



Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter Walk

Learn about Birmingham's unique historic Jewellery Quarter. Full of history, quirky museums and two peaceful Victorian cemeteries.

Distance 5 kilometers / 3.1 miles

Duration 2 hours and 30 minutes



Wildlife



Water feature



Refreshments



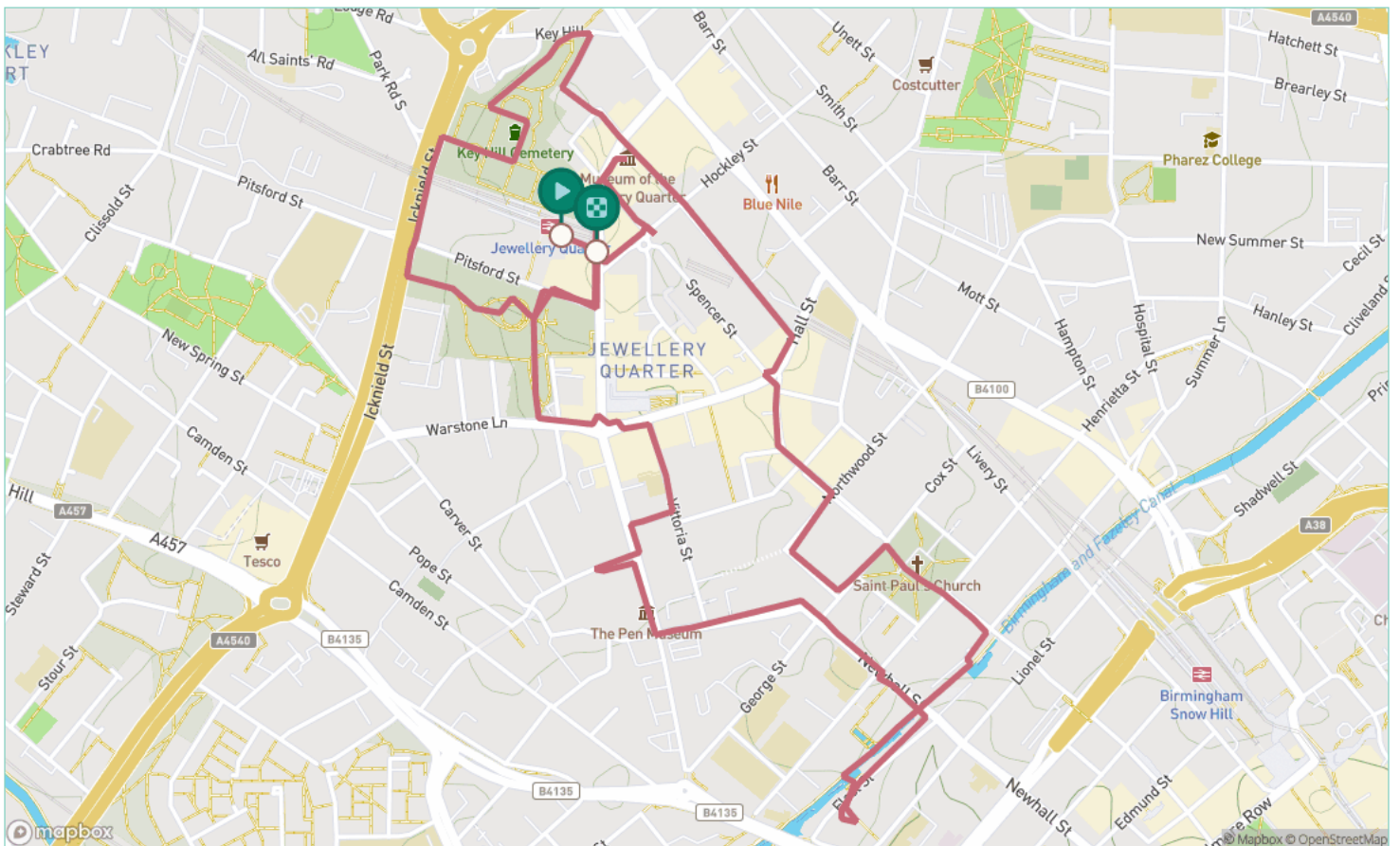
Public transport



History

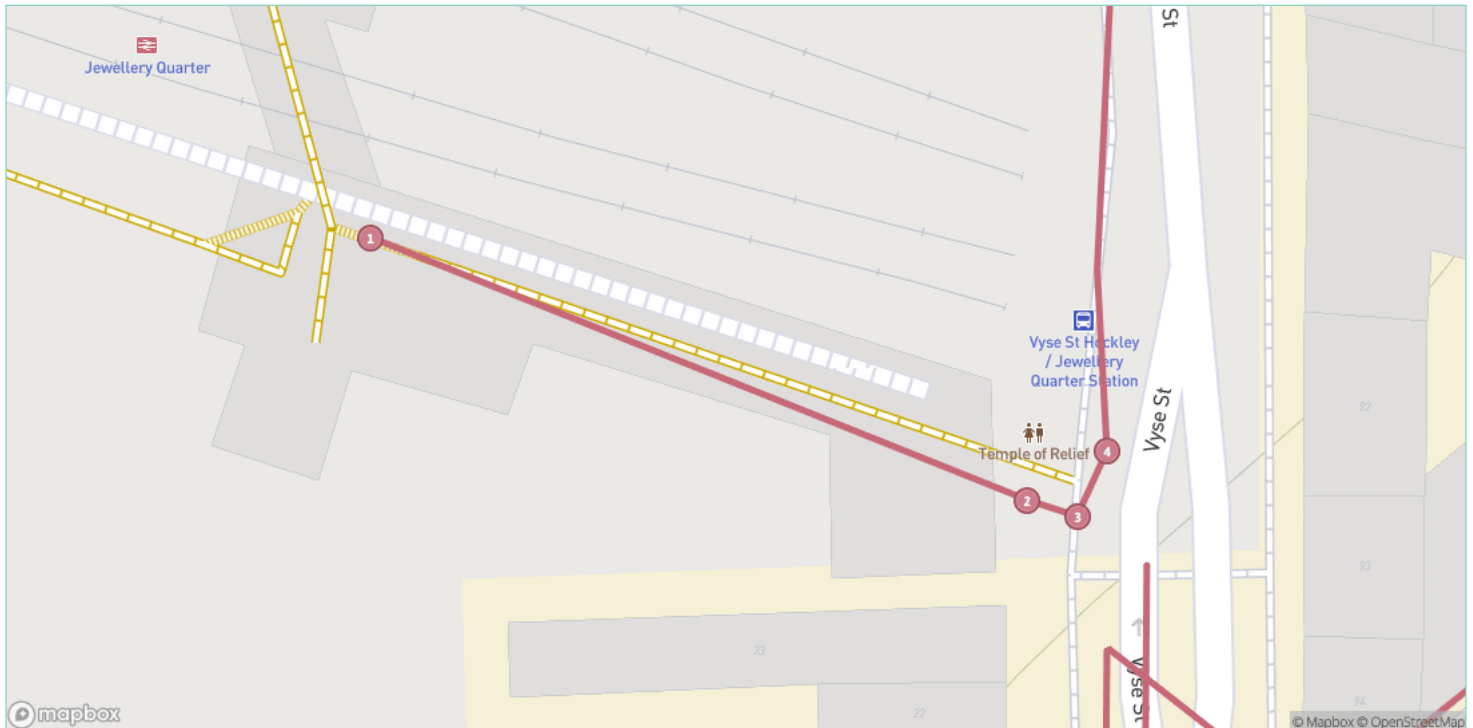


Paid-for attraction



Disclaimer: Directions are provided as guidance only. Weather, construction, closures or other factors may affect routes. Please take care when crossing roads and avoid private land. Always follow local signage and use common sense.

