

+ More than just business...

A Day in the District  
The Lowdown  
Movers & Shakers  
Art & Culture

# COLMORE

# LIFE

SPRING 2024



In this issue:

## Meet the new role curating the city for a brighter Birmingham



colmorebusinessdistrict.com



# Welcome

## to the Spring 2024 edition of Colmore Life.

I write this welcome piece as the daffs are popping through in the Cathedral Grounds and the skies across the District are getting just a little bit bluer.

Yes, spring is on its way and with it, a Colmore Life magazine featuring new arrivals and reopenings across the Colmore area.

This edition talks about the arrival of the Townhouse nail salon on Church Street, Zambrero on Colmore Row and the reopening of The Gas Hall at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and with it a welcome return for the city's art collections.

It's wonderful to see these new and returning destinations in the city centre and the BID team wishes them well.

It's all change for Colmore BID, too, as we head into BID4 and our next five-year term proudly representing the District with a whole host of initiatives to make the area as clean, safe and welcoming as it can be.

Among these is Paul Street's pioneering work with the Ask For Angela, Safer Nights Out and Walk With Women campaigns. Paul updates Colmore Life magazine with the latest news from these important projects, along with an update from our new City Curator, Alex Nicholson-Evans, who talks about her plans to enhance the cultural appeal of the District.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Colmore Life and your springtime in the city centre.

**MICHELE WILBY, CEO, COLMORE BID**



## THE BID TEAM

**Michele Wilby**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Jonathan Bryce**  
Operations Manager

**Katy Paddock**  
Special Projects Executive

**Kelsey Dwyer**  
Events Executive

**Paul Street**  
Strategic Projects Officer

**Mike Mounfield**  
Projects Manager

**Alex Nicholson-Evans**  
City Curator

**Claire Lishman**  
Media and PR Consultant

**Philip Singleton**  
Consultant

**Lee Stirrup**  
Database Officer

**Ruth Thompson**  
Finance Director

**Ali Abbas Rangwala**  
Bookkeeper

**John-Jo Von Johnson**  
Street Operations Manager

**Ryan Boothe**  
Project Support

**James Crooks**  
Security Officer

**Zack Palmer**  
Security Officer

**Dimitri Mitropoulos**  
Security Officer

**Nicole Panayiotou**  
Business Liaison Executive

**Peter Charalambous**  
District Cleaner

### CONTACT

Colmore BID, 37a Waterloo St,  
Birmingham B2 5TJ

info@colmorebid.co.uk  
colmorebusinessdistrict.com

We're also on:



## FOR COLMORE LIFE MAGAZINE

**Stacey Barnfield**  
Editor

Designed and produced for  
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edwinelliscreativemedia.com

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SPRING 2024

## NEW COLMORE BID WORKING GROUP



Following on from the success of the Welcome to Birmingham events, Colmore BID has introduced a new working group. This working group is focusing on supporting the District's new professionals. To find out more please email [Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk](mailto:Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk)

## CALL FOR DIVERSITY FEEDBACK

Equality, diversity and inclusion is extremely important to Colmore BID and the events team wants to learn more about different cultural celebrations in and around the District. Colmore BID Events Executive, Kelsey Dwyer, said: "We would love to hear from you to understand what events are important to you and how they are celebrated."

If you have any feedback, advice or want to highlight a special date please email [Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk](mailto:Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk)

**DID YOU KNOW?** At 155 metres (509 feet), the Octagon tower will be the tallest building in Birmingham (a title currently held by the nearby BT Tower), and a key feature of the Paradise development. Find out more on Page 19

# A DAY IN THE DISTRICT

IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT FOR A MEETING? WHY NOT MAKE A DAY OF IT?

## 1 BREAKFAST

### 200 DEGREES

Pop in and try one of their unique blends. You can even sign up to its Barista School and learn how to become a coffee expert.

21 Colmore Row,  
Birmingham, B3 2BH



## 2 LUNCH

### ZAMBRERO

'Feel good Mex' and a quick-service twist on Mexican cuisine with dishes such as burritos, bowls, nachos and tacos.

See page 5

Colmore Row, The Grand Hotel  
Building, Birmingham

## 3 SEE THE SIGHTS

### BMAG GAS HALL

Re-opening to exhibit the city's world-famous Pre-Raphaelite art collection, Gas Hall – part of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery – offers a slice of culture and history in the District.

See pages 22-23

Edmund Street,  
near Chamberlain Sq, B3 3DH

## 4 ME TIME

### TOWNHOUSE

The new Townhouse on Church Street brings industry-leading technology, chic interiors, and impeccable manicures and pedicures to Birmingham.

See page 20

26-28 Church Street,  
Birmingham, B3 2NP



## 5 DINNER

### HOTEL DU VIN

Stunning hotel in the former Midland Eye Hospital on Church Street with Bistro du Vin at its heart. Experience an elegant and informal setting for lunch or dinner.

25 Church Street, Birmingham, B3 2NR

## 6 ONE FOR THE ROAD

### HENMAN & COOPER

Three bars supported by live DJs in the evenings and a unique rooftop terrace make for the perfect place for a late-night tippie this spring.

110 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3AG

# COLMORE LATEST NEWS FROM THE DISTRICT Lowdown

## Colmore Food Festival to return to Victoria Square

### DATES ANNOUNCED FOR CELEBRATION OF FOOD & DRINK

Colmore BID has announced the dates for its renowned Colmore Food Festival for 2024.

From 13 to 14 September the much-loved Festival will return to its original home in Victoria Square.

The award-winning event will provide guests with a tasty and affordable selection of mouth-watering taster dishes from the traders' latest menus.

Visitors will be spoilt for choice with the stalls made up of local restaurants, coffee shops, bars and hotels offering a selection of meat, vegetarian, and vegan options, as well as a selection of wines, beers, cocktails, and soft drinks. As always, organisers are also placing price caps on food and drinks, creating an affordable, but unforgettable experience.

The must-visit festival showcases some of the best food and drink offerings from across the Colmore Business District and attracts over 30,000 visitors each year.

Colmore BID will now be reaching out to hospitality venues operating in the District to offer them the opportunity to showcase taster-size portions of their menu items at the festival stalls.

Colmore Food Festival is a two-day fun-filled event featuring a range of food and drink traders, live entertainment, and so much more. Live music lovers will be treated to great tunes throughout the weekend, featuring performances from a range of local talents.

From Friday 13 to Saturday 14 September, Victoria Square in the centre of Birmingham will be transformed to provide the backdrop to a jam-packed weekend of entertainment and tasty treats. Expect to find delicious food options from around the



world, tempting sweet treats, hot and cold options, as well as a variety of beverages including the District's best cocktails.

The Colmore Food Festival is always one of Colmore BID's most anticipated events of the year, giving a boost to the hospitality businesses in the District and giving them the opportunity to showcase what they offer to thousands of people.

The event will be open for visitors from 11am to 8pm on Friday and Saturday and will take place in a beautiful setting near Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the Council House and Town Hall.

Sponsorship opportunities for the Colmore Food Festival are available. Please contact Kelsey Dwyer for more information:

[Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk](mailto:Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk)

*Pictured:  
Colmore  
Food  
Festival in  
Victoria  
Square*

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**Michelin star chef Glynn Purnell**, who runs two restaurants within Colmore Business District said: "The Colmore Food Festival is a one-of-a-kind event which celebrates the best of Birmingham's food and drinks scene, right in the beating heart of our amazing city. Whether you're a diehard foodie or just fancy sampling the best of the District's hospitality offer, Colmore Food Festival will once again play host to many food and drink stalls, with a range of options available to tingle everyone's tastebuds!"

**Alex Tross, Deputy Chair of Colmore BID** added: "Following on from the success of Christmas in Cathedral Square, we are incredibly excited to announce the return of the Colmore Food Festival for its 11th year.

"Birmingham's food scene has an impressive history; the city is the birthplace of Typhoo Tea, HP Sauce, Cadbury's chocolate, and Bird's Custard to name but a few. We also hold the most Michelin stars in the UK outside of London. Every year the city has more and more to offer when it comes to food and drink, and the Colmore Food Festival showcases exactly that, whilst at the same time supporting the local businesses in the District. We'll be releasing more details soon, so keep your eyes peeled on Colmore BID's social media channels for more information."



# The Lowdown



*Serving a purpose,  
one dish at a time*

As Zambrero opens its doors in Colmore Row, we explore how the global sensation combines Mexican cuisine with a commitment to philanthropy

Zambrero's story begins with a young medical student, Dr Sam Prince. In 2005 at the age of 21, he embarked on his ambitious journey armed with a mere AUS\$16,000 in savings and a passion for Mexican food.

