

+ More than just business...

COLMORE

December 2020

LIFE

2020

REVIEW

**IT'S BEEN EVENTFUL,
TO SAY THE LEAST**



Welcome

2020 has been a year of trials and tribulations, pushing many businesses to breaking point. However, a sense of community and support has continued to shine a light through the dark, as businesses from across all sectors have rallied together to aid each other.

Walking through the District this year has been a bizarre experience. Areas that would normally be bustling with activity have remained quiet, with many businesses closed due to the latest restrictions.

While from an outsider's point of view, it may seem like nothing is happening on these streets, there



has been plenty taking place behind the scenes. Colmore BID has continued to deliver on its promises this year, with a range of projects coming to fruition.

With all the doom and gloom, it's easy to forget about the positives that have happened – but it's important that we not only acknowledge them, but also shout about them.

In this special edition of Colmore Life we look back at some of the successes that we've seen in the District in 2020. From parklets and public realm work, to our first virtual Food Festival and History Week. We speak to some of our key partners about their year and re-visit the successes of our businesses.

While news of a Covid vaccine shows a light at the end of the tunnel, we still have a long way to go. But, by pulling together and continuing to support one another we can come out fighting and more resilient than ever.

I hope you enjoy this magazine and I look forward to seeing you in person in 2021.

**MICHELE WILBY,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, COLMORE BID**



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DATES FOR THE DIARY



**Chinese New Year
celebrations in
Colmore BID**
Friday 12 February

Wellbeing Fortnight
February 2021

Community Games
Friday 21 May

Gay Pride
Saturday 29 –
Sunday 30 May

**Colmore Food
Festival**
Friday 2 and
Saturday 3 July

History Week
16-22 August

**Cyber Security
Awareness Month**
October 2021

**Christmas Lights
Switch On**
Thursday 25
November 2021

DID YOU KNOW? Colmore BID has joined forces with Croydon BID, British BIDs, ATCM and The BID Foundation to call on Government for 'special support' measures for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses. Visit the BID website to find out more.

A DAY IN THE DISTRICT

A SHOUT OUT TO SOME OF THE DISTRICT'S HEROES OF 2020

1 BREAKFAST

JAVA ROASTERY

A Business District favourite, Java Roastery stayed open for much of lockdown to provide fantastic coffee to go from 7.30am each week day. Java's Siena house blend is the stuff of legend and is available to buy online as a gift for a friend or just for you. Because you're worth it!

124 Colmore Row,
Birmingham



2 TO THE SHOPS

PURE ELECTRIC

Pure Electric bikes and scooters was classed as an essential retailer during lockdown, which meant it could stay open for e-bike and e-scooter servicing and sales. You can even enjoy a no-strings-attached free e-bike test ride before you buy (subject to stock, check before you visit).

37 Colmore Row,
Birmingham

3 ME TIME

BENJAMIN RYAN

Providing outstanding service and latest styles for over 10 years, Benjamin Ryan, on Edmund Street, has now reopened and is available for hair treatment bookings, the perfect pick-me-up after an incredibly tough year.

Maddox House, 117 Edmund
Street, Birmingham

Book online:

benjaminryanhair.co.uk

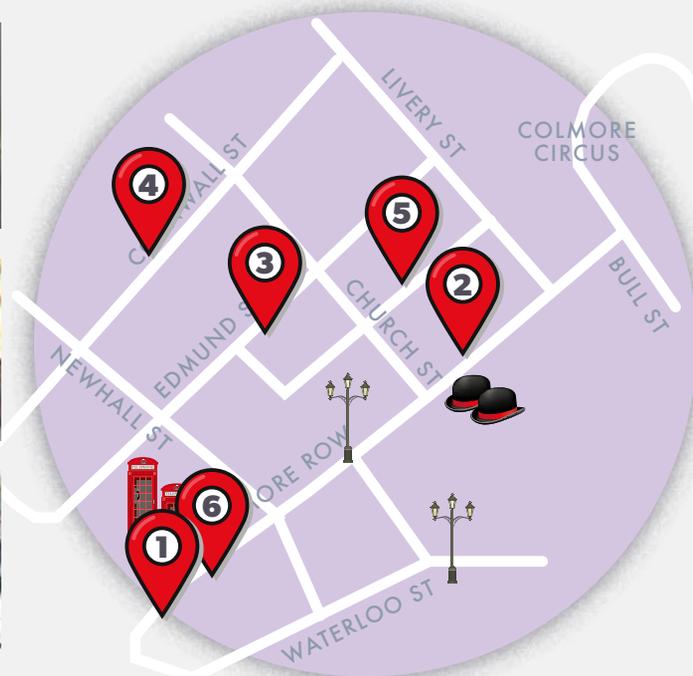
4 LUNCH

PURNELL'S

A new service from the multi-award winning restaurant is 'Purnell's @ Home' to cater for the restaurant's army of fans with at-home chilled meal boxes ready for you to recreate Glynn's outstanding dishes in the comfort of your kitchen.

Delivery options and boxes vary – follow the restaurant on facebook for updates.

55 Cornwall Street, Birmingham



5 SEE THE SIGHTS

THE COLMORE BID PARKLETS

Why not grab a hot drink and croissant from a nearby coffee shop and – with the weather on your side – have a few minutes at one of the BID's five Parklets (see Page16) to soak up the sights of the District architecture and open spaces.

Barwick Street, Church Street, Colmore Row and
Waterloo Street (x2)

6 ONE FOR THE ROAD (AT HOME)

THE COLMORE

During normal times, The Colmore, on Colmore Row, is the perfect place to while away an evening with friends, but as these are far from normal times, the bar is closed in line with Tier guidelines. However you can stock up on Thornbridge Brewery's extensive selection of craft beers for home delivery at any time.

Online: shop.thornbridgebrewery.co.uk/collections/

Lowdown

DID YOU KNOW? Birmingham businesses can now apply for the latest round of COVID grants. Businesses will need to register for a Birmingham City Council BRUM account to apply for a grant. Go to www.birmingham.gov.uk/myaccountpage



GALLERY GOES GLOBAL WITH ONLINE GAME

You can now curate your own exhibitions in a virtual Birmingham Museum & art Gallery as Birmingham Museums Trust has collaborated with the new online game *Occupy White Walls (OWW)*, making it the first official museum to partner with the AI-driven art platform.

Two hundred artworks from Birmingham's collection of Public Domain images, including

some of the city's most famous Pre-Raphaelite works, are now available to players in the digital world and can be explored at www.oww.io. As the partnership continues, it is planned to upload the full collection of Birmingham's public domain images, which are accessible via Birmingham Museums' online database.

Wider pavements to support city centre bars and restaurants



Birmingham City Council is installing temporary pavement widening measures in the Colmore and Retail Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), to help retail and hospitality businesses get back on their feet.

