, mapping and dialogue to grow shared understanding.



Taking Shared Action

Crafting a series of civic experiments as intentional proofs of possibilities that build on the energy and what has surfaced.



Invest, Accelerate, Spread

Crafting deep demonstrators for transition to regenerative neighbourhoods that sit at the sweet spot of people and planet.



Repair, Maintain, Hospice

What do we need in order to steward the loss of that which no longer serves us, from ideas and infrastructures, to practices and mental models.



Embedded Design, Storytelling & Working in the Open

A continual creative, embodied, everyday and strategic craft.

WHAT OTHER CRAFTS WOULD YOU ADD?



Unrolling The Neighbourhood Doughnut

“Both hard and soft evidence is used, thereby avoiding the common trap of giving preference to the quantitative above all else, which is especially dangerous when working in areas of knowledge where reliable measurements do not yet exist or data is overwhelming.”

— Helsinki Design Lab, *Recipes for Systemic Change*

On the previous page, we shared some guiding questions and the four lenses we use to unpack such large questions as “who are we?”, “what do we need to transform?”, “who could we be?” and “what bold goals are we working towards?”

The DEAL platform talks about these four lenses as helpful and connected starting points in crafting and co-creating Portraits of Place.

Why a Portrait? What could a Neighbourhood ‘Portrait’ be?

We found this framing from DEAL helpful, and asked them about their reasons. What resonated with us and our experiences coming into this work was a number of key ideas you can draw from.

A Neighbourhood Portrait is like painting a picture of yourself or your place. It can be artistic, and reflect the place expressively, conceptually and at different degrees of detail, precision and range of vantage points.

There is no limit to how many portraits you can create of a place; many can exist from different perspectives and starting points. They don’t have to be one hundred percent accurate to be valid, and they don’t have to be perfect.

Instead, they can capture the essence of an idea, they can be co-created with many people and they can centre many different bodies, types of knowledge and form.

The stories, links, connections and disconnections between them can be weaved together, perhaps allowing us to glimpse the “hologram of humanity, ever changing in the light” that Kate talks about in *Doughnut Economics*.

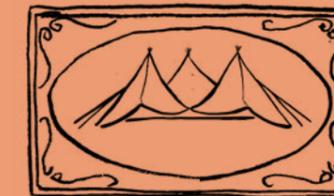
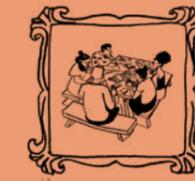
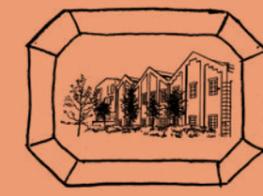
Making a system visible in ways which we can all relate to can be incredibly powerful in order for a system to understand itself, to understand each other’s perspectives, see the system from different vantage points, celebrate its strengths and identify where it is not doing so well.

From there, it can identify its challenges and opportunities, or, as the Doughnut would say, its ‘shortfall’ and ‘overshoot’. What happens in the constant co-creation, re-creation and updating of this Portrait? What happens when you say to the world “this is who we are”, “this is what we think

is possible”, “this is what we understand about our place”, and “these are our dreams”?

What happens when you combine this with the tools and platforms to take action, and the creative confidence and agency to see this in the grand scale of our planetary challenges?

You can have a compass and collective goals, but you can also measure how well you are doing — whether that be if culture is thriving, or air quality is improving — through asking about the gaps and finding ways to colour them in together.



These are some of the more recent, ongoing questions that we’re excited to explore together.

At this stage, we have approached our Portrait in three main ways: some deeply aligned with the DEAL framework, some looser and interconnected.



Community Portrait of Place

As we have progressed on the journey, we have focused on the many entry points that are creative, immersive and experimental. We have built on our learnings every week over the past three years. At this stage of organising the portrait is more about stories and a methodology, that begins to outline these typologies of entry point, and why we chose them. It is not yet necessarily plotted against the four lenses of the Doughnut Unrolled, or a deep synthesis of the learnings.

Working with neighbours of all ages from our neighbourhood, as well as interested people across the city and country and other people, exploring at this scale around the world, has meant the term ‘community’ is broad and plural for us, whilst also being used synonymously with ‘neighbourhood’ is this Portrait.

Data Portrait of Place

The Data Portrait of Place is more directly derived from the most recent launch of the DEAL methodology and associated tools in February 2022. In April 2022, the Climate Action Leeds team launched the Leeds Doughnut, and this was a game-changer for our work.

A multi-disciplinary team who had unrolled their doughnut, with researcher for each lens for their April in person launch, they shared something that we could touch see and feel. We were privileged to deeply connect with the team, and build a research collective together with Catriona Rawsthorne, Irena Bauman and Jenni Brooks to take the Neighbourhood Doughnut data portrait further.

Deep Demonstration

Our streets bring together the big picture, our bold goals, expansive dreams, immediate everyday challenges and opportunities, as well as the experience of crisis, mutual aid, and barriers to these, which manifest in a way that we can interact with, share in and feel the effects of.

Demonstrators, such as getting our street in the Doughnut or the building of 21st century regenerative civic infrastructure, are where the Community Portrait of Place and Data Portrait of Place come together into practice. Through deep, practical demonstration, all of these things can converge in bold and transformative depth, with nimble feedback loops of design to research to practice, and iterate together in a rapidly changing context, drawing upon many wisdoms and experiences that are grounded in the everyday.





Community Portrait of Place



Part of our strategy and hope for CIVIC SQUARE was to be a part of, and nurture, a creative and participatory community: a living ecosystem with a multitude of entry points for practising the collective futures we were imagining, and what the challenges all around us were calling for us to transition into.

Through continued iterative design and exploring this topic every day, we have learned so much about the role that building community plays at all scales. Moreover, we have learned how nurturing this ecosystem not only builds trust, relationships and social capital through shared experiences, but can serve as a space to invite co-authorship and contributions into the Community Portrait of Place, thus enriching this body of knowledge as a

shared resource for all.

Working in this way, deeply embedded in the everyday lives of people, with real care, means that we are always responsive to where we can practically add value to people's everyday lives in real time by inviting them to participate, whilst handling this contextual "warm data" sensitively. The development of our methodology for the co-authorship of the Community Portrait of Place requires us to continually think about the ways we can build in reciprocal practice and protocols for consent and contribution.

Over time we have built trust and relationships, as well as a deeper knowledge of place. We have refined these practices, and as the Data Portrait matured and the body of research developed,

we began to develop connections to participation design through regular events, activities and programming. This was the start of creating more natural feedback loops between the Community and Data Portrait, and exploring concepts such as neighbourhood science to connect them together. Over three years, we have sought to create many entry points that bridge across our everyday experiences and different ideas of what alternatives could look, feel and even taste like, as well as making systems visible.

