



Nottingham City Council Local Government Reorganisation Case for Change

November 2025

DRAFT

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Foreword

In February 2025, the government invited councils to take part in the most significant transformation of local government in over half a century.

Since then, councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have diligently worked together to move plans forward for the region. Together we have undertaken independent reviews, and comprehensive public engagement exercises. Local MPs, partners, councillors, the City Council's Commissioners and the East Midlands Mayor have all been invited to help shape our proposal. The message is clear: people want change that makes sense for the communities they live in, work in, and identify with — changes that will serve us well for the next fifty years.

Our current city boundaries no longer reflect the reality of modern Nottingham. While our official population stands at 328,000, more than 750,000 people live within the wider built-up area — many of whom rely on Nottingham's services and economy every day.

Outdated boundaries and political convenience can no longer dictate our future. Any reform must reflect genuine local identity, sensible geography, and the communities people call home.

An initial options appraisal in March found little distinction between a number of the original models tested, making the future of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire unclear. However, the government's willingness to consider boundary reviews provided a real opportunity to propose something better, built around what residents had actually told us, and what our region needs. Our proposal addresses their feedback directly. It creates two balanced new councils: one for the North and East, and one for the Southwest, aligned to ward boundaries rather than outdated district lines. This structure recognises both the rural and urban character of our county, ensuring fairness, coherence, and long-term sustainability.

This proposal also reflects how people connect with place. Residents in

Broxtowe, Gedling, Rushcliffe and the city itself see themselves as part of Nottingham, while those in Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood feel a stronger link to their towns or to Nottinghamshire as a whole.



This proposal respects both identities — the vibrant, dynamic city region of the Southwest and the proud market towns and rural areas of the North and East. Economically, this proposal unlocks growth. The North and East can pursue opportunities in clean energy research and production, advanced distribution and logistics, manufacturing, digital industries and agriculture, while the Southwest — centred on one of the UK's 12 Core Cities — will thrive through innovation-driven growth in creative, digital and cultural industries, life-sciences, advanced manufacturing, clean energy, financial technologies and food and drink.

A single unitary for the true Nottingham conurbation brings the scale, credibility, and recognition needed to attract investment, create jobs, and support housing growth across the wider region.

Importantly, this proposal joins seamlessly with the East Midlands Combined County Authority's *Vision for Growth*, supporting major initiatives such as the Supercluster, Heartlands, Canal Corridor and Trent Arc — the latter alone capable of delivering 30,000 new homes, 40,000 jobs and £2.4b in annual economic output.

This proposal is about fairness, efficiency, and a stronger local voice. It responds to all of the criteria set out by government, strongly supports the government's core missions, and offers councils that are large enough to deliver, yet close enough to listen. The decisions we make now will shape how Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are governed for generations to come.

Let's seize this opportunity to build a system that works for everyone — where public services are efficient, growth is inclusive, and local identity is respected.

Councillor Neghat Khan
Leader of the Council

Sajeeda Rose
Chief Executive



Executive summary

The time for incremental change is over. To truly unlock the potential of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we must move past outdated administrative lines and build a system fit for the future and fit for our people and businesses.

We are proposing a review of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's boundaries, so that this once in a generation opportunity is not constrained by outdated map lines; it is driven by the mandate to deliver improved, focused service delivery and greater, unified economic growth for the entire region.

This proposal is not merely a technical response to a government invitation, it is an ambitious vision for regional prosperity, community empowerment, and sustainable public service.

Backed by independent analysis, this proposal builds on extensive work with partner councils in Nottinghamshire and puts forward what we believe to be the best solution for the whole region; a true *hearts and minds* approach that respects how our people live, work, and identify, as well as aligning to broader strategic ambitions in the region.

Two councils will replace the nine existing authorities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, creating a unique footprint that focusses service delivery of one unitary authority on an urban conurbation and a second unitary authority serving the more rural areas.

Residents have told us their priorities. They want councils to focus on delivering good quality core and universal services like roads and pavements, crime, anti-social behaviour, and clean streets. They want to be involved in decision-making, and most importantly they want to see their local identity reflected in new authorities. They want boundaries based on local identity, coherence, and genuine community alignment rather than the current configurations – this proposal is rooted in our communities.

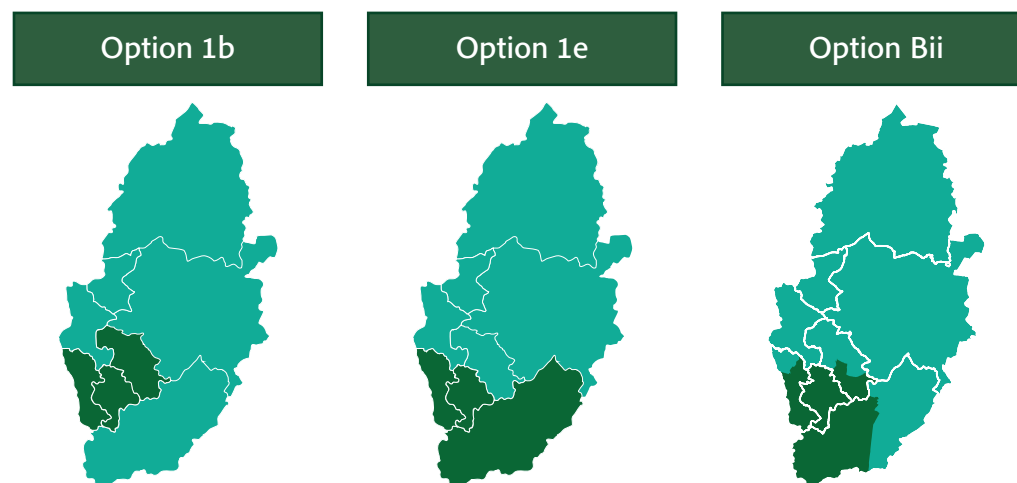
Alongside our neighbouring eight councils in Nottinghamshire, we have supported the development of two options (known as 1b and 1e). But these options have failed to take on board extensive feedback, and have split the Nottingham conurbation, with no thought to the surrounding suburbs identifying with the city, or to addressing the city and wider county's needs for the future.

That's why we're proposing a solution – known as Option Bii – that builds on the strong elements of 1b and 1e and mitigates their risks and limitations.

It is a proposal built on ward boundaries, creating two balanced unitary councils – one for the North and East and one for the Southwest. (NB: These naming conventions are purely for the purpose of this proposal. The names of the future unitary councils will be decided by the shadow authorities once a decision has been made and they are in place.)

Option Bii – builds on 1b as a 'base case' to ensure legal compliance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

FIGURE 0.1: CONSIDERED UNITARY MODEL OPTIONS (1b, 1e, Bii)



But we must not settle with the easy or the safe option.

To truly unlock the potential of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we formally request that Ministers implement modifications to the 1b Base Case, and this is why:

● Reflects our communities

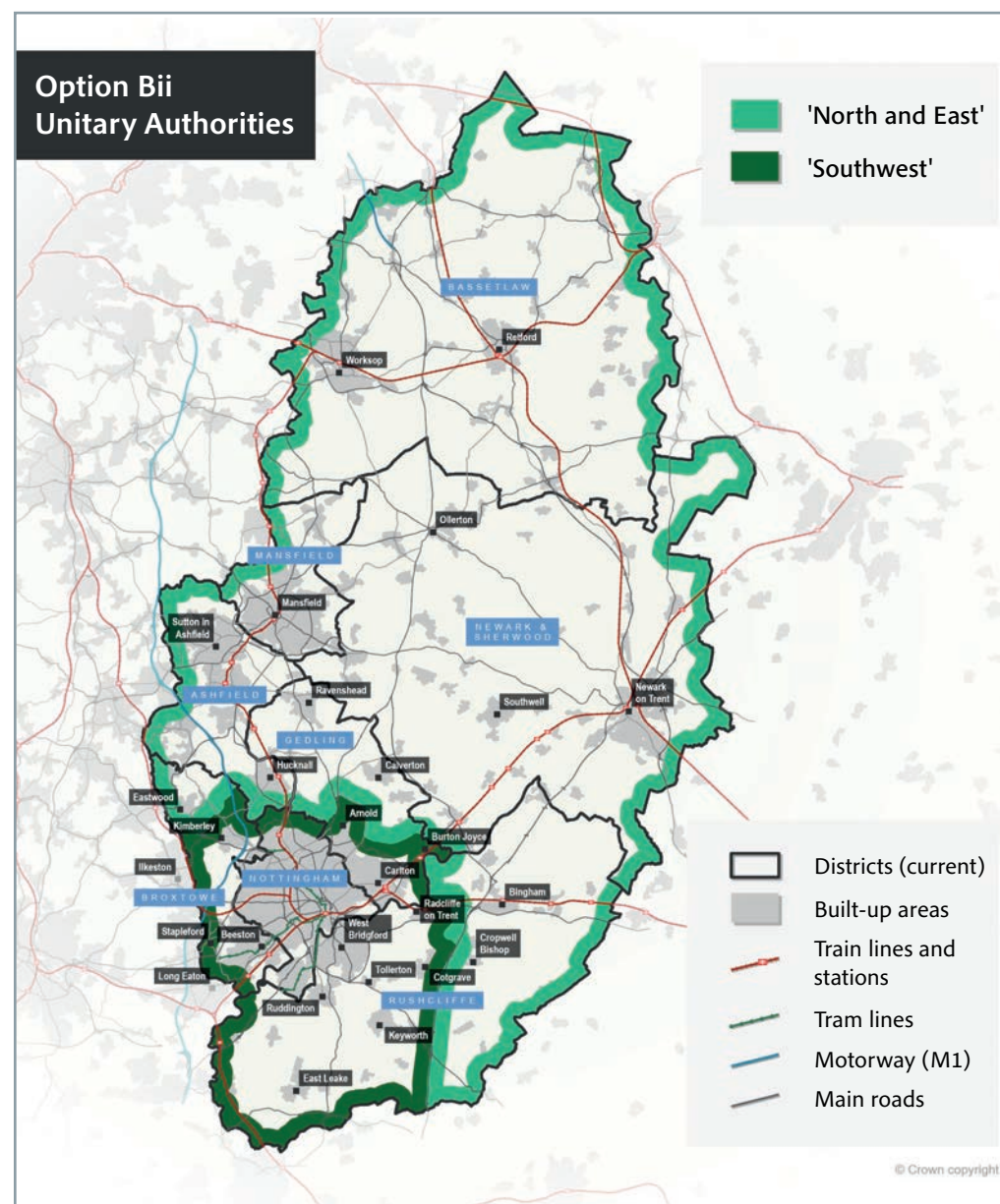
Bii is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work and study. 51% of the people who work in Nottingham live outside the current city's boundaries, meaning they have no say in how the city is run nor do they contribute financially through their Council Tax to support the infrastructure they use on a daily basis. Bii incorporates 71.4% of the Nottingham Travel-to-Work Area (TTWA), compared with the 65.2% that is incorporated within 1b and the 66.7% within 1e.¹



1 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Our Modified Proposal – Bii

FIGURE 0.2: OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



Working with the other councils of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we engaged with partners, business and residents to gather their views on our proposals for Local Government Reform (LGR). A significant 72% of respondents emphasised the importance of meeting local needs and ensuring fairness across all parts of the area and Bii is built to deliver this, clustering similar local communities together to create two new balanced unitary councils, building on communities' sense of belonging to create cohesion across the county's diverse requirements that will allow service delivery to be tailored and focused on local needs.

The majority of people who live in the Nottingham conurbation identify with the city, whilst the rest of the county have a more polycentric sense of belonging. This local sense of belonging was confirmed through our extensive resident engagement and survey, with residents from Broxtowe, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe referencing Nottingham as the place they would describe they are from, whereas residents from Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood, tended to cite a local town, Sherwood Forest or Nottinghamshire as the area they are from.

By actively celebrating and nurturing the unique characteristics, heritage, and cultural assets that define each local area, from historic market towns to vibrant city neighbourhoods, Bii can build a stronger, more cohesive collective identity.

Bii is considered the 'most sensible and logical solution' by approximately half of Nottingham City respondents³, validating the proposed boundary for Bii as being the best solution across all proposals.

● Enables economic growth

Bii is built to enable growth opportunities and will strengthen local industries, reflecting current work patterns and development priorities and ensuring required decision-making sits within sensible economic areas.

- In the North and East, economic growth can be targeted around key industries that are delivered in the region such as agriculture, forestry, light manufacturing, and increasingly, logistics and renewable energy.
- The North and East Authority can focus on delivering the opportunities for growth beyond the city economy, such as STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) Fusion and the Trent Energy Supercluster, inclusive growth in key towns like Newark, Mansfield, Kirkby- and Sutton-in-Ashfield, Ollerton, Worksop and Retford while supporting the rural economy.
- In the Southwest, economic growth will be built around Nottingham, one of the UK's 12 Core Cities that have been identified as having a 'unique set of strengths that make them worthy of focus in a plan to regenerate the UK'⁴. By bringing together the conurbation and surrounding areas into a single unitary we will release the region's potential by placing strategic decision making under a single authority that will have the mandate to drive economic growth across the region.



² <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

³ <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

⁴ UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF THE UK'S CITIES - FINAL REPORT_0.pdf

“...for every 100 jobs created through a business opening a new office, a further 44 are created in the wider region from the increased economic activity in the supply chain.”⁵

- **Improves financial stability for both unitary councils**

The Bii proposal offers a strong foundation for financial stability and operational confidence.

- Both councils are closely aligned in terms of population and net operating costs, ensuring fairness across the board. However, under the initial modelling, each unitary council will need to deliver efficiency savings to meet the forecast budget gap to allow sufficient reserves to cover the cost of transition.
- Bii presents a structure that is fit-for-the-future and can weather financial storms, unlock efficiencies, can offer improved, sustained service improvement.

- **Drives housing strategies and infrastructure planning:**

Significant opportunities for coordinated investment, planning and development will be created by better aligning local living and commuting patterns and including a greater proportion of the Inner Nottingham Housing Market and Travel to Work Areas in the Southwest Unitary. By creating two new balanced unitary councils that have a differentiated urban and rural focus, Bii aims to streamline decision-making and reduce administrative duplication, enabling both the Southwest and North and

East Unitary Councils to align their housing strategies with the economic development and infrastructure priorities of their communities.

- 76.7% of the Inner Nottingham Housing Market Area will be included under the Southwest Unitary in Bii, compared to 70.4% with option 1b and 70.9% with option 1e⁶. This provides greater opportunity for housing development and growth to meet the growing conurbation needs of Nottingham City in the Southwest Unitary.
- Strategic focus that was previously diverted away from rural areas to urban centres bordering the current Nottingham City Council area will be redirected towards addressing the specific housing demands of the rural communities in the North and East Unitary, including through more consistent planning for new houses. This fosters a more balanced approach to regional development across the area, providing the opportunity to mitigate historical housing deficits and promote sustainable community development in line with the specific polycentric nature of the north and east.

- **Improves investment opportunities**

Businesses looking to relocate or open new offices will look for cities with a certain population, skills mix and economic size in which to invest. With official statistics often recorded at a local authority level, it is currently all too easy for businesses to exclude Nottingham from investment decisions, as the city may appear not to meet their criteria given its current constrained boundaries. By creating a unitary that captures the actual conurbation of the city, the true city, with its much larger population, talent pool and economic potential, the reality of what Nottingham has to offer will be reflected in official statistics which will improve the perception of the city and what it has to offer – in turn driving future investments into the area.

Unlocking the potential the city has to offer will act as a catalyst for broader regional growth. When businesses invest in urban centres, they not only create direct jobs within the city but also stimulate additional employment

5 UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF THE UK'S CITIES - FINAL REPORT_0.pdf

6 https://nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/ypbdvyoh/option-bii_-comparative-analysis-final.pdf

and economic activity in the surrounding areas through supply chains and increased demand for goods and services. This ripple effect means that city investment will benefit the North and East Unitary as well as the Southwest Unitary, strengthening local industries, attracting further business, and driving prosperity across the county's urban and rural communities.

● Aligns with East Midlands Combined County Authority priorities

The strategic priorities and projects that have been developed by the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), as set out in their Vision for Growth⁷, dovetail perfectly into Bii.

- The North and East Unitary will be able to leverage EMCCA initiatives tailored to its polycentric and rural character to drive economic growth, including the Supercluster - a clean energy and innovation hub centred on three former power stations, projected to deliver 6,800 new homes, 15,500 jobs, and £930m in annual Gross Value Added (GVA). The Heartlands initiative will empower communities in Ashfield, Mansfield, and surrounding villages to shape their own development, with options for infrastructure upgrades, business support, and community-led projects, while the Canal Corridor will position the unitary as a national leader in advanced manufacturing, innovation, and sustainability, attracting investment and driving future growth.
- The Southwest Unitary is positioned as a strategic growth corridor, aligning with the Trent Arc, which will drive urban regeneration between Derby and Nottingham including delivery of 30,000 new homes, creation of over 40,000 jobs, and adding £2.4b annually to the local economy. It benefits from nearly £2b in transport investment to improve connectivity between Nottingham, Derby and major employment zones, driving transformative regeneration of industrial sites and creating new communities.⁸ EMCCA are also looking

to complete a feasibility study for extending Nottingham's Tram Network along the eastern route from Colwick to Gamston, and a further expansion with a Park and Ride.

Because Bii is the only option being proposed where EMCCA's economic growth initiatives sit neatly within the unitary councils, the benefits of not having to work across different democratic boundaries will streamline processes and ensure that devolution priorities are not hindered by bureaucracy and differing local priorities and agendas.

● Creates balanced boundaries

While our boundaries have been built around our communities, they also ensure a balance across metrics, which will be key in driving successful service delivery and ensuring the long-term financial health of both unitary councils.

All three options are very balanced with regard to current and population forecast, the proportion of working age and proportion currently economically inactive..

While option 1b scores higher with regard to total GVA, Bii scores highest/ joint highest across all other metrics.

Most importantly, Bii scores highest in driving a balanced Council Tax base (across band D properties), projected Council Tax receipts and projected combined social care to Council Tax receipt ratio across the proposed two new unitary councils for each model.

Given these are the two critical income and cost bases for local authorities, it is crucial these are as balanced as possible to ensure future unitary councils are balanced and financially sustainable.

7 <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

8 <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

FIGURE 0.3: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR EACH OF THE CONSIDERED OPTIONS (Bii, 1b, 1e)

	OUR PROPOSAL (Bii)		OPTION 1b		OPTION 1e	
	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY	UNITARY 1: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND REMAINING LAS	UNITARY 2: NOTTINGHAM, BROXTOWE, GEDLING	UNITARY 1: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND REMAINING LAS	UNITARY 2: NOTTINGHAM, BROXTOWE, RUSHCLIFFE
Population (ONS 2023) ⁹	561,213	612,557	612,759	561,011	607,468	566,302
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ¹⁰	604,125	660,520	661,460	603,185	653,127	611,518
Total GVA (ONS 2023) (£m)	£13,025m	£19,619m	£14,993m	£17,651m	£13,279m	£19,365m
GVA per capita (ONS 2023) (£) ¹¹	£23,208	£32,028	£24,468	£31,463	£21,860	£34,496
Council tax base (no. of band D equivalent properties) (Council Tax Base 2024) ¹²	191,328	190,814	214,400	167,742	207,349	174,793
Projected Council Tax receipts (2032/33) ¹³	£415,699,141	£380,705,437	£470,435,575	£359,340,174	£449,735,749	£380,332,467
Projected Combined Social Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio (2032/33) ¹⁴	0.93	0.94	0.87	0.94	0.92	0.87
% of population in working age (16-64) ^{15*}	60%	64%	60%	64%	60.0%	64.0%

9 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

10 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

11 Regional gross domestic product: local authorities - Office for National Statistics

12 Council Taxbase 2024 in England - GOV.UK

13 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

14 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

15 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

16 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

* Note: For all data published at the Local Authority or District level, proportional population percentages assigned to each new unitary authority were applied to the dataset values. This method was used to estimate the distribution of statistics for districts involved in a boundary review under the proposed model.

● Improves service delivery

All options will benefit from consolidation of IT systems and licensing, and will be able to build on the current infrastructure of Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council, however our proposal will provide a more equitable split of finances and demand, and better reflects the two diverse communities of the rural North and East and the urban Southwest. This demographic split is critical in enabling targeted service delivery and preventative initiatives that can be designed and delivered around local needs, tailored to the distinct communities across the unitary councils, truly moving beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and delivering much better value for money.

- With social care being by far the largest service any unitary authority delivers, Bii provides the most equitable model across demand and Council Tax ratio. When comparing projected combined social care spend to Council Tax receipts ratios for each option, our proposal provides a nearly identical 0.93 ratio in the North and East Unitary and a 0.94 ratio in the Southwest; compared to 0.87 to 0.94 respective ratios for 1b and 0.92 to 0.87 respective ratios for 1e - evidencing Bii as the most balanced model for service demand and spend.
- Homelessness and housing management are key areas of challenge and focus across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and at a national level. Bii adopts a rural-urban split, recognising the distinct needs of each area and enabling targeted interventions for each unitary's distinct demographic. A higher concentration of homelessness in the Southwest Unitary (7.2 per 1,000 households) compared to the North and East Unitary (3.4 per 1,000 households), presents the opportunity to scale focused initiatives to address the different homelessness challenges faced by rural and urban communities, enabling targeted interventions to be deployed to address the nuanced need of the different communities.

This proposal outlines a visionary approach to Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, recommending the creation of two new balanced unitary authorities with boundaries drawn at the ward level rather than being restricted by existing district building blocks.

The time for incremental change is over.



FIGURE 0.4: OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES

The naming conventions of these unitary councils are purely for the purpose of this proposal. The names of the future unitary councils will be decided by the shadow authorities once a decision has been made and they are in place.

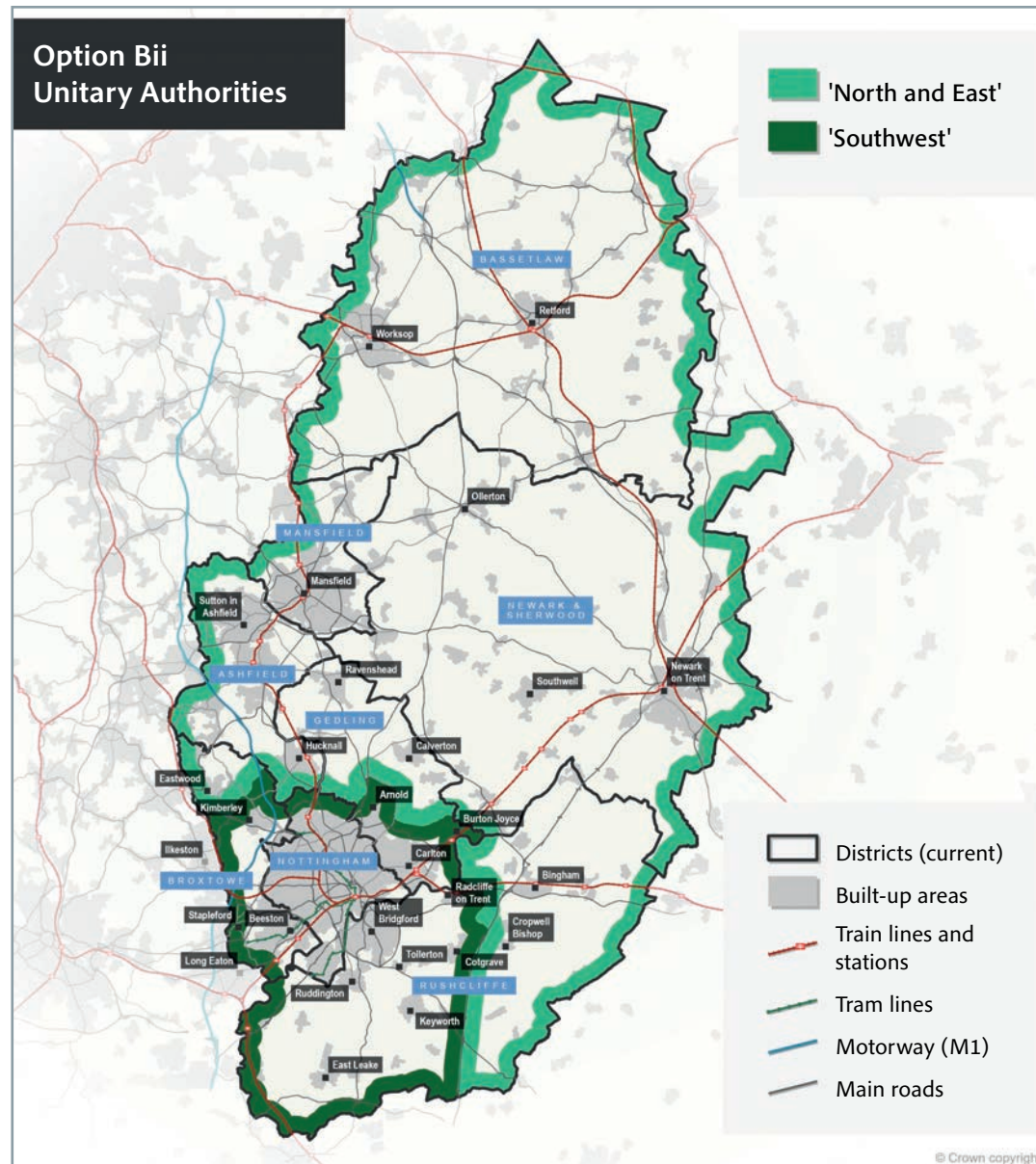


FIGURE 0.5: HOW Bii MEETS EACH OF THE SIX GOVERNMENT CRITERIA

1: ESTABLISHING A SINGLE TIER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	2: EFFICIENCY, CAPACITY AND WITHSTANDING SHOCKS	3: HIGH QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC SERVICES	4: WORKING TOGETHER TO UNDERSTAND AND MEET LOCAL NEEDS	5: SUPPORTING DEVOLUTION ARRANGEMENTS	6: STRONGER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD EMPOWERMENT
Sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base 	Population size of 500,000 or more 	Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation 	Evidence of engagement activity 	Ability to unlock devolution and sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority 	Enabling strong community engagement 
Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs 	Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money 	Public service reform and better value for money 	Reflecting local identity, culture and history 		
Supported by robust evidence and analysis 	Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing 	Reflecting views expressed through local engagement (and ability to address any concerns) 			
Single tier local government structures 	Transition costs and transformation opportunities 				
	Managing existing council debt through efficiencies 				

Background

Introduction to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire in the East Midlands is defined by a blend of historical depth, dynamic growth, expansive landscapes and diverse communities. Its rich industrial past combined with a forward-looking economic future, creates a unique identity that appeals to a wide range of interests and needs. Our residents maintain strong cultural and community identities, and population needs differ significantly across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's varied geographies and communities.

At its heart, Nottinghamshire is a vibrant and growing county. This vibrancy stems from its diverse population, thriving economic sectors, and a strong sense of community that spans its varied geographies. Nottingham, with its Charter City status, acts as a bustling urban core and drives innovation and cultural activity. Following LGR, Nottingham intends to maintain its Charter City status by issuing new letters patent to the successor body or by appointing Charter Trustees to preserve its historic rights and traditions. The surrounding county offers a complementary mix of market towns, picturesque villages, and expansive rural areas.

Historically, Nottinghamshire's identity was forged in core industries like coal mining and textiles, leaving a notable mark on its towns and communities. This heritage is the foundation upon which modern Nottinghamshire is built, fostering resilience and a strong work ethic. Beyond these traditional industries, the county has also been shaped by its agricultural roots and, famously, by the legends of Robin Hood, which continue to draw visitors and inspire the landscape with a sense of folklore and adventure.

Economically, Nottinghamshire is a diverse powerhouse. The conurbation of Nottingham is a hub for advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, and an expanding life-sciences sector, supported by world-class higher education institutions like the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. These universities are not only centres of learning but also significant economic drivers, fostering research, innovation, and a highly

skilled workforce. Across the existing county, particularly in the rural and semi-rural north, the economy diversifies further, with strong contributions from agriculture, forestry, light manufacturing, and increasingly, logistics and renewable energy. Market towns such as Newark, Retford, Worksop and Mansfield serve as vital local economic and civic centres, providing essential services and employment.

Culturally and recreationally, Nottinghamshire offers a wealth of experiences. Nottingham boasts exceptional sports facilities, including iconic venues like the City Ground (football), Meadow Lane (football), Trent Bridge (cricket), the Racecourse and the Greyhound Stadium, the Tennis Centre, the National Ice Centre and the National Water Sports Centre, reflecting a deep passion for sport. Nottingham also has the David Ross Sports Village and the Harvey Hadden Sports Village, which are major Nottingham sports facilities for public use and organised sports, with the former offering world-class sports amenities, including a unique all-glass squash court, the largest sports hall in the country, and a sports injury clinic, while the latter includes the county's only 50m swimming pool and both indoor and outdoor athletics tracks.

Beyond sports, the county provides a rich cultural scene, with theatres, museums, and historical attractions like Nottingham Castle, the legend of Robin Hood and the largest network of caves in the UK that are hidden beneath the city's streets, alongside extensive retail and leisure offerings that cater to both urban and rural populations.

In essence, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are areas of harmonious contrasts: an urban conurbation that is a beacon of innovation and culture, with a surrounding rurality that cherishes its natural beauty and traditional industries while embracing new economic opportunities. Together, these elements form a cohesive and appealing whole, making the region a dynamic place to live, work and visit, where history and progress walk hand-in-hand.

Our communities

FIGURE 0.6: TOTAL NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POPULATION (2023) AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS (2035)

	ONS 2023 ¹⁷	ONS 2035 PROJECTION ¹⁸	PROJECTED POPULATION INCREASE	PROJECTED GROWTH (%)
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE TOTAL POPULATION	1,173,770	1,264,645	90,875	7.7%

The county of Nottinghamshire spans 805 square miles (2,085 km²) with a varied demographic, defined by its historic and industrial past.

The north and east of the county is polycentric, combining market towns, ex-mining communities, and extensive rural landscapes. This area is covered by the proposed North and East Unitary.

The southern part of the county is dominated by the city of Nottingham and its wide commuter belt which reflects Nottingham's true urban conurbation – the proposed Southwest Unitary covers this area.

The current population of Nottinghamshire is 1,173,770, with a projected population growth of 7.7% by 2035, slightly above the projected national average increase of 7.3%.¹⁹



¹⁷ https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

¹⁸ https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

¹⁹ National population projections - Office for National Statistics

FIGURE 0.7: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NOTTINGHAM CITY AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COMPARED TO NATIONAL STATISTICS

ETHNIC GROUP OF USUAL RESIDENTS	NOTTINGHAM CITY ²⁰	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY ²¹	EAST MIDLANDS REGION ²²	ENGLAND ²³
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	14.9%	6.3%	8.0%	9.6%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	10.0%	3.7%	2.7%	4.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	5.9%	3.1%	2.4%	3.0%
White	65.9%	85.4%	85.7%	81.0%
Other ethnic groups	3.3%	1.5%	1.3%	2.2%

Nottinghamshire is characterised by a richly varied growing population, with a marked distinction between the city of Nottingham and its surrounding rural county areas. Nottingham, in particular, is notably ethnically and religiously diverse, evidenced by a higher proportion of minority ethnic groups and a significant Muslim community. In contrast, the county's rural regions tend to have a predominantly White population and a higher proportion of older residents, shaping different community needs and priorities.

The 2021 Census²⁴ data shows 65.9% of Nottingham City residents identify as White, compared to 85.7% across the East Midlands region. Nottingham City is significantly more diverse than the wider Nottinghamshire County and East Midlands region, reflected in a greater representation of Asian, Black and Mixed ethnic group communities, making up 14.9%, 10.0% and 5.9% of the Nottingham City population respectively. Overall, the

county has a varied population that is less ethnically and religiously diverse than Nottingham, with 85.4% identifying as White, with Asian and Black communities making up 6.3% and 3.7% of the population respectively²⁵.

This demographic divergence means that public services must be responsive and flexible, ensuring they are appropriately tailored to the unique needs of their communities. For example, urban centres like Nottingham may require services that address the challenges and opportunities arising from a younger, more diverse population, including language support, cultural inclusion initiatives and youth engagement programmes. Conversely, rural communities benefit from services focused on older adults, such as retirement facilities, healthcare for ageing populations, and schemes promoting social inclusion for the elderly, such as ExtraCare Villages, retirement parks, and initiatives like Age Friendly Nottingham.

20 How life has changed in Nottingham: Census 2021

21 Nottinghamshire Census 2021

22 How life has changed in Nottingham: Census 2021

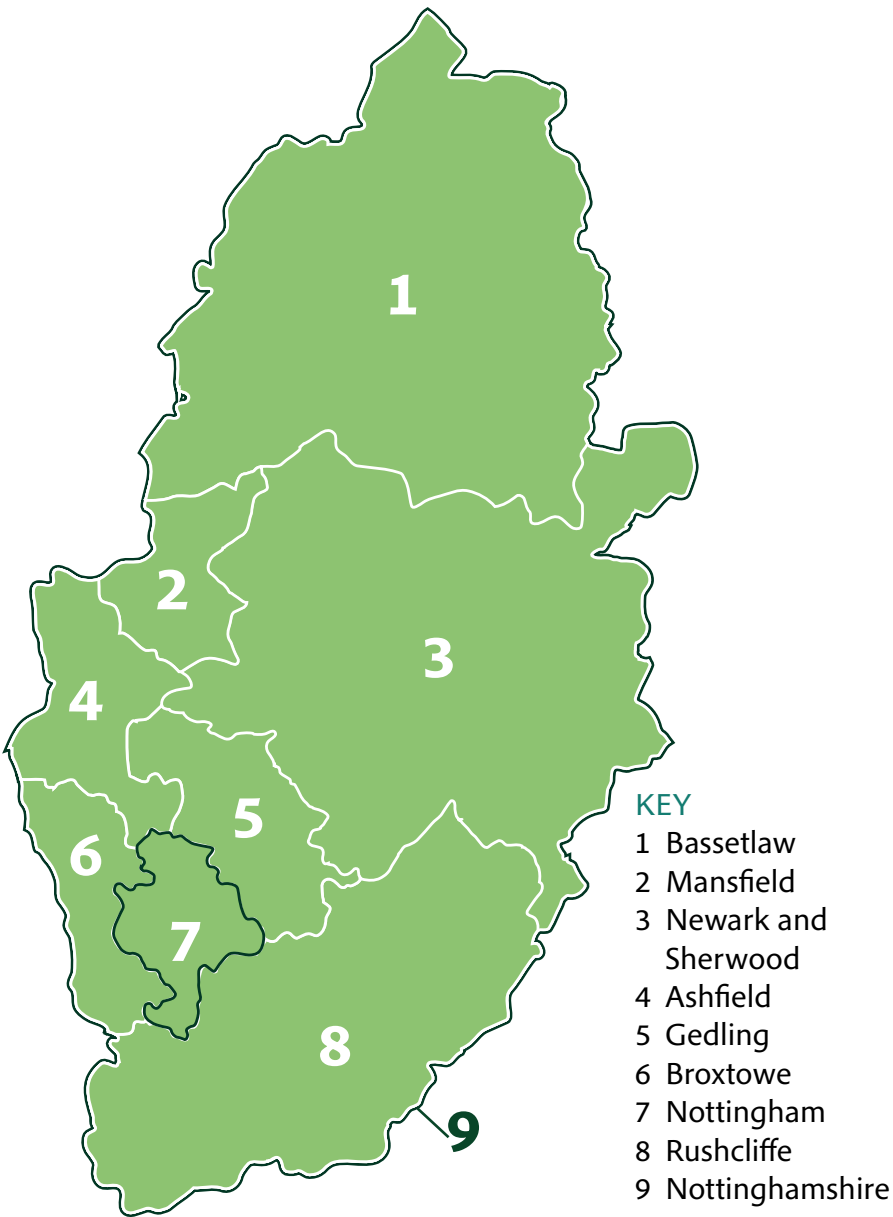
23 How life has changed in Nottingham: Census 2021

24 How life has changed in Nottingham: Census 2021

25 Nottinghamshire Census 2021.

Local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire today

FIGURE 0.8: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE TODAY



Nottinghamshire is a ceremonial county with a two-tier system served by seven district and borough councils and a county council. In addition to this, the city of Nottingham is a unitary council contained within the boundary of Nottinghamshire and provides all council services in the city area having become a unitary authority in 1998, gaining the responsibility of taking on county functions for the city.

Nottinghamshire, including Nottingham City, is represented by eleven Members of Parliament (MPs): nine Labour, one Conservative, and one Reform. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are represented by 407 elected members as shown in the table below.

	Nottinghamshire County Council	Ashfield District Council	Bassetlaw District Council	Broxtowe Borough Council	Gedling Borough Council	Mansfield District Council	Newark & Sherwood District Council	Nottingham City Council	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Number of Councillors	66	35	48	43	41	36	39	55	44

East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), established in March 2024, includes Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire. EMCCA focuses on regional economic growth, transport improvements and adult skills training through the Adult Skills Fund. Led by an elected Mayor, it represents its four constituent councils and manages funding and projects across the region.

Our Vision for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire presents a pivotal moment to harness the region's inherent strengths and address its diverse needs and challenges. This strategic shift offers a unique opportunity to reshape how services are delivered and how growth is fostered across our varied landscapes. By embracing this change and harnessing opportunities, Nottinghamshire can unlock its full potential.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's key opportunities

LGR presents Nottingham and Nottinghamshire with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to truly transform how local government delivers services across the county to positively impact the lives and experiences of our communities. Getting the right balance through the right boundaries will be critical in enabling future unitary councils to fully realise the potential across the county.

Key opportunities through LGR

- **Strengthening local identity:** By celebrating local heritage and giving residents a real voice in shaping their communities, the reorganisation can reinforce the current sense of identity and belonging across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.
- **Community cohesion:** There is an opportunity to create balanced boundaries that truly reflect the conurbation in the Southwest and the more rural, polycentric nature of the North and East, thus fostering stronger, more cohesive communities.
- **Responsive service design and equitable demand:** There is a significant opportunity to design and deliver equitable public services that are

highly responsive and finely tuned to the distinct requirements of different communities within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. This means moving beyond generic approaches to address specific local needs.

- **Proactive prevention:** Focusing on local needs enables the development of targeted, proactive, preventative initiatives that build healthier, more self-sufficient communities, reducing long-term demand on public services.
- **Targeted support for deprivation:** Leveraging local insights allows for tailored interventions to address unemployment and barriers to opportunity, ensuring that support is delivered where it will have the greatest impact.
- **Equitable resource distribution:** The new structure offers the chance to distribute resources fairly, so every resident benefits, regardless of where they live.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's key considerations

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire face a range of complex considerations that impact the lives and experiences of our residents. It is essential to have a strong understanding of these challenges to effectively address them through Local Government Reorganisation.

Risks and considerations to be addressed through LGR

- **City boundaries are too constrained:** Nottingham's official borders don't match its real urban footprint, holding back growth and investment where it's needed most.