Work to install these measures, which involves reallocating space from the carriageway for footway overspill is taking place on Temple Row, Temple Row West, Edmund Street and Church Street (pictured) to enable safe social distancing for outdoor queuing and to help pedestrians pass safely.

The measures on Temple Row are being funded through the European Regional Development Fund's (ERDF) Reopening High Streets Safely Fund, with the remaining measures funded by the Council.

The space can also be used for additional seating by local hospitality businesses, providing they have secured a Temporary Pavement Licence. The licences were introduced in July by the UK government and have a quicker, cheaper application process to help support economic recovery post-pandemic.

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "This has been an incredibly tough year for Birmingham's hospitality and retail sectors, and we know that businesses and their workers have really felt the impact of COVID restrictions. That's why we're doing all we can to help them to reopen safely when the lockdown is lifted."

**COLMORE BID PARKLETS:
PAGE 16**



LATEST PARADISE ARCHITECTS CHOSEN

FCBStudios have won the competition to design the next building at Paradise Birmingham.

Three Chamberlain Square will continue as part of the latest phase of the development, which will provide circa 160,000 sq ft of commercial office space next to the Town Hall, Chamberlain Square, and Paradise Street.

Keith Bradley, Senior Partner at FCBStudios, said: "Our approach to Three Chamberlain Square is centred around sustainability, wellbeing and place. In one of the first post-COVID office buildings to be commissioned in the UK, we intend to raise the bar and bring a game-changing office building to the West Midlands.

"Our ambition is to make a working environment which is desirable and attractive, while pushing the sustainability aspirations to deliver a net zero carbon building. Our design offers adaptable and resilient spaces and breathes new life into the workplace. With daylight, dramatic views, natural ventilation and greenery throughout, the offices engage with the outside to make an inspiring workplace."

At almost 2 million square feet, Paradise is delivering up to 10 new flagship buildings offering offices, shops, bars, cafés, restaurants and a hotel across 17 acres in the heart of the city, together with the proposed Octagon residential building.

Part of Colmore Business District, Paradise is the country's largest city centre Enterprise Zone and has already benefited from investment by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) in enabling and infrastructure works.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' GROUPS MERGE

Future Faces – the young professionals' arm of Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce – and BPS Birmingham are joining forces to create a unified professional network for the region.

The move will bring members of BPS – including its Aspire, Future and Leaders

sub-sections – under the Future Faces brand. The Future Faces annual awards and Birmingham Young Professional of the Year (BYPY) – will come together in 2021 for a joint celebration of young professional talent across the region.

CHAMBER REFLECTION: PAGE 27

DID YOU KNOW? According to latest research there were 121 million ransomware attacks in 2020. Visit www.wmrcr.co.uk to learn more and protect your network.



LIGHTS, CAMERA...

District super-chef Glynn Purnell starred in Colmore BID's Christmas lights switch-on video alongside BID Chair Nicola Fleet-Milne.

With coronavirus restrictions in mind, this year's switch-on took a different direction but that didn't stop Glynn and Nicola bringing a touch of festive fun to the occasion on Thursday, November 26.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT: PAGES 30/31

Great Charles Street apartment development gets green light



Plans for more than 700 apartments to be constructed on the fringes of the Business District in a scheme which include a 39-storey tower, have been approved by Birmingham City Council.

Land bounded by Lionel Street, Livery Street, Great Charles Street and Ludgate Hill has been set aside for the proposed development which will feature 722 flats.

After being approved by Birmingham City Council's planning committee at a virtual meeting, buildings ranging from three to 39 storeys are to be constructed. The development will also include a range of ground floor commercial units.

The applicants for the development are Moda Living and Birmingham City Council while about 470 new jobs are also to be created.

A YEAR

LIKE

NO OTHER

Silent streets

Colmore Row, bathed in spring sunshine, but eerily quiet during the early days of Lockdown.

A smattering of essential shops and offices remained open – with some attracting a steady trickle of visitors – but the District’s main streets were largely empty.

It was all in stark contrast to the days before lockdown when the District bustled in scenes we hope to see return in 2021, with health and safety as the priority.



2020

REFLECTIONS

'After much lobbying, our parklet scheme became a reality in 2020, with five custom-made units being installed across the District'

**MELANIE WILLIAMS:
PAGE 17**

'Our BID security team has worked through the crisis and will be there when we all return hopefully in 2021.'

MIKE BEST: PAGE 18

'One of the many great things about Birmingham and the District is its sense of community.'

ALEX TROSS: PAGE 24

'We are delighted to see plans for emergency bike lanes emerge and be implemented around the city'

PAUL FIELDING: PAGE 25

'No week has passed without several Zooms to review the current situation, make plans for our response or guidance, and to touch base and check on our fellow Directors.'

**NICOLA FLEET-MILNE:
PAGE 26**

'We've learnt lessons during 2020, particularly around the type of events and support our community want'

RICHARD GUY: PAGE 27



SKY HIGH

LANDMARK COLMORE ROW TOWER NEARS COMPLETION

The external wrap of 103 Colmore Row – the tallest and arguably most prominent building in the Business District – is nearing completion.

The £87m tower, funded by Tristan Capital Partners and developed by Sterling Property Ventures, will comprise 223,631 sq ft of office space over 26 floors, and 7,665 sq ft of bar/restaurant space, operated by D&D London, on the ground and top floors.

Whilst Covid-19 and the initial lockdown affected the construction timeline, contractor BAM remains on target to deliver the building by the end of Summer 2021.

The impact of the pandemic has been far-reaching. Birmingham's office take-up dipped dramatically in Q2, and the increase in working from home has caused some commentators to sound the death knell for the office.

Q3, however, saw take-up of 80,000 sq ft in the city centre. Birmingham was also home to the UK's largest office investment transaction, the £105m sale of 55 Colmore Row, followed by the sale of 1 Colmore Square for £86.75m in October.

James Howarth, managing director of Sterling PV, is optimistic. He said: "The market was in shock during the first three months of the first lockdown, so activity was understandably subdued. However, we've seen a marked uptick in occupier enquiries in the last couple of months, and particularly so since it became apparent that a vaccine is around the corner. Whilst flexible working is here to stay, it won't make the office redundant."

Strained communication, the blurring of work-life boundaries and poor digital connectivity are among the chief frustrations of working from home. Research by Deloitte reports that 38% of

103 Colmore Row



workers say lockdown has had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

According to the Office for National Statistics, productivity was down by one fifth in Q2 – the sharpest decline since records began.

In the scramble for talent, businesses regard the office as a key recruitment tool, as well as a way of reinforcing their brand and culture. It's hard to replicate that when your team is working remotely.

James Howarth said: "One of the things we've all missed during lockdown is interacting with colleagues. Collaboration space is going to be a key feature of the new generation of offices."

