

# BIRMINGHAM GEMS

*A celebration of a great city with community*

2021 CHARITY CALENDAR

**IN AID OF:**



**Birmingham  
Museums**



**Queen Elizabeth  
Hospital Birmingham  
Charity**



**Lord Mayor of  
Birmingham's  
CHARITY**

***A Birmingham We Are and Art4Charity collaboration***



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*The collaboration that has helped to bring the Birmingham Gems Calendars to life.*



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*A special thanks to our talented photographers who donated their work for the calendar.*



Elliott Brown



Pete Davies



Simon Felton



Reiss Gordon-Henry



Peter Leadbetter



Edwin Ladd



Kev Maslin



Mac McCreery



Tammie Naughton



Daniel Sturley



Daniel Tonks



Damien Walmsley



Barry Whitehead



Christine Wright

# Birmingham We Are

with

# art4charity

The production of the Birmingham Gems calendar for 2021 is a collaboration between Birmingham We Are and Art4Charity. Both organisations are active in promoting the city and supporting those who are passionate about Birmingham and their community.

For more about Birmingham WeAre:  
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For more about Art4Charity:  
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JANUARY						
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*Main photo: Birmingham City Council House with the newly constructed 103 Colmore Row. Photo by Reiss Gordon-Henry. Right: The fabulous Centenary Square from the Library Lower Terrace. Photo by Simon Felton.*

## OUR CREATIVE CITY

Birmingham, sometimes referred to as the 'City of a thousand trades', was one of the fastest growing cities in the world during the 19th Century. This growth and entrepreneurial spirit continues to this day. What is evident to see for all who visit and then fall in love with Birmingham is the innovation and huge creativity on display, but also the attention paid to showcasing the city's amazing history and heritage. Birmingham's construction and built environment perfectly complements its historical gems and is a magnet for followers of culture and creativity.

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FEBRUARY						
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Main photo: A lovely winter scene at Birmingham’s Cannon Hill Park. Photo by Pete Davies. Right: Later in the year, colours change at Kings Heath Park, Photo by Christine Wright.

# PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Birmingham is extremely proud of its parks and green open spaces. With over 550 parks covering a combined area of 14 square miles, this is more green open space than any other equivalent sized European city. 15 of Birmingham’s parks have received the prestigious Green Flag Award. The city’s parks play a major role in bringing people and community together and providing safe and family friendly environments where people can relax and enjoy nature on a walk, run or cycle ride in wonderful green and open spaces.

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MARCH						
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*Main photo: Stunning scene at Birmingham's Gas Street Basin. Photo by Tammie Naughton. Right: Wonderful reflections captured under Black Sabbath Bridge. Photo by Damien Walmsley.*

# CANALS AND WATERWAYS

Birmingham is often referred to as being at the heart of Britain's canal network. With over 100 miles of canals to explore it's easy to see why. Whether you walk, run, bike or simply sit back and relax, the more time you spend by water the happier and healthier you feel. The charity, Canal & River Trust, together with dedicated volunteers, do a wonderful job in protecting our canals for everyone to enjoy. Go and discover Birmingham's canals.

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APRIL						
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*Main photo: Deserted streets in the city during the lockdown. Photo by Daniel Tonks. Right: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham as seen from Frankley. Photo by Daniel Sturley.*

# HEALTHCARE AND OUR NHS

Birmingham has always put the health and wellbeing of its citizens at the forefront of policy, strategy and decision making. In 2012, Her Majesty The Queen, as part of her Diamond Jubilee Tour, officially named the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB). Birmingham is rightly proud of the country’s NHS and the pioneering contributions made at its own hospitals, including the work for those injured across the armed forces. In 2020, a wonderful display was created in Victoria Square as a thank you from the city in recognition of the wonderful work carried out by the NHS and frontline staff.

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MAY						
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*Main photo: Canal view from the south east into the city. Photo by Mac McCreery Right: Birmingham's entry for the 2019 RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Photo courtesy Birmingham City Council.*

## SUSTAINABILITY

Birmingham is a city committed to providing a clean and healthy environment for its citizens. Birmingham City Council's vision of sustainability and its clean air zone strategy are all considered essential for Birmingham as it continues to grow as a major European city. In 2019, for the 8th year in a row, Birmingham scooped gold at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show for a display highlighting the importance of action to tackle climate change. Sponsored by Veolia, and working in partnership with Baroness Floella Benjamin, the garden focused on four key themes: Air quality; water conservation; reducing waste; and community involvement.

