



The Future of City Centre Living in Birmingham

Centre for Cities at ippr / Birmingham Future

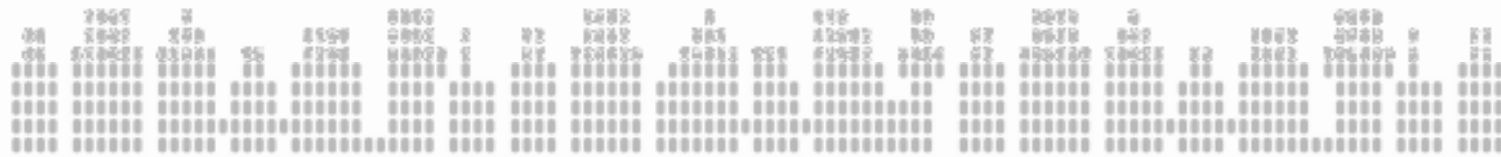
Martineau Johnson

Birmingham, 10 July 2006



Questions for this evening

- What kind of city centre communities are we creating in Birmingham?
- Is city centre living improving Birmingham's economic performance?
- How can we plan the regeneration of Birmingham's inner ring neighbourhoods?



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City Centre Living in the UK

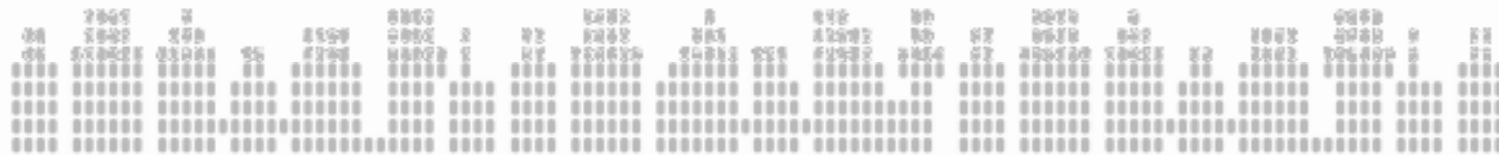
Max Nathan, Senior Researcher
ippr Centre for Cities

Birmingham, 10 July 2006



The Centre for Cities

- **What?** An independent urban research unit based at ippr. Sponsored by Lord Sainsbury
- **Why?** Taking a fresh look at how UK cities function, focusing on economic drivers
- **When?** Launched March 2005
- **Where?** Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sunderland, Derby, Barnsley, Doncaster and Dundee ...so far



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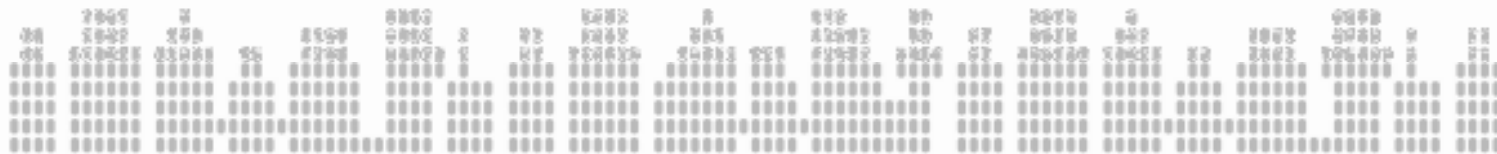
The big picture

We are starting to see people move back into city centres, drawn by a lifestyle in which home, work and leisure are interwoven within a single neighbourhood.

Urban Task Force, 1999

The Core Cities have turned a corner. People are coming back to cleaner, safer, greener cities.