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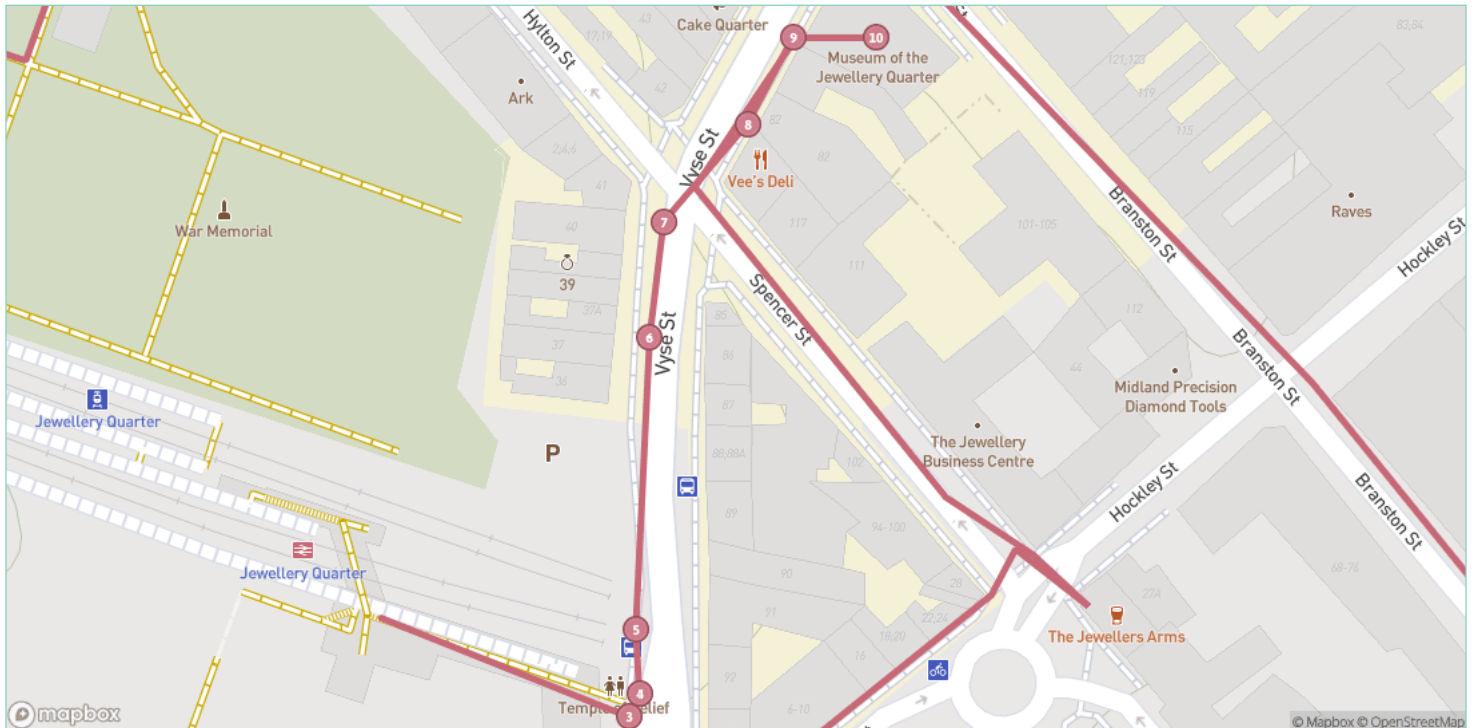
Step 1: This walk begins at Jewellery Quarter station. You can reach it by metro or rail. You can also start the trail on Vyse St.

Step 2: The station is a great starting point for some history on the jewellery quarter. Keep an eye out for information boards and memorabilia.

Step 3: Welcome to Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter. Find out more about its history and background by tapping 'Read More' below.

Intro to the Jewellery Quarter

Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter has been the heart of Britain's jewellery trade for over 250 years. At its Victorian peak, around 30,000 people worked in hundreds of workshops packed into these streets, producing roughly half of all the jewellery made in the entire country. Today hundreds of jewellery businesses still operate here, and the narrow yards and back-to-back workshops that give the area its character are largely unchanged from that era. You can still walk into a workshop and watch someone making jewellery by hand, just as people have done here for centuries!



Step 4: As soon as you exit the station, turn left and you will see a Grade II listed Victorian urinal known as the “temple of relief”. More below!

Temple of Relief Urinal

This ornate cast-iron Victorian public urinal is one of the most unlikely survivals in Birmingham, most of its kind were torn down during the 20th century, but this one made it through. It was installed at a time when tens of thousands of workers crowded these streets, and the Victorians, typically, made even a public toilet look decorative!

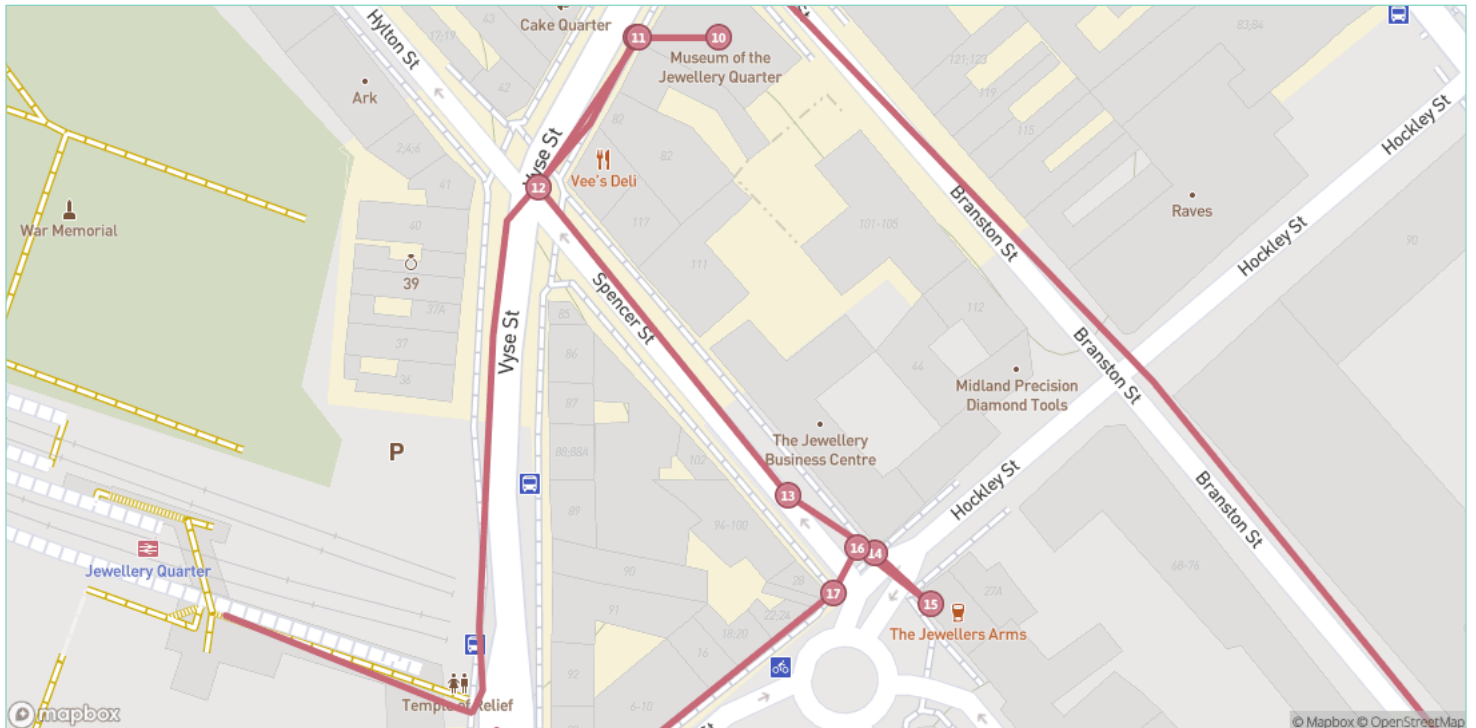
Step 5: Now continue left along Vyse Street.

Step 6: The Jewellery Quarter continues as an industrial hub today, there are hundreds of jewellery retailers and workshops here.

Step 7: Carefully cross Hylton Street to continue on Vyse Street. We are heading to the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.

Step 8: Cross to the other side of Vyse St. (The road was being used as a film set when we did the walk!)

