The official magazine for Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter

Birmingham author and historian, Carl Chinn, takes us on a trip down memory lane; recounting the lasting legacy of the master manufacturers in the JQ.

> Find out what's going on in the JQ to kick-off the city's summer of sport and celebration!

> The team at the Coffin Works tells us the secret behind its win at this year's West Midlands Tourism





### Download the app





Search 'DiscoverJQ'

#### Getting Ready for the Games



As we welcome what will be an exciting summer for the city, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will bring lots of activity to the Quarter which is available to view in this summer's edition on pages 16-17. Not to mention the anticipated return of The Jewellery Quarter Festival on 23rd July, following a hiatus during the pandemic. Its arrival will bring a celebration of the arts to the area with music, crafts and amazing food available. Find out more about What's On in the JQ on pages 6-7.

With medals created for the Commonwealth Games coming from the School of Jewellery and Toye, Kenning & Spencer, it has never been more important to celebrate the strong history we have of jewellery making and manufacturing. That's why we enjoyed a step back in time with city historian Professor Carl Chinn MBE for In Their Own Words (18-21).

We also feature a guide to the fitness initiatives you can get involved in should you be feeling inspired by the sport taking over the city (14), recommendations from Bite Your Brum on the hidden gems you can enjoy when visiting the JQ (22-23) and we hear from some of the people fronting the Quarter's LGBTQ+ businesses (28-29).

Enjoy issue 16 of JQ Life Magazine, and equally have an amazing time exploring the city this summer. It promises to be a great one!

Happy reading,

#### Luke Crane

**JQDT Executive Director** 



facebook.com/JewelleryQtr





@jq\_bid

For the latest news from the IOBID, visit our website and sign up to our newsletter



Issue 16 Summer 22

JO Life is published by Digital Glue www.digitalglue.agency



 $(\mbox{JQBID})$  provides a welcoming environment for visitors, keeps the streets clean and safe, and invests in projects

www.jewelleryquarter.net/jqbid

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# Guest Column:

### **Explore the Hidden Heritage of the JQ**

Irene de Boo: Birmingham Heritage Week coordinator



The Jewellery Quarter was one of the first places I visited, when I arrived in Birmingham from the Netherlands, nearly 28 years ago. I knew very little about the city, which I intended to make my home, but had been told that the Jewellery Quarter was worth visiting, and was unique in England. I visited and loved the industrial heritage. I have been returning to the JQ ever since (and of course got my wedding ring from here too).

I am interested in local history and heritage. I like to explore the city and find new places, not just in the JQ, but all over Birmingham.

I'm therefore very fortunate to coordinate Birmingham Heritage Week (BHW), an annual city-wide celebration of Birmingham's rich and diverse heritage. BHW is run by Birmingham Museums Trust on behalf of Birmingham City Council who also funds the festival. It is now in its 8th year and usually about 70 local organisations come together to run over 120 events ranging from exhibitions and tours to open days and workshops. Last year volunteers put in over 3,000 hours to make events happen and nearly 20,000 in-person visits were recorded. The event listing for 2022 will go live early August (birminghamheritageweek.co.uk) and the festival kicks off one month later, running from Friday 9 September until Sunday 18 September.

With the help of the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust and local venues, many heritage doors will again open in the JQ.

Last year there was a busy offer, including Key Hill Catacombs hard hat tour and a behind the scenes visit to the Banking Hall on Great Hampton Street. This year's BHW programming in the JQ looks equally promising (I am particularly excited about visiting a working factory).

There will be lots to see and do outside the JQ too. Within walking distance, in the City Centre, you can join a geology walk (fossils in buildings), look up to discover Art Deco, listen to choral music, run(!) around Digbeth's street art and much more.

BHW is a great opportunity to explore places you would normally not visit. How well do you know Sutton Coldfield? Are you curious what a synagogue or mosque looks like inside? Fancy a swim in an Edwardian pool? Have you walked around Austin Village or historic Acocks Green? Seen all of Bournville?

Check out the programme in August and discover some of the JQ and Birmingham's hidden heritage.

Visit **birminghamheritageweek.co.uk** to see the programme and learn more about Birmingham's exciting heritage.

# Motology Office States of the City 28th May - 7th August

Birmingham 2022 Fierce Festival presents the Key to the City, allowing participants access to 21 sites across Birmingham. The 12,000+ keys will enable their holders to explore private and intriguing places and spaces they would otherwise never have access to.

Find out how you can get your key at www.keytothecitybrum.org/

## **JQ Townscape Heritage Exhibition**4th July - 31st August

Gain an insight into the Jewellery Quarter at The JQTH Exhibition in Golden Square. The outdoor exhibition features three freestanding structures with a series of panels focusing on the JQ Townscape Heritage capital works projects. Learn about JQ buildings and the part they played in the development of the Quarter.

Read more about JQTH https://th.jewelleryquarter.net/

## **Cemetery Tours & Events** *9th July - 9th October*

Join a guided tour through Warstone Lane and Key Hill Cemeteries on selected Sundays from July through October. Experienced guides will walk you through the history, catacombs and the final resting places of Birmingham greats.

For more event information go to https://tinyurl.com/26nwmm93

## **JQTH Project Indoor Exhibition** 12th - 27th July

An indoor exhibition will be held at the Hive gallery in celebration of the JQ Townscape Heritage project, featuring a timeline of its highlights. It includes a film about Joseph Chamberlain and Australian Aboriginal Warrulan.

Find out more about the project https://th.jewelleryquarter.net/about/

## **BAJ Birmingham Open Day & Workshop** 13th July

British Academy of Jewellery (BAJ) Birmingham is hosting an open day for visitors. Attendees will be able to visit their site, meet current staff and students and participate in a workshop where they can make a keyring or pendant with one of the BAJ tutors.

Register for this free event at https://tinyurl.com/5b373tvy

#### King Kong Park

22nd July - 8th August, daily 12pm - 11pm

Enjoy all the Commonwealth Games festivities at King Kong Park at Great Hampton Row, brought to you by JQ property developers Cordia Blackswan. Expect live music, food and drink vendors as well as the return of Nicholas Monro's King Kong to Birmingham!

