

# Treasures of the Kingdom of Mercia



*Ironbridge*

Tuesday 11 - Friday 14 October 2022

A 3 night/ 4 day tour by coach

## TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2022

We will depart by coach from our pick up point outside the Taylorian Institute and travel to the outskirts of Birmingham for a visit to the **Winterbourne House and Garden**. An Arts and Crafts house built in 1903 for the Nettlefold family, it is set within gardens designed by Margaret Nettlefold who was inspired by the work of Gertrude Jekyll. The last private owner was John Nicolson, a keen gardener, who bequeathed the house to the University of Birmingham. It subsequently became their Botanic Garden and provided new areas for teaching and plant conservation. **Refreshments** will be served upon arrival, followed by a **guided tour** of the garden and free flow exploration of the house. At the end of our visit, a **light sandwich lunch** will be served.

This afternoon, we will continue to the **Barber Institute of Fine Arts**, which is part of the University of Birmingham. It is considered one of the finest small European art collections in the country and was purpose-built to provide a facility for the study of art history. The grade II listed Art Deco building was opened in 1939 by Queen Mary. The collection boasts works by Botticelli, Bellini, Degas, Gainsborough, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Manet, Monet, Poussin, Rubens and Turner, in addition to some sculpture work and an important collection of Roman, Byzantine and medieval coins. We will enjoy a **free flow visit** of the museum.

Late afternoon we will continue to the **Hotel Indigo Birmingham** where we will check in for the next 3 nights' on a bed and breakfast basis. **Dinner** this evening will be taken in the **Marco Pierre White Bistro**.

## WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER 2022

After breakfast at the hotel we will travel by coach to Warwickshire for a **private visit** to **Ragley Hall and Gardens**, the seat of the Seymour family, Marquesses of Hertford. The Hall is a fine Jacobean country house set in spacious landscaped gardens. Designed and built in 1680 by Robert Hook, it was not fully completed until well into the next century by James Gibbs, who decorated the ornate Great Hall in

fine baroque style. Like many stately homes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ragley Hall was used as a military hospital during World War One and World War Two, before undergoing major restorations to save the property from demolition in the 1940s. The property was open to the public in 1958, and the Staterooms have been restored to their former glory. **Light refreshments** will be served upon arrival, prior to a **guided tour** of the Staterooms. Late morning we will travel to Coventry, where there will be free time for lunch upon arrival.

The afternoon will continue with a visit to **Coventry Cathedral**. Coventry's earliest cathedral was founded as a Benedictine community in 1043. The Cathedral fell into disrepair during the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid 1500s, and was not re-designated as a Cathedral until 1918 when it became the church of St Michael. Sadly this earlier medieval Cathedral was bombed in 1940 and was burned almost to the ground along with a large area of the city. It was decided almost immediately that the city would rebuild its cathedral, and a design competition was won by Basil Spence. The new cathedral stands beside the hallowed ground of the ruins of the former cathedral and is intended to create one living Cathedral. The Cathedral features a huge tapestry by Graham Sutherland, a stained glass window by John Piper and a bronze sculpture by Epstein. There will be a **guided visit** of the cathedral with a resident guide. We will return to our hotel for an evening of leisure.

## THURSDAY 13 OCTOBER 2022

This morning we will be met by a local blue badge guide for a **guided tour** of some highlights of the city of **Birmingham**, both by coach and on foot. We will begin the tour with a short coach journey to visit **Bournville Village**, a model village built by George and Richard Cadbury in the late 1890s specifically to house the employees of their local Cadbury's factory. The Cadbury brothers were driven by a passion for social reform, derived from their Quaker upbringing, and the picturesque village was designed to improve upon the base living conditions of workers in the city. In addition to the housing, the village plans incorporate parks and recreational areas.

We will then return to the city for a **walking tour** of

the **Jewellery Quarter**. The area has a history of over 250 years and is still home today to over 500 jewellery businesses. With over 200 listed buildings and Birmingham's last remaining Georgian Square the area has been described by English Heritage as a 'national treasure'.