Step 9: On your right you'll soon see the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. If you have time we recommend popping in for a guided tour.



Step 10: Through the museum shop take a peek into the old workshop to see everything just as it was on Smith & Pepper's last working day. More below.

Museum of the Jewellery Quarter

When the Smith & Pepper jewellery factory closed in 1981, the owners walked out and left almost everything exactly as it was, tools, machinery, stock and paperwork, and it has stayed that way ever since, making this one of the most atmospheric museums in Britain.

You can walk the factory floor and see exactly how jewellery was made here for over 80 years. It is run by Birmingham Museums Trust, entry is by guided tour.

How to visit

<https://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/museum-of-the-jewellery-quarter/visit>

Step 11: Exit the museum and turn left onto Vyse Street, heading back in the direction you came from.

Step 12: Take the first left onto Spencer St.

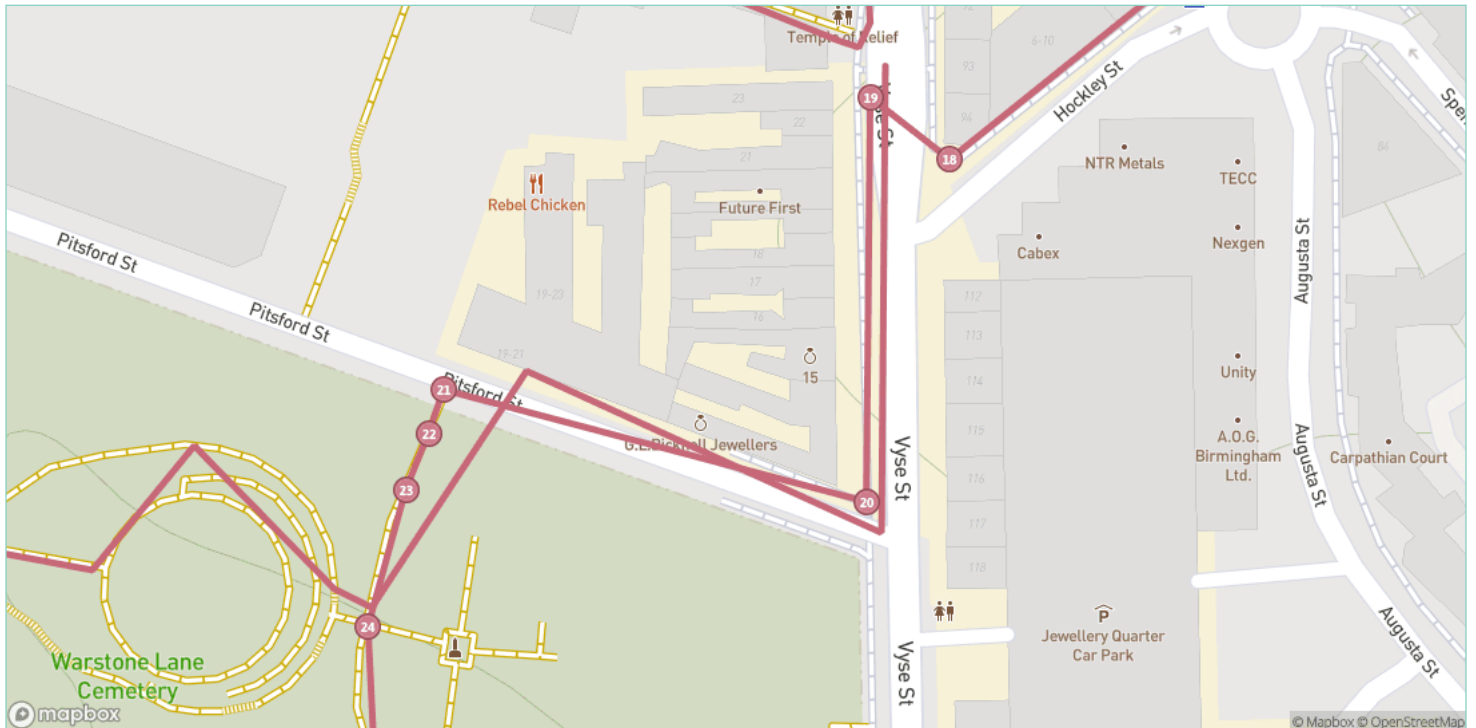
Step 13: Keep walking until you see our next point of interest, the Jewellery Business Centre.

Step 14: Cross over Hockley St towards the Jewellers Arms pub.

Step 15: The Jewellers Arms is an historic Grade II listed pub established in the 19th century to serve the thriving community of skilled craftsmen.

Step 16: Cross back over Hockley St and turn left onto Hockley St.

Step 17: Continue along Hockley St.



Step 18: Turn right onto Vyse St to cross at the zebra crossing. Then turn left after crossing.

Step 19: Continue along Vyse St. Take the first right onto Pitsford St.

Step 20: Turn right onto Pitsford St.

Step 21: Continue along until you see Warstone Lane cemetery's gates on your left. It's open daily 8:30am - 4pm. Carefully cross the road to enter.

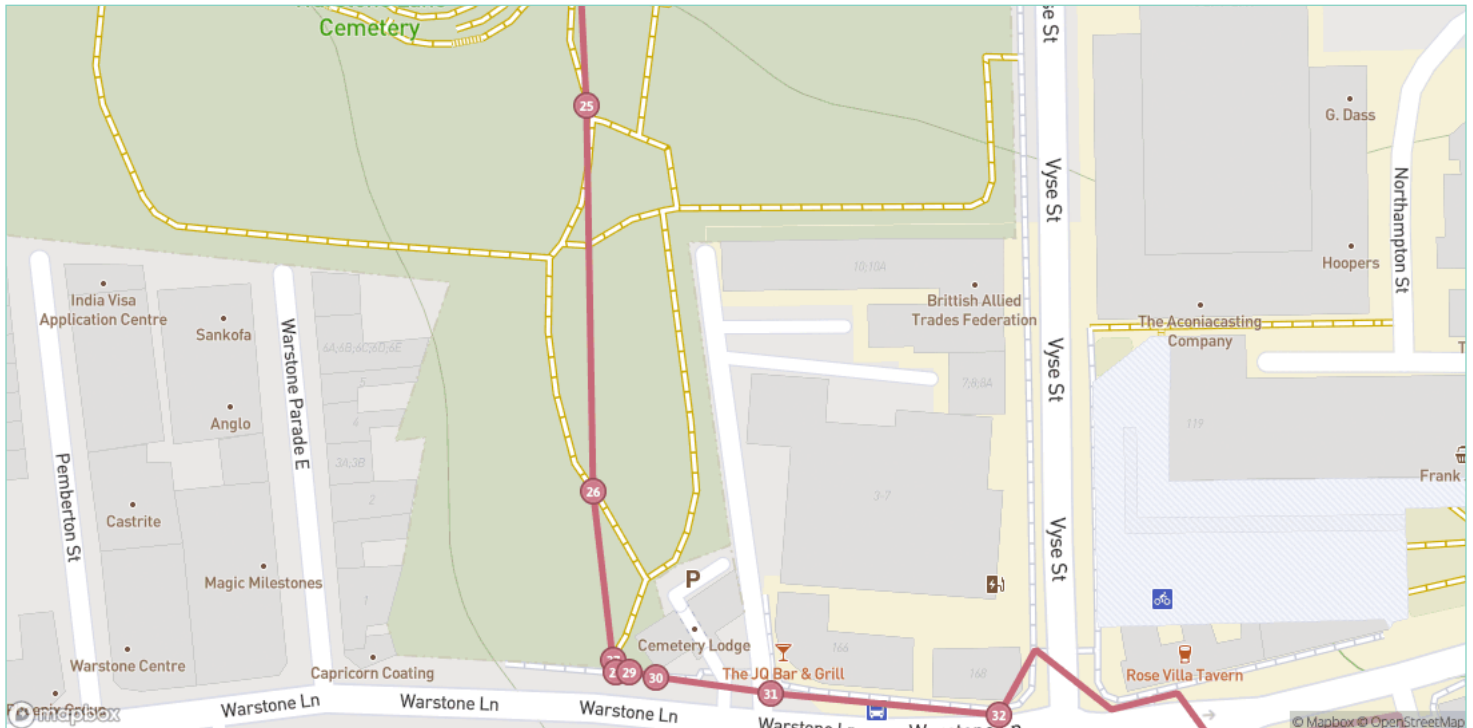
Step 22: Check out the information boards to learn more about its history, famous residents or find out more below.

