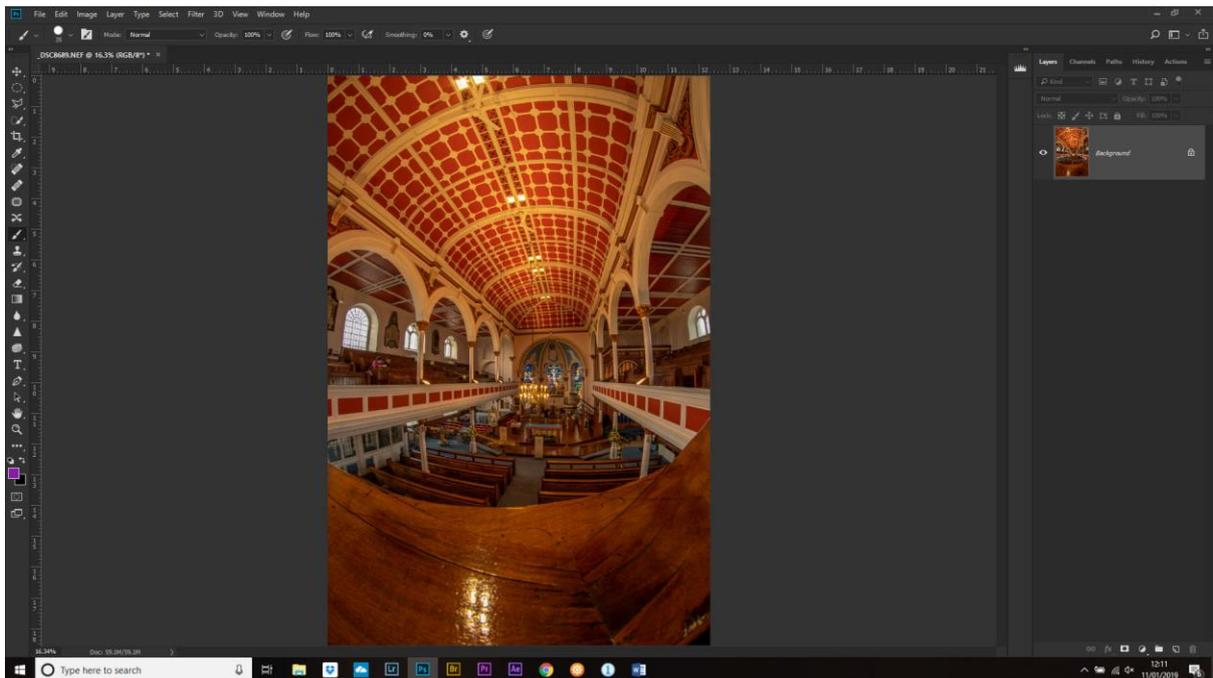


Finding the Grey Point

Adobe Camera RAW and Photoshop curves have an eyedropper tool which lets you click on a part of the image which should be grey and it will automatically colour correct your image. This is all well and good if your image has something which should be grey (for example, a road) or you have used a colour-checker card to have a neutral grey reference, but what if your image doesn't?

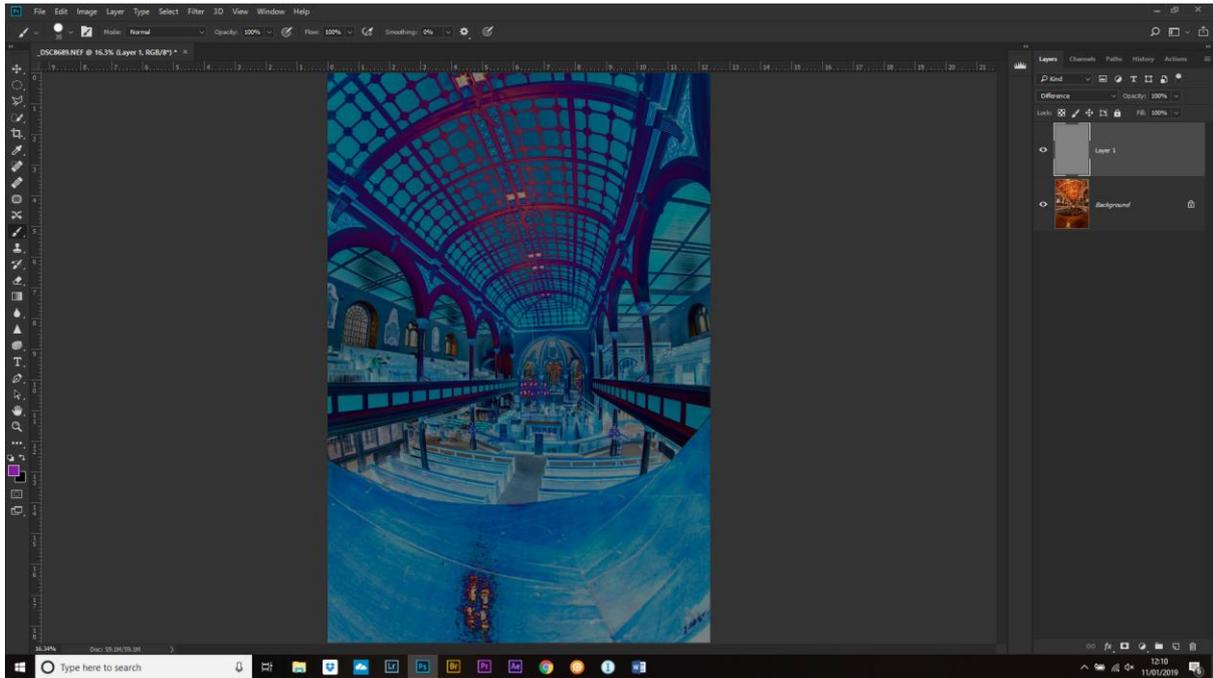
In this handout, I will show you how to find the most neutral grey part of an image. This will work for most – BUT not all of your photographs!