In response to this, 103 Colmore Row's ground floor business lounge will provide additional amenity space for occupiers, including wifi enabled breakout areas.

103 Colmore Row is also targeting a WiredScore Platinum rating. This internationally recognised accreditation provides reassurance that digital connectivity within the building is the best it can be. Five separate providers

will all have feeds into the building and there are two input points, which means there is a backup in the event of an outage.

Smart technology has been embraced throughout the building. A dedicated app has been developed which will, among other things, help occupiers navigate the building touch-free.

103 will also be the first commercial office development in Birmingham's business district to benefit from the city's District Energy Scheme. This green renewable energy system is sustainable and cost-effective, delivering savings of up to 20 per cent for tenants in addition to reducing their carbon footprint.

Now more than ever, staff wellbeing is at the top of every business agenda. 103 will be fresh air ventilated and floor to ceiling glazing floods the floorplates with natural light, as well as providing stunning vistas across the conurbation. Cycle storage, changing rooms and showers in the basement and the ground floor areas all provide additional amenity.



Top: The stunning dusk views from 103 Colmore Row captured by Birmingham photographer Ross Jukes

Above: A CGI of the finished tower as seen from Cathedral Square

Paradise

£700m transformation of vast site continues



The £700 million Paradise project reached numerous milestones in 2020 as the vast regeneration project continues to transform the former Central Library site at a pace.

The first phase of the mixed-use development, which includes the first two buildings, One Chamberlain Square and Two Chamberlain, as well as new public realm across the estate, has now been completed.

At almost 2 million square feet, Paradise will deliver up to ten new flagship buildings, offering offices, shops, bars, cafés, restaurants and a four star hotel across 17 acres in Colmore Business District.

The next commercial building at Paradise, One Centenary Way, a 13 storey 280,000 sq ft office-led building, is now underway, and FCBStudios won the competition to design Three Chamberlain Square (see page 5).

In October a planning application for the world's first pure Octagon residential tower was submitted to Birmingham City Council.

The 49-storey, 155 metre (510 feet) tall tower will create a stunning new landmark for the city as well as provide



up to 346 new homes of outstanding quality and design with views across the city.

There will be a mix of one, two and three bed homes, including some at affordable rents for key workers.

In July, one of Birmingham's most iconic and recognisable statues – of reformer and MP Thomas Attwood –

returned to the heart of the city. Thomas Attwood was last seen reclining on the steps of Chamberlain Square in late 2015. Since then he has been in storage at Birmingham Museum Trust's Collection Centre in Nechells while the Paradise site was prepared for redevelopment.

He has returned to his position on the

Pictured above right: CGI of the Octagon tower

Right: The Thomas Attwood statue returns to Chamberlain Square



steps of Chamberlain Square following the square's refurbishment as part of the completion of Phase One of Paradise. This phase also includes new public realm work on Congreve Street and Centenary Way as well as the first new buildings, One Chamberlain Square and Two Chamberlain Square.

The statue was originally presented to the city of Birmingham and its people by Priscilla Mitchell, Thomas Attwood's great great granddaughter, in 1993 to commemorate his contribution to the expansion of democracy and human rights in the UK.

Officially called 'Birmingham Man' the artwork, designed by sculptor Sioban Coppinger in collaboration with letterer Fiona Peever, includes further pieces of art including a crate (or soap box upon which Attwood would have stood to give speeches) and sheaves of paper that spell out important aspects of Attwood's political demands, along with the words Reform, The Vote and Prosperity, stencilled into the nearby steps.

The Paradise redevelopment is being brought forward through Paradise Circus Limited Partnership (PCLP), a private-public joint venture with Birmingham City Council. The private sector funding is being managed by the international business of Federated Hermes. Argent is the development manager.

DISHOOM'S ARRIVAL DOESN'T DISAPPOINT

Overlooking Grade I listed Birmingham Town Hall, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and the Chamberlain Memorial fountain, Dishoom Birmingham opened to great fanfare in the summer.

The restaurant forms part of the ground floor of One Chamberlain Square and pays homage to the old Irani cafés that were once part of the fabric of life in Bombay. The design weaves together threads of Bombay's history with a Birmingham-inspired narrative. The space accommodates 330 guests, across the dining room, Permit Room bar and lovely outdoor terrace.

The restaurant is open daily, providing diners with everything from breakfast and mid-morning chai, to lunch and afternoon tipples, right through to evening feasts and late-night snacks.

Snowhill

BT calls in office fit-out experts for spring move

Work is well underway inside the Three Snowhill development, which will see over 3,000 BT Group staff move in spring 2021.

BT Group have taken over 283,000 sq ft of space within the 400,000 sq ft building. It has taken the upper floors for offices, as well as a staff restaurant and area for clients. The office fitout began in June and is being delivered by fit out and refurbishment specialists, Overbury. The site has remained operational throughout lockdown, with the team adapting to new social distancing regulations. Due to the size of the space it has been easy to ensure trades people remain 2m apart at all time while working.

As an organisation BT Group has hundreds of sites across the country, but it is currently consolidating many of them as part of its Better Workplace Programme – one of the largest workplace improvement and consolidation schemes of its type ever undertaken in the UK.

The five-year programme will improve and consolidate BT's footprint of corporate offices, service centres, contact centres and specialist sites across the country. Birmingham is the first of four new hubs, with others in London, Bristol and Manchester.





17-year Snowhill project completes

This year saw the completion of construction on the giant Snowhill Estate in the Business District, almost bringing to an end a 17-year project.

BAM Construction put the finishing touches to Three Snowhill, which will provide a new home to BT's West Midlands regional hub.

Three Snowhill is 17 storeys of Grade A offices, with floor areas of up to 25,000 sq ft. It has 86 car parking spaces, a gym and shower facilities on all floors.

Designed by Sidell Gibson, the £200 million building boasts a full height atrium, the tallest in Birmingham.

Ballymore acquired the four-

MILESTONE FOR VAST SCHEME IN BUSINESS DISTRICT

acre site behind Snow Hill station in 2003 and has built one million sq ft of office space across three buildings. In addition, Ballymore has delivered the viaduct, which enabled the Metro extension from Snowhill to the wider city centre and provided pedestrian access to the Jewellery and Gun Quarters and Snow Hill station via the new 'high level' entrance.

Three new areas of public realm – Colmore Square piazza, the Metro boulevard and public space facing St Chad's – have also been created.

One Snowhill completed in 2009 and is home to Barclays, DWF and KPMG. Two Snowhill is home to law firm WLG Gowling and HS2 after

being completed in 2013.

Richard Probert of Ballymore, who has worked on the Snowhill estate since its inception, said: "Three Snowhill is the largest ever speculative office development outside London - its development was a massive vote of confidence in Birmingham by Ballymore.

