Centre for the New Midlands



Connections for Prosperity:

Beyond the Sport 2027

Sponsorship Opportunities

Thursday 11th March 2027

The Lower Grounds, Villa Park, Birmingham

One year on from Beyond the Sport 2026 - what has changed?

In February 2026, the Centre for the New Midlands brought more than 250 leaders together from sport, business, infrastructure and public policy at Edgbaston Stadium for **Connections for Prosperity: Beyond the Sport**.

The question then was one of opportunity. Could the Midlands use its sporting assets - its clubs, stadiums, events, facilities and sporting heritage, as catalysts for a new generation of regeneration, investment, jobs, skills and growth?



The answer was clear: the opportunity is significant.

Across the region, major sporting projects were beginning to reshape the investment landscape. The proposed Birmingham Sports Quarter was emerging as a potential £3–4 billion development; Aston Villa was advancing its plans around Villa Park; Edgbaston was embarking on a major redevelopment; Coventry was demonstrating the longer-term potential of a multi-purpose sporting destination; and major events, elite facilities and community sport were creating new opportunities across the region.

But that was the opportunity. One year on, what has changed? What are the key emerging themes in 2027? Have we seen the benefits of sports led regeneration across the region? What new developments are emerging to enhance the region's sporting infrastructure? Are we on track to deliver the benefits we spoke of in 2026? These are the questions at the heart of Beyond the Sport 2027.

Where and when will 'Beyond the Sport 2027' be held?

The conference will be held on Thursday 11th March, from 9am – 4.30pm at The Lower Grounds, Villa Park in Birmingham.

Following the conference, our delegates are invited to join us for a Drinks Reception on the concourse of the stadium, providing views of the pitch and the North Stand redevelopment project.

What does CNM hope to achieve through the conference?

As the **only independent think tank dedicated to the Midlands**, the Centre for the New Midlands (CNM) has a distinctive role to play in this conversation. We are not here to promote individual projects or celebrate investment for its own sake.

Our role is to bring together the evidence, challenge assumptions, connect different perspectives and ask whether the decisions being made today will deliver the greatest possible long-term benefit for the region.

Beyond the Sport 2027 will create a space for an honest, informed and forward-looking assessment of sports-led regeneration; celebrating progress where it is deserved, identifying where more needs to be done, and helping shape the thinking that will determine what happens next.



Who is the day for?

This conference will bring together 250 of the people who **plan, finance, deliver, scrutinise and experience** sports-led regeneration: sporting organisations and clubs; local and regional government; developers, investors and infrastructure providers; business and professional services; universities and researchers; community and voluntary organisations; and, critically, people and organisations representing the communities in which these developments are taking place.

By putting these perspectives together under the one roof, we want to build new connections, share evidence and ideas, challenge conventional thinking and identify practical actions that can ensure sport delivers more than great venues and memorable events — that it helps create **better places, stronger communities and a more prosperous Midlands**.



What are the sponsorship opportunities available?

1 x Headline Sponsor at £9.5k + VAT – will receive co-branding (with CNM) on all promotional materials associated with the event; receive 10 complimentary conference passes; have a feature page within the conference programme; invited to introduce opening plenary speaker; deliver opening remarks at the start of the day (up to 10 minutes); be invited to chair a conference session; be invited to send a delegate to the conference steering group, as well as additional branding to be displayed during the Drinks Reception at the end of the conference

3 x Key Sponsors at £6k + VAT – will be featured in event promotion in the build up to the conference; will receive 5 complimentary conference passes; feature on branding inside the conference itself; logo will be included within the conference programme; be invited to chair a conference session; be invited to send a delegate to the conference steering group.

How much are tickets and when will they go on sale?

- Full Reimagining the Region members will receive two complimentary passes to attend (Associates to receive one complimentary pass) – to be claimed by 11th January 2027
- Invited speakers will receive a complimentary pass to attend
- Early bird rates available until 11th January 2027: £125 + VAT (for all ticket types)
- From 12th January, rates increase to £150+ VAT for not for profit and £200 + VAT for private sector

---

Who sponsored Beyond the Sport 2026?

We were delighted to welcome **E.ON** as our headline sponsor. Alongside E.ON, we welcomed **Gleeds**, **Gowling WLG** and **Mott MacDonald** as our key sponsors.



Shaping the day's programme

As with all CNM conferences, the day's programme will be created and approved by a Steering Group. This group will be comprised of CNM advisory board members, event sponsors and other key invited stakeholders from across the West Midlands. We intend for this year's programme to include several panel discussions, but with a broader range of session delivery throughout the day.

What were the themes explored at Beyond the Sport 2026?

- Sports led Regeneration in the region: Why now and how big is the prize?
- Winning Formulas: The Dos and Don't of Sports-Led Regeneration
- Driving sporting excellence and investment as the catalysts for regeneration in the West Midlands
- Job Creation and Skills: Do the numbers really add up?
- Political Leadership in Driving Sports-Led Regeneration
- Winning the Mega Events: Is the West Midlands ready to consistently win the big prizes?
- Sports Quarter - Reshaping a Region
- The Life Changing Impact of Sport



Who were the speakers at Beyond the Sport 2026?

Richard Parker (Mayor of the West Midlands), **Stuart Cain** (Chief Executive, Warwickshire County Cricket Club), **Nicola Ibbetson** (Chief Business Officer, Coventry City FC), **Jeremy Dale** (Chief Executive, Birmingham City FC), **Neil Rami** (Chief Executive, West Midlands Growth Company), **Ben Hatton** (Chief Operating Officer, Aston Villa FC), **Nick Smith** (Head of Infrastructure, Birmingham City FC), **Richard Lawrence** (Executive Director - Place, Prosperity & Sustainability, Birmingham City Council), **Sandeep Shingadia** (Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands) to name just a few.

What is the timeline for potential sponsors to be aware of?

Sept – Mid October 2026:	All sponsors confirmed
24TH September 2026:	First Steering Group hosted in Birmingham city centre
4th November 2026:	Fourth and final Steering Group held
23rd November 2026:	Full conference programme published
24h November to 11th January 2027:	Early Bird tickets on sale
12th January 2027 – 10th March 2027:	Tickets revert to full pricing
11TH March 2027:	Beyond the Sport 2027

For more information on sponsoring this year's event, please contact Chris Smith (Founder and CEO, Centre for the New Midlands) by emailing chris@thenewmidlands.org.uk