Fast forward nearly two decades, and the successful entrepreneur and philanthropist has created one of Australia's fastest growing businesses and built a network of more than 250 restaurants worldwide, creating a culinary empire that stretches across the globe.

Sam recalls: "There's a quote by Steven Spielberg, who said that 'intuition whispers in your ear, it

rarely yells.' And indeed, in my life, intuition was whispering in my ear that Mexican food was just not done well for a long period of time in Australia. And at some point, it started to yell."

At the heart of Zambrero's success lies its Plate 4 Plate initiative – a beacon of social responsibility that goes beyond the conventional bounds of corporate philanthropy. The concept is simple yet revolutionary: for every burrito or bowl purchased, Zambrero pledges to donate a meal to someone in need. In essence, this makes every customer a partner in philanthropy, and to date it has provided more

than 75 million meals to those facing hunger and food insecurity.

Donated meals are distributed globally by Rise Against Hunger, primarily through school feeding programmes. The nutritious combinations of rice, soy and dehydrated vegetables are fortified with a vitamin mix to supplement the diet of malnourished individuals.

It's this commitment to making a tangible impact on food disparity that sets Zambrero apart. It has successfully positioned itself as a socially conscious brand thanks, to a genuine dedication to leaving a positive imprint and demonstrates that success can be a catalyst for change.

With only its second UK restaurant outside London now on Colmore Row, expect a gastronomic fiesta that marries traditional Mexican tastes with modern culinary innovation. Its vibrant and welcoming atmosphere is coupled with a commitment to quality and freshness; while the menu celebrates its culinary heritage with everything from burritos and bowls to tacos and nachos.

**Signature Burritos:** Choose from a variety of proteins, including slow-cooked meats, grilled chicken or vegetarian options, wrapped in a warm tortilla and complemented with vibrant salsas and toppings.

**Nourishing Bowls:** For those seeking a lighter option, Zambrero's nourishing bowls are packed with wholesome ingredients like black rice, fresh vegetables and protein of your choice.

**Tantalising Tacos:** A celebration of Mexican street food culture; soft tortillas filled with succulent meats, crisp vegetables and flavourful sauces.

**Mouthwatering Nachos:** Perfect for sharing or indulging on your own, crispy tortilla chips are generously topped with melted cheese, fresh salsa and guacamole.

**Zambrero, 20 Colmore Row**

*It's this  
commitment  
to making  
a tangible  
impact on  
food disparity  
that sets  
Zambrero  
apart*

## COLLEY ISON GALLERY



*The man with a passion  
about Birmingham art  
for Birmingham people*

Tim Ison is Director of Colley Ison Gallery, which represents leading contemporary artists, while also featuring 20th century artworks by modern masters. Always destined to be an art dealer, Tim spoke to local curator and consultant Ruth Millington about his successful career, selling “Birmingham art to Birmingham people”, and why his name was recently added above the door on Colmore Row.

Tim Ison was just a teenager when he was introduced to the art world by his family: “my dad was an artist, and my parents owned a small local gallery in Brierley Hill, where I worked on weekends while I was still at school”.

From learning how to frame a picture to running an entire commercial gallery, this is where he first developed many of the skills required for dealing in art.

Following his early days at the family-run business, Tim went to work in a Wolverhampton gallery before moving to Birmingham, where he joined Halycon Gallery as a consultant in 2000. It was here – based in what was formerly the Pallasades, and then at the ICC gallery – that he was introduced to “selling high-end contemporary art” and found his true calling.

While working at Halycon, Tim met Reuben Colley, who was then

one of the gallery’s artists. In 2008, Reuben’s contract was coming to an end, and he approached Tim with a view to launching an independent gallery of his own. By 2010, the pair had secured premises and opened Reuben Colley Fine Art in Moseley. Having joined forces with Reuben first as an employee, by 2011 Tim was a co-owner of the business.

From the outset, Reuben was intent on running “an artist-led gallery”, with a focus on representing local talent alongside his own work. Landscape painter James Byrne was among the first to join Reuben Colley Fine Art and, since then, the roster of Midlands-based artists has grown to include Danny Howes, Annette Pugh, Stephen Earl Rogers, Horace Panter, Goldie, George Shaw and Mark Godwin.

Always seeking to “do best by the artists”, many of whom have now

*Pictures: Stacey Barnfield for Colmore Life magazine*



# Big Interview

been represented by the gallery for almost 15 years, Tim has played a significant role in developing their careers and practice. Working closely with Reuben, the pair have built up trust, working with them on ideas for exhibitions, projects and collections, offering advice and guidance where it has been sought, and ensuring that “the artists’ vision” is fully realised.

“We work really hard to make sure that the artists are seen in the right places,” says Tim. Last year, Annette Pugh secured a major solo show of her paintings, ‘Happenstance’, at the New Art Gallery Walsall, while her limited edition prints were included in a local curation of the luxury apartments at The Goodyard in Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter.

One of the gallery’s few non-Birmingham-based artists, Roxana Halls secured a major commission for Disney, while her portraits have been acquired by London’s Science Museum, and the National Galleries of Scotland. Meanwhile, sculptor Jacob Chandler was commissioned to produce a public sculpture for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, which is still in situ outside New Street Station, while the gallery has a stunning bronze edition of this piece ‘One Giant Leap for Humankind’ available.

The gallery also now sells secondary market artworks, since relocating to Colmore Row in 2015. As Tim remembers, “moving to the city centre, and the financial district, brought a new type of client who was seeking blue chip works”. Picking up the phone, Tim works closely with other dealers to secure consigned works by the likes of Andy Warhol, Grayson Perry and Damien Hirst.

Tim’s approach is always ensuring that he secures the “very best work



that we can get”, and he recently found a home for an iconic Andy Warhol portrait of the late Queen. Behind every sale is his ethos, “We want to make sure that it’s a good deal for all three – owner or artist, gallery, and the client”. He also stresses that if clients are buying an original artwork, “Ideally, you need to see art in person”, so he will offer in-person visits, where he can hang the artwork in situ. Ensuring that his clients make wise decisions and always seeking to do “the best” for them, Tim will provide sound investment and financial advice. However, he also tells clients that, “You’ve got to buy what you like, and invest in something you’re going to enjoy.”

Rewarded for his hard work and dedication, Tim’s name was added above the door in 2021. While retaining the name of the gallery’s founder and director, Reuben Colley, the new name, ‘Colley Ison’ also importantly makes reference to Tim,

who has fronted the business since its inception.

Looking ahead, he is excited for the reopening of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, as this will bring audiences to Colmore Business District, as well as the gallery: “So many people come to Birmingham for the museum, so that reopening is a big bonus for the city, especially as they are reopening with the Pre-Raphaelites, who are loved by so many.”

Tim is also looking forward to Reuben Colley’s major Birmingham-themed exhibition of oil paintings, to be titled ‘City Living 3’, which the artist is currently working on. It will follow two sell-out collections, ‘City Living 1’ in 2012, and ‘City Living 2’ in 2016, both of which celebrated the architecture and people of the ever-changing Second City.

Above all, he is excited to support clients, old and new, in sourcing art for their homes. “Passionate about Birmingham art for Birmingham people”, Tim is true to his word. In his own home, he has a large Reuben Colley painting of the expressway, as well as a Rick Garland and a Horace Panter on his walls.

**Tim can be contacted on**  
**[info@colleyisongallery.com](mailto:info@colleyisongallery.com)**  
**Ruth Millington**

*Tim Ison takes a close look at Reuben Colley’s painting of Birmingham Cathedral*



## Pioneering initiatives to prioritise women's safety

As Strategic Co-ordinator: Safe & Sound Work Stream, Paul Street's focus is women's safety. Here he talks about why it's such an important issue for BID4 and shares details on the Ask For Angela, Safer Nights Out and Walk With Women campaigns.

By Lisa Piddington

One of the most robust initiatives at the top of Colmore BID's plans for 2024 is prioritising women's safety, with a number of key developments taking shape. The driving force – spearheaded by Strategic Co-ordinator Paul Street – is the recognition that the issue requires a thoughtful and comprehensive response.

Already, the BID has mobilised a forum of 26 businesswomen alongside a virtual network of more than 30 individuals, making it one of the most subscribed and interactive components within the District, and highlighting genuine concern and engagement within the community.

"It was only about 14 months ago that we had this pipe dream saying, 'we should be doing something bespoke for women. It's a national tier one threat for the country, so what's our response?'," explains Paul. "Whenever we publish anything on it, our social media activity increases significantly and women are recounting incidences that have happened to them."

With statistics revealing that 96% of violence, abuse and intimidation towards women is committed by men, the BID is busy taking proactive measures. Rather than placing

restrictions on women's actions, Paul advocates for a cultural shift: "It's not the answer to tell women 'you shouldn't wear a certain thing, or you shouldn't walk along a certain street at this time, or you shouldn't go to this bar' because women have the right to do what they like. The problem is men, and unless you address the core root the problem will always exist."