"Our faith in the building and our product has been rewarded with BT taking more than two thirds of the building for a new regional hub.

"But the Snowhill Estate is more than the sum of its parts.

"It has successfully extended Birmingham's prime business district with some major brands calling it home."



Grand designs

ICONIC DISTRICT BUILDING'S £45M RESTORATION ALMOST FINISHED

The Grand Hotel Birmingham will soon be ready to open its doors to the public revealing its spectacular £45 million restoration and refurbishment.

Housed in one of Birmingham's most iconic buildings overlooking prestigious Colmore Row, the luxury hotel is a Grade II* listed building.

Peter Kienast, General Manager of The Grand Hotel Birmingham, said: "We can't wait to reveal the stunning restoration that has seen one of the city's most iconic buildings returned to glory.

"We've carefully considered how to

create a 21st-century luxury experience alongside measures to ensure the safest experience for our guests and colleagues."

Retaining the building's French Renaissance exterior, Victorian and Arts & Crafts features and paying homage to its illustrious history, the restoration also includes new penthouse suites with spectacular views across Birmingham Cathedral and the city beyond.

When the hotel is fully open next year, it will also include an outdoor garden terrace – set to become one of the city's

most in-demand destinations; two bars and a restaurant; a hotel gym; and state-of-the-art meeting and event spaces.

Interior design by Robert Angell Design International reflects the passion and spirit of contemporary Birmingham, whilst paying homage to the building's stunning original features and history.

"We're looking forward to providing visitors to Birmingham – and locals alike – with a one-of-a-kind destination that combines the splendour and heritage of this building with the vibrancy of 21st-century Birmingham," added Mr Kienast.

The Grand



LIFE IS GRAND

The Grand Hotel played its part in the Suffragette movement of the early 1900s. Political meetings held at the hotel were interrupted as part of the Women's Social and Political Union's campaign against the Liberal government.

The hotel's heyday saw it host concerts, parties and dinner-dances, attracting world-famous stars to Birmingham. King George VI, Winston Churchill, Charlie Chaplin and James Cagney are just a few notable celebrities to have enjoyed the hotel, as did Malcolm X, during his last UK visit.



Parklets

Making the most of great outdoors

PARKLETS MAKE A GREAT ADDITION TO DISTRICT OUTDOOR SPACES

We welcomed five new additions to the District’s public realm this summer, as Colmore BID officially launched its parklet scheme, to further support the leisure and hospitality industry and local business community.

The outdoor seating scheme has been in the pipeline for some time, however following the implementation of Covid restrictions that reduced the capacity of indoor seating for venues, Colmore BID worked to fast track the programme, to provide additional support to the District’s hospitality venues.

Five new spaces were installed in September on Colmore Row, outside 200 Degrees Coffee, Barwick Street, outside Primitivo, Church Street, outside Hotel du Vin and two on Waterloo Street, outside Theatrix and Purecraft Bar and Kitchen.

Each parklet has capacity for 15-20 people within up to four defined areas, including seating with a low table for coffee and drinks, an area for dining with a high table and standing room. They also include an area that has been specifically designed to be accessible for wheelchair users.

We’ve had some truly fantastic feedback both from businesses and people making use of the scheme and it’s great to see them being used not only for a drink and a bite to eat, but

also people hosting outdoor meetings and just generally taking time for themselves.

The parklets are just one of the many ways we are working to support businesses during these unprecedented times. As a BID we are continually looking at what support is needed, changing our output to ensure needs are met.

‘It’s great to see them being used not only for a drink and a bite to eat, but also people hosting outdoor meetings and just generally taking time for themselves’





STOP PRESS

At the time of printing Colmore Life, the BID was working with local artists to add a splash of colour to the parklets with bright artworks on all five structures across the Business District. Find out more about the artists involved on the Colmore BID website.

2020 REFLECTIONS

While the streets may have been quieter this year, the work that Outstanding Places set out to do has continued and with it comes a number of improvements to the District’s public realm. This has included overseeing the BIDs representation on the £10m Snow Hill Public Realm programme board and realising the long-awaited start on the site of the Colmore Row East public realm project.

After much lobbying, our parklet scheme became a reality in 2020, with five custom-made units being installed across the District to help the hospitality industry and create safe, green outdoor spaces for people. On the topic of greening the area, we made a joint application for LEP funding for greening projects across Colmore and Retail BIDs and worked with a University of Birmingham student on the development of a greening masterplan to transform our urban spaces to the betterment of bio-diversity and wellbeing.

We have made considerable progress on many of our projects this year, however there will always be more to do. 2021 is set to be another busy year, with more schemes coming to fruition and we can’t wait to see what you think of them.

**MELANIE WILLIAMS
WORKING
GROUP LEAD,
OUTSTANDING PLACES**

Safe & Sound

2020 REFLECTIONS

As for many, 2020 started like any other year for Colmore BID's security team, however when the first lockdown was announced in March, our role evolved. While the streets became a ghost town overnight, with businesses implementing 'work from home' policies and the leisure, hospitality and retail sector shutting up shop, we worked with Birmingham City Council and Trident to relocate rough sleepers into supported accommodation such as the Salvation Army, Washington Court and even Holiday Inn Snow Hill. This was an important job to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus amongst the homeless community.

During the daytime, there was still a core group of people out on the streets engaging in anti-social behaviour, but our continued collaboration with Retail BID and West Midlands Police allowed us to quickly and effectively resolve this in key areas of the city.

With lockdown set to continue, a big part of our role became ensuring empty premises were safe and secure. Each morning the team would go out on patrol and check doors, windows and alleyways, to see if there was sign of forced entry. In the early days, we found a high number of businesses that were not secured properly – we contacted businesses to inform them of this and encouraged them to put the proper measures in place.

Our support for rough sleepers and vulnerable individuals continued with daily meetings with West Midlands Police, The Mailbox, Bullring and other city centre BIDs. This provided a platform for increased information sharing and improved problem solving, allowing us to identify key risks and solutions.

As more people return to the District, our day-to-day routine is slowly returning to normal. But while we're still a long way off from complete 'normality', whatever that may be, our work to ensure the District, its businesses and people are safe will continue.

**JOHN-JO VON JOHNSON,
 STREET OPERATIONS MANAGER**

From the street to cyberspace, the BID is on the frontline

"Is Birmingham city centre as safe and sound as they claim?" read one commentary about the knife attacks that occurred one late summer evening in September.

Thankfully, that was an isolated incident because the reality is that the city centre and Colmore BID in particular has seen crime and anti-social behaviour reduce in line with the dramatic drop in footfall that we have experienced during the pandemic.