Keep an eye out for details at www.facebook.com/cordiablackswan



### **Birmingham Jazz Festival** 19th - 22th July

The 38th Birmingham Jazz Festival comes to the JQ this year with performances in St Paul's Square between 12-2pm. Performers include Ajay Srivastav, Jake Leg Jug Band, Roy Forbes' Texas Rumble and Simon Spillett. What a great way to enjoy lunch while listening to live music in the square!

Find event details on the festival calendar https://www.birminghamjazzfestival.com/calendar/

## **Rose Villa Tavern Painting Classes** 21st July

Channel your Da Vinci and paint your very own pop art inspired Mona Lisa with PopUp Painting at The Rose Villa Tavern. Listen to your favourite 60s tunes while unleashing your creativity with a wine glass in one hand and a paintbrush in the other!

Book your tickets at

https://popuppainting.com/event/paint-pop-art-birmingham-6/

## The JQ Festival 2022 23rd July

The 2022 JQ Festival is the perfect opportunity to discover local businesses and heritage alongside free entertainment and special events across the JQ. On Saturday 23rd July, 11am – 8pm, enjoy music in St. Paul's Square, a maker's market in the Golden Square, live theatre in Warstone Lane Cemetery, plus tours, live maker demos and acoustic music.

Keep an eye out for more details at https://jewelleryquarter.net/whats-on/jq-festival/birminghamfest.co.uk/

## **Commonwealth Games Marathon** *30th July*

Be part of the action as the Commonwealth Games marathon makes its way through the heart of the JQ. Support participants on the final leg of the marathon as they pass the Chamberlain Clock and St Paul's Church as they move on to the final kilometre into the City Centre. For more Commonwealth Games related activities take a look at the map on pages Y-Z.

Read more about the marathon here https://www.birmingham2022.com/road-events/marathon



St Paul's Summer Fete 29th August

Spend your bank holiday Monday relaxing in St Paul's Square enjoying the summer sun! Expect delicious food and drink, stalls selling local products, music all day, dance performances in the Square, a classic car show, portrait painting, as well as organ recitals and church tours inside the St Paul's church. Join the JQ community for a day of fun, celebration – and hopefully a bit of sun too!

Find out more at

https://www.stpaulsjq.church/st-paulsfete-2022

#### Birmingham Heritage Week 9th - 18th September

Birmingham Heritage Week will be back this year, 9–18 September 2022. Expect well over 100 events with many old favourites returning and new spaces and places too! Keep an eye out for the full event listing that will go live Friday, 5 Aug 2022. Read about Birmingham Heritage Week and coordinator Irene de Boo in her guest column: Explore the Hidden Heritage of the JQ.

Find more information at

https://birminghamheritageweek.co.uk/

Download the Discover JQ app via the **App Store** or **Google Play** to keep up to date on all the events and happenings in the JQ.

# The Best Place to Live in Birmingham

In April, Birmingham was voted one of 'The Sunday Times Best Places to Live 2022'. No surprises there! What's even more notable is that The Times had extremely high praise of the Jewellery Quarter.

It said: "It's Birmingham's most attractive neighbourhood, with history oozing out of the lovely old workshops and warehouses in the streets surrounding St Paul's Square in the shadow of the BT Tower."

In this article we look at what makes this famous place so very special.

# THE ACASTIMES Toda's sections Past six days | Eaphor | Times Radio | T

#### History

The JQ is renowned for its historic roots. While the area has seen significant development over the past few years, the manufacturers, and jewellers of old still make up a large portion of the bustling businesses there.

There is lots to see in terms of iconic landmarks, which makes for a blissful stroll around the neighbourhood. If you'd like to step back in time and explore the JQ's rich past, here are some stop offs:

- St Paul's Church
- Chamberlain Clock
- Warstone Lane Cemetery
- Key Hill Cemetery







#### Bars

This extra-special area is a hub for leisure, featuring some of the city's most prestigious watering holes. If you're at home in a traditional boozer, try one of many with a presence here, including:

- The Red Lion
- The Queen's Arm's
- The Clifden
- The Rose Villa Tavern

If a special occasion looms, or you're treating yourself 'just because' then the following are a good bet:

- 1000 Trades
- Ikigai
- The Button Factory
- The Rectory
- 40 St Paul's





#### Galleries & Museums

Some of the most interesting sites to see here are museums set up in preserved warehouses – workshops that saw Birmingham become the hotbed of the country's Industrial Revolution.

The community and various businesses are dedicated to telling the story of this unique place, and there really is so much to see as a result. Check out some of these amazing attractions and immerse yourself in the JQ's history:

- Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
- Pen Museum
- The Coffin Works
- RBSA
- J.W Evans Silver Factory



#### Restaurants

You won't go hungry hanging out in the JQ, the area's welcoming restaurants will make certain of that. What is amazing about this multi-cultural centre spot is that

you are just as likely to find a slap-up curry as you are a hearty roast. From high-end to homemade, the world is your oyster without even stepping out of the JQ!

- St Pauls House
- 24 Carat Bistro
- Lasan
- Otto
- Cappadocia

#### Cafés

Working from a café is the perfect antidote when working from home feels a little lonely. Luckily, there are lots of cafés that welcome the community with open arms. You'll find people hard at work.

- The Hive Café and Bakery
- Urban Café/Bar/Kitchen
- Saint Kitchen
- Sofa Bread Café
- Damascena





#### **Shops and Services**

There's a never-ending list of fantastic shops and services in the JQ, so it may not surprise you that listing them all is no small feat. You can easily spend most part of a day exploring what the area has to offer, largely from independent businesses too, which makes it all that more special. Here are some to visit:

- The Chocolate Quarter
- The Floating Spa
- The Crafts Collective
- Wyrdwood Studio
- Mitchel & Co Jewellers
- Nigel Lynall Jewellers



Share some of the reasons you love to live in the JQ on Instagram by using #**TheBestJQ** and tagging us @ jq\_bid.
You may find yourself in the next issue!

# Changing Spaces: Assay Studios

Much can happen in a 145-year period. Since its completion in 1877 and until its relocation in 2015, the Assay Office on Newhall Street has been the centre of the precious metal trade in Birmingham. Giving the city's jewellers the quality stamp needed to manifest their global importance, this building has now seen new life while still contributing to the flourishing lewellery Quarter community.

The Birmingham Assay Office was founded by an Act of Parliament in 1773. It is to this day responsible for testing precious metals - in particular gold, silver, and platinum - to show the purity of the metal and as such the quality of the product. Prior to 1773, jewellers across the country had to send their goods to one of the two Assay Offices in Chester or London for testing and hallmarking.