Warstone Lane Cemetery

One of two cemeteries in the Jewellery Quarter (we'll visit both!). Before this became a cemetery in 1847, this area was full of sandpits, the fine sand dug here was essential to the jewellery trade for casting moulds and polishing metal, and the street name Pitsford Street still nods to that history. The cemetery features unique catacombs, built in 1848, they were constructed in a striking semi-circular amphitheatre style to naturally make use of an old sand quarry on the site. The landscape is grade II listed in recognition of its importance and the uniqueness of the catacomb design.

Step 23: Follow the main path ahead. Take a moment to notice the nature around you.

Step 24: You'll soon see the catacombs on your left. We'll pass back through them later on the walk.



Step 25: Continue straight along the same path.

Step 26: Continue until you see the exit ahead.

Step 27: Exit through the gate onto Warstone Lane.

Step 28: Turn left onto Warstone Lane.

Step 29: Look through the gate to see the War Stone, which gives its name to the road. It's an ice age boulder. Find out more about the stone below.

The War Stone

This boulder has been sitting in roughly the same spot since the end of the last Ice Age, carried here by a glacier thousands of years ago and left behind when the ice melted.

It became such a distinctive local landmark that it gave its name to the road, and in the medieval period it was likely used as a boundary marker or meeting point. It might be one of the oldest things you will ever stand next to!

Step 30: After a few more steps you'll see a plaque with history about the cemetery lodge.

Step 31: Look up and admire the cemetery lodge, which has since been converted into apartments.



Step 32: Continue on Warstone Ln towards the big clocktower ahead. This is the Chamberlain Clock. Read more below.

Chamberlain Clock

Built in 1903 to honour Joseph Chamberlain, the Birmingham mayor who modernised the city in the 1870s and went on to become one of the most powerful politicians in Britain, this teal and gold cast-iron clock has become the unofficial symbol of the Jewellery Quarter. It marks the spot where Vyse Street meets Warstone Lane, and has been a natural meeting point for locals and visitors ever since.

Step 33: Cross Vyse St at the zebra crossing towards Rosa Villa tavern on the other side of the road.

Step 34: This historic pub is famed for its vibrant Victorian ceramic tilework. Pop in for a drink to check it out. Read more below.

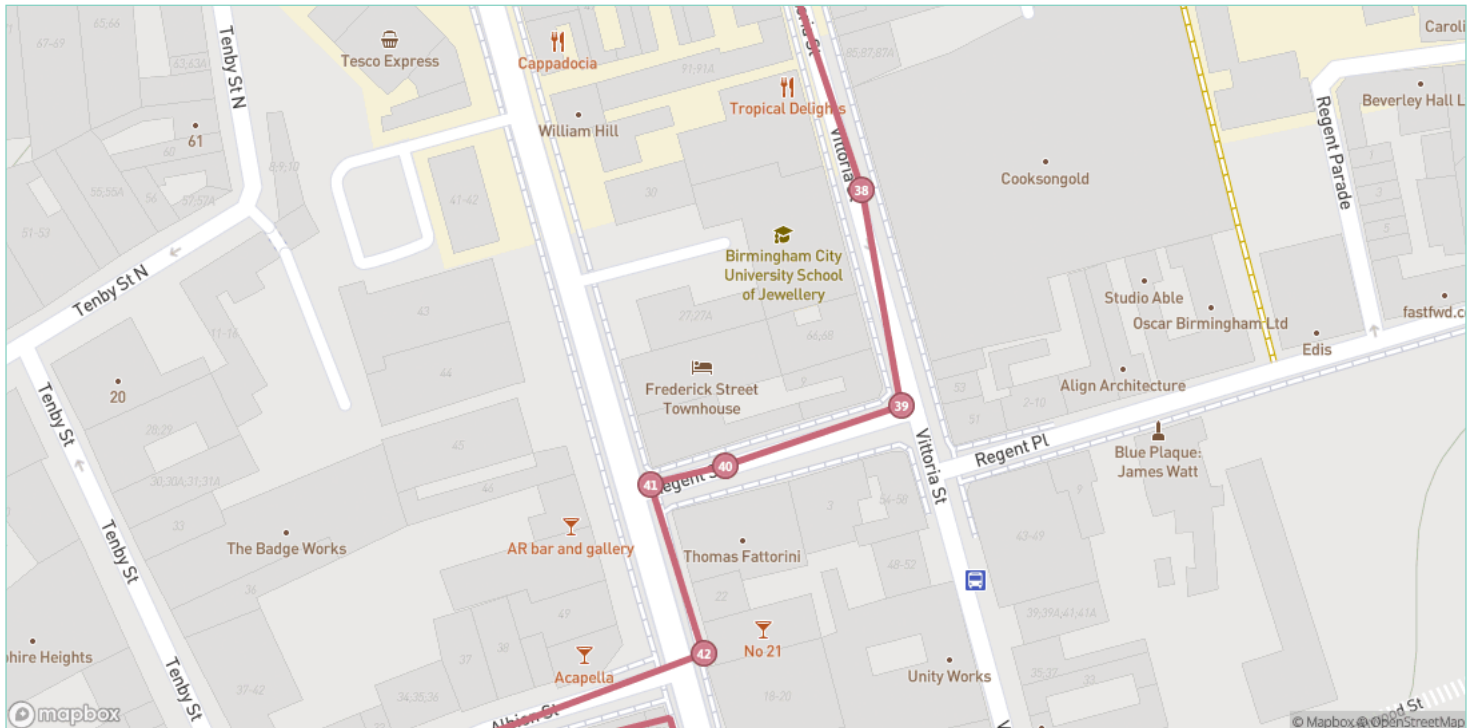
Rosa Villa

The Rosa Villa has been serving the Jewellery Quarter's community for generations, and in the Victorian era a pub like this was far more than somewhere to drink! It was where trade associations met, deals were struck and the end of a long day at the bench was celebrated. It still serves the Quarter today, now welcoming a mix of jewellers, creatives and visitors alongside one another.

Step 35: Head to the zebra crossing opposite the tavern and cross over Warstone Ln.

Step 36: Cross over and turn left.

Step 37: Take the first right onto Vittoria St.



Step 38: Keep walking until you see the School of Jewellery on the right. Founded in 1890, today it's the largest in Europe & part of B'ham City Uni.

Step 40: On your left you'll see Thomas Fattorini, a renowned manufacturer of medals and trophies. Read more below.

School of Jewellery

Part of Birmingham City University, the School of Jewellery was set up in the late 19th century specifically to train workers for the local trade, and today it is one of the best institutions of its kind in the world.

Students come from across the globe to learn jewellery making in the city that essentially invented the modern industry, using both traditional hand tools and the latest digital technology.

Thomas Fattorini

The Fattorini family came from Italy in the 19th century and built one of the Jewellery Quarter's most distinctive businesses, specialising in badges, medals and regalia rather than jewellery in the traditional sense.

They are credited with making the very first Football League Championship trophy in the 1880s, which gives them a unique place in both sporting and manufacturing history. The fact that a family firm with roots going back that far is still operating from these streets today says everything about the enduring strength of the Quarter.

Step 39: Continue along Vittoria St and take the first right onto Regent St.

Step 41: Turn left onto Frederick St. Crossing over Regent St.

Step 42: Cross the road and take the first right onto Albion St.



Step 43: Keep walking until you see J. W. Evans Silver Factory. One of the most complete surviving historic factories. Read more below.

JW Evans Silver Factory

Founded in 1881 and run by the same family for four generations, when the JW Evans Silver Factory closed, the family left everything behind. The workshops still contain all the original machinery, tools and equipment, making it one of the most complete Victorian factory interiors anywhere in Britain. English Heritage now looks after it and opens it to visitors on selected dates. Check the English Heritage website for upcoming tours.