- **Disconnected commuters:** 51% the city's workforce lives outside Nottingham, so they pay Council Tax elsewhere and have no say in city decisions—weakening civic engagement and funding.
- **Urban vs. Rural split:** The urban conurbation and more rural North and East have different priorities and needs, making county-wide planning and delivery fragmented and complex.
- **Mismatch in service demands:** Urban areas need dense transport and housing solutions; rural areas need connectivity and dispersed services. Current boundaries do not reflect these realities, leading to inefficiencies in service delivery.
- **Social care and homelessness:** The delivery of social care and homelessness services present a significant risk for existing councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It is essential that the proposal for LGR is advantageous for the delivery and improvement of these services across the entire region.
- **Two-tier system drag:** The current structure slows down decision-making and makes it hard to focus on what matters for both city and rural communities.
- **Local government finance:** By creating fewer, larger unitary authorities, the new unitary councils will be in a better position to achieve significant cost savings through greater efficiency, service transformation, and improved financial planning.
- **Growth blocked by structure:** The split between urban and rural, plus outdated governance, means missed opportunities for joined-up development and investment.
- **Misalignment with EMCCA:** Fragmented local government makes it hard to deliver on East Midlands Combined County Authority's big ambitions for integrated growth and regional uplift.

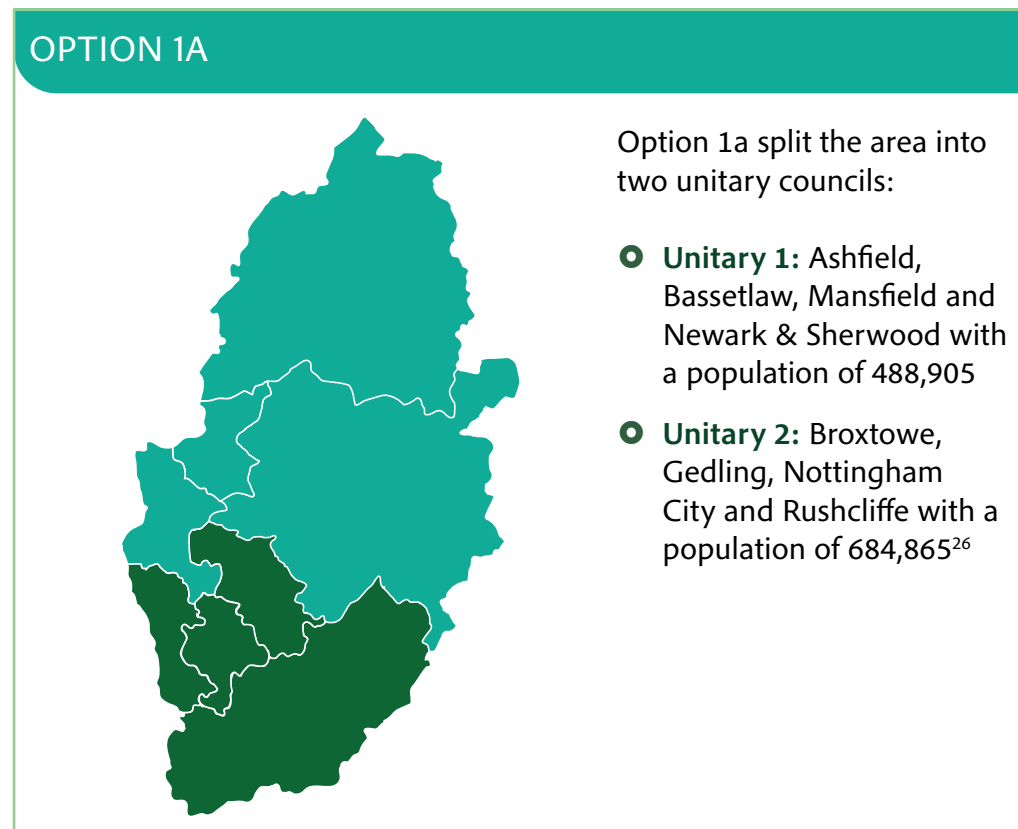


The way forward: assessing the options

Following the invitation from Government, we undertook a cross-council partnership to identify a range of options for the future of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Through a comprehensive options analysis, three potential options were identified from a longlist of eight. These were submitted as part of the interim plan for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Review of early options

FIGURE 0.9: OPTION 1a TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



This option created a disparity in population between the two unitary councils which was predicted to increase over the next ten years. This would put additional pressure on the more southern unitary from a service delivery and financial perspective. In addition, there was a significant difference between the two regions in the forecasted new homes needed to account for the population growth which would cause further disparity between the two unitary councils. Our analysis suggested that the Adults' and Childrens' social care spend in relation to Council Tax receipts projected a potential strain on public services in the future, with disparity between the ratios of combined social care spend to Council Tax receipts projection ratio of 0.98 for the northern unitary 1 compared to 0.84 for the southern unitary 2. We also found that there was a higher vulnerability risk to the regions in terms of potential business growth as there was a greater difference between the growth analysis between the largest two sectors in both regional economies (wholesale and manufacturing).

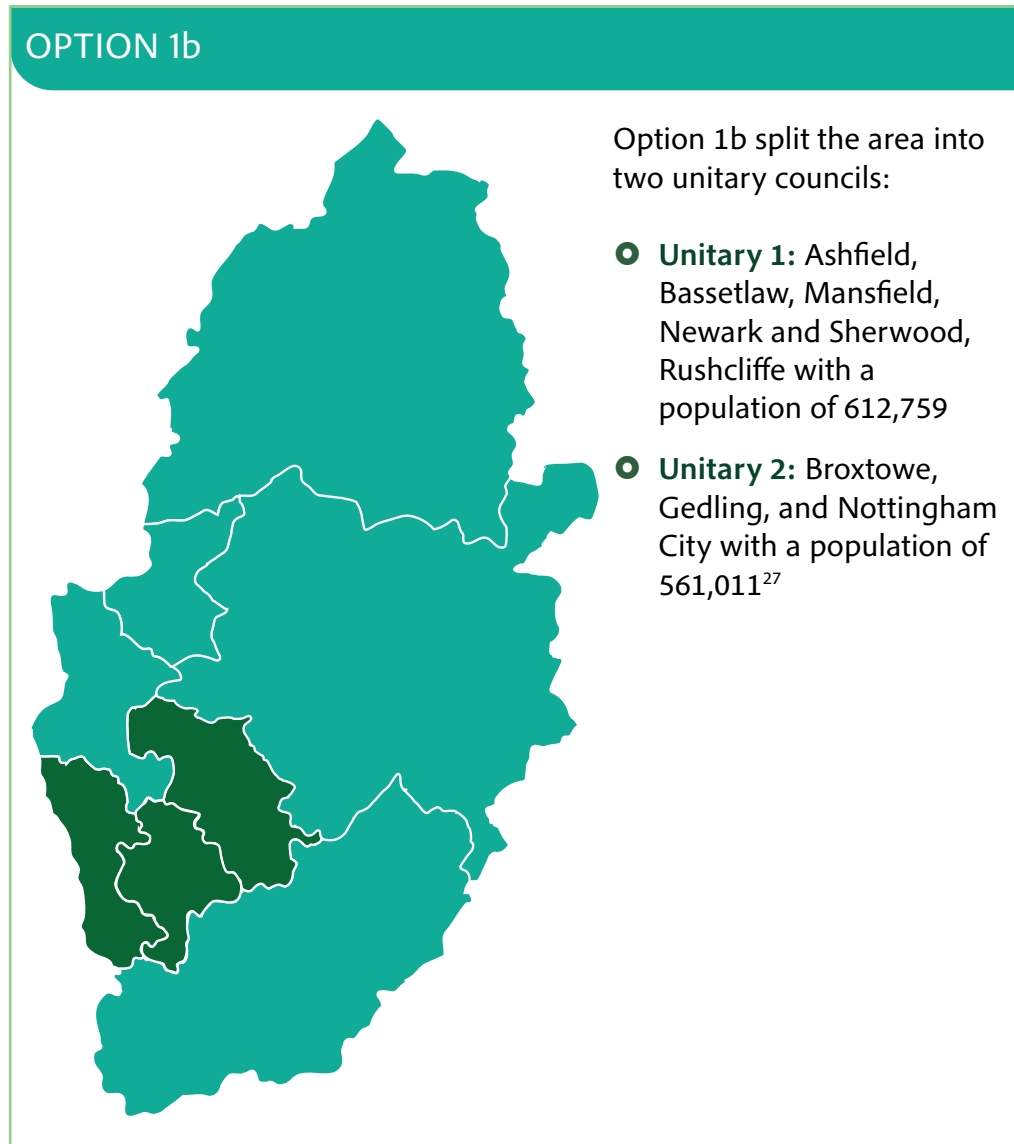
As a result, option 1a was discounted.

Options taken forward for further analysis

During the options appraisal, the councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire identified two main options that were considered to be the best fit for the region to ensure effective service delivery and to best serve the differing demographics of the county. These options, known as **1b and 1e** were considered to be most closely aligned to the success criteria established by MHCLG for Local Government Reorganisation and utilised the building blocks of existing city unitary and district council footprints.

26 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

FIGURE 0.10: OPTION 1b TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



Pros of 1b

- Bringing conurbation secondary schools under one authority streamlines education strategy, improves resource distribution, and ensures urban students benefit from a more unified and responsive approach to secondary education.
- Merging Nottingham City, Gedling, and Broxtowe as whole districts into a new unitary council paves the way for a faster, simpler transition. By avoiding complex boundary changes, and legal and administrative constraints, it would ensure a smooth, efficient shift in responsibilities and services.
- The proposed 1b Unitary 2 authority boasts a striking population density of 2,030 people per square kilometre — on par with Bristol and even denser than Sheffield or Leeds. This concentrated urban core not only streamlines service delivery but also positions the area as a magnet for further development and investment.
- This option creates two powerful authorities, both meeting the government's "right size" benchmark. With populations exceeding half a million, these councils would enjoy stronger financial resilience, greater efficiency and a wider tax base — setting the stage for robust, sustainable public services and real economies of scale.
- Greater scale brings improved capacity to deliver quality, sustainable public services.

Cons of 1b

- Key strategic areas on the southeastern and southwestern edges, including the Trent Arc (A453 corridor), are excluded.
- 1b's Unitary 2 authority covers only part of the wider Housing Market and Travel-to-Work areas risking inefficient housing, poor infrastructure, and weakened regional job markets.
- Hucknall, Ruddington, and West Bridgford — long considered part of Nottingham — are omitted.

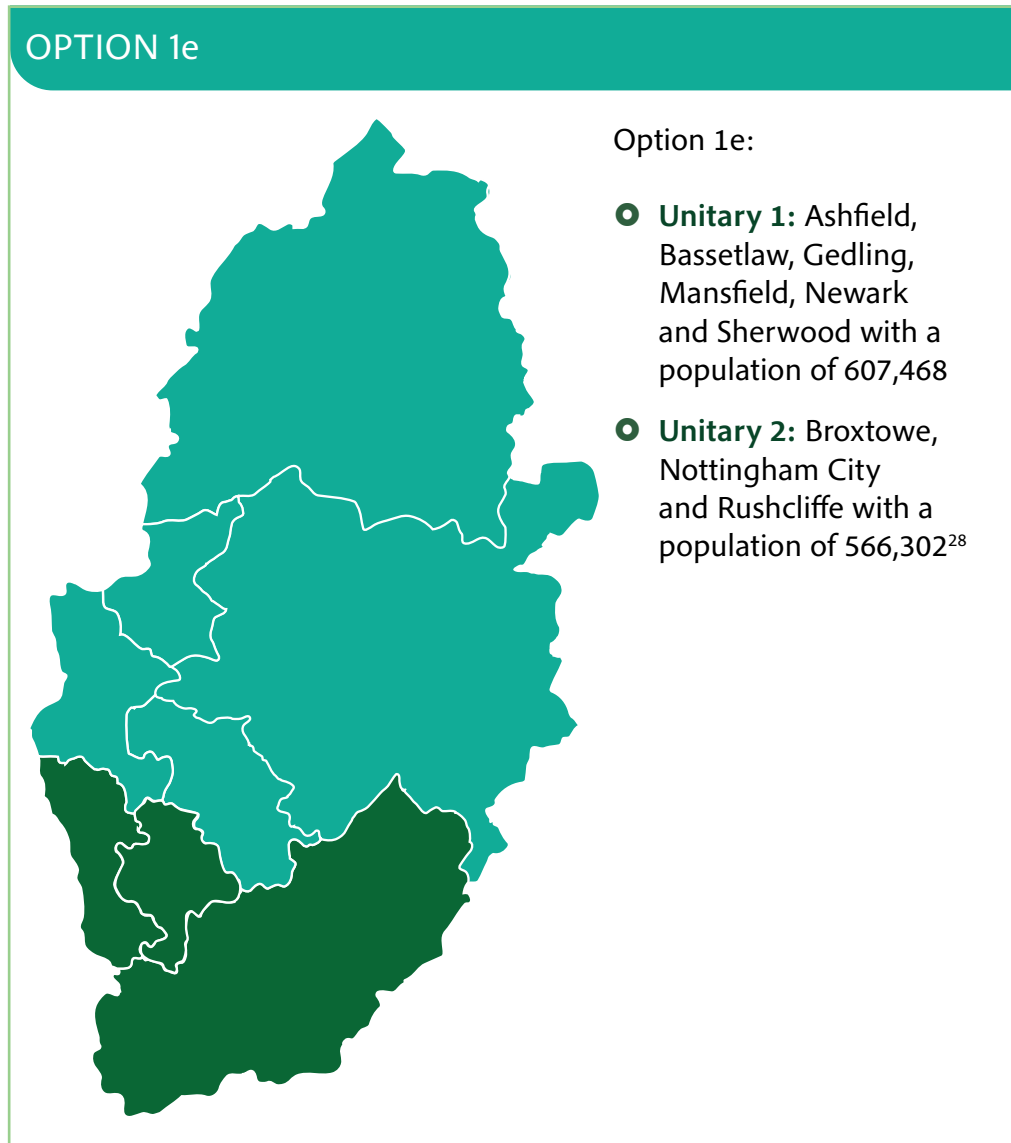
27 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

- 1b's Unitary authority almost surrounds the Unitary 2 authority, which will be challenging administratively, will complicate service delivery and will lead to the lack of a clear identity for communities.

- 1b's Unitary authority may struggle to deliver housing or employment growth south of the city, threatening future targets, driving up costs, and stalling economic progress.



FIGURE 0.11: OPTION 1e TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



Pros of 1e

- Balanced populations between the unitary councils.
- Balanced financial stability.
- Would slightly improve alignment with Travel To Work Area (TTWA) and Housing Market Area (HMA) geographies, reducing disparity between authorities.
- Presents a more coherent geography for strategic planning as it consolidates three authorities already collaborating on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan.

Cons of 1e

- Some disparity in terms of self-funders for Adult Social Care which may put financial strain on Unitary 1.
- Doesn't align to local identity and needs.
- Potential imbalance for SEND provision in income and demand for services due to lower levels of demand in Rushcliffe.
- Would shift 1e's Unitary 2 authority to a more rural profile, introducing more internal inequality.

Option 1b has been selected as the Base Case for our Modified Proposal (Bii) as it provides the foundation for parity of services, is leveraged on balanced financial stability and better represents the geographical profile and community alignment.



28 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Base Case

For Nottingham City Council, Option 1b represents our 'best fit' Base Proposal within the constraints of whole district boundaries. This is presented in accordance with Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the February 2025 invitation as a statutory Base Proposal, but the final proposal we are progressing is a modification of Option 1b, known as Bii.

Base Case Configuration – Option 1b:

FIGURE 0.12: OPTION BASE CASE TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES

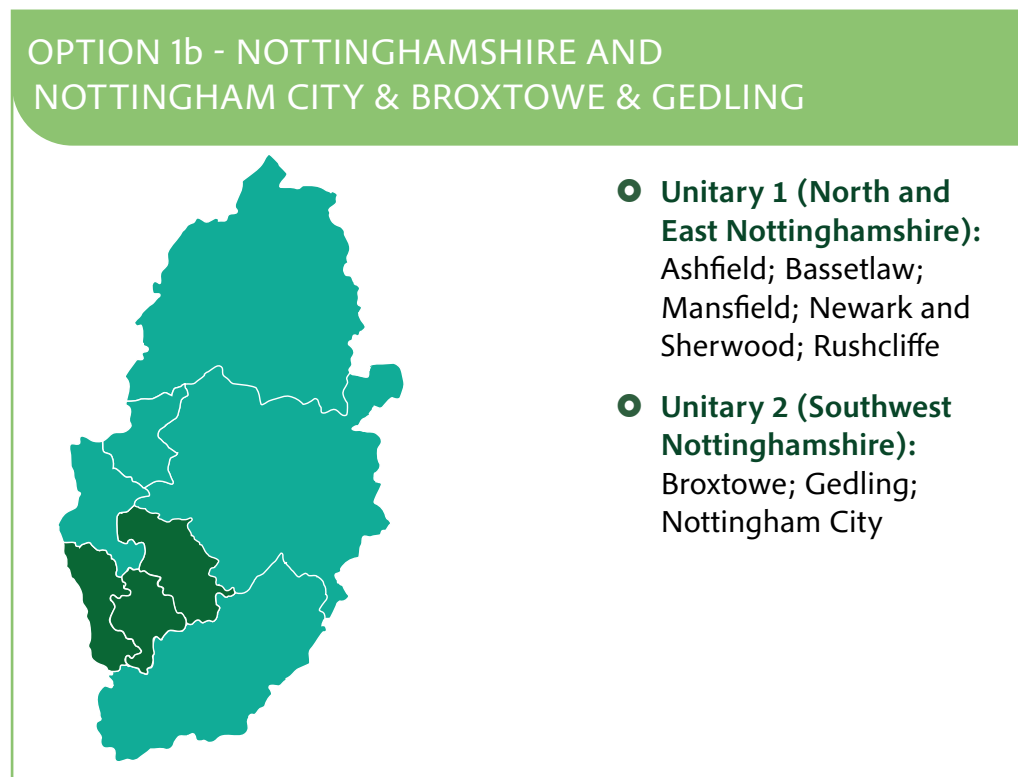


FIGURE 0.13: POPULATION FIGURES FOR EACH UNITARY IN OPTION 1b (BASE CASE)

POPULATION ²⁹	
Unitary 1: Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood + Rushcliffe	612,759
Unitary 2: Broxtowe + Gedling + Nottingham City	561,011



29 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Assessment of the Base Case of Option 1b against the government's criteria

CRITERIA	BASE CASE ASSESSMENT (WHOLE DISTRICT BUILDING BLOCKS WITH NO MODIFICATION OF BOUNDARY)
1. Single tier of local government	Defines two unitary councils based on the existing district building blocks, meeting the requirement to outline a Base Case on whole district building blocks and removing existing two-tier governance structures across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. With this model being based on existing district boundaries, it limits the opportunity to reflect the true local identity of residents that is evidenced through the consultation findings.
2. Right size and financial resilience	A balanced population size across both unitary councils would be maintained in addition to a well aligned rural-urban contrast between the two authorities to support targeted service delivery. However, proportions of the Housing Market Area growth sites and Travel to Work Areas to Nottingham City would not be included in the proposed city conurbation of Unitary 2 and it also excludes the strategic growth sites on the South-Eastern and South-Western edges of the conurbation, including the Trent Arc (A453 corridor). This therefore limits the economic, housing and development growth opportunities that would support future economic resilience and sustainability.
3. High-quality and sustainable services	The proposal would establish single tier local government across both unitary councils to remove duplication across service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The aligned rural-urban geographical split of this proposal would create a greater imbalance of time between key services and deprivation scores compared to the other considered options, making service delivery standardisation inconsistent across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.
4. Local collaboration and responsiveness to views	The unitary authorities of balanced population size would support collaboration with peers as no one dominant voice but would require formal agreements and processes for collaboration and joint working between the new authorities. This option's configuration complies with legal requirements as it is based on district administrative boundaries. However, it does not consider ward-level modifications shown to be supported by Nottingham City residents through our local engagement exercises.
5. Support for devolution	Would produce two right-sized, balanced unitary council populations aligned to rural-urban geographies. Fewer authorities across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would reduce the number of democratically accountable partners, reducing complexity and improving timeliness of decision making, especially for housing, planning and growth. As key growth sites are not included under one conurbation unitary, there may be challenges with planning and future growth of the city conurbation into areas outside of the unitary.
6. Community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	To ensure equitable voice and strong and effective local neighbourhood governance for each of the two new unitary authorities, a full electoral review by the Local Government Boundary Commission would occur after vesting day. However, residents in urban areas like Rushcliffe, who naturally associate with the city but are excluded from this proposal, might find it challenging to engage with their new unitary authority, as their sense of community identity may not align with the new administrative boundaries.

Constraints and weaknesses of the Base Case

We acknowledge that the Base Case aligns with government criteria recommendations. However, while district building blocks might offer a simpler administrative approach, they risk creating boundaries that could fragment communities or dilute the opportunity to develop targeted support to address the specific needs of certain populations and could hamper realising the full potential of economic growth opportunities.

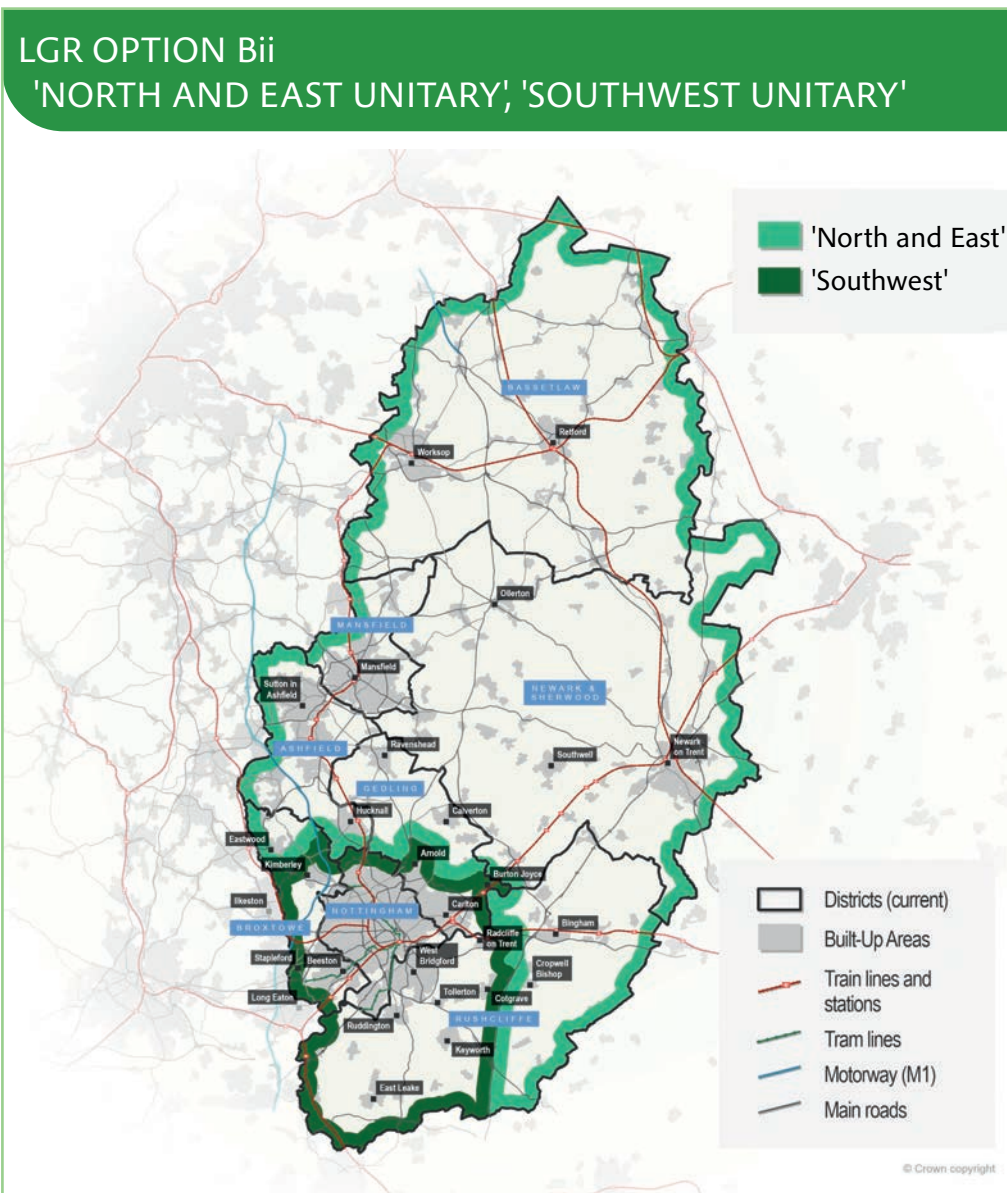
There are key constraints of the Base Case, that our Modified Proposal (Bii) addresses:

- The Base Case does not create a balanced boundary that captures the full footprint of Nottingham, undermining the long-term economic potential of the city, the wider conurbation and the associated benefits this would have for the whole county
- The Base Case does not reflect the rural/urban nature of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and therefore does not reflect our communities' inherent sense of identity and belonging
- Without encompassing our rural/urban communities within separate unitary councils, service delivery and preventative interactions will not be tailored to target specific demographic needs
- As Nottingham's conurbation footprint will sit across two unitary councils, we will not be able to maximise economic growth or provide the strongest financial stability for the city, as cross-boundary bureaucracy will be inevitable and will slow down decision making, ownership and accountability



The Best Solution – a modified proposal (Bii)

FIGURE 0.14: OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



POPULATION

North and East: Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood and parts of Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	561,213
Southwest: Nottingham City and parts of Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	612,557

The following sections of this case for change will elaborate on why we believe a modified proposal is the best option for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, maximising economic growth potential, enabling tailored and focused service delivery, and better reflecting our communities and their sense of identity and belonging.

Our proposal is first and foremost driven by our communities and the areas they identify with, overlaid with a detailed strategic assessment of future service delivery and financial sustainability. Bii uniquely combines the most advantageous aspects of Option 1b and Option 1e and ensures that each new unitary is optimally configured to deliver tailored services, foster local identity, and promote sustainable growth, ultimately leading to a more responsive and representative local government structure for all residents.

Introduction to the Modified Proposal

To best serve our communities, drive economic growth, ensure long term sustainability and to build upon current communities and their sense of belonging, we are requesting government implementation of Bii is not entirely bound by existing district building blocks. Our proposal is for a modification of the Base Case outlined in the previous section.

While the Base Case for Local Government Reorganisation provides a legally compliant and administratively simple foundation, Bii builds upon these strengths but takes it further to ensure we are maximising the opportunity

LGR is presenting to truly transform local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and do what is right for our communities, getting it right first time.

Bii unlocks much needed structural and economic growth opportunities across the county and ensures that the new unitary authorities are better positioned to deliver targeted, high-quality, sustainable services and foster a more resilient and prosperous future for all residents, making it a more effective option for achieving the government's transformation and growth objectives.

Our rationale for the proposed two unitary proposal with ward-level modifications

Nottinghamshire is a diverse county with a rural, polycentric north and east, shaped by its towns, villages and surrounding rural landscape, while in the Southwest, the urban conurbation around Nottingham City very much drives identity and belonging.

The north and east have at their heart their coal mining, textiles and agricultural heritage, with a modern economy that is still driven by agriculture, but has diversified to include forestry, light manufacturing, and increasingly, logistics and renewable energy as key industries. The conurbation in the Southwest is a hub for advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, an expanding life-sciences sector, higher education institutions and a rich sporting heritage that spans football, cricket, racing, tennis, and national ice and water sports centres.

Bii seeks to recognise and build on this, putting local identities and communities' sense of belonging based on where they live, work and study at the heart of our proposal, and by doing so, grouping communities together in two new balanced unitary councils, based on their sense of identity and sense of belonging, to enable tailored and focused service

delivery to meet their differing needs and to maximise their respective rural and urban economic potential.

Strengths of our proposal

Bii is underpinned by several compelling arguments focussing on resident identity, sense of belonging, economic growth, and the efficient and effective delivery of services.

● Reflects our communities

Our proposal is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work, and study. 51% of the people who work in Nottingham live outside the city's boundaries, meaning they have no say in how the city is run nor do they contribute financially through their Council Tax to support the infrastructure they use on a daily basis. Bii incorporates 71.4% of the Nottingham Travel to Work Area, compared with the 65.2% that is incorporated within 1b and the 66.7% within 1e.³⁰

A significant 72% of respondents³¹ emphasised the importance of meeting local needs and ensuring fairness across all parts of the area as part of the LGR process. Our proposal is built to deliver this, clustering similar local communities together to create two new balanced unitary councils, building on communities' sense of belonging to create cohesion across the county's diverse requirements that will allow service delivery to be tailored and focused on local needs.

The majority of people who live in the Nottingham conurbation identify with the city, whilst the rest of the county have a more polycentric sense of belonging. This local sense of belonging was confirmed through our extensive resident engagement and survey undertaken as part of our options analysis, with residents within Broxtowe, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe, commonly referencing Nottingham as the place they

30 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

31 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

would describe they are from, whereas residents from Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood tended to cite a local town, Sherwood Forest or Nottinghamshire as a county as the area they are from.

By actively celebrating and nurturing the unique characteristics, heritage and cultural assets that define each local area, from historic market towns to vibrant city neighbourhoods, Bii can build a stronger, more cohesive collective identity.

Bii is considered the 'most sensible and logical solution' by approximately half of Nottingham City respondents³², validating the proposed boundary for Bii as being the best solution across all proposals.

● Enables economic growth

Our proposal is built to enable growth opportunities and will strengthen local industries, reflecting current work patterns and development priorities and ensuring required decision-making sits within sensible economic areas.

- In the North and East, economic growth can be targeted around key industries that are delivered in the region such as agriculture, forestry, light manufacturing, and increasingly, logistics and renewable energy.
- In the Southwest, economic growth will be built around Nottingham, one of the UK's Core Cities that have been identified as having a 'unique set of strengths that make them worthy of focus in a plan to regenerate the UK'³³. By bringing together the conurbation and surrounding areas into a single unitary we will release the region's potential by placing strategic decision-making under a single planning authority that will have the mandate to drive economic growth across the region.

"...for every 100 jobs created through a business opening a new office, a further 44 are created in the wider region from the increased economic activity in the supply chain."³⁴

● Improves financial stability for both unitary councils

Our proposal offers a strong foundation for financial stability and operational confidence. Both councils are closely aligned in terms of population and net operating costs, ensuring fairness across the board. However, each unitary council will need to deliver efficiency savings to meet the forecast budget gap to allow sufficient reserves to cover the cost of transition.



³² <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

³³ UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF THE UK'S CITIES - FINAL REPORT_0.pdf

³⁴ UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF THE UK'S CITIES - FINAL REPORT_0.pdf

	OPTION Bii	
	North and East <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	Southwest <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>
28/29 Core Funding	£591,994,670	£650,897,745
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£615,192,642	£710,673,316
28/29 'Year 1' Budget Gap	£23,197,972	£59,775,571
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc demand pressures	£80,800,770	£177,970,897
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	£43,189,317	£71,201,184

Table using consistent data with other models but out-of-date financial position

The table above uses data from an initial analysis of the position – it is presented here to provide consistency with other Nottingham and Nottinghamshire models to support clarity for decision makers.

However, the use of the above initial analysis poses a fundamental challenge. Nottingham City Council, the largest constituent of the proposed Southwest unitary, expects to be at least £147m better off than the above cumulative budget gap based on subsequent analysis using the latest City Council MTFP (published in November 2025). This is not solely due to Fair Funding.

Conversely, other councils may face a worsening situation, but the expected impact of Fair Funding, which is a major influencing factor should be materially significant to all councils.

For the avoidance of doubt, Nottingham City Council has no concerns about the quality of the modelling in thoroughness or approach. However, Nottingham City Council has concerns that the initial analysis does not accurately reflect the current position. Agreement between all Nottinghamshire councils could not be reached to enable the most up-to-date information to be used. While the City Council has continued to use the initial analysis to support direct comparisons, PwC were able to update the financial modelling as shown below.

	OPTION Bii	
	North and East <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	Southwest <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>
28/29 Core Funding	£591,994,670	£752,541,745
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£615,192,642	£763,598,316
28/29 'Year 1' Budget Gap	£23,197,972	£1,056,571
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc demand pressures	£80,800,770	£43,311,897
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	£43,189,317	-£66,778,816

Financial modelling based on up-to-date financial position

The subsequent analysis using the latest City Council MTFP (published in November 2025) presents a positive picture on the benefits of Local Government Reorganisation for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, on both transition costs and transformation. While the disaggregation of services in Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe introduces a slight increase in

implementation costs, the impact is minimal. Financial returns are generated from transformation activities that are delivered almost from vesting day arising from economies of scale so that that payback happens within a year. The financial benefits continue to grow, marking a turning point where investment begins to pay off in real, measurable ways.



OPTION Bii TRANSFORMATION BENEFITS

NET SUMMARY BASE				
Financial Year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4-10
Total Benefits	£16,909,284	£33,818,589	£67,637,178	£67,637,178
North and East <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	£8,039,619	£16,079,239	£32,158,478	£32,158,478
Southwest <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	£8,869,675	£17,739,350	£35,478,700	£35,478,700
North and East Total Costs	£4,845,730	£4,845,730	£4,845,730	£1,615,243
Southwest Total Costs	£4,911,700	£4,911,700	£4,911,700	£1,637,233
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Bii presents a structure that is fit for the future and can weather financial storms, unlock efficiencies, and can offer improved, sustained service.

● Drives housing strategies and infrastructure planning:

Significant opportunities for coordinated investment, planning and development will be created by better aligning local living and commuting patterns and including a greater proportion of the Inner Nottingham Housing Market and Travel to Work Areas in the Southwest Unitary. By creating two new balanced unitary councils that have a differentiated urban and rural focus, our proposal aims to streamline decision making and reduce administrative duplication, enabling both the Southwest and North and East Unitary Councils to align their housing strategies with the economic development and infrastructure priorities of their communities.

- 76.7% of the Inner Nottingham Housing Market Area will be included under the Southwest Unitary in our proposal, compared to 70.4% with option 1b and 70.9% with option 1e³⁵. This provides greater opportunity for housing development and growth to meet the growing conurbation needs of Nottingham City in the Southwest Unitary.
- Strategic focus that was previously diverted away from rural areas to urban centres bordering the current Nottingham City Council area will be redirected towards addressing the specific housing demands of the rural communities in the North and East Unitary. This fosters a more balanced approach to regional development across the area, providing the opportunity to mitigate historical housing deficits and promote sustainable community development in line with the specific polycentric nature of the North and East.

● Improves investment opportunities

Businesses looking to relocate or open new offices will look for cities with a certain population, skills mix and economic size in which to invest. With official statistics often recorded at a local authority level, it is currently too easy

for businesses to exclude Nottingham from investment decisions, as the city may appear not to meet their criteria given its current constrained boundaries. By creating a unitary that captures the actual conurbation of the city, the true city, with its much larger population, talent pool and economic potential, the reality of what Nottingham has to offer will be reflected in official statistics which will improve the perception of the city and what it has to offer – in turn driving future investments into the area.

Unlocking the potential the city has to offer will act as a catalyst for broader regional growth. When businesses invest in urban centres, they not only create direct jobs within the city but also stimulate additional employment and economic activity in the surrounding areas through supply chains and increased demand for goods and services. This ripple effect means that city investment will benefit the North and East Unitary as well as the Southwest Unitary, strengthening local industries, attracting further business, and driving prosperity across the county's urban and rural communities.

● Aligns with EMCCA priorities

The strategic priorities and projects that have been developed by EMCCA dovetail perfectly into Bii.

- The North and East Unitary will be able to leverage EMCCA initiatives tailored to its polycentric and rural character to drive economic growth, including the Supercluster - a clean energy and innovation hub centred on three former power stations, projected to deliver 6,800 new homes, 15,500 jobs, and £930m in annual GVA. The Heartlands initiative will empower communities in Ashfield, Mansfield, and surrounding villages to shape their own development, with options for infrastructure upgrades, business support, and community-led projects, while the Canal Corridor will position the unitary as a national leader in advanced manufacturing, innovation, and sustainability, attracting investment and driving future growth.

35 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

- The Southwest Unitary is positioned as a strategic growth corridor, aligning with the Trent Arc, which will drive urban regeneration between Derby and Nottingham, including delivery of 30,000 new homes, creation of over 40,000 jobs, and adding £2.4b annually to the local economy. It benefits from nearly £2b in transport investment to improve connectivity between Nottingham, Derby and major employment zones, driving transformative regeneration of industrial sites and creating new communities.³⁶

Because this is the only option being proposed where EMCCA's economic growth initiatives sit neatly within the unitary councils, the benefits of not having to work across different democratic boundaries will streamline processes and ensure that devolution priorities are not hindered by bureaucracy and differing local priorities and agendas.

● Creates balanced boundaries

While our boundaries have been built around our communities, they also ensure a balance across metrics, which will be key in driving successful service delivery and ensuring the long-term financial health of both unitary councils.

From the data analysis completed during the options appraisal, Bii has the best balance across key metrics compared to the other options considered. All three options are very balanced with regard to current and population forecast, the percentage of the population in working age and those within that same age group who are currently economically inactive.

While option 1b scores higher with regard to total GVA, Bii scores highest/joint highest across all other metrics.

Most importantly, Bii scores highest in driving a balanced Council Tax base (across band D properties), projected Council Tax receipts and projected combined social care to Council Tax receipt ratio across the proposed two new unitary councils for each model. Given these are the two critical income and cost bases for local authorities, it is crucial these are as balanced as possible to ensure future unitary councils are balanced and financially sustainable.



³⁶ <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

FIGURE 0.15: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR EACH OF THE CONSIDERED OPTIONS (Bii, 1b, 1e)

	OUR PROPOSAL (Bii)		OPTION 1b		OPTION 1e	
	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY	UNITARY 1: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND REMAINING LAS	UNITARY 2: NOTTINGHAM, BROXTOWE, GEDLING	UNITARY 1: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND REMAINING LAS	UNITARY 2: NOTTINGHAM, BROXTOWE, RUSHCLIFFE
Population (ONS 2023) ³⁷	561,213	612,557	612,759	561,011	607,468	566,302
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ³⁸	604,125	660,520	661,460	603,185	653,127	611,518
Total GVA (ONS 2023) (£m)	£13,025m	£19,619m	£14,993m	£17,651m	£13,279m	£19,365m
GVA per capita (ONS 2023) (£) ³⁹	£23,208	£32,028	£24,468	£31,463	£21,860	£34,496
Council tax base (no. of band D equivalent properties) (Council Tax Base 2024) ⁴⁰	191,328	190,814	214,400	167,742	207,349	174,793
Projected Council Tax receipts (2032/33) ⁴¹	£415,699,141	£380,705,437	£470,435,575	£359,340,174	£449,735,749	£380,332,467
Projected Combined Social Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio (2032/33) ⁴²	0.93	0.94	0.87	0.94	0.92	0.87
% of population in working age (16-64) ⁴³	60%	64%	60%	64%	60.0%	64.0%
Unemployment rates (as % of economically active population) ⁴⁴	4.9%	5.0%	4.6%	5.3%	4.9%	5.0%
Economically Inactive rate (as a % of 16-64 population) ⁴⁵	22.9%	22.2%	22.7%	22.3%	23.0%	22.0%
Average deprivation score ⁴⁶	22.5	24.3	20.7	26.5	22.3	24.7

37 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

38 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

39 Regional gross domestic product: local authorities - Office for National Statistics

40 Council Taxbase 2024 in England - GOV.UK

41 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

42 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

45 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

44 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

45 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

46 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

*Note: For all data published at the Local Authority or District level, proportional population percentages assigned to each new unitary authority were applied to the dataset values. This method was used to estimate the distribution of statistics for districts involved in a boundary review under the proposed model.