With this in mind, Colmore BID has partnered with the Hollie Gazzard Trust to launch a Male Allies and Active Bystander Training Program. This involves influential senior managers from the district undergoing detailed training to become male champions, standing up, speaking out and supporting women both in the workplace and public spaces. The objective is to create a network of champions who not only challenge inappropriate behaviour but also provide support when needed.

The Trust, named after a tragic incident where Hollie was killed in her workplace, serves as a poignant reminder of the risks women face even within seemingly secure environments. The training goes beyond addressing immediate concerns; it delves into policies that support women in various scenarios, including instances

of workplace abuse or domestic violence.

"Many people don't realise the increased risk of an assault happening in the workplace or travelling to work," says Paul. "We're also actively working with public transport networks around keeping women safe. Transport for West Midlands's Project Empower, for example, is about empowering women to report and stand up against unwanted sexual behaviours."

Another key initiative is Ask For Angela, initially designed for licensed venues and now expanding to include unlicensed premises. There are 36 participating venues, six of whom have also been awarded the full five-star National Police Safety Award from the Licensing SAVI Scheme. The Safer Nights Out campaign, emphasising visibility, reassurance and proactive measures, and the newly-launched Walk With Women events are also shaping a culture of safety in the District.

"Last year we extended Ask For Angela to unlicensed venues, so coffee shops as well as bars, restaurant, hotels are now engaged. They have made that commitment to ensure their safety and vulnerability procedures are a high standard. We want people, specifically women, to know there's a real determined effort, whether that's



Pictured: Paul Street



through Ask For Angela, Licensing SAVI, the accessibility and visibility of street security patrols or how we work in partnership with the police. It's about visibility and reassurance. "When we did the Safer Nights Out campaign, we focused on safer transport links, but also police accredited car parks. So if you come in your own car, we're actually signposting you to the car parks that have gone over and above to make them as safe as they can possibly be.

"We also ran our first Walk With Women event in December because we know that the perception of safety of women at night adversely affects and changes their habits. Predominantly the event was marketed to our constituent businesses – to men and women – and representatives from The Holly Gazzard Trust travelled up as well. It was a really good show of strength and support for the women of this area, and something we are planning to do again in the summer."

With "spiking" now at the top of the news agenda, Paul highlights the BID's proactive stance, educating the public on responsible practices, recommending technological solutions and fostering awareness without inducing fear.

"As with all of our approaches, we're taking that early intervention and preventative approach. We're talking to venues about how they can work smarter in stopping spiking, looking out for specific behaviours and signposting resources that could prevent it taking place. We're outwardly making the public aware that this is a national risk and it's good practice to be aware."

Colmore BID is fast becoming a leader in the field of women's safety, actively sharing its strategies and successes with other cities and regions on how to strike a balance between alerting the public without causing unnecessary alarm. The commitment is to fostering dialogue, implementing measures and collaborating with external organisations, positioning the BID as a model for other cities to follow.

**Visit [colmorebusinessdistrict.com](http://colmorebusinessdistrict.com)**



## Working Group UPDATES

### LEISURE & HOSPITALITY

Colmore Food Festival will be returning to Victoria Square on Friday 13 and Saturday 14 September 2024. Keep an eye on the BID website for details on events in the lead up and for the full line-up nearer the time.

### PLACE MARKETING

Throughout 2024 we are planning to recognise several key events such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Holi, EID and Luna New Year. This will be done through educational blogs, social posts and in-person events.

If you have a cultural celebration coming up this year or wish to share your experience in celebrating please contact [Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk](mailto:Kelsey.dwyer@colmorebid.co.uk)

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Charity engagement will be a key focus as we head into BID4. A charity event is being explored for later this year to connect our businesses to local and District-based charities to help them get the support they need.

Our existing projects will continue as they have previously been a success, events such as Network & Drink and Community Games are some of those you will see returning this year.

We have also now got a great team involved within our New Professionals and Welcome to Birmingham initiatives with quarterly networking and up-skilling events.

### OUTSTANDING PLACES

Back in 2013 Colmore BID delivered a scheme to improve the public realm in Colmore Square which included adding new seating, planters and lighting.

Green landscaping requires careful maintenance and occasionally renewal. Colmore Square has been replanted once by Birmingham Parks & Nurseries some years ago. It now

needs replanting again. District-based business Node is helping us with a planting design that we will implement and maintain over the next BID term. This work is progressing and we are hoping to see it delivered in spring 2024.

Colmore BID has a full-time cleaner, who works from 7am to 3.30pm, who tops up Birmingham City Council's baseline services and supports Colmore BID businesses with cleaning issues on private and public land.

### ACCESSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE (PREVIOUSLY ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED)

The group continues to promote cycling across the District. Through links to the Mayor's cycling advocate, to the teams at the City Council and Sustrans, we ensure Colmore BID has a say in making cycling safer and more accessible.

Persuading the freight world to engage with smaller, cleaner and speedier ways of delivering items across the city centre are being explored. We hope to make announcements soon.

Clean Air Day is in June this year and we will be promoting active travel and sustainable thought leadership.

### SAFE AND SOUND

Our Community Support team remain active Monday to Friday, 7am-8pm. If you need their support they can be reached on 07572 257 246.

Our Business Liaison Executive continues to report environmental issues across the District, while our Colmore Building & Facilities Managers' Forum starts in 2024 with a briefing from a UK former National Counter Terrorism Coordinator about the latest Protect Duty developments and how this will impact our publicly accessible buildings and spaces.

# Colmore BID News

*'I want to fill the city with art and encourage us all to be creative and curious'*

Alex Nicholson-Evans is best known as Founder and Director of Living For The Weekend, the company behind city-wide festivals such as Birmingham Cocktail Weekend and Birmingham Restaurant Festival. Now she's adding City Curator to her list of achievements. Here she shares more about her new role and reveals her perfect Colmore day out.

## **WHAT ASPIRATIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE ROLE OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?**

Firstly, I think it's absolutely critical that we use all the tools at our disposal to send a strong message that despite the City Council challenges, Birmingham is open for business and is an absolutely wonderful place to live, work, visit and do business. I believe we all have a role to play in that, including myself.

Indeed, I think it's really important that my role brings people and organisations together to deliver more for the city we all love so much. So I am certainly aspiring to foster collaboration; establishing and



developing partnerships is going to be a major part of my work.

There are also two 'hero' projects that I'm working on and for both of these, collaboration will be at the heart of their success. The first is the development of the idea of a Jewellery Biennial for Birmingham, a month-long showcase of jewellery, in the broadest sense of the word. A celebration of design, of craftsmanship, of heritage and of innovation in the field. The festival 'anchor' will be a flagship exhibition showcasing world-renowned artists and winners of a major UK-wide open call. Imagine the Jewellery Quarter and beyond being brought to life by an exciting programme of related activities, too. I'm supporting the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust with bringing this vision to life and we've recently submitted a funding bid to allow us to lay the foundations of that idea.

The other hero project is the idea of Birmingham Light Festival, but I won't share too much on that at the moment. I'm close to completing the initial research phase of this idea and I'm also hoping we'll have exciting related news soon so watch this space.

There is so much more beyond this too, I really want to fill the city with art and find ways to encourage us all to be creative and curious. If you're interested in hearing more on my work then keep an eye on Colmore BID's website as I'll be sharing my thinking and progress through regular blogs.

## **YOU'RE WELL KNOWN AS FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF LIVING FOR THE WEEKEND. CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT THIS ENTAILS?**

Absolutely. I'm only in position as City Curator for two days a week – the rest of my time is largely spent working on our flagship festivals; Birmingham Cocktail Weekend and Birmingham Restaurant Festival. Believe it or not, 2024 is actually the tenth year of Birmingham Cocktail Weekend so we're celebrating by hosting two festivals this year, a summer edition and a winter edition.

We expanded to Bristol last year too, so that's a super-exciting development, the first Bristol Cocktail Weekend was an absolute blast.

Living For The Weekend does more beyond this – we run a popular Supper Club under the Birmingham Restaurant Festival brand, and I work with a very small number of clients on wider projects that excite me. I feel very lucky to utterly adore my job.

## **AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR LOVE OF CULTURE? WE SEE YOU WERE FORMERLY COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR OF**



## And so it begins!

### BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST.

My time at Birmingham Museums was very special for me. As Commercial Director, I led the trading company (think the Edwardian Tearooms, the shops, related product development and venue hire) but my role was quite unique, I think. I also had leadership for the historic properties; special places like Aston Hall and Sarehole Mill.