In the early 1770s, the city's prime entrepreneur, Matthew Boulton, lobbied Parliament extensively for an Assay Office in the city, as he believed the jewellery trade would otherwise never truly thrive in Birmingham. By the 1760s, silversmithing was booming in the city, where manufacturers were making buttons, buckles, and other small articles.

Boulton, who had a major investment in his family business, understood that it was a big disadvantage to send its items to either the London or Chester Assay Office. He blamed the trouble of transporting his silver goods to Chester or



London on the expense and delay, and on the risks of being attacked by highwaymen. Boulton also claimed that the Chester Assay Office was careless with handling and packing, which caused damage to his products. The actual concern. as it turns out, was that Boulton was worried that Chester silversmiths would copy his designs and innovative manufacturing techniques, which gave him a competitive advantage.

Even though the Birmingham Assay Office was established in 1773, it wasn't until 1877 that it moved into the building on Newhall Street. It cost £9,448 to build the first part of the Office, but it soon needed to expand the space to keep up with demand. The building was upgraded with the latest modcons in the late 1800s where telephones were installed in 1885 and gas lighting was replaced with electric lights in 1890.

## Restoring with Respect for History

Fast forward to November 2016, just a year after the Birmingham Assay Office moved from Newhall Street to



its new location on Moreton Street, Assay Studios opened its doors. Property developers, TCN, acquired the Grade II-listed building in 2015 and spent the following year restoring and repurposing the building. What was once the hub for jewellery hallmarking in the Midlands has been transformed into a contemporary, versatile workspace that still oozes of its previous life.

Richard Pearce, founder of TCN says, "The hardest part of the restoration] was simplifying the building so that it flowed as one, large building. The old quarter has completely different architecture to the later Victorian element that was added on, so it felt like different buildings, with three different entrances. By creating the triple height entrance in the heart of the

building we managed to pull it all together, make it relevant for modern day use and celebrate the beauty and changing history of the building."

The existing features have been recycled and the space has been restored with a nod to its former history. The building is light and airy with exposed brickwork and original Minton tiles. The intricate wrought iron bannisters on the grand staircase are still the same and a piece of art featuring Matthew Boulton now overlooks the entrance steps.

The structure of the building hasn't changed either and the respect for its past shines through in every nook and cranny. Users can host meetings in the vaults and the labs - or even in the former

safe where the majority of Birmingham's most valuable jewellery was once safely stored.

#### Pearce continues,

"When you walk in, if you look up to your right, you will see iron structure and brickwork left raw from the day it was cut to create the triple height — a record of the building evolving over generations. The timber floors upstairs have squares of new timber which we filled when the lifts carrying jewellery were taken out — rather than make it perfect. It all tells a story."

#### Being Part of the JQ Community

TCN has made repurposing historical buildings its main focus. Offering maximum impact with minimum



intervention, the company recycles existing features and has created a collaborative environment that inspires innovation. By fusing authentic characteristics with modern needs, the Assay Studios provide a dynamic workspace for entrepreneurs much like Boulton.

Founded in 2006 by Richard Pearce and Toby Bidwell, TCN set out to regenerate and create surprising spaces, and manage vibrant communities. Through long-term views and a people-first approach, the company wants to 'do the right thing' and bring

passion and soul into all of their projects. A building that has been the essence of the **Jewellery Ouarter's success** and history has found new life and still contributes to the area's thriving innovative and dynamic businesses. Looking back over the past 145 years, the Ouarter has been the home for some of the most exciting developments in the jewellery trade - all because of the Assav Office and the important work that was carried out here.

Pearce is positive about the future impact of the Assay Studios,

"We hope that Ithe Assay Studios | continues to be a proud part of the community which has contributed so much over the years. It has always been a positive influence. providing a service and employment to the area, and we hope the community we have created in the building will continue to do that. Retaining it as workspace rather than losing it to residential flats continues a vibrancy to the area that would have otherwise been lost for good."

Restoring a place that holds much sentimental value to many people in the local community can be difficult. But with the changes that TCN has made to the Assay Offices, they have done their part to keep the story alive. It has become a place where local businesses and people can gather to exchange ideas, make friends, and forge new business opportunities.



### **Revisiting and Reminiscing**

Richard Watson, a former employee of the Assay Offices, reminisces over his time spent at Newhall Street when returning to the building 64 years after he first set foot on the premises. "In September 1958, at the tender age of 14 ¾ years, I took my first walk down Newhall Street, descended the stairs to the right of the main entrance and joined the **Birmingham Assay Office** as their youngest analytical chemist." Back then, Mr Watson worked in the lab. testing the gold and silver goods the Quarter's many jewellers sent through for hallmarking.

He has many fond memories of his five years at the Assay Offices. "On a quiet lunch break, I found a dusty Kipps apparatus and set it up. From this I discovered that hydrogen burns with a huge blue flame resulting in an explosion that blew open the doors and removed both the cupboard and chess pieces from a game that had been in progress for weeks. The





second explosion was far greater than the first and resulted in many profanities from my peers.

"It was my job to place our tea break pilchard sandwiches for exactly two seconds in the 'kept sterile' gold refinery furnace at 1200 degrees, to produce the perfect pilchard waffle. Forced to stand and smile as the Assay Master unexpectedly passed through, we were rewarded with eight tiny piles of cremated fish, much to the dismay of my fellow chemists.

"At another occasion, we produced nitrogen triiodide, which we spread on the floor just before a visit from the Birmingham Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. As they climbed the entrance steps

you could hear huge cracks and bangs accompanied by purple clouds of the unstable iodine. All nowadays a 'final warning' but then seen as a mere lapse of judgement."

As the memories keep appearing, Mr Watson also appreciates the work that has been done to restore the building he once loved, "A personal praise from me to those professionals in TCN for creating an environment where the skills that later sent all of my fellow chemists and myself out into the world to make our fortune can flourish. From the refreshment bar to the library, everything is provided for both body and mind. The building now fits the people, and no one is forced to fit the building."

To learn more about JQ history, head to jewelleryquarter.net

# Get Your Sweat on in the JQ

With the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games kicking off at the end of July, you may be inspired to get out and get moving. Discover some of the many ways you can keep fit in the Jewellery Quarter.