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JUNE						
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*Main photo: The city skyline from Egg Hill in Frankley. Photo by Daniel Sturley. Right: The Mercian and Bank Tower Two, two of the city's tallest builds. Photo by Daniel Sturley.*

# BIRMINGHAM ARCHITECTURE

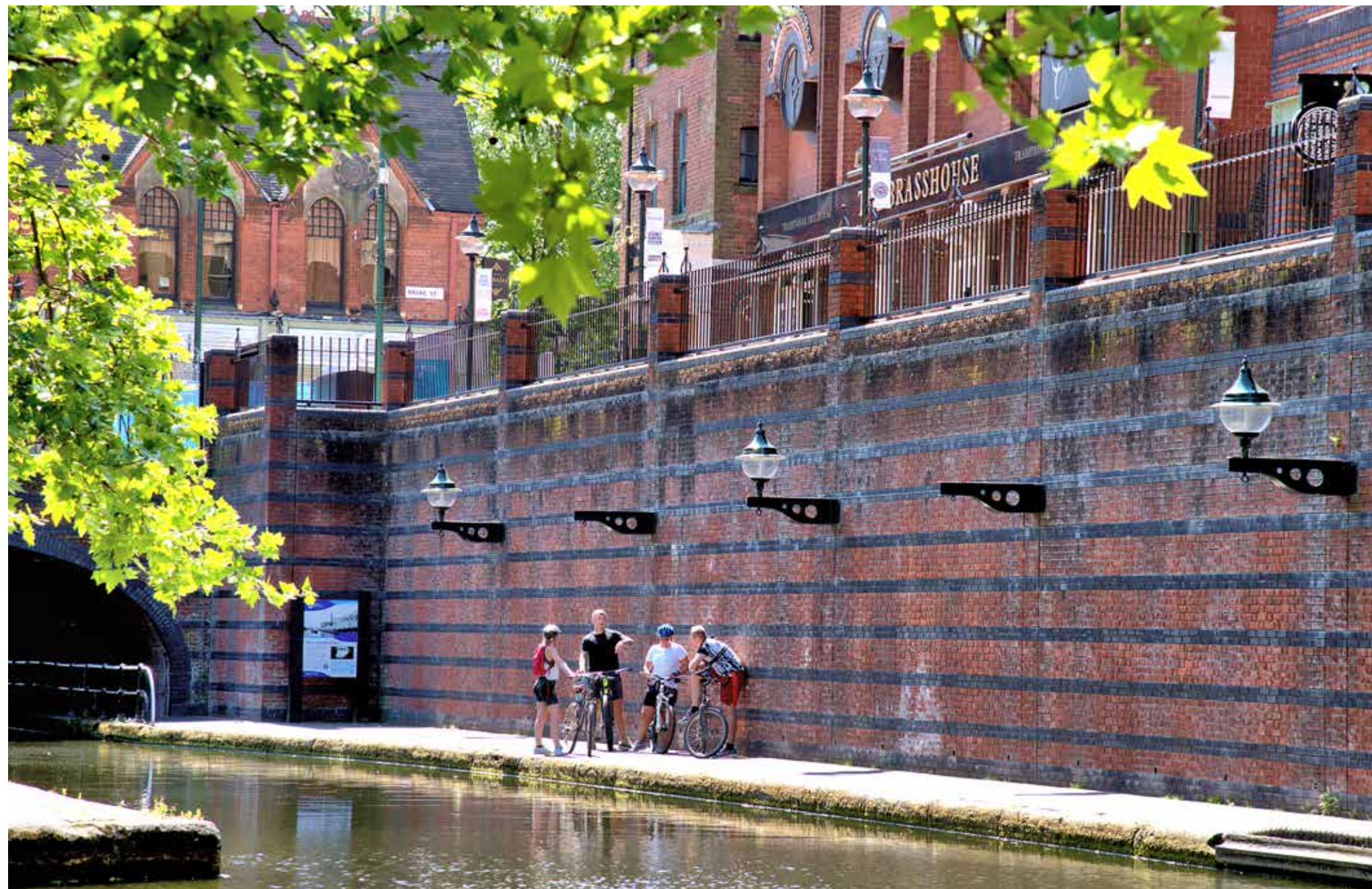
Birmingham is a relatively young city. As a result of the industrial revolution, the city grew rapidly. The fast pace of change continues today and this is reflected in the variety of architectural styles on display across Birmingham. Birmingham has been home to many prominent architects over the years such as Yeoville Thomason, William Alexander Harvey and John Madin. In recent years, architects such as Ken Shuttleworth, Francine Houben, Glenn Howells, Frances Gannon, Lyndon Glancy, Warren Jukes and many others have helped create a wonderful landscape and built environment for a city with an exciting future.

