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# Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay

**November 2023**

Hello and welcome to our latest edition of the Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay newsletter.

This is a regular bulletin to keep you up to date with progress on our ambitious masterplan regeneration projects in North Shields town centre and riverside.

In this edition you'll find the latest updates on:

1. Bedford Street
2. Riverside Embankment Walkway
3. Transport Hub
4. 131 Bedford Street
5. Exchange 1856
6. Traffic Light Works
7. Charles Minto Blue Plaque

Our ambition for North Shields aims to create a more vibrant town centre with more flexible retail opportunities, expanding the evening and weekend economy and improving the quality of public space in the town centre.

[Find out more](#)

**Bedford Street**



Bedford Street is the focus of the next phase of improvement works in North Shields town centre.

The scheme will have a high-quality finish, bringing it up to the same standard as other regeneration sites in the town. This will connect and support the completed and ongoing works at the Transport Hub, Howard Street, Northumberland Square, and the Riverside Embankment Walkway linking the Fish Quay to the town centre.

Our officers will be out and about speaking to businesses on Bedford Street in the coming weeks about what the scheme will mean for them. We will bring you more details about the proposals in the next edition of this newsletter.

## Riverside Embankment Walkway



Starting week commencing November 27th, the final phase of piling works will begin. It is due to finish in February 2024. There will be a two-week break for the festive period, between December 22nd and January 5th.

The scheme is being delivered by our appointed construction partner Wilmott Dixon.

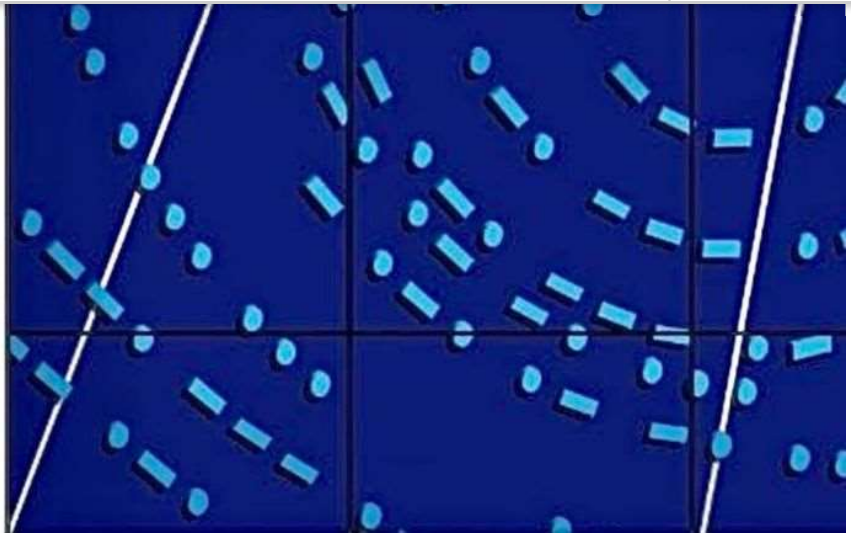
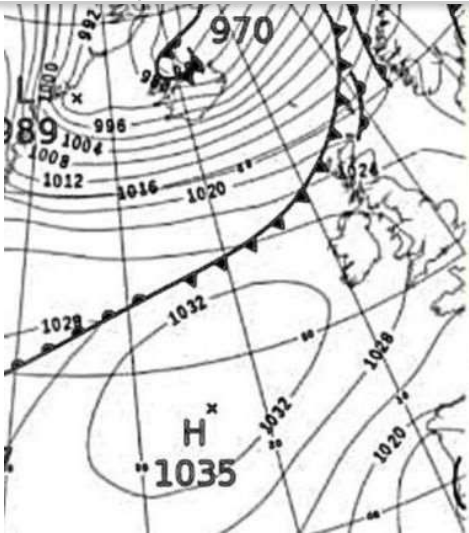
It will now be necessary to carry out the remaining sheet piling work via a crane positioned on Bell Street, meaning the road closure at the bottom of the bank will stay in place.

Bell Street will reopen briefly over Christmas while the works are paused.

Due to the nature of these works, it is expected that there will be further noise and vibration disruption, but we expect this will be less intense than during our previous piling wall installation works at the top of the embankment. This is due to the driven depth required for the remaining sheet piling being far shallower and requiring less force.

We apologise for any noise and disruption caused by these works and thank residents and businesses for their patience and understanding.

## Transport Hub and Town Square



Work is about to begin on installing two exciting sets of art work in the Transport Hub. They were created by local artist Colin Davies, with input from members of the public. One will feature morse code and maps to illustrate stories from local people. The second will be a roof installation made up of more than 2,000 fish. We expect the installation to take a few weeks. We're doing the work in phases to minimise disruption to passengers. There will also be two monkey fist knot sculptures installed in the new Town Square outside the Transport Hub, again by Colin Davies.

Following a public vote on the naming of the new Town Square, we are preparing to announce the result at a special unveiling ceremony in the New Year. Watch this space for further updates.

Final resurfacing works have taken place on the roadway immediately outside North Shields Transport Hub, in the Rudyerd Street / Wellington Street West area. The remaining road markings will be added in the week commencing November 13th. We would like to apologise to residents for the noise and disruption caused.

**131 Bedford Street**





A Victorian building in North Shields is about to play a new role in the cultural future of the town.

131 Bedford Street has been bought by a new social enterprise headed by internationally-renowned DJ and music producer Geoff Kirkwood, better known as Man Power.

It will be transformed into affordable studios and workspaces for creatives and artists.

**Exchange 1856**



The Exchange 1856 venue is being officially opened on November 9th following a seven-figure refurbishment programme.

Following a change of operator earlier this year, the 167-year-old building on Howard Street has been transformed back to its former glory, creating a world-class community space. There is a 500-capacity auditorium with high-tech lighting, sound and visual systems, and a newly-created conferencing and events spaces for meetings, fitness sessions, dance classes and weddings.

The refurbishment of the Exchange 1856 by Stonebanks Investments builds upon previous investment from North Tyneside Council, Historic England and ongoing support from North Shields Cultural Quarter, funded by North of Tyne Combined Authority.

## Traffic Light Replacement Works

The temporary traffic signals and crossing points on the A193 Albion Road/ A192 Preston Road/ Church Way junction are being made permanent by our partners Capita. Work will start week commencing November 13 and last around six weeks. Four-way traffic signals will be in operation at all times, with narrow lanes on all approaches. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience this may cause and thank you for your patience.

## Charles Minto Blue Plaque



North Shields black rights campaigner Charles Udor Minto MBE has been honoured with a blue plaque and an exhibition as part of Black History Month celebrations in North Tyneside. Charles was a Nigerian middleweight boxing champion who fought to provide accommodation, meals, social events, job opportunities and employment rights for the hundreds of black people who lived in North Shields in the 1930s and 1940s. The plaque was unveiled on Thursday 19th October at 3 Northumberland Place in North Shields, by Chair of North Tyneside Council, Councillor Brian Burdis. The building was formerly Colonial House, a hostel and community centre that Charles Minto was instrumental in founding. North Shields Heritology Project curated a display about Charles that went on display in the foyer of North Shields Customer First Centre throughout October.

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