John Prescott, 2004

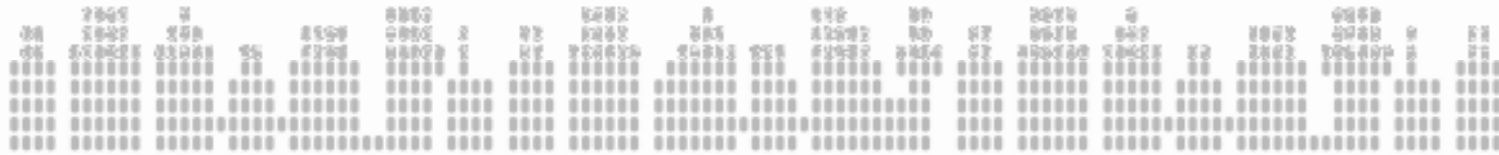


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Why is this happening?

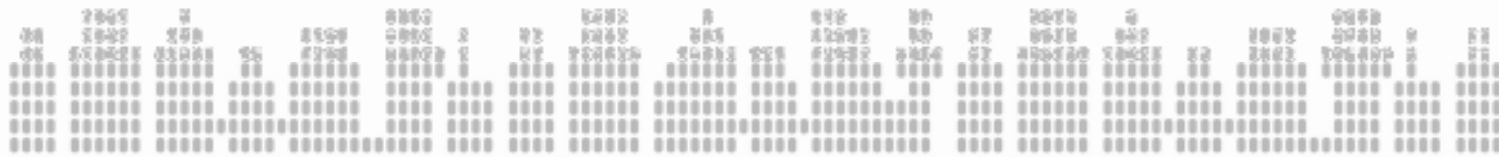
- **Demographic change.** People start families later, live alone for longer. More singles, especially older singles
- **Economic change.** Cheap land and buildings, emergence of service sector, economic recovery
- **Social and cultural change.** HE expansion, changing image of city living
- **Policy drivers.** Planning systems, economic development, housing and regeneration funding





Who's living in city centres?

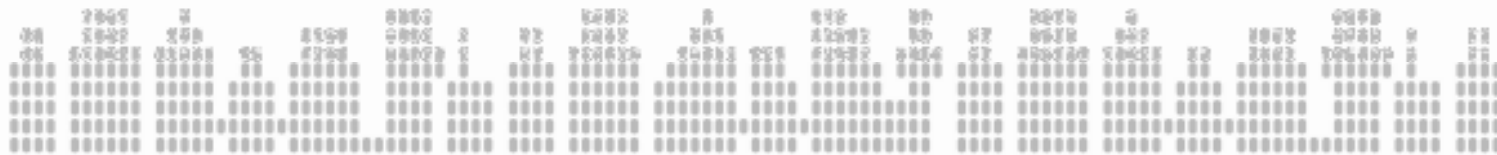
- **13,500 in Liverpool, 10,000 in Manchester, 2,900 in Dundee – 10,000 / 3,500 / 1,500 in 1991**
- **Predominantly young, single adults: students, young professionals and other workers.** Very few families, children, people over 40
- **People who have yet to settle down.** Most live single lifestyles – renting, going out a lot, no kids





Why do people live in city centres?

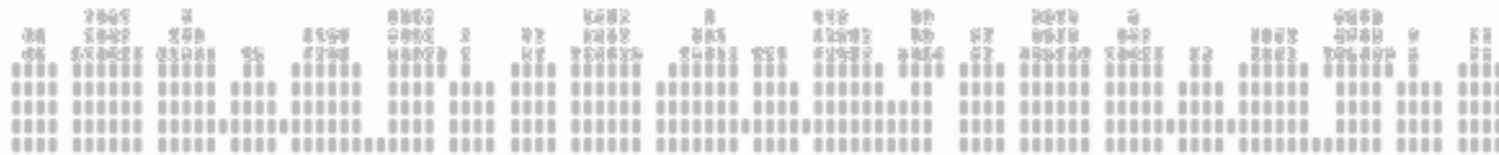
- **Proximity.** Being close to shops, work, friends, leisure
- **Buzz.** Sense of energy, being in the heart of things
- **Traditional ‘community’ is not a big deal.** Keeping up with friends, not knowing next-door neighbours
- **Liverpool:** 54% of respondents move to be in city centre, 35% like urban life (CSR, 2004)
- **Leeds:** 37% move to city centre for lifestyle reasons, 17% for nightlife (Unsworth, 2005)
- **High levels of churn.** 30% move in or out every year





How does Birmingham compare?

