



Visitors to the city of Birmingham's website ([birminghamal.gov](http://birminghamal.gov)) since close of business last night have been pleasantly surprised. The newest iteration of the city's digital facing first impression has launched quietly, though it is our understanding a more formal announcement should be forthcoming. It replaces [the one used \(with only minor tweaks\) since January 2008](#). This latest version was created by locally based web design firm [Kinetic Communications](#). They have also been working on [a new Birmingham City Council website](#) that launched last month, replacing [one in use since May 2012](#). The sites are so similar visually most visitors will not notice they are not one in the same when navigating.

This redesign is the latest effort to tackle an issue faced by many cities — how to build a useful website for its citizens and business owners. A look back at earlier iterations should give a pretty good idea of just how far the city's come from 2001.