Open your image into Photoshop (TIP – make sure you have the full tonal range during your RAW conversion by moving the white and black slider while holding down the Alt key).

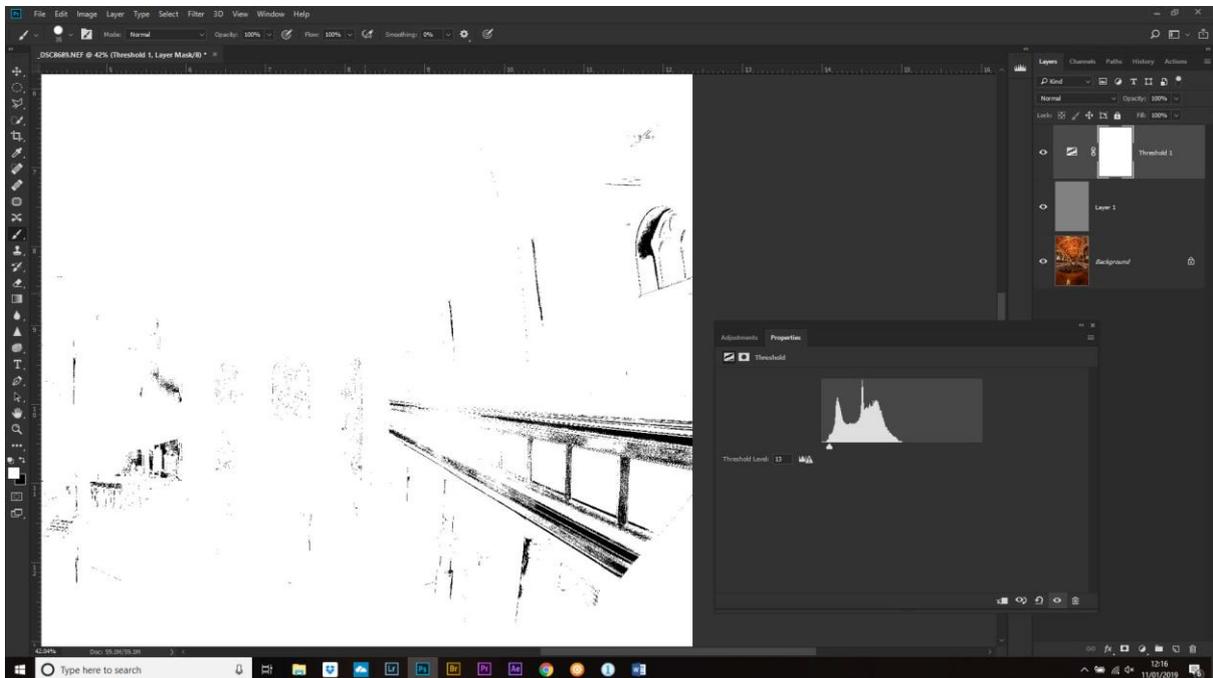


Make a new layer (little square with upturned corner at bottom of layers palette) and fill with 50% grey (Edit>Fill and choose 50% grey from the dropdown).

