

DISCOVERING BIRMINGHAM *experiences*

Your guide to getting the most from the city

Issue 2 • September–November 2020

Enjoy the city ... and keep Covid-19 Safe!

As the lockdown eases, Birmingham's experiences are gradually welcoming visitors back with additional Covid-19 security in place. *Discovering Birmingham Experiences* includes information on things that are now open for you to enjoy. For local people this is a fantastic time to come into the city centre and for visitors we aim to help you make the most of your stay.



Centenary Square in the heart of Birmingham is a great place to relax and enjoy the city.

Birmingham Heritage Week

A city-wide festival celebrating its rich and diverse aspects.

Heritage Week is for visitors and local people helping you to get out and explore the city.

This year is slightly different with a mix of real tours, visits, virtual tours and discussions. For live events full Covid-19 precautions are in place.



The Real Birmingham Family sculpture creates much discussion during Heritage Week tours.



Birmingham
Heritage
Week

Visit England – we're good to go!

Experiences that have reopened have many new ways of working in place to ensure they comply with the latest Government guidelines on Covid-19 security.

Look out for the Visit England 'We're good to go' quality mark which shows that an organisation has passed Visit England's assessment of compliance with Government and public health guidance on Covid-19 safety.



Subscribe online now – email: subscribe@discoveringbirmingham.co.uk

AWARD-WINNING City centre walking tours

The popular Positively Birmingham Walking Tours have restarted, with weekend tours available to book now and continuing throughout the year.

Private tours are also available for visitors and local people and groups to enjoy during the week. All tours use the 'live audio' system, with the guide transmitting to an audio unit carried by each guest. This enables social distancing to 2m – and much more if you like! Tours start from outside the Library of Birmingham.

Saturdays 1.30pm-3.30pm:

From canals and Victorians to today's city

Sundays 1.30pm-3.30pm:

Discovering Birmingham including the 'secret canal' to the Jewellery Quarter

Check availability and book a ticket on the website: www.positivelybirmingham.co.uk

Positively BIRMINGHAM
Walking Tours



The 'live audio' allows for great social distancing, used here as the tour stops at Newhall Square, the newest of Birmingham's designer squares.



Jonathan and Maria all set for a Covid-19 safe walking tour!

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**Birmingham
Heritage
Week**



10 – 20 September 2020

Heritage Fun in Brum

- Eleven days of fascinating events for local people and visitors to enjoy
- See website for details:
www.birminghamheritageweek.co.uk

Welcome back

While many places sadly remain closed for now there are plenty of things reopening for local people and visitors to enjoy in Birmingham. It is a win-win: they need your support and you get some great things to do without too many crowds! Here we highlight key attractions that are now open to enjoy.

For the latest information and a more complete list of experiences visit www.discoveringbirmingham.co.uk

IN THE CITY CENTRE:

A Self-Guided & Virtual City Centre Tour

Explore the city at your own pace. Available 24/7 – link sent straight to your phone so you can start at once. Also suitable as virtual tours, especially for schools.

www.positivelybirmingham.co.uk

Ikon Gallery B1 2HS

Modern art gallery in a historic Martin & Chamberlain building in Brindleyplace. Pre-book online with FREE entry. Open Thurs (3-7pm); Friday to Sunday (12-4pm)

www.ikon-gallery.org

Legoland Discovery Centre B1 2AA

Alongside the canal in the city centre. Do remember that adults must be accompanied by a child!

<https://birmingham.legolanddiscoverycentre.co.uk>

Positively Birmingham Walking Tours B1 2ND

2-hour city centre tours run most weekend afternoons.

Private tours at a date and time of your choosing.

www.positivelybirmingham.co.uk

Run of a Kind B5 4EG

A 10 km, 2-hour guided run over canal paths and city streets with stops to learn about things around you.

www.runofakindbirmingham.com

St Philip's Cathedral B3 2QB

Open for private prayer and to see the famous Burne-Jones windows. Restricted hours, face masks mandatory.

www.birminghamcathedral.com

Sealife Centre B1 2HL

Open now to visit as long as you pre-book on website.

www.visitsealife.com

AROUND & ABOUT:

Ackers Adventure B11 2PY

Now open for bookable activities including skiing and tobogganing.

www.ackers-adventure.co.uk

Birmingham Botanical Gardens B15 3TR

A short trip from the city centre. Now open to walk round on weekdays and the weekend.

www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

Cadbury World B30 1JR

Tells the story of the Cadbury family and their role in producing chocolate products.

www.cadburyworld.co.uk

Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens B36 9BT

A ten acre walled garden rescued by volunteers over 35 years ago and restored back to its original 19th century condition. Open all year round with pre-booking advised.

www.castlebromwichhallgardens.org.uk

Escape Live B19 3LY

Escape game for 2-6 people. Includes Peaky Blinder themes. Book on website.

www.escapelive.co.uk/locations/birmingham

Moseley Road Baths B12 9BX

Spectacular 1907 swimming pools with the smaller one open for swimming.

www.moseleyroadbaths.org.uk

Selly Manor B30 2AE

Reopen for pre-bookings. Two timber-framed Tudor buildings, moved to Bournville by the Cadbury family.

www.sellymanormuseum.org.uk

Make a Gentoo penguin's day!

Sealife Birmingham is amazing, with over 2,000 creatures and the incredible 360° underwater tunnel. The Gentoo penguins have been missing visitors and are looking forward to welcoming you back. You'll need to pre-book even if you have an annual pass. Online tickets start at under £20. The Utilita Arena Birmingham South car park is just a 3 minute walk.

More details and bookings at: www.visitsealife.com



Big thrills in Small Heath

Until you can hit those Alpine slopes again a great local secret is the excellent ski coaching at **Ackers Adventure** in Small Heath, now open with Covid-19 safe practices in place.

Tobogganing: For children up to 12 years, with limited group sizes.

Wednesday Morning Club: Expert advice and friendly people. You must pre-book.

Recreational Skiing: Available throughout the week for those who can already ski.

Further details and bookings from: www.ackers-adventure.co.uk



Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Now open daily from 10am to 6pm – 15 acres of gardens and four impressive glasshouses to enjoy.

The café is open for take-aways and there are plenty of places to sit and enjoy this tranquil space. (Please note that the ever-popular children's playground closes at 2pm).

More details from birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk



BIRMINGHAM CURIOSITIES

The invention of plastic

It's amazing that Birmingham invented silver electroplating and then went on to produce silverware for the whole world. Did you know that Alexander Parkes, one of the principles at the Elkington electroplating company also invented plastic? He is remembered with a blue plaque on part of the original Elkington factory works on Newhall Street.

Alexander proudly named the plastic 'Parkesine' and set up a factory to make it on Hackney Marshes in East London. The production process was problematic as it used ethanol to extract cellulose from wood pulp, which led to many fires. The process was modified and taken forward by another company who renamed the plastic Xylonite.

Positively Birmingham Walking Tours look at Elkington as part of their Sunday afternoon tour which runs throughout the year.

More details and booking at www.positivelybirmingham.co.uk

The Elkington factory site includes a pleasant new square for visitors to enjoy, flanked by the restored Whitmore Warehouse, seen here.



The blue Plaque remembers Alexander Parkes' invention of plastic.

Products produced by Elkington displayed in the brand new Newhall Square.

DISCOVERING BIRMINGHAM *experiences*

Editorial

Our focus is on promoting things to experience in the Birmingham postcode area – contact Jonathan Berg: editor@discoveringbirmingham.co.uk

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Visit Birmingham

sifa fireside

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