Our Security Team has nevertheless been on the frontline of BID operations during the Covid-19 crisis. Whilst many office workers have been absent from the BID area since March, John-Jo and his team have worked collaboratively with West Midlands Police and the other BID street wardens to protect buildings and to support those who have needed to come to the District for work, as well as

those visiting and passing through the city centre. The team have also liaised closely with hospitality venues on their re-opening in the summer.

Whilst we welcomed the positive impact on rough sleeping of the #EveryoneIn initiative, our street community has been an ever-present in the District and the main focus of our team's interventions. Again though, the crisis has led to closer working relationships with Trident Outreach, BVSC and our charity partners in signposting people to the support they need and co-ordinating food distribution in the city centre, the latter with the Food Justice Network.

One consequence of remote working has been a rise in cyber-crime and scams. Paul Street, our Security Projects Officer, has joined the advisory board of the West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre which has been established this year

and we are running sessions and providing information on the website to inform and assist businesses and individuals in the BID area.

It reminds us of the value of our key workers and, in this respect, our BID security team has worked through the crisis and will be there when we all return hopefully in 2021.

**MIKE BEST, CHAIR,
 SAFE & SOUND WORKING GROUP**

John-Jo Von Johnson



History Week

The year we made history

SPECIAL EVENTS, VIDEOS AND MAGAZINE CELEBRATE THE DISTRICT'S HERITAGE

2020 has been a positive year for developments in the District, but while we look to the future, it's important that we don't forget the past. In July, we celebrated the heritage of the Business District with the launch of Colmore History Week.

The street we now know as Colmore Row has roots dating back to before the 18th century. But while the District has come on a long way since its Georgian beginnings, there are still elements of the past if you look hard enough.

During Colmore History Week we published a range of videos and virtual tours that explore some of the everyday sights within the District that you probably walk past but may never have noticed. From statues of the first Bishop of Birmingham, to gothic angel fountains embedded within the city walls, we unpicked their histories and the early beginnings of the District.

As well as tours, we also created our first Colmore History Magazine, which features 29 pages of heritage fun and facts from around the area, all of which is available to read online on our website. Within the publication we explore the violent fight for power between two of Birmingham's wealthiest families; the Colmores and the Smallbrokes, the notable burials and memorials located within the grounds of St. Philip's



Above: The Colmore BID History Week digital magazine front cover shows how 'The Row' has changed over the years

Right: Ann Street, now Colmore Row, at its junction with Newhall Street, in a historic sketch from the Birmingham Museums Trust archives

Cathedral and of course some now vs then imagery.

While Colmore History Week ran July 20-24, all of the resources are still available online for you to explore in your own time. Just head over to the What's On section of the BID website for links to our publication and virtual tours.



Colmore Food Festival



Packed programme of online food events

Due to COVID-19, the city's biggest food festival went digital for 2020 as Colmore Food Festival, in its physical format, had to be postponed. But while we couldn't all gather in the sun in Victoria Square, we decided to beam a taste of the food festival right into your homes.

Starting Friday July 3, there was a packed programme of online content for you to feast both your eyes and taste buds on. The digital festival took a look back at some of the top recipes from across the years, which included staff from Opus and The Jekyll and Hyde talking viewers through making some of their fantastic cocktails in a series of online tutorials

Colmore Food Festival wouldn't be the same without some music and Luxury Live Entertainment certainly delivered.

A number of performances were filmed across the district and uploaded online, allowing you to enjoy in your own time.

If you missed the festivities this year, you can still watch all the performances and cooking demos by heading to our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/ColmoreBID. Plans are well underway for 2021, with more details coming soon.



Cook Books to try the best of the District at home



Many of us have missed our favourite meals and cocktails from the District's venues this year, as new restrictions have made it difficult to just pop somewhere for a bite to eat. While we'll never be able to re-create the buzz and atmosphere of our award-winning bars and restaurants in our homes, you can have a go at cooking up a storm in your own kitchen.

This year we released not one, but two editions of our brand new cook book, featuring delectable dishes from our venues. The first looked back at some of the top dishes featured at the Colmore Food Festival over the past 10 years. In the autumn, we looked at some delicious comfort food. The cook books are free to download from our website, but to give you a taste, we've included some of our favourites over the next three pages.

Colmore Cook Book



ALCHEMIST

54 Cornwall Street, Birmingham, B3 2DF
www.opusrestaurant.co.uk

Bubblebath

INGREDIENTS

30ml gin
 30ml filtered water
 7.5ml Aperol
 7.5ml Chambord Liqueur
 5ml Gomme 1:1
 20ml apple Juice
 ½ barspoon Soya Lecithin
 15ml L&G mix, as follows:
 5ml lemon juice
 1/2 tsp caster sugar
 10ml lemon bitters
 Lemon zest
 2.5 pellets of dry ice (optional,
 to create the smoke effect!)
 Cubed ice
 Glassware – margarita coupe/
 martini glass

METHOD

1. Fill a Boston tin with ice, gin, water, Aperol, Chambord, L&G mix, gomme, apple juice and soya lecithin.
2. Add dry ice pellets to glass, using a muddler to compress.
3. Shake Boston tin for 30 seconds.
4. Use a fine strain to remove any lumps of lecithin, into your glass with the dry ice.
5. Drink should start to bubble up over the glass!

Tip: Use soya lecithin and dry ice to create a chemical reaction that creates those fairy liquid bubbles.



THE JEKYLL & HYDE

28 Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham B4 6BJ
www.thejekyllandhyde.co.uk/

Bramble

INGREDIENTS

50ml Bombay Sapphire Gin
 10ml Sugar Syrup
 37.5ml Lemon Juice
 5ml Chambord
 x2 raspberries/slice of lemon to garnish

METHOD

1. Add all ingredients apart from Chambord to a double rocks glass and top with crushed ice.
2. Drizzle 5ml of Chambord over the top of the drink and garnish with 2 x raspberries and a slice of lemon.

Colmore Cook Book

PURNELL'S

55 Cornwall St, Birmingham, B3 2DH,
purnellsrestaurant.com

Cheese and Potato Pie 'Gratin'

INGREDIENTS

200g clean, large-grained industrial white rock salt
6 medium-large baking potatoes, skin on, washed
Splash of vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
Knob of butter, plus 60g
310g hard mature cheddar cheese, grated
100ml double cream
100ml milk
1tbsp chopped parsley
1tbsp chopped spring onions

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180C / gas mark 4.
2. Sprinkle the salt onto a baking tray and place the potatoes on top.
3. Bake the potatoes for 1 ½ hours, or until they are soft.
4. Remove the potatoes from the oven and leave to cool slightly, then cut in half, scoop the potato into a bowl and beat until smooth. Reserve the skins.
5. Heat the oil in a flameproof casserole dish, add the onion and cook over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes. Add the knob of butter and cook for a further 2 minutes, then remove from the heat.
6. Add the potato, 250g of the cheese, the remaining 60g butter, the cream, milk, parsley and spring onions, then mix together and spread out in the casserole dish, smoothing the surface.
7. Cut the potato skins into strips and scatter over the potato mixture, then cover with the remaining 60g cheese.