How to visit

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/j-w-evans-silver-factory/>

Step 44: Now turn back the way you came towards Frederick St.

Step 45: Take the first right onto Frederick St.

Step 46: On your right you'll soon past the Argent Centre & Pen Museum. Read more.

Argent Centre & Pen Museum

Birmingham was once the pen-making capital of the world, producing hundreds of millions of steel nibs every year for schools and offices across the British Empire, and this grand Victorian building is where some of that happened.

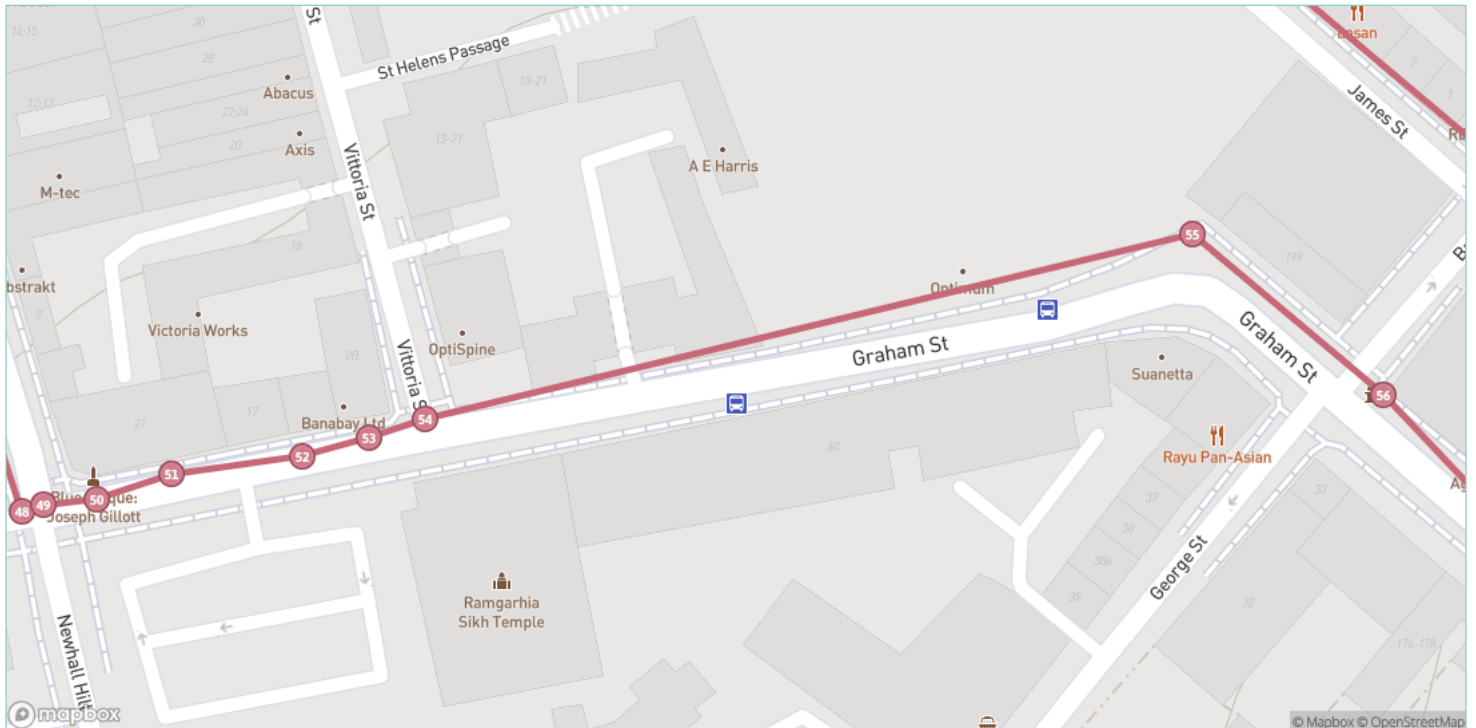
At the Pen Museum you can discover a wide range of fascinating objects and details that help tell the story of Birmingham's pen trade and its important legacy. The stunning Grade II listed building originally housed a Turkish bath for workers!

How to visit

<https://penmuseum.org.uk/>

Step 47: Pop in if you have time.

Step 48: Look out for these brass signs on the pavement giving more clues to the areas fascinating history.



Step 49: Cross Newhall Hill. Turning left onto Graham Rd. Newhall Hill is famous as the site of very large public meetings. More below!

Step 52: You'll soon pass Victoria Works on your left. This grade II listed building was home to Joseph Gillott's pen factory. Read more below.

Newhall Hill

This quiet street was once one of the most politically charged places in Britain. In the early 19th century, before it was built up, crowds of over 100,000 people gathered on this open hillside to demand parliamentary reform, the right for ordinary people to have a real say in how the country was run. Those meetings helped drive the campaign that led to the Great Reform Act of 1832, one of the most important moments in British democratic history.

Step 50: Keep your eyes peeled for a blue plaque to Joseph Gillot, a pen manufacturer. 🖋️

Step 51: Continue along Graham St.

Victoria Works

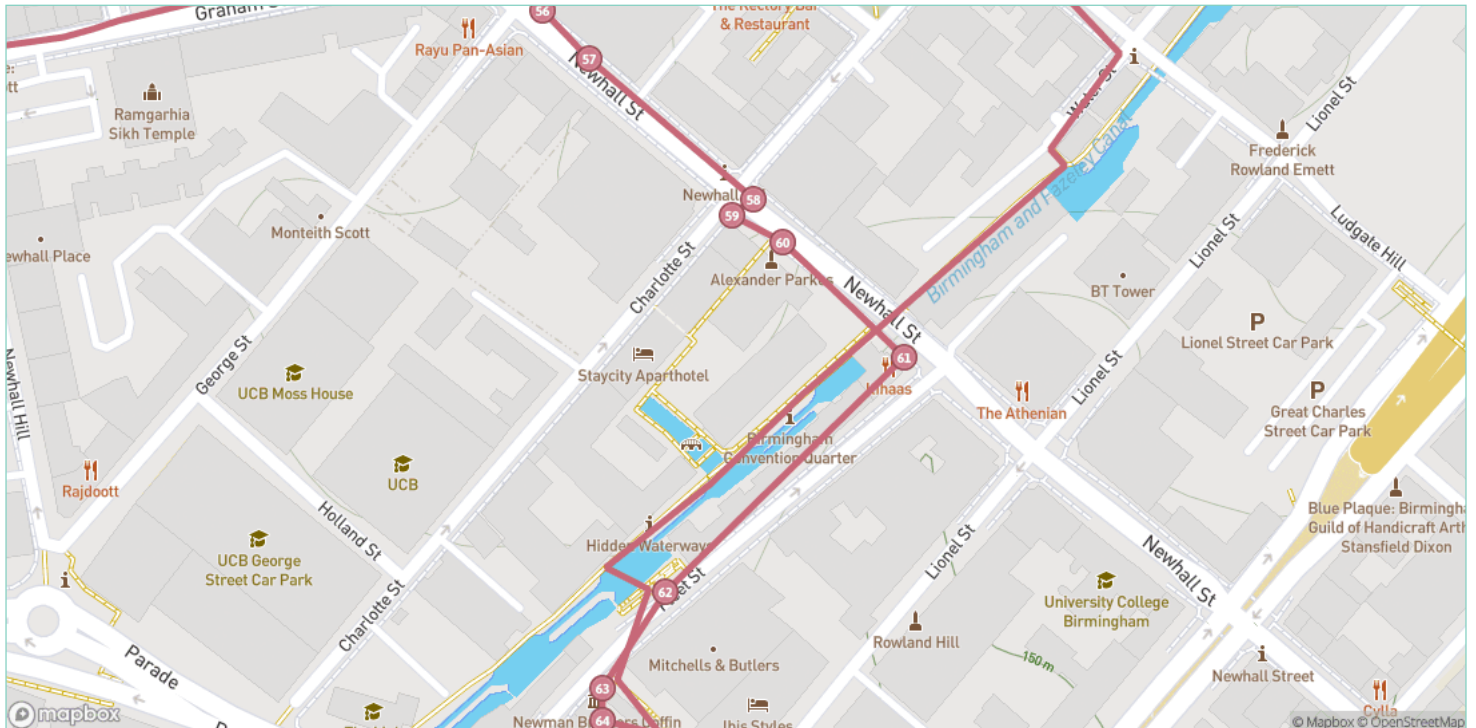
The Victoria Works was built for Joseph Gillott (remember him?) to produce steel pen nibs by his new pressing method. In 1843, mass production of pen nibs on site reached 105 million, more than 80% of world-wide production!

