

COLMORE LIFE

SUMMER 2026

**MIDLANDS
GROWTH &
AMBITION:
INTERVIEW WITH
ANDY BOSTOCK
OF KPMG**

**THE GREAT
OUTDOORS:
WHERE TO SIP
IN THE SUN
THIS SUMMER**

colmorelife.co.uk



COLMORE LIFE

WELCOME SUMMER 2026

A message from Michele Wilby, CEO of Birmingham Colmore



Welcome to the Summer 2026 edition of Colmore Life magazine. This is a season I

always look forward to, when our district feels brighter, busier and more full of possibility than ever.

In this issue, we're shining a spotlight on some of the people and stories shaping the cultural, commercial and civic heart of Birmingham. Our Big Interview features Andrew Bostock of KPMG, who offers thoughtful insight into business, leadership and what's next for our city's professional landscape.

You'll also find a rich update on our exhibitions across the district, along with a beautiful collection of heritage imagery that celebrates Colmore's unique past – a reminder of just how far we've come, and how much there is to cherish.

We're also gearing up for an exciting new event this autumn: Brum Transport Fest, arriving in September. You'll find two dedicated pages in this magazine exploring what's planned and how the festival will celebrate the region's proud transport story in a fresh, forward-looking way.

And of course, summer wouldn't be summer without the return of our most-loved event: Colmore Food Festival, arriving on Victoria Square on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July 2026. Expect fantastic flavours, local talent and two days filled with community spirit. It's a true highlight of our year, and I can't wait to see you there.

As the days grow longer, I hope you'll take time to enjoy everything Colmore has to offer – especially our fabulous pub gardens and terraces, which are perfect for unwinding with colleagues, friends or family. Find out more on page 28.

Wishing you a wonderful summer in Colmore. Stay safe, look after one another, and enjoy every moment.

SUMMER 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



THE BIG INTERVIEW: 4&5



BRUM TRANSPORT FEST: 8&9



ART IN THE DISTRICT: 10&11



THEN & NOW: 16&17

YOUR COLMORE TEAM

Michele Wilby

Chief Executive Officer

Katy Paddock

Chief Operating Officer (Maternity Leave)

Mike Mounfield

Chief Technical Officer

Jonathan Bryce

Chief Policy and Governance Officer

John-Jo Von Johnson

Head of Services (Acting COO)

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Matthew Weir

Community Support Officer

Wayne Cummins

Community Support Officer

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Abbie Bennett

Admin Executive

Stephen Paddock

District Cleaner

Peter Charalambous

District Cleaner

Lisa Gibbs

BID Consultant

Matthew Bott

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Philip Singleton

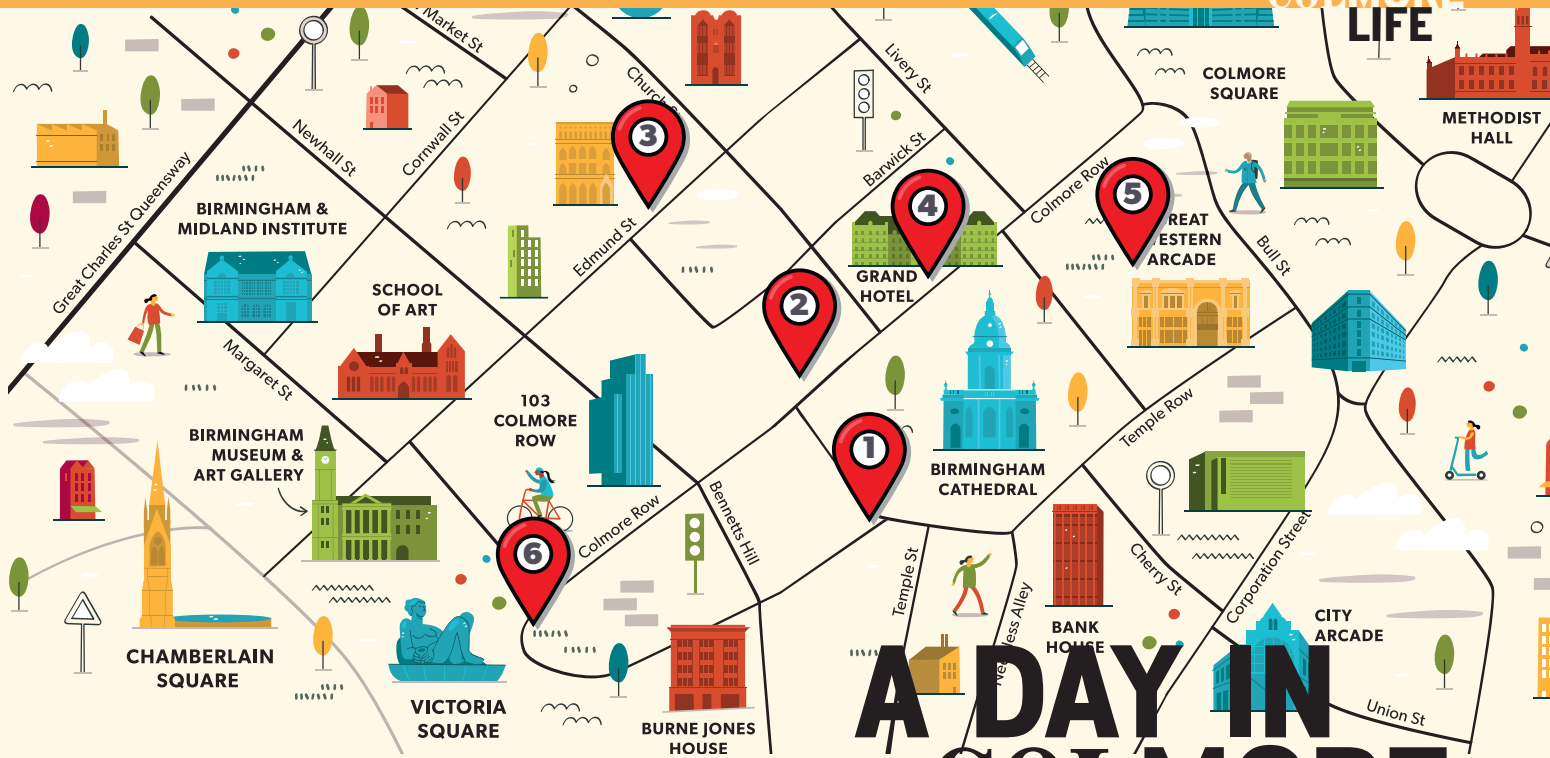
BID Consultant

WE'RE SOCIAL



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

**A DAY IN
COLMORE**



BREAKFAST

1 BLANK STREET

Whether you're grabbing a quick flat white to go or easing into the day with a pastry and a moment of quiet, the new Blank Street venue is a reliable spot to refuel and reset before heading into the buzz of Colmore and the day ahead.

*Blank Street,
Temple Row West*



EMAIL CATCH-UP

2 CUBO

For a productive pause between meetings, Cubo offers members a sleek, modern co-working environment right in the heart of Colmore Row. Settle in with your laptop, connect to the high-speed Wi-Fi, and enjoy a professional yet relaxed atmosphere.

*Cubo,
55 Colmore Row*



ME TIME

3 BENJAMIN RYAN HAIR

Take a well-earned break from the pace of the day at Benjamin Ryan Hair Salon, where luxury meets personal care. Whether it's a quick refresh, a blow-dry, or a full restyle, the expert team creates a welcoming space to unwind, recharge, and step back out feeling polished and confident.

*Benjamin Ryan
Hair Salon,
Edmund Street*



SHOPPING

4 UP AND RUNNING

For those who like to stay active, Up and Running is a must-visit for specialist running gear and expert advice. Whether you're a seasoned runner or just starting out, the friendly team will help you find the perfect fit, making it an energising stop that keeps you moving long after you leave Colmore.

*Up and Running,
Colmore Row*

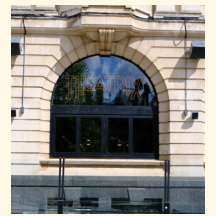


DINNER

5 SAMO BISTRO

The new Samo Bistro in Great Western Arcade offers a stylish yet relaxed setting for an evening meal. With a menu blending contemporary flavours and comforting favourites, it's an inviting spot to catch up with colleagues over good food and a well-earned glass of wine.

*Samo Modern
Bistro, Great
Western Arcade*



LATE NIGHT

6 THEATRIX

Round off your day at Theatrix, where Victoria Square comes alive with energy and entertainment. Whether you're enjoying live performances, music, or simply soaking up the vibrant atmosphere of the outdoor seating, it's the perfect late-night destination to experience Colmore after dark.

*Theatrix,
Victoria Square*

DRIVING GROWTH IN THE MIDLANDS

ANDY BOSTOCK ON OPPORTUNITY AND AMBITION

As Birmingham Office Senior Partner at KPMG UK, Andy Bostock sits at the centre of one of the region's most influential business communities. Based at One Snowhill in the heart of Colmore, he leads a team of more than 1,000 colleagues while working closely with clients across sectors shaping the West Midlands' future. With decades of experience in the Midlands and a front-row seat to Birmingham's transformation, Bostock offers a grounded yet optimistic perspective on the city's growth, its evolving business landscape, and why confidence in the region continues to rise.

As the Birmingham Office Senior Partner at KPMG, what does a typical working day look like for you at One Snowhill? Are there particular moments in the day that you value most, whether that's meeting clients, time with colleagues, or simply taking time out in the city centre?

My typical working day has a real mix of meetings, many of which are client facing, and this is one of the most interesting and fulfilling parts of my role. Hearing how businesses are faring, what challenges they're facing and working with them to support their journey – that's what it's all about. Interacting with colleagues is another hugely important part of my role and creating an environment where people feel valued and supported to do their best work.

I am normally in our office at One Snowhill around four days a week, and I always try to take a walk at some point, whether that's popping out to grab a coffee or just getting some fresh air.

KPMG has a significant presence in Colmore Business District. What makes this part of Birmingham such an attractive place for major firms to base their operations?

Colmore Business District is such a vibrant part of our city. It keeps evolving,



with new businesses moving in, and with lots of great new restaurants and bars opening.

I think a big part of its appeal is its accessibility. We're right next to Snow Hill station, close to New Street and Moor Street, as well as easy access to the A38. It's so well connected, which really matters to both clients and colleagues.

You've spent much of your career with KPMG and in the Midlands. How have you seen Birmingham's business and economic landscape evolve over the years?