I didn't have a background in museums when I joined the Trust, so I learnt an incredible amount from the people around me and there is no doubt that some of that learning is shaping my thinking now. I saw first-hand the power of arts and culture in the widest sense; how it can unite communities, bring people joy and spark curiosity. And we need all those things now more than ever.

### WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PERFECT COLMORE BID AREA DAY OUT?

Gosh, that's a big question, isn't it?! I love to run so I'd start with a city-centre jog. Then it would have to be a great breakfast somewhere to refuel. I'm a big fan of the Dishoom bacon naan, so I'll begin there.

Back to my old stomping ground next, over to Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery to see its new exhibition, Victorian Radicals. I'm looking forward to seeing some of my favourite Pre-Raphaelite paintings again.

Then I'll grab a coffee from 200 degrees and perhaps I'll watch the world go by in Chamberlain Square for a while. Time for lunch, and given it's my perfect day out I think I'll treat myself to a meal at Orelle. I've had some fantastic times there – and those views really are magnificent.

A spot of shopping in the afternoon. You might find me picking up a couple of bottles of wine from Loki in the beautiful Great Western Arcade. Oh, and I need some new running trainers, so I've been meaning to pop into Up & Running on Colmore Row for those.

It's 5pm somewhere, so off to the Bubble Lounge at Hotel du Vin for a cocktail. It has to be dinner at Purnell's and then a cheeky digestif at The Grand. What a day!

### Alex shares the first of her regular Colmore Life magazine columns

It's been a busy first month as City Curator with much of my time spent meeting stakeholders, connecting with new contacts, and reconnecting with lots of fantastic people in my existing network.

I've been prioritising developing the shape of the approach that will guide my work as City Curator, and I wanted to take this opportunity to share my initial thinking on both the vision and the emerging aims.

My vision is to bring the city centre to life through a co-ordinated and creative approach to programming, artistic interventions, and city dressing. I will also be supporting wider ambitions to ensure the city centre is a desirable place to live, work and do business.

### CREATE MOMENTS OF JOY AND ENHANCE THE AREA

I want to find ways to integrate art and culture into day-to-day city centre life. This may be through reducing 'dead space' and encouraging creative 'meanwhile uses', and improved presentation of out-of-use spaces. Encouraging curiosity and creativity amongst those who live and work in the city centre is my aim!

### ATTRACT LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES

Finding new ways to animate and drive footfall to the city centre is key to this. Part of my role will be to encourage existing producers to collaborate with us, with a view to scaling up and widening the scope of city centre events. But I also want to develop and commission new festivals and events that deliver on or support the objectives of the Birmingham Visitor Destination Plan:

■ **Increase awareness of the product in Birmingham.**

■ **Increase the number of visitors from the UK staying in Birmingham.**

■ **Encourage greater numbers of international visitors to visit Birmingham.**

■ **Increase the length of visits in Birmingham.**

All of this will support the positive evolution of the Birmingham brand.

### IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

I really look forward to being able to connect partners with shared ambitions, in order to maximise the impact of cultural work in the city. This could mean encouraging collaboration between the private sector and the public sector, for example, as well as improving cross-city-centre connectivity through enabling and encouraging BID activities and projects. I will be supporting Birmingham City Council in the delivery of the Cultural Strategy, as well as the Visitor Destination Plan. I am extremely excited to work closely with key partners who share our vision.

I'm just one person with two days a week in this post, but it's becoming very clear to me, the more conversations that I have, that I can add just as much value to the city by helping to connect the dots and supporting collaboration, as I can through independent commissioning.

That said, there is space for both. And in parallel to all the above, I am very excited to be researching and having some very exciting early conversations around two new city-centre festival ideas: The Birmingham Light Festival and The Birmingham Jewellery Biennial.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who has taken the time to meet with me or contact me over the last month. The richness of the conversations and our clear collective passion for this city has been completely inspiring.

*Alex Nicholson-Evans, City Curator*

# Movers & Shakers



Centrick founder James Ackrill

## CENTRICK

Business District-based property agency and management firm Centrick has announced the sale of its high street sales and lettings business.

The division has been acquired by the Lomond Group and will operate under its John Shepherd brand, resulting in the transfer of 25 staff in Nottingham, Solihull and Birmingham to the purchaser.

Staff will add to Lomond's workforce of 1,100 people across a network of 12 brands which manage more than 40,000 properties.

It follows the sale of Centrick's retail arm of its commercial agency business to Siddall-Jones last May.

Centrick says the decision to move away from its high street estate and lettings agency is in order to focus on delivering property management and services to the residential sector and is making a £1 million investment in technology to do so, as well as creating a 3,500 sq ft 'Centrick Academy'.

Centrick founder James Ackrill said: "We recognise the need for focus and depth in our specialisms in order to deliver on our long-term plans and commitment to clients today, as well as into the future."

## A round-up of the latest Business District launches, relocations, appointments and promotions

### WALKER CRIPS

Walker Crips Investment Management has appointed Ryan Hughes as its new Head of Business Development.

With a wealth of experience in the financial services sector, Hughes brings a dynamic approach which complements the existing team at Walker Crips.

In his previous post as Head of Business Development at Rowan Dartington DFM, he played a pivotal role in shaping the distribution strategy and successfully integrating the intermediary division into St James's Place, showcasing his strategic acumen and leadership skills.

Hughes is no stranger to innovation, having founded the successful FinTech startup Play-Ex Sports, a management platform aimed at sports professionals.

His entrepreneurial spirit and deep industry knowledge make him a perfect fit for Walker Crips Investment Management as the firm continues to expand its product and service offering to both direct retail customers and intermediaries. As part of his new role, Hughes will act as a champion of Walker Crips' #WalkerCripsInSport campaign. This initiative represents a commitment to empowering individual athletes and sports teams with sound



Ryan Hughes

financial literacy, helping them to secure their financial future beyond their sporting careers.

Ryan Hughes said: "I am honoured to be a part of the Walker Crips family and I am eager to contribute to the firm's continued success. The opportunity to combine my experience in developing DFM propositions with Walker Crips' longstanding commitment to excellence is truly exciting."

### SUCCESSION WEALTH

Succession Wealth has welcomed aboard the newest member to their expanding Birmingham based Independent Financial Advice team, Adam Rogers DipPFS, as Independent Financial Adviser.

After graduating from Business School in 2006 Rogers went to work in the Independent Advice market – and has stayed ever since – resulting in an extensive technical background covering all aspects of financial planning.



Adam Rogers

He previously held a senior Compliance Manager position overseeing 11 regulated individuals and in 2023 joined Succession Wealth's established team of planners to advise professionals, business owners and high net worth individuals on areas such as Inheritance Tax, Pensions and Investments.

Adam often quotes "begin with the end in mind" and recognises the importance of planning for intergenerational wealth, and that a role of adviser is often to be a teacher/educator.





Emma Fardell and Karuna Bhatia

## RICHBOROUGH

Growing national land promotion company Richborough has welcomed Karuna Bhatia as People HR Business Partner in its tenth staff appointment this year.

Bhatia's role is to enhance and build on the employee journey experience through recruitment, development, and employee relations, and to further develop Richborough's culture and values.

She was previously Human Resources Manager at Woodspeen Training and worked in similar roles at The Better Health Generation and Hyatt Regency Birmingham before that.

Emma Fardell, Chief Finance and Operations Officer at Richborough said: "Richborough

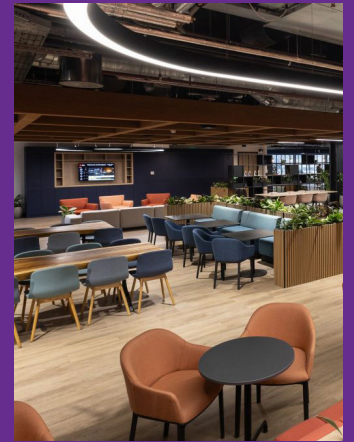
is enjoying an exciting period of growth, of which our people are at the very centre.

"Karuna supports the individual development of our staff members while growing the team to support the needs of our clients. She brings a professional approach, and we are delighted to have her on the team."

Bhatia added: "The changes at Richborough have provided me with the perfect opportunity to support the business and its journey.

"I've really enjoyed my time here so far. The team is really welcoming and open, it really does feel like a family."

Other recent new starters at Richborough are: Ian Long, Matt Dugdale, Harry Boniface, Alex Mortimore, Cameron Cook, Emma Fardell, Tom Lowbridge and Lamees Ali.



## JLL

JLL has now moved into its new home at One Centenary Way.

The new office space, part of MEPC's Paradise development, was completed in December by design and build company Tétris and managed by JLL's project management team in Birmingham.

One Centenary Way will be home to all of JLL Birmingham's 120-strong team.