Step 53: On the right you'll pass Ramgarhia Sikh Temple. The beautiful blue-facade temple operates from a converted Victorian church.

Step 54: Cross over Victoria St.

Step 55: Follow Graham St as it bends right.

Step 56: Cross over Brook St. You are now on Newhall St.



Step 57: Keep looking out for fun historical clues on the ground! 🏛️

Step 58: Cross over Charlotte St towards The Assay Office. Read more below.

The Assay Office

The Birmingham Assay Office has been certifying the quality of precious metals since 1773, when it was set up after a campaign by the great industrialist Matthew Boulton, who was fed up with Birmingham's makers having to send their work all the way to London to be hallmarked. The Office's anchor symbol, chosen, legend has it, after flipping a coin, has since appeared on billions of pieces of jewellery and silverware. Hallmarking is still a legal requirement in the UK, and the Assay Office operates from the Quarter today.

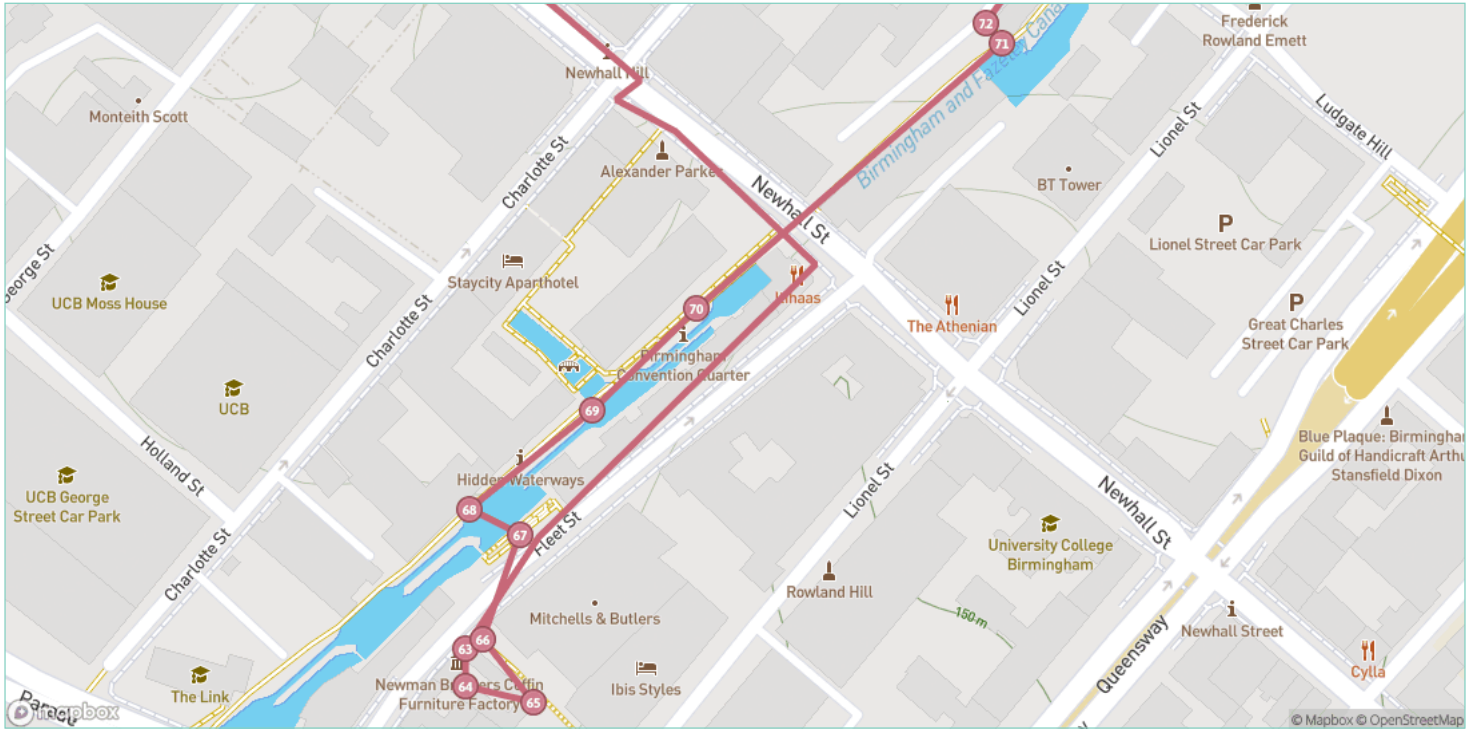
Step 59: Cross to the other side of the road.

Step 60: Look out for two blue plaques. Alexander Parkes (Inventor of the first plastic) & G.R. Elkington (Promotor of electro-plating)

Step 61: Continue along Newhill Rd. Take the first right onto Fleet St.

Step 62: Continue along Fleet St with the canal on your right.

Step 63: You'll soon reach Newman Brothers Coffin Works. Another museum!



Step 64: The Newman Brothers made coffin fittings and handles here. Read more.

Newman Brothers Coffin Works

Newman Brothers made coffin fittings and handles from 1882 until 1999, supplying funeral directors across the country and counting among their customers the undertakers responsible for the funerals of Winston Churchill and Diana, Princess of Wales.

When the factory finally closed, almost everything was left in place, including the petty cash tin on the office desk. It opens for guided tours on selected days, check the website for more details on how to visit.

How to visit

<https://coffinworks.org/visit/tickets-and-tours/>

Step 65: Pop in for a tour or stop the cafe in the courtyard.

Step 66: Exit the museum and turn right towards Fleet Street footbridge.

Step 67: Cross over the footbridge and turn right to walk along the canal.

Step 68: The Birmingham Jewellery Quarter's canals were vital to its Industrial Revolution success. Read more below.

Birmingham's Canals

Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter owes its very existence to the Industrial Revolution and the canal network. Evolving into the "workshop of the world", trades prospered thanks to raw materials shipped in and finished products shipped out via waterways.

Step 69: Continue on the towpath with the canal on your right.

Step 70: Pass under the tunnel. Mind your head!

Step 71: Keep walking until you see an archway on your left. Go through it.



Step 72: You'll exit onto Water St. Turn right towards Ludgate Hill.

Step 73: Turn left and cross the road onto Ludgate Hill.

Step 74: On your left you'll pass the Actress & Bishop pub. Read the plaque to learn about the last public hanging in Birmingham!

Step 75: Continue ahead until you reach St Paul's Sq.

Step 76: This lovely square is named after the church in the middle. It is the last remaining Georgian Square in the city. Read more below.

St Paul's Square

St Paul's Square is the most elegant corner of the Jewellery Quarter, a beautifully preserved Georgian garden square built in the 1770s as a fashionable address for wealthy merchants and professionals.

It is the last remaining Georgian square in the whole of Birmingham. St Paul's Church stands at its centre, surrounded today by restaurants, bars and apartments.

Step 77: Continue straight across the square.

Step 78: Turn left heading towards Brook St.



Step 79: You'll soon pass the Royal Birmingham Society of Artist (RBSA). It houses 2 floors of artworks. Read more below

RBSA Gallery

Founded in 1814 and granted a royal charter in 1868, the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists has been one of the city's most important cultural institutions for over two centuries. Its gallery on Brook Street shows a regularly changing programme of painting, printmaking, jewellery and applied arts, entry is free, and the gift shop is a great place to pick up original work.

How to visit

<https://rbsa.org.uk/visit-contact/>

Step 80: Turn right onto James St.

Step 81: Turn right again, onto Northwood St.