#### **Gyms**

If you get excited about toning with weight training, are looking to transform your body, or want to burn calories with HIIT, the JQ's gyms have everything you need.

**SMR Fitness** www.smrfitness.com/

The Pit Gym thepitgymjq.com/

Temple Gym templegymuk.com



#### Outdoor

You don't have to be restricted to the indoors to get active. The JQ has a wealth of great outdoor space, so lace up and explore the Quarter while breaking a sweat.

Run Talk Run JQ

facebook.com/RunTalkRunJQBrum/

**West Midlands Cycle Hire Stations at:** 

wmcyclehire.co.uk

#### **Dance**

Nothing is better than dancing to a good beat. Join a dance class and connect with others through music to feel instantly uplifted.

**LatinMotion at the Jam House** 

facebook.com/LatinMotion/?ref=page\_internal



CDOB (Capoeira) https://cdob.co.uk

#### **Yoga / Pilates**

Regardless of whether you are looking to find your inner zen, a bit of head space, or strengthen your core, yoga and pilates will help you get on the right track.

Cool Pilates coolpilates.co.uk

The Pretty Sweaty Stuff theprettysweatystuff.com

Yoga Haven www.yogahaven.co.uk

#### **Martial Arts**

If hitting a punching bag, or your sparring partner, helps you let off steam, why not join one of the JQ's martial arts classes?

The Eagle Kickboxing Academy eaglekickboxing.co.uk/

**Kaizen Centre** 

kaizencentre.co.uk/

**Bushido Birmingham** 

bushidoacademy.co.uk/

#### Other exciting offers

The JQ is also home to some unique opportunities to be active. If you are interested in something a little different, look no further.

**Gyrotonic Training** 

theartofmovement.co.uk

**Birmingham Bouldering Centre** birminghamboulderingcentre.com



# Warstone Tattoo:

## Leaving their (Hall)mark in the JQ\_ Through the Art of Tattooing

When you think of the Jewellery Quarter, you may not instantly think of the hum of tattoo machines. But in actuality, the creativity, artistry and expertise required for the art of jewellery making is not too dissimilar to that of tattooing.



In the midst of the JQ sits
Warstone Tattoo, one of the
oldest running tattoo studios in
the area, with its 7th birthday
approaching this year. Upon
entering, customers are greeted
by the ever-friendly Sarah, who
runs the studio with her
tattoo-artist partner Simon.
They're joined by Patrick and
Jamal, who are both at the helm
of their own respective tattoo
machines.

For the close knit team, the artistry of tattooing is a vital part of JQ's newer heritage.
Having tattooed some JQ-inspired designs on residents and visitors alike, the team feel a close connection with the area's industrious history. "We often get people coming in and asking for hallmarks and diamond tattoos, which we are always happy to do," Simon explains. "And while that may not be our usual style of tattooing,

we love being part of the community in that sense and leaving a lasting mark of the JQ's heritage."

Simon continues, "there's a lot of skill and history to jewellery making, similarly to that of tattooing. With tattooing you sketch it and design it to fit the body, and that's a similar process to that of jewellery making. In that sense, we feel closely connected to the culture of the JQ."



The open and welcoming studio is inhabited by art across the walls from one of the three artists, each with their own distinctive style. Simon, specialises in classic Japanese and Polynesian tattooing. "Over the years working in tattooing, I've become very interested in this style, due to its illustrative line work, as well as its deep history. There's also often

interesting symbolism behind the designs," he says. Meanwhile, Jamal favours traditional tattooing, and Patrick focuses on blackwork. Each artist infuses their work with the character and personality that mirrors the creativity of the JQ.

For Patrick, a particular favourite piece has been an engraved octopus. "I did all the engraving shading freehand, and I enjoyed watching the whole process all come together," he says. Jamal most enjoyed working on a dagger and heart tattoo he did on fellow tattoo-artist Patrick. "This design was based on a painting I made around a year or so prior. Since I started working at Warstone I've been lucky enough to work on some fun pieces."



**Warstone Tattoo**@Warstonetattoo



Jamal @J\_isles



Patrick @Pattooist



Simon @Noblesavage23

To find out more about Warstone Tattoo, go to www.warstonetattoo.co.uk/

# Commonwealth

## Commonwealth Games: 29 July - 8 August 2022

## Commonwealth Games Marathon Route 30th July

Support marathon runners on the sidelines as the route runs through the heart of the Jewellery Quarter. The runners will be passing the Chamberlain Clock and St Paul's Church on their route to the finish line in the city centre. Grab a front row seat and cheer for athletes on the last leg of their run.

Find out more about the marathon at https://bit.ly/3OKA5sO

#### **Commonwealth Games Medals**

Did you know?

The medals for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games were designed and manufactured in the Jewellery Quarter. They were designed by the BCU School of Jewellery and manufactured by JQ-based Toye, Kenning and Spencer.

Read more at https://bit.ly/3OMIaoq

#### **Shakespeare Inn**

27th July - 8th August

The Shakespeare Inn welcomes patrons back to their newly refurbished venue just in time for the summer season. In the spirit of the Commonwealth Games volunteers and workers will receive 10% off when visiting this unique city centre pub. T&Cs Apply.

Find out more information at https://bit.ly/39TOyEf

#### **Bloc Hotel**

27th July - 8th August

Bloc Hotel is hosting a festival of free nightly ever which is exclusive to the hotel guests and include

- Ice cream tasting from local producer Odi + Mo
- Beer tasting with Birmingham Brewing Compar
- Barbara Gibson exhibition

Find more information at www.blochotels.com/birmingham/2022-commowealth-games



The Cha<mark>m</mark>blerlain Clock

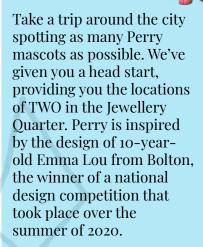


# Games Map 20 Throughout the JQ 22



#### City-wide Mascot Trail 21st July - 8th August

n-





St. Pauls Square





#### **King Kong Park**

22nd July - 8th August, daily 12pm - 11pm

Enjoy all the Commonwealth Games festivities at King Kong Park at Great Hampton Row, brought to you by JQ property developers Cordia Blackswan. Expect live music, food and drink vendors as well as the return of Nicholas Monro's King Kong to Birmingham! Don't miss this opportunity to reunite with the Bull Ring original!