JLL and Tétris have each committed to their own Net Zero targets. This has resulted in them working together to complete a low embodied carbon and zero waste to landfill strip-out and fit-out.

Stuart Smith, head of the Midlands at JLL, said: "Moving to Paradise feels like the natural next step in our continued commitment to the community around us in Birmingham.

"The office has been designed to change the way we think about our workplace and we are now better equipped to host businesses, clients and students from the region, and the Tétris team's willingness and ability to support us on our journey made them the perfect partners.

"The Midlands is a central part of our UK and international network, and we're pleased to have a base that mirrors our wider vision and provides a working environment our colleagues can be proud of."

## HELIGAN GROUP

Heligan Group has appointed four leading business professionals as senior advisors to its Board. The addition of Lord Stanley Fink, Walid Kamhawi, Michael Perry and Ben Turner marks a significant milestone in Heligan Group's ongoing expansion and enhancement of its service offerings.

Lord Stanley Fink is a luminary in the financial services and fund management sector, bringing a wealth of experience from his illustrious career, notably as the former CEO of Man Group plc

With an impressive 30+ years in finance and investments, Walid Kamhawi, formerly of Blackstone and a co-founder of a late-stage technology investment firm, is set to bring his vast experience to Heligan Group.

Michael Perry has over 40 years' experience in advising on technology and risk assessment to a wide range of businesses. He was an early member of Warwick University Angels Committee and has held various posts as CEO and Non Exec Directorships.

Bringing over 25 years of transactional experience in M&A and private equity, Ben Turner, head of the national M&A and PE teams at Shoosmiths, joins the Board as a senior advisor. Recognised by Legal500 and Chambers, and a two-time Thomson Reuters Stand-Out Lawyer, Turner has been a trusted advisor to Heligan Group since 2016.

With its Birmingham office at Saint Philip's House, St Philip's Place, Heligan Group is an intelligence led investment and advisory Group specialising in partnering with businesses that contribute to global safety and security.

# Movers & Shakers

## GRANT THORNTON

Grant Thornton UK LLP's Midlands Corporate Finance team has reported strong recent growth – both in deals and in its team – despite challenging conditions in the marketplace.

In line with the firm's deal activity, it has made a number of promotions and appointments, including Harry Gabriel being promoted to Director.

Gabriel first joined the Grant Thornton team in 2014 and has risen through the ranks in his nine years with the firm. He now supports Nick Gillott, Head of Midlands Corporate Finance, in leading the regional Midlands business and leads on regional healthcare sector coverage, including private care, medical devices, life sciences and pharma.

In addition, Harry Aston and Lydia Bullock have been promoted to manager.

Nick Gillott said: "It is well publicised that the M&A market has slowed significantly compared to where we were in 2021 and early 2022. Political and economic uncertainty continue to put pressure on deal timetables, but there is plenty of funding ready to be deployed for the right assets and we continue to see appetite from both domestic and overseas acquirers as they bolster their capabilities and footprint.

"Despite the more challenging market conditions, there is a resilient market for high quality assets. While we anticipate the market will remain more difficult relative to the period post-Covid, we are optimistic with a strong pipeline and expect momentum in deal activity to continue."



Left to right:  
Arthur Morgan,  
Lib Stones and  
Ben Marshalsay

## FISHER GERMAN

A development surveyor with more than 12 years experience in the industry has joined a leading property consultancy as it opens a new office in the heart of the Business District.

Arthur Morgan has been appointed by Fisher German as a partner in its residential development agency team and will be based out of the firm's new office at Fifteen Colmore Row as it looks to take advantage of the opportunities for development in and around the city.

Morgan graduated from Oxford Brookes University with a degree in Real Estate Management in 2011, before going onto work for Savills and passing his APC. In 2018, he moved to Cushman & Wakefield working on several significant development schemes for public and private sector clients before joining the partnership at Fisher German.

He said: "I'm really pleased to have joined Fisher German at such an exciting

time for the firm with its new office on Colmore Row in Birmingham about to open.

"I've been involved in residential development my entire career, and Fisher German has always been a name held in very high regard in the sector, so I jumped at the chance to join such a great firm.

"The new Birmingham office was a big draw for me too. It will mean we can liaise with clients and fellow firms in the industry much more easily and will put us in a great position to win new work."

Ben Marshalsay, Head of Development at Fisher German, added: "With the Birmingham office opening and housebuilding targets needing to be met across the region, we anticipate there will be a lot of opportunities in the market in the medium to long term. We are therefore delighted to welcome Arthur into the team at such an important time.

"He brings with him expertise in residential development, and he will enable Fisher German to grow its influence quickly in the Midlands."



# Movers & Shakers



Ruth Morris

## PKF SMITH COOPER

PKF Smith Cooper has appointed experienced Ruth Morris to a new Senior Corporate Tax Manager role as the company strengthens its tax division.

Morris joins PKF Smith Cooper with over 30 years of experience in audit, accountancy and tax and has specialised in corporate tax since 1998. She previously worked for a 'Big Four' firm and has occupied roles at several top ten firms during her career.

In her role with PKF Smith Cooper, Morris will manage the corporate tax compliance process, from reviewing tax computations and returns, tax accounting and disclosures for inclusion in statutory accounts to advising clients on their tax affairs and how upcoming changes to legislation may impact them. Ruth will combine her expertise in corporate tax with her broad understanding of all areas of tax to provide clients with comprehensive support.

The PKF Smith Cooper tax division has had another successful year, with their accomplishments celebrated at the esteemed Tolley's Taxation Awards, where PKF Smith Cooper were named a finalist for 'Best Tax Practice in a Regional Firm'.

Individual achievements have also been recognised internally, with six team members in the tax division promoted since January 2023.

## EFG HARRIS

EFG Harris Allday has joined the growing tenant roster at 103 Colmore Row, after more than half a century in its current home.

The investment management business, part of EFG Private Bank Limited, has let 12,178 sq ft on the fifth floor of the landmark Business District building. A ten-year lease has been agreed with EPIISO 4, a fund managed by Tristan Capital Partners, and Sterling Property Ventures, joint developers of 103 Colmore Row.

Harris Allday was founded in 1834 in Birmingham and has been based in the city's Stock Exchange building on Great Charles Street for more than 50 years. The business, acquired by EFG International in 2006, manages assets for private individuals, families, pension funds and charities.

Richard Killingbeck, managing director of EFG Harris Allday, said: "We are delighted to have agreed a lease for 103 Colmore Row. Having been a Birmingham based firm for nearly 200 years, we believe that this move demonstrates an exciting new chapter for us in the city and the West Midlands.

"The building's location in the Business District combined with state-of-the-art facilities and strong environmental credentials made it an ideal choice."



Wendy Griffiths

## AON

Global professional services firm, Aon plc, has announced further investment into its Birmingham-based commercial risk solutions team with the appointment of Wendy Griffiths who has joined as Executive Director.

Griffiths brings to the role a wealth of insurance experience that spans over 30 years. She spent the last two decades in client facing positions, including a 16-year period at Willis Towers Watson in Birmingham. She has built significant industry experience across food, agriculture, and beverages both for UK, as well as global businesses.

## SHOOSMITHS

Shoosmiths has welcomed a new partner to its national real estate practice.

Chris Morris joins the firm's Birmingham office from Gowling WLG where he spent over 16 years advising developers, operators and investors on major regeneration schemes and real estate transactions.

This appointment further enhances Shoosmiths' real estate team, which welcomed

six new partners and legal directors in 2023 – most recently hiring construction and engineering partner, Jody Kite, who arrived at the firm from national developer Dandara.

Morris brings specialist experience advising on build to rent and data centre assets, having supported operators and investors in these areas for many years. He brings experience and market knowledge to Shoosmiths, adding further depth to the real estate team and also supporting existing client projects.

# Movers&Shakers

*‘Birmingham is, in some ways like a village, it has got a very strong legal and business community’*



Partner at Rayden Solicitors, Mary Kaye, is one of the region’s most respected family lawyers. The present representative for Birmingham Solicitors at The Law Society Council Chancery Lane, London and past President of the Birmingham Law Society, she talks more about her career and who inspired her along the way.

but also great reward once the office is established. Birmingham is, in some ways like a village, it has got a very strong legal community and business community who work quite closely together despite the impression you might get from the media. Colmore BID has done a great deal of work to strengthen the ties between the various businesses in Birmingham.

necessarily relaxing. You carry and support the emotional strain that people are under during the breakdown of a relationship or where there are issues with regard to children. We work within a system that is increasingly burdened through lack of funding and inevitably you can become a sponge for what are, in the end of it, other people’s problems.

