

JQ Life

Issue 1 - Summer 2018



JEWELLERY QUARTER

Life in the Quarter

www.jewelleryquarter.net

FREE

CHANGING SPACES: OPHEEM

RENOWNED CHEF, AKTAR ISLAM,
UNVEILS HIS FIRST SOLO
RESTAURANT IN THE JQ



► In Their Own Words: Marion Wilson

Birmingham Assay Office's
Academy Director shares
her story of the JQ



LIVE

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► Join the JQ Festival fun 20 - 22 July 2018

Get a sneak preview of
this year's highlights



WORK

VISIT

G. L. BICKNELL & SONS

IN THE HEART OF BIRMINGHAM'S JEWELLERY QUARTER



IT STARTS WITH A KISS



12-14 Vyse Street, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, B18 6LE

bicknells.com

Shaping the JQ for the next generation



The relationship between the past, present, and future shapes our understanding of the world around us. This is never truer than when thinking of the Jewellery Quarter.

As we know, it is an area rich in heritage, but the work we carry out now will have a significant impact on shaping it for the next generation.

I oversee projects that play a valuable contribution to the community. The Jewellery Quarter Business Improvement District (JQBID), which received a yes vote from the local businesses in 2017, keeps the area clean, safe, and inclusive, while a £2million scheme that started earlier this year is reinvigorating new buildings and bringing heritage alive for a new audience (read more about the JQDT's Townscape Heritage on page 8).

However, it isn't just us playing a role in the JQ's future; businesses,

residents, and many other partners are resolved around one objective - making this historic area the best it can be. That's why we love producing our magazine because it helps us spread the word about all the great things happening here.

For regular readers, you'll notice that Quarter Life has transformed to JQ Life. It might look and feel different (more on page 8) but it remains the magazine for the Jewellery Quarter. We'd love to hear your feedback and you'll notice whilst reading that we want you to get more involved, whether it's providing stories or photos. Get in touch with us on jqlife@digitalglue.eu

Finally, I'd like to remind you that the JQ Festival is just around the corner (20 - 22 July). A 'What's On' special starting on page 10 features this year's highlights. I'll hopefully see you there!

Enjoy reading.

Luke Crane

JQDT Executive Director

To find out more about the JQBID, visit www.jewelleryquarter.net/jqbid

 @jq_bid

 [facebook.com/JewelleryQtr](https://www.facebook.com/JewelleryQtr)

 @JQBID

Highlights in this issue

WHAT'S ON: JQ FESTIVAL SPECIAL 10-13

PLAN YOUR WEEKEND AT THIS YEAR'S JQ FESTIVAL WITH OUR HIGHLIGHTS GUIDE

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MY PIECE OF THE JQ 30

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JEWELLERY QUARTER BID
Life in the Quarter

JQLife

Issue 1 – Summer 2018

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Get Involved

IF YOU HAVE A STORY YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE IN JQ LIFE, GET IN TOUCH ON JQLIFE@DIGITALGLUE.EU

Who's new in the JQ?

◆ SPACES.

Spaces describe themselves as 'a creative working environment with a unique entrepreneurial spirit'. They're bringing dynamic working areas to the JQ, to help you think, create, and collaborate - all with a warm welcome from their friendly staff. Spaces believe work is less about things and more about people and ideas. They have developed and facilitated an inspiring professional environment, and a strong culture centred around a community of interesting people doing exciting things.

Spaces support their members to build their networks and connect with like-minded people to link up and share ideas. Whether you're a small business, entrepreneur, or a corporate intrapreneur, Spaces want to facilitate your success.

Spaces is now open at Crossway, 156 Great Charles Street Queensway, B3 3HN

www.spaceworks.com/crossway

THE WILDERNESS

Run by Alex Claridge, The Wilderness serves playful and provocative food based on seasonal and wild produce. If you're after rock'n'roll vibes, and an exciting and innovative take on British cuisine, The Wilderness is well worth a visit. But be quick. With the restaurant tipped for a Michelin star, bagging a table is going to become harder than ever.

The Wilderness is now open at 27 Warstone Lane, B18 6JQ

www.wearethewilderness.co.uk



Diamonds Factory are a globally trusted purveyor of personalised, affordable, and high-quality diamonds and jewellery. They've recently opened a brand-new showroom in the JQ, designed to offer advice on their products and showcase their available samples.

The Diamonds Factory showroom is now open in Unit 505B, The Big Peg, 120 Vyse Street, B18 6NF

www.diamondsfactory.co.uk

CHECK OUT WHO ELSE HAS OPENED IN THE JQ

Arch 13
www.arch13bar.co.uk

Salcooks
www.salcooks.co.uk

The Rebel Chicken
www.facebook.com/wearerebelchicken

Opheem
www.opheem.com

Mi Amore
www.miamorepizza.co.uk

MDG Architects
www.mdgarchitects.co.uk

Sculpt
www.sculpt.design

The Pit Gym
www.thepitgym.co.uk

The Birmingham Whisky Club
www.thebirminghamwhiskyclub.co.uk

Sarto
www.sartohair.co.uk

Magpie Photography
www.magpiecreative.co.uk

Mumtaz Collection
www.facebook.com/MumtazCollectionbyDesign

Lucky Duck
www.luckyduckbirmingham.co.uk

Hair, Nails & Beauty For You
www.hair-nails-beauty-for-you.co.uk

Honor Gold
www.honorgold.co.uk

Shots Espresso Bar
www.twitter.com/shotsbysaints

Nevin Day Centre
www.nevindaycentre.co.uk

Superstar Phones
www.superstarphones.com

Steps To Your Healthy Future
www.stepstoyourhealthyfuture.org

Lucky Rabbit Tattoo
www.instagram.com/luckyrabbittattoocult

Thai Angels Thai Massage
www.thaiangels.co.uk

Eighty20Focus
www.eighty20focus.com

Little Box Co.
www.littleboxco.co.uk

JQBID & JQDT Highlights

SPRING - SUMMER 2018



NEW LOOK FOR JQ LIFE

As you might have noticed, we've had a makeover! Last year, the JQBID was renewed for a second five-year term, receiving an 88% yes vote from local businesses.



As part of our renewed term, we've partnered with Birmingham agency Digital Glue to deliver a brand-new magazine, complete with a new look and fresh features. Our new magazine is designed to put the people of the JQ in the spotlight, highlighting the vibrancy and diversity of our community.



JEWELLERY QUARTER BID
Life in the Quarter

The JQBID is operated through the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust (find out more about them overleaf).