- **Rapid population growth.** At least 19,000 people in the city centre (2001 Census)
- **Residents are young, single, ethnically diverse.** Most are renters, not owners
- **Intensive development.** 7,611 residences in the planning pipeline, to 2010
- **Future challenges** are to build the city centre out, regenerate inner urban / HMR zones



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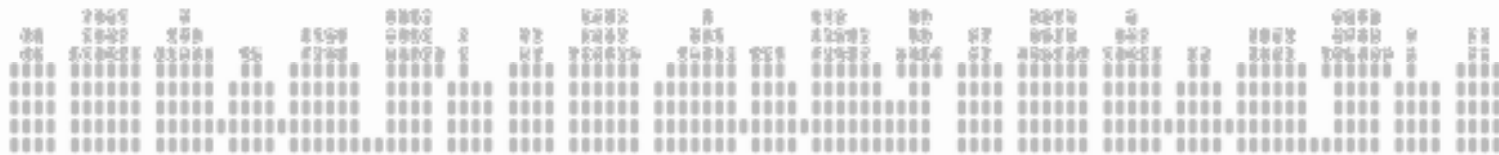
Key messages
and points for discussion

DIVERSION
END



Key messages (1)

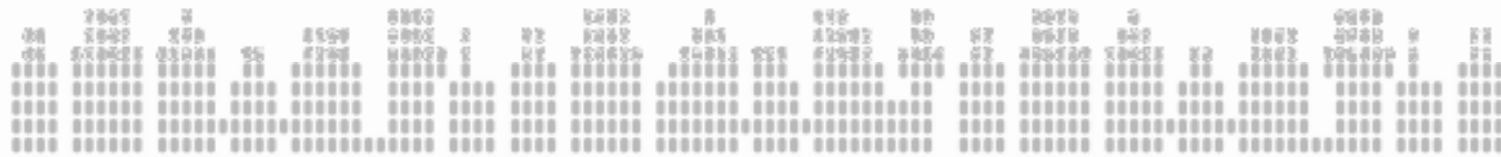
- **Today's residents: young, single, don't stay long**
 - Lots of young, single people. Loads of students
 - Hardly any families or people over 40
 - 'Conveyor belt' phenomenon: most leave after a few years
- **Tomorrow's residents ... ?**
 - More families, older people in 10-15 years' time?
 - Cities will need to start changing their offer





Key messages (2)

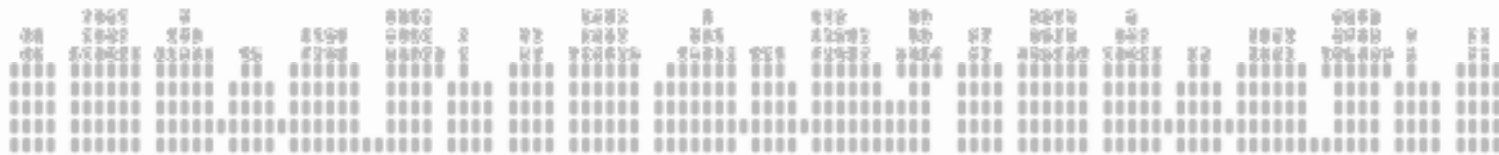
- **City centres are not for everyone. Don't impose a 'sustainable communities' model on them**
 - Probably not 'sustainable communities', but they are viable
 - City centres not seen as family-friendly – deep-rooted attitudes
 - Some space for family neighbourhoods, e.g. Hope / Canning in Liverpool, Castlefield in Manchester
 - Encourage families into the 'city edge' – new market opportunities, more facilities, bigger regeneration impact