● Improves service delivery

While all two unitary options for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will benefit from consolidation of IT systems and licensing, and will be able to build on the current infrastructure of the County Council and Nottingham City Council, who both already deliver key services such as adults' and children's services, our proposal will provide a more equitable split of finances and demand, and better reflects the two diverse communities of the rural North and East and the urban Southwest. This demographic split is critical in enabling targeted service delivery and preventative initiatives that can be designed and delivered around local needs, tailored to the distinct communities across the unitary councils, truly moving beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and delivering much better value for money.

- With social care being by far the largest service any authority faces, our proposal provides the most equitable model across demand and Council Tax ratio. When comparing projected combined social care spend to Council Tax receipts ratios for each option, our proposal provides a 0.93 ratio in the North and East Unitary and a 0.94 ratio in the Southwest, compared to 0.87 to 0.94 respective ratios for 1b and 0.92 to 0.87 respective ratios for 1e, evidencing our proposal as the most balanced model for service demand and spend.
- Homelessness and housing management are key areas of challenge and focus across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and at a national level. Our proposal adopts a rural-urban split, recognising the distinct needs of each area and enabling targeted interventions for each unitary's distinct demographic. A higher concentration of homelessness in the Southwest Unitary (7.2 per 1,000 households) compared to the North and East Unitary (3.4 per 1,000 households),

presents the opportunity to scale focused initiatives to address the different homelessness challenges faced by rural and urban communities, enabling targeted interventions to be deployed to address the nuanced need of the different communities.

Considerations for Bii

It is more complex with the boundary changes: Bii is based on ward rather than district boundaries as we believe this creates a balanced geography, better aligned services and future growth for both unitary councils. We understand this comes with political, financial and practical considerations; however we will mitigate this through extensive engagement and consultation with partners where the boundary changes may impact operationally such as police beats and school catchment areas. As part of our implementation planning we will undertake key 'no regret' activities - activities that will be required irrelevant of MHCLG decision, such as data cleansing, alignment of job roles/titles and consolidation of contract consolidation - and begin planning as early as possible.

Does not cover the full conurbation: Whilst we have put our communities' sense of belonging at the heart of Bii, we have been diligent in ensuring that we also create a balanced boundary and two financially sustainable unitary councils. This has meant that Bii cannot fully cover the total conurbation area, excluding areas such as Hucknall in Ashfield, the northern most parts of Gedling, and the northern tip of Broxtowe, as including these areas would create an imbalance across the unitary councils for both future growth opportunities and financial sustainability. Our proposal includes the greatest proportion of the Nottingham Travel to Work Area (TTWA) within the Southwest Unitary (71.4%)⁴⁷ whilst maintaining balanced population sizes for both unitary councils. Option 1a was the only option considered that incorporated a greater proportion of the TTWA, however 1a was discounted due to the population imbalance between the two unitary councils, as referenced in the options analysis.

47 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Payback period increases slightly: Disaggregating services from current district footprints may cause some one-time transition costs, but this only minimally extends the overall payback time (0.4 years compared to other options). We will continue to work with S151 officers to develop stringent governance across the programme, monitoring costs and savings.

On top of these challenges, there are additional considerations that would result from any of the proposals being put forward for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. These are largely focused on disaggregation of county services, ensuring seamless delivery of services through transition and financial and operational complexities.

Our proposed unitary councils

North and East Unitary

The North and East Unitary is polycentric in its makeup, consisting of a number of key towns and villages that sit within a wider rural hinterland.

The key towns in the North and East Unitary are Mansfield, Newark-on-Trent, Worksop and Retford – the former being shaped historically by coal mining and textiles, while the latter two are more historically and to this day shaped by the agriculture sector that surrounds them, and are therefore key hubs for food manufacturing, logistics and engineering.

Having emerged from the shadows of previous industries, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood are now home to logistics and warehousing provision, capitalising on their central position within the UK and the locality and access to both the A1 and M1.

Worksop and Retford to the north of the county are predominantly surrounded by agricultural land stretching to the Lincolnshire border. Numerous villages and hamlets with lower population densities surround these key towns, with arable and mixed farming, food production and supply chains, and rural services driving the local economy. Again, locality and access to the A1 corridor has driven a growth in distribution hubs in the area.

Interspersed between the towns and villages is farmland and woodland, with Sherwood Forest being both a cultural and environmental asset, driving both rural tourism and leisure activities.

North and East Unitary opportunities

- There is a strong heritage and cultural identity in this part of the county that is different to the urban conurbation, which a single unitary will be able to champion and empower
- Economically, rural Nottinghamshire remains reliant on agriculture, forestry, food production, logistics, and a thriving sector of small-to-medium enterprises, often concentrated within its market towns. The economic history and current focus of industries is very different than those in the Southwest Unitary, allowing the unitary to focus on targeting economic growth on sectors unique to their demographic
- There are natural links between the towns and communities in this area, more so than with the city, with well-established transport and bus routes as well as latent connections that can be redeveloped, such as the Nottingham Suburban Railway (industrial lines connecting collieries) that can be built upon to drive sustainable growth
- The EMCCA growth strategies demonstrate significant potential for the development of the North and East Unitary, with the Supercluster initiative establishing a major clean energy and innovation hub that will attract investment and create high-skilled jobs. The Heartlands programme targets the revitalisation of Ashfield, Mansfield, and nearby villages, ensuring these communities gain from focused support and economic regeneration. Additionally, projects along the Canal Corridor, such as the Explore Park in Worksop, showcase ambition and provide tangible opportunities for sustainable growth in the wider region.

- The 4,444 projected shortfall of housing in the area over the next 15 years within this area will be easier to address for a single unitary, as decisions can be made for the whole area, not bound by current districts, making them more streamlined, less bureaucratic and more driven by a single planning and building department
- The proposal will allow focus on delivering services and promoting inclusive growth across a polycentric geography of towns and villages without having to compete with or be distracted by larger, urban demands from the conurbation
- Services can be tailored to support a lower population density and more disparate communities, targeting delivery of focused services and preventative interventions that addresses the need of this demographic
- It will enable full focus on flooding control that typically only affects communities within the North and East unitary area

North and East Unitary considerations

- The 'centre of gravity' would move further north in the county as the communities surrounding the conurbation boundary are likely to continue to use city services, which could lead to a lack of focus and support on border areas near to the city, creating a disparity in service provision
- The unitary will have to ensure that both the more rural and the urban industrial areas, such as Ashfield and Mansfield, are all provided for in terms of service delivery and focused economic support
- The unitary will have to establish effective ways to represent disparate communities across a large geography, with a high reliance on Local Area Committees

Southwest Unitary

The city of Nottingham is at the heart of the Southwest Unitary, reflecting its current influence and centrality as a place for urban growth, economic opportunities across the conurbation footprint and the role it plays in people's lives as a place of work, leisure, culture and identification.

The Southwest Unitary conurbation is defined by its exceptional sporting and cultural offer, anchored by world-renowned venues such as the City Ground (football), Meadow Lane (football), Trent Bridge (cricket), the Racecourse and the Greyhound Stadium, the Tennis Centre, the National Ice Centre, the National Water Sports Centre and its two sports villages. This strong identity not only attracts significant sporting tourism but also fosters a dynamic environment for community engagement and economic growth.

Beyond its strong athletic spirit, the Southwest Unitary offers a rich cultural experience with extensive shopping districts, a lively nightlife, and a variety of cultural institutions including theatres, museums and historical landmarks like Nottingham Castle.

Consolidating these diverse sporting and cultural assets under a single authority will unlock further opportunities, streamlining development, enhancing visitor experiences, and amplifying the region's appeal as a go-to destination for both athletic pursuits and broader cultural enrichment. It will enable more coherent planning of the city as a destination – again driving economic growth.

The largest employers across the conurbation are the NHS and the higher education sector, with Nottingham being home to the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. Other dominant sectors in the area include financial and professional services, with Experian and Capital One located in Nottingham as well as being home to the headquarters for Boots UK, which sits at the heart of the UK's pharmaceutical sector.

Given these large employers are all based in and around the city, the local conurbation area hosts a significant commuter belt, with 51% of people who currently work in the city every day not residing within the boundaries

of Nottingham as they are currently defined. This means that the majority of people who actually work in the city, have no say in how the city is run nor do they contribute financially through their Council Tax to support the infrastructure they use on a daily basis.

The Southwest Unitary seeks to address this imbalance, capturing the vast majority of the commuter belt in its footprint (71.4% of the Nottingham TTWA), but consciously leaving small pockets of communities outside its boundaries to ensure financial and population parity and stability with the North and East Unitary.

Southwest Unitary opportunities

- Addresses the issue of the city being constrained, truly reflecting the city's conurbation footprint and providing much-needed growth opportunities
- By addressing current boundary constraints, Nottingham's national statistics, that are regularly viewed by investors, will improve, driving higher economic investment and opportunities across the region. By improving these statistics, the city will be more attractive to investors and will be able to truly meet its economic and growth potential
- Aligns with travel to work patterns, capturing how people naturally live and commute - this proposal includes 71% of the population in the Travel to Work Area, including the 51% of people who work in the city but do not live there, reflecting a more comprehensive representation of the working population's natural identity
- Including key sporting facilities (City Ground, Meadow Lane, Trent Bridge, Racecourse, Greyhound Stadium, Tennis Centre, National Ice Centre, National Water Sports Centre and two sports villages) within one authority will support economic growth built on sporting tourism, and provides the opportunity to streamline planning to support initiatives.

The unitary council will be able to capture Council Tax from these venues to support the infrastructure provided to support them

- Urban expansion presents a vital opportunity to embed biodiversity into city infrastructure and the fabric of new developments, enabling the creation of greener, more connected neighbourhoods and climate-resilient spaces that support both nature and people. By making space for wildlife and enhancing access to green areas, these developments deliver significant health and wellbeing benefits for residents creating nature rich beautiful spaces for people and an activated healthy sustainable city.

Expansion acts as a key enabler for harnessing ecosystem services—such as improved air quality, climate resilience, and enhanced wellbeing—while unlocking green finance mechanisms like biodiversity credits and net gain schemes. These tools align investment with ecological outcomes and promote long-term environmental stewardship.

In line with Professor Sir John Lawton's principles of "bigger, better, more joined-up"⁴⁸ ecological networks, urban growth should be seen as a strategic opportunity to:

- Scale up green spaces (bigger),
- Improve their ecological quality (better), and
- Connect habitats across the city (more joined-up).

Green finance plays a crucial role in enabling this transformation by funding nature-based solutions such as green roofs, wetlands, and pollinator corridors; supporting community-led greening projects; incentivising biodiversity-positive development; and integrating ecological goals into planning and infrastructure. Together, these approaches can be transformative creating inclusive, resilient and nature-rich environments

48 <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/43641/the-lawton-review-factsheet.pdf>

CASE STUDY

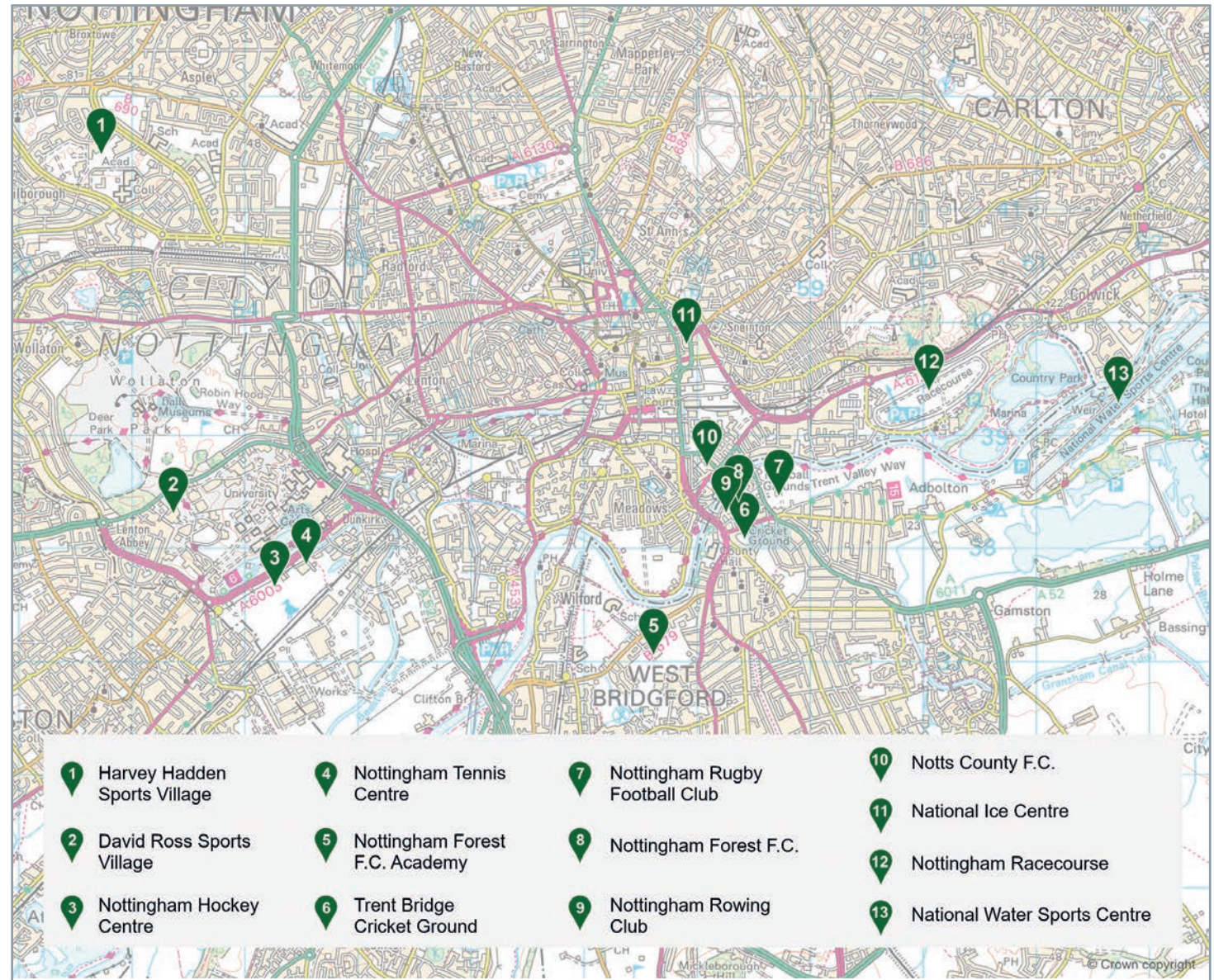
Regeneration Framework for the Trent Sports Campus

The Trent Sports Campus sits within a strategic location for EMCCA development as outlined in their Vision for Growth (2025). A regeneration framework is being developed to set a future vision for the campus to maximise the growth and development opportunities around Nottingham's sporting hub.

Bii fully complements the cross-boundary geography of the campus, as the Southwest Unitary includes both Nottingham City and southern Rushcliffe.



FIGURE 0.16: SPORTING ASSETS IN NOTTINGHAM



Southwest Unitary considerations

- There is a fundamental requirement to ensure both unitary councils are balanced in any proposal put forward, which has significantly informed the suggested boundaries and led to considered limitation of the size of the Southwest Unitary. Our proposal consciously strikes a balance between including a significant proportion of the conurbation footprint (71.4% of the TTWA) whilst also ensuring financial sustainability for both unitary councils
- Given we have consciously set a balanced boundary between the two unitary councils, the Southwest Unitary may be viewed as not being big enough, without enough space to grow, especially to the north, given Nottingham is the seventh largest conurbation by population nationally. However, analysis of potential options shows that any proposal that reflects the true footprint of the city would lead to an imbalance with the second unitary and threaten the long-term financial stability of the unitary councils
- There are areas within the conurbation that may consider themselves more aligned to their rural community and not part of the city. It is key to note that this proposal is not for a larger Nottingham City unitary authority, but for two brand new, sustainable unitary councils for the county, that addresses the MHCLG criteria, and most importantly is built around communities and a sense of identity and belonging, whilst ensuring a balanced and sensible geographic area where residents are supported, represented and have a voice to drive the local priorities and agendas that are important to them.



How our proposal aligns with the Government's Five Missions

The UK government has established five missions as part of its commitment to a mission-led approach in delivering change. This proposal aims to enhance the resilience, efficiency, and strategic capabilities of unitary councils, thereby supporting national objectives, particularly those focused on economic growth, fiscal responsibility and public service delivery.

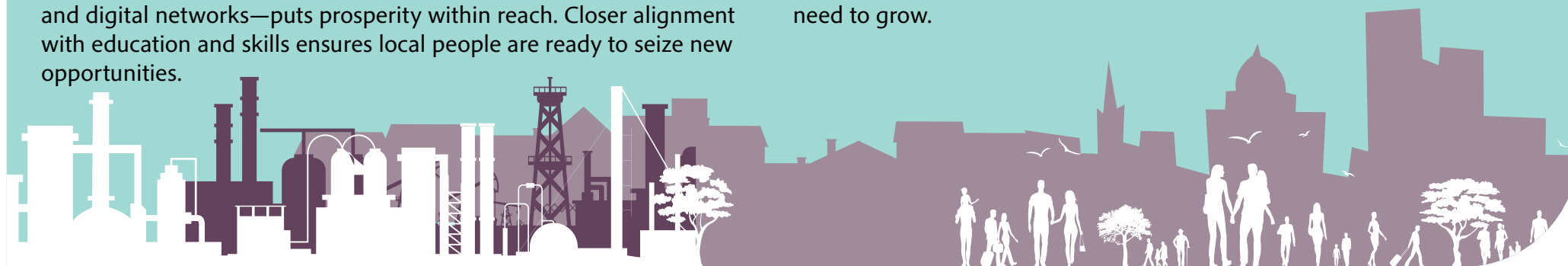
Strong foundations: Although Local Government Reorganisation does not set monetary policy, bigger and more streamlined councils can make a real difference. Our proposal will reduce administrative overheads and boost efficiency, by aligning cohesive rural and urban neighbourhoods, with their specific needs and priorities, under singular unitary councils to deliver targeted services and prevention agendas, that will deliver better public services for less, keeping local spending in check.

Accelerating economic growth: This approach unlocks bold, joined-up economic strategies across the southwest, putting the region firmly on the investment map, the North and East Authority can focus on delivering the opportunities for growth beyond the city economy, such as STEP Fusion and the Trent Energy Supercluster, inclusive growth in key towns like Newark, Mansfield, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Sutton-in-Ashfield, Ollerton, Worksop and Retford and supporting the rural economy. Backing local businesses, creating jobs, and driving major infrastructure projects—like cutting-edge transport and digital networks—puts prosperity within reach. Closer alignment with education and skills ensures local people are ready to seize new opportunities.

Building an NHS fit for the future: As larger unitary councils, we can join forces with nhs partners to break down silos and offer joined-up care. Working across wider areas means smoother patient journeys, quicker hospital discharges, and more resources for prevention and wellbeing—helping keep people out of hospital and staying healthier for longer, reducing public spending across sectors.

Making our streets safer: By working hand-in-hand with police, and fire and rescue partners, the unitary councils can roll out strategies that keep Nottingham and Nottinghamshire safe for everyone. Strong governance and a thriving economy also build safer, more cohesive communities where public services are delivered where they matter most.

Breaking down barriers to opportunity: With powerful partnerships and top-class education at every stage, the area is primed to open doors for all. Larger scale brings even tighter links between skills and local jobs, giving residents the chance to thrive and businesses the talent they need to grow.



Criteria 1: A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government

- a) Proposals should be for sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base which does not create an undue advantage or disadvantage for one part of the area
- b) Proposals should be for a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs
- c) Proposals should be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve, including evidence of estimated costs/benefits and local engagement
- d) Proposals should describe clearly the single tier local government structures it is putting forward for the whole of the area, and explain how, if implemented, these are expected to achieve the outcomes described

Strengths of Bii

- **Creates balanced boundaries:**
Having considered our communities and key demographic and financial metrics, our proposal is the most balanced option that will set up the two new unitary councils for equitable service delivery and long-term financial sustainability.
- **Enables economic growth:**
By aligning local government boundaries with real economic patterns, the plan unlocks targeted growth for both rural industries and Nottingham's urban core, maximising regional potential.
- **Drives housing strategies and infrastructure planning:**
Coordinated planning across new unitary councils will better match housing and infrastructure to local living and commuting patterns, supporting both urban expansion and rural development.

1.1 Sensible economic areas with appropriate tax base

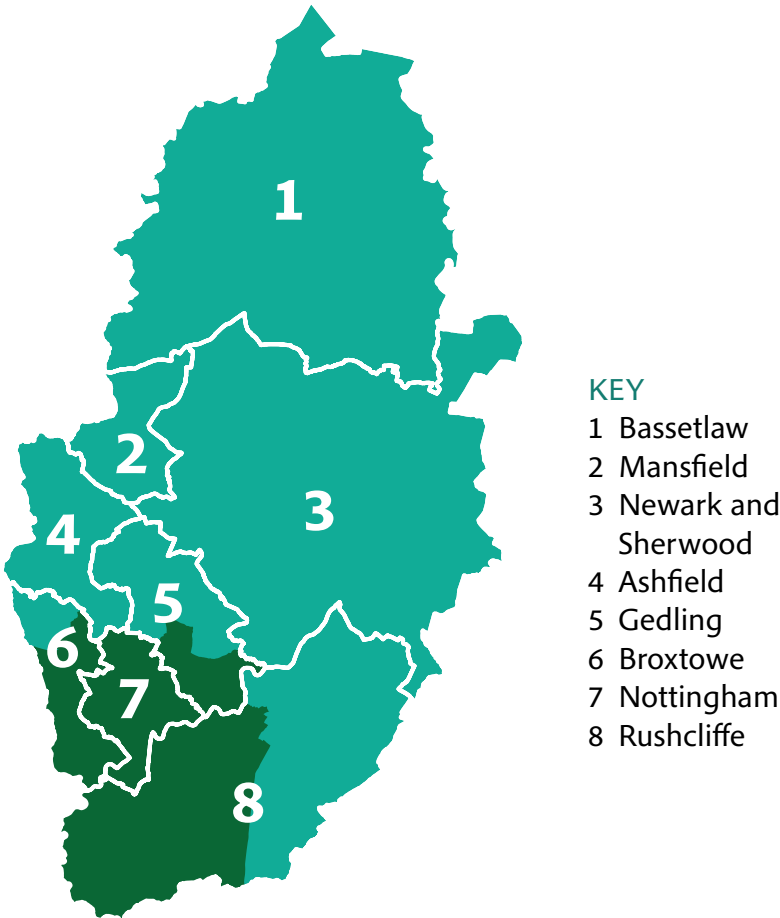
The local identity of the city conurbation of Southwest Nottinghamshire and the surrounding rural North and East Nottinghamshire presents a distinctive contrast shaped by geography, economic activity, historical development and industries, and socio-cultural characteristics. North and East Nottinghamshire, with a population of 561,213, is predominantly rural and semi-rural, characterised by smaller towns and villages, with an economy rooted in agriculture, forestry, light manufacturing and logistics. In contrast, Southwest Nottinghamshire, with a population of 612,557, is a dense,

urban area with a strong economy in advanced manufacturing, digital, and life-sciences, and a vibrant cultural scene centred around sports, history and retail. The key difference lies in Southwest Nottinghamshire's urban, technology-driven identity compared to North and East Nottinghamshire's dispersed, rural and industrially diverse character. These differences in core local identity, economies and geographical structure define distinct service delivery needs for each population.

FIGURE 1.1: COMPARISON OF POPULATION FIGURES FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL, SUPPORTED BY MAP OF PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁴⁹	561,213	612,557
% of total Nottinghamshire population	48%	52%
Geographic area (sq km) ⁵¹	1,780	379
% of total Nottinghamshire geographical area	82%	18%
Population density (people per sq km)	315	1,616
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁵¹	604,125	660,520
Forecast population growth (2023-35)	7.6%	7.8%
% of unitary population in rural areas ⁵²	32.8%	11.9%
% of unitary population in urban areas ⁵³	67.2%	88.1%

Boundary Review Model.
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham and parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling



49 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

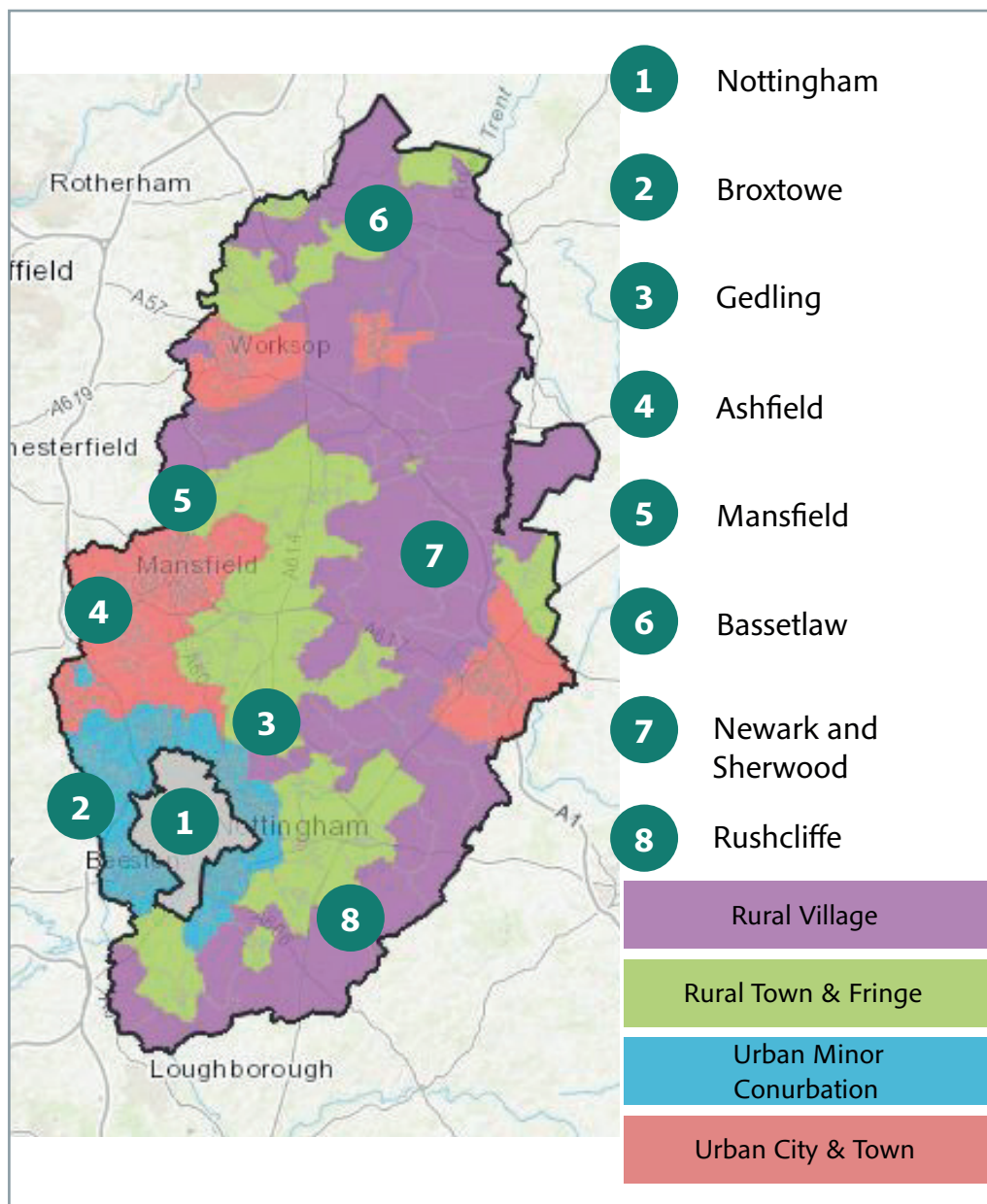
50 Standard Area Measurements for the Electoral Wards (December 2024) in the United Kingdom - Overview

51 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

52 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

53 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

FIGURE 1.2: RURAL-URBAN MAKEUP OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



Bii is very much driven by our communities' sense of local identity and the areas they associate with, recognising the differing priorities and localised agendas for a city that also supports a closely related rural population compared to a more polycentric, dispersed area, made up of towns and villages with a rural hinterland.

Bii will create a North and East Unitary that will consist of a 67% urban population and a 33% rural population, whilst the Southwest Unitary authority will consist of an 88% urban population and a 12% rural population.

Bii achieves a more balanced rural and urban distribution between the two unitary councils than option 1e which has a 18% difference compared to our 21%. While option 1b shows a larger 34% rural and urban difference between the two unitary councils, providing a greater alignment of rural and urban areas, it would result in 96% of the Southern Unitary 2's population being urban, which could constrain opportunities for growth and development that a rural environment provides. This rapid urban expansion and exclusion of Rushcliffe would limit the availability of rural areas necessary to support the true size of the conurbation in the future.

Bii offers a balanced approach between option 1e and 1b, achieving a robust rural-urban split that fosters community identity, strengthens a sense of belonging, and enables tailored service provision. Concurrently, it establishes urban polycentric hubs in the North and East Unitary to drive economic growth and development, while including some rural areas in the Southwest Unitary to support housing and economic development in line with the Trent Arc.



North and East Unitary

FIGURE 1.3: POPULATION FIGURES FOR THE NORTH AND EAST UNITARY

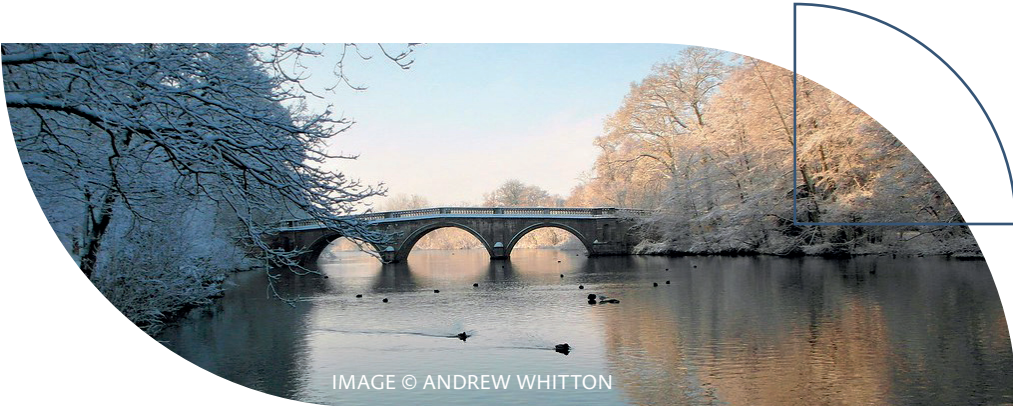
	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁵⁴	561,213
Geographic area (sq km) ⁵⁵	1,780
Population density (people per sq km)	315
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁵⁶	604,125

The rural North and East Unitary is characterised by a wider, predominantly rural and semi-rural area, comprising a network of smaller towns, market centres, and villages, each possessing distinct local characteristics with a more dispersed population compared to the Southwest Unitary. The North and East Unitary’s identity is intrinsically linked to its foundational industries of agriculture, forestry, and light manufacturing. Increasingly, we see a strategic emphasis on logistics, renewable energy, and service-based industries, reflecting an evolving economic landscape.

Our market towns such as Newark, Retford, Worksop and Mansfield serve as crucial local economic and civic hubs, providing essential services and employment. North and East Nottinghamshire’s economy is primarily driven by local enterprises, agricultural production, distribution centres and public sector employment, with retail and leisure offerings being more dispersed rather than concentrated in high-density commercial centres.

A proposed North and East Unitary will establish a more balanced and sustainable governance structure, specifically designed to cater to a predominantly rural population. By strategically delineating areas, the unitary will retain a viable geographical footprint, enabling inclusive growth across its polycentric geography of towns and villages. With a distinct industrial heritage and economy, a single unitary across this region will be able to target polycentric, rural and semi-rural provision, enhancing functional links between rural towns, without being distracted by the demands of the more urban-centric Southwest.

Communities within these areas often exhibit stronger identification with their current county towns, a pattern evidenced by transport routes and service demands, which create natural points of gravity distinct from the city. For example, evidenced through the LGR engagement results, residents in Bassetlaw (68%) and Newark and Sherwood (61%) council areas tend to work and study closest to where they live.⁵⁷ The resulting rural-urban split will foster balanced communities and a mixed economy, enabling the North and East Unitary to develop targeted strategies around its specific rural-urban focuses, stimulate growth in its key industries, and ensure the unique needs of its diverse communities are met without dilution.



54 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf
55 Standard Area Measurements for the Electoral Wards (December 2024) in the United Kingdom - Overview
56 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf
57 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

Southwest Unitary

FIGURE 1.4: POPULATION FIGURES FOR THE SOUTHWEST UNITARY

	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁵⁸	612,557
Geographic area (sq km) ⁵⁹	379
Population density (people per sq km)	1,616
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁶⁰	660,520

The Southwest Unitary presents a dynamic urban identity, shaped by a rich industrial heritage, ongoing modern redevelopment, and a dense population. Culturally, the Southwest Unitary boasts a strong sporting identity, supported by iconic venues like the City Ground, Meadow Lane, Trent Bridge, and the National Water Sports Centre, alongside a Racecourse, Greyhound Stadium, Tennis Centre, the National Ice Centre and two sports villages. Beyond sports, it serves as a major retail and cultural destination, offering extensive shopping districts, a vibrant nightlife, and a wealth of cultural institutions including theatres, museums, and historical landmarks such as Nottingham Castle and the largest network of caves in the UK that are hidden beneath the city’s streets. With a boundary defined by the A46 to the East, and its existing commuter belt to the west, the economic landscape within this unitary is robust, anchored by significant strengths in advanced manufacturing, digital and creative sectors, and a prominent life-sciences cluster, exemplified by BioCity in central Nottingham. The service sector also thrives across the Southwest Unitary area, contributing to a diverse and resilient economy. Key employers such as Boots, Experian, the University of

Nottingham, and Nottingham Trent University underscore the conurbation's economic vitality and its role as a hub for innovation and talent.

The specific boundary change in our proposal presents an opportunity to enhance economic growth in the Southwest Unitary Council, by encompassing a significant proportion of the true Nottingham City conurbation and also strategically integrating surrounding rural areas, offering a more comprehensive and impactful approach compared to the other options considered. This broader inclusion will demonstrably improve key economic statistics for Nottingham as one of the UK’s 12 Core Cities, elevating its overall impression as a desirable location for living and working. Our proposal also directly addresses the skills agenda to develop and align the workforce's capabilities with current and future economic needs, which is central to long-term prosperity. By aligning to the living and working patterns of residents and developing cohesive neighbourhoods, our proposal supports focused efforts on improving employability and skills in line with population needs and the skills agenda, creating a powerful incentive for sustained growth and builds on a more attractive proposition to prospective investors. This ultimately delivers tangible benefits to both residents and businesses within the region by fostering a skilled and adaptable workforce.

Nottingham city status

Nottingham was granted its city status by a royal charter as part of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations on 18 June 1897. To ensure Nottingham's city status is maintained after LGR, new letters patent will need to be issued to the successor body, or a body of charter trustees established, to formally transfer the ceremonial privileges and prevent the status from lapsing due to the abolition of the current council structure.

58 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

59 Standard Area Measurements for the Electoral Wards (December 2024) in the United Kingdom - Overview

60 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Tax base of the new unitary authorities

Our proposed boundary division is designed to ensure the economic viability of both unitary authorities, achieved through balanced Council Tax bases and GVA, which are critical for long-term financial sustainability. By aligning the boundary split with local economic identities and Travel to Work Areas, we will ensure each unitary authority retains its robust economic character. Our approach will foster future economic growth opportunities and maintain a balanced tax base, enabling the provision of tailored services that address the specific needs of the population.

FIGURE 1.5: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR TAX BASE AND ECONOMIC MAKEUP OF OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁶¹	561,213	612,557
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁶²	604,125	660,520
Total GVA (ONS 2023) (£m) ⁶³	£13,025m	£19,619m
GVA per capita (ONS 2023) (£) ⁶⁴	£23,208	£32,028

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Council tax base (no. of band D equivalent properties) (Council Tax Base 2024) ⁶⁵	191,328	190,814
Council tax average band D (modelled weighted average rate - FY2028/29) ⁶⁶	£2,414	£2,492
Projected Council Tax receipts (2032/33) ⁶⁷	£415,699,141	£380,705,437
% of population in working age (16-64) ⁶⁸	60%	64%
Unemployment rates (as % of economically active population) ⁶⁹	4.9%	5.0%
Economically Inactive rate (as a % of 16-64 population) ⁷⁰	22.9%	22.2%
Average deprivation score ⁷¹	22.5	24.3

61 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

62 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

63 Regional gross domestic product: local authorities - Office for National Statistics

64 Regional gross domestic product: local authorities - Office for National Statistics

65 Council Taxbase 2024 in England - GOV.UK

66 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=177&MIId=11441&Ver=4>

67 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

68 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

69 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

70 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

71 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

The current structure of local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire presents significant challenges to both financial sustainability and electoral accountability. Nottingham City Council, as the most boundary-constrained local authority of its type nationally, primarily serves the inner-city areas. Residents from surrounding suburbs heavily utilise the City Council infrastructure for work and leisure, however, their Council Tax contributions are directed to their respective, local district councils. Currently, only 49% of the people who work in the city live within its boundaries, meaning only 49% of people who work there have a vote on how the city is run or contribute funding towards its services and infrastructure⁷³. This disconnect results in a lack of financial contribution to the infrastructure they regularly use and limits the City Council's accountability to a significant portion of its service users.

Bii addresses this issue by creating a unitary that best reflects the commuter belt and the conurbation footprint, whilst ensuring both unitary councils remain financially stable and viable. This will ensure that the vast majority of people will live within the unitary where they work and spend their leisure time, and importantly will contribute towards funding the services and infrastructure they use through Council Tax payments. It will also give them a democratic say in how the area is developed and where the money is spent.



FIGURE 1.6: COMPARISON OF PROJECTED COUNCIL TAX RECEIPTS FOR OPTION 1B, 1E AND OUR PROPOSAL (Bii)

OPTION		COUNCIL TAX RECEIPTS ⁷⁴ (2032/33)
1b	Broxtowe + Gedling + Nottingham City	£359,340,000
	Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood + Rushcliffe	£470,436,000
1e	Broxtowe + Nottingham City + Rushcliffe	£380,332,000
	Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Gedling + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood	£449,736,000
Bii	Parts of Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe and the whole of Nottingham City	£380,705,000
	Parts of Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe and the whole of Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood	£415,699,000

73 2011 Census data - Office for National Statistics (2011 Census data used as 2021 data is not reflective of travel to work patterns due to Covid restrictions)

74 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf



Bii will provide the most balanced tax base compared to the other options considered, when comparing the split of projected Council Tax receipts for 2032/33 across the two new unitary councils. Bii will provide a forecasted split of £415,699,000 for the North and East Unitary and £380,705,000 for the Southwest Unitary, whereas the Base Case model would create a greater imbalance between the two, with a projected Council Tax receipt of £470,436,000 for the Northern and £359,340,000 for the Southern Unitary.