The following pages offer a short glimpse into some of the different methods of organising that have emerged so far. While it's possible to layer the four lenses onto these designed activities, we took an approach that deliberately didn't

centre every activity around Portrait building. This was so we could maintain the integrity of relationships and avoid experiences feeling extractive. Instead, we responded when interest was bubbling up and used multiple tools to make visible the four lenses and other connected ideas of Doughnut Economics for people to gravitate towards.



"It's brought me joy this week to be in this open space talking to others; meeting new people. Earlier this week I spent time with family members I have not seen for years at a very sad occasion, but connecting was good."

— Neighbour at Break Bread, our weekly Front Room community lunch

"From everyday extraordinary participation to grand, unforgettable experiences, we are nurturing civic agency and creativity through programming, events and shared experiments that are created, co-created and grown collectively. At the heart of our Creative + Participatory Ecosystem of practice is the democratisation of our capacity to dream, create, participate, and imagine together. This dynamic area of our work gives form to the mission and builds the deep trust, cultures, and environments for transformative work."

— CIVIC SQUARE, Vision & Strategy (2019)



Imaginative Bold Convening

Through a number of larger scale online and in-person festivals, we gathered thinkers, doers and visionaries from across the neighbourhood to share bold ideas — often over food, music and with play encouraged throughout — with the aim of inspiring, giving a call to action and offering a deep boost of hope. Over the last 10 years of organising larger events such as TEDxBrum and festivals such as City Camp Brum, we know that these moments are crucial to reground us in the bigger picture, and to draw inspiration from a range of stories.



Everyday Extraordinary

We hosted a range of everyday entry points that were regular and reliable, with a low barrier to entry. They centred participation as the only principle, coupled with deep listening to allow insights and learnings to emerge gently. Consistency formed the foundation of our organising; the anchor of having the kettle on for anyone to drop by at The Floating Front Room week to week, or co-building structures such as the grow room as a metaphor for the shape of the new economy. Twice-weekly rhythms like Room to Grow connected us with everyday ecological care. Other staples were Cotch Club, an intimate film night exploring films themed around climate justice, and Break Bread, an open weekly neighbourhood lunch.



Beyond School Learning

*Soup!
Brings me joy
oh + cake as well*



Through a weekly Doughnut After School Club over the school year, as well as holiday clubs across the summer, winter and half term breaks, we are introducing the idea of the neighbourhood as a school, where learning can happen anywhere. We focused on sharing the ideas of Doughnut Economics in fun, imaginative and creative ways, as well as listening to and observing what resonated. Over the course of the year we ran 36 sessions with 84 children across two primary schools. We had grow room builds at each site, and in this first year we found that soil and worms were what captured imaginations the most!



Immersive Experiences

Neighbourhood Quests are a playful, immersive, gamified way of exploring the neighbourhood more widely. They enable us to go beyond the natural patterns, geographies and places we experience in our everyday lives. Using an app such as Goosechase, these interactive experiences are an unexpected and rapid way of generating data and research. We used immersive experiences in many ways; workshops (workshop on a walk) and boatshops (workshop on a boat) around the four lenses, and around specific topics like air pollution, biological inequity and noise pollution. Play was central to this type of organising. Interactive games like Daybreak, Climania and Firestarter all offered ways to get moving, be out in nature, interact with one another and the neighbourhood, and explore these complex ideas in joyful ways.



Co-creation Weeks

The Neighbourhood Doughnut Co-creation Weeks were the most intentionally anchored and deeply designed experiences connected to co-authoring our Neighbourhood Portrait, and instrumental in our Community Portrait of Place in particular. They were always held during the school holidays so that they could be intergenerational and happened every three months, giving the space to build on and compound what had surfaced in the last. They were practical, themed and about literally and metaphorically getting to grips with the ideas of a regenerative and distributive-by-design neighbourhood. They were mostly held outdoors, in all weathers, in different spaces – from parks and front gardens to the to-be-developed industrial warehouse site of CIVIC SQUARE – to highlight that starting where you are can look like all sorts of things and building together is often messy, imperfect and emergent.



Great Big Green Week

Down To Earth

Following on from learnings from Grounding week, we zoomed in to soil as the natural element that could help to heal all nine planetary boundaries of life's earth supporting systems. Activities included a subpod co-build and superworm storytelling with Pyn Stockman.



Peer-To-Peer Learning Journeys

We co-designed a peer-to-peer learning journey with DEAL and Huddlecraft to give a deep dive into the ideas of *Doughnut Economics* over 12 months, with 12 hosts, and more than 100+ peers around the world. The intention was to learn from others working at a similar scale to us, and grow this ecosystem together through peer-to-peer learning models. It was an inspiring, immersive year with studio visits, a showcase and more. Learning horizontally as peers is critical for field building through distributed learning.

“This has been such a fantastic week! Thank you CIVIC SQUARE for all your energy & creativity & brilliance putting together such a learning-rich program for us all, kids & adults. We can't thank you enough – we love being part of this community.”

— MegaQuest participant

Books have been an invaluable tool to provide inspiration, ideas and knowledge about a regenerative society and economic systems. We started this year with a deep-dive book club into *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a fundamental text centring indigenous and ecological wisdom. Throughout the year we hosted many book-related events, such as a large neighbourhood book share for readers of all ages to democratically access and circulate books.

Beyond Books



Centre for Alternative Technology

Across 2022, more than 100 neighbours and partners of all ages took part in a series of visits to the Centre of Alternative Technology in Wales. This took us out of our inner city context to see the technology that already exists, spend time in rural nature and dream about what it means to bring bold ideas into the neighbourhood. These types of trips and dreaming together is crucial to activate the imagination and see practical examples of where the future is already here.

“A big thank you for inviting me and other local neighbours to your CAT trip. It was really helpful to get to spend time with you and other team members, and other neighbours and friends. It's so much easier to collaborate and share when we all see each other 'close-up'.”

— Local organiser

In short, anything can be an entry point. We started where we were, with what we were good at. We learned, listened, played, grew more confident and developed our design. This is just the story so far and we will now begin to synthesise these learnings and connect them with the Data Portrait of Place, a next step that we're really excited about.

Co-creation Week #1

Grounding

Grounding week aimed to create ways in which to begin exploring Doughnut Economics, particularly the Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist, building our second neighbourhood grow room, zine-making and space to dream together through making.



Co-creation Week #2

Safe & Just Space

Here we intentionally centred the DEAL enquiry questions and unpacked the 'safe and just space' language and ideas into practical, experimental co-creation. We also opened up the future CIVIC SQUARE site to the public for the first time. Activities included banners, neighbourhood interventions around retrofitting homes and a DIY Doughnut exhibition throughout the studio.



Co-creation Week #3

Neighbourhood Science

This week was deeply linked to the emerging Data Portrait of Place team that was coming together. We looked at the interplay between desk-based research and fieldwork by anyone, and everyone, connected to a place. Activities included four lenses walkshops (walking workshops) where we tested literacy building activities on the topics of lichen, soil, biospheres, energy and water. For this, participants could earn the title of “Land Defender” through the Neighbourhood Quest format.