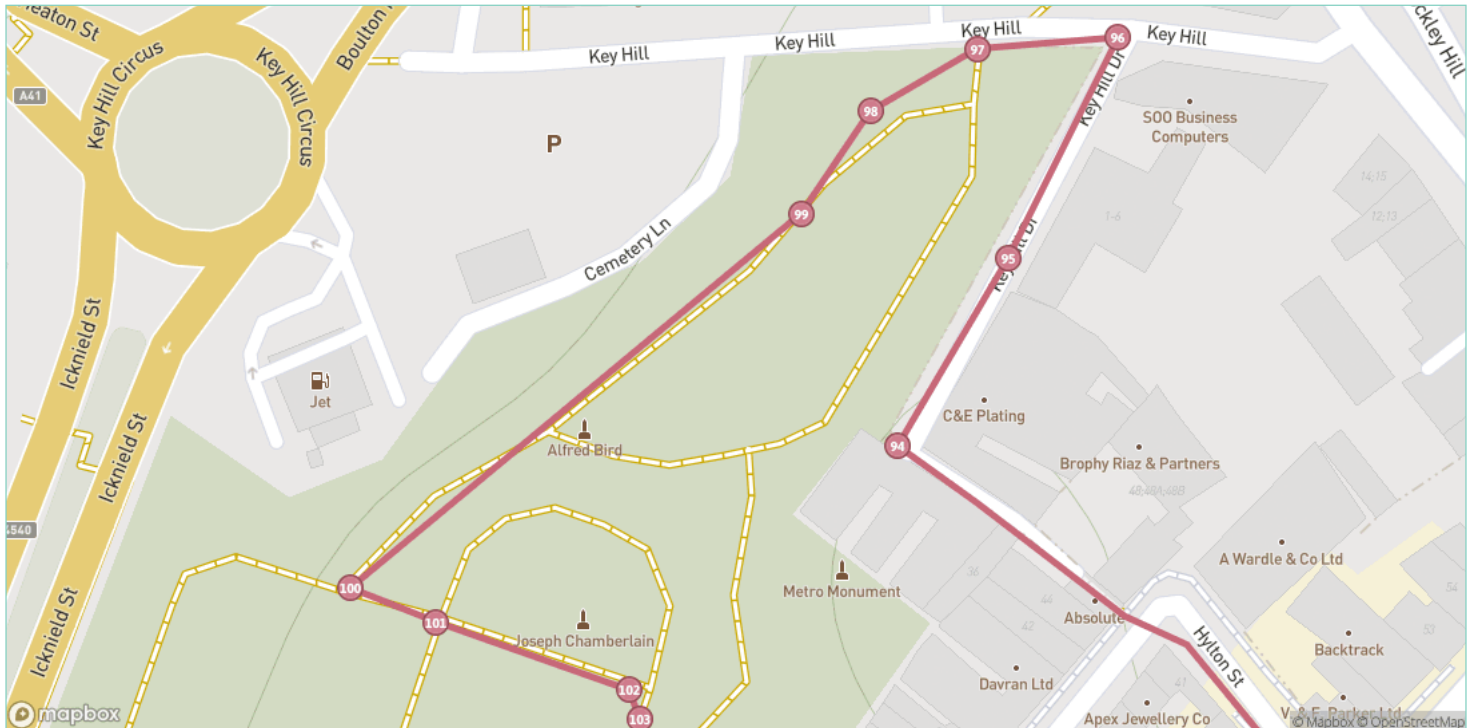
Step 82: Turn left onto Caroline St.

Step 83: Continue on Caroline St as it curves to the right.

Step 84: Many buildings on Caroline Street, such as the former Reliance Works (No. 42), were originally constructed as elegant townhouses.

Step 85: Turn left and cross the zebra crossing on Warstone Ln.

Step 86: Cross Spencer St to continue on Warstone Ln.



Step 95: Gem Buildings is a former diamond cutting works 

Step 96: Turn left onto Key Hill and head toward the cemetery entrance.

Step 97: Turn left through the impressive gate posts to enter the cemetery. It's open daily 8:30am - 4pm.

Step 98: Welcome to Key Hill Cemetery, look out for information boards to learn about its history and notable graves. Read more below.

Key Hill Cemetery

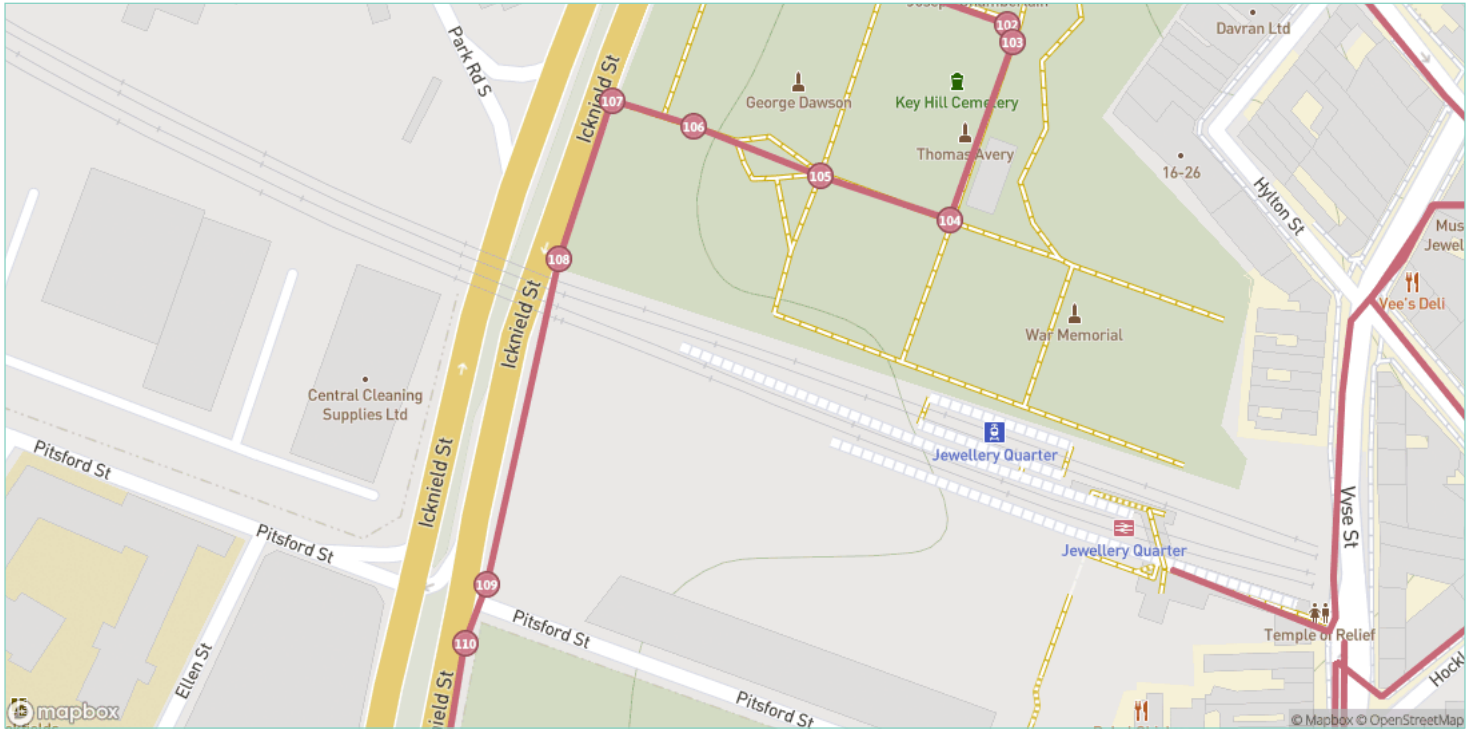
Opened in 1836 and sitting alongside neighbouring Warstone Lane Cemetery, Key Hill is the resting place of some of the most significant figures in Victorian Birmingham, industrialists, reformers and professionals who shaped the city at its most dynamic. Joseph Chamberlain's family vault is among the most notable.

Step 99: Follow the path ahead. Enjoy the dappled light from the trees.

Step 100: Take the second path left.