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JULY						
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*Main photo: Cyclists taking a break on the canal towpath. Photo by Kev Maslin. Right: The annual dragon boat race at Brindleyplace. Photo by Daniel Sturley.*

## SPORT AND WELLBEING

Given the city's long tradition with holding amazing sporting events, Birmingham is a natural choice for hosting the Commonwealth Games. From athletics to world gymnastics, we have been captivated and entertained by so many talented and gifted sports men and women from across the globe. What is perhaps not so well known is Birmingham's contribution to the Olympic Games by hosting one of the pioneering multi-sport festivals, the National Olympian Games in 1867. Within and across Birmingham, grassroots sport and some more unusual pastimes play an important role in ensuring people's physical and mental wellbeing.

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AUGUST						
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*Main photo: Amazing reflections in Centenary Square. Photo by Barry Whitehead. Right: The beautiful Bournville Village Green. Photo by Christine Wright.*

## BIRMINGHAM AND CADBURY

Birmingham, as most people know well, is home to Cadbury's, the famous manufacturer of chocolate. The Cadbury family has a fascinating history that dates back to 1824 when John Cadbury opened a grocer's shop in Bull Street, Birmingham. But it isn't just chocolate that we have to thank the Cadbury family for. The early Cadbury brothers, George and Richard had a strong belief in creating a prosperous, enterprising and inclusive community. This ethos and support for community continues today and the Cadbury Foundation supports a variety of inspirational organisations, local and national.

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SEPTEMBER						
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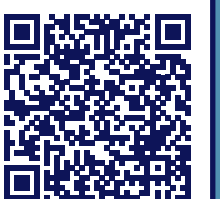


Main photo: 'Forward in Unity' mural by artist Gent48 (commissioned by Art4Charity). Photo by Edwin Ladd Right: Street art in Digbeth by Gent48 at Suki10c.

## BIRMINGHAM'S STREET ART

Birmingham is most definitely the city in which to enjoy incredible street art from an array of highly talented street artists. Whilst it was the sudden arrival of a mural by Banksy in the Jewellery Quarter and the excellent Art4Charity commission of the 'Forward in Unity' mural that hit the headlines, it is around Southside and Digbeth where you can enjoy work from talented street artists. These artists include Gent48, Anatomix, Lucy McLauchlan, Philth (aka Phill Blake), N4T4 (aka Nathan Parker), Wingy (aka Simon Wingfield), Foka Wolf, Justin Sola, Andrew Mills and many more. The main street art event of the year is the High-Vis Street Culture Festival.

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OCTOBER						
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*Main photo: Wonderful colours in the gardens at Botanical Gardens. Photo by Christine Wright. Right: A heron taking in the view at Witton Lakes. Photo by Elliott Brown.*

# NATURE AND WILDLIFE

The landscape of Birmingham and the surrounding area has a rich social, economic and natural heritage shaped by a complex history of rural, industrial, and more recent suburban and commercial land use. From scarce mammals like water voles and polecats to dragonflies and kingfishers, and a huge variety of plant life, there is much to treasure with so many wonderful places to go and enjoy the city’s nature and wildlife. The dedication and passion of hard-working volunteers is essential to the protection of wildlife across the city and within neighbourhoods.

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NOVEMBER						
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*Main photo: Sarehole Mill, a Grade II listed water mill, on the Shire Country Park. Photo by Elliott Brown. Right: Moseley Bog, a local Nature Reserve in Moseley. Photo by Peter Leadbetter.*