Co-creation Week #4

A Role For Everyone

By now, a more confident team were seamlessly weaving ideas about the climate crisis, planetary dysregulation, Doughnut Economics, neighbourhood retrofit and the wider societal and political context into our everyday work. This week centred around the planetary scale of this story. Activities included an IPCC Zine Studio, walkshops, paper making, street party, film screening and a roundup of what we'd done so far.



“ Having the opportunity to get involved with *Doughnut Economics* and the Doughnut After School Club with CIVIC SQUARE has been really instrumental for us as a driver to start thinking about our curriculum in a different way.

When we think about the inner part of the Doughnut, I know that quite a few of our children come from very challenging environments where they are at that shortfall edge, and they're seeing some of the difficult choices their families need to make.

At the same time, our children are growing up in a society where the value is still being placed largely onto material goods. Success has been related to how new your car is, or whether you're wearing the latest fashion, and all of that, and so our children are exposed to all of those messages.

Trying to deepen children's understanding of the planetary boundaries – relating to what they are, being able to recognise their own part to play in being able to live within them and what that could look like – is a really important part of our role as educators.

I see my role as educating the citizens of tomorrow, and actually cultivating the values that we want them to go out into the world with, and be aware of, so *Doughnut Economics* plays into that really well for us, and for me personally.

The children really enjoyed the club, and it seems evident to those around them that they've started to understand and think about how their lives intersect with the Doughnut. ”

— Antony Lowe, Barford Primary School

"The future can't be predicted, but it can be envisioned and brought lovingly into being."



— Donella Meadows



Data Portrait of Place



Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL) have crafted a range of tools that anyone can utilise in order to explore what thriving in balance means for the places they live. Expanding from what it means to unroll the Doughnut (pg. 10), DEAL have created the Doughnut Unrolled tool, a concept that takes us into the safe and just space of the Doughnut to see four ‘lenses’. This invites us to look at the interplay between local aspirations and global responsibilities in our place — both socially and ecologically — and identify possible entry points for transformative action.



The four lenses methodology allows us to understand the various aspects that influence and impact upon our lives and our environments. It gives enough space for the wide breadth that each dimension explores, whilst also allowing us to recognise how interconnected and interdependent the lenses, and all the dimensions within them, are.

Though the lenses are separate, their boundaries are porous, and so the concepts remain fluid and mobile. This is an especially useful framing for exploring how various dimensions identified by DEAL materialise in a real place, as well

as exploring how a specific place interacts with the wider global communities and ecosystems it is also a part of.

Our Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place has been created with the neighbourhood of Ladywood, Birmingham UK in focus. It is the first Doughnut Portrait to be shared that interacts with this neighbourhood scale. In practice, as part of this process, it was decided that the data for the local lenses would be based on the neighbourhood scale, while the global lenses connects to the city scale for wider Birmingham.

There were a number of reasons for this decision, including:

- limited availability for data at neighbourhood scale. We would love to expand this together though neighbourhood science activities and using further independently developed tools in future iterations
- downscaling national data to a specific region involves making many assumptions and forms of standardisation, which becomes increasingly inaccurate as the scale becomes smaller

- people living in a neighbourhood may not necessarily work, shop, and be recreational within the same neighbourhood, and are more likely to have movements contained within a city, and will likely be affected by the impacts there.



Through the Data Portrait of Place approach it is possible to explore how our neighbourhood is meeting responsibilities to give a “snapshot” of where the neighbourhood is currently positioned with the Doughnut framework. Upon understanding the status of our current reality across multiple interconnected dimensions, this study can be utilised as a framework and compass for where investment, infrastructure and mobilisation may be necessary in order to transition into the socially just and ecologically safe space, as well as an opportunity to celebrate what

is thriving in balance and where shifts in the right direction have been achieved together over the years to come.

Much of the methodology that has been used to create the Data Portrait of Place has come from developments and learnings from the immense community across the globe held through the Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL). The notable efforts of those at the Cornwall Doughnut, Amsterdam Doughnut, Devon Doughnut, Curaçao Doughnut, Brussels Doughnut, Melbourne Doughnut, Leeds Doughnut and

many more have demonstrated that each iteration can grow the capacity of this work and incorporate more coherence, which creates space for further iteration and sensemaking. As some of the researchers involved in this exercise had previously worked on the Leeds City Doughnut, there has been some continuation in methodology, with some variations and learnings incorporated in this Neighbourhood Doughnut iteration. We give our particular thanks to Catriona Rawsthorne, Irena Bauman and Jenni Brooks for their extensive work.

Although every lens has a different enquiry question and a variety of dimensions that it explores, each one explores a few things consistently, though the structure of the lenses are not limited to these.

These are:

- what **targets** or ambitions a place has set in regard to the dimension
- an **indicator** used to demonstrate how that target can be monitored
- defining a **threshold** for the safe and just space of the dimension
- a status **snapshot** of how Ladywood, Birmingham UK is currently performing
- the neighbourhood’s current **safe and just** status

Explore our findings through the first Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place on the following pages, with more detailed insights and methodology available at the QR codes linked.



Local-Social

How can all the people of this place thrive?

Understanding the social wellbeing of our neighbourhood is foundational to understanding what is necessary in order to achieve a transition into the safe and just space. This lens compares local aspirations and city-level policy to the reality, thereby providing a snapshot of what Ladywood neighbours currently experience in their everyday lives.

The local-social lens is explored through 15 dimensions shown below. Most are drawn from the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs but some, such as culture, have been added by DEAL because they are recognised in many localities to be essential elements of a thriving life. We have also added Access To Nature as a dimension, with further additions proposed on pg. 37.

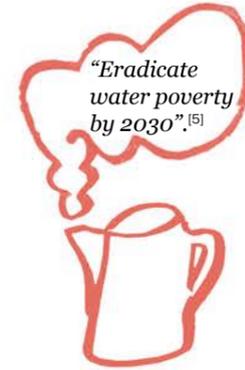
Discover the full Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-data or scanning the QR code.



Target

“Birmingham’s residents will be experiencing a high quality of life, living within attractive and well designed sustainable neighbourhoods.”^[1]

“We want Birmingham to be a city where every citizen can eat an affordable, healthy diet and enjoy their food.”^[3]



“Eradicate water poverty by 2030.”^[5]

“Increase the proportion of Birmingham residents living in high quality, affordable housing which meets their need.”^[7]

“Reduce the number of households in fuel poverty to the national average by 2030.”^[13]



“A city that invests in its people, so that everyone can have opportunities to realise their potential through lifelong learning, skills and good jobs.”^[10]



“Increase the proportion of children in Birmingham attending good or outstanding schools.”^[7]

Community organising is with high confidence in the safe and just space.*

“To ensure that communities have the resources, skills and support to build resilience in their areas.”^[10]

COMMUNITY



SDG 11.4: “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.”