Bake for 20 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve with a side salad or as a side dish for meat or fish.

Tip: Mix the cheese up to give it a change. Try using a bit of blue!



Colmore Cook Book



URBAN CAFE

30 Church Street, Birmingham, B3 2NP
urbanemporiums.com

Avocado, Edamame & Chilli Smash with Smoked Tofu & Poached Eggs

INGREDIENTS

Amounts per serving
1 slice of sourdough bread (toasted)
1/2 avocado, smashed, but not completely
10 edamame beans
5ml lemon juice
Handful of sunflower and pumpkin seeds
2 poached eggs
80g tofu
Pinch of paprika
Pinch of chilli flakes
Handful of pea shoots
Herb oil (rocket, pea shoots, basil & olive oil)
Salt and pepper

METHOD

To make the herb oil

Blend a handful of rocket, basil, pea shoots and 100ml of olive oil. Store in a squeeze bottle.

1. Smash the 1/2 an avocado to your desired texture and add lemon juice, salt, pepper and edamame beans.
2. Toast a slice of sourdough bread.
3. Poach the eggs for two minutes for a runny egg.
4. Crumble the tofu and fry in a frying pan with a drop of olive oil. And add salt, pepper and paprika.
5. Spread smashed avocado on to the toast and place on the plate.
6. Add smoked tofu, scrambled and poached eggs on top of the avocado.
7. Finish off with a bunch of pea shoots, chilli flakes, sunflower and pumpkin seeds and herb oil.
8. Tuck in, enjoy and make sure to get a photo of that runny yolk.

Leisure & Hospitality

2020 REFLECTIONS

2020 has perhaps been the hardest for the leisure and hospitality industry. With not one, but two lockdowns and restrictions that felt like they were changing every week, it's been difficult for businesses to plan for the future. One of the many great things about Birmingham and the District though, is its sense of community and how people come together to support those in need. From Eat Out To Help Out and #NoMoreNoShows to exploring new delivery options, the general public have continued to support their favourite bars and restaurants by any means possible. The BID has explored new means as well. Our parklet scheme has provided businesses with increased capacity for customers and the new Yoello app is allowing businesses that have not previously offered a takeaway service, to do just that at a fraction of the cost of other services.

The road ahead will be tough, we're not denying that, but if we as a community continue to support the businesses that make this city so special, we will get through this. If you have ideas on how the BID can further support businesses, we would love to hear from you.

ALEX TROSS
DEPUTY CHAIR OF
COLMORE BID AND
WORKING GROUP LEAD,
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY



PRIT SAGOO OF PRIMITIVO LOOKS BACK ON A TURBULENT YEAR

They say money makes the world go round, when in fact it's actually people, and no venue can attest more to this than Primitivo.

Nuzzled away on Barwick Street, this bar and eatery has stood the test of time, seeing market crashes, recessions and even countrywide lockdowns – however despite all that, it has maintained its reputation and customer base.

Opening its doors in 1996, Primitivo has become a household name within the professional services, with people from offices across the District and beyond using its stylish yet humble setting to seal deals, impress clients or even just catch up with colleagues after a long week. But what keeps people coming back for more?

"Customer service is key," says Prit Sagoo, owner of Primitivo (pictured inset). "Having the right team is vital to the success of a business, not just to keep it running, but to engage with guests.

"Over the years, we've homed in on our market. No bar can appeal to everyone – every customer has their own needs and wants. If you spread yourself too thinly, that's when things start to crumble. As our city's become laden with choice, it's important to find the qualities that are best for

your business – do something different and be an individual."

You can't hide from the fact that coronavirus has hit businesses hard this year. Like many leisure and hospitality businesses, Primitivo has had to shut its doors during lockdown, ensuring both its staff and customers are safe. Despite the turbulent year, it is already looking towards the future.

"2021 will be about getting back to what we're good at. Good food, good drink and value for money. While we have a small menu, all our meals are homemade in our open kitchen using local ingredients. We have an extensive wine list and a range of good ales, including Purity and Wye Valley.

"While we've evolved over the years, with new menus and the launch of our events space, the Barwick Suite, our mission remains the same – to provide outstanding service to our customers.

"Over the years, we've seen a lot of the city's characters come and go. Juniors have become partners and they are now bringing in their own sons and daughters. 2020 has been a tough year, but Birmingham will get through it – we have a long road ahead, but we all need to stay positive and work together and we'll come out fighting and stronger than ever."



BID Working Groups

Among the gloom, there were moments of hope

PARKLETS PROJECT WAS A HIGHLIGHT DURING DIFFICULT 2020



Nobody can talk about 2020 and not highlight the dramatic impact of Covid-19; the activities of this group were heavily linked to our response to the pandemic. Between March and the present date, no week has passed without several Zooms to review the current situation, make plans for our response or guidance, and to touch base and check on our fellow Directors. But it's not all been so sombre, with the parklet project bringing a ray of hope out of the gloom.

The Colmore BID board has long had an appetite for increasing the dwell space around the district, and the pandemic provided an opportunity that was not to be missed. Business Matters reviewed the project scope, agreed the funding pot with the board, and authorised the go-ahead of five initial parklets, seeking to eventually install ten.

Working incredibly closely with Birmingham City Council's many siloed departments, the BID managed to chart a course through the choppy seas of age-old red-tape and rapidly introduced emergency plans to deliver the parklets in time for the relaunch of many hospitality venues in the district. They're not 100% perfect yet, but they have already been heralded as much needed spaces of rest and contemplation, as well as unofficial extensions to the bars and restaurants nearby.

**NICOLA FLEET-MILNE,
CHAIR, COLMORE BID, WORKING GROUP LEAD,
BUSINESS MATTERS**

HOW OUR EVENTS TOOK NEW DIRECTION

Community has never been as important as it has during lockdown in 2020. With social distancing restrictions in place and the vast majority of people working from home, many have felt isolated and cut off from the world.

The Community Building working group's year began with a bumper programme of events. We launched our first wellbeing fortnight and celebrated Chinese New Year in style with a tour of the District featuring Lion Dancers and traditional drummers. People were also given a glimpse of what makes the District tick in our 'Colmore Business District Opens Its Doors' events as businesses in the area welcomed people behind the scenes.

Come spring, our events programme went out the window as the group had to adapt to ensure people remained connected while working from home. We launched virtual yoga and wellbeing

sessions, as well as a series of fitness classes and a hugely successful food and wine quiz. August also marked the launch of our first History Week, which featured a range of virtual tours and a magazine exploring the heritage of the District.