It's great to see Birmingham continuing to thrive. Over the last decade in particular, the city's ongoing transformation has been remarkable, and we've really made our mark as the leading financial services

centre outside of London – this is a huge achievement and one that we should be rightly proud of.

But as Brummies, we're naturally modest people and don't boast anywhere near enough about how great our city is. If you look at all the investment that's happening with HS2, the sports quarter, the digital quarter, and with all the cranes dotted on the city's skyline, this all points to a thriving city with lots of growth and development.

Birmingham is increasingly attracting national and international companies. What do you think the city and Colmore needs to do next to strengthen its position as a leading UK business hub?

It's encouraging that Birmingham is attracting major companies, but we must do more to promote our strengths and highlight the city's achievements.

KPMG works with businesses across many sectors, from infrastructure and public services to technology. What are the biggest opportunities you're seeing for Midlands businesses right now?

There's a lot to be positive about. Our latest Private Enterprise Barometer shows West Midlands businesses are more confident about growth than the UK average, and importantly, that optimism is backed by real action. Firms are investing in innovation, tech, digital, AI, cyber – all big areas for both public and private sectors.

The region has genuine strengths to draw on, and there's plenty of opportunity for transformation if businesses are willing to be ambitious and embrace it.

Colmore is not just about offices anymore, it's becoming a real destination for food and culture. With the new Trillium restaurant right on your doorstep, have you had the chance to try it yet? And where else do you enjoy eating in the area?

Trillium is right under our office at 1



Andy Bostock photographed at One Snowhill by Stacey Barnfield for Colmore Life

Snowhill and I have got a booking coming up! I'm a big fan of Glynn Purnell's food, so I'm looking forward to trying this one. My son is a big Gaucho fan, so I've also been there a few times.

With over a thousand colleagues in the Birmingham office, creating the right workplace culture must be crucial. How do you ensure the office remains a place where people enjoy working and developing their careers?

Workplace culture is critical to KPMG's ongoing success. We focus on building community through a buzzing programme of staff engagement events and through our diversity and inclusion networks, and all this helps to promote a positive culture of understanding and support to colleagues.

In today's world of hybrid working, it's still important to build face to face connections and enjoy spending time at work with colleagues. We encourage

“In today's world of hybrid working, it's still important to build face to face connections and enjoy spending time at work with colleagues”

collaboration across teams, and our people can support a wide range of clients and industries, allowing them to build broad expertise and learn from the people around them. It's this mix of teamwork and varied experience that really helps them to grow their skills and hopefully, build a long-term career at the firm.

For someone visiting the Colmore District for the first time, what would be your ideal lunchtime or after-work route around the area?

I've got a loop I really like – from One Snowhill, past the Town Hall, along the canal to the back of the Cube, then back round through the city centre past the Cathedral.

If my diary allows, I pop into various coffee shops along the way. It's a great 30-minute walk that I try to do a couple of times a week, or even for walking meetings when the weather is better. It's a great way to see what's happening in the area.

Finally, looking ahead five or ten years, what excites you most about the future of Birmingham and its business community?

I am hugely positive about the future of the city. There is so much happening now in terms of investment that should continue to transform Birmingham for the better, creating more jobs and opportunities for everyone.

INSIGHTS FROM THE CENTRE FOR CITIES' CITIES OUTLOOK 2026

Earlier this year, Birmingham Colmore welcomed Andrew Carter, Chief Executive of Centre for Cities, to the Birmingham Colmore Summit, where he shared key findings from the think tank's latest annual report, Cities Outlook 2026.

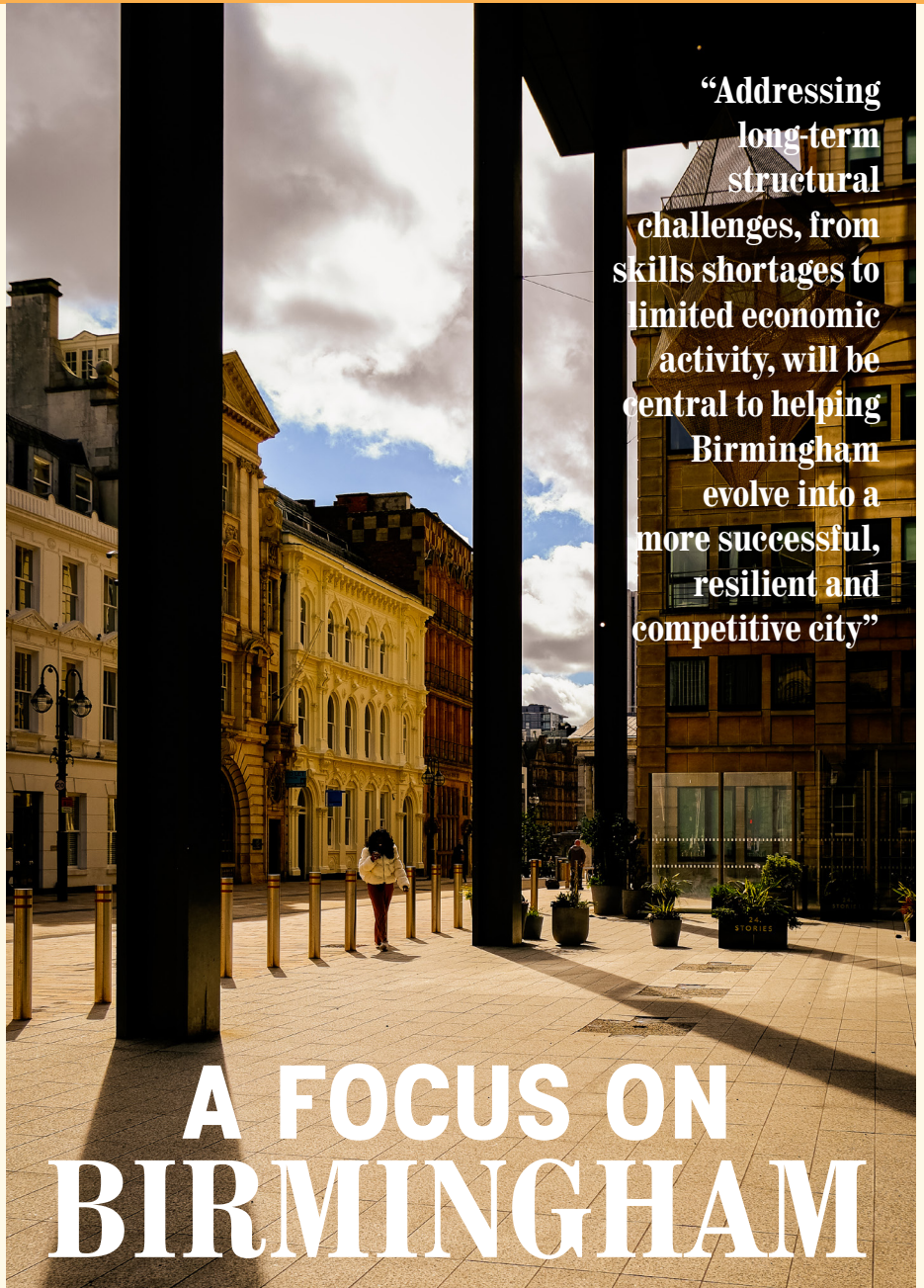
The national publication, widely recognised as one of the UK's most robust assessments of urban economies, aims to help policymakers, businesses and civic leaders better understand how cities are performing – and what interventions are needed to support long-term prosperity.

During his keynote, Carter, pictured below, provided a focused analysis of Birmingham through the lens of the 2026 findings. Offering an economist's outsider perspective, he highlighted the pivotal role of the city centre in driving the wider West Midlands economy.

Birmingham's centre generates 14% of the region's economic value and 27% of its productivity, with around 150,000 jobs – 11% of the region's total – based within the core. While these figures demonstrate significant economic weight, Carter noted that Birmingham still lags behind comparable metropolitan areas. Greater Manchester, for example, accommodates around 220,000 jobs (14%) in its centre, while Greater London sees an even more pronounced centralisation with 34% (2.2 million) of its jobs located in the capital's core.

Carter emphasised the essential link between a strong city centre and improved living standards for communities beyond it. A successful centre, he argued, has a multiplier effect, creating opportunities that ripple outward. To strengthen Birmingham's position, he outlined several strategic next steps, starting with the need to expand the physical footprint of the city centre. Such expansion would enable space for more high-skilled roles, while research shows it would also generate additional entry-level opportunities rather than excluding local people from the employment market.

This must be complemented, he said, by significantly increasing the density of high-quality housing close to the centre, ensuring that workers have convenient access to jobs. Equally important is the delivery of reliable, well-connected



“Addressing long-term structural challenges, from skills shortages to limited economic activity, will be central to helping Birmingham evolve into a more successful, resilient and competitive city”

A FOCUS ON BIRMINGHAM

public transport, viewed not merely as a logistics issue but as a labour market inclusion policy.

Carter highlighted Birmingham's twin city, Lyon, as an example of what can be achieved when housing density, transport and economic planning are aligned, resulting in improved quality of life and enhanced economic performance.

Finally, he stressed that achieving this scale of transformation requires leadership from civic institutions, including organisations such as Birmingham Colmore.

To read the Cities Outlook 2026 report, visit: <https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/cities-outlook-2026/>



A MAJOR MILESTONE

BIRMINGHAM LGBT OPENS NEW PURPOSE-BUILT CENTRE IN BIRMINGHAM'S GAY VILLAGE

Birmingham LGBT, the largest LGBTQ+ support service in the Midlands, has officially opened its new purpose-built centre in Birmingham's Gay Village.

The expanded centre follows 12 years at the organisation's previous Holloway Circus site and represents a major milestone in the charity's continued growth and service delivery.

Located on Hurst Street, the new, fully accessible ground-floor centre includes clinical and consultation rooms, hireable meeting spaces, and a large communal area designed to support events, activities and community connection.

The centre was formally opened in late January by award-winning former Birmingham Poet Laureate Jasmine Gardosi and actor Annie Wallace, the first transgender performer to play a regular transgender character in a British soap.

Founded in 2002, Birmingham LGBT opened the UK's first LGBTQ+ Health & Wellbeing Centre in 2013. The organisation has grown from a team of two to 26, delivering services to thousands of people each year including sexual health testing, domestic abuse support, counselling, youth work, older-people's programmes, substance-use services, outreach and peer groups alongside Shout, the charity's popular arts and culture programme.