“A fully inclusive digital city, where everyone has the confidence, skills and capacity to access the services and information they need to thrive.”^[15]

“The allocation of road space will change away from prioritising private cars, to support the delivery of public transport and active travel networks fit for a global city.”^[17]

“We want Birmingham to be a city of equal opportunity, where everyone is able to achieve their aspirations, regardless of where they live or grow up.”^[19]

SDG10.2: “We will ensure that everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, including those with protected characteristics.”

“Citizens and communities must be able to participate in setting local priorities and to take action themselves.”^[19]

“A safe and flourishing city.”^[19]



“Create a connected and diverse network of green and open spaces meeting a spectrum of community needs.”^[1]

ACCESS TO NATURE*

Snapshot

HEALTH



In 2022, Ladywood has a median Biological Inequity Index (BII) value of 16, on a scale of 0-20, where 20BII is the highest biological inequity.^[2]

FOOD

Across Birmingham in 2021, 2.3% of adults experienced hunger due to lack of enough food; 11.8% struggled to access food; 12.4% worried about having enough food.^[4]



WATER

In 2022, an average of 6% of households across the Midlands experience water poverty.^[6]



HOUSING

In 2021, 63% of properties in Ladywood constituency (~31,800) had an EPC rating of D or lower.^[8]

ENERGY

In 2019, 23.1% (11,770 households) of the Ladywood constituency were in fuel poverty. Ladywood is the 9th highest constituency for fuel poverty in England.^[9]

26

JOB & INCOME

In 2021, it is estimated that 10% of employee jobs in Ladywood constituency (~20,000 jobs) were earning below the Living Foundation’s Real Living Wage.^[11]



EDUCATION



78% of schools rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.^[12]

However, much community infrastructure to support this organising has been closed down^[13], and therefore, there is high confidence of shortfall.

*For more detail on community organising in Ladywood, the Community Portrait of Place on pg. 14 and Good News of B16 on pg. 38 demonstrate this in great detail.

CULTURE



The underfunding and demolition of culturally significant venues such as Tower Ballroom mean existing space for cultural practice is being lost or limited.^[14]



CONNECTIVITY

Across the West Midlands in 2021, it was found that 5% of people were considered to be digitally excluded.^[16]

MOBILITY



Ladywood constituency was found to have 32km (20miles) of cycle routes, meanwhile there is approximately 159km (99miles) of road.^[18]

SOCIAL EQUITY



63% of the areas in Ladywood fall within the top 10% most deprived areas in England.^[20]

EQUALITY IN DIVERSITY



Ladywood is the 2nd most deprived constituency in Birmingham^[14] but has average earnings of £28,837/annum, indicating an uneven distribution of wealth and resource.^[21]

POLITICAL VOICE



The fundamental challenges of the current political voice landscape encroach on democratic practices such as through the public order bill.^[22]

PEACE & JUSTICE



Criminal justice systems of law enforcement are punitive, therefore any achievement towards this goal must be criticized in its achievement of peace or justice.

Birmingham has over 8,000 acres of green spaces, over 600 parks.^[23]

There is currently no data available for Ladywood Constituency, so further study is required around equity of access.

27

Local-Ecological

This lens takes inspiration from how ecosystems maintain their balance, and how Biomimicry 3.8 (innovation inspired by nature) as an approach can help mitigate damaging impacts of human activities.

How can our neighbourhood be as generous as the wildland next door?

The local-ecological lens is explored through eight dimensions that represent the interconnected ways in which Nature continually generates conditions conducive to life. We have also added seven dimensions (marked with a *) to explore how we can protect and enhance these services.

Discover the full Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-data or scanning the QR code.

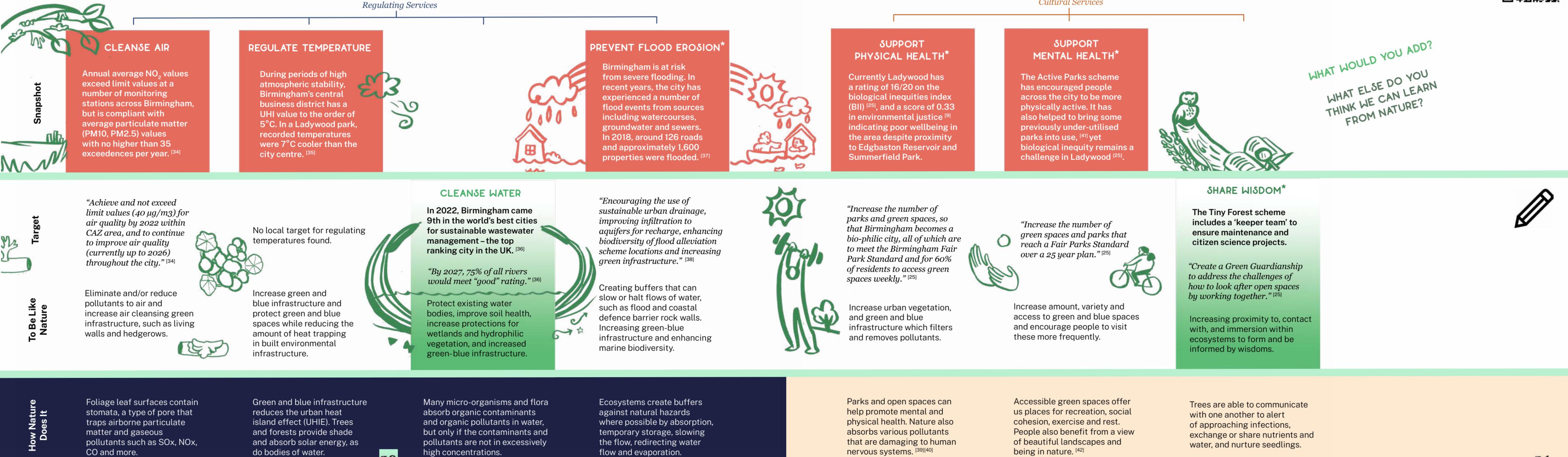


Local-Ecological cont.

Ecology n. *eco-* from Ancient Greek *house* and *-logia* study of
Study of relationships between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment.

Our approach to this lens is concerned with deep ecology, a term coined by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess to indicate that humans are no more important than any other species or natural process, arguing that only a deep transformation of modern society can head off ecological ruin.

Discover the full Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-data or scanning the QR code.



Global-Social

How can our neighbourhood respect the wellbeing of all people worldwide?

Every nation, city or locality has a responsibility to live and act in ways that aim to respect and support – rather than undermine – the ability of other people worldwide to realise these essentials in their own lives.

The dimensions in this lens have traditionally been informed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for which many targets have been adopted. There has been much critique over the SDG’s global north, development and growth centric perspectives, so these have been used where acceptable and with caution in this exercise. We have also added waste as a suggested dimension.

Discover the full Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-data or scanning the QR code.



Target



SDG3: “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing at all ages.”

SDG12.3: *By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.*”

SDG6: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.”

SDG11.1: “By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.”

SDG7: “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, modern energy for all.”