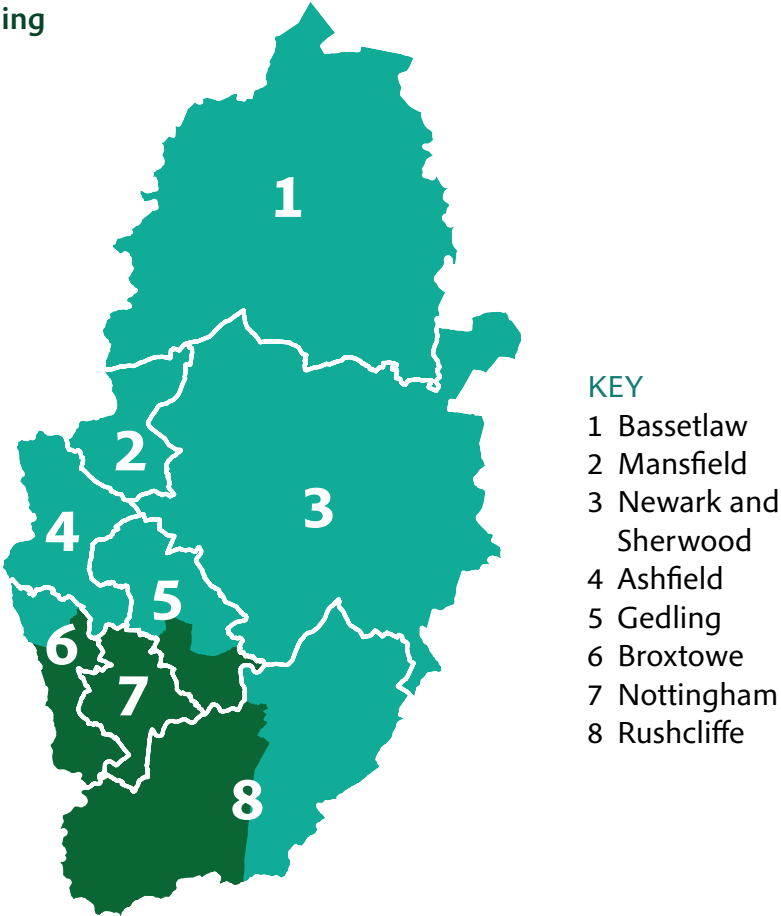
By ensuring that our proposed boundary split considers the most parity in tax base across the two new authorities based on projected Council Tax receipts for 2032/33, we are ensuring the creation of two balanced unitary councils, that reflect people's sense of belonging and identity, and will allow strategically focused economic growth and development around local industry, priorities and needs.



FIGURE 1.7: COMPARISON OF POPULATION FIGURES FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL, SUPPORTED BY MAP OF PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁷⁵	561,213	612,557
% of total Nottinghamshire population	48%	52%
Geographic area (sq km) ⁷⁶	1,780	379
% of total Nottinghamshire geographical area	82%	18%
Population density (people per sq km)	315	1,616
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁷⁷	604,125	660,520
Forecast population growth (2023-35)	7.6%	7.8%
% of unitary population in rural areas ⁷⁸	32.8%	11.9%
% of unitary population in urban areas ⁷⁹	67.2%	88.1%

Boundary Review Model.
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham and parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling



75 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

76 Standard Area Measurements for the Electoral Wards (December 2024) in the United Kingdom - Overview

77 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

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79 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

Quantitative analysis shows that our proposal offers a robust framework for meeting local housing needs by strategically aligning the Housing Market Areas (HMAs) with Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs). Under our proposal, 77% of the Inner Nottingham HMA and 71% of the Nottingham TTWA will

reside within the Southwest Unitary, providing a balanced reflection of the Southwest Unitary's population's natural identities and preferences which is crucial for effective service delivery and infrastructure planning.

FIGURE 1.8: COMPARISON OF HOUSING MARKET AREA (HMA) INCLUSION IN OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL, SUPPORTED BY MAP OF PROPOSED AND EXISTING BOUNDARIES

HOUSING MARKET AREAS (HMAs) IN EACH UNITARY ⁸⁰	% OF POP. IN INNER NOTTS	% OF POP. IN OUTER NOTTS	% OF POP. IN NORTHERN
North and East Unitary	9.01%	100%	29.31%
Southwest Unitary	76.74%	0%	0%

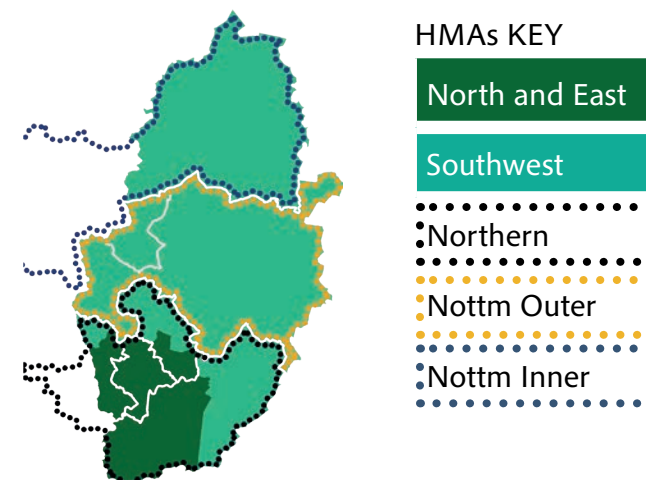
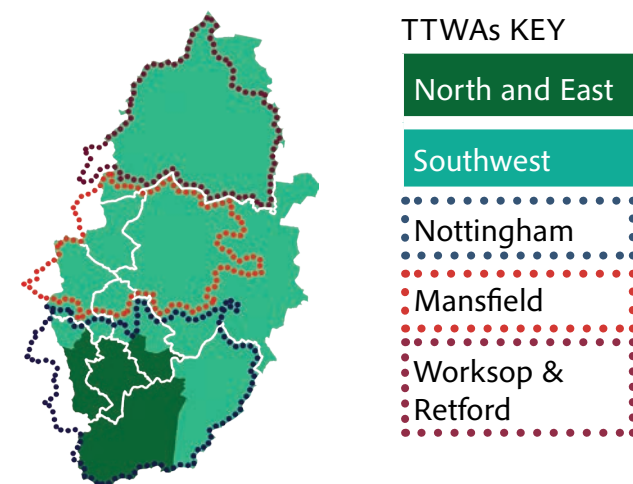


FIGURE 1.9: COMPARISON OF TRAVEL TO WORK AREA (TTWA) INCLUSION IN OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL, SUPPORTED BY MAP OF PROPOSED AND EXISTING BOUNDARIES

TRAVEL TO WORK AREAS (TTWAs) IN EACH UNITARY ⁸¹	% OF POP. IN INNER NOTTS	% OF POP. IN MANS	% OF POP. IN W&R	% OF POP. IN OUT OF AREA
North and East Unitary	14.3%	81.45%	91.21%	17.36%
Southwest Unitary	71.37%	2.18%	0%	0%



80 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

81 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

When compared to the Base Case, Bii includes a greater population percentage of the Inner Nottingham Housing Market Area, with 77% included in the Southwest Unitary compared to 70% included in option 1b. This strengthens our proposal, as it provides greater opportunity for growth and development to meet the growing conurbation needs of Nottingham City in the Southwest Unitary, whilst also maintaining a proportion of the HMAs to support housing needs in the North and East Unitary. Bii also ensures that a greater proportion of the Nottingham Travel to Work Area (TTWA) is included in the Southwest Unitary to better reflect the work and travel patterns of our conurbation residents. Our proposal incorporates 71% of the Nottingham TTWA, compared to the 65% included in the Base Case model.

Bii reflects the ways in which Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's communities live, work and study and their natural patterns to ensure we maintain a sense of belonging for our citizens and can deliver services to meet the needs of each unitary. By considering the interconnected HMAs and TTWAs, the Southwest Unitary can ensure developments are responsive to the actual needs and preferences of the local population and facilitate a more efficient distribution of housing resources, preventing disconnect between employment opportunities or essential services. This strategic approach to housing will not only enable us to address current deficits but will also support future growth, ensuring that adequate and appropriate housing is available to complement economic expansion and attract skilled labour.

The fragmentation inherent in a two-tier structure often leads to disjointed housing strategies, with district councils responsible for housing delivery and county councils overseeing broader strategic planning and infrastructure. This can result in inefficiencies, conflicting priorities and a lack of accountability, ultimately hindering progress on critical issues like housing supply and homelessness. Our unitary proposal will streamline decision-making processes, allowing for a more integrated approach to land use planning, infrastructure development and the allocation of resources for affordable housing initiatives.

Our proposed unitary approach will facilitate a targeted and responsive focus on housing, addressing the distinct needs and requirements of each

respective area. By establishing unitary councils dedicated to local concerns, we can strategically align housing growth with the unique demographic and economic characteristics of each area. This will ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure, access to essential services and protect local communities and smaller towns/villages from adverse impacts.



IMAGE © SCARLETT DRAPER

FIGURE 1.10: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Houses needed (15yr need) ⁸²	41,457	44,763
Known housing supply (15yr supply) ⁸³	37,013	51,477
Difference between housing need and known housing supply (15yr projection)	-4,444	+6,714
Forecast new homes (2022-2027) ⁸³	8,942	12,568
Forecast new homes needed per 1,000 people (2022-2027) ⁸⁵	15.9	20.5
Homelessness rate (per 1,000 households) (as per census 2021 household data) ⁸⁶	3.4	7.2
Rough sleeper count ^{87*}	41	27
Average deprivation score ⁸⁸	22.5	24.3

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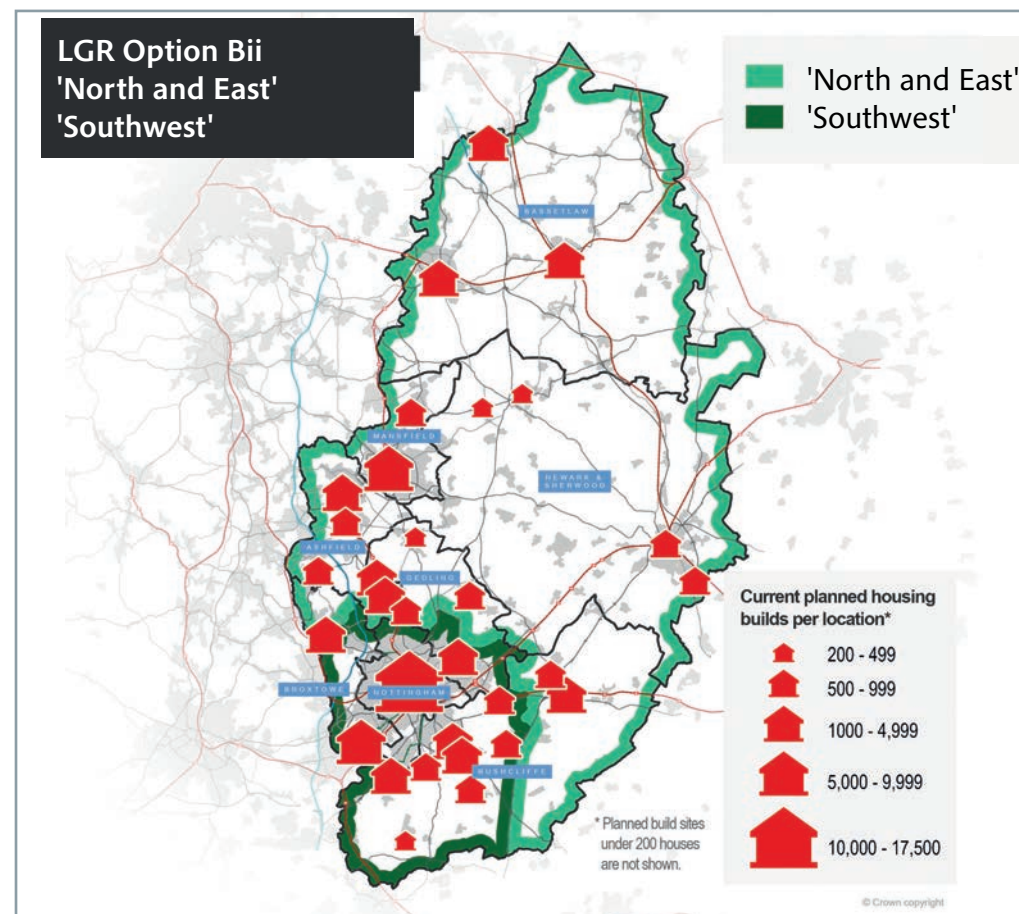
87 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67bde4c8b0d253f92e213c75/Rough_sleeping_snapshot_in_England__autumn_2024.ods

88 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

89 <https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/emerging-local-plan/ashfield-local-plan-2023-2040-regulation-19-pre-submission-draft/>

* Note: 2021 Census data has been used to calculate homelessness data points as this is the most recent complete set of data for comparative published homelessness and household figures for Nottinghamshire as a whole. Therefore, rough sleeper count figures from 2021 have been used for consistency.

FIGURE 1.11: THE LARGEST HOUSING SITES AS ALLOCATED IN THE MOST RECENT PUBLISHED LOCAL PLANS⁸⁹



Our proposal presents a significant opportunity to re-align housing growth strategies, particularly within the North and East Unitary Council. Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe are already collaborating on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan. Both new unitary councils under our proposal could adopt and scale this, ensuring coordination to future housing provision.

When compared to the Base Case, Bii reflects similar housing supply figures. Our proposal will lead to a forecasted housing surplus in the Southwest Unitary of 6,714, compared to 5,270 for 1b, and a deficit in the North and East Unitary of 4,444, compared to a 3,000 deficit for 1b.⁹⁰ All of the options considered will present a housing deficit in the North and East Unitary, however Bii has considered a strategic alignment of communities which will enable tailored housing development to meet both rural and urban community needs to help manage historic deficits.

By consolidating a large proportion of Nottinghamshire's urban areas under a single unitary council that mirrors the true Nottingham conurbation, strategic attention that was previously diverted to these urban centres can now be redirected to the specific housing requirements of rural communities of the North and East Unitary. This re-orientation will enable the development of housing initiatives tailored to the distinct needs and characteristics of this rural area, promoting a more balanced and responsive approach to regional development throughout Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Consequently, housing provisions will be better matched to both current and future populations, addressing historical shortages and supporting sustainable community growth. With the Southwest Unitary managing urban housing strategies, the North and East Unitary will be empowered to tackle rural housing deficits that were previously eclipsed by urban priorities, establishing a targeted approach that transforms these challenges into opportunities for building resilient and flourishing communities.

⁹⁰ https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

⁹¹ [https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/city-boundaries-uk-councils-v895nt9sj_!!E1R1dd1bLLODIQ4!EAF20_0lj_D--WATiIQVyYGp950YunjK-if3Jppq2sjAY0a5tPBUXb-uoeKpu-DNIRn6aGdVFySLr3gQGJmIu-aictY4z7KnCVtI0TIqr2LhMhE\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/city-boundaries-uk-councils-v895nt9sj_!!E1R1dd1bLLODIQ4!EAF20_0lj_D--WATiIQVyYGp950YunjK-if3Jppq2sjAY0a5tPBUXb-uoeKpu-DNIRn6aGdVFySLr3gQGJmIu-aictY4z7KnCVtI0TIqr2LhMhE$)

CASE STUDY

Broad Marsh Housing Redevelopment

“ In 2024, Homes England identified Nottingham as a high-impact opportunity, recognising the city's strong local leadership and commitment to long-term regeneration. This reflects both the ambition of Nottingham City Council and its proven track record, particularly in delivering the early phases of the Broad Marsh redevelopment. As a result, Homes England has entered into a collaboration agreement with Nottingham City Council and EMCCA, focusing on the regeneration of the Broad Marsh area. This partnership also aims to support a wider pipeline of housing-led and mixed-use developments, accelerating high-quality placemaking across the city.⁹¹ ”



1.3 Single tier local government structure

Councillor numbers and warding

For the first elections only, interim arrangements are required because the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) can conduct a full electoral review only after the new councils legally exist.

The interim approach explored below is designed to meet electoral equality, reflect community identity where practicable, and support effective and convenient local government at the first polls, while being deliverable for returning officers.

North and East Unitary

Alternative models were explored and rejected for this unitary. One would have kept the current member ratio the same. A second looked at larger wards having an additional member. Both options were rejected on electoral equality grounds.

A third option would see existing county electoral divisions used as the starting point with two or three members per Division except in the exceptional case of four Divisions which would see four members to best ensure electoral equality. On this basis the interim election model would provide for around 99 councillors for the North and East Unitary, with an average elector-to-member ratio of around 4,200. These figures are illustrative. Final numbers, ward boundaries and ratios will be set by the Secretary of State in the Structural Changes Order (SCO).

Southwest Unitary

Three models were explored and subsequently rejected for this unitary:

- 1) Using all of the existing district wards and current elected member totals would create too many councillors and not enough electors per councillor.
- 2) Using a combination of current district wards and county divisions would create fewer councillors but an increased electoral inequality not in

keeping with Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) guidelines.

- 3) Using existing city wards and existing county divisions while increasing the number of councillors in each of the county divisions by one or two would create a significant difference in electoral equality with the lowest in the current city at around 2,800 and the largest in Gedling at around 6,800.

A fourth bespoke approach has therefore been modelled for the Southwest Unitary. This interim approach would use existing wards across the Southwest Unitary council's area as building blocks, and, where it improves electoral equality and practicality, new larger wards would be formed from these existing wards for the first election. As an illustration, such a model would provide for around thirty-six new two or three member wards. These would range from around 3,500 electors per councillor, to 5,300 per councillor, with an average of around 4,200 ensuring a good degree of electoral equality. As an indication, it would lead to a total of 99 councillors elected at the first election.

This approach follows best practice from recent reorganisations. It ensures the first elections are deliverable and reasonably fair, while leaving the LGBCE free to carry out a full review post-vesting. Final numbers and warding would be determined by the Secretary of State in the SCO and then reviewed in detail by the LGBCE after vesting.



Criteria 2: Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks

- a) As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more
- b) There may be certain scenarios in which this 500,000 figure does not make sense for an area, including on devolution, and this rationale should be set out in a proposal
- c) Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that Council Taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money
- d) Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects
- e) For areas covering councils that are in Best Value intervention and/or in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support, proposals must additionally demonstrate how reorganisation may contribute to putting local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing and what area-specific arrangements may be necessary to make new structures viable
- f) In general, as with previous restructures, there is no proposal for council debt to be addressed centrally or written off as part of reorganisation. For areas where there are exceptional circumstances where there has been failure linked to capital practices, proposals should reflect the extent to which the implications of this can be managed locally, including as part of efficiencies possible through reorganisation

Strengths of Bii

- **Reflects our communities:**
Our model is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work, and study.
- **Creates balanced Boundaries:**
Having considered our communities and key demographic and financial metrics, our proposal is the most balanced option that will set up the two new unitaries for equitable service delivery and long-term financial sustainability.
- **Enables economic Growth:**
By aligning local government boundaries with real economic patterns, the plan unlocks targeted growth for both rural industries and Nottingham's urban core, maximising regional potential.
- **Improves investment opportunities:**
Redrawing boundaries to reflect Nottingham's true economic footprint will make the city more attractive to investors by showcasing its full population, talent, and potential, which will benefit the whole county.

2.1 The right population size

Our proposed two-unitary model is designed to establish authorities with populations exceeding the 500,000-threshold recommended by government guidance. This scale is critical to ensure each unitary possesses the necessary financial resilience to absorb economic fluctuations and deliver efficient, high-quality services, thereby securing short, medium, and long-term sustainability for both entities. By achieving this robust population base, our proposal will positively support economic growth, enhance organisational resilience, and build strategic capacity to effectively manage future population growth projections. Bii provides a similar population split to that of the Base Case, with a slightly larger Southwest Unitary population that reflects the true size of the Nottingham conurbation.

FIGURE 2.1: COMPARISON OF POPULATION FIGURES BETWEEN OUR PROPOSAL (Bii) AND THE BASE CASE

OUR PROPOSAL ⁹²		BASE CASE	
North and East Unitary	516,213	Unitary 1: Ashfield + Bassetlaw + Mansfield + Newark & Sherwood + Rushcliffe	612,759
Southwest Unitary	612,557	Unitary 2: Broxtowe + Gedling + Nottingham City	561,011

Our deliberate aim to create a North and East Unitary and a Southwest Unitary of comparable population size will foster well-balanced economies, enabling each authority to respond strategically and equitably to evolving demands, as well as maintaining a local community identity. This balanced approach will simultaneously preserve a strong local focus and distinct identity of place within each unitary, ensuring deep community connection

and the efficient, effective delivery of place-based services tailored to local needs across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

FIGURE 2.2: COMPARISON OF POPULATION AND PROJECTED GROWTH FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL

	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population (ONS 2023) ⁹³	561,213	612,557
Forecast Population (ONS 2035) ⁹⁴	604,125	660,520
Forecast population growth (2023-35)	7.6%	7.8%

Growing evidence consistently demonstrates that place-based and neighbourhood-level interventions are highly effective in reducing demand on public services and enhancing their overall efficacy, largely due to improved relationships with local citizens and the empowerment of local resources and decision-making⁹⁵. By scaling our unitary authorities to a size that is built around a strong sense of local identity and belonging, Bii will actively support a locality-centric approach to service delivery, maximising our impact on residents and driving community engagement.

The ability to align unitary boundaries with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's population needs and identities, rather than being constrained by outdated historic local government boundaries represents a significant advantage to us. These historical divisions, dating back to 1974, fail to reflect the true conurbation and the natural rural-urban split of the county, which then ignores the differing needs present within these areas, leading to misaligned service provision. By establishing boundaries

92 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

93 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

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95 <https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/case-neighbourhood-health-and-care-0>

that accurately reflect the actual needs and characteristics of communities, we will be optimally positioned to tailor services and deliver preventative measures that are precisely aligned with the lived realities of their residents in both unitary authorities. This strategic alignment will enable a more effective allocation of resources, foster innovation in service design, and ultimately lead to more equitable, efficient and sustainable outcomes for all communities within our new unitary structures.

2.2 Capacity building

Our proposed rural-urban unitary approach across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is designed to establish a local government structure that is intrinsically linked to distinct community and geographic identities. This proposal will foster robust democratic representation and unlock significant opportunities for our service efficiencies, particularly through targeted prevention agendas. By ensuring we maintain balanced population sizes based on the distinct urban and rural communities across the county, each unitary authority will possess the capacity to deeply understand the specific needs of their local populations and identify the root causes of public service demand and its associated cost. This granular understanding is crucial for developing and implementing strategic, targeted approaches to service delivery that are genuinely responsive to local communities and at the same time drive efficiencies in provision.

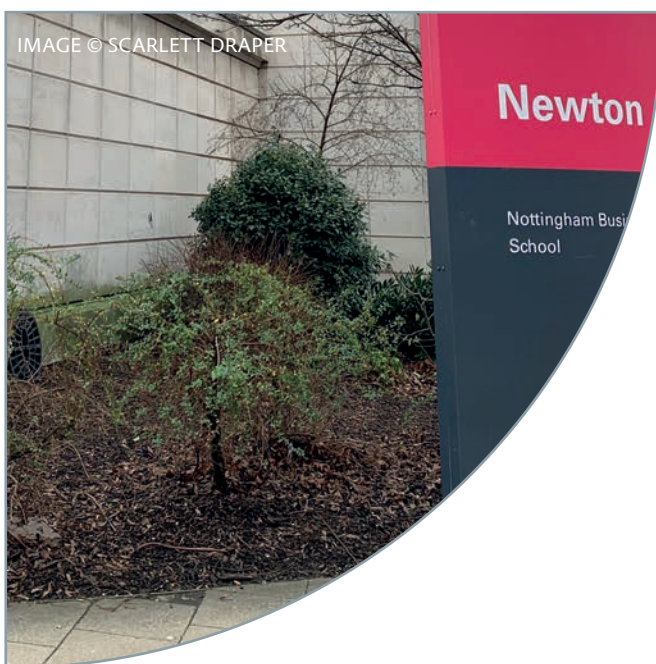
Our proposal for this two-unitary model is specifically designed to bolster prevention agendas by allowing us to precisely tailor services to the distinct needs of both urban and rural communities within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. While preventative initiatives are good for communities, they also crucially reduce service demand and associated costs. We believe this rural-urban split is essential in allowing us to drive this agenda, as it enables us to prioritise services that directly address the unique population characteristics of each area. In Southwest Nottinghamshire, our prevention focus will likely involve strategies relevant to a dense urban population, such as public health initiatives in high-density areas, support for our diverse workforce, and programmes combating social isolation in urban settings. By redefining service standards in the Southwest Unitary to include more rural and affluent communities, we see an opportunity to review and adapt our

prevention strategies, ensuring they cater to a broader spectrum of needs and lifestyles.

Conversely, in North and East Nottinghamshire, with its predominantly rural and semi-rural landscape, we recognise different challenges. Here, a significant focus on prevention is vital to support areas experiencing deprivation, acknowledging the inherent difficulties of lower population density and geographically spread-out services. Our prevention efforts in these areas will concentrate on improving access to healthcare in remote locations, combating rural isolation, supporting local enterprises to create sustainable employment, and addressing the specific educational and social needs of smaller, often more isolated communities.

We believe our two-unitary proposal provides the financial foundations and scale to deliver the right support for everyone. We will structure and manage ourselves to focus on prevention and targeted intervention across statutory services. We will also have the authority to work with partners across the broader public sector to tailor the delivery of services to local needs, with a particular emphasis on tackling poverty, which remains a key concern, through prevention and community empowerment. Our proposal will leverage existing relationships cultivated by our nine current councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, fostering new collaborations essential for navigating complex service delivery. This foundation of trust is critical for addressing difficult issues and simultaneously advancing national growth priorities. By building upon established local networks, the new unitary authorities gain immediate operational capacity and community buy-in, accelerating effective implementation.

Crucially, our proposal is also highly complementary to the strategic role of EMCCA. This synergy allows EMCCA to focus on delivering regional infrastructure, transport and economic growth at scale, providing crucial capacity. Consequently, the new unitary authorities are empowered to concentrate on local delivery and place-based reform. The clear division of responsibilities will ensure both local and strategic priorities are effectively addressed without necessitating larger, potentially less responsive and agile, unitary councils.



2.3 Financial Case

The case for Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is underpinned by evidence of growing financial pressures, service demand increases, and limitations in the current two-tier system's capacity to respond. Across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, councils are managing substantial budget gaps, rising demand for social care and housing services and constrained funding growth.

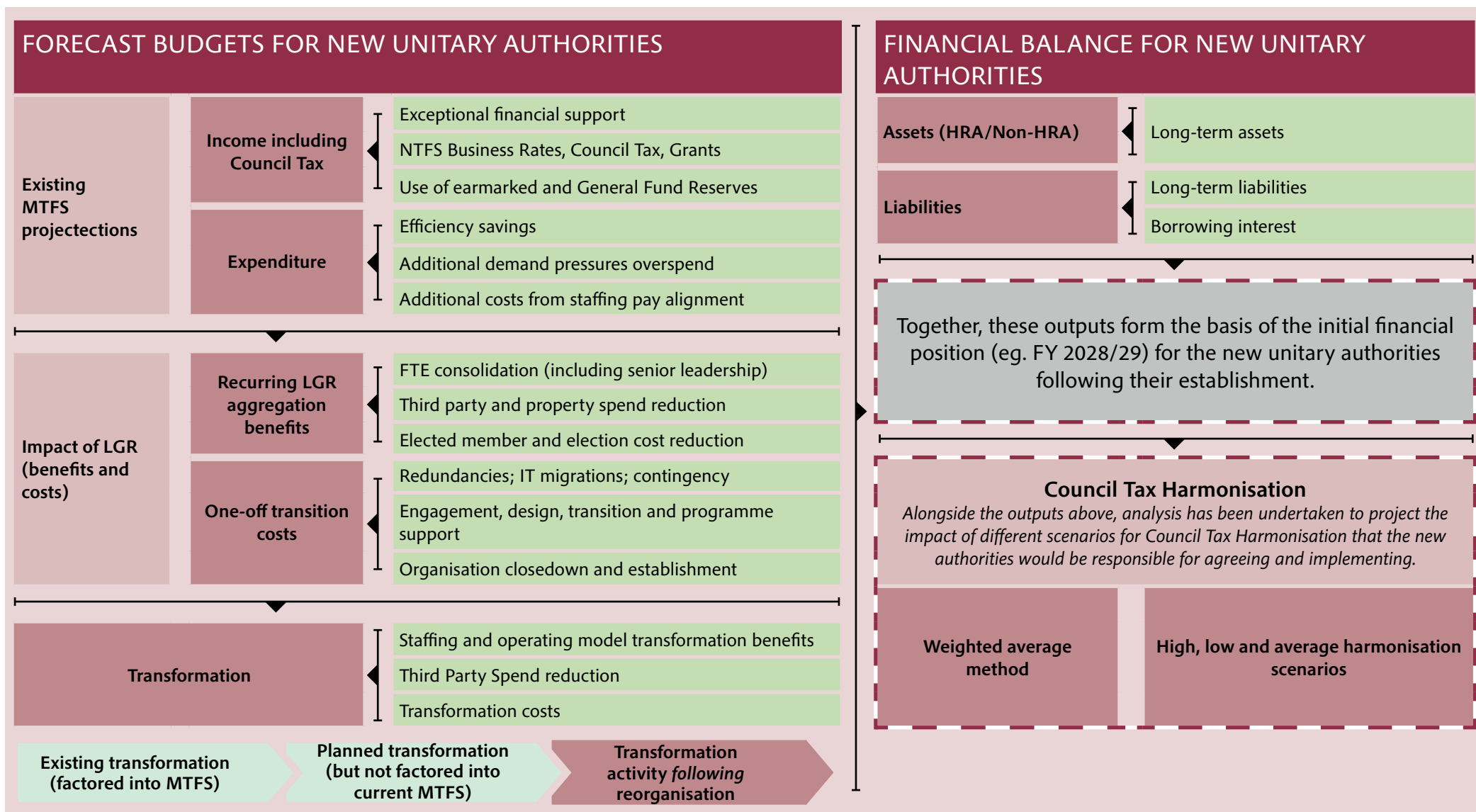
There are opportunities to streamline governance, consolidate services, unlock transformation opportunities, increase efficiency and enhance service delivery. The financial case that underpins this option balances the investment cost of implementing the new structures with ongoing savings potential. This financial case is part of the assessment of how the new unitary councils are capable of being more resilient and sustainable than the existing two-tier model. This component of the business case:

- quantifies the financial impact of the proposal
- compares options on a like-for-like basis, considering savings, costs, and payback
- demonstrates the financial viability and strength of the options
- provides confidence in our assumptions, modelling approach, and scenario testing

The analysis provides a structured, evidence-based appraisal of potential savings, required investment and net benefit.

Approach

The analysis undertaken and assumptions applied provides an estimated forecast of "Year 1" budgets and financial balance for the new unitary authorities (UAs) options, the projected impact of LGR and transformation. Separately, an analysis of potential scenarios for Council Tax harmonisation is provided to demonstrate the impact of this fiscal lever for the new authorities. This is summarised in the chart below:



Set out below is the methodology and logic for assumptions applied. The additional complexity involved in creating multiple unitary authorities has been taken into account in the form of increased transition and disaggregation costs and reductions in economies of scale. To note, transformation costs and benefits are applied after reorganisation based on an assumed level of ambition and further change to realise the full benefit:

REORGANISATION BENEFITS AND COSTS	TRANSFORMATION <i>POST-VESTING DAY</i>
Reorganisation benefits Recurring aggregation benefits: savings achieved through consolidation e.G. Management, systems and support functions. These are ongoing efficiencies generated through removing duplication and streamlining processes. These benefits are phased over the initial years following vesting (30% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).	Transformation benefits Efficiency and productivity improvements realised once new authorities are established and operating effectively. Reflect long-term service redesign, innovation, and better outcomes for residents. These benefits begin to realise in year 1 (28/29) following vesting (25% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).
Reorganisation costs One-off transition costs: upfront investment needed to create new authorities, including additional Costs generated through implementing a configuration of unitary local government involving the dissolution of existing district authority boundaries. These costs are incurred incrementally in the four years following vesting (30% in year 1; 30% in year 2; 30% in year 3, 10% in year 4). The cumulative percentage of costs add to 100%.	Transformation costs Investment required to modernise and redesign services (e.G. Digitalisation, workforce reform, asset rationalisation). These are incurred after reorganisation and are distinct from transition costs. These are short-term costs intended to unlock longer-term service and financial improvements. Different scenarios for the phasing of costs of transformation have been developed to inform the cost-benefit analysis.

Annual savings estimates

Our financial analysis projects cumulative aggregation benefits up to year five of £30.6m. While the quantum of savings delivered will depend on the level of ambition and decisions made by each new unitary in the future, these estimates are built from both top-down modelling and validated against local data inputs.

The modelled savings are primarily achieved through the factors shown in the table over the page.

The estimated aggregation benefits for Option Bii as a whole are set out over the page.

Table 1 quantifies the maximum annualised benefit realisable (which will be realised in 2030/31)

Table 2 applies an assumed phasing of aggregation benefits agreed with all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire section 151 officers in July 2025 to calculate the benefit realised in each year following vesting.



OPTION Bii | AGGREGATION BENEFITS

TABLE 1: Maximum annualised benefit realisable through LGR from reduced spend on staffing, third party spend, democracy and property operating costs.

		TOTAL	NORTH AND EAST <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	SOUTHWEST <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>
Estimated Staffing Benefits				
Senior Leadership Structures savings	Recurring	£8,681,498	£5,704,984	£2,976,514
Front Office Reorganisation savings	Recurring	£7,654,171	£6,764,293	£889,878
Service Delivery Reorganisation savings	Recurring			
Back Office Reorganisation savings	Recurring			
TOTAL FTE BENEFITS	Recurring	£16,335,669	£12,469,277	£3,866,392
Estimated Third Party Spend Benefits				
TPS Aggregation savings	Recurring	£9,018,354	£5,992,550	£3,025,804
Estimated Democracy Benefits				
Allowances + SRA savings + Election costs	Recurring	£1,783,602	£919,881	£863,721
Estimated Property Benefits				
Property OpEx savings	Recurring	£3,435,116	£2,306,972	£1,128,144
Total Aggregation Benefits (when 100% is realised from 2030/31)	Recurring	£30,572,742	£21,688,680	£8,884,062

Implementation cost investment estimates

One-off investment costs required to implement the reorganisation, covering the areas shown in the table below are estimated at £20.4m. The estimated transition costs for Option Bii as a whole are:

- **New unitarities setup and closedown costs:** spend to design the new ua and manage the change (training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT and systems costs:** spend on new / upgraded systems to support a single unitary authority (e.g. Finance, HR, CRM).
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** resources needed to run the transformation programme (e.g. project management)
- **Redundancy costs:** payments and support for staff reductions due to structural changes.
- **Salary alignment:** additional staffing costs to align to the same pay scale
- **Contingency:** a buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and complexity.

The table below shows the modelled implementation costs by year and category:



OPTION Bii | COST/BENEFIT OVERVIEW

NORTH AND EAST (ASHFIELD, BASSETLAW, MANSFIELD, NEWARK AND SHERWOOD, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE)					
Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£6,506,604	£10,844,341	£21,688,681	£21,688,681	£21,688,681
Yearly Cost	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£2,179,940	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£6,506,604	£17,350,945	£39,039,626	£60,728,307	£82,416,988
Cumulative Cost	£6,539,820	£13,079,639	£19,619,459	£21,799,399	£21,799,399
Total <u>Cumulative</u> Net Benefit	-£33,215	£4,271,305	£19,420,167	£38,928,908	£60,617,589
Payback period	1.01 years				

SOUTHWEST (NOTTINGHAM CITY, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE)					
Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,665,218	£4,442,030	£8,884,061	£8,884,061	£8,884,061
Yearly Cost	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£1,665,811	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,665,218	£7,107,248	£15,991,309	£24,875,370	£33,759,430
Cumulative Cost	£4,997,432	£9,994,864	£14,992,297	£16,658,107	£16,658,107
Total <u>Cumulative</u> Net Benefit	-£2,332,214	-£2,887,616	£999,012	£8,217,262	£17,101,323
Payback period	2.74 years				

OPTION Bii | TOTAL TRANSITION COSTS

ONE-OFF TRANSITION COSTS FOR OPTION Bii AS A WHOLE	ADDITIONAL COSTS APPLIED AS A RESULT OF SPLITTING DISTRICT FOOTPRINTS?	NORTH AND EAST UA ASHFIELD, BASSETLAW, MANSFIELD, NEWARK AND SHERWOOD, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE	SOUTHWEST UA NOTTINGHAM CITY, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE
External transition/design/implementation support	Yes	£4,483,500	£5,124,000
Internal programme management	Yes	£2,010,087	£2,330,749
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	No	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	Yes	£384,884	£441,538
Public consultation	No	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	No	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new council(s)	Yes	£642,066	£738,265
Redundancy costs	No	£3,740,783	£1,159,917
Salary alignment	No	£5,409,149	£1,164,328
Contingency	Yes	£3,578,054	£4,148,435
Total		£21,799,399	£16,658,107

TRANSITION COSTS OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD (AND APPORTIONMENT)					
	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Total One-Off Transition Costs (£M)	£11,537,252	£11,537,252	£11,537,252	£3,845,751	£0
North (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£2,179,940	£0
South (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£1,665,811	£0
Aggregation cost profile	30%	30%	30%	10%	0%

These costs are essential to unlock recurring efficiencies. The level of investment is proportionate and supports a positive return on investment over a realistic planning period.

Transition payback

A breakeven analysis and payback period assessing when cumulative savings from reorganisation outweigh the one-off implementation costs has been calculated for each option and is contained within the relevant appendices. In summary, the payback for all options is within the standard range of three years for transition costs.

OPTION Bii | COST/BENEFIT OVERVIEW

NORTH AND EAST (ASHFIELD, BASSETLAW, MANSFIELD, NEWARK AND SHERWOOD, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE)					
Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£6,506,604	£10,844,341	£21,688,681	£21,688,681	£21,688,681
Yearly Cost	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£6,539,820	£2,179,940	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£6,506,604	£17,350,945	£39,039,626	£60,728,307	£82,416,988
Cumulative Cost	£6,539,820	£13,079,639	£19,619,459	£21,799,399	£21,799,399
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	-£33,215	£4,271,305	£19,420,167	£38,928,908	£60,617,589
Payback period	1.01 years				



SOUTHWEST (NOTTINGHAM CITY, PARTS OF BROXTOWE, GEDLING AND RUSHCLIFFE)

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,665,218	£4,442,030	£8,884,061	£8,884,061	£8,884,061
Yearly Cost	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£4,997,432	£1,665,811	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,665,218	£7,107,248	£15,991,309	£24,875,370	£33,759,430
Cumulative Cost	£4,997,432	£9,994,864	£14,992,297	£16,658,107	£16,658,107
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	-£2,332,214	-£2,887,616	£999,012	£8,217,262	£17,101,323
Payback period	2.74 years				

This net benefit helps to position the new councils to begin to close future budget gaps and reinvest in public services supporting stronger long-term resilience. We do however recognise that we are all currently experiencing budget, service demand and delivery challenges and these will continue to put pressure on each new unitary council budget.

Financial sustainability

To demonstrate that the two new unitary councils are of the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and able to withstand financial shocks their future financial sustainability has been modelled. The metrics used to test this are:

1. A Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) modelled for the new councils (before Council Tax harmonisation and the impact of the Fair Funding Review)
2. Reserves availability
3. Future funding, including a high-level indicative analysis of the assumed impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0
4. Balance sheet health

Medium-term financial planning

The existing consolidated forecast budget gap across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire highlights significant financial pressures. In 2025/26, the initial PwC analysis suggested the combined budget gap exceeds £25.5 million, indicating the scale of the challenge. However, the initial PwC analysis was based on historical data and has not taken account of Fair Funding across all existing councils, (data used by district councils did incorporate Fair Funding II). Agreement between all Nottinghamshire councils could not be reached to enable the most up-to-date information to be used.

This initial analysis of the modelled position is therefore significantly distorted and fundamentally misleading if one is comparing on a like-for-like basis. Nonetheless, PwC as previously noted, were able to update the data for option Bii.