Last year, more than 4,000 individuals visited the centre for support.

Steph Keeble, Director of Birmingham LGBT, said: "This new centre represents a major step forward for LGBTQ+ support in the city. We now have a purpose-built space that reflects the needs of our diverse community and provides room for services to grow."

The centre has been delivered through Outpost Management's joint venture with BlackRock Real Estate, in partnership with the Galliard Apsley Partnership, and forms part of Outpost's Lower Essex Street development.

Birmingham LGBT is supported by



individuals, organisations, and a range of funding bodies, including The National Lottery Community Fund, The Arts Council England, The Heritage Lottery Fund, Birmingham City Council, and Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System.

Last summer the charity launched an exciting programme that allows organisations in the city to support it, called Corporate Champions. Supporters include a number of city firms, and Aston University became the first gold level Champion in January.

The Legends and Icons scheme – an innovative opportunity for individuals to support the charity – has grown quickly to provide a valuable long-term source of income with many community members signing up to donate £10 or £25 per month. Birmingham LGBT is keen to see the scheme grow even more and anyone who wants to donate can sign up on the charity's website from the Legends and Icons page.

The centre is open at 151 Hurst Street, Birmingham B5 6EW, with opening hours from Monday to Saturday. Full details and service information can be found at www.blgbt.org.

Birmingham Pride 2026 took place on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May in the heart of the Birmingham LGBTQ+ Village, primarily centered around Hurst Street. Visit birminghampride.com for more information.

SOLIDARITY AND SHARED PURPOSE AT PRIDE-FOCUSED EVENT

We were proud to host a deeply meaningful Pride-focused event at Albert's Schloss, bringing together LGBTQ+ professionals and allies from across the district.

Over breakfast and networking, attendees had the chance to meet new faces, share experiences and build relationships that extend beyond the workplace. The heart of the event was our panel discussion, which explored both the challenges LGBTQ+ professionals continue to navigate and the successes worth celebrating – from lived experiences and career progression to leadership visibility, inclusion and the growing importance of active allyship.

The conversation struck a powerful balance between acknowledging ongoing challenges and celebrating the progress made within modern workplaces. Our speakers highlighted the need for environments where authenticity and performance are not only compatible, but celebrated together. Attendees left with practical insights, renewed solidarity and a shared sense of purpose in driving meaningful change, while all ticket proceeds were donated to Birmingham LGBT.



GET YOUR MOTOR RUNNING...

FIRST BRUM TRANSPORT FEST TO ROLL INTO TOWN



Birmingham's rich transport heritage will take centre stage in 2026 as the brand-new Brum Transport Fest arrives in the heart of the city this autumn.

Delivered by Colmore Life, the festival will bring together the past, present and future of movement in a vibrant, city-wide celebration.

Designed as a family-friendly and highly visual event, it will animate some of Birmingham's most iconic public spaces, creating a unique experience for visitors, workers and residents alike.

Taking place across Victoria Square, Chamberlain

Square, Centenary Square and Snow Hill Square, the festival will showcase an impressive range of vehicles and transport experiences. Visitors can expect everything from beautifully preserved classic cars and heritage buses to modern transport innovations that reflect how people move around the city today.

But Brum Transport Fest is about more than nostalgia. It also looks firmly to the future, highlighting how transport

continues to shape Birmingham as a connected, forward-looking city.

A key part of the festival will be its focus on careers and opportunities within the sector. In partnership with West Midlands Railway, attendees will be able to access advice and guidance on careers in public transport – offering insight into roles across rail, operations, engineering and customer service.

This element aims to inspire the next generation while showcasing the breadth of opportunities available in a growing and essential industry.

Mike Mounfield, CTO at Birmingham Colmore, highlighted

the ambition behind the event, saying it will bring together “past, present and future of movement” in a way that is accessible and engaging for everyone.

Melanie Williams, Board Director and lead of the Colmore Placemaking Working Group, said: “Brum Transport Fest will be a celebration of what makes Birmingham and the West Midlands region the home of makers and innovators. We're excited to invite the public to come together

“Brum Transport Fest will be a celebration of what makes Birmingham and the West Midlands region the home of makers and innovators”



this September and share in the pride, creativity and ambition that continue to drive our region forward.”

By activating multiple squares across Colmore, Brum Transport Fest also reflects the wider placemaking vision for the area – using culture, heritage and public events to create welcoming spaces.

Event details

Friday 18-Sunday 20 September 2026

11am-5pm (Friday 18 and Saturday 19 September)

11am-4pm (Sunday 20 September)

Free to attend, open to all

Expect showcases of the regions key transport modes, including heritage cars, bikes and buses.

Follow [@colmorelife](#) for updates.





Peter Phillips in his studio on Holland Road.
Picture courtesy of the Phillips family

FREE SHOW CELEBRATES AN OVERLOOKED BIRMINGHAM ARTIST

Colmore Life is set to honour pioneering Birmingham-born Pop artist Peter Phillips with a vibrant, free-to-view outdoor exhibition in Snow Hill Square this June.

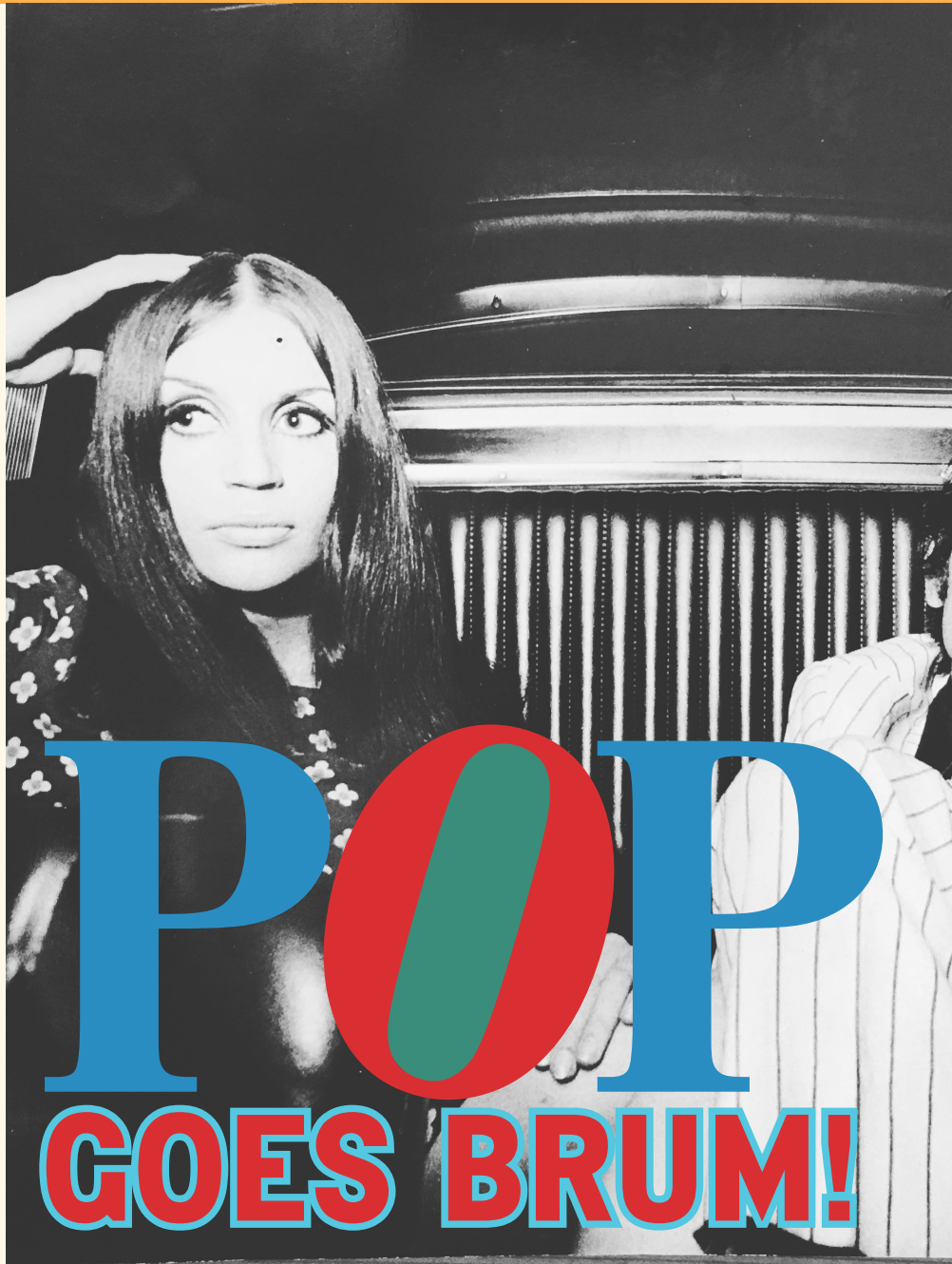
Pop Goes Brum! showcases striking artworks and photographs celebrating one of the city's most overlooked creative figures.

Born in Bournville, Phillips studied at the Birmingham School of Art on Margaret Street before becoming a key figure in the international Pop art movement. His career placed him alongside iconic artists including David Hockney, Pauline Boty, Peter Blake, and later Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, cementing his position in the era's bold, culturally charged art scene.

Pop Goes Brum! not only reflects Phillips' pioneering artistic achievements but also celebrates his deep-rooted connection to Birmingham. Although he lived and worked across London, New York, Zurich, and Australia's Sunshine Coast, his distinct Brummie humour and fascination with industrial and automotive imagery remained central to his work until his passing in June 2025, at the age of 86.

Curated by art historian and author Ruth Millington, the exhibition will explore Phillips' immense contribution to the Pop art movement; a movement defined by bold imagery inspired by consumer culture, mass media, music, advertising, celebrity and everyday life.

Ruth Millington said: "I am thrilled to be curating this exhibition, which pays tribute to an overlooked pioneer of Pop art, Peter



Phillips. His Birmingham upbringing and art education was an enduring influence on this talented artist who transformed everyday life in the Second City into modern art which still feels fresh and full of energy today.

"Even though Phillips lived and travelled across the world, his Brummie sense of humour never disappeared, nor did the enduring influence of industrial and automotive imagery.

"He was intensely focused and serious, yet full of wit and sarcasm, deeply introspective, but also someone who enjoyed being seen, as his family remember him."

The exhibition will also feature contemporary works by current Birmingham School of Art students, creating a meaningful link to Phillips' alma mater, where he both studied and later taught.

