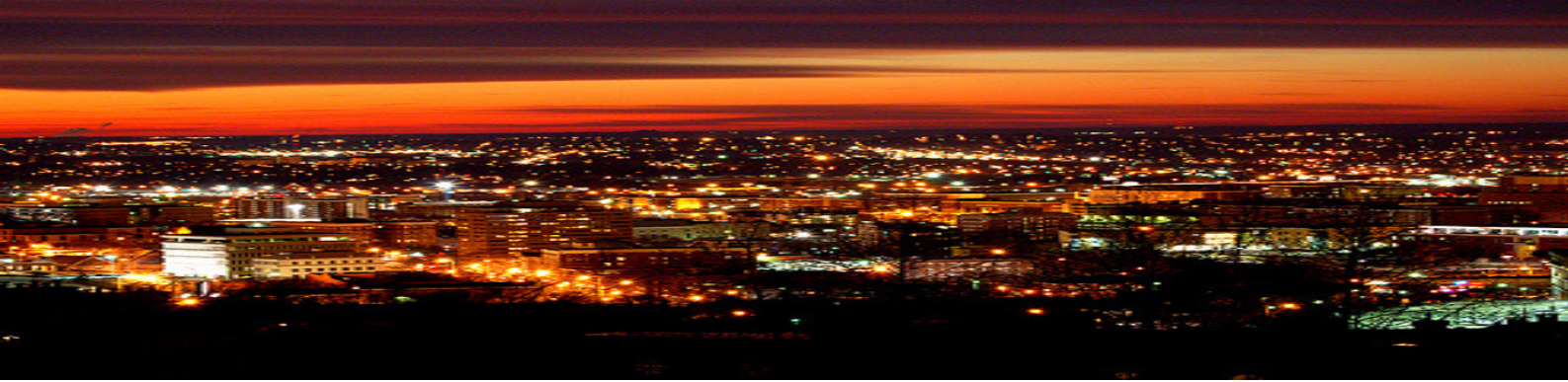




Travelodge

# SEE BIRMINGHAM FOR FREE





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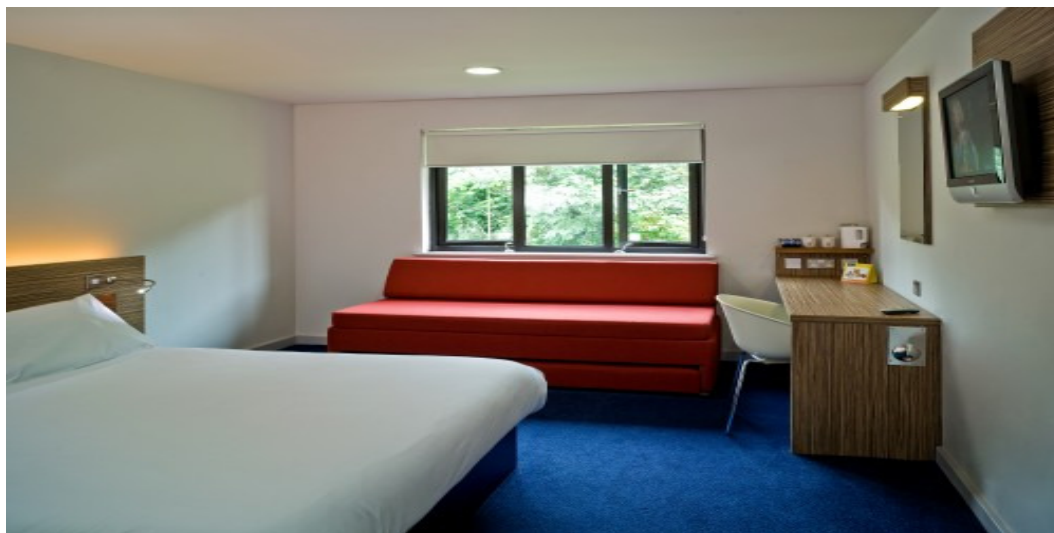
Birmingham is Britain's second largest city and is situated right in the heart of England. It's a diverse and dynamic city, vibrant by day and by night. With its fascinating history and world-class cultural scene, combined with superb shopping, great nightlife and award-winning restaurants Birmingham has a unique quality that brings with it an exciting and dynamic spirit.

