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Migration has played a significant role in the making of Birmingham, from the arrival of Irish migrants in the 19th century, through the Windrush era of the 1950s and 1960s, to the Asians from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the 1970s. Various waves of migration have resulted in long-established ethnic minority communities settling in areas such as Sparkhill, Sparkbrook, Nechells, Small Heath, Handsworth and Washwood Heath. Yet, in the last two decades, increased labour migration, the influx of international students and the arrival of displaced people fleeing conflict have changed again the composition of the population in the West Midlands. The 2021 Census shows that with 51.4 per cent of the population from an ethnic minority background and 187 different nationalities, Birmingham joins London, Leicester and Luton as one of the UK's first 'super diverse' areas.

Brummies are known for their welcoming nature, sense of humour and acceptance. Civility, which refers to 'the ability of people who are different to live together', continues to mark Birmingham as a model of modern life, where people of all nationalities become locals and where everyone is truly accepted. Brummies' adaptability towards diversity has built their confidence through routine encounters and shared space. The sounds and smells from as far away as the Middle East, North Africa, China, and the Caribbean fill the air as you stroll through the Balti Triangle, the Jewellery Quarter or China Town. Public and private spaces where people of different nationalities mix are the hallmark of the sprawling metropolis. Mixed workplaces are now the norm in factories, offices, hospitals, schools, leisure centres, libraries and universities.

110 languages are spoken in Birmingham every day, but with such diversity, communities need to build bridges to increase local knowledge and awareness of the different cultures within the city. It's about making sure that everyone's culture is represented. The stage and walls of arts venues such as theatres, performance halls, museums, gardens and castles contribute to building a more inclusive and harmonious multicultural city. Exposure to diversity helps challenge stereotypes and prejudices that may exist within a community. When individuals interact in a positive and celebratory environment, it can break down barriers and dispel misconceptions.

All in all, Birmingham's distinctive character has been shaped by the mix of heritage and cultures of its people, who are proud of the continuing fusion of cultures that has created its unique community in the present and its future.