Melanie Williams, Lead for the Colmore Placemaking Working Group, which have funded the exhibition, said: "We are incredibly proud to bring Pop Goes Brum! to Snow Hill Square and to shine a spotlight on Peter Phillips, a remarkable Brummie talent whose influence has quietly shaped the global Pop art movement.

"This exhibition not only honours his

Peter Phillips pictured in the late 1960s with Claude-Marion Xylander, his future second wife. Picture courtesy of the Phillips family

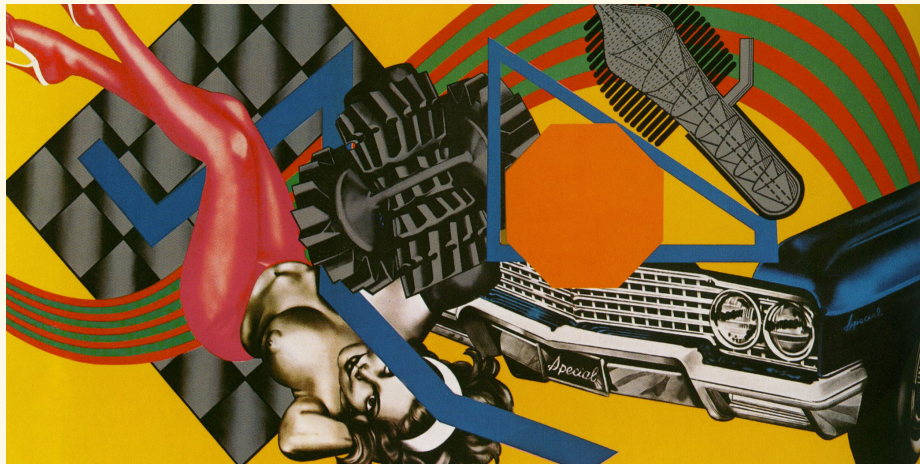


Above: Peter Phillips, Art-O-Matic Riding High (1974) © The artist. Courtesy of the Phillips family
Below: Peter Phillips, Custom Painting n. 5 (1965) © The artist. Courtesy of the Phillips family

legacy but also reconnects Birmingham with one of its most significant cultural trailblazers. By showcasing both Phillips' work and that of today's Birmingham School of Art students, we're celebrating the city's creative past, present and future – something we're deeply committed to championing at Birmingham Colmore."

Developed in partnership with Birmingham School of Art (Birmingham City University) and Birmingham Colmore, the exhibition is fully supported by the artist's family.

Pop Goes Brum! 9–30 June 2026
Snow Hill Square, Birmingham. Free



EMERGENCE

OPEN ART WINNERS ENJOY NEW SHOW

Colmore Life unveiled a brand new open to all show, EMERGENCE, a dynamic new exhibition placing Birmingham's rising creative talent firmly in the spotlight.

Running 8–23 April 2026 at the historic BCU School of Art, Margaret Street, the free showcase brought together never-before-seen work from three standout emerging artists – Ispahani Mukah, Dinah Hewson and Awoyomi Ayodeji, winners of the Birmingham Open 25 competition.

“EMERGENCE is about championing fresh perspectives and amplifying the trailblazing talent within our city,” says Melanie Williams, Lead of Colmore’s Placemaking Working Group. “This showcase highlights artists whose work is not only visually compelling but also emblematic of the innovation and resilience driving Birmingham’s cultural resurgence. We’re really proud to have provided an additional opportunity for emerging artists to platform their work to the public.”

Curated by art historian Ruth Millington, the exhibition celebrated the bold perspectives and fresh artistic energy shaping the city’s cultural future. Their never-before-seen pieces captured the



ambitious, boundary-pushing creativity that continues to define Birmingham’s evolving artistic identity.

She said: “Thanks to Birmingham Colmore and Birmingham School of Art, Emergence gives three talented artists much-needed exhibition space in a historic space, which they’ve activated. It’s been an honour to work on this show, which is an important next step in these

Birmingham-based artists’ well-deserved success.”

Visitors enjoyed an inspiring experience that reflected both the diversity and dynamism of the city’s emerging creative scene. The exhibition forms part of Colmore Life’s ongoing mission to support cultural programming that enriches Birmingham’s civic and commercial heart.



CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF THE NEW-LOOK GRAND

One of Birmingham’s most recognisable landmarks, The Grand Hotel Birmingham, is celebrating five years since its £50 million restoration with a programme of collaborations spanning art, food, culture and wellbeing.

The Grade II* listed hotel reopened in May 2021 after nearly two decades of closure, bringing 185 bedrooms, the restored Grand Ballroom, Madeleine bar and Isaac’s restaurant back into use. Since then, it has re-established itself as a key destination within Colmore, overlooking Birmingham Cathedral.

To mark the milestone, The Grand has partnered with a series of local and regional collaborators throughout 2026. Highlights include an artist residency with the Charles Pedone Art Collective, which will see four suites transformed into bookable gallery spaces until the end of June, alongside a literary collaboration with the Birmingham Book Club, continuing a relationship that dates back to 1886.

OPEN ART CALL IS BACK



CITY ART EXHIBITION RETURNS FOR IDOB 2026

Colmore Life has announced the return of the Birmingham Open, the popular open-call competition and exhibition supporting emerging artists.

Launching for the third year, running in partnership with International Day of Birmingham (IDOB) and Central BID, Birmingham Open 26 continues its mission to champion creative talent inspired by the city.

Following a successful 2025 edition that saw over 80 emerging artists exhibited, this year's competition theme of Birmingham reflects the new partnership with IDOB, placing the city's stories, people, culture and global connections at the heart of the exhibition.

Emerging artists are invited to respond to the theme of 'Birmingham' in whatever way feels most meaningful to them. From Birmingham in the UK, inspiration can be drawn from the city's well-known friendliness and personality to its built environment, sense of place and ever-evolving identity.

In partnership with International Day of Birmingham, artists can also take inspiration from some of the eighteen Birminghams across North America

visited by Joe Lycett in the 2025 TV series, 'Joe Lycett's United States of Birmingham'. Stretching from Canada's Saskatchewan province, down to the East Coast of the US, through the Midwest and into the Deep South, their history and their collective Brummie cultural commonalities offer a rich starting point for personal interpretation.

Inspiration might include the symbols of Brum, everyday lived experiences, hidden stories or global connections, but ultimately, we welcome any response that reflects a personal or imaginative take on Birmingham today.

"Birmingham Open has become a vital platform for emerging artists responding to the city," said Ruth Millington, the exhibition curator. "Each year we see more ambition, confidence and diversity in the work, and the partnership with IDOB brings an exciting new international dimension to the 2026 exhibition."

Speaking of the partnership, Joe Lycett said: "Birmingham has an extraordinary and vibrant art scene, and also happens to be the best city in the world, so I fully endorse this celebration of the city and its artists."

The competition is open for entries until Friday 19 June 2026. Prizes for Birmingham Open 26 include a £2,000 cash prize for the Overall Winner, £1,000 for Highly Commended Award and £1,000 People's Choice Award, all accompanied by professional portfolio reviews for the three winning artists.

Melanie Williams, Birmingham Colmore Board Director and Lead of the Colmore Placemaking Working Group added: "Now in its third year, Birmingham Open reflects our ongoing commitment to championing emerging creativity in the city centre.

"The strength of last year's exhibition showed just how much talent is being nurtured across Birmingham and we're proud to support that journey."

Key information

Theme: Birmingham

Entries open: Until 19 June 2026

Entry form: <https://colmorelife.co.uk/birmingham-open-26-competition/>

Judging: July 2026

Overall Winner and Highly Commended revealed: August 2026

Exhibition live: 7–24 September 2026

People's Choice revealed: October 2026

For entry details, visit colmorelife.co.uk/birmingham-open-26-competition/





YOUR FEEDBACK POWERS OUR PLACE



We're halfway through our BID4 (2024–2029) term and want your views on what matters most in Colmore.

Whether you live, work or spend time here, your feedback will help shape future projects, services and delivery.

Share your thoughts in our short survey today by scanning the QR code to the right.

As a thank you, all participants will be entered into our prize draw worth over £500 including an overnight stay for two at The Grand Hotel Birmingham, £100 Trillium voucher, and additional £50 vouchers to redeem at a Colmore food & drink venue of your choice.

Scan the QR code to share your views



ACTIVATING THE DISTRICT: COLMORE EVENTS

Colmore's events programme continues to animate the commercial heart with a dynamic mix of culture, conversation and community. Below is a snapshot of the experiences shaping Colmore Life – celebrating what's already been, and looking ahead to what's next.

Salon in the City

Four intimate conversations explored the ideas, voices and challenges shaping Birmingham's future.

Colmore Artisan Markets

Seasonal showcases at Snow Hill Square celebrating independent makers, from Christmas cheer to International Women's Day in March, and a fresh spring edition in May.

Colmore Food Festival 3 and 4 July 2026

A summer highlight bringing Victoria Square to life with bold flavours, local talent and a shared love of food.

Network & Drink

Relaxed, regular meet-ups connecting professionals from across the city centre.

Pop-ups in Colmore

Planned engagement sessions hosted in key buildings, offering opportunities to meet us and the West Midlands Police team, discover Colmore initiatives, and learn more about tools such as the Colmore Life app.

Walking Tours

Guided journeys uncovering Colmore's rich heritage, architecture and evolving identity.

Brum Transport Fest 18-20 Sept 2026

A celebration of movement, innovation and Birmingham's transport story, right in the heart of the city-centre.

Exhibitions in Colmore

Rotating exhibitions showcasing art, ideas and creativity in our public spaces.

Colmore Homelessness Summit, 21 Oct 2026

Bringing partners and local authorities together to share insight, build collaboration and drive meaningful action.

AN UPDATE FROM THE CITY CURATOR

Well, what an exciting few months it's been. Birmingham Light Festival 2026 has been and gone, and it's now been fully evaluated too. The results confirm what many of us felt during those four special nights in February; this is a festival that genuinely shifts how people experience the city, and how they talk about it too. The data tells a compelling story and despite snow and rain, we delivered an 84% increase in city centre footfall.

- 86% of visitors said they felt more connected to Birmingham as a result of attending
- 93% of visitors felt the festival was good for their wellbeing
- 58% of visitors spent in a hospitality business whilst they were here
- 99% of visitors want to see the festival return in 2027

And on top of that, the press coverage was next level. Over 345 pieces of coverage with 2.8 billion opportunities to see and read positive news about our city. That really matters when we're working so hard to make the rest of the world see what we already know - that Birmingham is fantastic.