The city offers plenty of things to do and see for all ages and this Travelodge city guide will show you how you can see the city for free. Included within this guide are:

- **Details on major free attractions**
- **Details of art galleries that are free to visit**
- **Details of free museums**
- **Details of the best parks to visit**

To get the most out of your break to Birmingham book a Travelodge Saver room at £19 or £29 which will leave you plenty of pennies to spend on eating out and shopping. To book a Travelodge Saver room just go to [www.travelodge.co.uk](http://www.travelodge.co.uk).

A Travelodge family room will cater for two adults and two children or three adults – so there is no excuse not to get away this year with the family, your partner and your friends. By staying with Travelodge you can afford to take more short breaks this year. Wherever you are in the UK you are bound to find a Travelodge hotel close by.



A Travelodge Family Room

## FREE ATTRACTIONS



**Blakesley Hall** is one of the few, remaining timber framed buildings left in Birmingham, the Hall was built in 1590 for Richard Smalbroke junior, who wanted to reflect his growing prosperity with a new and comfortable home. In the 1930s, the Hall became a museum and both central heating and toilets were installed altering the layout of the ground floor. Restoration has involved removing these to reinstate the 'Great' and 'Little' Parlours. In these rooms, the family would dine, separately from their servants, perhaps entertaining guests. They would also read, prepare accounts and write letters here away from the daily bustle of the rest of the household. The Hall contains period furniture and fittings. The table in the great hall is original to the house. Other pieces come from the collections of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

**Opening times:** Tues to Sun 12 noon to 4pm (Closed Mon except Bank Holidays)

**For further information please visit:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk/blakesley.bcc](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/blakesley.bcc)



**Aston Hall** is a 400 year old Grade I listed building set in 52 acres of historic parkland. It is the largest and oldest of the five community museums owned by Birmingham City Council. It has recently **undergone** a £12.5 million renovation. The Hall was built for Sir Thomas Holte and was one of the last great Jacobean houses to be built. The layout of rooms is largely unchanged, and they are linked by the original imposing grand stairs and splendid Long Gallery. The house still retains many early seventeenth century decorative features in stone, plaster and wood.

**Opening times:** Tues-Sun (except Bank Holiday Mondays) 12 noon to 4pm. Closed on Aston Villa home match days.

**For further information please visit:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk/astonhall.bcc](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/astonhall.bcc)



**Sarehole Mill** was built in 1765 on the site of Biddle's Mill, which dated back to 1540. For most of Sarehole's working life it was used to grind corn, but in the industrial revolution it was used for blade grinding and metal rolling as well. Sarehole Mill is a fine example of one of more than fifty water mills that existed in Birmingham at one time. Matthew Boulton's father rented the Mill and Sarehole farm in 1756. When his father died, Boulton used the Mill for making buttons and for metal rolling until he moved his operations to Handsworth in 1761. In the late 1890s Sarehole was the childhood haunt of *Hobbit* author J.R.R. Tolkien, and famously mentioned in *The Lord of the Rings*.

**Opening times:** From Sat 4 April to Sun 2 Nov, Tues to Sun 12 noon to 4pm (closed Mon, except Bank Holidays)

**For further information please visit:** [www.bmaq.org.uk/sarehole-mill](http://www.bmaq.org.uk/sarehole-mill)



**Soho House** was the elegant home of industrial pioneer Matthew Boulton, who lived in Soho House from 1766 to 1809. Here, he met with some of the most important scientists, engineers and thinkers of his time. Soho House has been carefully restored to its 18th century appearance and contains some of Boulton's own furniture. Displays tell the story of this fascinating man and the interests he shared with his famous visitors including members of the Lunar Society. There's also the chance to see some of the products of Boulton's nearby factory – where buttons and buckles, clocks and vases, and silver and Sheffield plate tableware were made – and where he developed the steam engine in partnership with James Watt. In the visitor centre next to Soho House is a community gallery with a changing programme of exhibitions and activities.