SDG12.5: “By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.”
Birmingham to achieve “40% recycling by 2026; 70% by 2040”.^[27]



SDG8: “Promote full and productive employment and decent work for all.”

SDG4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning and opportunities.”

SDG11: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”

SDG11.4: “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.”

SDG5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”

SDG16.7: “Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.”

SDG16: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all, and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”



Snapshot

HEALTH



From the consumption patterns traced back to Birmingham, there are an annual associated 187 air pollution related mortalities across Asia and 208 across the rest of the world.^[43]

FOOD



We can approximate that Birmingham imported 334,528 tonnes of consumable goods from countries all over the globe in the first half of 2018.^[44]

WATER



The Elan Valley was flooded to provide water for Birmingham in 1890s, resulting in 400+ people displaced. Only landowners were compensated, with others losing ancestral homelands and income.^[45]

HOUSING



Based on 2017 data, operations of residential buildings produce 34% of the city’s emissions, and thereby contribute to climate change.^[46]

ENERGY



Average UK demand across 2021 was 29.3GW, met with fossil fuels comprising 45% (43% oil & gas, 1.8% coal); renewables 28% (wind 22.7% solar PV 4.6%); other energy 26% (nuclear 17.8%, biomass 7%).^[45]

WASTE*



Birmingham currently has a recycling rate of 22%, the worst in the West Midlands. Like the rest of the UK, the city’s recycling traceability is exported internationally, with 39% sent to Turkey, 12% to Malaysia and 7% to Poland in 2020.^[48]



WORK & INCOME



Goods and services imported into Birmingham result in an estimated 30 workplace fatalities and 16,000 injuries a year elsewhere in the world.^[44]



EDUCATION



In 2018, there were more than an estimated 25,000 child labourers in the global supply chains resulting from consumed goods and services in Birmingham.^[43]

COMMUNITY & NETWORKS



The UK’s total remittances in 2013 were £2.2 million, with the primary receiving countries being India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Bangladesh, China, Philippines, Somalia, South Africa, Jamaica, Kenya and Ghana.^[49]

CULTURE



The British Empire’s colonial activity rendered many cultural practices, artefacts and histories lost, looted and / or destroyed.

EQUALITY IN DIVERSITY



This target provides a limited frame of reference for a broad and deep issue, but there is high confidence of shortfall that requires further study and exploration.

POLITICAL VOICE



The UK has a well established democratically mandated precedent of exercising its political voice to the detriment of many groups, particularly migrants and asylum seekers.

PEACE & JUSTICE



The British MOD budget for 2020/2021 was £42.4bn for “operations and peacekeeping”^[50], but 52% of British public oppose military intervention.^[51]

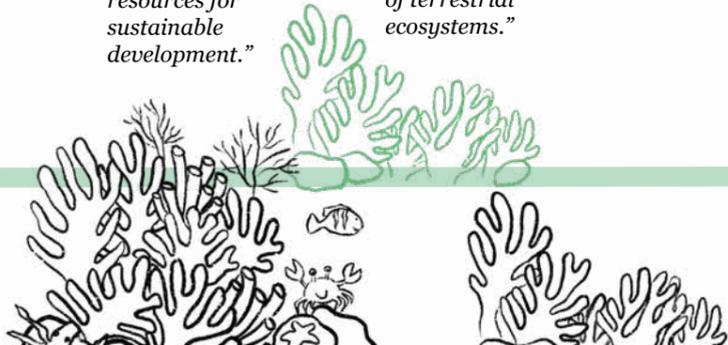
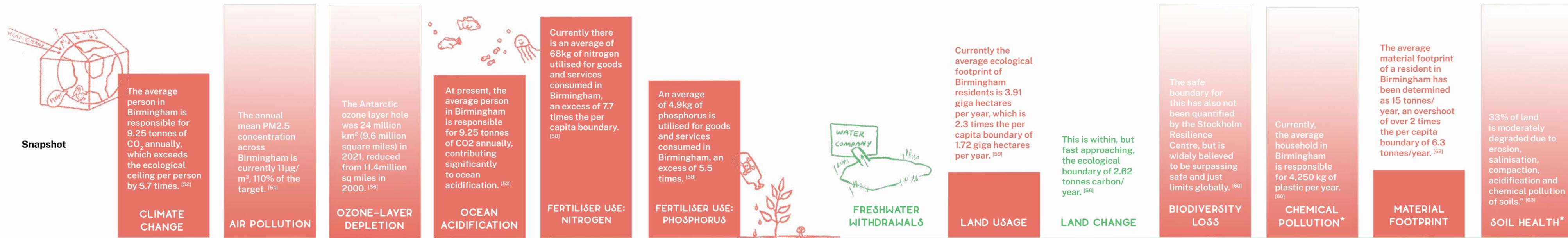
Global-Ecological

How is our neighbourhood respecting the health of the whole planet?

By looking at all Earth systems as a whole, we can understand how planetary dysregulation is a combination of all of these dimensions moving beyond their boundaries and into states of non-linear change and uncertainty.

This lens looks at Birmingham's global responsibility to planetary health. This is explored through nine dimensions known as the planetary boundaries, which protect the critical life-supporting systems of the living world, as defined by Stockholm Resilience Centre. We have also added three other dimensions, (marked with a *) to highlight impacts that are relevant anywhere.

Discover the full Neighbourhood Doughnut Data Portrait of Place by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-data or scanning the QR code.



“Arundhati Roy writes: ‘What lies ahead? Reimagining the world. Only that.’ But that reimagining requires us to assemble the tools now to help people to feel that longing deep in their bones, that aching, pining, for a new economy, a new world, a thrilling new culture.”

— Rob Hopkins

We are currently working on rerolling all four lenses of the Neighbourhood Doughnut, which we'll be excited to share after further experimentation. For now, we have rerolled two lenses to share our Portrait work-in-progress.

Rerolling The Doughnut

From looking at the data, we can say with a fairly high degree of confidence that we are not meeting the needs of our own place, our collective responsibilities to each other or working within ecological boundaries. Whilst this can feel alarming, it's also a chance to look deeply and honestly at where we are, and where we need to get to, knowing that we might have to oppose a lot and, more

importantly, propose and demonstrate a lot more, but that together we are able to do so.

Overwhelmingly, the Community Portrait of Place revealed deep, untapped vision, energy and passion in every corner of the neighbourhood, at a scale that the climate transition and the bold vision of the Doughnut requires of us.

The deeply and actively hopeful part of this Portrait is that there are so many routes in the right direction that have already started to be paved. On a global scale, new technologies are helping us identify what climate mitigation is possible and also a local scale the field of civic power, agency and care is bursting with energy.

From CIVIC SQUARE and our neighbours' collective work in creating a Community Portrait of Place, to others near and far that are reimagining economic possibilities and moving us into the Doughnut, we are all part of a growing, eclectic field of people working towards an economic system fit for the 21st century.

The portrait so far isn't the end of the story; it's the platform to act from.