Birmingham Light Festival is a great event but it's more than that too – it's a tool for reshaping perception and fostering pride. In the words of one of the Light Festival artists, Amerah Saleh

“You see a city doesn't shine by accident”

and with that in mind I want to thank everyone who was involved in making the festival such a success. It was hard work but boy was it worth it.

Beyond the light, work continues on Birmingham's Food and Drink Tourism Project. Our Culinary Destination Readiness Assessment delivered by the World Food Travel Association, has now been completed. The Project Board is now working through the findings in detail and looking to finalise the report in the coming month. Something that is crystal clear already though, is that Birmingham has the raw ingredients to succeed as a global culinary destination.

In the background, work continues at pace on bringing Birmingham Jewellery Biennial to fruition. Progress has been fast and exciting these past few months, and I am very much looking forward to finally revealing more on that later this year.

**ALEX NICHOLSON-EVANS,
CITY CURATOR**



PUBLIC ARTWORK COMMISSION TO CELEBRATE SHAW

We are celebrating Birmingham's overlooked photographic pioneer George Shaw (1818–1904) with a new public exhibition, showcasing his early daguerreotypes and scientific contributions.

Following a successful installation at the Metro Town Hall station stop in 2025, we have commissioned an artist to create a design of a two-dimensional new public artwork.

Keep your eyes peeled on our channels for further updates or visit colmorelife.co.uk/george-shaw-open-call



NEW LOOK FOR THE QUEEN'S HEAD

Davenport's Brewery (a Birmingham institution since 1829) has breathed new life into The Queen's Head on Steelhouse Lane, unveiling it as the first venue in their bold new 'British & Best' portfolio.

Following an extensive renovation, the pub now blends heritage character with modern comfort, opening its doors to the public with a refreshed identity grounded in everything we love about Great British pubs.

The refurbishment has also introduced three outdoor spaces, including a Guinness Terrace that nods to Davenport's historic link with the brand, an upstairs courtyard, and a street-facing area ideal for soaking in Colmore life.

www.thequeensheadbirmingham.co.uk



TAVERN REPLACES 24 STORIES BAR

The former 24 Stories downstairs bar on Colmore Row has opened as 'Stories Tavern', transforming the formerly Orelle space into a cosy, heritage-inspired tavern serving £5 pints all day, every day.

Designed with historian Ron Cregan, the new space features dark wood, brass detailing, nautical and historical artwork, and a new outdoor terrace, creating an inviting setting for after-work drink.



BOILER ROOM COMING TO COLMORE!

Opening for the first time in the city-centre following their success in Leamington Spa, follow @theboilerroombirmingham on Instagram for the latest updates.



A WARM WELCOME TO BLACKLOCK

Blacklock has opened the doors to its much-anticipated venue in Colmore, located at the heart of the city at St Philip's Place. The ground floor of the historic former vicarage has been transformed into a lively 100-seat restaurant and bar.

Bringing Blacklock's signature take on the Great British chophouse to the Midlands by championing exceptional British produce, the menu centres on chops and steaks, featuring prime cuts dry aged for

up to 55 days. It also boasts the much-loved 'All In' sharing feast of beef, pork and lamb chops served on charred flatbreads, and their award-winning Sunday roast with whole joints slow-roasted over open coals.

The drinks menu spans seasonal twists on classic cocktails, wines on tap and their Blacklock Brews, made in collaboration with Birmingham Brewing Company.

Book via theblacklock.com/restaurants/birmingham

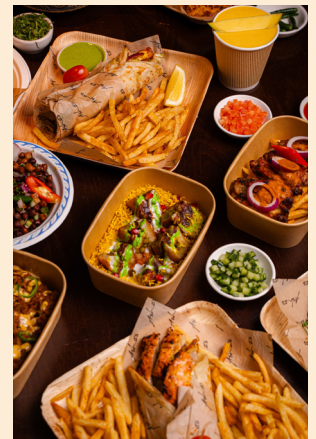
ASHA'S LAUNCH AT SOCIETY

Birmingham legends Asha's have launched a brand-new Indian street food concept at Society Birmingham in the heart of Colmore.

Inspired by the bustling streets of India, Asha's Indian Street Food brings a menu designed for casual, street-food-style dining. Their arrival at Society Birmingham marks a new chapter for Asha's, joining the mix of independent food traders and expanding the range of global cuisines available under one roof.

Having opened its doors at One Colmore Square in September, Society Birmingham is now a firm fixture on Birmingham's independent food and drink map.

www.societybirmingham.com



BRUMMIE CELEBRATION OF ALL THINGS WINE!

Wine lovers descended at The Grand Hotel in May for the first Colmore Wine Showcase event. We brought together some of the city's most exciting wine and hospitality talents - including Loki, Arch 13, Vagabond, Midland Press and Hotel du Vin – for an afternoon of tasting, learning and fun.

With the aim of making wine fun, accessible and a little less serious, each guest explored a curated selection of wines and venue offerings, enjoying delicious antipasti alongside an expert talk and interactive activities.



NEW LOCATION FOR MONTY'S

The popular deli sandwich bar, headed up by owner and local legend Aggie Pelekanou, has opened its second Colmore location on Bennetts Hill. Expect the same full-flavour delicious lunches you know and love in a new spot.

A NEW MODERN BISTRO LED BY ELLIOT BROWN

Samo has opened its doors in Great Western Arcade on Colmore Row, bringing a fresh, seasonal approach to classic European cooking in the heart of the city centre. Led by chef-owner Elliot Brown alongside sous chef Greg Sheppard, the restaurant focuses on ingredient-led dishes that celebrate the best produce each season.

Lunch is served Wednesday-Friday from 12pm to 3pm. Dinner service runs Wednesday-Friday from 5pm and all day Saturday from 12pm. The evening menu continues Samo's seasonal approach while maintaining a selection of modern bistro dishes rooted in bold flavours.

Find out more: samobistro.co.uk



COLMORE FOOD FESTIVAL IS BACK!

We're so excited to announce that Colmore Food Festival will return to Victoria Square on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July 2026, marking the 13th year of one of Birmingham's most popular free events.

The festival continues to be a major summer highlight for the city, celebrating the depth and diversity of the hospitality scene across Colmore Business District. Each year it brings together acclaimed restaurants and talented independents, giving visitors a true taste of the area's culinary prowess.

The 2025 edition, delivered as part of Birmingham's Super Weekend saw record-breaking crowds, with 75,000 visitors coming together across two days to enjoy food, drink and entertainment in the heart of the city. Open from 11am-7pm on both Friday



and Saturday, Colmore Food Festival remains free to attend and continues to champion affordability accessibility through capped pricing and taster-sized portions, allowing visitors to sample a wide range of flavours without breaking the bank.

Find out more by visiting colmorelife.co.uk/colmore-event/colmore-food-festival-2026

SAVE THE DATE: BIRMINGHAM RESTAURANT FESTIVAL 2026

Celebrating its fifth birthday in 2026, each year Birmingham Restaurant Festival takes over the city, giving foodies exclusive menus to enjoy for incredible value throughout the month of August. Diners can make as many reservations as they like or join a brand-new food tour experience, with a variety of lunch and dinner menus on offer.

More info: birminghamrestaurantfestival.co.uk



The Grand Hotel, 1950s
Courtesy Reach plc



The Grand Hotel today

THEN & NOW

A CENTURY OF CHANGE ACROSS COLMORE

From Victorian streets to a modern skyline, Birmingham city centre has seen extensive change, and sometimes, as these 'Then & Now' images reveal, change is subtler than we might expect.

This latest series turns its focus to Newhall Street, the Industrial Gallery at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, a 1950s bus on Colmore Row, and a striking archival view of the Grand Hotel from the same era. In truth, not everything has transformed beyond

recognition, and that's part of the story. Newhall Street captures the steady evolution of the Business District, where historic frontages and modern interventions sit comfortably side by side. At Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the Industrial Gallery speaks to the city's manufacturing heritage, a reminder that innovation has long been at Birmingham's core.

Meanwhile, Colmore Row, seen here with a 1950s bus, reflects both movement

and permanence. And then there is the Grand Hotel. Elegantly preserved, its archival image could almost pass for today. It stands as a rare example of architectural continuity in Birmingham.

Together, these images reveal a different kind of transformation — one not only of dramatic change, but of endurance.

For the latest Colmore history and heritage walks, talks and publications, visit colmorelife.co.uk



The Industrial Gallery, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, date unknown, from a glass plate, pre-1910.
Courtesy Birmingham Museums Trust Digital Archive



The Industrial Gallery today

Newhall Street, 1890s
Source unknown



Newhall Street today



A bus on Colmore Row, 1950s
Source unknown



A modern bus on Colmore Row today



Cornwall Street, 1960s
Courtesy Phyllis Nicklin Archive/University of Birmingham



Cornwall Street today



BRIDGING THE GAP

COLMORE'S WORK IN THE COMMUNITY



COLMORE IN LADYWOOD

**BY KELSEY DWYER,
EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS
MANAGER, BIRMINGHAM COLMORE**

This season, our work in the Ladywood community has felt particularly meaningful – a reminder of the responsibility we share as neighbours, and of the real impact small acts of kindness and connection can have.

At a recent workshop at St John's & St Peter's CofE Academy, our board and team spent time with a group of young boys whose futures are full of promise, even if they don't always see it reflected around them. Though the school and the Colmore district sit within the same ward, the reality is that many of these boys don't feel that Colmore is a place for them, and that is something we are determined to change.

The workshop focused on self-worth, choices, responsibility, and the belief that no one should accept the limits others place on them. The potential in those boys was unmistakable and the session was both inspiring and hopeful for the future generations.

Our business community came out in force as part of our annual Easter donations drive! Thanks to their generosity and kindness, 472 Easter eggs were delivered



to families and children in Ladywood who may otherwise have gone without. A huge thank you to Aviva, Colmore Partners, Intex Projects, Colliers, Headoffice Accountants, Rothschild & Co, 103 Colmore Row, Squire Patton Boggs, and many more organisations and individuals across the district for their support.