The JQBID is in its second five-year term (2017-22) and delivers projects, events, and initiatives for the benefit of the JQ community.

Find out more at www.jewelleryquarter.net/jqbld

1,901 BAGS OF RUBBISH OFF JQ STREETS

The JQBID clean team, Allan and Dennis, have been working hard to keep the streets of the JQ looking spotless by collecting litter and tackling fly-tipping. A whopping 1,901 bags of rubbish were collected from across

the Quarter between January and the end of March 2018.

Building on our clean team's excellent work, we also organised and participated in a very successful community clean-up as part of the Great British Spring Clean in March. The event saw amazing volunteers from the JQ community come together and take to the streets with local MP Shabana Mahmood to collect a further 90 bags of rubbish!



LET'S GET DIGITAL

This spring, we held two free digital training workshops for JQ businesses in partnership with Google Digital Garage and Digital Birmingham. The event was a great success, giving local businesses that attended essential skills to help them grow.

These included:

- How to build a website
- Search engine optimisation
- Social media
- Digital advertising

Watch this space for more events near you.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL BID LEVY PAYERS' DINNER

On 17 May, we hosted our annual BID levy payers' dinner at the award-winning Brasserie restaurant located in University College Birmingham. We enjoyed a 3-course meal put together and hosted by the University's students. The dinner was a great opportunity to catch up with some of the fantastic businesses in the JQ and thank them for their ongoing support, as well as giving our levy payers the opportunity to hear what we have planned for our next term.

If you are interested in the next event, please contact the JQBID team via email info@jqdt.org



JQBID AND JQ CREATIVES AT MAKERS CENTRAL

The first ever Makers Central event was held at the NEC this May, giving people the opportunity to discover new techniques, get their hands on one-off hand-crafted items, and meet their favourite YouTube creatives. The JQBID stand was busy with over 600 people popping by to meet our local JQ makers. Highlights included:

- A chance to get up close and personal with Deborette Clarke's (B18 Leather) colourful products
- Glenn Campbell's brilliant jewellery demonstrations. (Thanks to the generosity of Cooksongold who lent us their equipment)
- The opportunity to see Michele White's beautiful pieces and discover the creative process behind them
- Tina Francis leading embroidery sessions with families and young people - many of whom hadn't tried embroidery before

The show was a fantastic opportunity to highlight the thriving community of creative makers, designers, and jewellers in the JQ.



THE LATEST FROM THE JEWELLERY QUARTER DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The work of the JQBID wouldn't be possible without the JQDT. This organisation acts as an umbrella body, through which different constituencies in the Quarter can come together and work to benefit the whole area.

THE JEWELLERY QUARTER TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE PROGRAMME

This year, in addition to operating the JQBID, the JQDT has started a brand-new project – the Jewellery Quarter Townscape Heritage programme, a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) scheme, funded through money raised by National Lottery players which will take place from 2018 to 2021.

"JQ Townscape Heritage is a three-year project to regenerate the area through delivering improvement and restoration works to buildings and improving visitor and local engagement with the heritage of the 'Industrial Middle', which forms part of the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area," says Mandy Hall, JQTH

Capital Works Programme Manager.

"We will be delivering a programme of public events and activities, exploring and celebrating the heritage of the Townscape Heritage area. Presenting heritage in new and exciting ways, we will bring the area to life through tours, talks, performances, and events inspired by the people and buildings of the 'industrial middle'. The aim is to engage new audiences through working with local schools, colleges, and community groups, as well as creating opportunities for local people to support events and carry out research."



To find out more, visit www.jewelleryquarter.net/townscape-heritage or email townscapeheritage@jqdt.org

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL LEADER'S VISION FOR THE JEWELLERY QUARTER

In the first JQDT Speaker Breakfast of 2018, Councillor Ian Ward spoke of his commitment to preserve the Q's historic legacy for future generations and expressed a desire for local businesses to manufacture the medals for the Commonwealth Games in 2022, as well as reiterating council plans to attract start-ups to the area.

Councillor Ward also shared a family connection to the area – his grandmother spent time working for one of the Quarter's many family businesses. The area's heritage is, according to Councillor Ward, the reason why "the Jewellery Quarter

is a distinctive area in Birmingham and known the world over."

Speaking after the event, Luke Crane, Jewellery Quarter Development Trust Executive Director, said, "Nurturing the creative industries, attracting investment, and effectively collaborating on major city-wide initiatives such as the Commonwealth Games is integral to the JQDT's work. By working in partnership with the City Council, these objectives can be achieved for the good not only of the Jewellery Quarter, but throughout Birmingham and the wider region."

The next Speaker Breakfast will be held in the Autumn.
For more information, please [email info@jqdt.org](mailto:emailinfo@jqdt.org)

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We're looking for volunteers to help with new and ongoing projects! If you are interested in the Jewellery Quarter and can spare a few hours, either regularly or on an ad hoc basis, we would love to hear from you. Volunteering with us is a

fantastic way to learn new skills, make new friends, or simply try something different.

Example roles include; events assistants, researchers, oral history interviewers, photographers, bloggers, and explainers.

To find out about current and upcoming volunteer opportunities and to get involved, visit www.jewelleryquarter.net/volunteering or email volunteering@jqdt.org

In With the Old, In With the New:

BUILDING A JQ FIT FOR PURPOSE

GUEST COLUMN: MATTHEW BOTT

The rate of development in the Jewellery Quarter is very visible. This is a welcome reversal of its neglect but also a challenge for the future of our area.

The goal of a vibrant Jewellery Quarter is achievable with a combination of its historic industry cluster and new designing and making sector, high quality new developments complementing restored historic buildings, and a large population of workers, students, and residents.

The influx of new people provides critical mass, keeping the area lively and helping stimulate demand for new shops, cafes, bars, and restaurants. This investment saves buildings from dereliction and fills unsightly gap sites. On the other hand, out-of-scale development and poor architecture has harmed the conservation area, and the densification of business and residential populations inevitably brings the risk of nuisance or disruption. So how can we create a JQ that is fit for purpose?

The Jewellery Quarter Development Trust (JQDT) created a group to review planning applications, and discuss and make representations for the most important schemes within the area. I co-chair the JQDT Planning Consultation Committee which comprises of volunteers drawn from the JQDT membership. The group reflects the Jewellery Quarter's businesses and residents and we are lucky to have on the panel a wealth of knowledge of the area, as well as planning, property, and design expertise.

