

Birmingham launches first-ever social media photography exhibition

- **Birmingham's first official social media photography exhibition to take place at Ikon Gallery**
- **Ikon Gallery to showcase photography of local community in celebration of city's most landmark year**

Hundreds of photographs captured by Birmingham's Instagram community are to form the basis of the city's first-ever social network photo exhibition, launching next week (26-29 November).

Taking place at the world-renowned Ikon Gallery, the first-of-its-kind event will showcase Birmingham's busiest, most landmark year in over a decade, through the eyes of its local community. The pop-up exhibition will see images captured and shared through photo-sharing site Instagram, displayed alongside the works of internationally acclaimed artists in this one-off, exclusive opportunity.

Organised by the city's official leisure tourism programme Visit Birmingham in collaboration with the Ikon Gallery, the exhibition entitled the *More Birmingham Instagram Showcase*, celebrates a successful series of 'Instameet' social media events that have taken place throughout 2015. The events have captured key milestones throughout this landmark year – ranging from the opening of the revamped New Street Station to the redevelopment of Paradise Circus, to key cultural celebrations such as the Big Hoot and the Birmingham Weekender. Other unique featured themes include a sneak-peak into the city's 'hidden spaces', as well as a spotlight on Birmingham's growing urban street-art scene.

Bringing together hundreds of people from Birmingham and beyond, the Instameet events have aimed to showcase what Birmingham has to offer to potential visitors worldwide. The thousands of images produced have generated over one million hits across social media throughout the year.

Emma Gray, Director of Marketing and Communications at Visit Birmingham, said:

"We couldn't have anticipated this level of success – Birmingham's Instameet events have created an online photographic legacy, with thousands of remarkable images generated and shared amongst potential visitors across the world."

"The More Birmingham Instagram Showcase is the perfect end to a phenomenally successful year, and the first event to actually document the milestone 12 months unfolding from start to finish. We hope residents and visitors alike join us at the Ikon Gallery as we toast both our fantastic local artistic talent, and what has been an incredibly momentous year for the city."

Jonathan Watkins, Ikon Director, added:

"Ikon is internationally renowned as a champion of contemporary art and we pride ourselves in offering a vital platform for artistic expression. We are therefore thrilled to host this showcase with Visit Birmingham, to celebrate the passion and creativity of the city's Instagram community."

"This social media exhibition is not only a new venture for Ikon but a first for the city. We look forward to welcoming visitors to what will surely be a great success."

The More Birmingham Instagram Showcase will be running at the Ikon Gallery from Thursday 26 – Sunday 29 November 2015 and is free to attend. The exhibition will comprise a mixture of print and projected photography, complimented by a virtual gallery accessible online. Key



themes of the exhibition include: Birmingham's architectural heritage, hidden spaces, urban street art, Birmingham's evolving landscape, and art and culture in the city. More information about the event can be found on the Ikon Gallery website: <https://ikon-gallery.org/event/more-birmingham-instagram-showcase/>.

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About Visit Birmingham

Visit Birmingham is the city's official leisure tourism programme for Birmingham, part of Marketing Birmingham's destination marketing strategy. As one of the top visitor cities in the UK, attracting over 37 million visitors a year, Birmingham is a must-visit leisure destination for all.

Instagram: http://instagram.com/visit_birmingham

Website: <http://visitbirmingham.com/>