If you'd like to learn more about how you or your organisation can get involved with our work in Ladywood, please get in touch with me: kelsey.dwyer@birminghamcolmore.co.uk

A CLEANER COLMORE

JANUARY-MARCH 2026 IMPACT



700

hours of litter picking

52

graffiti and/or
sticker removals

114

footway cleans

72

private property cleans

122

human waste removal

25,000_{m2}

space deep cleaned by
Ramora

SAFER COLMORE

AN UPDATE ON OUR WORK HELPING TO KEEP COLMORE SAFE AND SECURE

Keeping people safe is at the heart of everything we do at Birmingham Colmore, and our Safer Colmore work continues to evolve in response to the needs of our businesses, workers, residents and visitors. This year is already shaping up to be one of meaningful progress, collaboration and renewed commitment.

One of the most significant developments nationally is the forthcoming introduction of Martyn's Law, designed to improve security and preparedness in public spaces. We've been working closely with partners and specialist advisers to ensure our district businesses understand what the legislation will mean for them once enacted. Our focus is on making the process clear, constructive and achievable – empowering venues rather than overwhelming them. We'll continue to share further guidance, training opportunities and practical steps that organisations can take to prepare. Find out more by scanning the QR code.

Women's safety remains a core priority for Safer Colmore. Our Stalking Awareness Toolkit will soon be available to businesses and employees, providing clear guidance on recognising the signs of stalking and the support pathways available. Keep your eyes peeled on colmorelife.co.uk for its release. We're also working with the Hollie Gazzard Trust to deliver a 'Stalking in the Workplace' workshop to spread the word and demonstrate how the digital toolkit can help our businesses protect victims.

Alongside this, our Safer Hospitality initiatives continues to support venues with anti-spiking measures and the Ask for Angela scheme is helping staff respond compassionately and effectively when someone feels unsafe or uncomfortable.

We're also expanding our network of Safer Colmore Ambassadors, and we'd love more people to get involved.

SCAN TO FIND
OUT MORE ABOUT
MARTYN'S LAW



Ambassadors play a vital role as extra eyes, ears and friendly faces in the district, helping us promote safety, signpost support and strengthen our sense of community. If you're passionate about the wellbeing of those who live, work or spend time in Colmore, we'd love to hear from you.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for our Homelessness Summit, taking place in October. We'll be bringing together charities, service providers, city partners and businesses to explore solutions to one of our city's most complex challenges. Reducing homelessness is not

something any organisation can solve alone, and the summit will give us space to unite around compassion, evidence and shared ambitions.

And finally – a small but mighty addition to our toolkit: our new street-cleaning machine. This investment from us means quicker response times, cleaner routes, and a more welcoming environment for everyone. We asked our social media followers to give the new cleaning machine a name, and you can see the creative suggestions over on our Instagram!

A safe district is also a cared-for district, and this little machine is already making a big difference in Colmore.



SEASONAL SAFETY TIPS

With summer fast approaching, we're also sharing seasonal safety tips to support those spending time in the district's many outdoor spaces and beer gardens.

Keeping an eye on your belongings

Travel with trusted friends

Stay hydrated

Look out for one another

**CALL 07572 257246
FOR OUR SUPPORT**

Should any business in Colmore need any assistance with cleaning, anti-social behaviour, or other community support, call the team via our dedicated duty number on **07572 257246** (Monday to Friday, 7am-6pm).

Together, these initiatives reflect our ongoing mission: to ensure Colmore is a place where people feel protected, supported and safe. If you'd like to learn more or get involved in any aspect of Safer Colmore, we're always here for a conversation.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

THE PROMOTIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND MOVES SHAPING COLMORE'S PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE



Wesleyan

Birmingham-based Wesleyan Group has appointed a new Chair and CFO to the board to support its growth strategy.

Ian Gladman, pictured above, has been appointed Chair Designate of Wesleyan's board of directors and will succeed Nathan Moss in April, following the completion of Moss's nine-year term. Gladman brings more than 30 years of senior financial services experience at firms including J.P. Morgan, Goldman Sachs, UBS and Old Mutual. Most recently, he also founded, led and now chairs Hurst Point Group, a wealth management business with c.£10bn of assets under advice or management.

Gladman said: "I am very honoured to be joining Wesleyan as Chair to help the brilliant people who work in the Society and the core professions that they serve."

mfg Solicitors

Law firm mfg Solicitors has bolstered its commercial litigation department with the appointment of a new senior associate.

Commercial and civil litigation specialist Ian Sheppard has joined the firm's Birmingham office, working closely with partner and head of department, Sam Pedley.

NEW DISTRICT CHAPTER FOR EXPANDING FIELDFISHER

Fieldfisher

The Birmingham office for law firm Fieldfisher hosted clients, partners, and the local business community to celebrate the opening of its new 12,000 sq ft office space at Two Chamberlain Square, in the city's £1.2bn Paradise development in Colmore.

The strategic move will support Fieldfisher's plans to double its regional workforce over the next five years, with an ambition to attract local talent and offer returning opportunities to legal professionals who may have left the region.

With more than 150 guests in attendance for the launch celebrations,

Fieldfisher's Birmingham team was joined by colleagues from across its European network – including Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and Poland – who were welcomed by a choral group performing songs in multiple languages.

Alongside speeches from visiting European partners, Robert Shooter (Managing Partner), and Ranjit Dhindsa (Birmingham Office Leader and Head of UK and European People and Work) spoke to the achievements of the regional team, noting how the relocation represents a new chapter for Fieldfisher in Birmingham.



“It’s a privilege to step into the role of Partner after more than a decade with the firm”



LAURA MADE PARTNER AT FORVIS MAZARS BIRMINGHAM

Forvis Mazars

Global professional services network, Forvis Mazars, has appointed Laura Salter as a partner in its financial planning team, based in the firm’s Chamberlain Square office.

In this role, Salter will continue driving the growth of the financial planning team in the Midlands, with a focus on developing talent and building on the firm’s reputation as a leader in Birmingham’s business community.

Salter has managed the Birmingham financial planning team since 2018, significantly expanding the size of the practice, underpinned by collaboration across service lines to bring clients a comprehensive and personalised service.

Joining Forvis Mazars as a graduate in 2013, Salter’s promotion to partner reflects the firm’s commitment to nurturing homegrown talent.

Salter said: “It’s a privilege to step into the role of Partner after more than a decade with the firm.

“I’m incredibly proud of the team we’ve built in Birmingham and excited to continue expanding our offering across the Midlands.

“Supporting our clients to achieve exceptional outcomes and long-term financial confidence is at the heart of what we do, and I am looking forward to driving further development of our practice in my new role.”

Stephen Lewis, Birmingham office managing partner said: “Laura’s promotion underscores our long-term investment in Birmingham and the Midlands. Her leadership has been instrumental in scaling our Financial Planning capability in the region and supporting our broader growth ambitions.”

Laura Salter photo courtesy Forvis Mazars

HCR Law

HCR Law has announced its largest-ever promotion round, with more than 100 colleagues advancing across its business services and private client teams.

The promotions span offices across England and Wales and include six new partners, among them Gurinder Hayer (commercial), Cris Manuel-Hughes (dispute resolution) and Lynne Adams (employment and immigration).

The firm’s corporate team saw 14 promotions, while family and private client teams also recorded strong progression.

The round includes 11 newly qualified lawyers and marks the first set of promotions since Wright Hassall joined HCR Law last year.

Harris Lamb

Harris Lamb has strengthened its commercial and industrial agency team with the appointment of Lauren Allcoat-Hatton as director.

With 18 years’ experience in the property sector, she specialises in the sale, letting and acquisition of industrial and logistics assets across the Midlands, and will lead the agency team in the firm’s Worcester office.

Dains Accountants

Dains Accountants has strengthened its leadership team with the appointment of John Williams as chief performance officer as the group continues its ambitious growth journey.

Williams joins from Radius Limited, where he spent seven years as director of finance across its fuel, telematics and emerging business units. During his tenure, he led more than 18 acquisitions with a combined enterprise value exceeding £200m and drove improvements in commercial performance across all three divisions.

EY

EY has strengthened its Midlands leadership with two senior partner appointments as it expands its technology risk and restructuring capabilities.

Tony King joins as partner in data risk and AI, advising government and healthcare clients on data quality, accessibility and the growing role of AI in decision-making. He brings more than 20 years’ experience, having previously built a 40-strong team generating over £10m in revenue.

Kris Aspin, who relocates from Edinburgh, will lead the Midlands restructuring practice, supporting businesses through complex financial challenges.

King said the region faces increasing pressure to deliver better outcomes with limited resources, adding that EY’s investment in data, AI and collaborative expertise positions the firm to support clients both nationally and internationally while continuing to grow its Midlands team.



Gateley Legal

Gateley Legal has strengthened the real estate team at its Birmingham office with the appointment of Daniel Walsh as partner.

Walsh brings a wealth of experience to Gateley, having previously held senior roles at CMS, Eversheds Sutherland and Gowling WLG. He has 20 years' experience working with a range of developers, institutional investors and property funds on complex, strategic and high value development and investment transactions across all real estate asset classes, with a particular focus on large-scale logistics schemes and urban regeneration projects.

Clearwater

Clearwater, the award-winning corporate finance advisory firm with an office on Livery Street, has been acquired by US investment bank KeyCorp in a move that marks the bank's strategic expansion into Western Europe.

Founded in 2002 by Michael Reeves and Phil Burns, Clearwater has built a strong reputation in the mid-market M&A space, recently dominating the regional Rainmaker Awards. The deal applies to the UK partnership only, with the wider Clearwater network remaining independent while continuing to use the brand.

The acquisition builds on a successful collaboration between Clearwater and KeyBanc Capital Markets since 2020, strengthening transatlantic deal flow. The combined platform will connect US investors with European opportunities, while giving UK and European clients greater access to American markets.

Mark Taylor, CEO of Clearwater UK, described the move as "a significant milestone," adding it will enhance, rather than change, the firm's offering to clients.



Delicious PR, alongside Spaceman Marketing and EDGEY, has scooped top honours at the Restaurant Marketer & Innovator Awards in London, winning Best Launch of the Year for the standout debut of Cow & Sow in Paradise.

Their bold and playful "Let's Mooooove" campaign captured attention and set a new benchmark for hospitality launches, showcasing the power of creative collaboration.

Adding to the momentum, Delicious PR's Managing Director, Anita Champaneri, is shortlisted for two prestigious accolades at The Business Desk Leadership Awards, Hospitality Leader and Sales & Marketing Leader, cementing her reputation as a driving force behind the industry's most exciting brand moments and ambassador for the City. Delicious PR is celebrating 19 years of business in 2026.



NEW DIRECTOR JOINS AS INNES ENGLAND EYES EXPANSION

Innes England

The Colmore office of surveying firm Innes England has welcomed new director, Andy Johnson, to its team.