The green shoots are there, the civic power is growing and the appetite for transformation is urgent. The crises converging on our homes and streets must meet the deep design, frameworks and technology available to us in abundance.

It is now about how we collectively harness this: to continue doing bold work and building legitimacy with care' to demonstrate systemically; work in ecologies of community with a thoughtful urgency, knowing that this is the work that the transition requires of us all, and that our liberation is entangled with one another at a planetary scale.

The stage is set, and the future is ours to make.

Through our Community Portrait of Place we have added some new dimensions that we will unpack and study together in the future.

Interested to turn this into a live dashboard with us? Get in touch, as there is plenty more rerolling cycles to go through together!





GREEN SHOOT'S of a new economy



When describing the route to net zero, Anna Bullen from the Centre of Alternative Technology tells us: “we have all the ideas, we have the technology, we know what to do, we just need to get on with it”. This workbook outlines a journey to understanding that our neighbourhoods are a crucial foundation for this transformation. On a national and global level there are already green shoots of the new economy being rehearsed, where practice and imagination are dancing hand in hand in systemic and everyday ways: often seamlessly weaving them all. We asked ourselves: who is already working to move us into the Doughnut, where are these green shoots, how does their work connect up with ours?



How do we amplify and grow together, whilst learning to hospice and let go of that which is going to hold us all back from thriving? Perhaps, by spotlighting the ways forward, we can increase our sense of hope, confidence and possibility, and more easily leave behind that which no longer serves us.



What if we can find those characters of the new economy all around us; in our homes and on our streets. What if the neighbourhood was the stage for the first act of the twenty-first-century economic play?

How We Organised



If we know that everyday entry points, creativity and storytelling are needed, as well as the agency to act and tell our own stories, and if we know that there are many more actors in the new economy than our current models recognise, then how do we activate our sense of hope, meet the pioneer within ourselves, and the pioneers all over our neighbourhoods? Our curious team of storytellers, designers and newly crowned renegade economists went to meet some of those we had worked alongside and admired from afar in our neighbourhood. Using a canvas that encompassed many questions, we invited the pioneers to not only tell their own stories, but engage with the Doughnut from their own perspective and share their Doughnut dreams. This tool will be uploaded for open source use with instructions and interview guide in late 2023 as part of DEAL platform, and will be linked in our tools chapter of the full Portrait.

“[Seeing the big picture] sets the stage for a twenty-first century economic play – one whose characters and script can help bring us back [from the brink of collapse] and into a thriving balance.”

KATE RAWORTH, DOUGHNUT ECONOMICS



“We’ve got a once in a generation chance to get this right.”

RETROFIT BALSALL HEATH



John Christophers is one of the driving forces behind Retrofit Balsall Heath, a social movement to transform the energy efficiency and aesthetic of the built environment in his hometown. John has been hosting open days at his home zero carbon house in Balsall Heath (which actually performs better than zero carbon) to start conversations about how to retrofit homes across the UK at a community-led level.



“They might not know it but they’re building better futures for themselves.”

MAIA + YARD



MAIA is a Black-led arts and social justice organisation that Amahra Spence and Amber Caldwell co-founded in order to build vital infrastructure and resource artists in their home city of Birmingham.

“I’d like to live in a neighbourhood that dares to dream.”

IRIS BERTZ, BERTZ ASSOCIATES



“Taraki as a word is found in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and it’s part of the verb ‘to progress.’”

SHURANJEET SINGH, TARAKI



For Shuranjeet to address the underlying causes of mental health challenges, he has found that Taraki has to be strategic in creating space for people to self-organise around the redistribution of resources and opportunities. We need to design to re-distribute, and it must be just that - by design.

“Birmingham will be the place they say ‘they did it as a community.’”

KATE SMITH



“We’re here when you need us. We’re along for the journey.”

KARIS NEIGHBOUR SCHEME



Karis has been responding to the needs of people in the neighbourhood since 1997. They set up a befriending service for older people, and in response to the growing number of refugees and asylum seekers being moved to the area, they started support and advocacy sessions, an ESOL class and a ‘Welcome to Ladywood’ drop-in for people new to the area. They also started a BabyBank, and run a benefits advice service. This is just a glimpse of the work that Karis does in the neighbourhood.

Reimagining Economic Possibilities

One of the biggest obstacles to things being different is a failure of imagination.

A failure to imagine a world in which public space and land might be held in common, for purposes beyond the pursuit of profit.

Movements all around the world working to repurpose our economics for the 21st century are vast and growing in breadth, depth, creativity, courage, scale and hope. In our work until now, we have always wished to centre voices from the margins and intersections of practice, spotlight those often missed, search beyond our own dominant viewpoints that are often steeped in global north bias, and a lack of decolonial thinking at the heart of the stories we live within, listen to, and are part of. In a loving way, we have sought to critique elements of the Doughnut, whilst surfacing and sharing the stories and visions of many radical imaginaries in this growing space, working at many scales, to help to inform, broaden and decolonise our own thinking and practice as we move through this

journey together.

To coincide with the launch of the first Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait, and Good News of B16: Doughnut Spotlight Edition, we are launching the Reimagining Economic Possibilities publication, an ongoing open publication to deeply tap into the Dream Matter that we discussed on pg. 9, and continue to listen and learn from those who are dreaming boldly, deeply, imaginatively, creatively and radically beyond current limitations.

The first series brings together 16 commissioned works by visionaries who are reimagining economic possibility from a number of different angles. Explore the collection directly on Medium at: bit.ly/ReimaginingEconomics, or explore them in the context of our full Portrait using the links below.

"Local", "neighbourhood", "community" do not have to mean small or slow.

They can be the infrastructure engines of a new big and bold kind of economic future, one that is collective, regenerative and cares about the longview



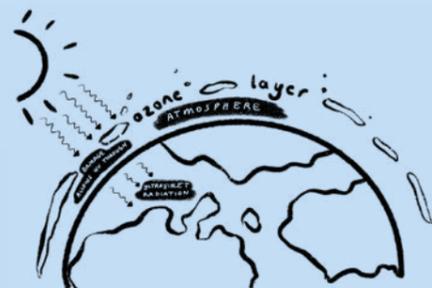
The Scale Of The Challenge

"The existence of goals that helps people envision a future significantly different than present can be one often key difference between decision processes that pursue transformational as opposed to incremental change."

— IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

Working Group II: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, Chapter 17: Decision-making Options For Managing Risk

On these pages we have tried to demonstrate that right here, in our home, streets, and neighbourhoods, there is a deep potential for just, equitable, collective transition. However, our high confidence in this does not come in isolation.



Discover The Scale Of The Challenge in Chapter Nine of our full portrait 44 by going to bit.ly/DoughnutPortrait-09 or scanning the QR code.



How can our neighbourhood become a thriving place, that is home to thriving people, whilst respecting the wellbeing of all people and the health of the whole planet?