We've learnt a lot of lessons during 2020, particularly around the type of events and support our community want. We've also bolstered our ranks with new members to the group from hospitality, property and construction, PR and events sectors to give greater and more diverse input.

Whether you're working from home more or back in the District, our events programme for 2021 will evolve once again and we can't wait to show you what we have planned.

**RICHARD GUY
WORKING GROUP LEAD,
COMMUNITY BUILDING**

2020 REFLECTIONS

Much like most walks of life, 2020 has been a strange year for the Accessible and Connected Working Group. With the changes to working life, we have been heavily focussed on sign-posting people who come in and out of the area, to ensure they move around in the safest way possible, while adhering to relevant social distancing measures.

While congestion on the roads has certainly eased this year, albeit for completely the wrong reasons, the popularity of cycling has increased dramatically, and we were delighted to see plans for emergency bike lanes emerge and implemented around the city.

Looking onwards to 2021, we will continue to work with partners to champion the city's Clean Air Zone, ensuring businesses are prepared for the changes coming into force mid-year. We will also continue to work towards finding a solution to freight issues and in particular 'last mile delivery services'. Hopefully we may see plans emerge in this respect at some point soon.

**PAUL FIELDING
DEPUTY CHAIR OF
COLMORE BID AND
WORKING GROUP
LEAD, ACCESSIBLE &
CONNECTED**

West Midlands reflection

Investing in new era for Birmingham and beyond

DAN STORER, CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER AT THE WEST MIDLANDS GROWTH COMPANY, HIGHLIGHTS HOW THE REGION IS READY TO STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT FOR 2021

As we optimistically welcomed the dawn of a new decade on January 1st this year, no-one could have foreseen the unprecedented challenges that would emerge to cement 2020's place in the history books.

Coronavirus has rapidly altered life as we know it; in business especially, where many organisations are continuing to adapt to the unfolding impacts of the virus.

On a personal note, amid the prevailing economic challenges, a promising new venture has begun for me. I'm pleased to have joined the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) as Chief Investment Officer, where I will lead the region's global inward investment efforts at a critical point in time.

Formerly part of MIDAS – Manchester's strategic investment agency, I'm looking forward to bringing a fresh perspective to unlocking the region's investment potential.

What has struck me about the West Midlands from my first two months in post is its overwhelming sense of resilience and ingenuity in the face of adversity – an ethos that is plain to see in this year's investment performance.

July saw the West Midlands crowned the UK's leading location for attracting Foreign Direct Investment outside London and the South East for a fifth year in a row, with global industry leaders such as Microland – India's leading digital IT transformation company – joining our influential portfolio of foreign investors.

A new West Midlands India Partnership was also established to build on this corridor of investment between the region and India. The

Partnership's five-year programme of activity will draw on the region's existing industrial and cultural links with India to develop mutual opportunities for economic growth. We are looking

forward to progressing our ambitions throughout 2021, in the context of wider discussions around the UK's post-Brexit trade relationships.

Additionally, the region secured national recognition for its emerging expertise in Data Driven Healthcare Technologies and Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) Modelling through the Department for International Trade's (DIT) High Potential Opportunities (HPO) programme, solidifying our legacy for cutting-edge innovation.

The impact of the pandemic has sharpened the critical role of innovative, data-driven healthcare and transport systems. I'm looking forward to translating the potential of these clusters into investment gains in partnership with Government colleagues.

Birmingham's status as a global hub for Financial & Professional Services has been elevated exponentially this year following a raft of new firms moving and expanding into the city. Completions on the Paradise development have seen PwC open its



new regional HQ at One Chamberlain Square, additionally anchoring investment from DLA Piper, Knights, and Mazars onsite.

The West Midlands' standing at the frontier of clean technologies was brought into focus following Government's new vision for a Green Industrial Revolution.

In our corporate response to this Plan, we outlined our determination to ensure the region's increasingly vital role in progressing the UK's net-zero targets is realised, along with the investment opportunities this will create in areas such as electric vehicles.

Focusing on more gearshift propositions of this nature, we will continue to raise the profile of our unique offer to investors. Across the business in its entirety, we're paying

*Pictured:
Birmingham's
skyline and Dan
Storer, inset*

Chambers of Commerce

How businesses spent another year inching closer to Brexit

We are only 11 months in to the decade and already Brexit is no longer the most disruptive event on businesses' agenda.

In November, we (the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce) asked almost 400 businesses what impact they thought COVID-19 and Brexit would have on their organisations over the next 6 months. A resounding 42% believed that COVID-19 will have a significant negative impact compared to a more muted 10% for Brexit.

However, as we inch ever closer to the end of the Brexit transition period more and more businesses are trying to find the headspace to make those final preparations for the many changes that we know are coming on the 1st January.

Last year, the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce ran a digital business Brexit health check. On average, businesses selected eight areas of their operations that could be impacted by Brexit related change. These included everything from the EU nationals in their workforce to countries they buy their goods from.

In this time of great uncertainty and rapid change, we are working to help businesses navigate this period and prepare for what they can – to leave the space to react to what they can't.

On Brexit, we have teamed up with the West Midlands Combined Authority, Coventry & Warwickshire and Black Country Chambers of Commerce to offer a range of free support and services.

By February, together we will have delivered 24 entirely free international trade training courses on topics such as customs declarations and import and export procedures to help businesses get ready for the new UK Border Operating Model.

We will also have delivered 15 free digital workshops and webinars on a wide range of Brexit related topics – giving businesses opportunity to speak directly with guest experts and learn from each other.

Businesses can also access a free documentation & customs helpline, offering expert advice from the Chambers' international trade documentation teams



and a range of free checklists (topics include importing and exporting goods, employing EU citizens, delivering services in the EU, data protection, intellectual property and more).

You can find more information on the free support available for businesses from both the Chamber and other organisations (such as growth hubs, industry bodies and government departments) through our Brexit "hub" and downloadable checklists at www.greaterbirminghamchambers.com/Brexit.

Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce is a not-for-profit business membership and business support organisation that exists to connect, support and grow local businesses. We've been in business, for business, since 1813 (fittingly given the topic – we were partly founded by Brum's business community to support joint lobbying efforts around disrupted access to European markets as a result of the Napoleonic wars... but that's another story).

One thing that never ceases to impress me about Birmingham is the genuine passion for the city and spirit of collaboration from its business community – business leaders, business improvement districts, membership bodies and networks.

Suffice to say, it's not going to be an easy ride through to 2021 (for some sectors more than others). But businesses do not need to manage through this alone - I would encourage all businesses reading this to reach out to Colmore BID, the Chamber or others in your network and tap in to the support and networks available.



considerable attention to maximising the remarkable opportunities we will be afforded by milestones like the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

But we are conscious that our mission is a collective one. As well as working closely with DIT and the Government's new Office for Investment, we are keen to continue collaborating with public and private partners on the ground to discover new opportunities to support one another.

