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women-led organisations

Social infrastructure and the process of mapping

The value of mapping local assets is primarily in the process. In asking questions about where different assets are located within a neighbourhood we have an opportunity to think differently about our neighbourhoods and to learn from others with deep local knowledge.

Mapping assets collaboratively across organisations can reveal knowledge and insights that may be hidden. It can be useful in pooling knowledge between individuals or partners who do not regularly work together, for sparking ideas and fresh thinking about how to develop local assets and to cut across the silos and structures that can inhibit innovative thinking.

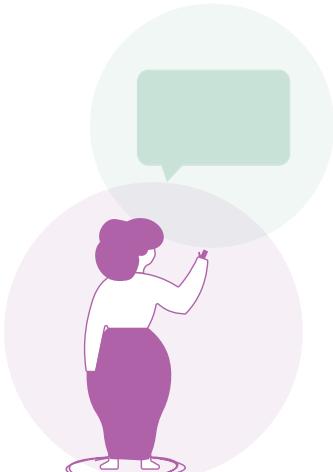
What do we mean by assets? We include all the supports that residents use to meet their needs, to socialise, to take part in decision making, to have influence. This could include formal assets like libraries or community centres or informal groups or online networks.

Women's Economy

The Women's Economy map portrays a gendered perspective on the East Birmingham North Solihull zone, covering the Sports, Green Innovation and Knowledge Quarters. Women-led enterprises shown in dark blue have roots in Digbeth, Small Heath, Alum Rock, Balsall Heath and Ward End. Digbeth in particular is home to several arts-based organisations.

To visualise the geographic reach of the four participating women-led organisations, the map shows a 15-minute walking radius from their respective hubs. This approach illustrates how the geographic scope of each organisation is limited by physical constraints in the built environment, such as railway infrastructure. It also highlights the size of the zone and the gaps in coverage between the four organisations.

Birmingham Airport, schools, hospitals, care homes and the National Exhibition Centre are important local employers where women work as nurses, cleaners, retail assistants and hospitality workers. Key high streets that provide local shops and services include Chelmsley Wood, Coventry Road, and Erdington High Street.



Local stories, issues, solutions and aspirations are recorded on the second map. One of the most prevalent emerging themes is related to economic inequality by gender. It is common for women to work within the informal economy and lack an account at a formal financial institution, risking their financial independence and being connected to a lack of opportunities for personal growth.

The map shares ideas to enhance women's social and economic well-being in the region. These include unlocking new investment opportunities for women-led organisations, skills and career development, improved transport infrastructure, and opportunities for more mapping and analysis of the Women's Economy.