A builder surveyor, Johnson joins from construction consultants MPP Group, where he spent five years. He also clocked in at Mace and Faithfull+Gould during the course of his 43-year career in construction and consultancy.

Johnson has extensive experience in party wall matters, neighbourly issues, dilapidations, clerk of works and project monitoring, technical due diligence, asset management, defect diagnosis and

schedules of condition surveys with risk management. He is also an RICS APC counsellor.

He has worked with prestigious clients across the Midlands. He was lead clerk of works for Jaguar Land Rover's Triangle building at Gaydon and estate planner at their Whitley plant; he project managed refurbishment projects at BMW's Hams Hall plant and advised Aston University and Wolverhampton University on their estate strategies. Johnson said: "Innes England is a highly regarded business, with an ambitious growth strategy. I look forward to working with the team and being part of this journey."

Fisher German

A leading property consultancy has been appointed as asset managers for a West Midlands-based property development and investment company.

Fisher German's asset management team has been awarded a contract to oversee four properties from the Barberr investment portfolio, strengthening the long-standing relationship between the businesses.

Barberr is an existing client of the

firm, with Fisher German already providing property management and agency services. The new instruction will see Fisher German take on asset management responsibilities for four properties totalling approximately 100,000 sq ft predominantly located across the Midlands.

The appointment will involve day-to-day asset management initiatives and providing a range of comprehensive advice and support to the Barberr team.



First Intuition

First Intuition has 'Large Provider of the Year' at the AAT Training Provider Awards 2026.

The award from the Association of Accounting Technicians recognises the quality of the training and support provided to people starting and progressing their careers in accounting and finance.

First Intuition was recognised for creating inclusive, supportive learning environments, and tutors who go above and beyond to help learners succeed.

From personalised academic guidance to helping learners rebuild confidence through complex challenges, First Intuition puts trainees at the heart of everything they do.

The awards took place in March, at voco St John's, Solihull, and the FI team took great delight in collecting the award.

Marrons

Planning, design and development consultancy Marrons has appointed Tim Farley as planning director, strengthening its senior planning capability and reinforcing its commitment to delivering sustainable housing and infrastructure growth across the region.

Farley brings more than 25 years' experience across both public and private sector planning, with a career spanning development management, strategic land promotion, and major infrastructure delivery.



Harper James

Harper James has appointed Lottie Hugo as a corporate partner, strengthening its offer to SMEs and high-growth businesses.

Hugo brings more than a decade of experience advising founders, management teams and investors on UK and cross-border deals, spanning private M&A, private equity and restructurings across sectors including energy, tech and retail. She joins from Freeths, where she was made partner and helped grow the firm's South West corporate team.

At Harper James, she will work within a 16-strong corporate team supporting clients on transactions, investment and governance, with a focus on scalable, commercially driven legal advice.



James Maynell (right) pictured with Mark Taylor (left)

Bishop Fleming

Accountancy practice Bishop Fleming has strengthened its Birmingham presence with the appointment of James Maynell as a transaction support partner to its Colmore Row office.

Maynell joins as a due diligence specialist alongside the Birmingham leadership team and partner group to support clients looking to buy, sell, or merge with other businesses.

His focus will be on both buy-side and sell-side due diligence, maximising the attractiveness of deals by identifying commercial value and ensuring clients are presented in the best possible light.

He brings over two decades of wide-ranging, high-level commercial experience, including 12 years at EY in operational transaction services, and latterly as a partner at Ballards LLP.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

DISTRICT PROFILE:
BEN GULLIFORD,
ROTHSCHILD & CO

ROTHSCHILD AT 25 BACKING CITY'S NEXT CHAPTER

Rothschild & Co has been present in the city for 25 years. Ben, you've recently returned to working here. What excites you most about being part of Birmingham's next chapter?

Although I have worked away for several years, I've continued to live and raise my family in the Midlands, keeping me connected to the city.

What excites me most about returning to work here is the sense of momentum and confidence in Birmingham's future and the chance to play an active part in that next phase.

All this, and participating in the Colmore Food Festival in July!

This year marks the 25th anniversary of your Global Advisory business in Birmingham – what does this milestone mean to you, and how do you see its impact reflected in the city today?

The milestone is a recognition of the long-term commitment Rothschild & Co has made to the region and our continued belief in the strength of local businesses. Our investment in the Wealth Management arm of our business alongside Global Advisory is also testament to this.

Our approach across Global Advisory and Wealth Management reflects Birmingham's development as a genuine advisory hub, with companies of all sizes seeking strategic guidance, investment support and succession planning. This is visible in the breadth of the client base and the quality of the work in the city today.

I'm proud to lead the Birmingham Wealth Management division of a firm which has such continuity and heritage.

You previously served on the Colmore Board; looking back, how would you describe the evolution of the Colmore business district since your time in that role?

Returning to the district after several years away, it is inspiring to see how the ambitious plans discussed during my time on the Board have become reality.



One of the highlights is that the district today feels more confident, more welcoming and more defined as the professional heart of the city, as well as more intentional about bringing businesses together and promoting Birmingham externally.

From your perspective, how does Birmingham's current trajectory align with the ambitions you've seen throughout your career, and where do you believe the greatest opportunities now lie?

Birmingham has always been ambitious about its future. What feels different now is the pace and scale at which that ambition is being realised, with stronger investment flowing into the region and a wider mix of high quality companies choosing to grow here.

Looking ahead, I see some of the greatest opportunities in supporting owner managed and family run businesses as they plan for the next stage of their journey, as well as helping larger companies navigate growth, investment and generational change. With the talent in the region and the increasing depth of capital available, the city is well placed for a very strong next chapter of growth and broader influence.

THE POWER OF THREE

GLOBAL NAMES AND A REIMAGINED PUBLIC REALM POSITION PARADISE AT THE FOREFRONT OF BIRMINGHAM'S COMMERCIAL EVOLUTION

Birmingham's Paradise development has reached another defining moment, with a wave of high-profile relocations to Three Chamberlain Square signalling a new phase in the scheme's evolution.

The influx of professional services firms comes as the building's surrounding public realm nears completion, unlocking new sightlines, pedestrian routes and places to dwell around Paradise Street and the historic Town Hall.

At the heart of this momentum is Three Chamberlain Square itself: a 191,000 sq ft, next-generation office building that has attracted a roll call of global occupiers and achieved full occupancy shortly after completion.

Among the headline arrivals is Eversheds Sutherland, which has committed to a 15-year lease for its 500-strong Birmingham team. The move will bring the law firm into the Paradise cluster, joining a growing eco-system of advisory, legal and consultancy firms in the city centre.

Accountancy and advisory firm Forvis Mazars is also expanding within Paradise, relocating its 340 staff into larger premises at Three Chamberlain Square as part of a wider growth

trajectory that has seen its regional headcount more than double in recent years.

Meanwhile, real estate advisory giant CBRE has chosen the building for its Birmingham office, underlining the scheme's appeal not just to occupiers, but to the very firms shaping the commercial property landscape.

Together, these moves reinforce a clear trend: Paradise is fast becoming Birmingham's professional services hub. The clustering effect is further amplified by Three Chamberlain Square's design, which emphasises connectivity. As the final elements of the public realm are delivered, the spaces around Paradise Street and the Town Hall are reimagined as places not just to pass through, but to pause, meet and spend time.

Looking ahead, the next chapter in Paradise's commercial story will be written just across the estate. Deloitte has confirmed it will relocate its Midlands operation later this year, bringing more than 1,000 staff to One Centenary Way. The firm has taken 46,000 sq ft across two floors and is expected to move in autumn 2026.

PEOPLE, PLACE AND PLANET PROSPER AT BCO MIDLANDS AWARDS

Birmingham's office sector dominated this year's BCO Midlands & Central England Awards, with five city projects recognised for excellence in workplace design, sustainability and innovation.

The standout winner was Three Chamberlain Square, which claimed both the Commercial Workplace and ESG awards at the ceremony held at the Eastside Rooms on 8 May.

Three Chamberlain Square impressed judges with its "exemplary environmental credentials". The landmark building achieved BREEAM Outstanding status and is targeting a NABERS 5* rating, both firsts for the West Midlands.

The awards also recognised several other Birmingham projects. 10 Brindleyplace won the Fit Out of Workplace category for Phoenix Group's new Standard Life hub, while 19 Cornwall Street received the Refurbished/Recycled Workplace award for its ESG-led transformation. No.1 BHIC secured the Innovation award for its role in creating a new health and innovation campus near the University of Birmingham.

Midlands winners will now go forward to the national BCO Awards in October at London's Grosvenor House Hotel.



HERE COMES THE SUN WHOSE ROUND IS IT?

As the sun stretches long into the evening and Colmore colleagues step out onto our streets and squares, summer socialising in Birmingham takes on a new dimension.

From polished terraces to cosy courtyards and pavement tables humming with post-work chatter, Colmore offers one of the city's richest selections of outdoor drinking spots.

What sets the area apart is its range. Traditional pubs pour some of the region's best cask ales, perfect for those chasing a proper pint, while contemporary bars lean into spritzes, classic cocktails and chilled rosé. Whether it's a quick lunchtime catch-up over a 0% beer or golden-hour drinks that stretch late into the evening, there's a venue to match every mood.

Historic pubs sit comfortably alongside sleek new arrivals. You might find yourself perched outside a centuries-old pub steeped in character, or sipping something citrusy on a stylish terrace designed for people-watching.

Many venues open directly onto Colmore's elegant streets, making it easy to drift from one stop to the next as the evening unfolds. From Bennetts Hill to Edmund Street and across Paradise, this is a district made for summer socialising, where great drinks, good company and the glow of the setting sun come together.

OUTDOOR DRINKING SPOTS ACROSS COLMORE

Albert's Schloss **Chamberlain Square, B3 3HJ**

A Bavarian-inspired bar with steins of beer and a party atmosphere that spills outdoors.

Damascena **5-7 Temple Row West, B2 5NY**

A Middle Eastern café with outdoor seating, perfect for coffee and light bites in the sun.

Eighteen **103 Colmore Row, B3 2QD**

A skyline members' bar offering cocktails and impressive city views from its terrace.

F1 Arcade **Chamberlain Square, B3 3AX**

High-energy entertainment venue with an outdoor area, ideal for drinks with a competitive twist.

Good Intent **Great Western Arcade, B2 5HU**

A hidden gem for craft beer lovers, with a great arcade setting.