Over time, we've moved from a reactive role in reviewing applications, to a proactive one


where we spend most of our time looking at developments before they are submitted to the council. Birmingham City Council formally notify us of all applications in the Quarter, Planning Officers highlight our representations in their reports, and developers are now encouraged to meet with the JQDT before submitting their applications.

We've got to this point by providing consistent and relevant comments on planning applications, and this early engagement is mutually beneficial: applicants benefit from our wealth of knowledge of the area, including local issues and planning rules, and the community has a chance to meaningfully influence schemes on our patch.

Over the past couple of years, we've looked at proposals ranging from a residential development on Legge Lane, the new UCB building now under construction, and Gilder's Yard on Great Hampton Street, to various plans for the 'bomb site' on Ludgate Hill – all before they've gone in for planning.

You might notice I used the term 'planning rules'. Not satisfied with being part of the planning review process, the JQDT also initiated a Neighbourhood Plan, where the community gets to write

its own planning rules (within reason). The Neighbourhood Plan is in its final stages and will be ready for more community engagement soon – keep an eye on www.jewelleryquarter.net/living and this column for more details.



Matthew Bott is a local resident and a Member of the JQDT. He is a Head of Design at Kier but writes here in a personal capacity. In his column, he looks at the Jewellery Quarter through the lens of conservation, planning, and development. Have an idea for a column?

Email JQLife@digitalglue.eu

Interested in finding out more about JQDT membership?

Contact **Parv Gandham** via email info@jqdt.org

What's On: JQ Festival special



20-22 July 2018

IT'S TIME FOR SOME FUN IN THE SUN AT OUR FOURTH ANNUAL JQ FESTIVAL

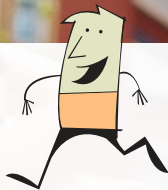
We're excited to announce that the Jewellery Quarter Festival is back for 2018, taking place between 20 - 22 July. The festival has been a huge success for the past three years, filled with fun, sun, and the best of the JQ.

Expect music, entertainment, workshops, tours, food, and more!

Plus, this year we have added a new third key location - the 'Makers Hub'. Join us at Stan's Café to meet local makers and get involved in workshops and activities. Want to know what else is going on? Here's a few highlights to keep an eye out for at this year's festival.

BREWERY QUARTER

20-22 July



Birmingham has no shortage of good beer and the JQ is a hotbed of independent brewers. Kick back and sample some real ale brewed locally while soaking in the JQ's unique charm in the sun. Visit one of the following breweries/venues during the festival, buy a drink, and you'll receive a sticker. Collect 10 and you can get your hands on one of 50 exclusive limited-edition Brewery Quarter 2018 T-shirts!

- 1000 Trades, Frederick Street
- Burning Soul Brewery, Mott Street
- Indian Brewery, Livery Street
- Rock 'n' Roll Brewhouse, Regent Place
- Two Towers Brewery, Bath Street



TAKE A TOUR OF THE JQ

21-22 July

Galleries, heritage, architecture, notable letterboxes... you name it, the Jewellery Quarter has got it. This year's festival has got tours for all ages so you can explore one of the most historic areas in the city. Here's just a taste of what's going on:

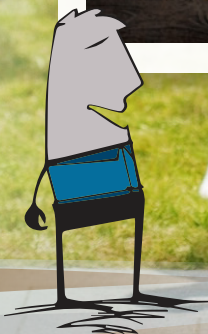
Gallery Tour (12:00 and 14:30 on Saturday 21 July)

If art is your thing, why not take a free tour of some of the stunning local JQ Galleries and find out more about their unique collections.

Letterboxes of the Jewellery Quarter (£5.00) (11:00 and 14:00 on Sunday 22 July)

The JQ's Georgian letterboxes are a unique detail of the area's industrial landscape. Discover their stories with our one-hour letterbox tour and learn about the history of the area and the businesses that forged them over the past two hundred years.

(All tours will start from the tour station on The Golden Square. Drop by any time during the festival to find out more details about all the tours taking place over the weekend.)



WITNESS THE IMPOSSIBLE WITH CIRCUSMASH

21-22 July

This year's JQ Festival will play host to the incredible CircusMASH. Why not swing by St. Paul's Square to watch them in action on Saturday 21 July – but leave the actual swinging to the professionals! Plus, if you want to see if you're made of circus material, get involved with family-friendly workshops on Sunday.



RAISE THE ROOF WITH BIRMINGHAM OPERA COMPANY

21 July

Cast your expectations aside... this is not your average opera performance. Birmingham's award-winning, international opera company will be performing this year on the stage in the marquee on the Golden Square – come down and hear something amazing.



GET AWESOME OFFERS AND DISCOUNTS WITH THE FESTIVAL VOUCHER BOOKLET

Our JQ Festival Voucher Booklet is returning again this year, giving you offers, promotions, and discounts during the festival weekend, as well as in July and August. Get fantastic deals on our famous jewellery shops and non-retail jewellers, as well as food and drink, hair and beauty, tourist attractions, and more.



WHAT ELSE TO WATCH OUT FOR....

 @jq_bid

 facebook.com/JewelleryQtr

 @JQBID

 #JQFestival

JQ SET

20-22 July

The JQ Set, on Spencer Street, will be opening up its brand new jewellery studio and school during the JQ Festival weekend for you to look around, view demonstrations, and participate in workshops. Come and join in to learn a little about making jewellery and go home with your own finished piece.

- Workshops - 11:00, 13:00, 15:00 on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 July
- Demonstrations - 10:00 – 17:00 on Friday 20 July



JEWELLERY QUARTER: PAST AND FUTURE

20 July

We will be running a launch event 'Jewellery Quarter: Past and Future' on 20 July in partnership with the School of Jewellery. There will be a Townscape Heritage information zone, a screening of a new short film about the 'Industrial Middle,' and hands-on demonstrations and exhibitions of work by local school and SoJ students.