The interdependent, entangled, planetary scale of the challenges and opportunities must not be forgotten in pursuit of an isolationist localism. "We are at a crossroads. The decisions we make now can secure a liveable future. We have the tools and know-how required to limit warming," describes IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee.

We have a small and rapidly closing window, but the IPCC shows high confidence in many of the ideas that underpin the work described in this report. We should hold this with deep hope, continually moving towards rapid, bold and imaginative transitions.

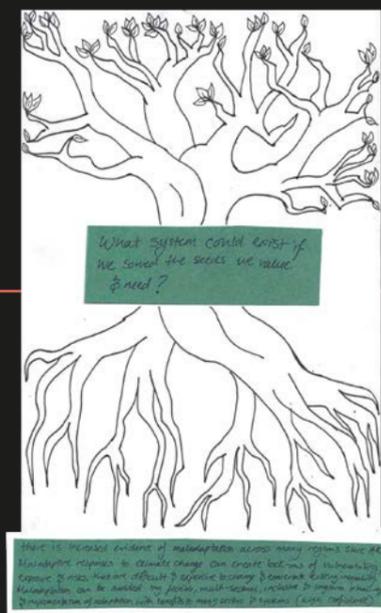
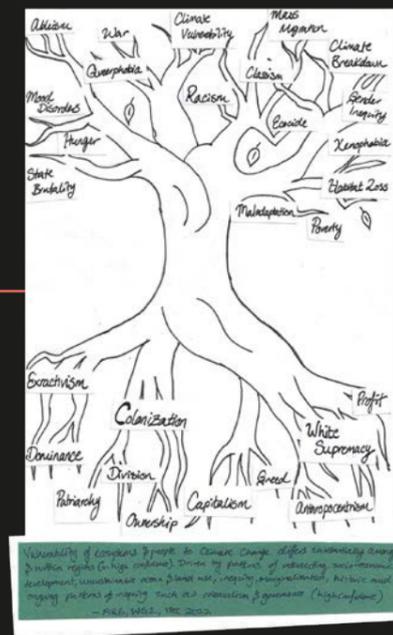
*One such way has been repeated hosting of an IPCC Zine Studio space, an open invitation for anyone to sit, cut, make, draw, chat and unpack the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report together, with a few examples of responses shown right.

Throughout the past year, during our co-creation weeks, we have tested everyday events, street parties and workshops to explore what it means to connect people rooted in a local settings to these planetary scale challenges*. The core idea is that when we create safe and creative spaces, people who have access to the right tools and resources to translate can, and do, wish to engage with the complexity of our planetary challenges. There are multiple ways to connect these to local action that are being taken. We strongly encourage everyone at the scale of the home, streets and neighbourhood to continue creatively, courageously and openly unpacking how to connect to this planetary scale in their community organising.

"Human culture has always had a creative instinct that enables the future to be better dealt with through imagination."

— IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

Working Group III: Mitigation of Climate Change
Chapter 10: Enabling Creative Foresight



"Narratives that help explain where a community is, where it wants to go and how it intends to get there are an important enabler of transformation."

— IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

Working Group II: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability,
Chapter 17: Decision-making Options For Managing Risk

Ways Forward: CIVIC SQUARE 2023-2030

“Systems Demonstrators are more fully-realised and fleshed-out versions of living systems. Nonetheless, they exemplify innovative approaches to transformed systems delivered in reality. They are real things, yet also stand for future trajectories, effectively living incarnations of North Stars for the missions.”

— Dan Hill, *Designing Missions*

Over the last decade of building TEDxBrum, Impact Hub Birmingham and prototyping CIVIC SQUARE, going forward into CIVIC SQUARE 2.0 now represents the next deep shift from all we’ve learnt so far from what we have done. After 3 years of deep experimentation in the neighbourhood, learning from all that thrived in a backdrop of crisis, there will be a deep shift for our stewardship of this work from 2023.



Firstly, we will be **open sourcing** all we have done so that it can take on a life of its own in our neighbourhood and far beyond.

Demonstrators are a nested system of systems, and can be as big or as small as it is possible to **demonstrate the different transformations that are required, in governance, finance, and many other areas required to deeply (re)design and build different realities.** Rather than discrete projects and portfolios, we will seek to bring the everyday tangibility, the dream matter of radical imagination, and the dark matter of systems consciousness into each demonstrator.

This is a development from having started from building relationships and invitations through everyday participation, then observing and moving towards the ideas that land in a more experimental way during this first phase. We will keep telling the inspiring stories of possibility, and what we have to gain by moving towards more regenerative and distributive-by-design neighbourhoods, whilst remaining focused on the scale and pace of work required now.

In his seminal playbook *Designing Missions*, Dan Hill outlines precise definitions of the systemic design and practice around transformational missions. Therefore, **secondly**, we will be **refining our definitions and specificity of the work**, synthesising the learnings, and turning the prototypes and proofs of possibility that we have now tested toward a very intentional focus, alongside key partners.

Thirdly, we’ll be making a **shift into deep demonstration.** We don’t feel we can simply describe the possibility or scale of change required, and we are forever changed by seeing and feeling the emerging futures right here, right now.

Our key focus for CIVIC SQUARE 2.0 will be to simultaneously continue to develop, maintain and build out three specific system demonstrators, all born directly out of our work so far at a neighbourhood scale with a focus on the rapid, equitable transition that we need. As mentioned in further context on pg. 3, we can see that global systems starting to collapse on themselves is experienced most viscerally as they converge on our homes, streets and neighbourhoods, meaning this is also the scale where deep infrastructure is required. This is also where our agency and ability to organise is likely to be highest.

Whilst many of the examples we draw inspiration from, such as neighbourhood GPs, community libraries and social housing movements were all of a different era, they represent that transitions require democratic access to resources for neighbourhoods to be at the forefront of their transitions. This is not in isolation, nor to give in to localism, but rather an interdependent planetary approach that starts from where we are and cannot ignore the scale of the challenge.

Therefore, at the centre of this enquiry is a bold question:

What if the climate transition and retrofit of our homes and streets were designed, owned and governed by the people who live there?

and we will focus specifically on the three following layers...

Ways Forward: CIVIC SQUARE 2023-2030



Neighbourhood Doughnut

The Doughnut will take the form of a compass to guide us as to the scale of challenge and opportunity. This will not be used to give prescriptive, simple solutions, but instead continue to orient us in the direction of the safe and just space of thriving in balance in our neighbourhood.

Dynamic in its co-creation, building on the last three years more deeply, then unrolled and rerolled on an annual basis, this will serve as a new set of collective metrics to be accountable to; a 21st century change of goal to collectively hold our progress, action and roadmap. We will take what we've learnt, discovered and been inspired by in the first Neighbourhood Doughnut Portrait and weave research, data, technology, fieldwork and participation together in the years to come.

This will include deep dives into topics of particular interest such as soil, waste and water, as well as unpacking the new dimensions we have added in more depth. The dashboard, data, research and co-creation processes will underpin our other two demonstrators, as well as our overall organisational design, governance, and finance.

