

Soho House



Soho House was the elegant home of the Birmingham industrialist and entrepreneur Matthew Boulton from 1766 to 1809.

It is a Grade II listed 18th-century house in Handsworth, Birmingham. The house has been beautifully restored and reflects the fashions and tastes of the late Georgian period.

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.

Soho House was also a favourite meeting place of the Lunar Society, a leading Enlightenment group. The Lunar Society would meet every month on the night of the full moon to dine, conduct experiments, and discuss philosophical matters of the day. The name arose because the society would meet during the full moon, as the extra light made the journey home easier and safer in the absence of street lighting. The members cheerfully referred to themselves as "*lunatics*", a pun on lunatics.

Members of the society included Erasmus Darwin, James Watt and Joseph Priestly who all gathered around the Lunar Room table and engaged in a lively exchange of ideas which inspired many new discoveries and inventions.

We will be given guided tour of Soho House showcasing not only the house but also the meetings of the Lunar Society. Tea and cakes will round off our insight into this important period of the Industrial Revolution.

The trip will take place on the afternoon of Tuesday 11 August, 2020. The maximum number for this trip is 45

Lapworth Museum of Geology



Did you know that millions of years ago Birmingham was a tropical paradise?

The Lapworth museum holds the finest and most extensive collections of fossils, minerals and rocks in the Midlands. Dating back to 1880, it is one of the oldest specialist geological museums in the UK.

Enabling visitors to explore life over the past 3.5 billion years, the Lapworth Museum, following a £2.7m redevelopment, showcases exceptional objects from one of the UK's most outstanding geological collections.

With state-of-the-art galleries and a range of innovative and interactive exhibits the fossil collections are important both scientifically and historically, with exceptionally well-preserved specimens from the Midlands and many other famous fossil localities in the UK, and throughout the world.

The museum showcases rocks and fossils to volcanoes, earthquakes, and even dinosaurs.

The museum has some of the finest collections from the Wenlock Limestone of Dudley, famous for its fossils that lived 420 million years ago when the area was covered by a shallow, warm, tropical sea that enabled a highly diverse ecosystem to develop. From the rocks of the old Midlands Coalfields are important collections of fossil plants, fish, insects, arachnids, fossil footprints and animal tracks.

We will be given a guided tour of the galleries with the opportunity also to see what goes on behind the scenes. At the end we will have a well-earned cup of tea to round off our visit to this fascinating museum.

The trip will take place on the afternoon of Tuesday 11 August 2020. The maximum number for this trip is 45