Initial analysis of consolidated Medium-Term Financial Plan outlook

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out for Option 1. Please note positive values indicate a net budget gap and negative values indicate net surplus position.

MTFS figures have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. The most recent published versions for the district councils are dated 31 March 2025.

For Nottingham City, the most recent MTFS document from November 2025 has been used to reflect the council's projected improved financial position, in particular a significant gain in expected income leading to a surplus in the South Option in 2028/2029.

The Year 1 position is directional and does not include an estimated outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.

Option Bii | Estimated Year 1 Position

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- Opening deficits: The combined opening position across the new UAs shows significant core funding pressures. All will start with an operating deficit, which is not unexpected as local government is operating in a challenging financial context.
- Efficiency requirements: To achieve a balanced budget, savings are required across multiple councils, with many needing recurring efficiency gains over the next 5 years. These are outlined in the notes below.
- Strategic trade-offs: Councils will face early policy choices: draw further on reserves, amend Council Tax, or accelerate service transformation.

Longer-term gains from LGR aggregation and longer-term transformation integration are potential offsets.

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position are set out on the next page for Option 1.

MTDS figures from the most recent published versions as of 31 March 2025 have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. This baseline position was agreed with S151 officers for all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities in September.

The Year 1 position is directional and does not include an estimated outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.



	OPTION Bii	
	North and East <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>	Southwest <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>
28/29 Core Funding	£591,994,670	£650,897,745
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£615,192,642	£710,673,316
28/29 "Year 1" Budget Gap	£23,197,972	£59,775,571
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures	£80,800,770	£177,970,897
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	£43,189,317	£71,201,184

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham City	Nottinghamshire County
Year Used	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29
Source	Annual Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy Pg 7	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report and Associated Financial Strategies Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy Pg 9	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals for Submission to Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget. General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income. General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified. General fund will be used	The council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget. General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	<i>November 2025 has been used to reflect the council's projected improved financial position, in particular a significant gain in expected income</i>	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes. This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves income

As a result of using the consistent baseline of published revenue budgets and MTFS as of 31 March 2025, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. These may indicate an improved financial position - particularly in the South's net income and expenditure positions and thereby reduce pressure on general fund reserve balances.

Subsequent analysis of consolidated Medium-Term Financial Plan outlook

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out on the following page for Option 1. Please note positive values indicate a net budget gap and negative values indicate net surplus position.

MTFS figures have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. The most recent published versions for the district councils are dated 31 March 2025.

For Nottingham City, the most recent MTFS document from November 2025 has been used to reflect the council's projected improved financial position, in particular a significant gain in expected income leading to a surplus in the South Option in 2028/2029.

The Year 1 position is directional and does not include an estimated outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.



				OPTION Bii					
				North and East <i>Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>		Southwest <i>Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</i>			
28/29 Core Funding				£591,994,670		£762,541,745			
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure				£615,192,642		£763,598,316			
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures				£80,800,770		£43,311,897			
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS				£43,189,317		-£66,778,816			
Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham City	Nottinghamshire County
Year Used	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29
Source	Annual Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy Pg 7	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report and Associated Financial Strategies Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy Pg 9	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals for Submission to Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget. General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income. General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified. General fund will be used	The council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget. General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	<i>November 2025 has been used to reflect the council's projected improved financial position, in particular a significant gain in expected income</i>	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes. This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves income

Initial analysis of MTFS Position

Breakdown of MTFS income and expenditure

The cumulative deficit shown in the two previous pages reflect the year-on-year differences in income and expenditure shown in each respective council MTFS from 25/26 to 28/29.

COUNCIL	INCOME 2025/26	EXPENDITURE 2025/26	NET DIFFERENCE	INCOME 2026/27	EXPENDITURE 2026/28	NET DIFFERENCE	INCOME 2027/28	EXPENDITURE 2027/28	NET DIFFERENCE	INCOME 2028/29	EXPENDITURE 2028/29	NET DIFFERENCE	CUMULATIVE DIFFERENCE
Nottinghamshire County	£668,400,000	£668,408,000	-£8000	£701,400,000	£711,400,000	-£10,100,000	£735,400,000	£741,700,000	-£6,300,000	£771,500,000	£776,900,000	-£5,400,000	-£21,808,000
Bassetlaw	£24,757,900	£24,757,900	£0	£22,158,700	£22,158,700	£0	£20,589,000	£22,196,000	-£1,607,000	£19,027,600	£22,014,900	£2,967,300	-£4,594,300
Ashfield	£17,764,000	£22,017,000	-£4,253,000	£15,361,000	£23,454,000	-£8,123,000	£14,826,000	£24,668,000	-£9,842,000	£14,899,000	£24,837,000	-£9938,000	-£32,156,000
Broxtowe	£14,182,000	£15,429,000	-£1,247,00	£14,471,000	£16,137,000	-£666,000	£14,805,000	£16,956,000	-£2,151,000	£15,147,000	£17,395,000	-£2,248,000	-£7,312,000
Gedling	£15,527,921	£15,584,200	-£56,279	£14,633,691	£16,206,649	-£1,572,958	£14,717,620	£16,753,607	-£2,035,967	£14,913,015	£15,043,858	-£130,843	-£3,796,067
Mansfield	£17,334,000	£17,572,000	-£238,000	£17,304,000	£19,926,000	-£2,624,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	-£9,362,000
Newark & Sherwood	£20,647,000	£20,647,000	£0	£19,337,000	£21,618,000	-£2,281,000	£19,639,000	£21,974,000	-£2,335,000	£19,950,000	£22,629,000	-£2,679,000	-£7,295,000
Rushcliffe	£19,888,700	£16,338,900	£3,549,800	£14,278,400	£15,439,500	-£1,161,100	£14,848,000	£15,906,400	-£1,057,600	£15,445,800	£16,263,200	-£817,400	£613,700
Nottingham City	£331,800,000	£335,068,000	-£23,268,000	£344, 000,000	£372,189,000	-£28,189,000	£349,116,000	£390,103,000	-£40,987,000	£354,307,000	£409,835,000	-£55,528,000	-£147,972,000

The initial PwC analysis uses historic data on debt, MTFP and budgets. Nottingham City Council, the largest constituent of the proposed Southwest Unitary, expects to be at least £147m better off than the above cumulative budget gap based on subsequent analysis using the latest City Council MTFP. This is not solely due to Fair Funding.

For the avoidance of doubt, Nottingham City Council has no concerns about the quality of the modelling in thoroughness or approach. However, Nottingham City Council has concerns that the initial analysis does not accurately reflect the current position. Agreement between all Nottinghamshire councils could not be reached to enable the most up-to-date information to be used.

In the normal run of events, the differences between years would be relatively superficial and not affect financial decision-making. However,

the financial position has materially changed at Nottingham City due to a financial turn-around including the expected impact of Fair Funding:

- A deficit position from 2025/26 to 2028/29 of approximately £148m is now expected to be a small overall surplus of £3m based on the in-year position and the updated MTFP - producing an approximate swing of £150m in the modelling.
- Nottingham City Council debt has reduced to £645m, down from £753m and now with over £400m in cash and short-term investments, and unallocated General Fund Reserves of approximately £64m within an overall reserve position of some £457m. Overall, the net asset position on Nottingham City's balance sheet has strengthened.

The initial PwC analysis illustrates that there is barely a £1m difference between the three options of 1b, 1e and Bii.

The use of the subsequent Bii analysis in this document should allow for an estimate of its impacts on the financial modelling for options 1b and 1e, which is material.

The position is further obscured where councils use reserves to balance budgets and this contrasts against Nottingham City Council's position in growing reserves within the same period. Given the magnitude of the differences between the latest MTFP and balance sheet position against that modelled for Nottingham City (approximately £150m on MTFP revenue), it is not unreasonable to suggest that assessments not using the subsequent analysis are materially flawed. This poses a challenge for options 1b and 1e that do not take account of these changes.

With the revised trajectory of Nottingham City Council, it is highly likely that the new Southwest Unitary with the aggregation and transformation savings available, would rapidly move any budget gap position into surplus.

The modelling outcomes in the table above show that the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) payback trajectory is healthy, with a balanced position forecast from year three for all options. The early years are marked by substantial deficits (albeit significantly inflated) before savings from reorganisation and transformation are fully realised. This places pressure on financial planning and necessitates careful management of reserves and cost controls. The financial outlook shows a steady improvement over time, reflecting the medium- and longer-term benefits of reorganisation, harmonisation efforts and funding reforms.

Funding Opportunities

There are substantial funding opportunities from LGR to close the budget gap. Council Tax harmonisation presents an opportunity to generate additional revenue as Council Tax is lifted to create parity at the earliest point across each proposed area. The importance of this additional revenue stream

on future financial sustainability is demonstrated in the tables above. This modelling assumes harmonisation to the highest rate can be achieved as quickly as possible, within referendum limits. However, it is recognised that this will be a decision for the new councils. Opting for harmonisation that generates a lower income yield will create more risk to the future financial sustainability of the new councils, putting additional pressure on service delivery.

There are other harmonisation opportunities from LGR that will potentially generate additional income, such as aligning fees and charges and Council Tax support schemes. Again, these will be a local decision for the new councils. It is recognised that these will present opportunities to generate further revenue, but they have not been modelled at this stage of the process.

Estimated total resources are balanced across both unitary councils. The Southwest Unitary Council is forecast to consistently have more growth than the North and East. However, the unitary council in the North and East will generate a higher Council Tax per head due to a higher aggregate bands B and D.

A summary of the projected Council Tax receipts for each authority under Option Bii has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in Council Tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on Council Tax. This is especially pertinent for “mid” and “high” scenarios.

While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an ‘Alternative Notional Amount’ this would require the approval of MHCLG.

COUNCIL TAX | 1 YEAR HARMONISATION SCENARIOS

UNITARY AUTHORITY	HARMONISATION LEVEL	FINAL BAND D LEVEL IN 2029/30	AVERAGE CHANGE IN COUNCIL TAX RATE	INCOME FOREGONE/ RECEIVED BY RESPECTIVE YEAR OF HARMONISATION
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£2,508	4.08%	£3.88M
	Mid	£2,526	4.81%	£715K
	High	£2,535	5.20%	£952K
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£2,508	2.14%	£18.5M
	Mid	£2,575	4.86%	£6.73M
	High	£2,750	11.97%	£24.0M

A summary of the projected Council Tax receipts for each authority under Option Bii has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in Council Tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on Council Tax. This is especially pertinent for “mid” and “high” scenarios.

While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an ‘Alternative Notional Amount’ this would require the approval of MHCLG.



UNITARY AUTHORITY	HARMONISATION LEVEL	FINAL BAND D LEVEL IN 2029/30	AVERAGE CHANGE IN COUNCIL TAX RATE	INCOME FOREGONE/ RECEIVED BY RESPECTIVE YEAR OF HARMONISATION
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£2,756	4.58%	£8.0M
	Mid	£2,775	4.81%	£1.45M
	High	£2,785	4.92%	£2.0M
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£2,756	3.92%	£41.3M
	Mid	£2,832	4.87%	£15.2M
	High	£3,031	7.27%	£53.0M

A summary of the projected Council Tax receipts for each authority under Option Bii has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in Council Tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on Council Tax. This is especially pertinent for “mid” and “high” scenarios.

While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an ‘Alternative Notional Amount’ this would require the approval of MHCLG.



UNITARY AUTHORITY	HARMONISATION LEVEL	FINAL BAND D LEVEL IN 2029/30	AVERAGE CHANGE IN COUNCIL TAX RATE	INCOME FOREGONE/ RECEIVED BY RESPECTIVE YEAR OF HARMONISATION
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£3,330	4.72%	£16.8M
	Mid	£3,351	4.82%	£2.75M
	High	£3,362	4.87%	£4.65M
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Low	£3,330	4.44%	£100.3M
	Mid	£3,426	4.87%	£36.9M
	High	£3,683	5.96%	£130.4M

Fair Funding Review 2.0

The estimated impact of Fair Funding Review 2.0 is also expected to contribute to improved financial sustainability over time. Indicative modelling suggests that the Southwest Unitary Council should experience a quicker improvement in their budget position compared to the North and East Unitary Council, due to expected differences in funding allocations. The initial analysis detailed above includes the impacts of Fair Funding 2.0 at the district level. The subsequent analysis detailed above expands on this.

The high-level analysis of the impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 shows that across all options, the new unitary councils will have aggregated “needs” in the upper quartile when compared to existing unitary councils. While this indicates a relatively strong case for funding, variations in the mix of funding - comprising differences in Council Tax, retained business rates, and grant allocations - reflect the underlying structure of the funding system. These differences mean that the pace and profile of budget improvement will evolve differently across each option.

The Fair Funding Review 2.0 estimates are assumption-based due to the lack of exemplification in the consultation process and should be interpreted with

caution but since this review is likely to have a material impact on the future financial sustainability of the new unitary councils, it is appropriate that some analysis is incorporated within this submission.

Reserves

Using the best information available, there was over £600m General Fund Reserves (both unallocated and earmarked) as at 31st March 2025, therefore even assuming £112m use of reserves to balance the budgets over the 2024/25 to 2027/28 (£259m adjusted downwards by Nottingham City Council’s revised MTFP position), there are sufficient available reserves across Nottinghamshire to fund the implementation costs investment and help the new councils to withstand future financial shocks.

However, unanticipated funding and/or expenditure pressures could adversely affect this position before the new councils are created in 2028. The main caveat is that it is difficult to determine reserve usage to balance the MTFP as that is not always clear from constituent contributing council’s MTFP data used within the modelling. However, there are also alternative

reserve options such as capital receipts to fund transformation should that be deemed appropriate.

Balance sheet health

While both balance sheets appear broadly healthy (as below), the North and East council appears to be using significant amounts of reserves to balance the budget (after reviewing Nottinghamshire as the largest constituent entity). By examining the Southwest council’s largest constituent entity, Nottingham City Council, its revised MTFP suggests a more resilient position. Loan debt overall in this context is manageable.

OPTION BII		
	North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)
Assets		
Long-term Assets (28/29)	£3,830,941,635	£5,178,394,904
Liabilities		
Long-term Liabilities (28/29)	£922,741,103	£1,343,876,840
Net Assets		
Net Long-term Assets (28/29)	£2,908,200,532	£3,834,518,064

It should be noted that many of the recently constituted unitary councils are not in a strong financial position, for example Somerset and Cumberland. Both of these new unitaries have required Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from the government in their early years, so these outcomes many need to be treated with some caution.

2.3 Financial risk assessment

In terms of scale, the each of the unitary council options are the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks and have the potential to remain viable, stable and able to withstand pressures in the future.

However, it is important to note that this is a snapshot at a moment in time and there are considerations and strategic financial risks within and/or outside of our control that could change this. The table below summarises the systemic financial challenges faced and an intended strategic response with areas requiring additional government support also identified.

Summary

The following table summarises the key components of the financial case for Local Government Reorganisation, and the impact on the two proposed new unitary authorities for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The analysis summarises:

- the inherited net budget position that each proposed unitary authority would inherit under the two options;
- projected costs and benefits realisable through reorganisation;
- costs and benefits of potential post-reorganisation transformation activity in a “base” scenario.

OPTION Bii					
	28/29 cumulative budget gap ⁹⁶	One-off LGR transition costs	Projected transition benefit ⁹⁷ (recurring)	Projected transformation costs (base)	Projected transformation benefit (base) ⁹⁸
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	£43,189,317	£21,799,399	£21,688,680	£16,152,433	£32,158,478
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	-£66,778,816	£16,658,107	£8,884,062	£16,372,333	£35,478,700

OPTION 1b					
	28/29 cumulative budget gap ⁹⁶	One-off LGR transition costs	Projected transition benefit ⁹⁷ (recurring)	Projected transformation costs (base)	Projected transformation benefit (base) ⁹⁸
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	£43,483,641	£21,366,157	£23,508,381	£16,177,203	£33,915,635
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	-£67,073,140	£14,332,277	£7,064,360	£16,349,792	£33,728,972

OPTION 1e					
	28/29 cumulative budget gap ⁹⁶	One-off LGR transition costs	Projected transition benefit ⁹⁷ (recurring)	Projected transformation costs (base)	Projected transformation benefit (base) ⁹⁸
North and East (Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	£42,231,311	£21,568,951	£23,427,154	£16,247,964	£33,866,175
Southwest (Nottingham City, parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)	-£65,820,810	£13,789,774	£7,145,588	£16,273,802	£33,761,001

⁹⁶ Assumes MTFs savings delivery, reserves transfer and exceptional financial support are delivered. Please note positive values indicate a net budget gap and negative values indicate net surplus position.

⁹⁷ Represents 100% of projected transition benefit (due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31)

⁹⁸ Represents 100% of projected transformation benefit (due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31)

CASE STUDY

Improvement at Nottingham City Council

In November 2023, a Section 114(3) report was issued by Nottingham City Council's Chief Finance Officer on the basis that the expenditure of the Council exceeded resources available to meet that expenditure. In February 2024, Commissioners were appointed by the government under Section 15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999 to oversee the Council's recovery and improvement over the next two years.

Overseen by the City Council's Commissioners, improvement at the Council and the impact of Fair Funding II has meant that by November 2025 the deficit position from 2025/26 to 2028/29 of approximately £148m is now expected to be a small overall surplus of £3m. Debt at Nottingham City Council has reduced to £645m, down from £753m and now with over £400m in cash and short-term investments, and unallocated General Fund Reserves of approximately £64m within an overall reserve position of some £457m.



Criteria 3: Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services to citizens

- a) Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services
- b) Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money
- c) Consideration should be given to the impacts for crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness, and for wider public services including for public safety

3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation

We believe that LGR and our proposal to create a North and East Unitary and a Southwest Unitary will provide the scale, financial stability and the capacity to deliver public service transformation. By aligning Nottingham and Nottinghamshire into two unitary councils, we will build on existing good practice and innovate to deliver integrated service pathways that ignore traditional service boundaries and will allow us to put service users at the centre of our approach.

Strengths of Bii

- **Reflects our communities:**
Our model is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work, and study.
- **Improves service delivery:**
Our model enables services and preventative initiatives to be designed and delivered around local needs, tailored to the distinct communities across the unitary councils, truly moving beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and delivering much better value for money.

Improving service delivery to meet local needs

Bii reflects the diverse needs of the people across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and spreads demand for key services between the rural North and East Unitary and the more urban Southwest Unitary, avoiding concentrations of needs and demands for any one unitary. We recognise the local differences across the two unitary councils, as well as the geographical differences and believe that our proposal will be best placed to effectively meet these needs.

Across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire there are varying levels of deprivation and wealth, with affluent areas such as Wollaton Vale, West Bridgford and Beeston and more deprived areas such as Cotgrave and Newgate & Carr Bank. The geography of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire also varies with higher levels of rurality in the North and East, and more urban areas in the Southwest.

While differences do exist between the proposed unitary councils, overall our proposal demonstrates a balanced picture across key factors such as the time to access key services, current and future spend, population projections, deprivation levels, housing need and access to healthcare.

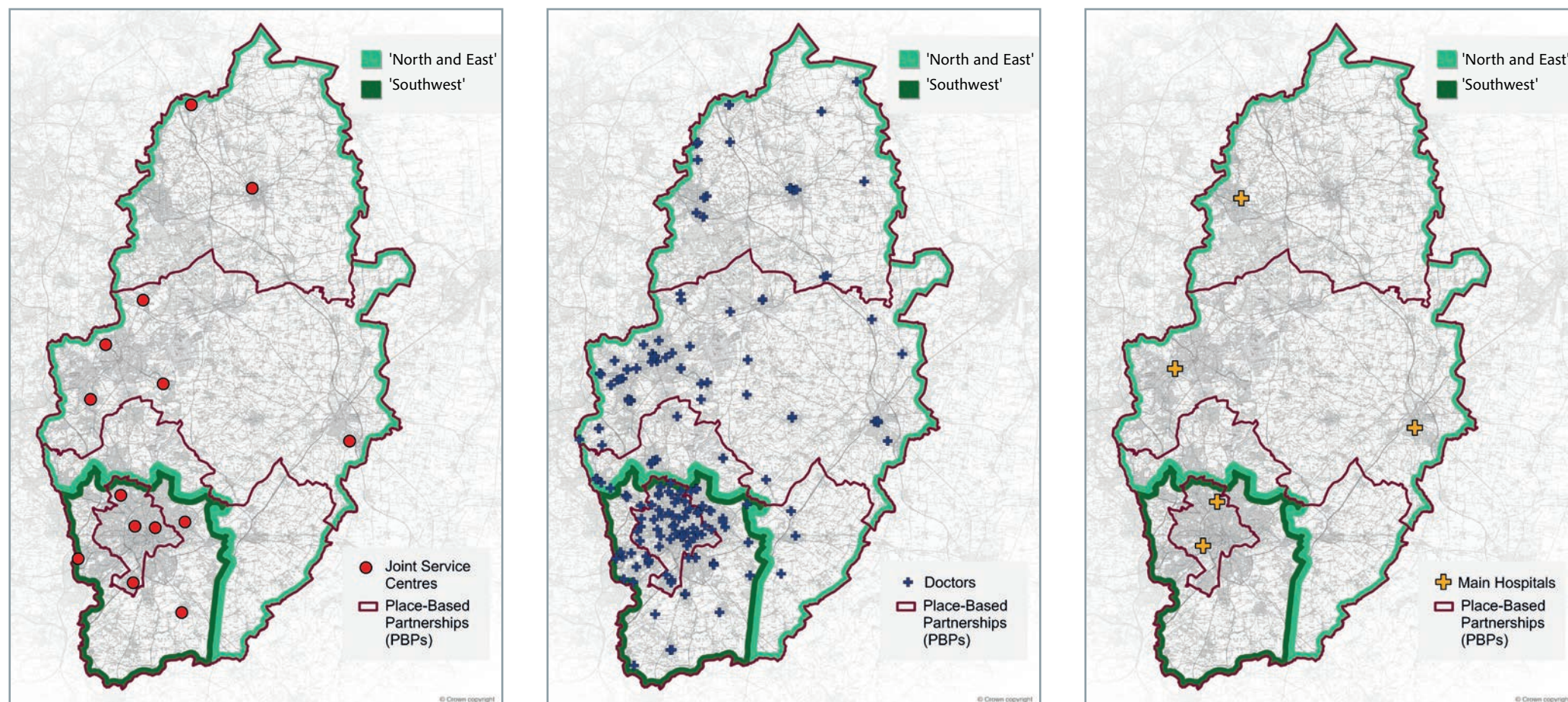
FIGURE 3.1: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY AND DEMAND FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL⁹⁹

	RURAL / URBAN (DIFFERENCE BETWEEN % OF URBAN AND RURAL)	TIME TO KEY SERVICES (MINS)	SOCIAL CARE SPEND TO COUNCIL TAX (CURRENT)	SOCIAL CARE SPEND TO COUNCIL TAX (2032/33)	POPULATION (2035)	DEPRIVATION	HOUSING NEED (NO. OF HOMES PER 1000 OF POP'N)	HEALTHCARE PROVISION (POP'N PER GP SURGERY)
North and East Unitary	20.9%	17.5	0.91	0.93	604,125	22.5	15.9	8,376
Southwest Unitary		15.4	0.86	0.94	660,520	24.3	20.5	7,123



99 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

FIGURE 3.2: JOINT SERVICE CENTRES, GP SURGERIES, AND HOSPITALS RESPECTIVELY IN RELATION TO EXISTING PLACE-BASED PARTNERSHIP BOUNDARIES AND OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL



The above maps show the healthcare provision across the proposed North and East and Southwest Unitary Councils. The first map identifies the Joint Service Centres, the second highlights the GP surgeries and the third notes the hospitals. The boundary split incorporates existing Place-Based Partnerships (PBPs) as shown by the light blue lines across each map. Our proposal poses a benefit for a strong relationship with the Acute Trusts (NUH for the Southwest Unitary Council) and ability to support the neighbourhood health model, providing balanced healthcare services

across the two unitary councils in line with population density and location of the two new council areas. Our proposal also aligns with the broader geographical footprint of both the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB and the new footprint of the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire ICB Cluster that is planned to form from April 2026. This cluster will cover a much larger geographical area and will support the local government and devolution structures, leverage economies of scale, drive operational efficiencies, and minimise duplication.

Parity of funding and expenditure

A key principle of our proposal, grounded by the MHCLG's criteria, is to ensure financial resilience and sustainability. Our two-unitary proposal of a North and East Unitary and Southwest Unitary will ensure both councils have a firm financial footing, and that public services spending and services can be effectively and efficiently managed.

Combining projected social spend in comparison to Council Tax receipts suggests that our proposal will produce a relatively level parity across people services, which is key as these are by far the biggest costs faced by local authorities today.

FIGURE 3.3: COMPARISON OF PROJECTED COMBINED SOCIAL CARE SPEND TO COUNCIL TAX RECEIPTS AND PROJECTED DEMAND FIGURES FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL¹⁰⁰

		COMBINED SOCIAL CARE SPEND TO COUNCIL TAX (2032/33)	PROJECTED SPENDING (2032/33)	PROJECTED NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECEIVING SOCIAL CARE
Adult Social Care (ASC)	North and East Unitary	0.93	£213.1m	8,858
	Southwest Unitary	0.94	£188.7m	9,330
Children's Social Care (CSC)	North and East Unitary	0.93	£175.0m	3,477
	Southwest Unitary	0.94	£169.6m	3,266

Avoiding unnecessary fragmentation

Residents will expect continuity of support and service during transitions. While some disruption is anticipated from LGR, the process also provides an opportunity for public service reform. Principles for disaggregation and harmonisation in service delivery have been proposed to facilitate a smooth transition.

Services for vulnerable individuals and groups are critical, and key services delivered by top-tier authorities play an important role in residents' quality of life and safety. Collaboration with county colleagues, such as in homelessness, is ongoing, and efforts are made to coordinate service delivery. Steps will be taken to minimise adverse impacts on individuals.

The principles for service delivery during disaggregation and harmonisation include:

- Ensuring an uninterrupted transfer of essential services from Day One, prioritising continuity. Planning and drawing lessons from other LGR areas are part of this approach. Day One planning covers aspects such as contact channels, case management systems and care package procurement.
- Harmonising service models and working methods where advantageous, especially in areas like homelessness and housing, to improve efficiency and effectiveness. This includes building on established performance and partnerships, such as the shared Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and considering the extension of these arrangements to other services.
- Recognising that consistency and stability of placement of officers contribute to positive outcomes for vulnerable populations. A pragmatic approach will be adopted, particularly in children's services, to maintain consistent service delivery even if it temporarily extends across new administrative boundaries, such as keeping lead professionals in place during transition.

100 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

We recognise that our proposal involves boundary changes, designed to achieve greater balance across the two new unitary councils. We do not anticipate these changes will cause additional service fragmentation, as Nottingham City Council already manages critical services within the city and Nottinghamshire County Council does so for the wider county. This would mean that while both unitary councils will be new, and neither Nottingham City Council nor Nottinghamshire County Council will exist, the work delivered by these authorities will continue, inherited by the new unitary councils.

North and East could take forward the current County Council's service delivery, processes and ways of working on a smaller footprint, and the Southwest could expand the current City Council's delivery across the new unitary, or choose to adopt the County Council's ways of working.

Of course, there will need to be a review of staffing given the change in coverage, but importantly there are two teams already established in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire that deliver these key services and this, alongside ways of working, can be reviewed and evolved through the planning for implementation stage.

This proposal aims to enhance and build on current joint working practices, promoting further collaboration, as this will improve people-focused services and will ultimately benefit service users, increasing options for the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and prioritising their welfare. We recognise that currently Nottinghamshire County Council and the district and borough councils have the challenge of delivering services to urban and rural communities with differing needs. In Bii, the North and East Unitary will be able to focus on the rural areas, and the Southwest can focus on the urban ones. This will provide the opportunity for more efficient and better services to residents.

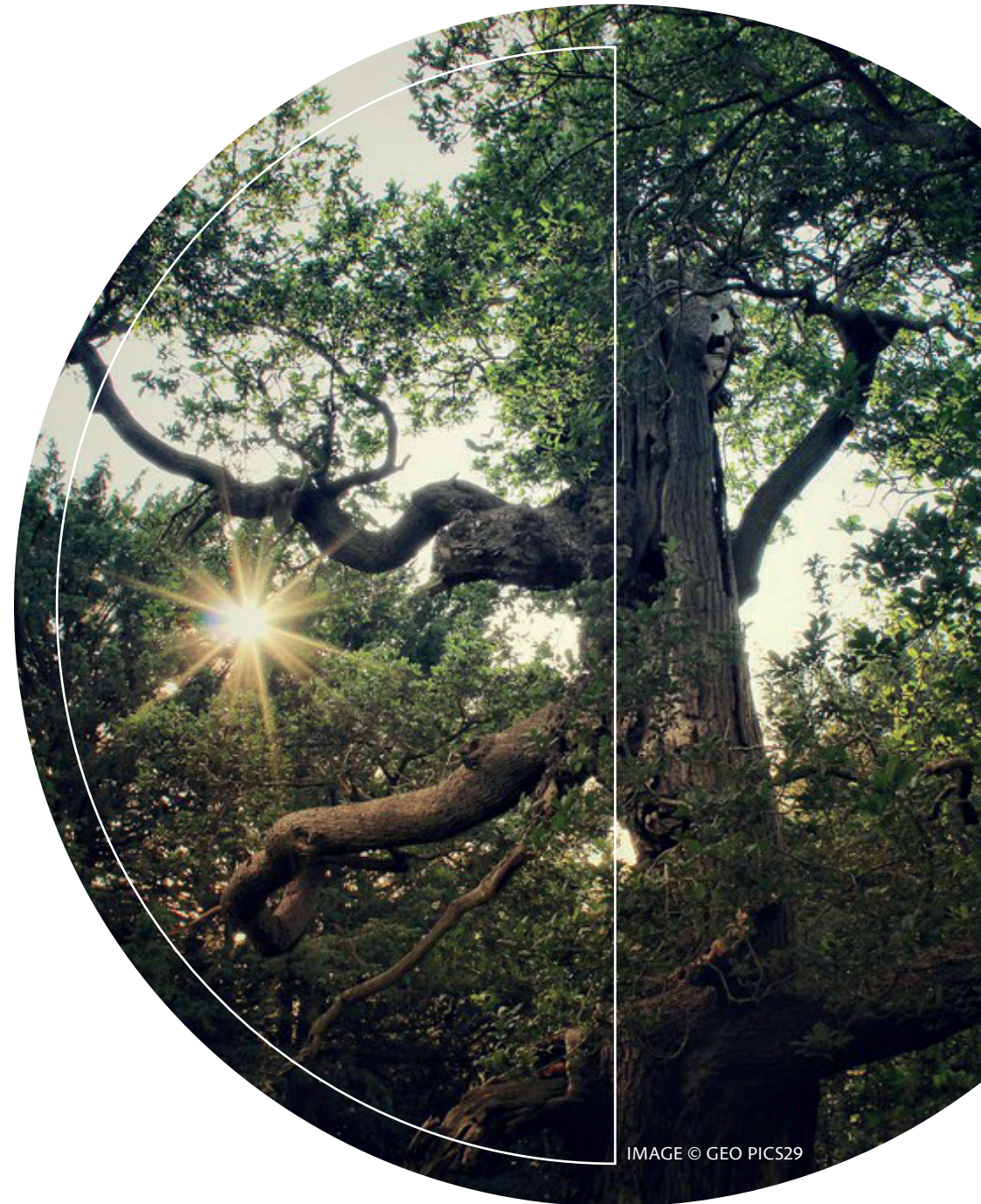
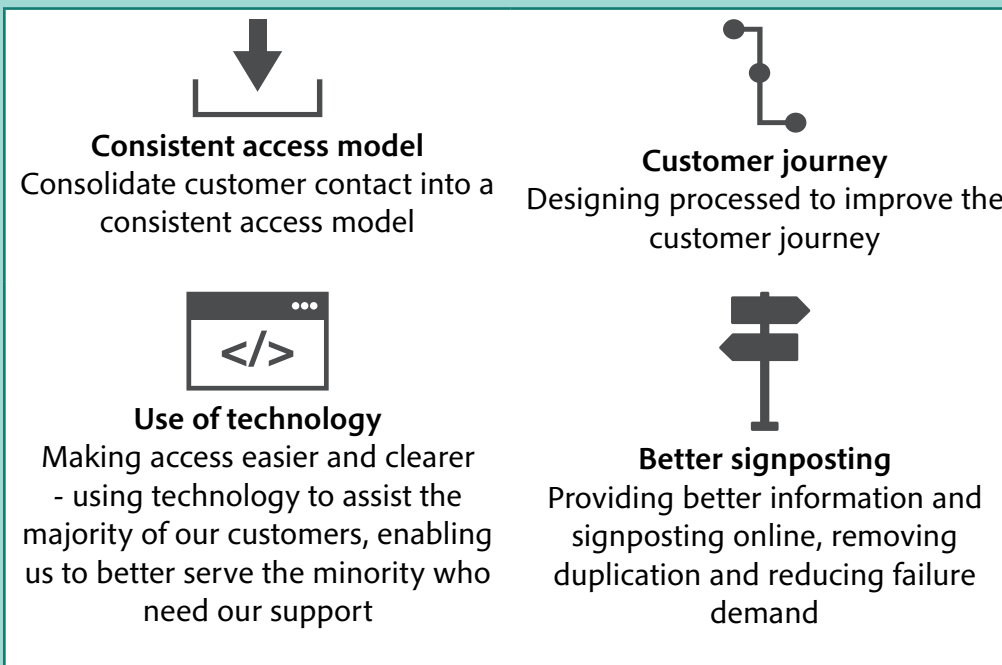


IMAGE © GEO PICS29

Customer and business support transformation programme

How Nottingham consolidated customer access and business support

The Nottingham City Council Customer First Transformation Programme was established to consolidate all frontline contact and business support within centralised functions which maintained alignment to the services they support through a matrix management approach. Improved customer satisfaction was achieved alongside savings of £5m through systems consolidation and digital efficiencies. To support success, a vacancy management process and guiding principles were established.



Over 850 posts were transferred in total, across four phases including Revenues and Benefits and Housing following their transfer back to NCC. Teams were organised into 'hubs', generally supporting their originating services but also aligned by themes.

The operating model was continuously improved, and service delivery lead roles established to lead each hub with a clear framework of grades and roles created to support consistency, flexibility, and opportunities for progression together with reduction of job descriptions.

A programme of opportunities was established for transitioned colleagues to learn and develop business analyst, digital and robotic process automation and business process redesign skills with acting up and secondment offers. As a consequence, the majority of colleagues within the Process Improvement function are home-grown talent, with the exception of our two RPA (Robotic Process Automation) developers who were NTU graduates, sourced through collaborative dialogue with our universities.

Alongside holding vacancies, a business process redesign workstream applied lean principles with digital, RPA and AI to ensure colleagues supporting services were benefitting from improved and simplified administration processes.

The programme was a catalyst for a wider adoption of our Functional Design workstream, identifying centralised 'Centres of Excellence' and supporting our future Target Operating Model as we consider more localised, neighbourhood-based service delivery in the future.



This experience provides a strong basis for further integration and service redesign across the new Southwest Unitary that simplifies access to services for residents and improves overall customer satisfaction through simpler and consistent processes.



3.2 Delivering value for money

Our proposal will provide:

Economies of scale and efficiency gains

- **Consolidation of services:**

By merging the current district, city, and county councils into two unitary authorities, we will reduce overheads and duplication in administrative processes, strategies, and IT systems. This consolidation is expected to free up resources that can be reinvested into frontline services, making public service delivery more efficient and cost-effective.

- **Standardisation and harmonisation:**

Harmonising and standardising processes and systems across the new councils will reduce complexity for both staff and service users, improve efficiency, and minimise errors. This will lead to better service delivery at a lower cost.

- **Joint working ventures:**

East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS) will provide an opportunity to scale up already existing joint venture delivery for transactional HR, payroll, and finance services.

- **Optimised procurement:**

Consolidating the district and borough councils into two larger unitary councils will enable procurement to be optimised through greater purchasing power for the services they currently deliver. This means negotiating better deals for goods and services, reducing bureaucracy and standardising contracts, which will result in significant cost savings. With the reallocation of services currently delivered by the County Council to the Southwest Unitary Council and the North and East Unitary Council there will be the opportunity build on the ICS Collaborative Planning and Commissioning Framework and take a more proactive approach to commissioning in areas like social care.

Integrated service pathways

- **Integrated services:**

Introducing a new structure will allow for more integrated and holistic services, such as combining parks and open spaces with social care to support social prescribing and the development of preventative services, thereby transforming current siloed working into truly integrated service provision. This reduces the need for multiple assessments and interventions, streamlining support for individuals and families.

- **Data sharing and prevention:**

Improved data sharing and intelligence gathering will enable more informed decision-making, targeted interventions, and proactive support, helping to prevent issues from escalating and becoming more costly.

- **Locality working:**

The boundary split between North and East and Southwest Nottinghamshire is designed to enable each council to focus on the unique needs of its communities, supporting more effective strategic planning, particularly for complex services like housing and homelessness.

Workforce optimisation and specialism

- **Stable and specialised workforce:**

We anticipate that the overall workforce size will remain, but with larger councils there will be more opportunities for specialisation, upskilling and career development in the areas currently delivered by the district and borough councils. This is expected to help with recruitment and retention, particularly in critical areas like planning. Additionally, the reorganisation will lead to fewer senior officers, as each will oversee a larger geography, improving decision making, boosting efficiency and reducing operational costs.

Enhanced innovation and transformation

● Capacity for innovation:

Larger unitary councils will have greater capacity and resources to invest in innovation and digital transformation, such as digital platforms for support and predictive analytics for early intervention. Nottingham has already been selected as one of ten areas to benefit from a £100 million 'Test, Learn and Grow' programme to deliver the government's Plan for Change, which enables those who deliver and use public services to work together, alongside tech experts, to solve problems faced locally.

- Create Growth N2 (CGN2) has also launched a new Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Networking Grant Scheme to strengthen the region's creative, digital and creative technology sector. The scheme provides one-off funding for small-scale events and activities that foster collaboration, knowledge-sharing and growth.
- Initiatives like these can foster a culture of continuous improvement and position councils for broader public service transformation.

Stronger governance and accountability

● Simplified structures:

The new councils will have simplified organisational structures, leading to clearer lines of accountability and easier performance monitoring. While there may be some initial complexity during the transition, longer term there will be a reduction in bureaucracy, making both unitary councils more agile and responsive to local needs compared to current provision.



IMAGE © SAMUEL CHURCHILL



3.3 Impacts for crucial services and wider services

Critical services

Bii necessitates a balanced allocation of combined social care expenditure relative to Council Tax receipts. As social care represents the predominant proportion of local authority spending funded by Council Tax across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, an equitable distribution of this financial responsibility between both unitary authorities is fundamental to ensure fiscal resilience and operational viability. Such a balanced approach prevents the concentration of high-cost social care demands within a single authority and enables the delivery of services to be tailored to meet the distinct needs of local populations. This strategic financial alignment underpins the objectives of enhanced local autonomy and the consistent provision of public services, empowering each unitary to exercise greater control over its service design.

Children's services

As a unitary council, the City Council currently provides Children's services within Nottingham, while the County Council is responsible for services in the remainder of Nottinghamshire. Calculating service needs and allocating resources presents challenges, especially since school boundaries influence service delivery and require formal agreements. The different systems used - System Logic/Capita in the city and Synergy/Mosaic in the county - also create difficulties for data sharing and collaborative working.