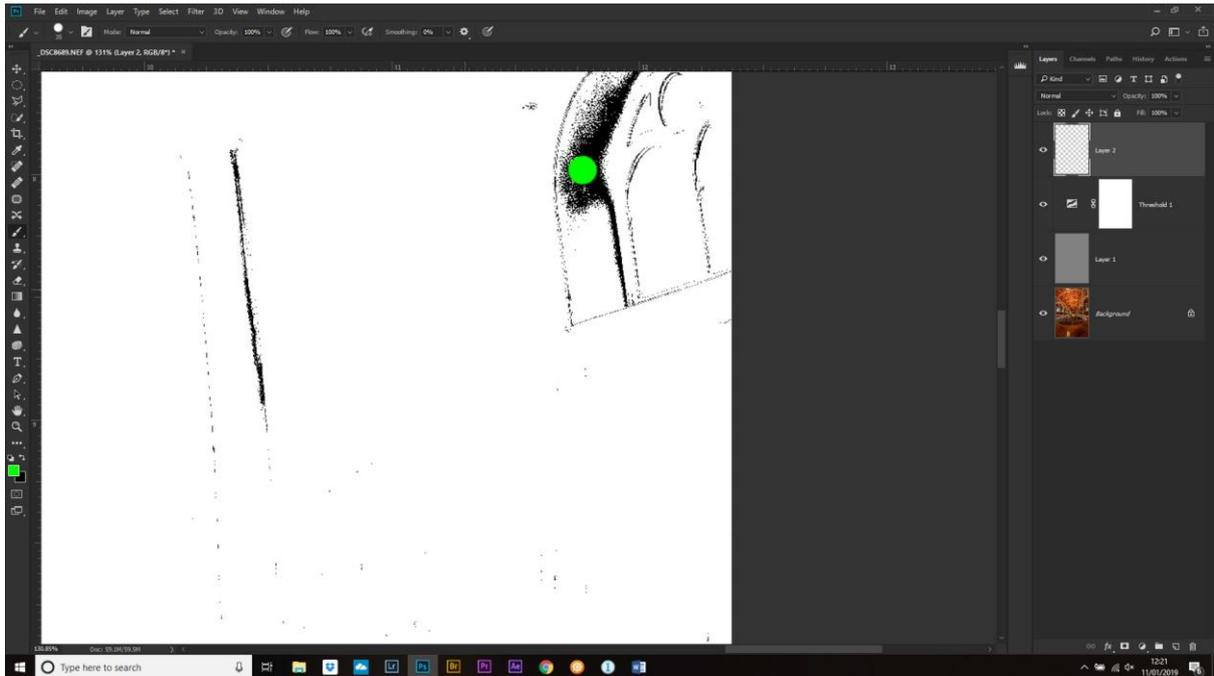
Change the Blending Mode from Normal to Difference. The image will go funny-coloured, but don't worry! Remember I explained how the Difference blending mode works, so you will know that the closest parts of the image to black are actually the closest to neutral grey!



To help us see the closest part to black, we need to make a Threshold adjustment layer. At the bottom of the layer palette click on the half black/half white circle and choose Threshold. Move the slider all the way to the left then bring it back until the first solid black appears. You can zoom in a little to help you see this.



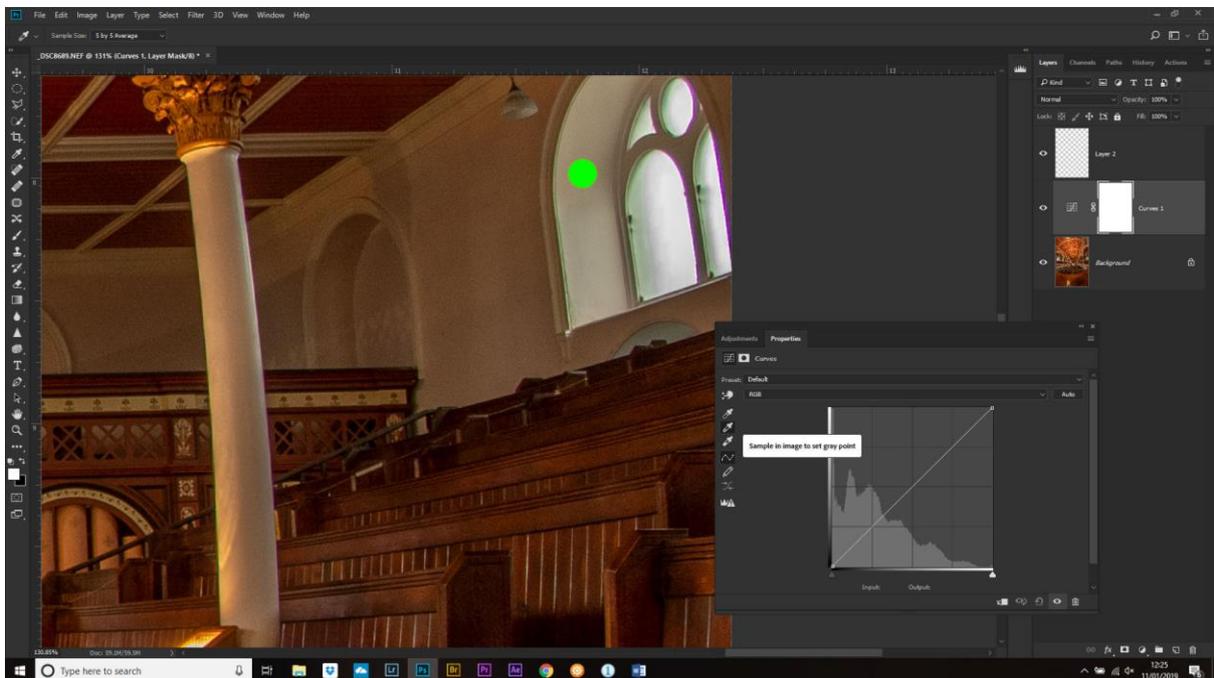
NB. The previous handout on this from several years ago got a bit complicated at this point. We used the info eyedropper to leave a point on the darkest part. A better and easier to understand method makes a new layer (click the little square with the upturned corner at the bottom of the layers palette again) and choose a brush – any colour will do but have it at 100% opacity and 100% hardness. Here I chose a lime green and clicked on the solid black in the window arch.