Keep an eye out for details at www.facebook.com/cordiablackswan

#### Milan Indian Cuisine

29th July - 8th August

If you fancy authentic yet modern Indian cuisine, be sure to visit Milan Indian Cuisine. If you are attending the Commonwealth Games and have your ticket to hand, you will benefit from a 10% discount off your bill for the period of the Games. T&Cs Apply.

Find out more information at www.milanindiancuisine.co.uk/

#### **Coffin Works**

Witness first-hand the contents of the former Newman Brothers' manufactory, which opened in 1894 and finally closed its doors in 1998. Visit the award-winning Coffin Works on an atmospheric evening tour and discover its many Commonwealth links, including sales to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Barbados, Trinidad, Tobago, Malta and many more.

28th July: 4.30pm and 6pm 30th July: 4.30pm and 6pm 4th August: 4.30pm and 6pm 6th August: 4.30pm and 6pm

Find out more information and book tickets at http://www.coffinworks.org/coffinworks/coffinworks-after-hours-tour/

# In Their Own Words:

# Professor Carl Chinn MBE, social historian, writer, broadcaster, and teacher

For Issue 16 of JQ Life, Professor Carl Chinn MBE talks about the long-lasting legacy of the working-class manufacturers of the JQ, and the rich history belonging to one of

Birmingham's most renowned areas.

The Jewellery Quarter was not a place I really went to until I was in my 20s, which was when I began to shop for jewellery. I grew up in Springfield. My mom and her family were factory workers in Aston and my dad's family were illegal bookmakers from Sparkbrook! By the early '80s the jewellery shops were beginning to open in the Quarter. My cousin was on the edges of the trade so we would visit the area to get our pieces repaired. I remember my family would meet him for lunch at the old Chamberlains, which I believe is now home to a fish and chip shop.

As time went on, one of the people that gave me a great interest in the Quarter was Kathleen Dayus. She was a local author, famous for documenting her experience of living in the JQ as an impoverished young girl. Her book 'Her People' was a crucial read for me, and for others interested in the lives of the poor in Edwardian Birmingham. Those people and their



stories were hidden in the back-to-backs of the JQ, more than anywhere else in the city, because the frontages of local workshops dominated the area.

I became good friends with Kathleen in the late '80s, which saw me visit the Quarter more frequently. I should have spoken at her 100th birthday celebration. However, she passed away just days before that, so instead I delivered the eulogy at her funeral. Unfortunately, there have been lots of women forgotten about on the fringes of the trade - Kathleen herself was an enameller. Back then, in the early 1900s, women were working in the warehouses – it was a lot of hard work.



#### The Legacy of the Jewellery Quarter

It is significant to me to understand how our city thrust itself onto the world stage as a place of international repute and a manufacturing centre. The JQ is integral to Birmingham's story. Towards the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th, the jewellery trade was one of the most prevalent, employing tens of thousands of people, both directly and indirectly.

All of this originally emerged from the 'toy' trades, which is the practice of producing small metal goods. Many of the city's early jewellers were button and buckle makers initially. It is this overlap that tells us that Birmingham's skilled workers were particularly adaptable. As one trade declined, they were able to move into another that was rapidly expanding. Bear in mind the jewellery trade continued to be hugely important right up until World War II. Even now the JQ remains a manufacturing district at heart, and that emphasises the ongoing importance of Birmingham.

The city's jewellery industry may not employ as many people as it once did, and it might not have quite the economic impact it used to but the JQ's history is important, and the area is still important today – economically and architecturally.

#### The Quarter's Hidden Gems

Not only is the area significant for its jewellers, but it is also significant for the buildings that survive here and continue to draw us in. If you walk along Vyse Street, or Vittoria Street, you will see a variety of structures that you won't find anywhere else in the city. The area is home to long established companies like Fattorini and Toye, Kenning and Spencer. There is also a unit on the corner of Vittoria Street that was an extension of Elliott's button factory that I believe is one of the oldest factory



buildings in Birmingham. I do many walking tours around the city and it is impossible for me to say what my favourite area of the JQ is because there are just so many!

We must remember that the JQ is not only about jewellery. I've mentioned the button trade, but the pen trade was important too and we have the Pen Museum emphasising that Birmingham was essential as the production centre of pens. Even now, many manufacturing processes continue to take place here in the JQ.

I hope the Government and local councils recognise why these businesses are so vital to our country – *Birmingham is still the premier manufacturing city in the UK. We are home to some of the most well-established, well-respected companies across the country and we should be talking about that far and wide.* 

It is very exciting to go to the JQ, to see all the bars, shops and restaurants and the new developments in the area. It certainly is an attractive place to live, but we don't want all of that to come at the cost of what the area is most famed for. I urge those moving into the area to respect the manufacturers. There are many important bases still here and we must cherish them.

There are lots of underrated places to visit. The silver factory in Albion Street deserves more attention, and Vittoria Street carries so much fascinating history. We also mustn't forget that the magnificent Argent Centre used to be Camden House, which is where Henry van Wart lived with his wife Sarah Irving. She was the sister of Washington Irving, who wrote much of 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' and 'Rip Van Winkle' in the JQ. Another place I think needs more attention is the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists. It is a wonderful building, filled with wonderful pieces of art. It has a great café too.

#### **Educating the Next Generation**

I used to teach at a local school – Perry Beeches II, now Arena Academy, and I very much enjoyed my time there. I worked with



the youngsters, taking them out on local tours. We'd not only talk about the history, but where, perhaps their grandparents and great grandparents had come from. From there we'd reach out to the world and back to Birmingham.

I try to partner with lots of schools to work on local history projects. Last year, I worked with Midlands Actors Theatre to produce a project around the JQ's pen trade with St Paul's Catholic School for Girls in Edgbaston.

Young people need to know more about who we are, and why we are all here together. We should build bridges between people and different communities. The curriculum tends to focus on events that happened 2,000 years ago, which



is relevant, but we should be starting with the local and the familiar and then branching out from there.

Initiatives like Birmingham Heritage Week, which is coming up in September, are crucial. It advertises the great sites we have here. It is also important for drawing attention to the groups that are focussed on our local history. There are so many inspiring people working hard to bring our history to the forefront. I admire them a lot. We should be looking at heritage over 52 weeks, in my opinion!

#### The International Stage

Shows like Peaky Blinders have placed us on an international stage and it should be clear that while we recognise the power of the drama and its acclaim, gangsterism isn't glamorous. More could certainly be done to grasp the opportunity that the series has given the city to draw tourists in.