- 17:15 - 19:45 on Friday 20 July
- BCU School of Jewellery, Vittoria St



Best Dressed at the JQ Festival

WE'VE HAND-PICKED THE JQ'S BEST BUYS TO GIVE YOU THE ULTIMATE SUMMER-IN-THE-CITY STYLE, READY FOR JQ FESTIVAL ON 20 - 22 JULY

RING IT IN

This gorgeous 18ct yellow gold ring adds a dash of boho glamour to any outfit



Prices on enquiry, Michele White Jewellery
www.michelewhite.com



PERFECT PINS

From Bill Murray to origami animals, show off your crafty side with Frilly Industries' quirky laser cut designs

£10 - £15,
Frilly Industries
www.frillyindustries.com

DIG YOUR CLAWS INTO THIS



Add a touch of macabre to your outfit with this dainty blackbird claw necklace

£210, Kate Gilliland
www.kategilliland.com

ULTIMATE EAR CANDY

Let these peacock-inspired earrings do the talking with their beautiful blue sapphires and enviable emeralds



Price available on request, Bèo London
www.beo.london

SUMMER, HONEY

There's still a huge buzz around honey bee pendants this summer and this is one we can't get enough of

£28, Summer and Silver
www.summerandsilver.co.uk



HEAT WAVE

Spice up your look with these red chilli cufflinks

£260,
Platinum Jewellers
www.platinumjewellers.co.uk



SKIRTING AROUND

What better way to embrace those festival vibes than with a midi skirt? This pleated Sassari midi is the perfect balance of cool and feminine

£45, Dolls of Decadence
www.dollsofdecadence.co.uk

FIX UP, LOOK SHARP

Found a vintage bargain that would look great at the JQ Festival but is just one size too big? Head to Karlus G. Tailor for the perfect fit
Prices start from £8, Karlus G. Tailor
www.karlusg-tailor.co.uk





NAILED IT

Whether it's glitter, chrome, or personalised designs, get your nails festival-ready at The Nail Quarter on Vyse Street

Prices start from £12, The Nail Quarter
www.thenailquarter.co.uk



TRIM AND PROPER

Fancy a fresh festival trim? Visit the team at Harris Gibbs Hair Shop on Caroline Street for men and women's bespoke cut and colouring services

Cut and finish starts at £30, Harris Gibbs Hair Shop
www.harrisgibbs.com



SILVER LINING

Fei Liu's sterling silver Serenity bangle, inspired by the flow of the smoke of incense, is the ideal day-to-night accessory

£300, Clearwater Diamonds
www.clearwaterdiamonds.co.uk



ALL MADE UP

Want to create that flawless festival look? Why not book in with Alyn Waterman Makeup & Hair Studio and learn the tricks of the trade

Makeup and hair services start from £50, Alyn Waterman Makeup & Hair Studio
www.alynmakeuphair.co.uk



CHARM ME

Looking for something that's completely unique, bespoke, and will really make you stand out? Bug, create personalised charms to symbolise any memory

Prices vary, Bug,
www.bugliveshere.com



COVER UP

Don't forget to protect your skin from the summer sun this JQ Festival. With anti-oxidants for extra protection and recommended by dermatologists, you won't want to leave home without RAD 15 sunscreen

£19.99, The Skin Practice
www.theskinpractice.com



RIGHT ON TIME

This suave Certina DS Podium chronograph watch for men can be dressed up or down

£357, Creative Watch Co.
www.creativewatch.co.uk



PRETTY PENNY

Gosia Weber Handmade's selection of chic purses are both stylish and practical for storing your pennies at the JQ Festival. Want to customise your own? Drop the GW team a note and they'll be happy to make it more you


£53, Gosia Weber Handmade
www.bagshandmade.co.uk

In Their Own Words: Marion Wilson

IN EVERY ISSUE, WE INVITE A MEMBER OF THE JQ COMMUNITY TO TELL US ABOUT THEIR JQ IN THEIR OWN WORDS.

IN THIS ISSUE, MARION WILSON, ACADEMY DIRECTOR AT BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE, SHARES HER STORY OF 18 YEARS SPENT WORKING IN THE JQ, HER FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT THE QUARTER, AND HER HOPES FOR ITS FUTURE.





NAME: **MARION WILSON**
ORGANISATION: **BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE**
JOB TITLE: **ACADEMY DIRECTOR**
YEARS WORKED IN THE JQ: **18**

“ IT'S PURELY ACCIDENTAL THAT I'VE ENDED UP IN THE JEWELLERY QUARTER.

I was working in the hotel industry when I met my husband, and his promotion brought us back to my hometown of Birmingham. We thought we'd stick around for a couple of years and then move on again, but we ended up staying and we've never looked back. I was desperate for a job of any sort when we moved here. We agreed I wouldn't continue hotel work, as if we both worked in different hotels, we'd never see each other! I got a 9-5 job at the H Samuel head office in Hockley. Quite honestly, I blagged my way into it; I just about had some of the qualifications, but I was very honest at the interview, so they took me on and 3 months later I was promoted.

My career in the jewellery industry blossomed from there. After ten years at H Samuel, during which I became mother to two daughters, I took time out and enjoyed some less demanding casual jobs. Months before our second daughter was starting school, an old contact from H Samuel got in touch. He had just taken on the role of Assay Master at the Assay Office and was kicking off the whole diversification programme - developing new businesses to run alongside the existing hallmarking service. He wanted me to take on a part time sales and marketing role. A tough decision. I wasn't sure I wanted a job that big at that time, but I took the plunge and I'm

so glad I did. I've been here for 18 years now, continually gaining responsibility and recently moving from Sales and Marketing Director, to my current role as Academy Director.

My new role was created as we moved to our new building three years ago. It has given me the opportunity to drive delivery of one of the key benefits of the new building which I was so involved in planning. Our vision is to create a training, meeting, and networking facility which supports the trade, local business, residential, educational, and heritage communities. The Academy is a wonderful space with great potential and my role is both a privilege and a challenge. It gives me a great sense of achievement. I like to think I've made a contribution to what the Assay Office has achieved in the past 15 years in particular, and I'd like to think I can carry on doing that - although maybe not for another 15 years!

MY JQ, MY OPINION:

“ THINGS AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE IN THE 1960S – AND THAT'S NOT A BAD THING.

The Jewellery Quarter has experienced continual, fascinating changes probably all of its life. In the last 20 years, there have clearly been some very serious challenges in terms of planning and regeneration. Some of the very big factories were gradually closing down as the market changed, with more and more importers or retailers going to the Far East to source their volume items. How to strike a balance between preventing the JQ becoming totally residential and preventing the area from becoming full of derelict empty jewellers was a big dilemma. Different well-intentioned factions were pulling in different directions, and in the middle of it all, we had a JQ Regeneration Partnership which was part-funded by the City Council and part-funded by European funding. There were so many different people involved, it was hard to make any positive changes. Then when the Council withdrew their funding, they left a big hole.