Gusto **Unit 10, The Grand Hotel, Colmore Row, B3 2BS**

A chic Italian restaurant with outdoor tables, ideal for spritz and lunches.

Newhall Street Tavern **106-110 Edmund Street, B3 2ES**

A contemporary pub with a spacious outdoor terrace, popular for both craft beer and cocktails.

Plates by Purnell's **119 Edmund Street, B3 2HJ**

A stylish, laid-back dining spot with outdoor seating and a focus on small plates to go with fine wines.

Primitivo **10 Barwick Street, B3 2NT**

An intimate wine bar with a continental feel, offering relaxed pavement seating and European charm.

Purecraft Bar & Kitchen **30 Waterloo Street, B2 5TJ**

A go-to for craft beer enthusiasts, with outdoor tables and a menu designed to pair perfectly with its brews.

The Queen's Head **28 Steelhouse Lane, B4 6BJ**

A traditional pub with friendly atmosphere and outdoor seating for no-fuss pints.

Regina's Bar and Restaurant **11 Newhall Street, B3 3NY**

A touch of glamour on Newhall Street,

with outdoor seating and a cocktail-led menu perfect for after-work drinks.

Society Birmingham
One Colmore Square, B4 6AA

Modern food hall with outdoor seating, offering drinks alongside street food.

Stories Tavern
Ground Floor, 103 Colmore Row, B3 2BS

A new-look bar with an outdoor area for cocktails and after-work gatherings.

The Alchemist
The Grand, Colmore Row, B3 2BS

Famous for theatrical cocktails, with outdoor tables perfect for the sunshine.

The Colmore
114-116 Colmore Row, B3 2DA

A bustling city pub with a terrace, ideal for group drinks and people-watching.

The Old Contemptibles
176 Edmund Street, B3 2HB

A characterful Nicholson's pub with classic ales and one of the area's most recognisable outdoor spaces.

The Old Joint Stock
4 Temple Row West, B2 5NY

A gorgeous pub that was once a banking hall, offering outdoor seating and a strong selection of real ales.

The Roebuck
16 Church Street, B3 2NP

A historic pub with outdoor seating and a solid selection of beers and pub classics.

The Royal
53 Church Street, B3 2DP

A traditional pub with outdoor tables, offering a relaxed setting on Church St.

The Wellington
37 Bennetts Hill, B2 5SN

One of Birmingham's most celebrated real ale pubs, with outdoor seating.

Theatrix
130 Colmore Row, B3 3AP

A bold, theatrical bar with striking interiors and outdoor space fronting Victoria Square.

Trillium
1 Snow Hill Queensway, B4 6GH

The new terrace is perfect for a glass of wine, cocktail or beer.



UPDATED ON CITY CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Major public realm improvements began in January, bringing significant upgrades to key parts of the city centre, and here's what Colmore businesses need to know.

Birmingham City Council has appointed CPC Civils to deliver a programme of high-quality public realm works, including new granite paving, upgraded lighting, improved drainage and refreshed street furniture. The project is scheduled to run for around 18 months.

The works will transform a number of central streets, including New Street (pictured above), Bennetts Hill, Ethel Street, Temple Street, Lower Temple Street, Eden Place and Chamberlain Passage. Although the programme sits outside of Colmore's boundary, it will directly affect many routes commuters, visitors and workers use every day.

Birmingham City Council said the enhanced pedestrian areas will create "safer and attractive" spaces for people walking and cycling.

Some access routes will be temporarily diverted, with traffic management in place as needed. Any adjustments to waste collection points or delivery arrangements will be shared in advance, and Colmore will keep businesses informed through newsletter updates.

TIMETABLE OF WORKS

Proposed work: until July 9

New Street – area by Starbucks – Mappin and Webb – Tesco

Proposed work: until June 4

Temple Street – area by Moss Bros – Flight Club – Tesco Car Park

Proposed work: May 25 until August 18

Cannon Street

Proposed work: July 10 until August 10

New Street – area by Bella Italia – Tim Hortons – Moss Bros

Proposed work: August 19 until November 9

Lower Bennetts Hill – areas by The Indian Streatery and Dave's Hot Chicken

Proposed work: August 19 until November 25

Second phase Bennetts Hill – areas by Dirty Martini – Cosy Club – The Indian Streatery

Proposed work: November 26 until March 31, 2027

Lower Temple Street – area by Tim Hortons – Café Nero & Starbucks – Ladbrokes

Proposed work: April 1, 2027 until July 7, 2027

Sequence dates may be subject to change

HEALTH, REIMAGINED

WHY NEKO CHOSE COLMORE

Neko Health, the health technology company redefining how we approach early detection, has chosen Colmore for its latest UK location. Known for its cutting-edge, non-invasive full-body scans and data-driven insights, Neko Health is on a mission to shift healthcare from reactive treatment to proactive prevention. In this Q&A with founder Hjalmar Nielsen, pictured right, we explore why Birmingham stood out as the ideal next step.

Birmingham marks Neko Health's newest UK location. What made Colmore Business District the right choice for your expansion, and how do you see Neko Health contributing to Birmingham's growing reputation as a hub for innovation and wellbeing?

Birmingham felt like a natural next step. Since launching in London, we've seen an enormous appetite from people across the UK for a more proactive approach to their health. Birmingham, with its energy and growing professional community, kept coming up. Colmore has the kind of forward-thinking atmosphere that feels right for what we're building.

What we're doing at Neko is quite simple in principle, even if the technology behind it is anything but: we give people a genuinely thorough picture of their health in under an hour, right now, before symptoms appear. A full, non-invasive body scan that includes body, skin and arterial imaging as well as a blood panel, and then time sitting with a doctor who walks you through what it all means and what you should do about it.

Everything we measure is designed to be actionable. And critically, it all happens in a single visit: no waiting weeks for results, no being left to interpret numbers on your own, no returning to multiple specialists.

Neko Health has been described as a transformative approach to preventative healthcare. In your view, what are the biggest gaps in today's healthcare ecosystem, and how does your technology aim to bridge them for everyday patients?



The system we have in the UK (and in most countries) is designed to treat you once you're ill, and doesn't have great tools to help you avoid getting ill in the first place. The NHS does important work under enormous pressure, but preventive care has historically been underfunded and fragmented. Chronic conditions like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers are responsible for the vast majority of healthcare costs worldwide, and the frustrating thing is that many of them are detectable long before symptoms appear, if you're looking for the right signals.

That's the gap Neko is designed to address. We're not trying to replace your GP or the NHS. We see ourselves as a complement to the existing system, not a replacement for clinical care but an enabler of earlier insight, smarter decision-making and more efficient use of healthcare resources.

Our data is the greatest proof point for this. An analysis of over 4,000 scans in Stockholm in 2024 found that 1.2% of people had a previously unknown life-threatening condition that required immediate attention. People who had come in feeling perfectly fine. Another 4% had significant health conditions that were newly identified. These cases now have

the chance to act early, when it matters most. Among those who returned for a second scan, 77% were found to be in good health or with their condition under control, and we observed a statistically significant improvement in outcomes across five out of seven biomarkers. These cases now have the chance to act early, when it matters most and the direction of travel is clearly positive.

Technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace. Which emerging innovations – whether in AI, diagnostics, or personalised medicine – do you believe will have the greatest impact on the future of healthcare?

What I'm most excited about, and that we're actively building towards at Neko, is the move from looking at your health as a series of isolated snapshots to tracking it as a continuous, evolving picture over time. Right now, most of us only really engage with healthcare when something feels wrong. The future is one where we understand our baseline, notice subtle shifts before they become problems, and have the tools to act early.

AI has a transformative role to play here, not as a replacement for clinical judgement (the face-to-face consultation

with a clinician at the end of every Neko appointment is essential), but as a way of making sense of enormous amounts of health data and surfacing what matters. We're already using AI across multiple applications every day: from analysing sensor data to detect and track skin lesions over time, to cardiovascular signal analysis, to supporting the clinical documentation that helps doctors focus on the conversation rather than the paperwork.

There are also areas where the science is advancing rapidly that I find particularly compelling. The immune system, for instance, sits at the intersection of nearly every chronic disease, yet today it's rarely monitored proactively. Building immune resilience – understanding how the body responds to stress, how quickly it recovers, how these patterns evolve over years – is one of the most important frontiers in preventive medicine.

As you look ahead to the next phase of Neko Health's growth, what are your priorities for the service in Birmingham, and how do you plan to ensure it remains both accessible and impactful as the healthcare landscape evolves?

Our immediate priority is simply making sure the Birmingham experience is everything it should be: that every person who walks through our doors leaves genuinely informed, reassured and clear on what their results mean and what to do next. That's the standard we hold ourselves to, and it's non-negotiable.

Beyond that, accessibility is something we think about constantly. The Neko Scan is designed to be both convenient and affordable relative to other private health options, and our technology-led model is built to become more accessible over time, not less. As we grow and learn, we want to reach more people across Birmingham and beyond, including those who've never thought of themselves as the kind of person who would pay attention to preventive health.

Longer term, we're committed to building something that contributes meaningfully to the broader healthcare conversation in the UK. That means working alongside the NHS where we can, sharing outcomes data and research, and demonstrating with real evidence that catching things earlier genuinely changes lives.

Visit www.nekohealth.com/se/en



DR IPEK CLINIC BRINGS A REFINED MEDICAL APPROACH TO AESTHETICS

Located on Colmore Row, Dr Ipek Clinic reflects a considered approach to aesthetic medicine. Founded by NHS doctor Dr Ipek, the clinic opened in January 2026 with a soft launch and New Year reception, marking its arrival in Colmore.

After gaining clinical experience across Europe and the United States, Dr Ipek established her Birmingham practice with the aim of combining medical knowledge, dermatological training, and aesthetic expertise.

Holding a Professional Diploma in Dermatology from the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, Dr Ipek integrates dermatological knowledge with aesthetic medicine while also offering longevity consultations and guidance on healthy living.

The location was deliberately chosen for its central, vibrant and prestigious character. Colmore Row is also an area shaped by pace and pressure, where long working hours and demanding schedules often leave little room for personal wellbeing.

The clinic focuses on safe, natural-looking results delivered with a personalised medical approach, offering a range of advanced treatments.

Its proximity, just a minute from Snow Hill Station and within easy reach of New Street and Moor Street, makes it especially convenient after work, offering a discreet setting for professionals integrating wellbeing into busy routines.

Find out more: dripekclinic.uk

Your Colmore Business District Map



Map