**Opening times:** Open from 4 Apr to 1 Nov 2009 - Tues to Sun 12.00am to 4pm  
Closed Mondays except Bank Holidays

**For further information please visit:** [www.bmaq.org.uk/soho-house](http://www.bmaq.org.uk/soho-house)



The ruins at **Weoley Castle** are over 700 years old and are the remains of the moated medieval manor house that once stood here. The site has been inhabited from the 12th century and, according to the Domesday Book, was part of the estates of William Fitz Ansculf. Finds have included glass from Syria and a range of kitchen equipment. Some of the objects can be seen at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. Weoley changed hands several times between 1485 and 1531 when it began to fall into disrepair. In the centuries that followed, stone from the castle was removed to build a nearby farm and the Dudley no.2 canal. Today the site is a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument' of national importance, which means it, is legally protected from future development or damage.

**Opening times:** Weekends and Bank Holidays only viewing platform

Open from 21<sup>st</sup> Mar to Nov 2nd

**For further information please visit:** [www.bmaq.org.uk/weoley-castle](http://www.bmaq.org.uk/weoley-castle)



**Victoria Square** stands at the junction of three streets; New Street, Paradise Street and Colmore Row. After the Council House was built in the 1870s it was known as Council House Square. It became Victoria Square after the arrival of the statue of Queen Victoria in 1901. Between August 1992 and June 1993, Victoria Square was completely redesigned at a cost of £3.2 million. Only the statue of Queen Victoria remains in its original location. The square was re-opened by Diana, the Princess of Wales on 6 May 1993. The square is also the site of Birmingham's Town Hall, and several public works of art, including the Iron Man and the 'Flooie in the Jacuzzi'.

**For further information please visit:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk)



**Birmingham is said to have more canals than Venice.** Certainly, in the middle of the 18th Century, there were 174 miles of canal in Birmingham. Now only 114 miles of them remain as navigable water. Walking the towpath gives you a chance to see the city and its surrounding towns in a new light. In the centre of the city, over 15 miles of canal have been improved to make safe and enjoyable walking - you don't need a boat!

**For further information please visit:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk/canals.bcc](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/canals.bcc)



**St Chad's Cathedral** is Birmingham's hidden jewel it is situated on the edge of the Jewellery Quarter. St Chad's is known across the world as a beautiful building with a remarkable history and a rich heritage. The cathedral possesses a large collection of medieval furnishings and carvings collected by Pugin. He was the pioneer of the Gothic revival in England and, until his early death in 1852 aged 40, designed many cathedrals, churches and convents with their furnishings and contents in England, Ireland and Australia. Pugin was also responsible for much of the interiors of the Houses of Parliament in London. Three of Pugin's sons, Edward, Cuthbert and Peter Paul, also worked in the Cathedral. His grandson, Sebastian Pugin Powell, designed St Edward's Chapel which was consecrated in 1933.

**Opening times:** Daily 7am to 5pm (Sat 9am to 5pm and Sun 7am to 3pm)

**For further information please visit:** [www.stchadscathedral.org.uk](http://www.stchadscathedral.org.uk)



**The Birmingham Cathedral** was designed by English Baroque architect, Thomas Archer. The cathedral was originally built as a church in the early 18th Century. Archer's design was influenced by a visit to Rome which is particularly noticeable in the concave-sided tower. Now Grade I listed, it is the smallest of the English cathedrals and the only one to be built in the Baroque style. St Philip's is most famous for its 19th century stained glass windows designed by Birmingham artist Edward Burne-Jones. The cathedral contains four jewelled effect windows as excellent examples of his work

**Opening times:** 7:30am to 6:30pm weekdays and 8:30am to 5pm weekends

**For further information please visit:** [www.birminghamcathedral.com](http://www.birminghamcathedral.com)

## ART GALLERIES



The **Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery** opened in 1885, the collections cover fine art and applied arts, archaeology and ethnography, natural history, social history. The Museum has the largest collection of Pre-Raphaelite works in the world, as well as Old Masters and Impressionists. Recently the modern and contemporary collections have had a new home created in the Waterhall Gallery of Modern Art, positioned just at the rear of the Museum.