There are many people coming to Birmingham but there is not much to guide people to visit places like the JQ. It should be harnessed in a positive way. We should be showcasing the diversity we have here in the city, including its trades and its districts.

Walk the Quarter's Frederick Street with Carl. https://historywm.com

# Bite Your Brum

# JQ's Hidden Gems

With a promising summer ahead, it is time to try something new. Here is a celebration of some of the lesser known haunts you'll find in the JQ. Have you tried some of these best kept secrets?









The Hive Cafe

#### 43-47 Vittoria St, Birmingham B1 3PE

Nestled within New Standard Works, this rustic café offers up breakfast and lunch options during the week but also provides brilliant work experience and training opportunities to local students. The space is inspired by the history of the surrounding area and even has its own mini museum. A lot of the ingredients are actually grown in the Biodynamic garden on the roof, making it one of the most eco-friendly places to eat in Brum.

Must try: the menu changes all the time but if you can get your hands on the smoked cheddar fritters with home grown salad you'll be very happy.



#### The Wolf

#### 2-10 Constitution Hill, Birmingham B19 3LY

OK, so this pub isn't hidden away so much, as it's a treasure trove for beer lovers. Here you can discover some of the more interesting or rare tipples associated with brewing, including a list of over 20 beers including sours and porters. It's a lively bar and come the weekend the team serves up great roast dinners. One of my favourite pubs in the city.

Must try: on Tuesdays you can get 50% off all food, making those gorgeous toasties you see on its Instagram page around £4, or pie and mash for just a fiver.



#### Ikigai

#### 16 Frederick St, Birmingham B1 3HE

What says hidden gem better than a bar within a bar?
Squirrelled away up 2 flights of stairs in the loft of 1000 Trades you'll find this minimalist cocktail bar. The flavours and ingredients of Japan inspire the drinks here, and it offers a relaxed and informal setting for a night out with friends. A total one-off and independent to its very core, it's just won Newcomer of the Year at the Top 50 Cocktail Bar Awards.

Must try: If you're a gin fan then the Pixilated Punch is a must-try. My favourite from the menu.



#### Viela

#### 91 Vittoria St, Birmingham B1 3NU

Brand new to JQ, this café serves up Brazilian street food and snacks 7 days a week. There's a secret garden terrace out the back, making it an ideal place for summertime meetups. The menu is small but growing all the time, and there's bound to be something on it you've never heard of or tried before including sweet and savoury bites.

Must try: the pao de quedo and coxinha are both delicious small bites and make a great snack while working in the sunshine.





Ana Rocha Bar & Gallery

#### 48 Frederick St, Birmingham B1 3HN

Probably one of the quirkiest places in the city, this hidden gem serves up cocktails and Spanish tapas from a restaurant bar all set within a gallery. Expect to find wild antiquities, a lot of colour and live music events. It's quite lively come the weekend, making it a good stop on a bar crawl.

Must try: the cod fish cakes from the tapas menu go down a treat with a chilled glass of wine after work.



Laura McEwan is the author behind award-winning food blog Bite your Brum. Covering food, drink and hospitality news in Birmingham, Bite Your Brum offers a fun insight into the best places to eat, drink and be merry within the city. She focuses on independent businesses and the best places to spend your time and money, helping readers get the best out of their local area. Having lived and worked in the JQ Laura knows the hidden gems and where to get the best bites. Check out www.biteyourbrum.com and @biteyourbrum on socials.

# What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger

The Jewellery Quarter is home to many brilliant attractions and experiences; however, one shines particularly bright this year. In April, Coffin Works won 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year' at the West Midlands Tourism Awards, in partnership with Visit England. We spoke to Sarah Hayes, museum director, about the importance of the award.

We all remember the uncertainty of March 2020. As airports and borders closed, the tourism industry soon realised that their doors were going to be shut for the foreseeable future. But while the pandemic was hard for everyone, it also brought positive changes to the way we live and work which no one could have predicted.

For Coffin Works, the past two years have been particularly difficult. However, by staying agile, the museum has been able to adapt their visitor experience and provide an attraction that is more responsive to guests' needs.

"Covid challenged us to try something different," says Sarah Hayes. "We had many requests in the past, from visitors who wished to walk around the museum themselves without having to join a tour. Due to the accredited collection and the layout of the museum, this wasn't something we were able to consider pre-covid."

But as the government gradually allowed venues and museums to reopen, Coffin Works needed to adapt their daily tours to be able to maximise visitor numbers and still accommodate for social bubbles and distancing. The solution was a hybrid model where both guided and self-guided tours became an option. This solution and how the team at Coffin Works adjusted the museum to a post-pandemic attraction is why they won the 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year' award in April 2022.

During the pandemic, the museum received the 'Sustaining Engagement with Collections' grant from the Museums Association and utilised the support on social media, from their local network, to crowd fund. This meant that they could put in appropriate barriers and develop a digital tour, allowing visitors to experience the museum on their own while having volunteer room enablers in each room to answer questions and bring the stories to life.





Sarah continues, "the 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year' award is really a seal of approval for the team showing that we are doing something right. We are a small attraction and don't have the biggest budget, but with the passion and willingness from the team to try something new, we are able to compete with the larger venues."

The digital tour is accessed through a QR code and guides guests around the museum through videos, imagery, and oral histories. Since reopening after lockdown, the team now runs guided tours once a day Friday to Sunday, alongside the digital tours, and has a full day of guided tours only on Thursdays. This gives visitors flexibility to experience the museum the way it suits them best.

"We've had such good feedback on the changes we've made. We are now more family friendly which enables visitors with young kids and kids with disabilities to enjoy the museum at their own pace. This response along with the award really validates the hard work and effort the team has put into the changes."

Visitor numbers are still not up to where they were before the pandemic, but the team at Coffin Works are positive that with the changes and the upcoming Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, the number of guests

will increase. To help diversify their income, the museum has recently opened a cafe within the museum – currently only accessible to museum guests, but which will open to the public in the future.

Coffin Works tells the story of the Newman Brothers' coffin furniture factory. The grade II\* listed building and its contents allows visitors to be transported back to the factory in its heyday in the 1960s and experience an important piece of Birmingham's industrial legacy. Coffin Works was functioning for over 100 years on the Fleet Street premises, until workers laid down their equipment and walked out of the building for the last time in 1998, leaving everything behind - including personal belongings.