Step 101: Head towards the graves in the wall ahead. Joseph Chamberlain's grave is nearby. Can you find it?

Step 102: Turn right once you reach the wall of tombs.



Step 103: Continue ahead.

Step 104: Take the first path right.

Step 105: Continue forward passing a tree in a round bed made of stone.

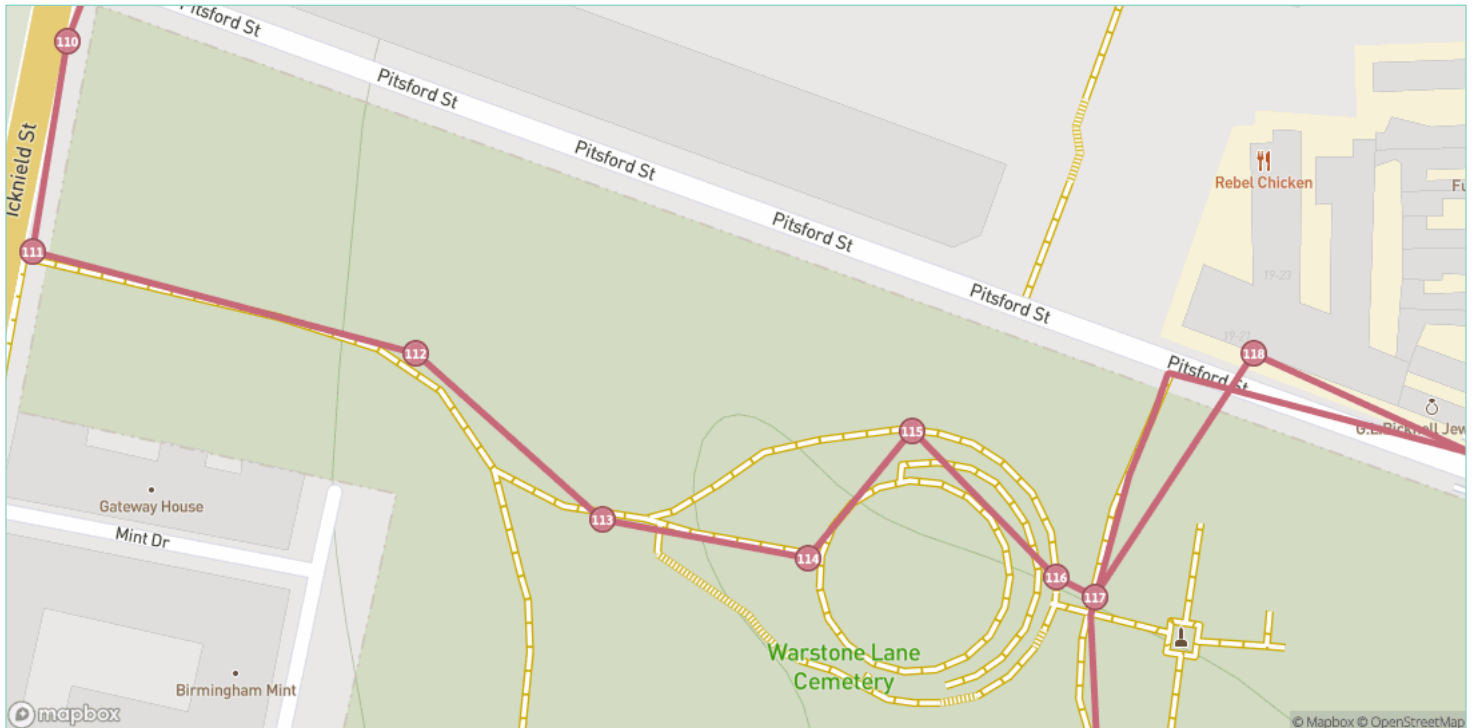
Step 106: Continue towards the exit.

Step 107: Exit and turn left onto Ickfield St. We'll walk along a busy road for a couple of minutes before returning to quiet streets.

Step 108: Continue under the rail bridge.

Step 109: Cross Pitsford St to continue ahead.

Step 110: Continue with the cemetery on your left towards the entrance.



Step 111: Turn left to enter the cemetery.

Step 112: We are back in Warstone Lane cemetery. Let's head towards the catacombs.

Step 113: Continue straight.

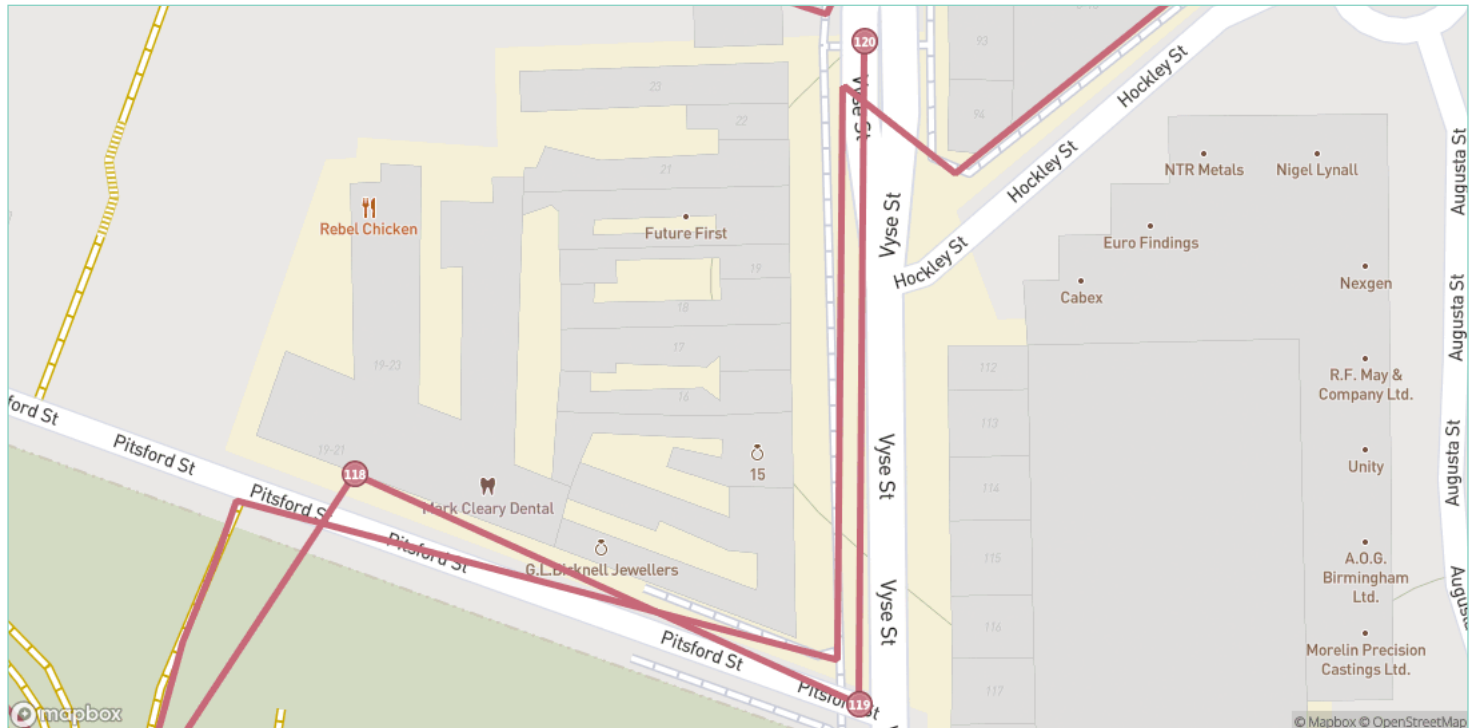
Step 114: You are now back at the catacombs from the start of the walk.

Step 115: Take the path along the left, head up towards the top.

Step 116: Head up the stairs and turn left onto the main path.

Step 117: Turn left towards the exit on Pitsfield St.

Step 118: Cross over Pitsfield St and turn right. We are heading back to the station where the walk ends.



Step 119: Turn left onto Vyse St.

Step 120: You have reached Jewellery Quarter station where the walk ends. We hope you enjoyed it! We have lots more Birmingham walks in the app.