**Opening times:** Mon -Thurs 10am to 5pm, Fri 10.30 to 5pm, Sat 10am to 5pm  
Sun 12.30pm to 5pm

**For further information please visit:** [www.birmingham.gov.uk/bmag.bcc](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/bmag.bcc)



The **Ikon Gallery** leans towards the modern and contemporary. There are two galleries to have a muse around. A variety of media is represented, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation.

**Opening times:** Tues - Sun 11am to 6pm, closed Mon except Bank Holidays

**For further information please visit:** [www.ikon-gallery.co.uk](http://www.ikon-gallery.co.uk)



The **Number Nine Gallery** was established in 1999 by **Lee Benson** - a key figure in the art market. Benson felt that a new and dynamic approach was needed in the arts and sought to create a gallery where art, glass, ceramics and sculpture could all be displayed in a reviving commercial environment. Located within the new Brindleyplace redevelopment just off Birmingham's Broad Street, **number nine** is one of the many new businesses in the area. Surrounded by the city's best bars and restaurants and near the redeveloped canals, **number nine** must be visited by those interested in the fine and modern arts.

**Opening times:** Tues-Sat 11am to 6pm, Sun 11am to 5pm, (closed Monday)

**For further information please visit:** [www.numberninethegallery.com](http://www.numberninethegallery.com)



The **Barber Institute of Fine Arts** is one of the finest small art galleries in Europe. It is situated on the grounds of Birmingham University. The collection includes pieces by Rubens, Degas, Monet and Sickert. It is a bit out of town, but it's only a 5 minute walk from the University train station, which is just two stops from New Street.

**Opening times:** Mon – Sat 10am to 5pm and Sun 12 noon to 5pm

**For further information please visit:** [barber.org.uk](http://barber.org.uk)

# MUSEUMS



**The Birmingham Back to Backs Museum** is a row of four houses on Hurst Street, Birmingham, that are owned by the National Trust. The houses are typical of the kind that dominated this area of Birmingham throughout the 19th and 20th century. As such each house has been restored to reflect a different date in history, 1840's, 1870's, 1930's and the 1970's. The later of which is quite thought provoking when you see how some people still lived in Birmingham only 40 years ago. There is an interactive exhibition and also a 1930's traditional sweet shop.

(This attractions is only free for National Trust members and children under 5 adults otherwise adults have to pay an entry fee of £4.50 and children £2.20

**Opening times:** Please call to book a visit and confirm opening times 0121 666 7671 (booking line) and 0121 622 2442 (office)

**For further information please visit:**

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-birmingham\\_backtobacks](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-birmingham_backtobacks)



At the **Museum of the Jewellery Quarter** discover the skill of the jeweller's craft and enjoy a unique tour of an original jewellery factory, frozen in time. For over 80 years the family-run firm of Smith and Pepper produced jewellery from the factory that is now the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. The excellently preserved 'time capsule' workshop has changed little since the beginning of the century. When the factory closed in 1981 its entire contents were left exactly as they had been on the last day of production - right down to the workers' final mugs of tea. Today, museum staff give you a guided tour of the Smith and Pepper factory and demonstrate jewellery making techniques at the jeweller's bench. Using the most up to date techniques of video and display, guides and jewellers take you through the astonishing story of the 200 year old Jewellery Quarter and the ancient craft skills still practised in the workshop that make this area the centre of the British jewellery industry. Learn about the origins of your own jewellery; was it made here on the site of Smith & Pepper's old factory.

**Opening times:** Tues to Sat 10.30am to 4pm open Bank Holiday Monday's

**For further information please visit:**

[www.jewelleryquarter.net/.../museum-of-the-jewellery-quarter](http://www.jewelleryquarter.net/.../museum-of-the-jewellery-quarter)



**Broadfield House Glass Museum** is situated in the historic Stourbridge Glass Quarter. Broadfield House celebrates the magical art of glassmaking and houses a magnificent collection of British glass, much of it made locally, dating from the 17th century up to the present day. A programme of events and temporary exhibitions compliment the glass displays. There is also a glassmaking studio on site where visitors can watch the glassblowers' at work.