So, a crowd of people in the JQ, including the Assay Office, got together as a team to adopt an approach that aimed to nurture and respect our heritage, but didn't allow it to become an obstacle to inward investment and growth. That's how the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust (JQDT) was spawned. The model is not perfect, but it at least gives us one voice to represent the JQ within the City. We decided to introduce a Business Improvement District (BID) sitting under the JQDT to ensure we involved all businesses, and that's been a huge success. There are so many different types of businesses in the JQ now; creatives, offices, professional services, bars and restaurants,

and they are just as important to our future as the jewellery industry. The BID has brought all these businesses together with one common purpose – to rejuvenate the area, attract inward investment, and encourage people to work in, learn in, live in, and visit the JQ. I'm really pleased I was involved in the BID from the outset as a member of the Assay Office. We got an 88% yes vote on our last ballot, and it's brilliant to see the renewed energy and vitality across the Quarter. The guys involved in the Neighbourhood Plan have done so much work too. There is much more of a feeling that the future is being planned and controlled by people who live, learn, and work here, rather than dictated by outsiders.

Of course, that challenge between residential and commercial hasn't gone away, but our options are very limited.

We could continually bemoan the fact that things aren't what they used to be in the 1960s, or we can work to create a new world where people are living, working, enjoying, and learning all in the same environment.

My main fear now is that too many more one-bedroom apartments that people live in for four days a week will appear. With HS2 coming, that could be a real issue. We could do with more family homes in the Quarter but that's not happening at the moment.

We have to be realistic. We can't be everything. We can't be in 'Best Places to Live' lists and also have low property prices for people who want a workshop. That's the challenge to all of us – to try and keep that balance so that space is available for people that want to work here. As an Assay Office, we could have built our new office outside the JQ for a fraction of the price. But we wouldn't have been where we need to be. There are plenty of small businesses in the JQ that are still interdependent on each other because they've got the individual skills or processes that they need to share, and we're proud to be part of that supply chain.



MY JQ, MY HISTORY: BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE

To work in such a historical institution, which is very much a part of the Birmingham fabric, is a real privilege. Founded in 1773, the Assay Office was originally in the city centre. In the 1870s, as volumes for hallmarking were growing, the jewellers in the JQ petitioned the Assay Office to come closer to them, so they didn't have to travel a mile with all their valuable articles and we've been part of the JQ ever since.

I was recruited to the Assay Office when we had only recently had a new Act of Parliament granted allowing us to do things other than assaying and hallmarking for the very first time. My brief was to support those new divisions through sales & marketing activity. Firstly, we introduced our lab, where pioneering work has taken place. In addition to offering many routine precious metal tests, we have thoroughly researched harmful issues certain

metals such as nickel can have, and also developed tests in response to common trade concerns such as identifying the cause of silver tarnishing. We've helped people save a serious amount of money by offering a solution for that!

The development of the Analytical Lab introduced new expertise and a new mindset, and began the cultural change which is ongoing as we work and invest continually to keep pace with the industry we are serving.

We have staff of all ages, from 18 to retirement, and lots of different specialities. That's one of the reasons why we started the Academy, so we could pass on the phenomenal expertise under this roof.

Some people have been with us their whole careers - they started at 16 and are still with us 40 years later. We've got hallmarking expertise, gemmological knowledge, chemistry knowledge, and the understanding of metals and how they will perform when you strike them with a punch. We've also now got laser technology that we use to burn the hallmarks on some pieces that are too fragile to mark with a conventional press. There are people working here that have had to really change their game since they started. They might have started in a very traditional 1970s world and now they're suddenly working in the 21st century.

In the same year that I joined we bought SafeGuard, an existing jewellery valuations business and I became responsible for selling and marketing that. Out of the expertise there, we developed our AnchorCert gem lab, which is responsible for diamond and colour gem certification and authentication. This was also added to my remit, and a few years later, I became responsible for sales and marketing activity for all five divisions of the Company. This was no longer a part-time job by the way!

When I joined in the early 2000s, the economic climate was much more robust than now. When the recession began to bite in 2007,



THE FORMER BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE ON NEWHALL STREET

things became much more challenging for us, and hallmarking figures began to decline and have scarcely stopped since. There's been a massive decline in the volume of hallmarking; not just for us, but throughout the UK. The introduction of our other divisions has insured us against the risks of this uncontrollable market and offers many other opportunities.

Moving into this new building when things were still looking gloomy was a huge leap of faith. I'm not exaggerating when I say we must have discussed it for two years before we actually did it. It then took us another year to find the right space. We really wanted to stay in the JQ, but it was a challenge to find somewhere big enough. In the end we built this building from ground to finish in a year. Our old building in Newhall Street was built in 1877 and within 2 years, they'd realised it was too small and





another piece was added on about 8 years later. We were determined not to make that same mistake again, so this building was deliberately built too big to future proof it.

As a result, most of the first floor here is rented out to tenants, including pre-apprentices who are learning with The British Academy of Jewellery. We've also got the whole gemmology department of the Birmingham School of Jewellery based here. There's a great synergy there between their gemmology department and what we do in our gem labs, so there's lots of scope for shared learning, research, and resources.

As you can see, we have many strings to our bow. Many people don't realise we host networking events, exhibitions, and conferences. That's the challenge with being an Assay Office. People either have no idea what we do, or think they know, so their mind is closed off to all the other things we offer.

Inevitably, more and more is passing people by, so one of our key objectives is letting people know exactly what we do and getting them in the door. The Academy is, of course, one of the crucial strings to our bow. Most of our courses are aimed at retail sales assistants, but we also run courses aimed at technologists, people who are buying, selling, or importing costume jewellery, and even hobbyists, or people trying to improve their personal skills.

We're always facing new challenges. The sale of jewellery online is one example. You only have to go online for a short period of time and you can find a multitude of items that are possibly

being described incorrectly. There are plenty of perfectly legitimate businesses trading online, hallmarking as they should, but there are others trading online that may be based abroad and may not follow UK hallmarking laws. If you're selling online in pounds sterling, to our mind, you should be adhering to UK hallmarking laws. It's very difficult to enforce. The only way to really do it is to actually buy things from the seller, which is a very arduous process which no one really has the resource to properly police.

We're always adapting to meet new challenges; from investing in all sorts of modern tech, to pushing the boundaries on things like the way that we test metals. We've got this great contrast between using some really old-fashioned and traditional methods alongside

innovative technology. In the lab, we're still using a referee method for assaying gold which was developed by the Romans, but alongside it we have a modern induction furnace. All the time we're mixing the best of the old with what we need from the new, so that we can always be here to support the longevity of the jewellery industry in the JQ.