"One thing the pandemic has taught us is that, much like the Newman Brothers, we are resilient. Covid has been a catalyst for new opportunities and by trusting our gut instinct and our offering, the team of staff and volunteers have transformed the museum and have created something to be truly proud of," Sarah finishes.

To find out more about Coffin Works visit **www.coffinworks.org** or follow them on Instagram **@coffin\_works** 

# A Vision for the JQ

By Matthew Bott, JQDT board member and co-chair of JQ Plan

In 2021, the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust (JQDT) secured Local Centres funding from the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) to create a Jewellery Quarter Cultural Action Zone. Culture is 'everything we do and everywhere we go' and the Jewellery Quarter has a culture and heritage of creativity – of innovation, design, making, and trading.

A grant of £70,000 was awarded for projects focused on showcasing the Jewellery Quarter's culture and heritage, and stimulating investment in people and buildings. The JQDT led projects centred on four areas: making the case for a jewellery biennial, supporting heritage in the JQ, developing three community-led visioning studies, and producing a detailed proposal for a creative incubator.



JEWELLERY QUARTER
CULTURAL ACTION ZONE

Together they will contribute towards the Jewellery Quarter's bright future.

#### **Jewellery Biennial**

Biennial festivals that showcase visual art or craft-based activity – such as the International Glass Biennial, British Ceramics Biennial, or the London Design Biennale – are celebrations of artistic excellence, raise awareness and pride in a place, and increase trade for local businesses.

The Jewellery Quarter is uniquely placed to establish the 'Birmingham Jewellery Biennial' and this project was to research this opportunity, consult with key stakeholders, and develop a deliverable proposal for the UK's Jewellery Biennial. Its conclusion was that the Birmingham Jewellery Biennial should be a showcase of jewellery in the broadest sense of the word. A celebration of design, of

craftsmanship, of heritage, and of innovation in the field. The festival 'anchor' will be flagship exhibition showcasing world-renowned artists and winners of a major UK-wide open call contest. Taking place over a whole month, the Jewellery Quarter will be brought to life by an exciting programme of activities. The core festival programme will be accessible, vibrant, and free. It will give festival goers a glimpse of the lives of current designer-makers. and skilled tradespeople. It will shine a light on the heritage of the Jewellery Quarter and will inspire creativity.

Now the event concept has been developed, the next stage of this project will be a fundraising appeal led by the JODT.

#### **JQ Heritage Network**

JQ heritage attractions include the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Pen Museum, Coffin Works, and The Hive. £2.3 million of restoration work on the cemeteries is now complete, and heritage improvements delivered through the £1.8m Townscape Heritage grant will conclude this summer. As well as these, JW Evans and St Paul's Church are now going through the grant process.

This project recognised that connecting these important organisations is more crucial than ever, and by harnessing this momentum the JQ can make heritage an active part of the Quarter's identity. As a result, a JQ Heritage Network has been set up to help share knowledge and co-ordinate activities. Working with JQ-based Birmingham Conservation Trust, a two-year plan has

been created which supports the Heritage Network and identifies routes for additional funding. The network now meets once per quarter, and it has been invaluable in its contributions to other elements of this project. The intention is for this network to be permanent, with no set term, and that it will always be both informal and free. The network is currently coordinated by the Jewellery **Ouarter BID** 

#### **JQ Visioning**

The Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Plan (JQ Plan) recognises three parts of the Ouarter which have some of the most complex challenges and would therefore benefit from further work. The IO Visioning work provides community-driven answers to these challenges. These have been developed by volunteers from the resident, business, and student community, whose unique insight and experience have produced exciting visions of what the Jewellery Quarter can be. They are intended to generate discussion and action - developing them

further and providing a basis for investment and change which will provide a Jewellery Quarter fit for the rest of the 21st century. The three visions will be published in July 2022 and will be used to direct existing resources and attract new funding to deliver them.

#### JQ Creative Incubator

The JQ has a 250+ year old jewellery industry cluster with over 300 businesses, supporting over 2000 workers.

Businesses are located here because of the jewellery ecosystem where trades depend on each other for specialist skills, labour, materials, and support. Business upskilling and the loss of traditional craftsman skills as people retire is seen as a big threat, and the JQDT and JQ Plan propose a JQ Creative Incubator to help address this.

Birmingham City University's Institute for Design & Economic Acceleration has been appointed to research this further with the jewellery



and creative industry to propose what an incubator should do, where it should be and how it can be delivered.

## The goals for the incubator are:

- Contribute to increasing business survival and growth
- Support the growth of the JQ's indigenous businesses
- Enhance existing assets, building on the existing strengths, attractions, and resources of the IO
- Be part of the existing creative ecosystem and extend or create a new centre of excellence

The proposal for a JQ Creative Incubator will be published this summer and work can then begin to assemble a team of delivery partners.



For more information, email info@jqdt.org

# 

The JQ is home to a rich tapestry of people and cultures. Having recently celebrated Pride month, we shine a light on the JQ's LGBTQ+ community, with three businesses explaining what it's like running a business in the area.

Tan Davis, Bernadette Rushfirth and Dale Hollinshead are all part of the Jewellery Quarter's vibrant LGBTQ+ community. Tan Davis owns Kalypso Cafe, a colourfully energetic wellness business that focuses on superfoods and organic produce. Kalypso Cafe is currently online and through Uber Eats, but Tan is looking to open a shop in the area. Hazel and Haydn, a trendy hairdressers in the heart of the JQ is the brainchild of hair aficionado Dale Hollinshead, and Bernadette Rushfirth owns The Rectory, a cosy yet modern bar sat next to St Paul's church.

So, what's it like to run a small LGBTQ+ business in the Jewellery Quarter?

# What's the LGBTQ + community in the JQ like?

Dale: There is a large LGBTQ+ community in the JQ. We like to think that all our events are fully inclusive of all the communities we serve. For example, we at Hazel and Haydn help organise the yearly summer fete in St Paul's Square. This event helps raise much needed funds for St Paul's church which, in turn, brings the LGBTQ+ community together.