## BIRMINGHAM AND TOLKIEN

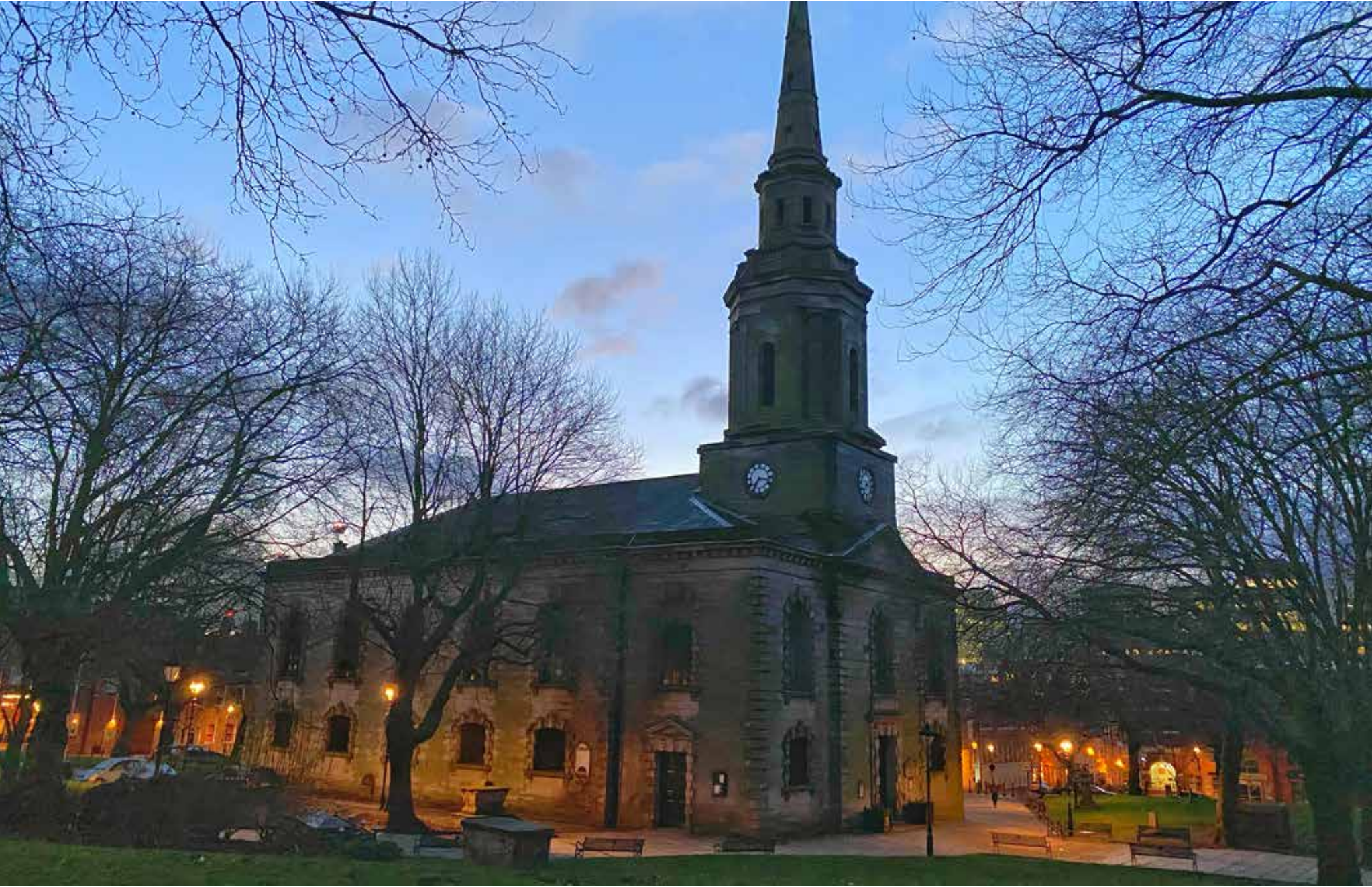
J.R.R Tolkien is one of the best known authors in the world, with universally acclaimed epic novels such as The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. What is not so well known is the Tolkien family's links with Birmingham. From 1895 to 1911 before Tolkien left to study at Exeter College, he and his family lived in a number of homes located in the south of the city. J.R.R. Tolkien often referred to Birmingham as his home and places such as Moseley Bog, The Two Towers on the Ladywood/Edgbaston border, Sarehole Mill and the Shire County Park all played their part in the wonderful works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

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DECEMBER						
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Main photo: St Paul's Square in the heart of the Jewellery Quarter. Photo by Damien Walmsley. Right: Oozells Square and the Ikon Gallery in Brindleyplace. Photo by Kev Maslin.