## **CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR ROLE?**

Rayden Solicitors is an award-winning specialist firm of family solicitors with offices across Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex and London, as well, of course, in Birmingham! I am the Partner and head of the team in Birmingham. We opened in July 2022 during the Commonwealth Games, which made it all the more exciting.

Starting a new office and leading a new team brings its ups and downs,

## **YOU SPECIALISE IN FAMILY LAW; WAS THIS AN AREA YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO GO INTO?**

I remember my old Principal in Mere Green saying that what was important in law was to know what you didn’t know, and at that time I knew very little about anything. I found my feet when, in the late 80s, I started working in family law. It is a broad area which increasingly includes, as the world becomes smaller, international elements.

Family law is rewarding, but not

## **ONE KEY AREA OF FAMILY LAW IS “PRE-NUPS”. IS THIS SOMETHING YOU ALWAYS ADVISE A COUPLE TO DO?**

One area that has become of particular interest relates to Pre-Nuptial and indeed Post-Nuptial Agreements. There is very little difference in either – a Pre-Nuptial is considered by a couple who are planning to get married; and a Post-Nuptial is often entered into after a marriage. It is not the case that we



advise everyone to enter into a Pre-Nuptial or Post-Nuptial Agreement. They are normally entered into by people where one may have greater capital than the other, or might receive a large inheritance, or both parties wish to protect the assets they have prior to the marriage.

In this country we do not have community of property. When a marriage breaks down the Court will look at a starting point of sharing the assets which were developed during the course of the marriage. Where there are children this adds another dimension as to how assets will be divided. Increasingly, couples are taking a sensible approach to how their finances will be dealt with in the unfortunate event of the marriage breakdown. This does not mean that parties enter into a marriage with a view that it will inevitably break down. It is simply sensible planning and could prevent an expensive litigation further down the line.

One tip I would give anyone thinking about entering into a Pre-Nuptial Agreement is to do so in good time, get proper legal advice. In the same way as you would not leave the planning of your reception or buying of your wedding dress until the last minute, this should be done in plenty of time and for both parties to ensure that all of the circumstances which are required to ensure that it will be upheld in the future are satisfied. And it needs to be done sensitively. You do not want to end up as indeed happened in one wedding with a Pre-Nuptial Agreement in which I represented one of the parties, with neither side of the family speaking to each other at the reception.

## WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PLACES WITHIN THE COLMORE BID AREA?

I am partial to a drop of what is known by the grandchildren as “nanna juice” (wine). There is plenty of opportunity to enjoy food and a drop of nanna juice with family and colleagues, and many lovely restaurants that sit around the business district. I have to say a special thank you to Jordan at Gaucho who has suffered my family on many



occasions with great patience, and nothing beats a swifty with the team if we have the opportunity on a Friday evening at The Roebuck.

It would be also remiss of me not to mention Craig, better known in our office as “The Flower Man” who has his stand outside Sainsbury’s. He is a regular supporter of ours and in turn we give him, I hope, some banter and a little grief every now and again.

## WHO INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

Many years ago, in the late 1990s, I was attending an advocacy course in Leeds. I thought I was great but my results were anything but. I was told by the person giving the course that I could be the next Helena Kennedy if I only learned to ask two questions instead of 50. At that time I had no idea who Helena Kennedy was, but of course she is a leading Human Rights Barrister and sits in

the House of Lords. Later on I was extremely fortunate when President of Birmingham Law Society to have Baroness Kennedy as my guest speaker. Sometimes it is not a good idea to meet those people who inspire you as they may turn out to be disappointing, but this was far from the case and I have appreciated her continued support since then.

Very often it is not high profile people that inspire us but the people that we meet every day in our work. A few years ago I received a letter from my former client bringing me up to date as to how her life had progressed. In it she said something that I have never forgotten: “I could have walked into any solicitor’s office but I walked into yours and that made the biggest difference to my life”. We see clients every day, we hope to do a good job and we try to make a difference, but now and again we are given the opportunity and we do. This, I think, is the greatest inspiration.

*Edmund Street  
and the home  
of Raydens  
Solicitors*

# Movers&Shakers

## Engineering giant opens Midlands hub in District

Global engineering consultancy Arup officially opened its new Midlands base – one of its five largest global hubs – at Paradise Birmingham’s One Centenary Way, by welcoming clients and contacts to mark the occasion.

Arup was a major contractor to Birmingham City Council supporting it to deliver the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, helping to deliver the Alexander Stadium, transport and infrastructure improvements city wide, as well as the Perry Barr masterplan, and the Sandwell Aquatics Centre.

Establishing a national and international centre of excellence for Arup in the Midlands, with nearly 800 staff and offering more than 90 specialist services UK-wide, the multi-million-pound investment cements Arup’s commitment to Birmingham and the region as a global business destination.

Last year, the local Arup team worked on hundreds of projects locally and globally, supporting the delivery of more sustainable buildings, infrastructure, public spaces, and communities, and bringing the best of global expertise to the area. Arup’s move to the city centre is designed to attract local talent and aid the growth of the West Midlands as an innovation and skills hub.

The new office location will bring Arup closer to schools, colleges and universities, ensuring stronger links to education and more opportunity to attract, grow and retain diverse industry talent locally. Based in the heart of the city, Arup’s public-facing



activity hub on the ground floor, ‘The Gallery’, will be a space Arup staff are able to work alongside local partners and neighbours to deliver community based, and charitable activities.

Speaking at the launch event, Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: “Arup’s move back into the heart of Birmingham city centre is a tremendous endorsement of all that our region has to offer a global player of Arup’s stature.

“This kind of major investment is just the type we envisaged when we worked on the Enterprise Zone more than a decade ago - bringing to life our vision of a new city business district generating jobs for local people.”



Understanding that the future office needs to compete with highly personalised home working arrangements, a variety of workplace settings, social areas, wellbeing areas, creative spaces and focus zones have been provided in the new Arup Midlands HQ. The new range of flexible workspaces is designed specifically to support collaboration, convening stakeholders and hosting events.

Cem Budak, Arup Midlands Leader, said: “We are excited to officially open our new Midlands hub located in the heart of Birmingham, the UK’s second city. We are eager to build on six decades of expertise in the Midlands and the opening of the new office will bring us closer to key decision-makers, clients and collaborators, helping to foster innovation and creativity across the region.”

Arup’s work in the Birmingham region for the last 60 years has helped shape the local landscape including major public buildings and developments from the NEC and ICC to commercial office buildings and new public realm like that created at Brindleyplace and Paradise in Birmingham. Arup’s major role in delivering the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and supporting infrastructure in and around Birmingham helped secure a meaningful legacy for the Games in the Midlands.

*Pictured: Paula Walsh, Incoming Chair of UK, India, Middle East and Africa, Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, Cem Budak, Geography Leader for Arup in the Midlands and James Watts, Head of the Birmingham Office at Arup*





## Octagon update

### BUILD SCHEDULE AT HALF-WAY POINT

Octagon is currently halfway through its build schedule and is due to top-out in the spring of next year. Work began in December 2021 with foundation and preparatory work taking the best part of a year.

With the current tower cranes extending to just over 100m they still have 90 metres to go before they are at full height. Once they are, they will stand at 189 metres – twice the height of the Statue of Liberty and the tallest cranes ever used in Birmingham.

At 155 metres in height, Octagon itself will be taller than the BT Tower and a major landmark for the city.

The current superstructure is on the 31st floor, with the core progressing beyond the 33rd floor.

This means Octagon is now visible from many viewpoints from across the city and beyond.





## Townhouse nails it with luxury new Church Street salon

One of the UK's leading luxury nail care brands has launched its first Birmingham salon on Church Street. Renowned for its unrivalled expertise, chic interiors and an A-list clientele, Townhouse opened its doors last November and has already become the go-to destination for those seeking celebrity-worthy nail treatments.

Offering an immersive experience for beauty aficionados, Townhouse is recognised as a trailblazer in luxury nail care. It has garnered top industry accolades, including Best Nail Salon of the Year, and been described by Hello Magazine as "the salon everyone is talking about".

It was founded by Juanita Huber-Millet in 2018 with one goal – to elevate the nail salon experience. Throwing away the rulebook, she reinvented it for the modern age, using years of industry research to perfect every aspect from start to finish.

One of the key features that sets Townhouse apart is its innovative technology. Boasting state-of-the-art equipment and techniques, its salons offer a range of treatments, from quick express sessions for those on the go to ultra-indulgent experiences for a touch of luxury. The diverse treatment menu caters to a spectrum of tastes and styles, ensuring that every customer finds their perfect fit.

### TEAM TOWNHOUSE

The Townhouse team are experts in their field, delivering a top class service all while adhering to industry-leading hygiene standards. Highly trained nail artists are masters of their craft and leave clients feeling polished to perfection.