Birmingham Assay Office
www.theassayoffice.co.uk

THE ASSAY OFFICE'S HOME SINCE 2015



MY JQ, MY PICKS:

BEST PLACE TO EAT IN THE JQ?

There's still plenty of places I need to try, but Pasta di Piazza is a firm favourite of the Assay Office. It was our go-to in the 1990s when we were in the Newhall Street office and it is still a favourite. It's good value for money, always busy, and the staff are friendly.

Pasta di Piazza has been serving up authentic Italian deliciousness in St. Paul's Square since 1995 and is still a popular haunt to this day for anyone living in, working in, or visiting the Quarter.

www.pastadipiazza.com



BEST VIEW IN THE JQ?

The terrace on top of The Button Factory is a fascinating place to sit. You can see all of the wonderful architecture and can get a completely different perspective on some of those old buildings. It's also just a nice place to have a drink!

As the name suggests, The Button Factory has restored one of the JQ's traditional manufacturing buildings, which dates back to 1824. Since opening in 2016, it's become the place to be for everything from bottomless brunch to cocktails, which are best enjoyed on the expansive rooftop terrace.

www.thebuttonfactorybirmingham.co.uk



WHAT MOST EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE JQ?

The potential to keep changing it and moving it on, with the new creative businesses moving in and the innovative ideas in regenerating its historical buildings. There seems to be a young vibe about the JQ now. It feels so different from 20 years ago. I hate people being negative about the JQ, and we Brummies are far too quick to criticise our own city, but I think if I'd had to describe the JQ in the late 1990s, I would have been quite pessimistic. I wouldn't have described it as having lots of young people, having a buzz at night, feeling a safe place to walk around, and a nice place to wander at the weekend. Back then, it was a manufacturing area that had seen better days. It's a completely different landscape now, but we still have a long way to go. What excites me is that we're moving in the right direction.

To keep up with the latest developments in the JQ, visit www.jewelleryquarter.net/living



WHAT'S YOUR PROUDEST CAREER MOMENT?

One of my highlights is moving from our old building to the new. On the day we moved, I had very mixed feelings. My department was the last to move and seeing the building so empty was creepy and really sad. I'm delighted to see Assay Studios looking brilliant now. They've breathed new life into that building! I've also been privileged to welcome some well-known figures to the Assay Office, such as George Osborne. That was a stressful short notice visit to arrange, but having the Chancellor of the Exchequer visit us was a real achievement. The Duke of Gloucester's visit was also great fun!

Assay Studios has transformed the former Assay Office into a collaborative working environment, adding a modern twist to the building's stunning historical features.

www.assaystudios.co.uk



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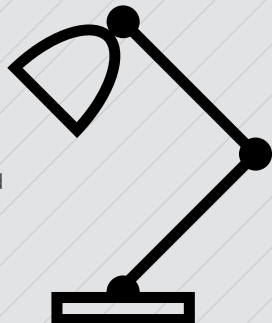
SPACES IS BRINGING CREATIVE,
COLLABORATIVE WORKING TO THE JQ.

Our strong culture centres around a community of interesting people doing exciting things. We support our members to build their networks and connect with like-minded people to link up and share ideas. Through our content and events, we want to involve people in the buzz and energy of Spaces.

Crossway

THE LOWDOWN

- 10 floors across 42,000 square foot
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- A variety of meeting rooms and event space available for both members and non-members
- Delicious health food and great coffee, courtesy of our in-house deli, Soul Deli
- Flexible contract terms, tailored to your specific needs



Spaces Crossway, located on Great Charles Street Queensway, is the largest Spaces centre in Europe, with £10 million being invested into the new centre alongside their second Birmingham location, The Lewis Building in Colmore Business District.

Originating in Amsterdam, Spaces embrace a 'Dutch spirit' and inspiring personality, for a more laid-back approach to workplace solutions, offering dynamic working areas to help you think, create, and collaborate. Spaces offers its members the opportunity to network with others through co-working, while still providing quiet spaces, meeting rooms, and virtual office facilities.

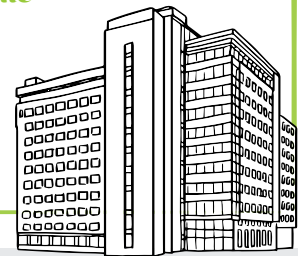
The brand recently launched in Birmingham with an event that brought the city together for a night of relaxed networking, celebrating the community and Spaces' place within it with fabulous food, drinks, inspiring speakers, and live music.

Forward thinkers, innovators, and game changers - join the Spaces community today.

To book a tour or to **find out more about our workspaces**, get in touch with our Area Manager, **Matthew Hamula** - matthew.hamula@regus.com

To request **event space, networking, or meeting room bookings**, get in touch with our Community Manager, **Melanie Crathorne** - melanie.crathorne@spacesworks.com

We believe work is less about things and more about people and ideas. Spaces have developed and facilitated an inspiring professional environment with a love for design. The Spaces team take care of all the background logistics and services, so our community can focus on driving their business forward.



Spaces is now open at
Crossway, 156 Great Charles Street Queensway, B3 3HN

www.spaceworks.com/birmingham



Changing Spaces: Spicing up the Jewellery Quarter with Opheem

“ OPHEEM IS SOMETHING YOU COULD SAY
I’VE BEEN WORKING ON MY WHOLE LIFE. ”

THIS IS THE EXCITED AFFIRMATION OF AKTAR ISLAM, THE
RENOWNED BIRMINGHAM-BORN CHEF, WHO LAUNCHED HIS
FIRST SOLO-PROJECT AND RESTAURANT IN EARLY JUNE.

OPHEEM

AKTAR

Located on Summer Row, Opheem takes up the space of former nightclub and bar, Mechu, which closed in 2017 after 14 years. Aktar jumped at the chance to make the space his own, describing it as a 'natural choice' to open up a restaurant in the Jewellery Quarter.

"I lived in the Jewellery Quarter pretty much for all of my twenties and it's somewhere I very much regard as my stomping ground. It's a proud achievement for me to have opened my first restaurant within this area and we're bringing this stretch of the Jewellery Quarter back to life."

The new offering takes customers on a journey of Indian culture, influence, and inspiration. Aktar truly believes Opheem will adopt a unique take on Indian food, with the use of seasonal spices and influences that the chef has adapted throughout his career.

The 70-cover restaurant combines flavours and recipes from India with some of the best produce of the British Isles, with the esteemed chef believing Opheem will bring 'added attention and value' to the city. Opheem is inspired by nearly 800 years of Indian culinary history, spanning from chefs that cooked for royalty through to the British empire.