# PUBLIC SQUARES

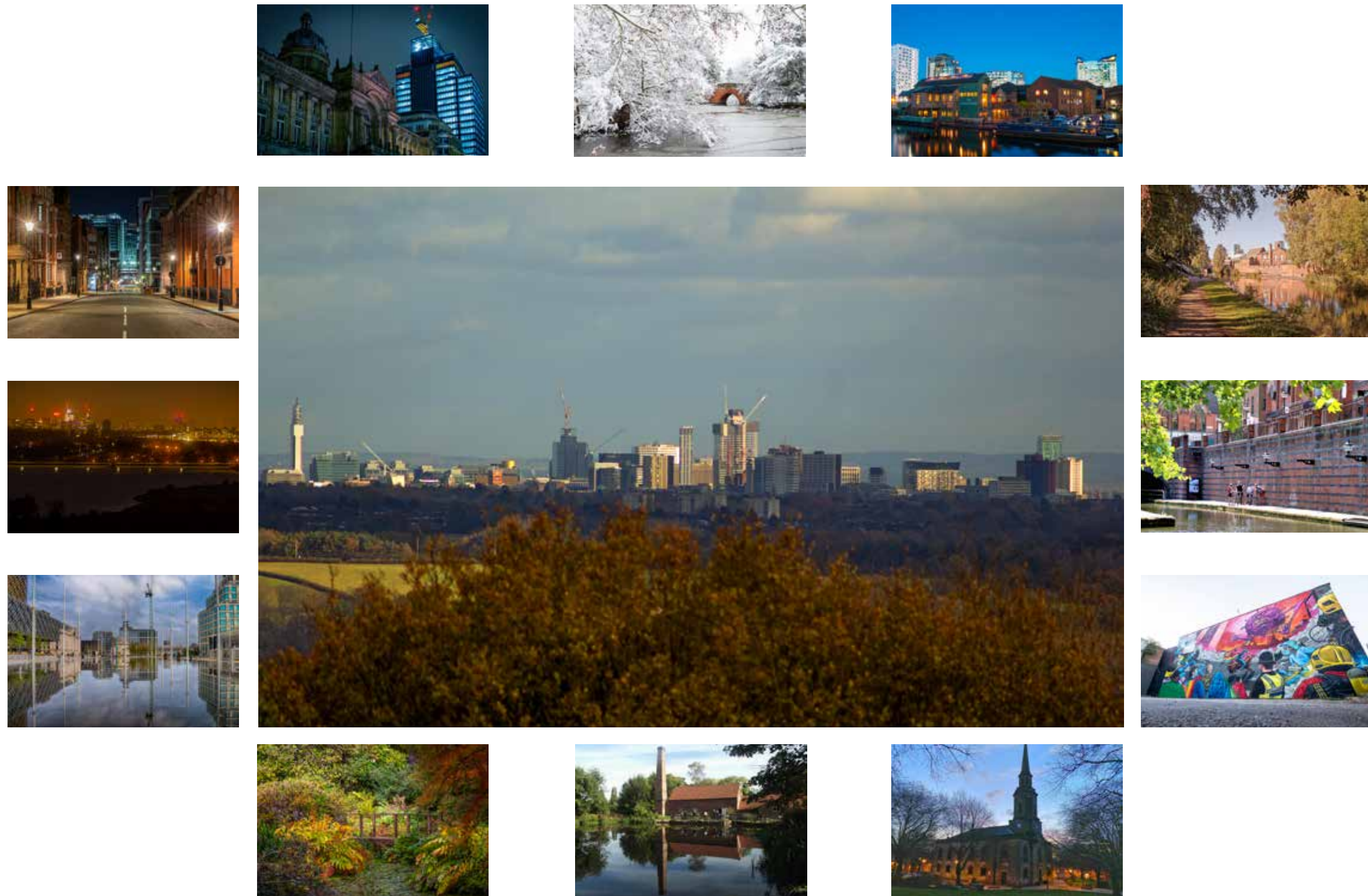
Birmingham’s impressive public spaces and squares have played, and continue to play, an important role in the City Council’s urban design strategy. Birmingham is a great example of how well designed and developed city squares and interconnected streets can enhance the experience for both visitors and people living in the city. Victoria Square, Centenary Square and Chamberlain Square are just a few of the wonderful public spaces that are connected with direct and pleasant pedestrian links. These spaces and places portray a city that recognises the value and importance of its heritage and history whilst maintaining a vision of growth.

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For more about the city and its Birmingham Gems Scan the QR code or visit [www.birminghamgems.com](http://www.birminghamgems.com)