While 2020 has been enormously challenging or both our society and our economy, it has also created a momentum of change. From what I've seen so-far, the West Midlands has the resilience and ingenuity to harness this momentum to further accelerate the future prosperity of the region.

**SHAKESPEARE
MARTINEAU**

In the spring of 2020 top 55 law firm Shakespeare Martineau announced a major restructure of its senior leadership team.

The firm made significant changes to its organisational structure to support its ambitious plans for growth and increased collaboration across the business.

Key updates to the structure included the introduction of business unit managing directors and super team leaders as well as introducing regional heads across the Midlands.

Sitting on the main board alongside CEO Sarah Walker-Smith (pictured) and business unit managing directors, are the newly appointed chief transformational officer (CTO) Karen Walker and recently promoted Ben Buckton as chief marketing and people officer (CMPO).

The law firm has since outlined plans to more than double in size by 2023 and 'pursue bigger ambitions' beyond that, seeking mergers, acquisitions, team recruitment and lateral hires – but with a difference, becoming a 'house of brands' group.

"What we're trying to achieve, for the brands we have and those likeminded people who join us, is the best of both worlds," said Sarah Walker-Smith.

"So often in our industry large and aggressive businesses will acquire firms only to destroy the very heart of that brand and the reason they have loyal clients – we want to reverse that. What we're looking for is teams, individuals and brands that are similar to our current offering to enhance existing teams."



Movers & Shakers

JUST A FEW OF THE BUSINESSES MOVING OR HIRING IN 2020



Rob Groves of Argent and Ian Holder of Mazars

BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE

The Birmingham & Midland Institute appointed four new trustees to further strengthen its board and help shape the Institute's work over the next few years. These latest appointments completed the vacancies on the Board.

The new trustees are George Davies, Rachel Dobson, Peter Miles and Alex Round.

The Birmingham & Midland Institute was set up by Act of Parliament in 1854 for the 'Diffusion and Advancement of Science, Literature and Art amongst all Classes of Persons resident in Birmingham and Midland Counties'.

MAZARS

International accounting and advisory firm Mazars became the latest global business to commit to Two Chamberlain Square at the heart of Paradise Birmingham.

Mazars is taking 11,728 sq ft of space across the first floor of the Glenn Howells Architects-designed building and is relocating the 200-strong Birmingham team from existing offices in Church Street.

PARADISE PROGRESS: PAGE 10

FLEETMILNE

Estate and lettings agent, Fleetmilne has bolstered its forces and welcomed a number of new members to the team this year, despite not one but two lockdowns.

Ruth Thompson joined the firm on the March 1, as Director of Finance and Operations. Kayley Dhillon also joined at the same time of year in an administrative role - just two weeks before the first lockdown.

During the summer, which is typically the lettings industry's busiest time, Fleetmilne partnered with the University of Birmingham to employ one of its students for a three-month role as a Lettings Assistant. Ryan Ladyman joined the team on July 1 and impressed so much, he stayed for an extra month.

A necessary restructure in late summer resulted in a number of promotions.

Kirsty Cove (pictured right) has been promoted to Associate Lettings Director. She heads up the lettings team, but now also takes on additional responsibilities including involvement in the running of the company.

Rebecca Boast has been promoted into the Senior Leadership Team and is now Property Operations Manager.

Alex Cattanach is now Senior Lettings Consultant and takes on the additional responsibility of conducting appraisals and growing the lettings portfolio.





BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST

Birmingham Museums Trust, one of the UK's largest independent museum trusts, appointed Sara Wajid and Zak Mensah as joint CEOs. The pair take over from Dr Ellen McAdam who stepped down in June this year.

The appointment is a rare instance of people of colour reaching the highest level of leadership in UK museums, and of job-sharing taking place at this level. Of the 45 institutions represented on the National Museums Directors Council, only one other organisation is currently led by a person of colour. Sara and Zak's appointment also represents the only instance of a shared CEO role among the group.

Birmingham's demographic is young and diverse and this announcement further cements Birmingham Museums Trust's commitment to representing the people of the city at all levels across the organisation.

Zak comes to Birmingham Museums Trust from a leadership role at Bristol Museums where, as Head of Transformation: Culture & Creative Industries, he made a leading contribution to increasing income by 100% within three years as well as ambitious programmes focusing on continuous improvement and technology.

Sara was Head of Engagement for the Museum of London's new museum capital project; previous to that she was Head of Interpretation at Birmingham Museums Trust on a 15-month secondment.

Niels de Vos, Chair of Birmingham Museums Trust, described the appointment as 'transformational'.

Irwin Mitchell's offices in The Colmore Building



IRWIN MITCHELL

Irwin Mitchell relocated to The Colmore Building in the heart of the Business District in 2020.

The law firm has leased the seventh and ninth floors of the building, comprising 46,750 sq ft of office space.

It becomes the new home to Irwin Mitchell's Birmingham office which has a head count of 320 members of staff.

The move from Imperial House reflects over 30 years of success in providing legal services to both individuals and businesses in the West Midlands and beyond.

Improving the working environment for Irwin Mitchell's people and clients alike, the move is also expected to lay the groundwork for its continued regional expansion.

The law firm reported increased turnover to £263m last year and has a national headcount of 3,000. Irwin Mitchell is ranked among the most active deal-making law firms by Experian and is the third most active litigation law firm in the UK courts.

Lisa Jordan, Partner, said: "This is a hugely exciting move for every member of the Birmingham team. Such a big change is a clear statement of our ambition and intent and underlines our commitment to clients in the city and the wider Midlands region.

"The office space has been designed to make the most of flexible working and to help improve wellbeing for our colleagues as well as being welcoming for our clients and business partners across the region."

BEEVER AND STRUTHERS

Accountants and business advisers Beever and Struthers opened a new Birmingham office at The Colmore Building.

This is the first hub opened by Beever and Struthers, which also has offices in Manchester, London and Blackburn.

CPMG ARCHITECTS

CPMG Architects launched a Birmingham office in Bull Street's The Lewis Building.

With offices in Nottingham and London, the business is expanding its design services and expertise into the West Midlands area.

CURIUM SOLUTIONS

Edmund Street-based Curium Solutions appointed Debora Edwards as its new operations director. Debora brings years of experience working across many high-profile businesses.

Merry Christmas from Colmore

**JUST SOME OF THE
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND
DECORATIONS ACROSS
THE BUSINESS DISTRICT.
SHARE YOUR PICTURES
WITH THE HASHTAG
#COLMORELIFE**





COLMORE
LIFE



COLMORE BUSINESS DISTRICT

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