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE



With health and hygiene a priority, all tools are either single-use (and recycled) or sterilised in a hospital-grade autoclave machine between each use. There are also 'better-for-you' products, meaning all polishes and gels are at least "three-free" (meaning they don't contain Dibutyl Phthalate, Formaldehyde and Toulene).

### A LOVE FOR STYLE

With nail art a specialty, the Townhouse Classic Collection features a range of timeless designs perfect for the boardroom and the bar; while the Seasonal Collection changes twice a year to feature fresh new looks that set the manicure trends.

The Flawless Finish Guarantee pledges to fix any chipping within seven days of a gel manicure

treatment for free, echoing a dedication to impeccable results.

Founder and Creative Director Juanita Huber-Millet expressed her excitement about the new Colmore Business District venture: "We are so excited to bring our award-winning services to the vibrant Birmingham community. Expect our stunning signature interiors, flawless treatments, and industry-leading nail artists!"

Opening hours at the Church Street salon have been tailored to accommodate even the busiest schedules, ensuring accessibility for all. With services available from 9am-8pm on weekdays and extended hours on weekends, clients can easily find time for those regular pamper sessions.

**To book appointments, please visit [www.townhouse.co.uk](http://www.townhouse.co.uk)**



# Charity & Community

## Shining a light on brilliant city charities



Colmore BID supports a number of charities based in the city that raise awareness of, and offer support on, a wide range of causes.

The BID also hosts a number of fundraising activities throughout the year to raise much needed funds for charitable causes.

To help charities with a connection to the District raise their profiles, the BID has launched an online directory. Visit [colmorebusinessdistrict.com/charities-in-colmore-bid/](http://colmorebusinessdistrict.com/charities-in-colmore-bid/)

### CHARITY OF THE MONTH

#### Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity

Birmingham Children's Hospital, located on Steelhouse Lane, is a leading, specialist paediatric centre, delivering some of the most advanced treatments, complex surgical procedures and cutting-edge research to over 100,000 children and young people, each year, from across the UK and beyond.

Every patient and family benefits from the hospital's charity, which exists to make a real difference to

poorly children during difficult times. Whether that's through a newly refurbished playroom or ward, a state-of-the-art piece of equipment or even a toy at Christmas.

Charitable donations allow Birmingham Children's Hospital to be at the forefront of what's possible, ensuring patients and families receive the best care, treatment, experience and environment. Charity funding has been responsible for a number of firsts at the hospital, helping to create the first standalone paediatric burns centre in Europe, the UK's first rare diseases centre for children, as well as Magnolia House, the first bereavement centre of its kind in a hospital setting, creating a standard of care across the UK.

Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity's priority is, and always will be, to address the most urgent needs of its hospital. With the support of the public, businesses, organisations and philanthropic individuals, the hospital and charity can continue to transform the lives of some of the UK's sickest kids.

**To find out more, to fundraise or to donate, visit [bch.org.uk](http://bch.org.uk)**

### CHARITIES CONNECTED TO COLMORE

Just a few of the charities who have an office in the city, some of whom are based within the Colmore District.

#### CHILDREN'S LIVER FOUNDATION

From its head office in Birmingham, it provides a comprehensive information hub on childhood liver disease for healthcare professionals and for families.

[childliverdisease.org](http://childliverdisease.org)

#### RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

A home away from home that provides comfort, support and resources to families who travel far from home for the medical care their child needs.

[rmhc.org](http://rmhc.org)

#### LIONHEART

Offering the expert and confidential support that can help someone through a difficult time. When you ring for help, you'll speak to one of LionHeart's highly experienced support officers who will take time to listen to your circumstances and then work out what can help.

[lionheart.org.uk](http://lionheart.org.uk)

#### SIFA FIRESIDE

SIFA Fireside provides an ever-evolving range of responsive services, including homelessness intervention, recovery and prevention.

[sifafireside.co.uk](http://sifafireside.co.uk)

#### RSPV - RAPE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROJECT

RSPV believes everyone deserves a life free from sexual violence and abuse. The charity supports people who have been subjected to sexual violence and abuse to thrive and enjoy a future of hope and confidence.

[rsvporg.co.uk](http://rsvporg.co.uk)

#### ST BASILS

Are you aged 16-25 and homeless, at risk or just in need of some housing advice? St Basils can help!

[stbasils.org.uk](http://stbasils.org.uk)

#### BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST

The Trust oversees nine extraordinary venues that provide a fascinating glimpse into Birmingham's rich and vibrant past and showcase world class museum collections.

[birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://birminghammuseums.org.uk)

## Gas Hall reopens for homecoming Pre-Raphaelite art exhibition

**FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN 5 YEARS COLLECTION EXHIBITS IN BIRMINGHAM**

Birmingham's world-famous collection of Pre-Raphaelite is on display in the city for the first time in more than five years in a special homecoming exhibition.

The Gas Hall, part of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, has reopened for 'Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts Movement'.

Three generations of British artists, designers and makers revolutionised the visual arts in the second half of the 19th century. The Pre-Raphaelites, William Morris and his circle and the men and women of the Arts and Crafts movement transformed art and design.

Victorian Radicals gives visitors the chance to discover the story of the Pre-Raphaelites – Britain's first modern art movement – and their influence on artists and makers well into the 20th century.

Selected from Birmingham's outstanding collection, Victorian Radicals presents vibrant paintings and exquisite drawings alongside jewellery, glass, textiles and metalwork to explore a radical vision for art and society. The collection also celebrates Birmingham's historic importance as a centre for the Arts and Crafts.

The exhibition explores three generations of progressive British artists working between 1840 and 1910: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and their circle; the second wave of Pre-Raphaelite artists who gathered around Rossetti from the late 1850s, including William Morris and Birmingham-born Edward Burne-Jones; and a third generation of designers and makers associated with the Arts and Crafts movement, working from the turn of the century to just before the First World War.

In Birmingham, paintings made by artists including Kate Bunce, Joseph



*The Gas Hall at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery*

Southall and Arthur Gaskin combined the poetry and intensity of the Pre-Raphaelites' work with a distinctive identity all their own. By the early 20th century, Birmingham's School of Art was one of the most important centres in Britain for progressive art and design. Women artists were particularly significant in the School, winning national art prizes and raising the city's profile through national and international exhibitions. They included the painter Kate Bunce and her metalworking sister, Myra; stained-glass designer Florence Camm; enameller Fanny Bunn; and embroiderer, painter and designer Mary Newell.

With more than 160 works on display, by artists such as Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, William

Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Elizabeth Siddall, the exhibition's paintings, drawings, watercolours, and decorative arts explore the relationship between art and nature and the search for beauty in an age of industry.

Organised in partnership with the American Federation of Arts (AFA), Victorian Radicals was the largest and most complex touring exhibition ever staged from Birmingham's collection.

During its journey across the US Victorian Radicals reached some 168,000 visitors, raising the profile of Birmingham and its collection, and won a Global Fine Arts exhibition award.

Victoria Osborne, Curator of Fine Art at Birmingham Museums Trust and one of the exhibition's co-curators, said: "We're excited to celebrate the homecoming of Birmingham's



*Pictured: La Donna Della Finestra (The Lady of Pity), 1881, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Morgan-le-Fay, 1864, by Frederick Sandys and Bacchus, 1867, by Simeon Solomon*  
 Photos by Birmingham Museums Trust

Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts collections by opening Victorian Radicals here in the city.

“This exhibition highlights one of the great strengths of Birmingham’s collection and also highlights its importance as a centre for the Arts and Crafts movement at the end of the 19th century.

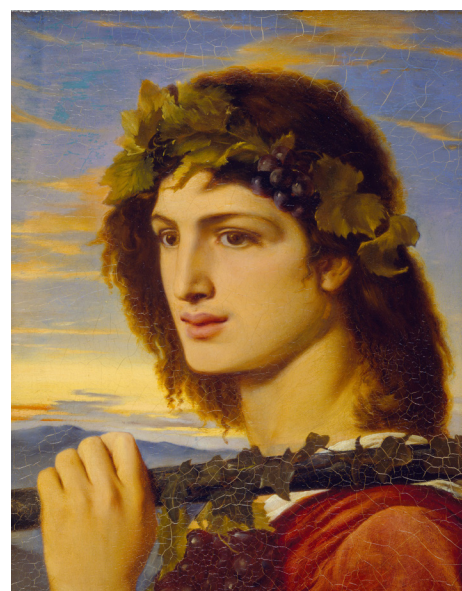
“The ‘Victorian Radicals’ believed that art and creativity could change the world and be a real force for good in society. The questions they explored in their lives and work are as relevant today as they were 150 years ago.”