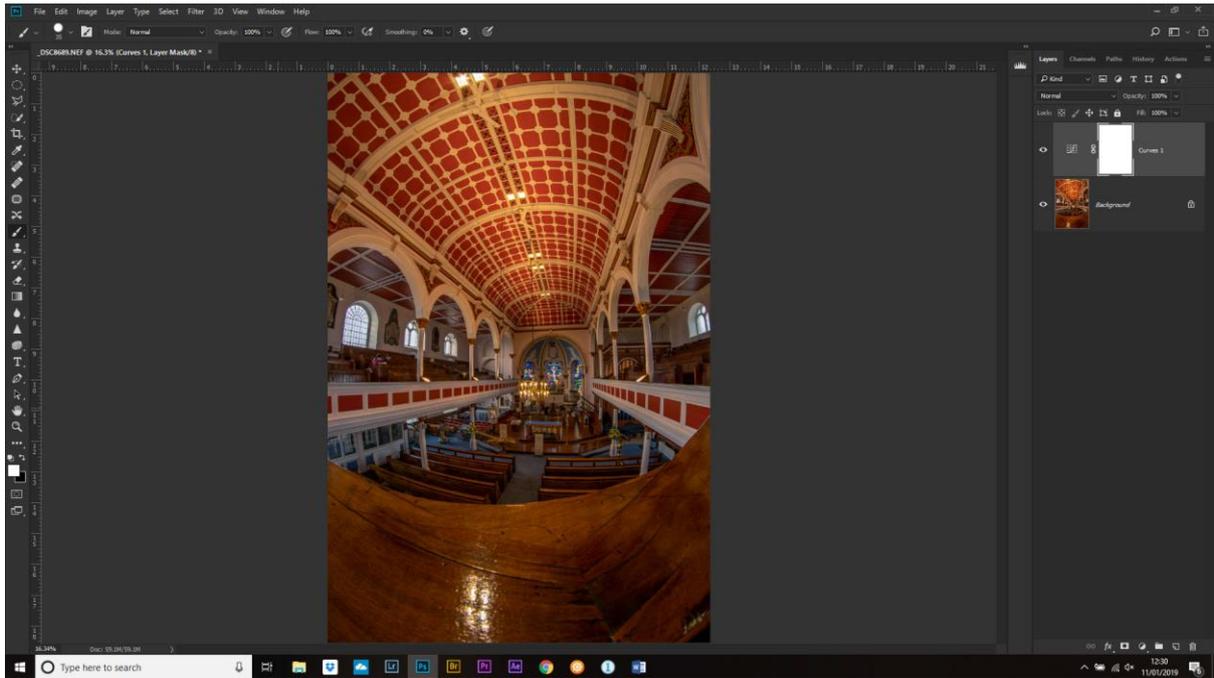
Now, the two middle layers have done their job, so either delete them or switch off their visibility.

Make a Curves adjustment layer (little black half white/black circle at bottom of layers palette) and choose Curves. Make sure this layer is BELOW the green spot layer.

Click on the middle eyedropper then click on the image where the spot is.



Your image will now be colour corrected. Remember to delete the spot layer!



Done!