**Opening times:** Call 01384 312 745 for opening times

**For further information please visit:** [www.stourbridge.co.uk/htm/broadfld.htm](http://www.stourbridge.co.uk/htm/broadfld.htm)

# PARKS



**Cannon Hill Park** is one of the premier parks in the city and has been awarded Green flag status. The park offers beautiful flowerbeds, lakes, pools and a wonderful collection of trees. There's plenty of opportunity for exercise at the park's tennis courts, bowling and putting greens and wildlife enthusiasts can follow the walkways and cycle routes alongside the River Rea. The conservation area within the park includes a 5 acre woodland known as the 'RSPB Centenary Plantation'. There is also a wildflower meadow, which is sown each year with cornfield annuals such as field poppy, cornflower and corn marigold. The park is an ideal venue for families, with children's play areas and boats for hire on the lake in the summer. There are plenty of picnic areas and refreshments are available at the Garden Tea Rooms.

**For further information please call:** 0121 442 4226



**Handsworth Park** was designed over 100 years ago, by nurseryman and landscape designer Richard Hartland Vertegens. It has Grade II listed status and lies in the centre of Handsworth. It offers a wonderfully maintained landscape; children's play area and a modern leisure centre located within the grounds. The park also has a Ranger Service which offers a wide range of activities and events such as nature walks, practical conservation activities and general activities.

**For further information please call:** 0121 523 9624



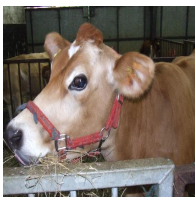
**The Lickey Hills Country Park** lies 11 miles south west of Birmingham city centre and covers an area of 524 acres. The hills are covered by a mosaic of mixed deciduous woodland, conifer plantations and heathland; all are rich in a variety of wildlife. Included within the park boundary is an eighteen hole golf course, bowls, tennis, putting green and viewing platform allowing easy access to panoramic views over the surrounding countryside. The Visitor Centre provides a focal point for nature conservation activities within the park. Exhibition, leaflets and information on nature trails, guided walks and other activities organised by the Ranger Service.

**For further information please call:** 0121 447 7106



**New Hall Valley Country Park** consists of historic wetland, grazing meadows, former farmland and is part of Plantsbrook. It borders on a number of privately owned listed buildings, including a corn mill that dates back to the 17th Century. The park includes a network of cycle routes and footpaths and two play areas for children. The Valley is home to a wide range of animals and plants. Brook Trout, Kingfishers, Water Voles and Grey Herons can all be seen along the Plantsbrook. Oxeye Daisy and Black Knapweed grow in the wildflower areas, whilst other wild flowers such as Greater Burnet, Ragged Robin and Yellow Rattle can be found in the meadow. Birds of prey, including Buzzards, Kestrels and Sparrowhawks, can be spotted in the valley too.

**For further information please call:** 0121 355 6370



**Sheldon Country Park** covers an area of 300 acres, comprising open grassland, wetlands, old hedgerows and some mature woodland. The park is situated on the very edge of the city and is also a haven for wildlife. There is a working demonstration farm on the grounds showing visitors traditional methods of agriculture. The farm animals include Jersey cattle, pigs, goats, ponies, ducks, chickens and geese. Other facilities include a children's playground and picnic areas.

**For further information please call:** 0121 742 0226



**Sutton Park** is included in the English Heritage's list of historic parks and gardens and most of the site is also a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument' due its many sites of archaeological interest. Lying six miles to the north of Birmingham City Centre and covering over 970 hectares (2,400 acres). This landscape is a mosaic of open heathland, woodlands, wetlands, marshes and seven lakes each with their own rich variety of plants and wildlife. There are opportunities to enjoy walking, angling and nature watching. In addition the park has bridle paths, cycling routes, playing and picnic areas.

**For more information please call:** 0121 355 6370