FIGURE 3.4: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DATA POINTS	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Population aged 0-19 ¹⁰¹	123,661	148,105
Number of children and young people (0-25) subject of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (Jan 2025) ¹⁰²	3,495	3,833
Numbers drawing on long-term support ¹⁰³	3,477	3,266
Cost of servicing demand (Children's) (2023) ¹⁰⁴	£146.4m	£142m
Number of initial requests for an EHCP in calendar year 2024 ¹⁰⁵	1,095	1,201
New EHCPs issued in calendar year 2024 ¹⁰⁶	758	832

Estimates show there is a relative balance between the two unitary councils in terms of children's Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) and wider support. It is anticipated that the North and East Unitary will have slightly higher costs for delivering Children's Services due to the larger geographical area and lower population density. However, the unitary council will have the opportunity to assess and make efficiencies in how these are run, and consider how to leverage existing locality working. The Southwest

101 Population estimates - local authority based by single year of age - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics

102 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

103 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2023-to-2024>

104 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s167015/Budget%20Monitoring%20Period%207%20202425>

105 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans/2024>

106 Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2024 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK; Children looked after in England including adoption: 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK

Unitary will likely experience a greater population of young people and children and a greater demand for EHCPs due to the larger population density. There are notable differences in the structure and stability of service models; for example, the County Council's "wrap-around" support is described as robust, while the City Council is working through what educational resources should look like as it continues on its improvement journey. Educational requirements differ significantly: the County Council generally serves more affluent, rural areas with some deprivation, whereas the City Council addresses more deprived areas, with higher rates of issues such as neglect. While it is sometimes thought that children from the city perform differently in county schools, there is no confirmed evidence for this claim. Social workers across the two new unitary councils will support different communities and family dynamics and will therefore need different approaches.

Nottingham City Council recognises that it is on a clear improvement journey. The establishment of two new unitaries presents a unique opportunity to reset and build strong foundations while committing to collaborative work that ensures improved and consistent outcomes for children across both new organisations.

Collaborative efforts between unitary authorities during the shadow authority period will also help address risks associated with ensuring sufficient SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision and joint working across both unitary councils will be needed to manage the flattening of demand that is predicted for secondary schools from 2028.

LGR is integral to our planning for SEND services. Our approach aligns with the principles set out in the draft Nottingham City SEND, Inclusion and Alternative Provision Strategy and the SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2023-28, which prioritise high-quality, inclusive education close to home for all children and young people with SEND. We recognise the importance of enabling pupils to access suitable and good-quality provision within their local communities, reducing reliance on travelling long distances to placements and supporting better outcomes.

Bii would build on the co-produced Joint Commissioning Strategy from Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the

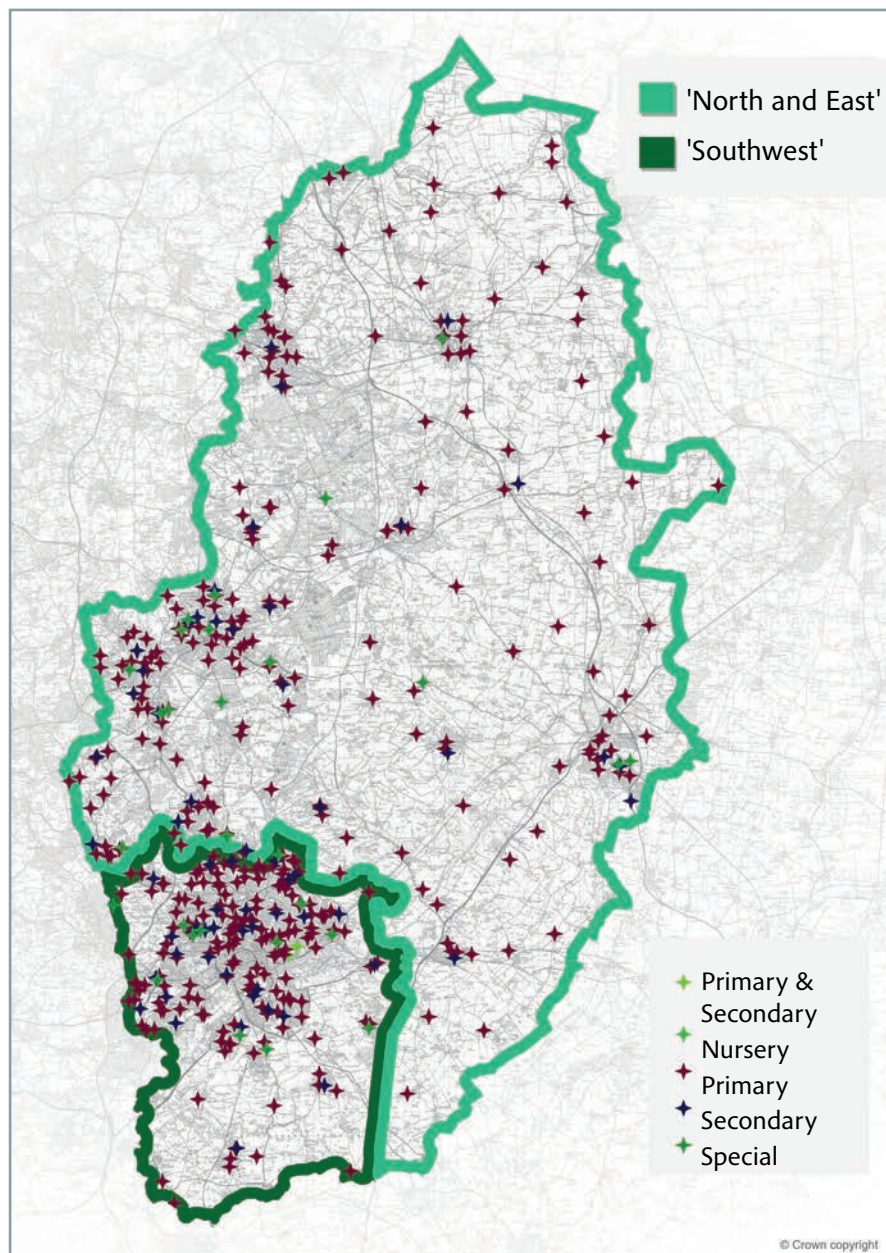
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). This strategy ensures a coordinated approach to commissioning therapeutic and specialist SEND services across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint, supporting holistic access to education, health and care for children and young people, and timely access to assessment. Through collaborative efforts, we aim to deliver a system that is sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to local needs, ensuring that every child and young person can thrive in education and in life.

There are opportunities to develop a more integrated and effective service framework across both new unitary councils. Establishing unified data practices and enhancing inter-authority cooperation may improve overall efficiency and outcomes. Addressing workforce concerns and enabling smoother transitions between city and county roles can help organisations meet changing population needs. Engaging with stakeholders like D2N2 (Local Enterprise Partnership for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire), foster carers and maintaining transparent communication can also help build trust and support changes.

A coordinated approach to safeguarding, early help and family support offers potential for earlier intervention, which could reduce the need for more costly care placements. This approach aims to provide a more balanced response to needs and aligns with broader strategic objectives. Plans include expanding Children's Services and setting up a Family Hub within the urban area, further increasing the availability of essential services. This growth is expected to improve the balance between Adults' and Children's Social Care, supporting operational priorities in both sectors.

To support the transition to new unitary councils, all current authorities will need to carry out large-scale, resource-intensive data transfers and thorough validation processes. As expected, there are differences in local data capture methods and postcode analysis between the city and county, so reconciling this information into a consistent format will not only support effective and efficient service delivery by the new unitary councils from day one, but it will also enable cross-county support for residents through future service provision. Preparing the workforce through collaboration with county and district partners will also be a key aspect of implementation planning.

FIGURE 3.5: STATUTORY EDUCATION PROVISION ACROSS NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COMPARED TO OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



The map highlights the statutory education provision across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. As with all proposals, Bii does result in some schools being very close to the boundary, and catchment areas would extend between the two councils, but this is no different to what happens today and the two new unitary councils will have the same collaborative ethos and mechanisms in place to develop cross-unitary policies and strategies as is in place today between the County Council and City Council.

Adult social care

Despite a greater population density in the Southwest Unitary, our projections suggest a slightly lower cost of ASC delivery than that of the North and East Unitary. Service users within the North and East Unitary are typically more dispersed, which increases travel time and transportation expenses for care staff who must cover greater distances to reach individuals. Additionally, it can be more challenging to achieve economies of scale, as resources and services cannot be concentrated in a single location, leading to higher per capita costs for infrastructure, management, and staffing. However, in relative terms the differences in costs are fairly minimal and the reorganisation will provide the opportunity to deliver services more efficiently.

FIGURE 3.6: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE (ASC) FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL¹⁰⁷

ADULT SOCIAL CARE (ASC) DATA POINTS	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Projected cost of servicing demand (Adults) (2032) – includes assumed population growth as per ONS 2022 projections and assumed 2% inflationary uplift	£213.1m	£189.0m

¹⁰⁷ <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-activity-and-finance-report/2023-24>

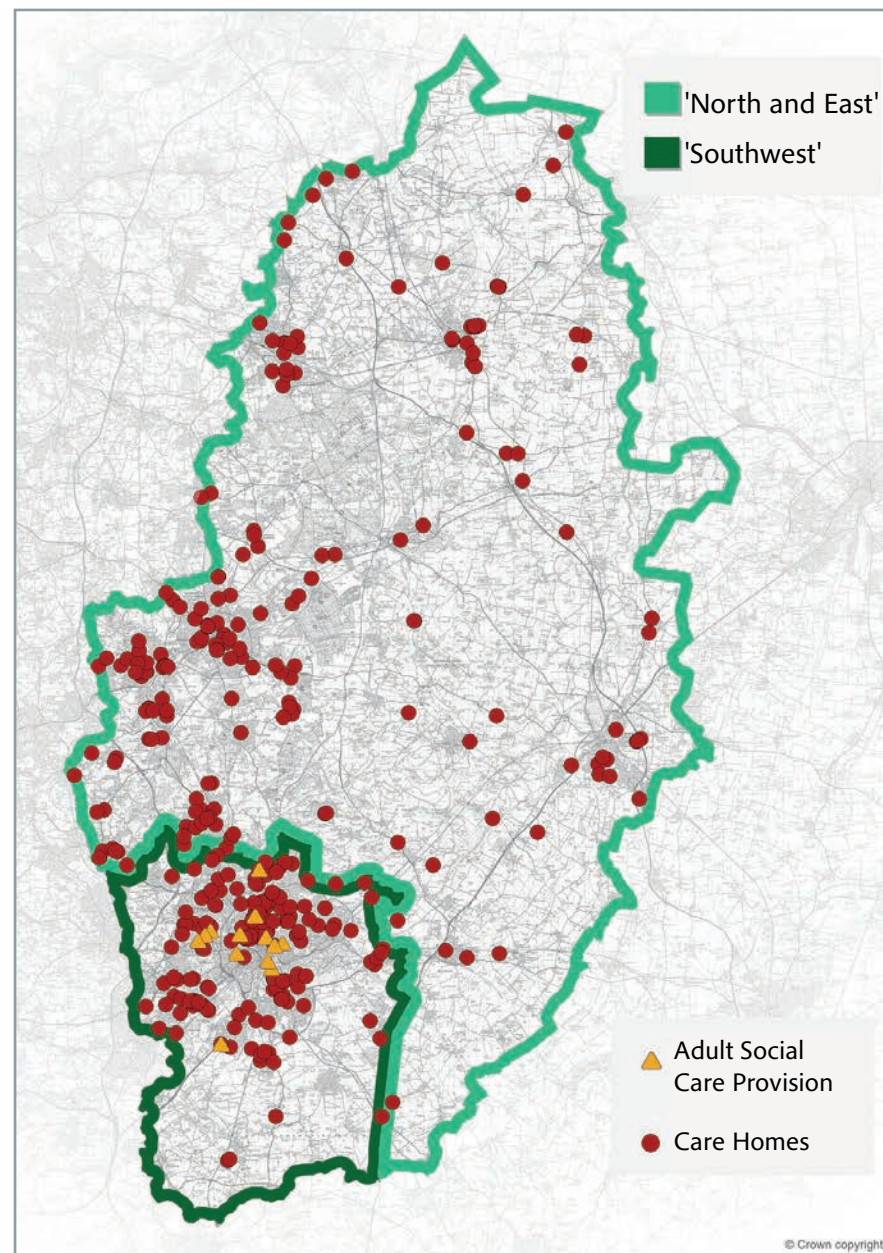
The current landscape presents a number of risks and considerations, as well as promising opportunities for community development and adult social care. A primary objective is to empower local communities, enabling them to support themselves more effectively and thereby reduce their dependence on council services. Building stronger partnerships with local schools is also vital, as this can help address ongoing workforce gaps by fostering early interest and engagement in relevant career paths.

However, several considerations must be addressed to ensure progress is both inclusive and sustainable. Data has not been available with regard to the wider geographic footprint of Adult Social Care (ASC) whilst writing this proposal, which complicates targeted planning and resource allocation. Additionally, there is a risk of inadvertently creating two-tier services, where some areas or groups receive higher levels of support than others. Rural communities, in particular, face hidden harm risks that may not be immediately apparent but require focused intervention.

Poverty remains a pervasive issue, impacting both individual outcomes and overall community resilience. Tackling this challenge involves not only addressing immediate needs but also empowering communities so they can build lasting capacity. Workforce challenges, including high turnover rates and issues related to pay, continue to affect the quality and consistency of care. Ongoing efforts to improve through the Care Quality Commission (CQC) framework are crucial to raising standards and ensuring better outcomes for all.



FIGURE 3.7: MAP OF CARE HOMES ACROSS NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVISION IN NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL



Finally, there are currently marked disparities in funding between county and city areas, which must be addressed to ensure equity. Looking ahead, there are substantial opportunities to bridge these gaps through innovation, collaboration, and targeted investment, creating a more robust and supportive environment for all community members.

Integrated health and social care teams, alongside shared assessment procedures and the joint commissioning of care services, offer significant opportunities to minimise duplication and enhance outcomes for service

users. These collaborative approaches have the potential to achieve a more balanced provision of care across the system. By incorporating a greater proportion of the Nottingham city conurbation in a single unitary, it is anticipated to increase the proportion of adults in care who are self-funders. Current projections suggest that these figures will approach those seen in comparator cities such as Newcastle, Liverpool and Hull, where 44% of adults in care are self-funders, compared to just 19% in Nottingham in 2018. For unitary councils, calculating spending per head provides only a

FIGURE 3.8: COMPARISON OF KEY DATA POINTS FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND HOMELESSNESS FOR OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL

Housing Management and homelessness

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS DATA POINTS*	NORTH AND EAST UNITARY	SOUTHWEST UNITARY
Forecast new homes (2022-2027) ¹⁰⁸	8,942	12,568
Forecast new homes needed per 1,000 population ¹⁰⁹	15.9	20.5
Average deprivation score ¹¹⁰	22.5	24.3
Homelessness rate (per 1,000 households) (as per census 2021 data) ¹¹¹	3.4	7.2
Rough sleeper counts (2021) ¹¹²	41	27
Number of households in temporary accommodation (per 1,000 Households) (as per census 2021 household data) ¹¹³	0.40	2.04
Unemployment rates (as % of economically active population) ¹¹⁴	4.9%	5.0%

108 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

109 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

110 https://lgrnotts.org/sites/default/files/10208710/2025-10/Nottingham-Nottinghamshire%20LGR%20Option%20bii_Comparative%20Analysis.pdf

111 Detailed_LA_2021-22__Revised_Nov_2023_.ods

112 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67bde4c8b0d253f92e213c75/Rough_sleeping_snapshot_in_England__autumn_2024.ods

113 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62e14c208fa8f564a21dcd8a/Detailed_LA_202112_revised.ods

114 LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities - Office for National Statistics

* Note: 2021 Census data has been used to calculate homelessness data points as this is the most recent complete set of data for comparative published homelessness and household figures for Nottinghamshire as a whole. Therefore, rough sleeper count figures from 2021 have been used for consistency.

basic indication of resource allocation. It is more informative to estimate the available financial resources relative to the specific needs of community services, as this offers a clearer picture of service provision capacity.

Homelessness and housing management are key areas of challenge and focus across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and nationally. Our proposal considers a rural-urban focus for tackling homelessness challenges and allows for targeted intervention opportunities for the differing population needs across the two unitary councils.

With a higher proportion of homelessness per 1,000 households in the Southwest Unitary, which is expected due to the high-population density urban context of the city and its surrounding conurbation, there will be greater demand for homelessness services within this unitary. The concentration of the different urban and rural demand allocated to the two new unitary councils respectively presents a significant opportunity to enhance efficiency, service delivery and strategic alignment, allowing targeted intervention to meet the differing population and homelessness needs of each area.

Current socioeconomic indicators illustrate both similarities and differences across the proposed new unitary councils. Unemployment rates are closely matched, at 4.9% in North and East Nottinghamshire and 5.0% in Southwest Nottinghamshire, suggesting a parity in economic activity. The rough sleeper count is higher in North and East Nottinghamshire (41) than in Southwest (27), while the proportion of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households is markedly lower in the North and East (0.40) compared to the Southwest (2.04). These differences highlight the nuanced challenges faced by each area, such as the shortage of social housing and lack of affordable housing options in the North and East Unitary, and the consideration of increased population density in an urban context for the Southwest Unitary.

A larger urban footprint across the Southwest Unitary Council offers further advantages, such as increased opportunities for social and affordable housing developments. This will help meet growing population demands, and with the new unitary covering a larger footprint, will enable more

strategically planned and geographically unhindered initiatives that will address the higher homelessness rate in the Southwest Unitary (7.2 per 1,000 households). Integrating homelessness statistics and services for the urban population under one unitary authority will enable improved data quality and consistency, facilitating better planning and resource allocation. Enhanced accountability and transparency will further support the development of policies that address the root causes of homelessness, rather than merely treating the symptoms.

Our proposal provides focus for both unitary councils to support targeted interventions where they are most needed, to address the nuanced needs of their communities.

Importantly, we believe there is no significant difference in the potential approach to housing management, temporary accommodation and homelessness support, as our proposal can build upon existing approaches across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It does not alter the location of housing stock or disrupt current service provision. Instead, it offers a platform for drawing efficiencies through aligned allocation policies, management practices and wider partnership working. Communities and individuals will continue to receive support through familiar channels, with the added benefit of a unified strategy for both new unitary councils that streamlines operations and maximises the impact of available resources across a wider geography.

Ultimately, our proposal provides the opportunity ensure that service delivery is both equitable and responsive to local needs, ultimately reducing reliance on costly temporary accommodation and achieving better outcomes for all residents.



CASE STUDY

Joint Homelessness Review for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

A joint review of single homelessness services has been commissioned in 2025 by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities, demonstrating a collaborative approach across the region to address shared challenges. By working in partnership and engaging with external organisations, the authorities are actively pooling expertise and resources to build a comprehensive understanding of current provision and identify areas for development. This coordinated effort not only reflects a commitment to consistent and effective practice across existing and future boundaries but also presents an opportunity to design new operating models, streamline service delivery and ensure that responsibilities and funding are fairly distributed across the new authorities being created through LGR. Looking ahead, the insights from this joint review will help shape a unified pathway and support the transition towards a more effective, evidence-based response to single homelessness throughout the conurbation area in the Southwest Unitary and the wider rural geography of the North and East Unitary.



EMCCA is positioned to take on a greater role in the planning and shaping of regional growth, providing strategic leadership and influence over future developments. Our proposal provides the opportunity to conduct a review, and potential redrawing of the green belt, albeit indirectly through an assessment of existing planning policies. This approach aligns with the broader commitment to promoting sustainable development, with a particular emphasis on directing growth to suitable areas rather than expanding into rural areas where it may not be appropriate.

In the current context, there is a recognised need to enhance city statistics, making the region more attractive to investors and improving the retention of graduates that come to the area for their studies, which is vital for long-term economic success.

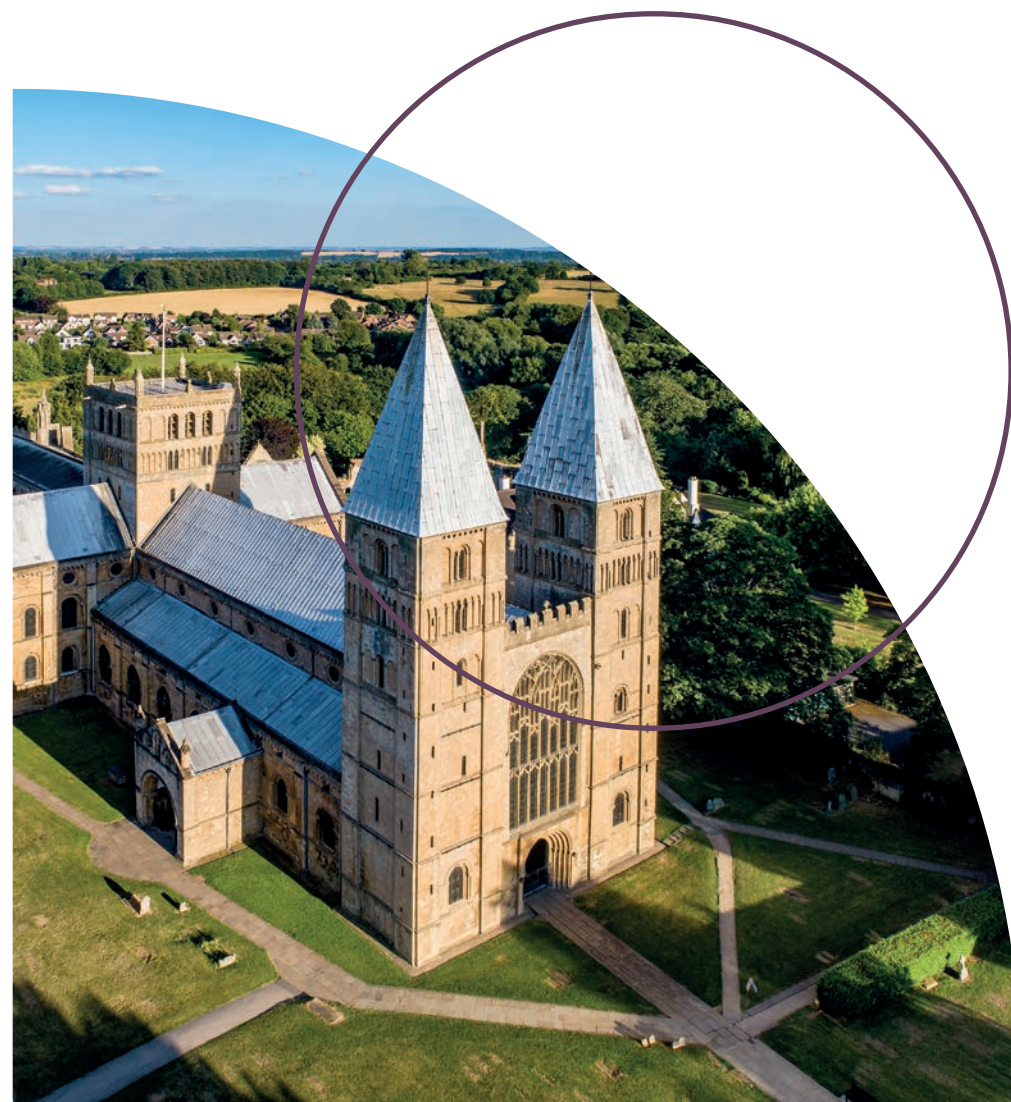
Several key considerations must be addressed to fully realise these opportunities. The rationalisation and harmonisation of council housing management remain critical issues, particularly in ensuring that sufficient land is available for housing growth within the Southwest Unitary. Furthermore, conflicting political views and barriers to growth between unitary councils present risks that will require careful negotiation and collaboration.



Consolidation of Housing Revenue Accounts is another key consideration. For example, in the proposed Southwest Unitary Authority, Nottingham City Council and Broxtowe Borough Council both have Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs). These will need to be combined into a single HRA which will be able to operate more efficiently at a larger scale¹¹⁵.

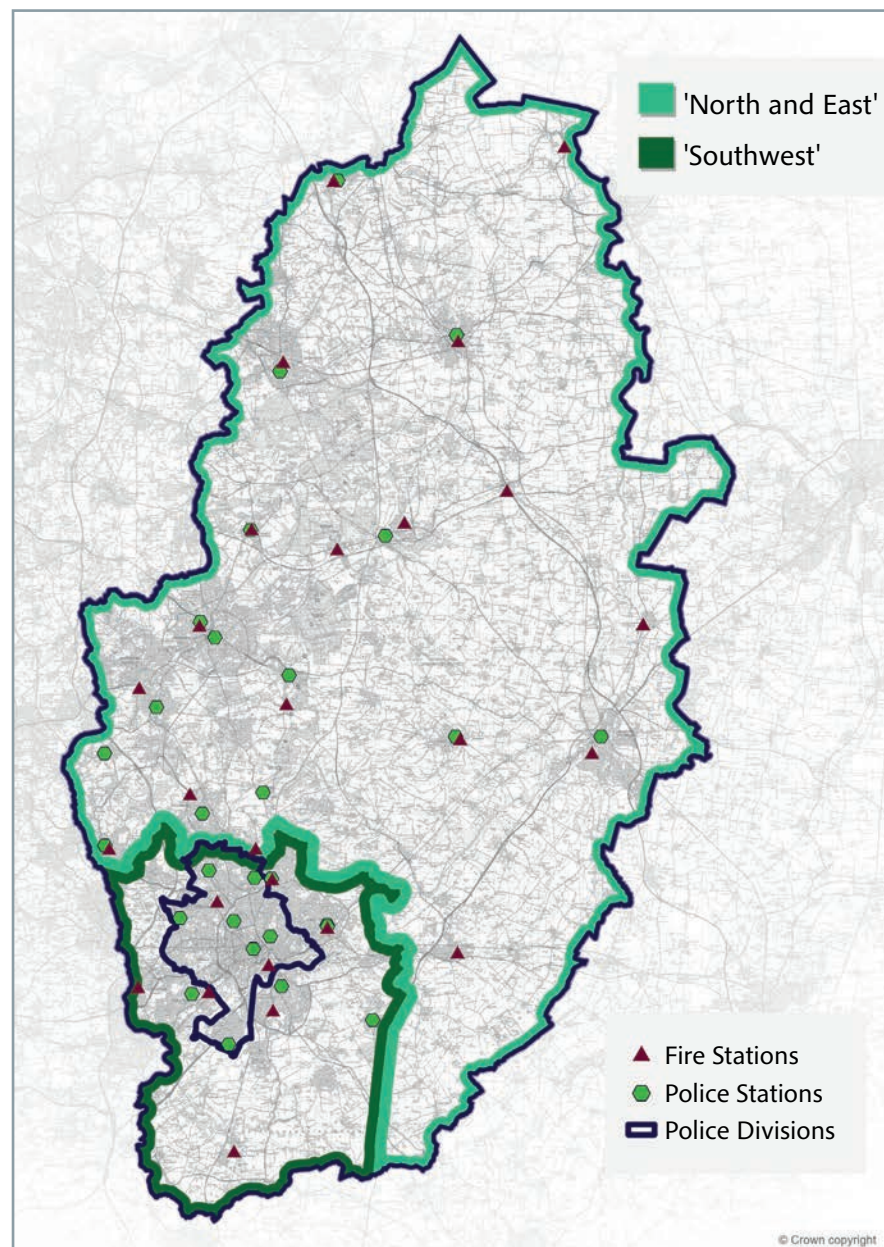
Whichever option for LGR is selected, this will involve the integration of affordable housing allocation management in areas with an HRA with those that do not have these. It will involve a renewal of the nominations agreement these authorities currently have with the third-party Registered Providers (RPs) to the new unitary authorities.

Nottingham City Council currently runs the Homelink letting partnership which operates a choice-based letting system to a range of Housing Association partners who currently operate in the city. The new unitary authority would require a similar partnership to be put in place across the new unitary authority area to manage nominations to affordable housing from all of the appropriate RP providers operating in the new geography.



¹¹⁵ Neither Rushcliffe or Gedling have HRAs – their former council housing went through a large-scale voluntary transfer to third party housing associations with whom the authorities will have a nominations agreement.

FIGURE 3.9: BLUE LIGHT PROVISION ACROSS NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COMPARED TO OUR PROPOSED TWO-UNITARY MODEL BOUNDARIES



Public safety

The map outlines the blue light provision across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and where these will sit across our proposed unitary councils.

Policing for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is structured around two major geographical divisions (as shown by the black border), city and county. The city division covers the existing authority boundary and surrounding area, with significant coverage to reflect the difference in population density compared to the more rural areas.

By creating two unitary councils in North and East and Southwest Nottinghamshire, we can develop a unified approach to reduce crime and disorder and enforce health and safety regulations across the entire area. Managing community cohesion, safety and crime in an urban area is very specific and differs from the rural areas, so this split will support the modelling of services to fit an urban conurbation, and a more rural geography.

Wider services

We believe that by consolidating resources, both unitary councils could achieve greater resilience in service delivery. At the same time, delivering single tier services across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has the potential to deliver at appropriate scale, with financial efficiencies. Each area provides evidence of predicted spend for key services and a commitment to enabling localism and place-based reform. We believe that this will provide value for money, particularly when sourcing high-cost low volume services, and is in line with the direction of travel with regional commissioning arrangements for services.

We will champion locality working to ensure the local needs of the North and East and Southwest communities are understood and met, and we expect our frontline services to be clearly linked to any established area-based working.

● Waste collection and disposal

Currently, Nottinghamshire County Council manages recycling centres, while the city and district councils handle bins and bulky waste collections within the local areas. There are joint Officer Boards, and a Waste Management Board set up to ensure a collaborative approach across the county. The city and county have different approaches to glass and recycling and different numbers of bins per household, largely due to the lack of space in the city compared to more rural areas.

The establishment of two unitary councils representing both the North and East and Southwest will require us to consider harmonising ways of working. By creating two new unitary councils built around our rural and urban communities, we can take a more strategic and coordinated approach to waste management supporting environmental goals, improving efficiency and ensuring a better experience for residents across Nottinghamshire. We will look to ensure consistency in food waste collection, recycling and street cleansing across Nottinghamshire, optimising fleet operations, branding and disposal processes. We will utilise software tools to model new collection routes to drive efficiency and maximise service delivery.



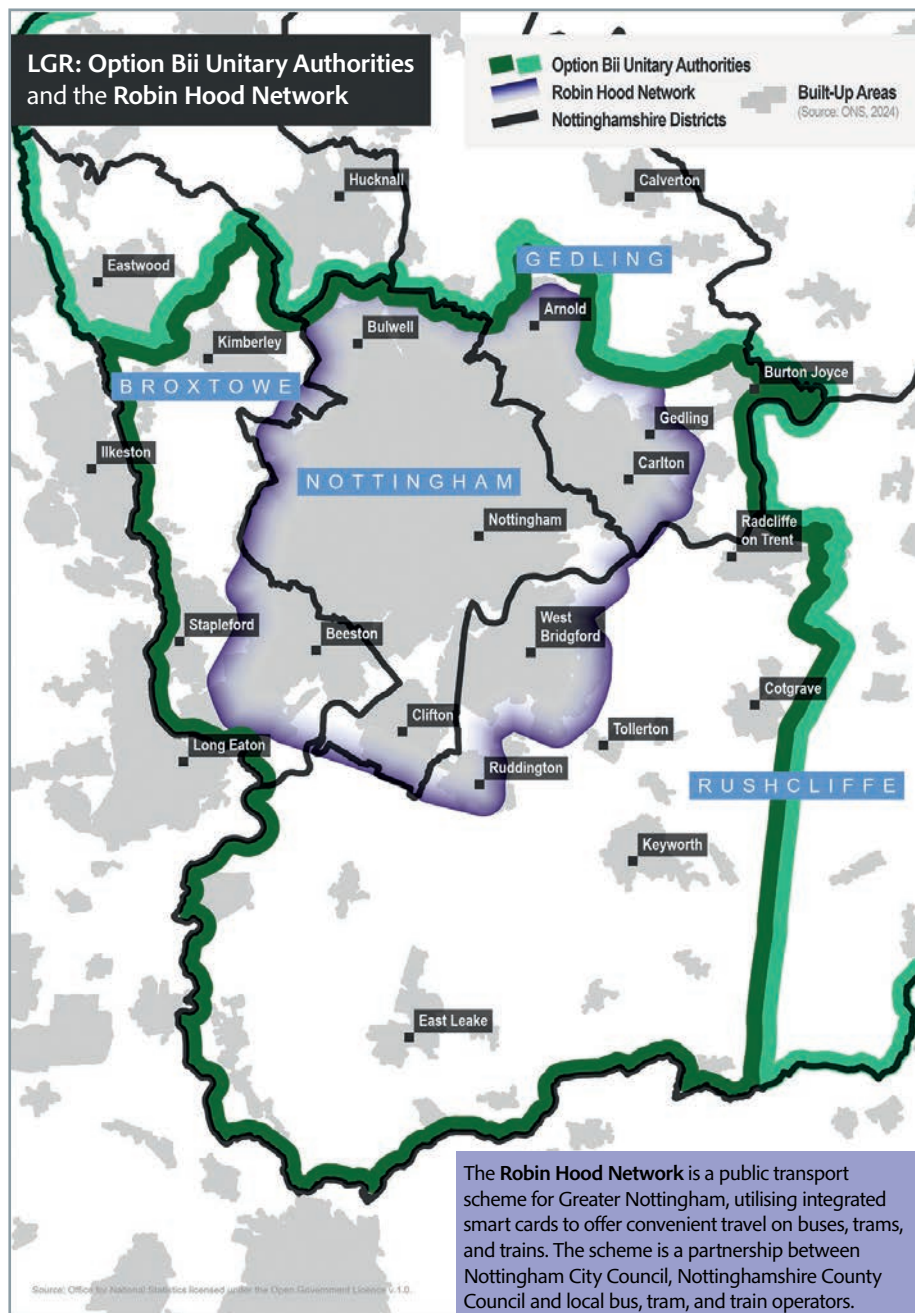
● Planning and economic growth

The creation of two new unitary councils will promote constructive dialogue and foster collaborative approaches for integrated planning, transportation and economic development, reducing existing tensions between the numerous current governing bodies. We anticipate that this arrangement will enhance the capacity to negotiate solutions, address challenges effectively, and adopt a comprehensive outlook on urban and rural planning and sustainable development strategies throughout the region.

EMCCA presents a unique opportunity to harness the extraordinary economic and population growth potential of the Trent Arc - the combined Derby and Nottingham area - which now accounts for nearly half of the region's overall growth. By placing the Trent Arc at the heart of a unified regional strategy, EMCCA is positioned to efficiently coordinate major infrastructure projects, orchestrate cross-boundary transport solutions and catalyse economic development across Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and the wider East Midlands.

With EMCCA assuming strategic transport responsibilities, the region gains a centralised platform to manage major infrastructure projects and facilitate regional economic development. EMCCA's oversight will streamline the planning process for large-scale investments and provide the crucial capacity needed to coordinate cross-boundary transport solutions. This structure enables the new unitary councils to concentrate on local delivery and place-based reform, ensuring that local priorities are addressed with agility, whilst EMCCA can drive initiatives that serve the wider region's connectivity and growth.

FIGURE 3.10: EXISTING ROBIN HOOD NETWORK



An advantage of our proposal is the opportunity to expand and integrate successful transport initiatives across the region. The Robin Hood Network could be extended under the Southwest Unitary Council to cover a greater proportion of the Travel to Work Area for Nottingham City, making bus and tram connections smoother and more accessible. The Public Transport Levy (PTL) and Workplace Parking Levy (WPL), currently implemented within Nottingham, could be synchronised or adapted to cover a broader geographical area, encouraging sustainable commuting practices and generating funding for further improvements. This unified approach not only simplifies fare structures and ticketing systems but also lays the groundwork for future expansions and upgrades to public transport routes that benefit both urban and rural communities.

Importantly, Bii allows for sharper focus on the differing needs of rural and urban areas. The urban Southwest Unitary Council will be well-placed to address high-density transport requirements, integrated systems and economic strategies suited to metropolitan growth. Meanwhile, the North and East Unitary Council can prioritise tailored economic development in smaller towns and rural localities, ensuring that local needs, such as flexible transport options and targeted growth plans, are met and that the benefits of regional growth extend beyond the Trent Arc to all areas of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and the wider East Midlands. This clear separation between the two new unitary councils cultivates constructive dialogue and maximises resource allocation, enabling each council to optimise outcomes for their respective populations and contribute to a coherent, region-wide strategy for sustainable development.

By overcoming historical geographical barriers and presenting a consolidated economic and demographic profile, the Southwest Unitary Council could expand Nottingham City Council's existing growth-oriented strategy over a larger geographical area to optimise resource allocation and improve outcomes across the wider economic region. Significant sporting assets—including football grounds, a cricket ground, a racecourse, and water sports facilities—could be strategically developed by a single authority, overcoming barriers, such as the River Trent, that currently hinder cohesive efforts. Major employers, including universities and the NHS, would also

benefit from these reforms. A larger unitary structure will provide more accurate regional statistics and avoid misleading 'per capita' calculations that do not accurately reflect the city's demographic profile. Presenting a more consistent and compelling narrative will strengthen the area's case for increased national and international investment by highlighting its economic and population strengths.

In summary, the centrality of the Trent Arc as a driver of growth, combined with the benefits of a unified strategy under EMCCA and the establishment of the urban Southwest Unitary and rural North and East Unitary Councils, provides a robust foundation for targeted economic development, optimised resource use, and the strategic advancement of the East Midlands as a whole. This approach ensures that both metropolitan and rural communities across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire can thrive.



CASE STUDY

The **Greenspace and Natural Environment service** is a skilled, award-winning team acting as the City Council's centre of expertise for greenspace strategy. The team manages statutory duties such as Biodiversity Net Gain and allotments, oversees protected areas, and delivers safe play spaces. Their work includes fostering community engagement, generating income for reinvestment, and representing the Council in national nature and parks programmes. Strategic partnerships support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and broader greenspace initiatives.

The potential benefits of expanding or reorganising the service include integrated green infrastructure planning, which would allow greenspaces to be connected across city and suburban boundaries, strengthening regional green corridors and biodiversity networks. The new Southwest Unitary would also be better placed to access national and regional funding streams, gaining greater opportunities for investment through avenues such as the Levelling Up Fund and the Nature for Climate Fund.

By aligning administrative boundaries with the true urban footprint, suburban residents will have an increased ability to participate in decision making and to benefit from investments grounded in a place-based approach. Furthermore, economies of scale achieved through shared services will reduce costs related to development, volunteering and conservation management, freeing up resources for new projects and broader community engagement. Such a unified authority could also set consistent standards for greenspace quality, accessibility and biodiversity, in line with national objectives.



● Highways and grounds maintenance

Nottinghamshire County Council contracts with Via East Midlands to deliver a range of services such as highways maintenance, winter service, infrastructure management, road safety and public transport. Nottingham City Council maintains and improves the roads, footways and other highway assets, manages car parking facilities throughout the city and delivers winter service and infrastructure. District and borough councils handle local street issues such as parking and street cleansing.

Existing agreements mean that the City Council maintains some roads outside of its current boundary. There are some cross-boundary agreements in place but historically these have been challenging to maintain, and cross-boundary issues often prove to be messy and approaches to street lighting, trees and bridges are often inconsistent.