While the Gas Hall reopens to visitors for Victorian Radicals, planned maintenance work continues in other areas of the Museum but several gallery spaces within the main Museum will re-open ahead of summer 2024.

The Gas Hall will also be available for conference and networking events, giving Birmingham businesses the chance to host clients among world-famous artworks. A new range of Victorian Radicals collectible gifts and reproduction artwork will be on sale in a special Gas Hall gift shop, including a limited range of illustrated print products inspired by one of the show’s headline pieces – *Musica* by Kate Bunce.

Sara Wajid and Zak Mensah, co-CEOs of Birmingham Museums Trust, said: “Birmingham has missed its radicals, and it has missed its museum too. By starting to reopen, we start a new chapter – it is incredibly exciting to be weeks away from welcoming visitors back to Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.”

**Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Gas Hall, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, from 10 February, 2024.**



## How you can find art across the District using new trail map

As it enters BID4, Colmore BID is aiming to continue its celebration of the District's rich culture, art and heritage.

With last summer's launch of the new Art Trail, the BID is now encouraging locals and tourists alike to explore and appreciate the city centre's public art, which can be all too easily overlooked and walked past.

With 11 landmarks on the BID's Art Trail map, highlights include Birmingham Cathedral, which attracts visitors from across the world for its recently-restored Edward Burne-Jones stained glass.

The trail also features several local galleries and historic buildings,

including Birmingham School of Art, where William and May Morris once lectured, and the Birmingham and Midland Institute, which houses a charming (and cheeky) monkey mural.

All of the art stops are within easy walking distance of one another, and are illustrated on the map, which can be viewed and downloaded from Colmore Business District's website before setting off on a cultural afternoon out.

[colmorebusinessdistrict.com/projects/colmore-bid-art-walk](http://colmorebusinessdistrict.com/projects/colmore-bid-art-walk)

**Launched just last year, Colmore Business District's beautifully illustrated Art Trail invites people to appreciate art on the walls, streets and boulevards of Birmingham. With spring around the corner, and map in hand, local arts writer and curator Ruth Millington went searching for art on the streets of Birmingham.**

**For the first part of Ruth's blog, read the autumn edition of Colmore Life at the BID website, or check out Ruth's blog by following the link at the foot of this feature.**

### TREE-LINED BOULEVARD

It's always a pleasure to walk down Colmore Row, taking in the beauty of the Tree-lined Boulevard (no. 6 on the map). Today, it's the city's most prestigious business address but once upon a time, it was Birmingham's prime residential location. In the early 17th century, an elm-lined avenue led to a grand Jacobean mansion, the home of the fabric-trading Colmores, from whom the street took its name. Although it originally consisted of Georgian houses typical of the late 18th century, in the 19th century these were replaced by late Victorian commercial premises that still give Colmore Row its current character and impressive style. In 1971, it was designated a Conservation Area to protect buildings for future generations and boasts no less than 23 listed buildings.

### UMBRA AT CHURCH STREET

A short walk from the bustling business district is the calm oasis of Church Street Square. It's here that you can find a giant spherical sculpture, 'Umbra'. It was created by award-winning artist Wolfgang





Buttress, who was born and brought up in Solihull's Chelmsley Wood. Since then, he has been commissioned to create public artworks around the world, taking inspiration from the natural world to make multi-sensory sculptures. The title of this work refers to the darkest part of a shadow, and specifically the earth's area experiencing the total phase of an eclipse. Shifting in its colour, depending on the time of day or quality of light, it invites reflection. This is also encouraged by the space around the sculpture which includes seating, soft landscaping and trees. It's the perfect spot to sit and unwind in, thanks to Colmore BID.

## BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL

Another great space for reflection is St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham, which stands in what is affectionately known as Pigeon Park. It also houses some of the most magnificent examples of Pre-Raphaelite stained-glass, not only in the city but in the world. The four windows were designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made in the workshop of his friend, William Morris. They collaborated to create brightly coloured scenes of beauty, depicting four key scenes from the life of Christ: The Ascension, The Nativity, The Crucifixion and The Last Judgement. Work is currently in progress to clean, repair and conserve these treasures for future generations, as part of the Lottery-funded Divine Beauty project. These masterpieces alone are well worth a visit, but the Cathedral also hosts a programme of concerts by candlelight, events and immersive art experiences.

## CLARENDON FINE ART

Head inside Clarendon Fine Art and you'll find limited edition prints by modern masters including Surrealist Salvador Dalí, the King of Pop Art, Andy Warhol, and L.S. Lowry, who painted streetscapes of that other city, Manchester. The gallery also sells



original contemporary art by big names such as Damien Hirst and Jeff Koons, most famous for his balloon animal sculptures. One of their most popular artists is French-born street artist, Mr. Brainwash, who famously tried to film Banksy before having the camera turned on him in the brilliant film, *Exit Through the Gift Shop*. In his current practice, he fuses elements of pop art, street art, and classical paintings to make humorous visual mixtapes on canvas. Expect to see cartoon dogs herding sheep and Disney characters stencilled in to street scenes.

## LIVERY STREET MURAL

In 2021, proud Brummie artists Luke Davies and Anna Davies (working under the name Window Artists) added colour to the city with a huge mural on the walls of Livery Street. Commissioned by Colmore Bid, the duo's design features a series of Birmingham landmarks and historical events influenced by the Brutalist architecture genre. In particular, it pays tribute to the concrete murals of innovative sculptor William Mitchell who wanted the public to interact with his art, and even climb on it, including a sequence of concrete murals known as the 'Brutalist Climbing

Wall' at Hockley Circus flyover. This mural also invites interaction: taking the theme 'Green in the City' as their starting point, the artists depicted urban animals and birds which can be spotted among large, stylised trees.

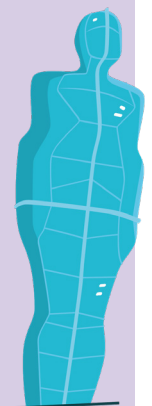
## SNOW HILL MURAL

Like father, like son; at least in the case of Oliver Budd. In 2013, he set about remaking his father's mural, titled 'History of Snow Hill' which was destroyed when the area was redeveloped. The contemporary mural might be a miniature mosaic version of the original but it is incredibly well crafted, framing recognisable details of commuting by train, both then and now. It feels particularly relevant today, given current conversations about the benefits of public transport.

■ Although not listed on the map, train travellers can find another piece of public art inside the station – John McKenna's bronze statue 'The Commuter' stands rather suitably in front of the waiting room on platform 1 & 2. A lesson in patience, he also invites us to look at the public art to be found as we walk around Birmingham city centre.

[ruthmillington.co.uk](http://ruthmillington.co.uk)

*Ruth Millington follows the Colmore BID Art Trail to Birmingham Cathedral*



**Follow the trail over the page**

# Colmore Business District

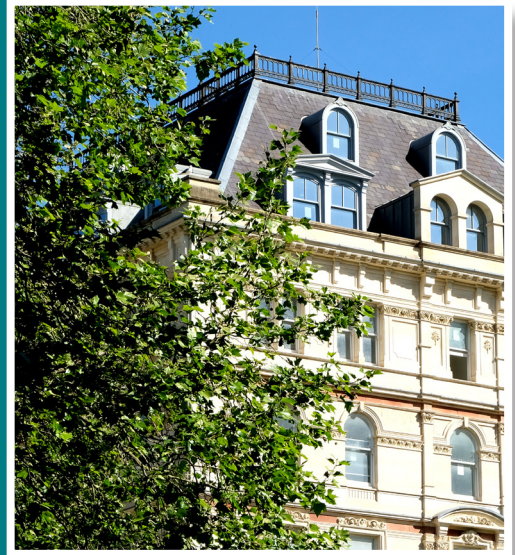






## Colmore Art Trail

1. Iron:Man, Victoria Square
2. Thomas Attwood
3. Birmingham School of Art
4. Birmingham and Midland Institute
5. Colley Ison
6. Tree-lined Boulevard
7. Umbra at Church Street
8. Birmingham Cathedral
9. Clarendon Fine Art
10. Livery Street Mural
11. Snow Hill Mural



# COLMORE BUSINESS DISTRICT



**Snow Hill Interchange**  
For national and regional rail services, Metro and northwest bound bus services.

**Bull Street/Priory Queensway Interchange**  
For northeast bound bus services.

**Moor Street Interchange**  
For national and regional rail services and southeast bound bus services.

**New Street Interchange**  
For national and regional rail services and southwest bound bus services.

**Cathedral Square**  
The green heart of the city centre around the historic cathedrals is a place to relax and enjoy the many cafes and pubs nearby.

**Victoria Square**  
The city's civic heart is home to the town Hall, Council House and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The square is used all year round for a wide variety of events.

## COLMORE BUSINESS DISTRICT