**Tea and coffee** will be taken in a local public house before continuing our overview of the city's local history and architecture. We will visit **St. Philip's Cathedral**, a Grade I listed building built as a parish church in the Baroque style by Thomas Archer in the early 1700s. St. Philips later became the Cathedral of Birmingham in 1905. In 1940, during the Second World War, the Cathedral was subject to extensive bomb damage, however its significant treasures were removed and stored for safekeeping by the Birmingham Civic Society, and were fortunately unharmed and replaced when the building was restored in 1948. These treasures include four intricate pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. There will be free time for lunch in the city centre.

Mid afternoon we will embark on a **private canal boat tour** of Birmingham's waterways. We will cruise along the stretches of the canal that first brought commercial life to the city, and are one of the most enduring features of the early Industrial Revolution to be seen in Britain. In 1800, Birmingham was the central hub of England's canal network, which stretched from London to Liverpool.

These canals meant that valuable goods, such as coal and

raw materials, could be moved around the region efficiently, and helped usher in a new dawn of manufacturing processes. The remainder of the afternoon will be at leisure. **Dinner** this evening will be served at a local restaurant.

#### FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 2022

We will check out of the hotel after breakfast and travel by coach to **Ironbridge Gorge**, near Telford. The Gorge was one of the most important centres of the Industrial Revolution and also one of the world's great iron-making centres. Industrial decline in the 20<sup>th</sup> century led to the decay of the Gorge, although today it has been restored as a complex of industrial archaeology, with several museums along the wooded banks of the River Severn. We will begin with an introductory short film at the Museum of the Gorge. Take a short scenic walk along the wharfrage to the Iron Bridge and then rejoin the coach for the short transfer to Blists Hill Victorian Town where there will be free time for lunch. Our visit will also include the Coalport China Museum and the Jackson Tile Museum.

Mid afternoon we will rejoin our coach and travel homeward arriving in the early evening.

*Heritage*  
GROUP TRAVEL



*Coventry Cathedral*



# The Arts Society Oxford

## Practical Details

### TOUR PRICE

**£790 per person sharing a twin/double room**

**£210 single room supplement**

### PRICE INCLUDES

Executive coach travel throughout  
3 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation  
Dinner in the hotel restaurant on the evening of arrival  
Dinner in a local restaurant on the final evening  
Guided garden tour at Winterbourne  
House and Gardens  
Refreshments and a light lunch at Winterbourne  
Coffee and a private guided visit of Ragley Hall  
Guided visit of Coventry Cathedral  
Services of a local Blue Badge Guide for a half day  
Light refreshments at a local public house  
Private guided boat cruise around Birmingham  
All entrance charges and fees  
Porterage

### HOTEL DETAILS

3 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation at:  
**Hotel Indigo Birmingham** (4 star)  
The Cube  
Wharfside Street  
Birmingham  
B1 1RS

For further details please visit their website:  
[www.ihg.com/hotelindigo/hotels/gb/en/birmingham/bhxin/hoteldetail](http://www.ihg.com/hotelindigo/hotels/gb/en/birmingham/bhxin/hoteldetail)

### MINIMUM NUMBERS

The price of the tour is based on a minimum of 25 paying participants.

### FINANCIAL PROTECTION

ABTOT provides protection for your booking as set out in the Financial Protection clause of our Booking Conditions.

### OPTIONAL TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is not mandatory for the UK, but we strongly recommend that you have adequate insurance in place to cover any COVID-related issues. We have arranged a scheme with specialists Travel & General Insurance Services Limited who are fully authorised and regulated by the FCA (firm reference number 304788) full details of which can be found on the FCA website [www.fca.org.uk](http://www.fca.org.uk). Please call Travel & General on 0203 794 2954 for a quote.

### PAYMENT DETAILS

A deposit of **£200** per person is due **as soon as possible** and no later than **Friday 01 July 2022**. Please note that as places on the tour are limited, bookings will be accepted on a 'first come, first served' basis. The final balance will be due by **Friday 05 August 2022**.

### BOOKING & FINAL TRAVEL DETAILS

To reserve your place on the tour, please send your completed booking form and deposit to Heritage Group Travel. You will receive a confirmation of your booking combined with an invoice for the final balance. The final travel details (itinerary, hotel details and luggage label) will be available approximately 10-14 days prior to travel.

*Heritage*  
GROUP TRAVEL

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