Regenerative Infrastructure

We will begin the deep focus on the capital project and the retrofit of the CIVIC SQUARE site. This transformation of a 20th century industrial site into 21st century regenerative infrastructure will be a demonstrator for many areas of stewardship, finance, refurbishment and avoidance of demolition, with ownership to be designed around what these buildings being held in the commons for the neighbourhood looks like.

Fundamentally, the CIVIC SQUARE site seeks to demonstrate the tools, resources and spaces to gather and make, the access to knowledge and networks, and the means of production that neighbourhoods need in order to be at the forefront of their own climate transition: leading creatively, courageously, confidently and collectively.

It is essential that we don't create a black swan, but a demonstration in real time of how we need to be retrofitting our neighbourhoods, playgrounds, libraries, and own our local platforms for wealth to be generated and circulated to many people in a place, as part of a wider bold transition from the neighbourhood up.

Neighbourhood Transitions

Taking forward our deep retrofit and decarbonisation of the street work and prototype on Link Road, we will be deeply building this into a demonstration for other streets to follow suit, going beyond a single household approach to retrofit and into designing from the starting point of our streets as a living systems.

We know decarbonisation is important, but deeper shifts are required away from making disconnected piecemeal interventions to houses, and towards whole home and whole street deep retrofit that considers how we improve air quality, biodiversity, soil quality and more. All the technology is there, but we need to (re)build the social fabric and ways of organising to move towards a radically more just and sustainable future, that is also more joyful and connected.

Again, this means bringing together many layers of system organising with participation, imagination, and systemic transformation at the heart. Together with neighbours, partners it is our imperative to manifest collective action today, co-developing distributed knowledge systems, and agency, rather than see it as a distant outpost for others to deal with.



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We are the first generation to know the scale of the challenges that have been created by human activity on the planet, and we are one of the last that can deeply do something about it. We can be stewards of a joyful, just, creative and caring transition, starting right where we are as the pioneers demonstrating transformation in real time.

Now is our time to step into our power, to recognise the collective force it could bring to an economy in service to life; a neighbourhood that is regenerative and distributive by design; a movement that knows its liberation is tied up with one another.

For an economy that thrives in dynamic balance of human needs and planetary health, there is a role for everyone, and the revolution starts on our doorsteps. Please join. Let's weave our dreams, skills and talent together, and do more than any of us can alone in our lifetime.

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Tools

We are currently preparing to share the tools we use in our work, influenced by and to influence the way forward for Neighbourhood Doughnut. It is our enduring wish to work openly, distributively and quickly as possible. We hope to create an open-source tools library online to make the tools and methods that support this work easy to find, pick up, use and hack.

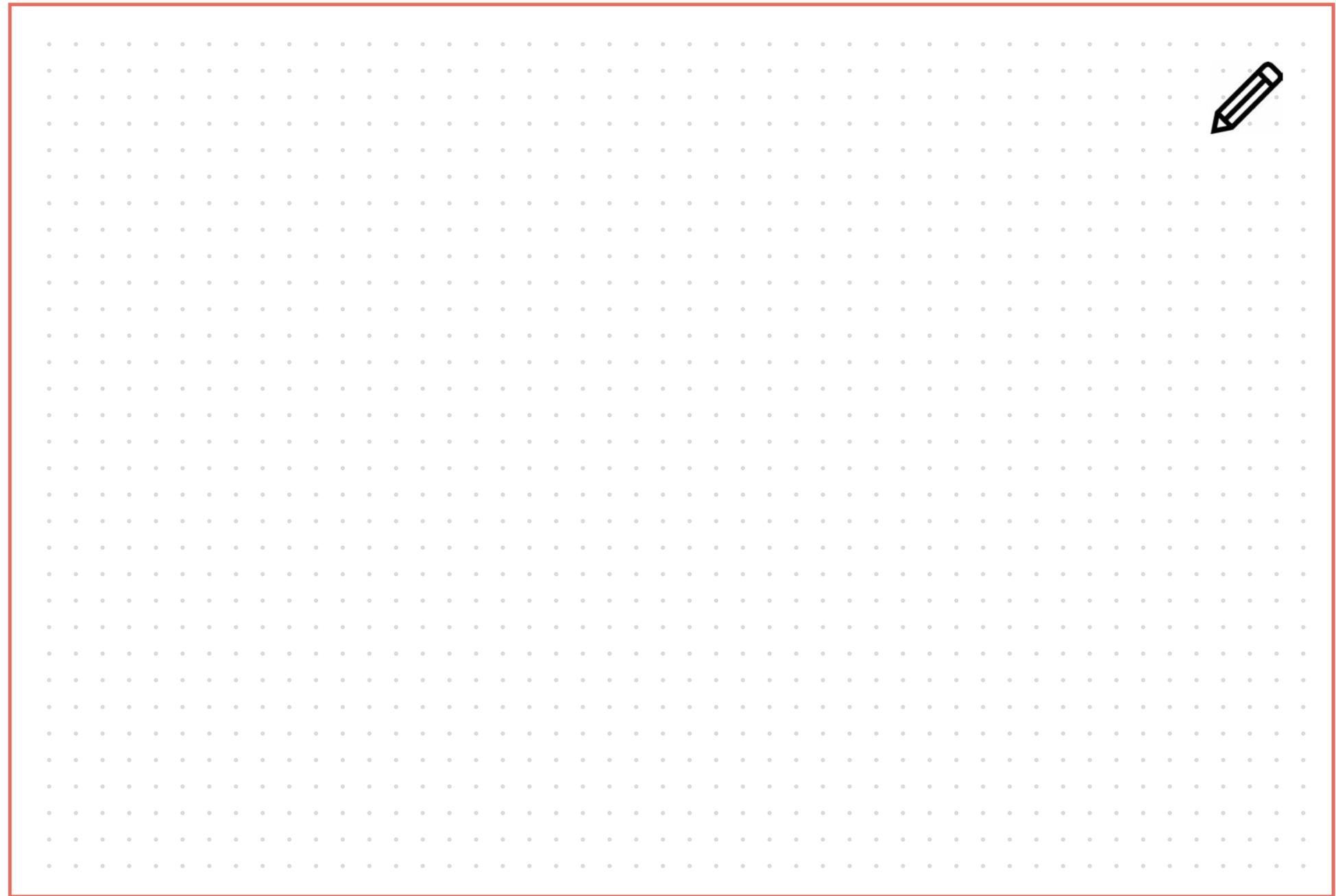
These will be posted on the DEAL platform, so sign up and join to be an active member at doughnuteconomics.org. Get access to our full Portrait and detailed methodologies at bit.ly/NeighbourhoodPortrait.

The DEAL platform is a network of global changemakers taking the ideas off the pages and turning them into transformative action, so connect here for stories, tools and news connected to the work of Doughnut Economics Action Lab.

Thanks for exploring with us, and please do hack, use and dream up your own Portraits of Place. We'd love to see where you take it!

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