AKTAR ISLAM - OWNER OF OPHEEM

"In my opinion, nowhere else in Birmingham, or in the UK, offers what we have here. A year from now we won't be serving the same dishes. Customers won't be coming to Opheem just because they're hungry; they'll be coming to experience the different seasonal menus and influences that combine progressive Indian cooking with local produce."

Of course, opening the restaurant hasn't come without its challenges.

"It has been a massive project; we've had to repurpose a building that used to be a nightclub, in a space of the Jewellery Quarter that had been forgotten about. The area had become very inaccessible, but what better way to restore Summer Row than open a statement piece restaurant."

This is the first time the TV-chef has had complete creative freedom to develop a brand and concept, with the restaurant also featuring a 14-cover private dining room. Aktar also hopes maximising and developing the space into a restaurant will transform the Jewellery

It's a proud achievement for me to have opened my first restaurant within the Jewellery Quarter...

Quarter into a hot bed for the talented chefs of tomorrow.

"Everything I've done in my career has brought attention to the city. I'm delighted my dream has become a reality, but I'm also excited that Opheem will offer the opportunity to a lot of young, talented chefs and service team members who will learn a lot here and go on to do some amazing things in the future."

Opheem is now open. Find out more and book a table at www.opheem.com





Something Old, Something New

GLEN SEWELL,
LA-MON'S JEWELLERY

"It's the only thing I've ever done and ever known how to do." Glen has been working in the Jewellery Quarter for the majority of his life, creating and crafting his way into the hearts and minds of couples in Birmingham and beyond as a jeweller and repairman for close to four decades. He kicked off his career in the trade as a 16-year-old apprentice at Craft-ing Rings, before opening his own business, La-Mon's Jewellery on Vyse Street, in his late twenties.

"It was hard at first, but boy, were we busy! You couldn't move in the shop the majority of the time. It was a great time for jewellers. We all knew each other, got on, and helped each other out if we needed to."

Glen still enjoys crafting as much now as he did back then, particularly engagement rings. "I love creating single stones and going on the journey with a customer. It's nice when they come back in to let you know how much they love what you've made and how much they appreciate it. That always puts a smile on my face."


The JQ has changed dramatically since Glen first started his career, with more bars, restaurants, and residential properties occupying space. Recent years have not come without their challenges for the jewellery industry in the Quarter.

"The Jewellery Quarter is a hugely popular place; people are coming to visit all the time, but not always necessarily for jewellery. There is so much choice and many different things to do here, which is great, but the jewellery industry is definitely not what it was. We like to think we set ourselves apart by accommodating to customer needs and requirements to make bespoke pieces that you won't find anywhere else, but I'm afraid the internet is winning at the moment."

It's a growing concern for many jewellers, but Glen has a positive outlook on the future of the JQ's founding industry. "There's this thing called trust, you see, and we have customers who trust us. I think people will always need a jeweller."

Whilst online shopping may tempt many in with its convenience, the expertise of a skilled and experienced craftsman like Glen is unbeatable when it comes to a purchase as important as a piece of jewellery.

La-Mon's Jewellery, 20 Vyse St, B18 6LE



THE MIX OF MODERN AND TRADITIONAL BUSINESSES IS ONE OF OUR PROUDEST ACCOLADES IN THE JQ. THE QUARTER TODAY IS HOME TO A WEALTH OF CREATIVE BUSINESSES, BARS, AND RESTAURANTS, WHICH EXIST ALONGSIDE THE TRADITIONAL JEWELLERY MANUFACTURERS AND RETAILERS THAT GIVE THE AREA ITS NAME. IN THIS ISSUE, WE MEET TWO VERY DIFFERENT BUSINESS OWNERS WITH VERY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES, WHO HAVE BOTH MADE THE JQ THE THRIVING AREA IT IS TODAY IN THEIR OWN WAY.

SAMUEL BOULTON, THE VANGUARD

If there's one person embracing the JQ's changing landscape, it's Samuel Boulton. After almost 10 years working in bars, consulting for brands like Oddbins, and racking up a string of national and global awards, the 26-year-old opened his first bar last year.

"I'm not the sort of person to wait around. As soon as I saw the space above 1000 Trades, I instantly thought it was perfect. Two days later, I'd put in a proposal and a few months later, we opened. It was a challenge; everything is built by me and my dad, the alcohol was my personal collection, everything else was gifted or borrowed. We did everything we could to get open with just a few thousand pounds."

Despite its young age, The Vanguard specialises in something ancient: mead.

"Mead is one of the world's oldest alcoholic drinks. I wanted to share something that I enjoy, and that people may not have tried. Gin bars and craft ale pubs are massive, but no one is doing this."

Of course, with Sam's award-winning success, cocktails are also on the menu. But in a city rife with cocktail bars, how can The Vanguard stand out?

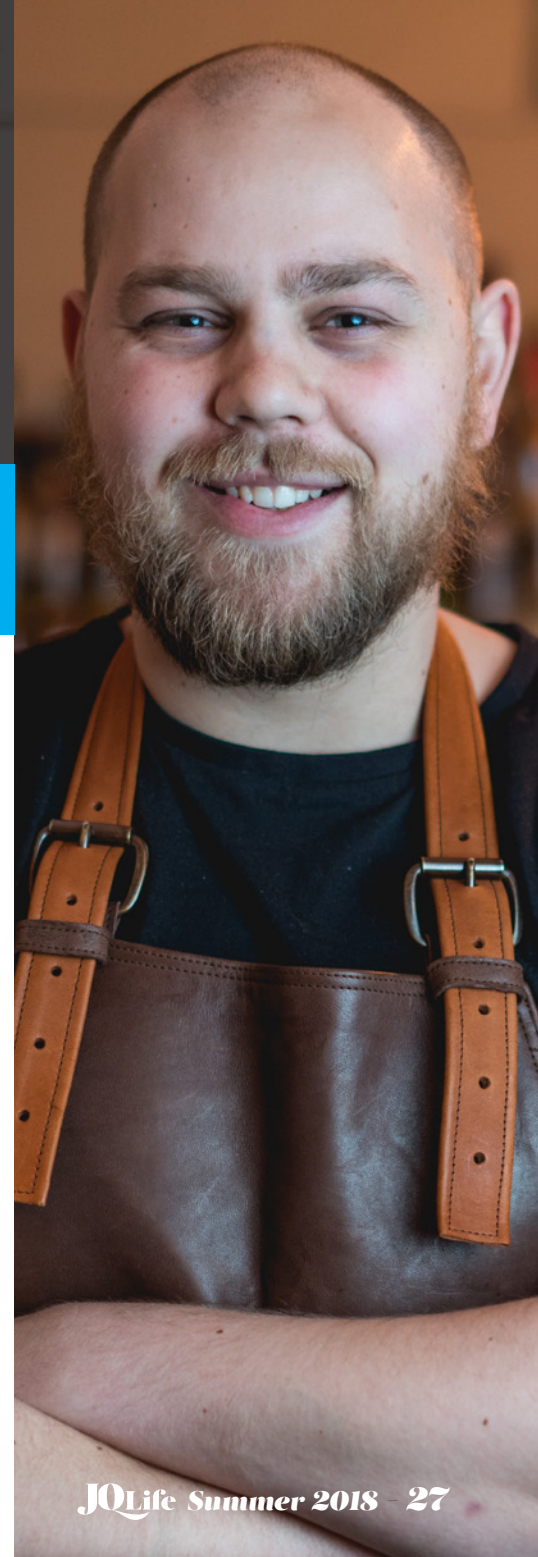
"We're the first devoted cocktail bar in the JQ. I'm not into dry ice or theatrics. I'm more