Tan: Although I am not LGBTQ+ myself personally, my brand 100% is. Kalypso Cafe fully supports the LGBTQ+ community. Kalypso Cafe plans to put on lots of events this summer for the LGBTQ+ community in the JQ, including a disco night, a jam session and a clothing swap shop dedicated to the LQBTQ+ community. Plus, we are doing a pop-up shop in the square. Those involved in these events will be part of the LGBTQ+ community themselves, providing a safe space for anyone who wants to join. Look out for the groovy funk!

Bernadette: We are very lucky to have such a diverse range of businesses surrounding us here in the JQ. I've always been an advocate of offering an open and safe space for our community and visitors to come and relax without feeling any prejudice. I'm truly happy to say our regular visitors love it!

#### How has the LGBTQ+ community in the JQ changed over the years?

Dale: As the area has changed over the years with the addition of more places to eat and drink along with more residential space it's LGBTQ+ community has grown because it's such an inclusive place to be.









# What does being an LGBTQ+ business in the JQ mean to you?

Dale: It's really important for me and all the team at Hazel & Haydn that we are here to show support to other LGBTQ+ people and promote inclusivity across everything we do. Our team works in an environment that is safe and supportive regardless of their gender, orientation or status.

Tan: It means that when we open a shop in the community, we will have a colourful place for people to be themselves. Get ready for the coolest hangout coming for the community with the healthiest drinks, snacks and merch – Birmingham style! Bernadette: Something I have always been proud about is who I am and my belief that everyone deserves to be loved and to love in a safe environment. We provide that for anyone and everyone that comes to see us. Having the support of not only local businesses, but also the company you work for can make a huge difference mentally and this is a wonderful thing to share.

#### What's your favourite thing about being an LGBTQ+ business in the JQ?

**Dale:** That we are pioneers in LGBTQ+ inclusivity with no exceptions.

Tan: EVERYTHANG! We are here for you.

Bernadette: The JQ is a fantastic place for all kinds of culture spots, independent venues and perfectly situated on the walking tours from in and around the city, we've been welcomed with open arms from other local businesses from day one and being part of the JQBID is a great way for us to engage with people locally and also bring people in from outside our fair city!

To find out more about the businesses mentioned in this article visit:



Dale's business hazelandhaydn.co.uk



Tan's business kalypsocafe.com



Bernadette's business therectorybirmingham.co.uk



# Fancy a Pint? Walk JO's Ale Trail



A crisp, cold pint on a summer's day is one of life's simplest pleasures, especially when the setting is Birmingham's coolest location. With that in mind, why not set a date for making memories with mates, celebrating the Quarter's amazing independents along the way?

Below are some of the highlights, scan the QR code for a full map of the 20-point trail.

#### THE ROSE VILLA TAVERN

With regular DJs, quizzes and a solid street-food offering from Oso Street food, you can't go wrong with The Rose Villa. Enjoy a beer here with a view of the famous Chamberlain Clock.



One of the area's most aesthetically pleasing bars, The Button Factory, is a must-stop on your journey. On a sunny day, soak up some rays on its glorious rooftop terrace, or take to its open courtyard and bask in its buzzing atmosphere.



#### 1000 TRADES

1000 Trades prides itself on serving a wide selection of local brews. Across its six kegs and four cask taps you'll certainly find a regionally sourced beer to nurse.

Share your route #**JQAle** 

#### ROCK & ROLL BREWHOUSE

(only open Friday evenings & 1st Saturday of the month)

This quirky spot combines music and tasty beers for the ultimate rock & roll atmosphere. Its self-produced pints will quench your thirst and leave a lasting smile.

#### THE LORD CLIFDEN

Another independent boozer serving up a wealth of local options, plus beers from further afield if you'd like. Check out the bustling garden which is incredibly popular over summer.

#### HEN & CHICKENS

A popular desi pub at the centre of the JQ. If you're feeling peckish by this point, we'd recommend ordering something spicy and washing it down with a beautifully paired pint.

#### THE WOLF

An achingly cool craft beer bar with an array of interesting drinks available. Anything goes here, from a chocolate and chilli stout to a raspberry ripple cider. Try a roast if you're visiting on a Sunday.



#### **INDIAN BREWERY**

You'll be won over by the fabulous décor and creative offerings at Indian Brewery. Try its very special, hazy Birmingham Lager. For a sweeter tooth choose either a Bombay Honey or a fruity Peacock.

#### THE RECTORY

Along the iconic St Paul's Square, you'll find The Rectory. This bar is stocked with some big-name brewers and smaller breweries too, for balance. Choose between draft, cans and bottles.

#### **SAINT PAULS HOUSE**

An amazing space to put your feet up and relax as you break from your walk. Saint Pauls House is just the stop for lovers of lagers, stouts, ales, and ciders. With an abundance of popular choices, you'll be spoilt for choice.







heritage-week



Discover this fascinating corner of Birmingham and explore the Jewellery Quarter's rich history of manufacturing, innovation and creativity through an array of online and in-person events!

Browse our website to find out about activities taking place in the Jewellery Quarter as part of Birmingham Heritage Week. Enjoy online tours, theatre performances, walking tours & much more. Including free, online and live events







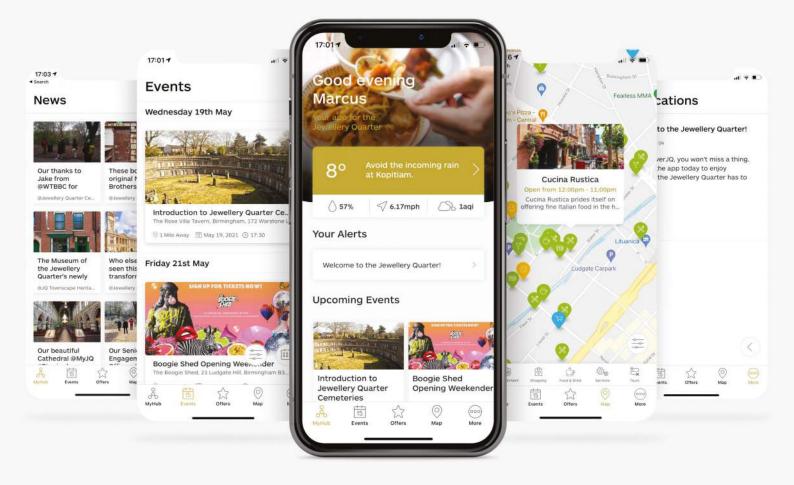






# Browse events, redeem offers, explore heritage, and support independent businesses.

#### Download the app today.



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