Bii brings a refreshed opportunity to review the established cross-boundary agreements and expand the City's 'Streets for People' community-based approach, which is award-winning and nationally recognised, to highways and grounds maintenance across a broader area. We also believe there is potential for greater resource allocation and impact through scaling and upskilling technical personnel in specialist areas.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nottingham City Council contributes to the Nature Towns and Cities programme and have their own Greenspace Strategy - Greener, Healthier, Happier Nottingham - to improve urban nature and green spaces. The Council, through initiatives like the Nottingham Green Guardians, mobilises volunteers to plant trees and improve the environment. They also develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy with partners to restore habitats and increase access to nature for residents.



● Customer services (including Council Tax)

Many customers are unaware of the two-tier local government system and often assume their district, borough or city council handles all local services. They may contact their local council about issues like potholes, blue badges, social care, or education only to be redirected to the County Council. In many instances, customers often contact the incorrect council, with instances of customers outside of Nottingham City Council mistakenly believing they fall under that boundary. This causes frustration and duplication, with multiple councils handling the same queries, leading to wasted resources, inefficiencies and sometimes conflicting advice.

Our proposal to create a North and East Unitary and a Southwest Unitary will enable the new unitary councils to take advantage of economies of scale to utilise software and online solutions. This will provide customers with a wider variety of self-service tools to improve response times, reduce data entry for staff and free up more traditional access channels for those who require it. We recognise existing councils are using various Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems currently. Rationalising the IT infrastructure into a single council infrastructure will increase the long-term savings and help to ensure a digital-first approach for residents and customers that ensures a positive user experience.

In Revenues and Benefits and Customer Contact, the larger unitary teams will be able to deploy higher numbers of staff at peak periods, reducing wait times for customers. Specialist teams will be created to handle more complex service provision without disrupting routine working, enabling a more flexible and adaptable service that will be responsive to user needs.

The unitary councils will provide a clear point of service delivery for residents and businesses, avoiding customers having to call several different places to report or request a service. This approach will make council services more accessible and visible, particularly for individuals with additional needs, by simplifying navigation and reducing barriers to engagement. Aggregation of insight and data across the unitary councils will help support new community engagement approaches to inform decision-making and shape service provision more effectively.

● Back-office support services

All council services are supported by back-office functions such as finance, HR, procurement and IT services. Currently Nottingham City Council co-deliver transactional HR, payroll and finance services with Leicestershire County Council through East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS).

Bii provides the opportunity to scale these services and realise efficiencies through the standardisation of processes, governance, procurement exercises and the rationalisation of systems. Both new unitary councils can decide whether to utilise and further expand EMSS or bring the work back in-house.

From a finance perspective, our proposal can deliver simpler, more cost-efficient operating models in both new unitary councils through the rationalisation of processes, ways of working and systems. We believe it creates opportunities to modernise financial services and achieve economies of scale in transaction.

From a HR and People perspective, LGR (no matter the proposal taken forward) will mean an assimilation of staff, culture, ways of working and approaches to HR management. We believe that the HR teams across the current councils are resilient and well-placed to come together to drive large-scale transformational change. The team within Nottingham City Council can use the insights and experience from integrating HR teams when they became a unitary council to help steer this change and work with peers to deliver change.

From an IT perspective, all the councils use Granicus (digital forms platform) but their core systems differ. LGR will provide an opportunity for consolidated data warehousing across the region, and sharing of lessons learned in digital transformation across the existing councils to determine the principles for the new unitary councils.

WHY CHANGING THE BOUNDARIES IN THIS PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO DELIVER PUBLIC SERVICES BETTER

Throughout our analysis we determined differences in the public needs of our critical services across the area. In the North and East, we see greater need with challenges such as isolation in Adults' Services, and emotional abuse in Children's services, whereas there are more challenges around deprivation and neglect in the Southwest. Both areas experience difference in educational challenges as well.

Our adaption of the building blocks of the existing boundaries mean that we are bringing together communities that already resonate and align with each other, having similar backgrounds and needs. North and East and Southwest will be able to better represent these communities and deliver targeted prevention and intervention measures that will benefit all public service delivery, ensuring effective use of funds and public spend.

The other options that were analysed either don't cover enough of the area or cover too much of it and therefore create disparity of resources and services. We believe this will create challenges in terms of the ability to deliver effective, tailored services and interventions, thus limiting the true potential of public service transformation.



Criteria 4: Proposal should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views

- a) It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way and this engagement activity should be evidenced in your proposal
- b) Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance
- c) Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed

Strengths of Bii

- **Reflects our communities:**
Our model is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work and study.
- **Improves service delivery:**
Our model enables services and preventative initiatives to be designed and delivered around local needs, tailored to the distinct communities across the unitary councils, truly moving beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and delivering much better value for money.

4.1 Working together

There is a well-established history of collaborative working at district, city and county level across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, providing a robust foundation for future joint working through our proposed two unitary model. Over many years, councils and partner organisations have jointly addressed important issues through a range of formal and informal partnerships. For example, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System has brought together health and social care leaders to develop consistent strategies and outcomes across the region. Economic development and regeneration have been driven by the Greater Nottingham Joint Planning Advisory Board and the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee, which unite executive representatives from all local authorities to focus on shared economic

priorities and investment opportunities. Community safety and welfare have also benefited from Nottinghamshire-wide initiatives such as the slavery exploitation partnership, linking children's and adults' services with resettlement programmes and victim support services to deliver equitable provision throughout Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Transparency and accountability in public services are supported by Joint Health Scrutiny Committees, while the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority, as a Combined Fire Authority, oversees emergency services through a partnership of councillors from both councils. These enduring partnerships illustrate a deep-rooted commitment to working together for the benefit of all communities in the region.

The establishment of EMCCA in March 2024 marked a significant evolution in regional collaboration.

EMCCA, chaired by the directly elected Mayor and comprising of leaders from Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire unites councils, businesses, and communities under a shared mission to unlock opportunity, improve lives, and build a stronger, greener and fairer East Midlands. This powerful partnership stands as a testament to the region's collective ambition and provides a strong platform for future progress.

Building upon this longstanding tradition of collaboration and joint working relationships throughout Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, all nine councils have united to drive forward LGR proposals across the region. The adoption of a single, Nottinghamshire-wide engagement approach is unique at a national level, with all options appraisals being developed in a spirit of openness and collective responsibility.

Since February 2025, a dedicated communications cell has steered engagement activities, supported by a clearly defined communications and engagement strategy for LGR in the region.

This group, comprised of representatives from each of the nine councils, still convenes fortnightly to maintain momentum and ensure coordination, and has been recognised for their work by the LGA.

Key principles and actions have been established by this group, most notably the implementation of a comprehensive resident engagement survey designed to capture valuable public feedback. All nine councils have played an active role in shaping the programme's outputs, with every stage managed via this collaborative platform.

In addition, each council has maintained representation at weekly Chief Executive meetings, underpinned by a core programme team responsible for coordinating activities, while finance and monitoring officer groups have remained closely involved.

Meetings between elected members have also facilitated discussions about available options and the region's strategic direction and the City Council's commissioners have been engaged during the development of all the

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire proposals.

These collaborative efforts have been enabled by government contingency funding, which has provided vital financial support for the programme's key activities and core offer.

To ensure transparency and accessibility, a shared website has been established as a central information hub. This platform enables residents and partners to access up-to-date information, options appraisals and data, ensuring the consistent provision of neutral, reliable information across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

4.2 Informed by local views

FIGURE 4.1: SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT EXERCISE



Commitment to resident involvement across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was demonstrated through a comprehensive six-week engagement exercise conducted by all nine councils in September 2025. The primary mechanism for gathering widespread public opinion was an online questionnaire¹¹⁶ open to all interested parties and promoted via the councils' websites, outreach events and engagement with stakeholders. The survey, with 11,483 responses received, was supported by four distinct focus groups involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas to deepen the qualitative understanding and validate the survey findings. The focus groups provided a platform for in-depth discussions, allowing participants to unpack

RESIDENTS' RESPONSES SPECIFIC TO Bii

Respondents who live or work in Nottingham City were invited to add comments, concerns or suggestions about the two unitary boundary split model being proposed.

Approximately half the respondents considered the model to be the 'most sensible and logical solution', citing it as fairer to suburban residents who use city services paying city Council Tax and having voting rights, essentially creating a better alignment between service use, taxation, and representation. Some respondents also perceived it as potentially a less disruptive and preferable alternative to wider structural reorganisation.



emerging findings from the broader engagement process and deliberate on the reorganisation proposals, thereby adding rich contextual insight and validating the quantitative data.

Concerns remain about the fairness of boundaries and urban-rural divides, potentially dragging rural areas into an urban-focused council and an urban area having to deliver, and potentially subsidise, services to a rural area (cited by approximately 20%). There is also scepticism as to whether a larger council with new boundaries will solve financial pressures and service delivery issues with some believing these are deep seated and underlying in nature (cited by approximately 15%).

To mitigate these concerns, an ongoing and comprehensive engagement strategy will be essential.

It is important to note that the challenges and criticisms highlighted above were not unique to Bii and were raised in the context against all options considered and for LGR in the region, as significant structural changes rightly invite scrutiny and debate.



116 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

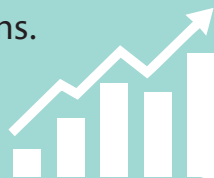
CASE STUDY

Engaging with local businesses to support economic growth – Boots

We recognise the importance of engaging with our local businesses. Through open discussions with one of Nottingham's largest employers, Boots PLC, we gained essential operational insights that support our proposal, and which will foster businesses and economic growth. Boots highlighted the operational burden of dealing with multiple authorities for planning and development that they currently face as a result of being located across district boundaries, and showed support for Bii that encompasses part of Broxtowe, stating:

“ With our Beeston campus currently split between two council areas, we do see potential merit in Broxtowe being in the same unitary body as the City of Nottingham, as that would mean we had to deal with one local authority regarding planning considerations and future development of the site. ”

This feedback demonstrates Bii's direct benefit to businesses by reducing administrative complexity, accelerating development, and fostering a more business-friendly environment, proving our engagement with local concerns and the tangible positive impact on their operations.



ENGAGING WITH PARTNERS AND OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES

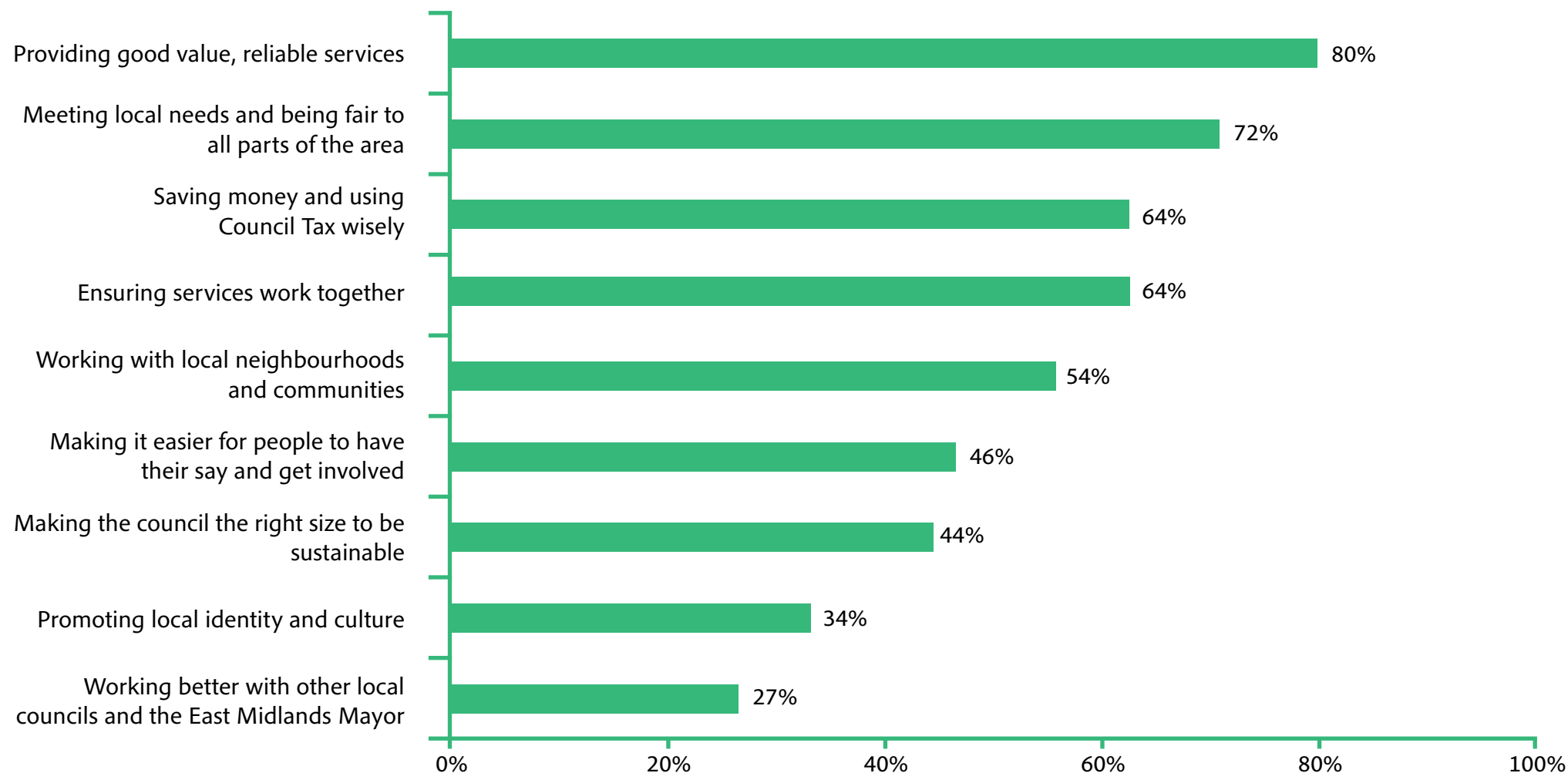
Through informal sentiment gathering with our regional partners and MPs, it has been widely accepted that LGR is happening and that whatever the proposal taken forward, they would support the transition and delivery, continuing to work with us to deliver services to the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

More specifically, **Nottingham College** – one of conurbation's anchor institutions with 22,000 learners enrolling every year – has reviewed each of the potential options in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and has offered firm support for the City Council's boundary change proposal. The college cites the potential benefits to their six campuses which see travel to learn patterns into Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe and a natural recruitment geography beyond the city – endorsing option Bii as the “most sensible, logical and fair”.



Aligning with resident priorities: our proposal's response

FIGURE 4.2: CHART SHOWING SURVEY RESPONSES TO 'WHAT SHOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT WHEN DESIGNING A NEW COUNCIL?'¹¹⁷



Number of respondents: 11,335

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer

¹¹⁷ <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

Our proposal for a new council structure is designed to address the concerns, and core priorities identified by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire residents, stakeholders and businesses during our engagement exercises, ensuring that local communities and views are at the heart of its design and delivery.

The engagement work undertaken highlights what matters most to the people we serve, and Bii directly responds to these needs:

1 Providing good value, reliable services (financial efficiency)

Residents overwhelmingly prioritise good value, reliable services (80% of respondents) and prudent financial management, including saving money and using Council Tax wisely (64% of respondents). Our proposal directly addresses this through:

- **Financial sustainability:** By proposing two unitary councils with the most balanced boundaries and service demand, not only will we deliver financial sustainability across the county, but will be able to drive real value for money for tax payers by tailoring our services to the needs of our distinct urban and rural local communities
- **Focused service delivery:** By strategically creating an urban centred Southwest Unitary Council and a more rural North and East Unitary Council, Bii allows for a more focused approach to service delivery. This alignment to the distinct needs of each area, rather than attempting to split resources across differing and sometimes conflicting requirements, enables services to be made more reliable and good value. This targeted approach ensures that resources are optimised for the specific challenges and opportunities of either urban or rural environments, leading to more efficient and effective outcomes for residents. Assessment and performance management of resident impact will be closely aligned to the Local Government's Outcome Framework (LGOF).

- **Strategic collaboration:** By enabling the two unitary councils to scale and formalise inter-council collaboration, building on existing working relationships and shared service models, we can achieve significant economies of scale. This strategic approach, including engagement with EMCCA, will drive financial efficiency, reduce duplication, and ensure that Council Tax is spent effectively, directly responding to the desire for *"saving money and using Council Tax wisely."* This directly counters the sentiment that *"Councils often spend lots of money on lots of things that often don't matter to local people"* by focusing resources where they can deliver the most impact and value.

2 Meeting local needs and fairness to all parts of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

A significant 72% of respondents emphasised the importance of meeting local needs and ensuring fairness across all parts of the area. Bii is built to deliver this, clustering similar local communities together to create the two new unitary councils bringing together the different communities' sense of belonging to create cohesion within each of the unitary councils:

- **Services tailored to local need:** Bii is built around local communities. By creating unitary councils that encapsulate our differing urban and rural communities, we will be able to specifically design and deliver services that meet the unique requirements of our communities, ensuring strategies and resources are deployed effectively to address the most pressing local issues. Our approach directly supports the desire for service delivery to be relevant and effective for residents.

Results from the engagement, together with previous quantitative research on Nottingham's Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and wider commuting patterns, shows that respondents tend to work or study in areas closest to where they live, especially those that live in Nottingham City (69%), Bassetlaw (68%) and Newark and Sherwood (61%) council areas. However, a notable proportion that live outside Nottingham work or study in the city,

especially those council areas that border it (Gedling 33%, Broxtowe 29%, Rushcliffe 24% and Ashfield 23%).

- **Cohesive neighbourhood identities:** The engagement work clearly highlights that the majority of individuals who use and work, in Nottingham City Centre reside outside of the existing unitary area. Bii ensures that a significant proportion of the Travel to Work Area will fall under the same unitary authority (71.4% in the Southwest Unitary), aligning with existing travel patterns, fostering cohesive neighbourhood and identities. Bii's alignment with these patterns offers substantial benefits to residents: their Council Tax contributions will directly support the areas where they live, work, and study, fostering a more direct and tangible connection between their financial input and the services they receive. This ensures that essential services and infrastructure improvements are planned and delivered with the needs of all residents in mind, fostering a stronger sense of community and shared purpose.
- **Enhanced democratic voice and local control:** This integrated approach also significantly enhances the democratic voice of residents. By having their living and working areas governed by the same authority, residents gain a greater voice and control over how services are delivered and tailored to their specific needs and priorities. This direct alignment empowers communities to actively shape their local environment and ensures that council decisions are more closely reflective of the public's will.

3 Improving core services and infrastructure (unified planning)

Residents have clearly articulated their priorities for improvement, with maintaining roads and pavements (71% making it a priority for improvement, 83% saying it makes somewhere a good place to live), clean streets (57%), and public transport, roads and parking (53%) topping the

list. Crime and anti-social behaviour (64%), refuse collection (40%), parks and leisure (42%) and health services (46%) are also significant priorities. Our proposal facilitates a more effective response to these needs through:

- **Unified planning:** Our proposal allows for the planning, delivery and management of demographically targeted growth. This will significantly speed up processes and align focus and priorities, particularly for critical infrastructure. It will facilitate alignment of transport, housing, and economic development across the region, supporting commuting links and regeneration ambitions. This unified approach will enable more efficient and coordinated investment in roads, pavements and public transport, directly addressing residents' top infrastructure concerns.



4.3 Celebrating local identity and cultural distinctiveness

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's character is defined by a rich mosaic of history, culture and geography, with vibrant local identities woven throughout its urban and rural communities. Through the process of LGR, it is vital to recognise and champion the unique attributes, civic pride and sense of identity and belonging that make each area special. Effective governance must respect these differences, ensuring that services, representation and development are tailored to the specific needs and strengths of both rural and urban populations.

Rural North and East Unitary: This area is steeped in tradition, with strong community ties, a proud industrial and agricultural heritage, and a way of life shaped by its picturesque landscapes and historic villages. Local customs, festivals, and small businesses thrive, supporting a resilient rural economy and vibrant tourism sector.

Urban Southwest Unitary: Nottingham's historic, urban heart is marked by a multicultural population, a legacy of industrialisation, and a dynamic shift towards modern industries such as sport, education, healthcare, life-sciences, and the creative sector. Its cultural vibrancy and economic innovation require governance that can respond to the complex needs of a diverse and growing city.

- **Local identity and civic pride:** Across the county, residents identify deeply with their communities, with 75%¹¹⁸ expressing pride in their local area. These strong identities highlight the importance of grouping likeminded communities together, so that their identity and sense of belonging can be truly championed.
- **Responsive, respectful governance:** The new unitary structure should not only acknowledge but actively empower these distinct identities and communities, ensuring public services and strategic development are tailored and appropriate for each locality.

Overall, the strategy for Bii will reflect local identity and align to the priorities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's residents, as shared with us through extensive engagement, focusing on:

Rural-urban service delivery and prevention focus: Tailoring services to the distinct needs of rural and separately to the needs of urban populations, recognising that a 'one-size-fits-all' model will not be the most ineffective. The new unitary councils will focus on prevention, and the specialisation in urban or rural services will enable the unitary authorities to invest in early interventions and community-based solutions, reducing the demand for more costly reactive services and improving overall well-being across diverse geographical areas.

Identity of place and cohesive neighbourhoods: Fostering strong cohesive neighbourhoods, a sense of belonging and identity is crucial for community cohesion and civic participation, achieved by ensuring that local decision making reflects the unique characteristics and heritage of each area, and that administrative boundaries reflect the living and working patterns of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's people, allowing residents to feel more connected to their local government and the services it provides.

Community engagement and boundary alignment: Proactively involve local communities in the decision-making processes through established governance channels, collaborating with parish and town councils, and establishing area committees. This approach is designed to ensure that local perspectives are integral to the formulation and implementation of local plans and initiatives. By aligning administrative boundaries to travel-to-work patterns, residents will be able to vote and influence how services are delivered in the areas they work and live, enhancing democratic voice and empowering communities.

118 <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

Investment in key infrastructure and growth priorities: Strategic investment in infrastructure, such as transport links, digital connectivity and public facilities, is essential for economic development and improving quality of life. Focusing on growth priorities ensures that resources are directed towards projects that will yield the greatest long-term benefits for both the region as a whole and its individual communities, attracting businesses, creating jobs and enhancing opportunities for residents.

By proposing a model that aligns with the distinct identities of these two defined areas, the unitary authorities will achieve reform balanced with recognition of place, respect for tradition and communities, and strategic ambition. This approach enables Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to commit to a more coherent, effective, and locally resonant model of governance. It ensures that services are delivered in ways that genuinely reflect community identities and needs, thereby avoiding uniformity in favour of authentic localism and fostering a stronger sense of belonging.



Criteria 5: New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements

- a) Proposals will need to consider and set out for areas where there is already a Combined Authority (CA) or a Combined County Authority (CCA) established or a decision has been taken by government to work with the area to establish one, how that institution and its governance arrangements will need to change to continue to function effectively; and set out clearly (where applicable) whether this proposal is supported by the CA/CCA/Mayor
- b) Where no CA or CCA is already established or agreed then the proposal should set out how it will help unlock devolution
- c) Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities

EMCCA was formally established in March 2024, encompassing Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire. It is one of the largest regional governance bodies in the UK. In May 2024, Claire Ward was elected as the first Mayor of the East Midlands, representing over 2.2 million residents.

The key priorities for EMCCA are:

Skills and employment

- Focused on reducing low attainment and increasing technical training.
- Funding allocated for tailored adult skills initiatives.
- Aims to build a dynamic talent pool aligned with local business needs.

Strengths of Bii

- **Enables economic growth:**
By aligning local government boundaries with real economic patterns, the plan unlocks targeted growth for both rural industries and Nottingham's urban core, maximising regional potential.
- **Improves investment opportunities:**
Redrawing boundaries to reflect Nottingham's true economic footprint will make the city more attractive to investors by showcasing its full population, talent, and potential, which will benefit the whole county.
- **Aligns with EMCCA priorities;**
The proposal dovetails with EMCCA's growth initiatives, ensuring both rural and urban areas benefit from major projects and streamlined delivery.

Net zero

- Commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050.
- £18m allocated for housing and Net Zero projects.
- Includes building low-carbon homes, retrofitting existing housing, and expanding renewable energy use.

Economic growth

- £4b in funding over 30 years.
- Targets include 100,000 new jobs and 52,000 homes.
- Strategy to attract public and private investment and support business growth.

Transport

- EMCCA is now the local transport authority.
- Plans include a unified regional transport vision, better bus services, decarbonisation, and inclusive access across urban and rural areas.

Housing

- £16.8m annually secured to regenerate brownfield sites.
- 1,400 new homes under way, with completion expected by March 2026.
- Retrofit schemes to improve energy efficiency in existing housing.

These strategic priorities and the projects that have been developed off the back of them dovetail perfectly into our proposed two unitary proposal, with the Trent Arc focusing very much on urban development and building on the footprint and conurbation of both Nottingham and Derby, while the projects supporting the rest of the county very much focus on the polycentric nature and associated infrastructure to provide regionally targeted growth and development.



The North and East Unitary

EMCCA also has a number of key initiatives that will be delivered across the North and East Unitary, many of which are unique to that area, building on existing infrastructure to improve local opportunities and strengthen communities. The initiatives have been designed to reflect the polycentric nature of the area, acknowledging that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach for support and development will not work across such diverse historic and culturally unique rurality with its key town-based communities and their historic industries.

Supercluster: A Hyperscale Growth Initiative

The Supercluster is a transformative clean energy and innovation hub centred around three former coal-fired power stations in the East Midlands:

- West Burton Power Station
- Cottam Power Station
- High Marnham Power Station

These sites are geographically close and collectively form the backbone of a future-facing, decarbonised industrial cluster with global ambitions – the East Midlands equivalent to the Silicon Valley and a future global exporter of technology and expertise in decarbonising industries.

West Burton Power Station has a central role to play in the UK becoming a clean energy superpower. Through the STEP Programme (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production, a major UK government initiative led by the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) to develop the world's first commercial fusion power plant), the Power Station will provide a site for world leading research, testing and manufacturing for fusion and other net-zero initiatives.

Cottam Power Station will be home to the UK's largest data centre and will support numerous sectors including manufacturing, food production and defence. Powered by zero carbon energy, the development of this data centre will make it a magnet for tech companies, creating a digital enterprise hub around the Cottam region.

High Marnham Power Station is set to become a multipurpose centre for green hydrogen production, processing and product development. Given its excellent location, the site will also serve as an operations centre for food and agri-tech operations centre, supporting local businesses to export across the UK.

Projected impact

- 6,800 new homes
- 15,500 new jobs
- £930 million in annual Gross Value Added (GVA)¹¹⁹

Heartlands

The Heartlands initiative is very much focused on supporting the communities of Ashfield and Mansfield and the smaller villages in their vicinity, ensuring the benefit from the EMCCA targeted initiatives and development support. Given the disparate nature of the region, the 'Heartlands Approach' aims to engage communities and empower them to identify and decide on the specific support they want from the range of EMCCA initiatives.

There is a range of options that will be available to these communities, including:

- town and village extensions
- faster broadband
- high street upgrades
- better public transport
- support for local businesses
- better social infrastructure
- funding for community-led projects

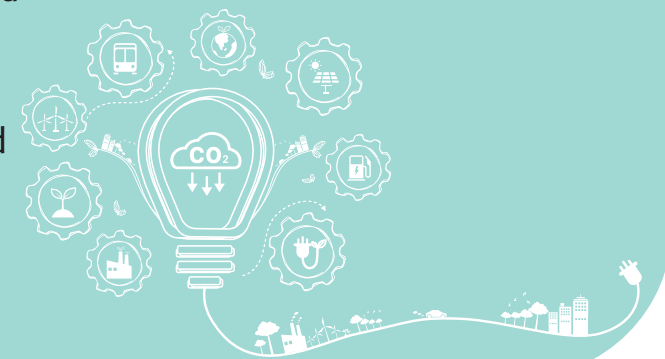
¹¹⁹ <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

CASE STUDY

How Nottingham is tackling climate change as a Core City

Nottingham has surpassed its 2020 energy target by reducing CO₂ emissions by 26% from 2005 levels ahead of schedule, aiming to be the UK's first carbon-neutral city by 2028. Efforts focus on cutting transport emissions and congestion for climate, air quality and health benefits. The city introduced the UK's first workplace parking levy, with proceeds funding public transport improvements such as expanding the tram network, upgrading the railway station and developing a large electric bus fleet. Plans include extending the tram east to connect with HS2. To encourage sustainable travel, Nottingham is building four segregated cycle corridors and aims to boost regular cycling by 10% by 2025, supported by Local Enterprise Partnership funding.

These efforts can be scaled into the new Southwest Unitary, and approaches and lesson learned shared with the North and East Unitary to help the entire county's climate change efforts.



As with all EMCCA initiatives, projects will use the building blocks that already exist within communities, such as leveraging key economic assets of the Automated Distribution and Manufacturing Centre in Mansfield or the Air and Space Institute in Newark.

Canal corridor

There are several initiatives across the canal corridor, and the Explore Park development in Worksop in the north of the county unitary is a great example of growth and ambition. It is Europe's largest and most advanced pre-assembly manufacturing facility, strategically located in the East Midlands Investment Zone. This site is a significant employment area with millions of pounds invested, including a large off-site manufacturing factory which opened in 2009. The ambition is for the site to develop into a key advanced manufacturing hub in the region and supply nationally important infrastructure development.¹²⁰

Key benefits:

- **Strategic location:** The park's location offers excellent transport connectivity across the UK, making it a premier destination for growth and innovation.
- **Economic growth:** The project is set to attract investment, create jobs, and enhance social value in the region.
- **Advanced manufacturing:** Explore Park champions cutting-edge British manufacturing, utilising the latest in research and development, AI, robotics, digital engineering and green technologies.
- **Sustainability:** The introduction of pioneering green technologies will generate jobs and skills, improve working conditions, and increase productivity.
- **Future development:** With full planning consent for additional space and a placemaking masterplan in development, the potential for growth is vast.

Explore Park is more than just an employment zone; it is a dynamic hub poised to transform the future of manufacturing in the UK.

The Southwest Unitary

The footprint of the Southwest Unitary very much aligns with the Trent Arc, the flagship initiative for the EMCCA Economic Growth priority. It is designed as a strategic growth corridor linking the Nottingham and Derby conurbation, with a focus on unlocking the economic potential of the communities and towns between them. This economic focus aligns perfectly to the priorities of the Southwest Unitary to drive urban regeneration for all communities within this area.

The priorities below are for the whole of Trent Arc, which sits comfortably within the boundaries of the Southwest Unitary.

Housing and jobs:

- Delivery of 30,000 new homes
- Creation of over 40,000 full-time jobs
- Development of 2.7m sq ft of commercial floorspace
- Expected to add £2.4b annually to the local economy

Transport and connectivity:

- Nearly £2b in transport investment across the East Midlands
- Enhanced links between Nottingham, Derby, and strategic sites like the East Midlands Freeport and Infinity Park Investment Zone
- Improvements in public transport, road and rail infrastructure, and freight routes
- Feasibility study into a tram extension along the eastern route from Colwick to Gamston and a further expansion with a Park and Ride in Rushcliffe

¹²⁰ <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/what-we-do/the-economy/east-midlands-investment-zone/explore-park-worksop/>

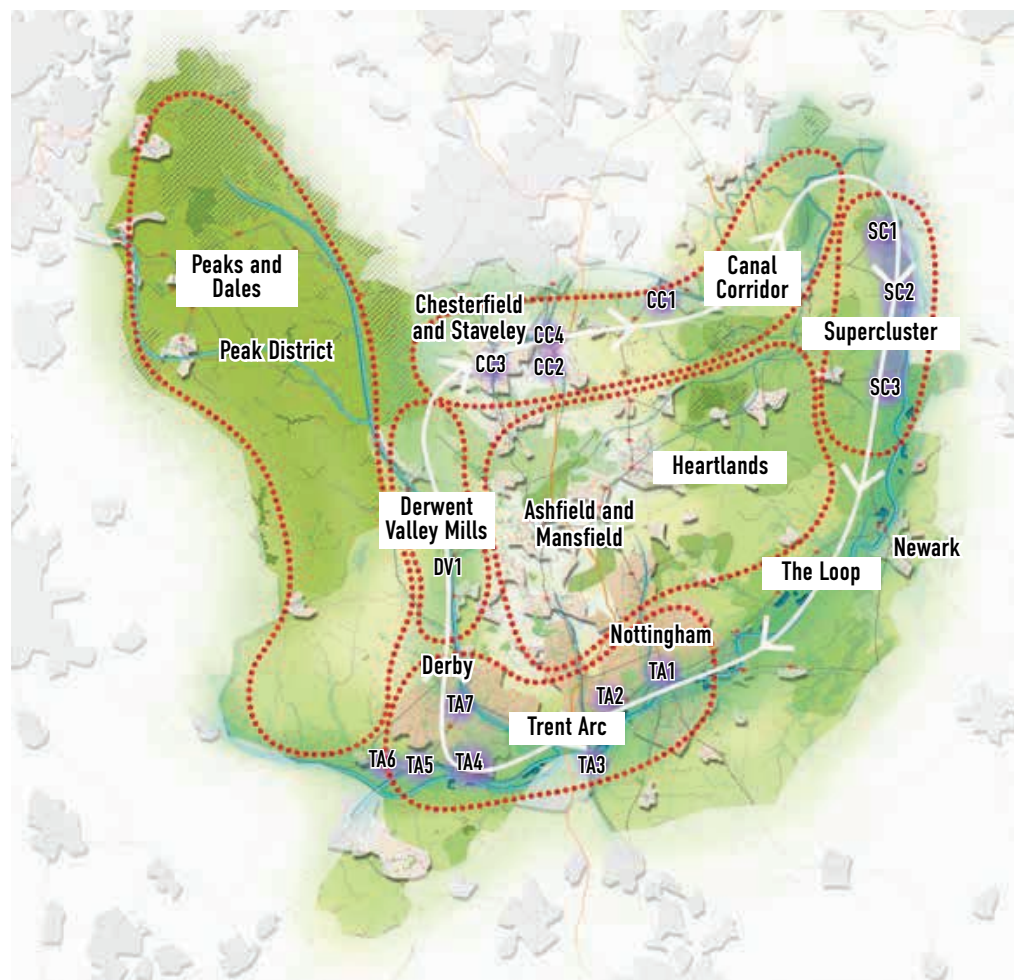
Regeneration and place-making:

- Transformation of former industrial sites such as Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Willington
- Development of new communities including Toton (west of Nottingham) and the Infinity Garden Community (south of Derby)

Environmental and social impact:

- Creation of a “nature-enhancing urban network”
- Integration of clean energy infrastructure, net zero goals, and nature recovery
- Emphasis on sustainable living and high-quality green spaces

FIGURE 5.1: THE EAST MIDLANDS SEVEN GROWTH STRATEGIES¹²¹



KEY

-- Growth Strategy Areas ● Growth Opportunities

Canal Corridor

- CC1 Explore Park investment zone
- CC2 Markham Vale enterprise zone
- CC3 Chesterfield Town Centre
- CC4 Hartington and Staveley investment zone

Supercluster

- SC1 West Burton Power Station
- SC2 Cottam Power Station
- SC3 High Marnham Power Station

Trent Arc

- TA1 Nottingham city centre
- TA2 Toton and Chetwynd
- TA3 Ratcliffe Power Station (Freeport)
- TA4 Infinity Park investment zone and South Derbyshire growth zone

Derbyshire Growth Zone

- TA5 Willington Power Station
- TA6 EMIP (Freeport)
- TA7 Derby city centre

Derwent Valley

- DV1 Derwent Valley Mills

Peaks and Dales

Heartlands

The Loop

121 <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

Alignment with the Combined County Authority and future governance

Currently, governance within EMCCA is managed by four constituent council members - two from Derbyshire and two from Nottinghamshire - who work alongside representatives from a number of district councils of varying sizes. This arrangement, while functional, often results in uneven representation and fragmented engagement, as the councils and districts differ significantly in remit and coverage, agendas and priorities. The diversity of authority types means that voices within the Combined Authority do not always carry equal weight, and the complexity of the structure can make it challenging to achieve truly balanced engagement and coherent strategic planning across the region.

LGR presents an opportunity to address these challenges, with representation from four unitary councils taking EMCCA forward, two each from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. As this is based on current membership, there will be a smooth and balanced transition to new principal authorities, but most importantly these four unitary councils will have the full mandate to represent the two counties of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. By streamlining representation, interaction with EMCCA will be much more effective, in line with MHCLG directives, ensuring the long-term development and success for both EMCCA and the East Midlands region.

This new structure will also ensure fairer representation for our communities, with each authority having broadly equivalent population sizes, so that every voice and vote carries equal democratic credibility. Importantly, through Bii, the diverse communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will have both rural- and urban-focused representation which will be able to prioritise and deliver inclusive growth.

The new unitary authorities will work seamlessly with EMCCA as the Strategic Authority, supporting devolution arrangements and driving the successful implementation of the East Midlands Growth Plan¹²². This future model will enable the new unitary councils to remain central to regional economic development, working in partnership with EMCCA, local and national agencies, and community stakeholders.

As EMCCA moves towards established Mayoral Combined Authority status in 2028, our approach will ensure that governance remains symbiotic and effective, with the new unitary councils continuing to play a central role in shaping the region's success.



¹²² https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/10/East_Midlands_Growth_Plan_Launch_Version-1-1.pdf

A view from the Mayor of the East Midlands

Throughout the process of developing our proposal we have engaged with EMCCA and the Mayor. The Mayor of the East Midlands has not expressed a preference to Nottingham City Council for any model. The Mayor considers the following matters as important and relevant for areas developing final proposals for LGR:

Proposals should be in the best interests of the region as a whole and put people and communities first. Best interests includes both how the new authorities relate to place and culture and how they enable a strong foundation for good public services and future reform. To achieve this, we welcome engagement by local authorities with the public and local stakeholders to inform the development of proposals.

The number of constituent councils, which is currently four, two from each area, once new principal authorities are established should stay the same to enable a smooth transition to new arrangements and balance between the two areas. As per MHCLG feedback, new unitary authorities must support devolution arrangements and should interact effectively with EMCCA as the Strategic Authority. Authorities should prioritise coherent new unitary authorities, that support the long-term development of the success of the East Midlands.

The current planned timeframe for the establishment of new principal authorities, who will be constituent councils of EMCCA, should not be delayed beyond the shadow elections in April 2027 and full establishment from April 2028. Authorities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire should work towards the same timetable that enables a smooth transition for the region together. Proposals that involve splitting building blocks of existing councils should have a clear plan for meeting this timetable. Proposals should meet the sensible geography criteria and support housing delivery and wider spatial development across the region, and the planning and delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to residents. Authorities should explain how proposals for new authorities will provide for these, including with regards to EMCCA's Growth Strategy Areas and the sustainable expansion of current city boundaries. This is a once in a generation opportunity to establish new, coherent boundaries that support the long-term development of the region.



CLAIRE WARD
MAYOR OF THE
EAST MIDLANDS



East Midlands
Combined County
Authority

How Bii responds:

The strategic priorities and projects that have been developed by the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), as set out in their Vision for Growth¹²³, dovetail perfectly into Bii.

- The North and East Unitary will be able to leverage EMCCA initiatives tailored to its polycentric and rural character to drive economic growth, including the Supercluster - a clean energy and innovation hub centred on three former power stations, projected to deliver 6,800 new homes, 15,500 jobs, and £930m in annual GVA. The Heartlands initiative will empower communities in Ashfield, Mansfield and surrounding villages to shape their own development, with options for infrastructure upgrades, business support and community-led projects, while the Canal Corridor will position the unitary as a national leader in advanced manufacturing, innovation, and sustainability, attracting investment and driving future growth.
- The Southwest Unitary is positioned as a strategic growth corridor, aligning with the Trent Arc, which will drive urban regeneration between Derby and Nottingham including delivery of 30,000 new homes, creation of over 40,000 jobs, and adding £2.4b annually to the local economy. It benefits from nearly £2b in transport investment to improve connectivity between Nottingham, Derby and major employment zones, driving transformative regeneration of industrial sites and creating new communities.