understated. I want people to feel like they can relax here, so our first aim is everything must be done quickly. No one should wait more than 90 seconds for a drink, but under no circumstances does that undermine quality. Flavours are obviously really important to me, so on our menu, we don't actually write what alcohol we use. I don't want people to pick a gin-based drink just because they like gin, for them then to discover they hate all the other flavours in the drink!"

As the JQ's hospitality scene continues to thrive and grow, Sam is looking to the future. "The traditional JQ and its heritage is fantastic. However, there is a thriving hospitality scene here which I think is still underrepresented. There are more venues opening, bringing in more people, which in turn supports all the other businesses. I don't see why both the jewellery industry and hospitality scene can't both work together to embrace the younger clientele that are now coming in to the JQ and will be spending their money here for the next 50 years."

The Vanguard @ 1000 Trades,
16 Frederick St, B1 3HE

www.vanguardbar.co.uk



Behind the Scenes:

CREATING A UNIQUE PIECE OF JEWELLERY

THE JQ HAS BEEN THE HOME OF DOMINO JEWELLERY AND THEIR ON-SITE MANUFACTURING FACILITY, WESTON BEAMOR, FOR OVER 70 YEARS.

To this day, the vast majority of their product offering is created and crafted from scratch – from the initial design through to the casting, mounting, stone-setting, and finishing processes. In this issue, Domino Jewellery offer JQ Life an exclusive behind the scenes look at their process from trend-spotting to diamond-setting.



The character, look, and feel of each piece is ultimately determined by the materials used.

KEEPING UP WITH THE TRENDSETTERS

Keeping a keen eye on current and predicted trends is essential for Domino Jewellery's design team. This process allows them to create responsive, design-led jewellery suites and individual pieces, using a range of traditional and modern skills to craft their items. The process will usually begin with initial hand-drawn sketches before they are brought to life using sophisticated CAD/CAM systems.



MARRYING OLD AND NEW METHODS

Digital tools and traditional skills go hand-in-hand to produce the final piece. Hand-drawn sketches become digital designs, which are then transformed into a prototype using 3D printing. This allows Domino Jewellery to quickly fabricate customised to-scale models based on the customer's preferences. The 3D models provide the moulds that are then used to cast the jewellery using precious metals. Once the prototype has been finalised with both the designer and the customer, Domino's skilled crafts-people work at traditional jewellers' benches and set the stones by hand into the final item of jewellery.



SOURCING THE BEST MATERIALS

The character, look, and feel of each piece is ultimately determined by the materials used. Domino Jewellery use a wide range of precious metals, which can be selected to suit all tastes and trends; from platinum, white, yellow and rose golds, palladium, and Fair-Trade gold. Domino's ethical sourcing of materials has resulted in the company being named 'Ethical Jewellery Supplier of the Year' at Retail Jeweller's 2017 UK Jewellery Awards. The nominations have flooded in again this year, with both Weston Beamor and Domino Jewellery nominated in the Ethical Jewellery Business of the Year and Supplier of the Year categories in the UK Jewellery Awards 2018.

The Birmingham School of Jewellery continues to attract students from all over the globe, with many of the employees at Domino Jewellery graduating from there and choosing to stay in the JQ, despite attraction from elsewhere. Domino Jewellery are proud to support the next generation of jewellers and keep the manufacturing industry in the JQ alive.

Domino Jewellery www.dominojewellery.com

Birmingham School of Jewellery www.bcu.ac.uk/jewellery

My piece of the JQ

LUCY'S PROPOSAL STORY IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT TO MOST



“ MY FIANCÉ, GARY, POPPED THE QUESTION AFTER WE'D BOTH COMPLETED 26 MILES AT THE LONDON MARATHON.

About two months before, he'd injured his knee and I was trying to convince him to defer until next year, but he was adamant he was still going to run no matter what... now I know why! Gary carried the ring for the whole marathon as a symbolic gesture of a relationship - it takes commitment and perseverance to achieve something great. I'm just glad he didn't lose it!

Little did I know, Gary had been working with Nick at Mitchel & Co. since January to design the ring to ensure it was as meaningful to the both of us as possible. Although we hadn't explicitly discussed it, I knew that I wanted something simple, classy, and beautiful, and that is exactly what I got - a platinum ring with a single solitaire. Gary also personalised the ring by engraving the setting with our surname initials, 'M' and 'W', as well as the name of the baby we sadly lost in December into the band of the ring, which was such a beautiful touch.

Before moving to Solihull, I actually lived on Carver Street in the Jewellery Quarter. Although Gary isn't from Birmingham himself, we've often visited the area and I've shown him around.



The fact that the ring came from the JQ and shares my future surname, Mitchell, makes it even more special, bringing back memories of my life there, and how far we've come together.



We've visited Mitchel & Co. again to get the ring resized and the team there couldn't do enough for us. It really feels like they love the design and making process, and of course the final ring, as much as we do. I know that my engagement ring is completely unique and now marks such a significant moment in our lives that we will be reminded of forever. We will be choosing our wedding rings from Mitchel & Co. and I can't wait to encapsulate the next part of our journey together in another beautiful and irreplaceable piece of jewellery.

Have you got a story about a piece of jewellery from the JQ that means a lot to you? Send us your story to JQLife@digitalglue.eu

JOLife



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