Key messages (3)

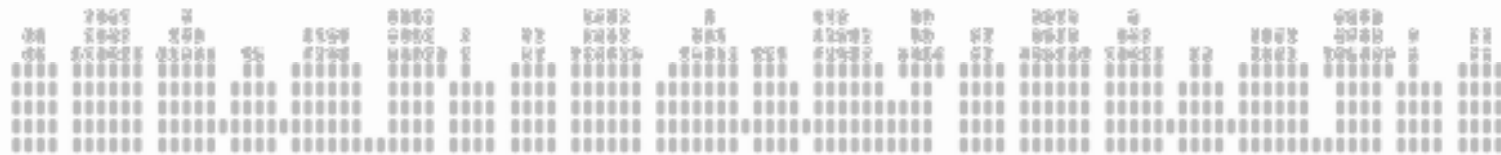
- **We need a better mixed use offer for current city centre residents**
 - Local shops that suit residents
 - Public services: access to healthcare, primary schools
 - Places to socialise. Relatively high tolerance of ‘disorder’
 - Work spaces, especially for independent businesses
 - Car parking!
- Future (older residents): security, space, access





Key messages (4)

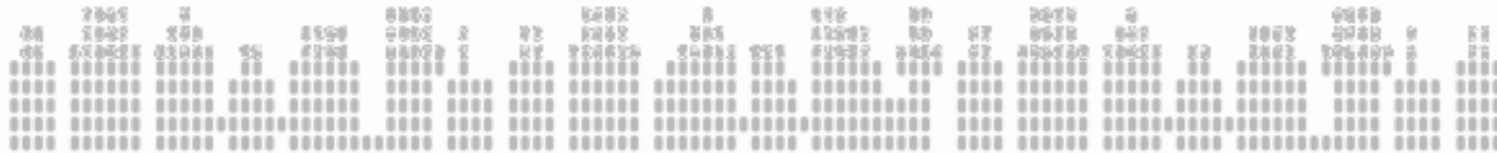
- **The economic impact of city centre living is positive, but not huge**
 - Improves city centres. Helps physical improvement
 - Helps local service economy. Boosts demand for shops, bars
 - Wider catalyst effects. Improves labour market, housing market, changes external perceptions
 - Reduces car use, increases council tax take
 - Reflects wider city performance. Strongest effects in best-performing cities





Key messages (5)

- **Inner ring neighbourhoods are the next big priority**
 - *Edge of centre: 'grown up city living'*
 - *Inner suburb: classic family neighbourhood*
 - Homes with gardens – not flats
 - Space, security, services – especially parks, schools
 - Street environment: needs to foster sense of community
 - Connections to city cores – bus light rail, commuter lines
 - Extend economic opportunities / access to employment





Questions

- **What kind of city centre communities are we creating in Birmingham?**

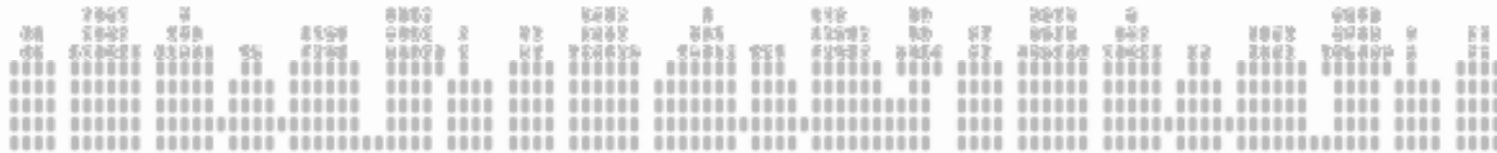
Can we attract more families and older residents?

- **Is city centre living improving Birmingham's economic performance?**

What are the catalyst effects?

- **How can we plan the regeneration of Birmingham's inner ring neighbourhoods?**

What are the next steps for Eastside / HMR?



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