EMCCA are also looking to complete a feasibility study in to extending Nottingham's Tram Network along the eastern route from Colwick to Gamston, and a further expansion with a Park and Ride through to Rushcliffe.

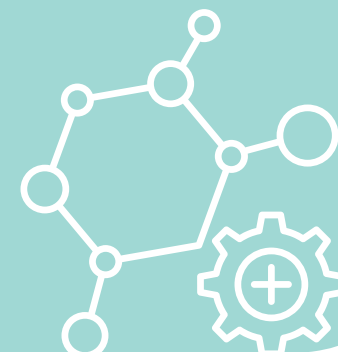
Because Bii is the only option being proposed where EMCCA's economic growth initiatives sit neatly within the unitary councils, the benefits of not having to work across different democratic boundaries will streamline processes and ensure that devolution priorities are not hindered by bureaucracy and differing local priorities and agendas.

¹²³ <https://www.eastmidlands-cca.gov.uk/content/uploads/2025/06/EMCCA-Spatial-Vision-FINAL.pdf>

CASE STUDY

How Nottingham is leveraging the benefits of regeneration for wider economic benefit

Over the last 10 years, Nottingham city has seen over £4bn of regeneration activity covering major city centre schemes, infrastructure upgrades, and neighbourhood improvements. Building upon this strong track record and the city's designation as a priority place for Homes England, investment has been committed to establish a new regeneration function within the City Council to work alongside EMCCA, to create a pipeline of investable opportunities, along with new investment sources to accelerate the pace of regeneration. An expanded boundary for the city creates the opportunity to develop a more coherent strategy, which reduced duplication or competing bids, and larger scale opportunities with the potential to attract funding, which would not otherwise be an option.



Criteria 6: New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment

- a) Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged
- b) Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement

Strengths of Bii

- **Reflects our communities:**
Our model is built around our communities, reflecting their heritage, their economies and their sense of belonging, giving them a democratic voice in the places where they live, work, and study.
- **Improves service delivery:**
Our model enables services and preventative initiatives to be designed and delivered around local needs, tailored to the distinct communities across the unitary councils, truly moving beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and delivering much better value for money.

6.1 Community engagement now and in the future

Bii is community-driven, designed to reflect and reinforce the sense of belonging that defines Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's diverse communities. By clustering similar communities within each unitary, we can implement flexible and responsive engagement models tailored to the unique needs and identities of each area. This approach will foster cohesion, enabling neighbourhoods with shared characteristics and needs to benefit from targeted support and collaborative initiatives.

Empowering residents and local communities is central to our prevention agenda. By understanding and aligning with local priorities, we can support

residents not only as service users but as active partners in shaping their communities and their health and wellbeing. Bii will ensure that people have the opportunity to participate in the place they identify with, strengthening their democratic voice and engagement in both where they live, work and study.

This empowerment is especially significant for those included within the Southwest Unitary, addressing the misbalance of 51% of city commuters who currently live outside the city boundaries by including them in the unitary footprint and giving them a direct say in city governance and

development. At the same time, the polycentric demographic and of the North and East Unitary will be able to focus on their local community priorities, without being overshadowed by conurbation challenges. This balanced focus is a core strength of Bii.

Across the county there are existing assets that are used for people to come together to connect. Our communities use leisure centres, community spaces and NCC-maintained community centres and they will be important assets for the future unitary councils to engage with residents and service users, and to help to ensure a sense of belonging and community going forward. Having spoken with all district authorities during this process, it is clear there is no consistent definition of a community space, leisure centre, or equivalent, which means it has not possible to fully map this provision although it clearly exists. A more detailed audit of this will be required going forward to fully understand this resource base.

Financial resilience and scale are built into Bii, providing the foundation for comprehensive support and enabling a strategic focus on prevention and targeted interventions. By collaborating with a broad range of public sector partners, we can ensure that service delivery is precisely tailored to local needs.

Bii is intentionally aligned with EMCCA's Mayoral ambitions to reduce inequality and empower local communities, supporting the 'place framework' of the Placed-based Strategy. This will allow us to target deprived communities across the county with tailored interventions, building on established good practices from across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and beyond, while remaining open to learning from past challenges.

In summary, Bii will deliver:

- Community-driven boundaries and engagement
- Empowerment and democratic voice for all residents
- Balanced focus on urban and rural priorities
- Strategic, prevention-focused service delivery
- Alignment with regional devolution and place-based strategies
- Strengthened integrated neighbourhood working to improve health and wellbeing

Existing relationships and structures to leverage

Strong community identity and sense of belonging

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are built on a strong sense of community and belonging and this is reflected in its numerous existing local networks of town and parish councils, residents and tenants forums, voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs), faith groups, business forums and community safety partnerships, which are all critical assets. These vital community-based organisations, many of which have strong local connections, will be key partners to integrate and collaborate effectively with across both unitary authorities. We acknowledge the unique role of town and parish councils, particularly for isolated rural communities, and will build upon their existing work and supporting their capacity.

Local knowledge and resilient networks

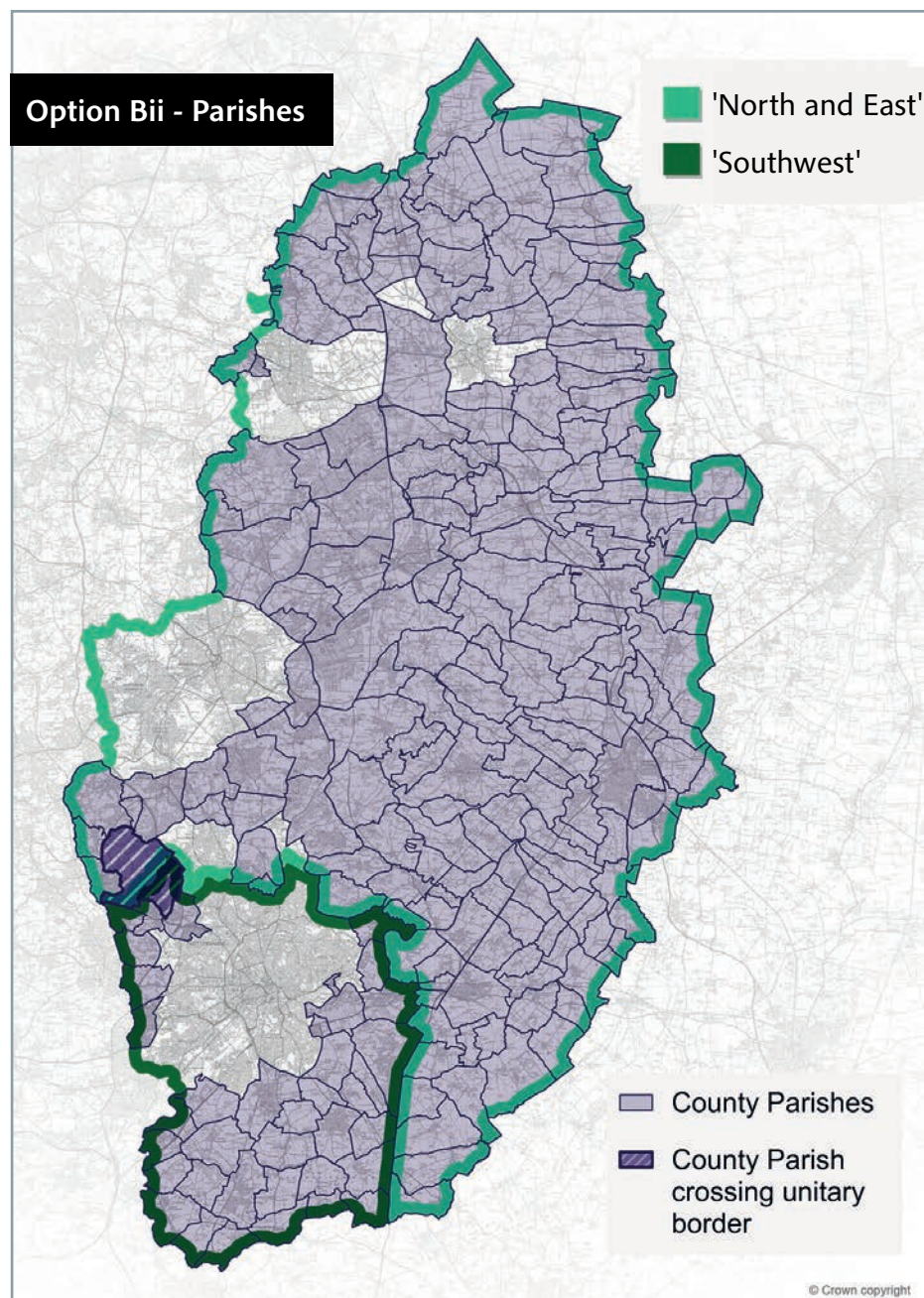
The invaluable local knowledge residing within former districts and boroughs will be inherited by the two new unitary councils and will inform critical service delivery and service transformation. Resilient networks, such as the Ending Youth Violence Network and continued Locality Partnerships, provide strong foundations for future engagement, demonstrating the power of community-led initiatives that will continue through the new unitary councils.

Formalised place-based collaboration

The North Nottinghamshire Place Partnership (NPP), with its Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) and focus on community-led approaches, offers a proven blueprint for effective collaboration.

The new unitary councils will deepen EMCCA partnerships, embedding regional working and strategically aligning estate assets through 'One Public Estate' and family hubs, alongside key EMCCA initiatives that sit firmly within our proposed balanced boundaries.

FIGURE 6.1 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PARISHES



Local knowledge and resilient networks

The invaluable local knowledge residing within former districts and boroughs will be inherited by the two new unitary councils and will inform critical service delivery and service transformation. Resilient networks, such as the Ending Youth Violence Network and continued Locality Partnerships, provide strong foundations for future engagement, demonstrating the power of community-led initiatives that will continue through the new unitary councils.

Formalised place-based collaboration

LGR and NHS reform provide an exciting opportunity to address the key social, environmental and economic determinants of health through collaborative working, such as work, housing and education. The new councils will build on the successful model developed by Nottingham City Health and Wellbeing Board that places the individual at the heart of strategic planning and builds an infrastructure around them to enable them to make healthier choices and live thriving and empowered lives.

There is a strong and established place-based approach to improving health and wellbeing through place-based partnerships. Working closely with the ICB, NHS providers and the community and voluntary sector, the new councils will build on these foundations to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities. Each council will drive strategic changes through the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and a neighbourhood health plan, which will tailor services to the needs of neighbourhoods.

People will benefit from enhanced integrated neighbourhood teams working across social care and health, building on the work currently delivering change and improvement across the whole county and learning from the national neighbourhood health programme being piloted in Nottingham city. This focus on health care at a neighbourhood level will align with an improved use of estate and assets to bring care and support closer to where people live and reflect their needs.

The new unitary councils will deepen EMCCA partnerships, embedding regional working and strategically aligning estate assets through 'One Public Estate' and Family Hubs, alongside key EMCCA initiatives that sit firmly within our proposed balanced boundaries. The strong inter-relationship between the key priorities of EMCCA and their approach to inclusive growth will be enhanced through effective neighbourhood working based around the wider determinants of health.

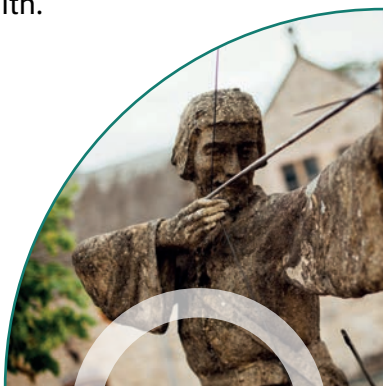


IMAGE © GLENN REID

CASE STUDY

Nottingham City Council, in collaboration with NHS and voluntary sector partners, is participating in the government's flagship National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme. Neighbourhood health is a central part of the government's ambition for the future of health and care: moving more care into community settings rather than hospitals, making better use of digital tools instead of traditional analogue processes, and shifting the focus from treating sickness to preventing it.

By using integrated datasets, we are identifying residents with the highest levels of need and who frequently interact with NHS, local government and voluntary sector services. Through integrated clinical and professional neighbourhood teams that are being established across the city, we are coordinating support around people rather than services, providing holistic, proactive care that meets more than just a person's physical health needs.

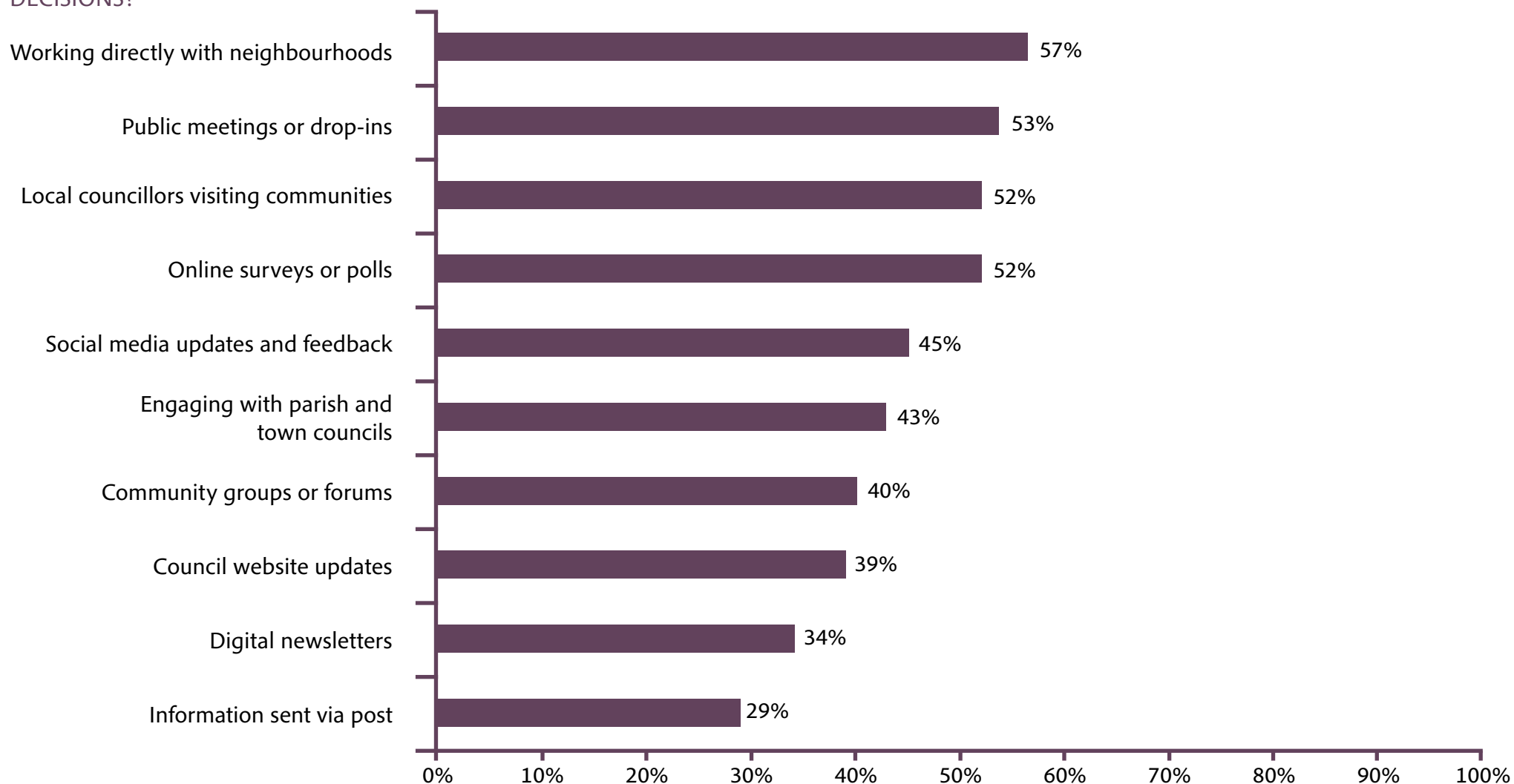
This approach is helping to reduce duplication, prevent avoidable hospital admissions, and ease pressure on adult social care by intervening earlier and supporting people to live independently for longer. It is also enabling a more efficient use of collective resources, ensuring capacity is focused where it has the greatest impact and delivering better value for money across the system.

Alongside this, we are working with local communities to take preventative approaches to addressing the wider determinants of health, enabling people to better manage their own wellbeing

Our involvement in the programme is strengthening Nottingham's neighbourhood model and laying the foundations for future Neighbourhood Health Services that deliver better outcomes for residents, make best use of public resources, while building a more sustainable health and care system.

New opportunities for enhanced neighbourhood working, engagement and empowerment

FIGURE 6.2: CHART OF SURVEY RESPONSES TO 'WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS FOR THE NEW COUNCILS TO INVOLVE PEOPLE IN LOCAL DECISIONS?'¹²⁴



Number of respondents: 11,262

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer

¹²⁴ <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s175926/Appendix%20G%20-%20Nottingham-and-Nottinghamshire-LGR-Engagement---Final-report.pdf>

The resident engagement exercise has yielded good insights into the preferred ways in which Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's residents wish to participate in local decision-making processes. The opportunities for community engagement outlined in Bii consider these findings, ensuring that future methods of interaction and involvement are closely aligned with the aspirations and expectations of the people they are designed to serve.

Meaningful and accessible consultation:

The new unitary councils will have the opportunity to create transparent communication processes. They will have the options to utilise diverse methods beyond online-only platforms to ensure broad accessibility, directly addressing past challenges where consultation was perceived as a 'tick box' exercise.

Improved networking and coordinated support:

There is an opportunity to improve coordinated networking between the councils and diverse community groups, including Communities of Identity, which will be established through the proposed model. This involves formalising and expanding internal meetings for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) grant coordination, utilising a central SharePoint to prevent duplication and to document identified needs, driving VCSE efficiency and sustainability.

Revitalised local governance structures:

Local governance structures will be put in place, such as Neighbourhood Area Committees, to give communities a stronger voice in shaping local priorities. This governance structure will serve as a platform for residents to influence policy development and service delivery, complementing the important role already played by parish and town councils.

Neighbourhood Area Committees will be a key mechanism for embedding and giving a greater focus on local voice and influence into the council's governance model. These committees will empower communities, building on existing local and neighbourhood organisations to shape local priorities,

support one another, and build resilience from the ground up, ensuring that the council is not just delivering services, but enabling communities to thrive.

Inclusivity, diversity, and transparency:

A clear, transparent nomination process for committee members will be implemented, supplementing elected representatives with co-opted individuals representing underrepresented groups. Accessible participation, varied engagement channels, and robust feedback loops will ensure all voices are heard. Devolved budgets will be linked to agreed local priorities, supported by strong financial controls, regular reporting and public annual financial reports to ensure transparency and value for money.

Outcome-focused monitoring:

Our approach will align with the proposed new outcomes framework for local government, monitoring progress through indicators such as anti-social behaviour rates, residents' perceived influence on local decisions, and overall satisfaction with their living environment.



CASE STUDY

Nottingham City Council's award-winning "Streets for People" programme is a multi-phase initiative to improve pavements, roads, cycle paths, and local town centres to make them safer and more accessible for walking and cycling, with features including greening, improved lighting, and neighbourhood improvements identified with resident and councillor input.

It seeks to improve accessibility especially for those with less mobility and contribute to safer streets through road safety and traffic management. The programme prioritises work based on local feedback to ensure the Council is delivering against local needs.

The principles of the programme can be shared as part of partnership working during LGR implementation, for both new unitary councils to consider.

**Streets
for
People**



6.2 Effective democratic representation

UNITARY COUNCIL	NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS	CURRENT ELECTORAL REGISTER	COUNCILLOR TO RESIDENT RATIO
North and East Unitary	99	423,406	1:4,277
Southwest Unitary	99	423,007	1:4,273

Our Modified Proposal for two new unitary councils will support effective democratic representation by creating a governance structure that is both responsive and accountable to its constituents. The proposal has good electoral equality across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, ensuring the voices of each area are heard equally and by structuring and managing ourselves with a focus on community priorities, prevention and targeted intervention, Bii will ensure that elected representatives can oversee services that are directly addressing community challenges. The authority to work with partners across the broader public sector will enable representatives to tailor service delivery to specific local needs, thereby making democratic representation more impactful and relevant.

Inclusive representation

By integrating diverse membership selection processes, including co-opted individuals, and ensuring accessible participation, these local committees and partnerships will be able to broaden the scope of representation beyond traditional electoral mechanisms. This commitment to inclusive representation will ensure that agendas and decisions are informed by a wide array of perspectives, strengthening the democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of this reorganisation.

Implementation plan and roadmap

We recognise that the successful delivery of LGR programmes is determined by the people. We want to ensure that our staff, partners, stakeholders, residents and customers have the opportunity to be a part of this transformation, and that the new unitary councils are set up for success from day one. We understand that this will require extensive planning, governance, engagement and key decisions to be made. We have taken the lessons learned internally from creating a city unitary, as well as good practice and lessons from other areas to inform our approach.

Our principles for successful LGR delivery

We have considered our own learnings and the workforce considerations set out by the Local Government Association (LGA) to develop key principles that will underpin our approach to transition and implementation:

- 1) **Start early and be collaborative:** We recognise that by mobilising early we put ourselves in the best position to manage risk, meet timelines and maintain the continuation of public services. The effectiveness of this will be determined by the collaboration and joint LGR working with the rest of the councils in the county.
- 2) **Set a clear vision that will guide us:** We will create a single, shared vision with the other areas that will guide all the change activity going forward.
- 3) **Ensure the continuation of service delivery:** We will put people at the centre of our planning process to ensure access to services is not interrupted.
- 4) **Co-design with our communities:** We need to engage and work with our communities, local businesses and stakeholders so that the future unitary council's structures and services reflect local needs.
- 5) **Ensure we are people-centric:** We will adopt a comprehensive approach to change management and be mindful of the potential impacts to people, and specifically to underrepresented groups so we can proactively work to put mitigations in place. The wellbeing of our staff will be paramount throughout the delivery of LGR and we will work to support and engage with them throughout, building an inclusive culture that people can thrive in.
- 6) **Establish transparency and accountability in our decision making:** We will strive to be open throughout this journey, with visible leaders acting as role models and advocating for LGR and the future of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. We will seek to ensure clear structure and responsibilities within our implementation programme, with strong governance and controls.
- 7) **Ensure sustainability is at the heart of everything we do:** We will deliver efficiencies without compromising the quality of what we do, underpinned by robust financial planning. We will champion innovation and continuous improvement to drive new ways of becoming more effective, efficient and greener.
- 8) **Clear performance framework to monitor and measure impact:** We will assess overall impact on outcomes through the Local Government Outcome Framework (LGOFF) and ensure strategies and delivery plans are aligned to the outcome areas.

Future operating model

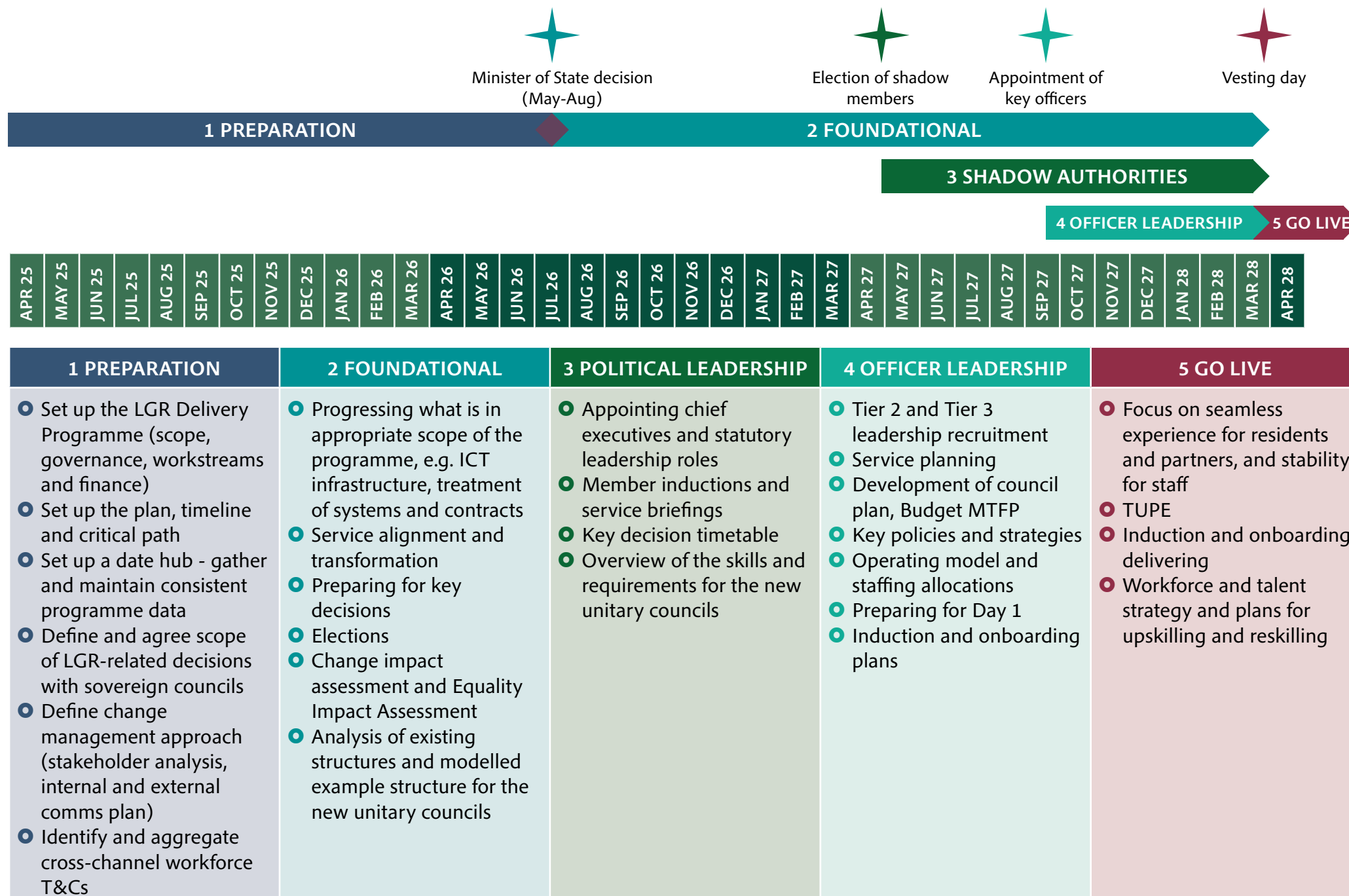
Our operating model provides a framework for the delivery of our ambitions for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Our operating principles for the North and East and Southwest unitaries are:

- A. Demonstrate robust financial management and governance
- B. Design things around the customer
- C. Be efficient and productive, and make the best use of our assets
- D. Prevention through early intervention
- E. Work collaboratively and transparently
- F. Be focused on performance, risk and improvement
- G. Be led by intelligence, insight and data

Timeline and key implementation activities

The implementation of LGR has five clear phases. These are triggered by key events in the programme, some of which are externally imposed e.g. the Minister of State decision and others are within the control of the programme e.g. the appointment of key officers. Throughout the phases, we will focus on safe transition and long-term sustainability. This graphic provides an overview of the tranches and their purpose:





In addition to the above, it is possible that time will need to be allowed for a judicial review, given LGR is yet to deliver a boundary change. This is not expected to affect the overall timeline as 'no regret' activities can continue during this time (see 'Immediate focus' section below).

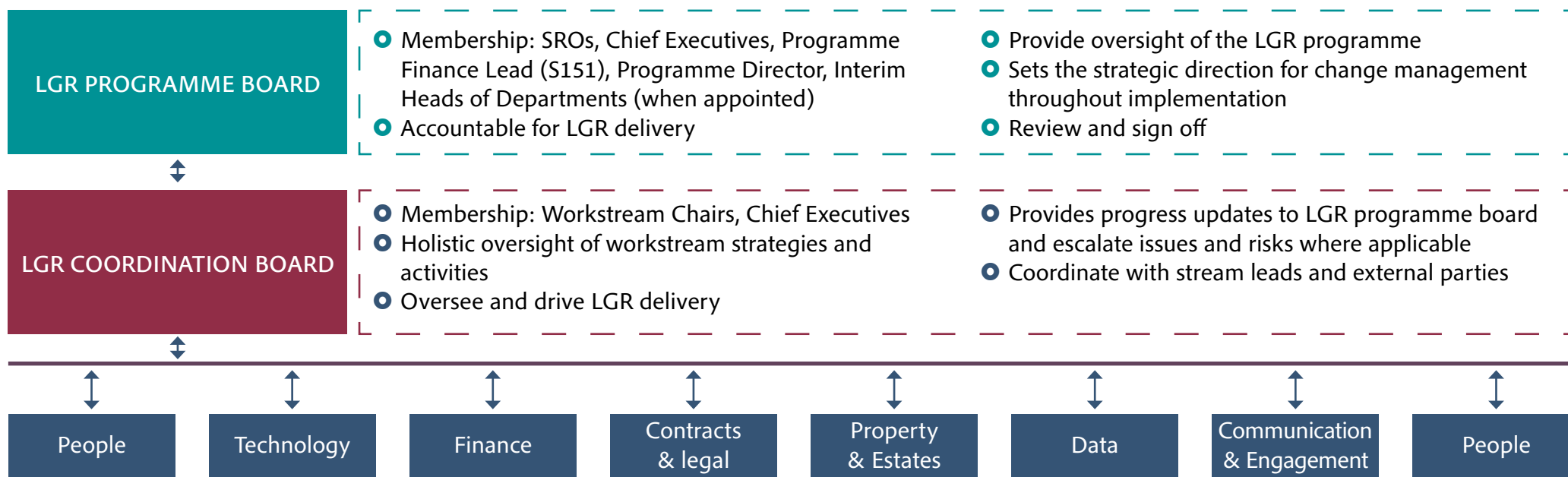
Additional time will also need to be allocated for the boundary review itself, but again, this will not affect the planned vesting day date as this activity can sit alongside the other key events.

Our governance

Our two-unitary proposal requires a clear governance structure to align with our vision, support transparent decision-making, and manage risk effectively. We want to ensure that people at all levels feel accountable for making this happen successfully.

A clear governance structure will be established across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, with representatives from each existing council being a part of the delivery. We will also continue to engage with our stakeholders, partners, elected members, residents and customers to ensure their voices are heard.

The LGR framework will include:



Our workstreams

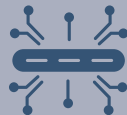
We will establish seven key workstreams to manage the complex process of such large-scale implementation and change. The work that these will do will vary between phases, but they will be the core delivery arm of the programme, setting and delivering milestones that achieve the Day One requirements on behalf of the services of the councils.

It is important to differentiate between the role of the services and a workstream and different leads may be appointed to each to manage workload e.g. ICT as a service that the unitary councils will provide and the Technology workstream which is responsible for safely transferring all infrastructure, systems and applications. This ensures that workloads remain manageable and that the detailed infrastructure required to build the foundations of a successful unitary is defined and mapped, over and above day-to-day service delivery.



WORKSTREAM	DELIVERY FOCUS
PEOPLE 	- Plan and deliver TUPE processes, map T&Cs and workforce demographics. - Consult with staff and trade unions. - Work with the Technology workstream to gather insight on the ERPs and HR/learning systems. - Develop a workforce strategy to support recruitment, retention, workforce planning and talent management. - Define critical roles and support the recruitment of statutory leaders and tier 1-3 leadership. - Provide HR legal advice and advise on workforce-related risks throughout the process. - Feed into the cultural change programme as part of the staff transfer processes. - Support the design of new structures, operating models and policies by comparative analysis of legacy ones. - Undertake cross-council skills gap analysis and develop a plan to develop the required skills, knowledge and behaviours. - Coproduction of internal branding and values and behaviour framework.

WORKSTREAM	DELIVERY FOCUS
TECHNOLOGY 	- Map the cross-council system infrastructure. - Work with the Contracts and Legal team to get visibility on contract lifecycles of systems and develop a plan for rationalisation. - Develop secure, unified platforms to support integrated service delivery. - Work with the Contracts and Legal workstream to procure new vendors where applicable / adapt current system contracts. - Advise on emerging technologies that will support the new unitary councils to deliver sustainable, accessible services efficiently.
FINANCE 	Manage budget disaggregation, transition funding and long-term financial planning.
CONTRACTS AND LEGAL 	- Align procurement pipelines and map contracts across the councils. - Advise other workstreams such as HR on the legal aspects of LGR. - Establish governance to ensure continuity and value for money. - Support elections and ensure legal readiness.
PROPERTY AND ESTATES 	- Map all cross-council assets. - Undertake stock condition surveys of all assets. - Work with representatives from service departments to analyse property assets. - Ensure branding is replaced at all buildings.

WORKSTREAM	DELIVERY FOCUS
DATA 	- Undertake data cleanse. - Ensure consistent data points and reporting mechanisms. - Create and manage the data hub.
COMMS AND ENGAGEMENT 	- Develop a communication and engagement strategy with key messaging aligned to the vision (determined at each phase). - Coordinate internal and external messaging to inform and engage staff, members, stakeholders, local businesses, partners and the public.

Key risks and mitigations

We recognise that there are significant risks associated with LGR, no matter the proposal that is taken forward. We believe the governance framework we have outlined will provide sufficient risk management throughout the implementation journey. We will ensure a robust risk and issue register is developed and maintained and that identified risk owners are accountable for mitigating actions.

Despite the inherent risks, we anticipate key opportunities between now and vesting day. Largely we anticipate that all local authorities coming together to deliver LGR for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will promote wider collaboration and knowledge sharing that goes beyond LGR for the better of current service delivery. We believe that this timeframe will give us the opportunity to build momentum and create the organisational mindset required for delivering effectively.

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	MITIGATION
DISAGGREGATION COMPLEXITIES All LGR proposals involve separating existing county services. We must avoid disruption to service delivery during the transition.	High	High	- Collaborative working across all existing councils to share knowledge, data and insights - Build a critical service continuity plan that incorporates insights from other LGR programmes - Maintain dual systems temporarily where needed - Clear communication with staff, residents, partners and customers about changes and contact points
AGGREGATION OF SERVICES Services will need to be merged across new boundary areas. We must avoid disruption to services during the transition.	High	High	- Early planning to align similar services and understand gaps / differences - Rigorous data testing to ensure integrity and continuity during system transition - Early analysis of skills required and plan to bridge any gaps in the workforce - Clear communication with staff, residents, partners and customers about changes and contact points
LACK OF COLLABORATION ACROSS THE EXISTING COUNCILS We anticipate that the councils will continue the joint working that developed during the start of this process. If not, this risks the delivery of LGR and the position for vesting day.	High	Medium	- Leverage the collaborative LGR work done to date - Co-create a charter for all councils to sign up to - Develop clear Terms of Reference and ways of working for the governance structure - Keep momentum on the case for change and the focus on fulfilling the future vision for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
ICT INTEGRATION There are multiple systems in use across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, particularly for critical services. There is a risk of critical data loss and or system failure.	High	Medium	- Conduct a comprehensive audit of all existing IT systems, licenses and data, mapping data flows and critical paths to inform a migration plan - Conduct rigorous testing including parallel runs and sandbox environments - Implement cyber security protocols and disaster recovery plans - Identify preferred systems early
BUDGET OVERSPEND ON LGR DELIVERY We believe the financing for LGR delivery will come from the existing council reserves. Any overspend could put financial strain on the new unitary council(s).	High	High	- Develop a robust Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) with contingency buffers, savings trackers and cost analysis - Develop a benefits realisation framework - Seek independent assurance where applicable

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	MITIGATION
OPPOSITION FROM RESIDENTS, STAFF, COUNCILLORS OR MPS May hinder the new authority's ability to effectively address diverse local needs, weaken community cohesion, and create substantial challenges in implementing policies due to perceived disconnect and resistance.	Medium	Low	- Engagement to-date suggests that our proposal is favourable with communities and partners - Continue to conduct extensive public engagement and consultation
STAFF CAPACITY TO DELIVER Staff will need to maintain current services while preparing for transition. This dual workload may stretch capacity, impact wellbeing and hinder delivery.	High	Medium	- Consider the time requirements for LGR delivery when setting up the programme - Review roles and map skills to enable flexible resourcing - Share capacity and bring in interim support where possible to fill gaps
CULTURAL MISALIGNMENT The new unitary councils will bring together different organisational cultures and ways of working. This may lead to tension, misalignment and people losing their sense of belonging.	Medium	Medium	- Communication and engagement plan to ensure staff and trade unions are engaged early and regularly - Co-create the vision, values and behaviours framework with staff, respecting the best elements of legacy councils, and incorporating the new future - Set clear organisational design principles and underpinning workforce principles - Appoint leadership to advocate the transition and build confidence and trust early - Adopt a clear change management approach throughout each phase
T&C HARMONISATION COMPLEXITIES The new unitary councils will TUPE the majority of staff with their existing T&Cs. This may create a complex environment for HR to manage and risk long-term tension due to disparity. Potentially there could be a risk to equal pay.	High	Medium	- Despite the National Joint Council (NJC) Green Book Agreement, we anticipate local agreements being in place and differing approaches to key People strategies and policies - Gather and aggregate T&Cs and policy information from all councils - Analyse the data to determine the similarities and differences - Develop a clear plan for harmonisation post vesting day - Investigate opportunities for HR/People joint working and alignment throughout implementation - Early and ongoing engagement with trade unions

Immediate focus

Through the work we have done to develop this proposal, and taking our learning from previous large-scale transformation programmes, we have determined that there are some key activities we can kick-start now to put us in the best position for moving into the planning phase. These are our 'no regret' activities - the things that we can act on now that will have both immediate and longer-term benefits. Ultimately, the more we can do now, the better placed we will be to move at pace when a decision is made about the future of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Our 'no regret' activities that we will be actioning in the short-term:

- **Establish an LGR Programme Board** to drive the transformation across the county.
- **Review all procurement contracts across the existing councils.** Going forward this will help us to determine short-, mid-, and long-term procurement actively and investigate opportunities for alignment following the decision and prior to vesting day.
- **Undertake a cross-council data cleansing exercise**, specifically across critical services such as Children's and Adults' services. In later phases it will help us to understand opportunities to align key datasets and reporting mechanisms to be able to understand performance and context in the entire geography.
- **Mapping the entire IT infrastructure and architecture.** As we move into the foundational phase, it will ensure we have a clear understanding of the IT and systems in place and where there are opportunities for rationalisation.
- **Establish a data hub** for each council to share key data and documents to allow a holistic analysis of key elements such as organisational terms and conditions (T&Cs) to understand the differences and similarities between organisations to help inform future activities such as harmonisation post-vesting day.

- **Co-create our change management principles** to ensure consistent messaging and approaches across the entire area of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Undertaking activities such as stakeholder analyses, change impact assessments and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) will help to inform our overall approach and the communication and engagement strategy going forward. This will help to build understanding of LGR and will help to build trust both internally and externally.



Supporting documents

LGR - PwC Bii Options appraisal

LGR - PwC Options Appraisal July 2025

LGR Interim Plan for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Interim Plan Feedback - Nottinghamshire and Nottingham

PwC financial analysis

PwC Bii financial analysis

LGR - Engagement report Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

LGR Engagement - NCC Specific Report

LGR EIA

