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Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay

December 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:

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2. Riverside Embankment Walkway
3. Transport Hub Artwork
4. Stephenson Street Gateway Works
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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



Works to improve Bedford Street are due to start in early 2024. The street will be repaved, with mature trees and seating added. It will be carried out by our construction partners Capita, using funding from external sources.

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.

We are proposing to alter the vehicular access arrangements to the north and south ends of Bedford Street as part of the scheme.

Safety concerns have been raised with the Council by members of the public about vehicles and pedestrians coming into conflict.

The Council proposes to restrict vehicular access to Bedford Street. Barriers and/or planters would prevent traffic from entering at either end. There will be access arrangements for emergency services.

Officers are engaging with businesses to discuss their access needs.

Riverside Embankment Walkway



The Riverside Embankment Walkway is a new high-quality step-free walkway, aimed at improving access where accessibility can be difficult between the town centre and the Fish Quay.

Unfortunately, adjustments required to progress with the piling works for the scheme have caused significant delays to the delivery programme. As a result, the expected completion date is now December 2024.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this delay may cause.

The final phase of piling works has now commenced and is due to finish by the end of January 2024. This will require further use of a large crane which will be positioned on

Liddell Street/ Bell Street.

There will be a two-week break for the festive period, between December 22nd and January 5th. Liddell Street/ Bell Street will reopen for the same two weeks over Christmas while the works are paused.

Businesses on the Fish Quay are looking forward to welcoming people over the festive season, and appreciate the support of customers and the local community.

Excavation work began in late October and is progressing well at the top of the embankment. It will run concurrently with the final piling work and is programmed to finish in March 2024. Works beyond March 2024 are the installation of the earth retaining system and formation of the ramped path.

Transport Hub Artwork



Three artworks inspired by North Shields' maritime heritage are being installed at the town's new Transport Hub and Town Square this winter.

Created by local artist Colin Davies as part of an 18-month project funded by a government grant, they have been made using sustainable and environmentally-sound materials.

Inside the Transport Hub, more than 2,000 fish have been suspended on a wire sculpture from the ceiling.

Outside in the new Town Square, two marble monkey's fist knot sculptures will sit on concrete plinths rising from the planters and seating, with installation due to take place in December.

A third artwork is planned for a wall inside the Transport Hub, based on fishermen's synoptic weather maps and using morse code to spell out a poem about life at sea. Passengers can expect to see that arrive by the New Year.

The new Transport Hub and Town Square opened in September 2023, thanks to government funding from the Transforming Cities Fund via Transport North East and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, and additional funding from North Tyneside Council.

Stephenson Street Gateway Works



Preparations are underway to start work on a new gateway to North Shields at the A193 Albion Road / Stephenson Street junction early in the new year.

Our partners at Capita will be adding new traffic signals and pedestrian and cycle crossings to make it easier to get into North Shields town centre.

The grassed area outside the Magistrates' Court will also be landscaped and a piece of public art will be installed, helping to create a welcoming entrance to the town.

Nearby residents and businesses can expect to receive more information about the works in the coming weeks.

North Shields Christmas Fair



Thousands of shoppers are expected to turn out to one of the region's most popular Christmas markets.

North Shields Christmas Market returns on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th December, to Northumberland Square, Howard Street and the new Town Square outside the Transport Hub in North Shields town centre.

The event will see over 80 stalls selling a wide variety of festive gifts, food and drink, and crafts.

There will be a selection of fairground rides, colourful character walkabouts and live music.

The market is open 10am until 5pm on Saturday and 10am until 4pm on Sunday.

The event is organised by North Tyneside Council and supported by the Beacon Shopping Centre.

Old Low Light Warm Welcome



A North Tyneside Warm Welcome venue is giving people a chance to explore North Shields' historic Fish Quay and the surrounding area.

The Old Low Light Heritage Centre is one of 40 warm spaces across the Borough, made possible by £75,000 in funding from North Tyneside Council.

The centre is offering a range of activities this year as well as free teas and coffees and a warm space to sit, each Friday between 10am and 3pm.

They are all free and include a guided heritage walks around Clifford's Fort, winter bird watching walk, short informal talks about local people's experiences of the Merchant Navy, craft sessions, and an opportunity to explore the Old Low Light itself, the oldest surviving building on the Fish Quay.

Since launching in 2022, more than 43,000 people have visited a warm space in North Tyneside.

As well as its libraries and customer first centres, North Tyneside Council has funded 20 voluntary and community sector organisations to open their doors to residents.

Free hot drinks are on offer at all venues and they are open to everyone, with no criteria.

Exchange 1856 Opening



Music icon Sting returned home to North Tyneside to receive the Freedom of the Borough.

The Wallsend-born musician, whose real name is Gordon Matthew Sumner CBE, accepted the honour during a special ceremony at the Exchange 1856 building in North Shields.

The event saw Sting become the first artist to grace the venue following a stunning renovation exceeding £1m.

Having travelled by Metro to be there, he told a packed auditorium that he was very proud, that he owed North Tyneside a great deal, and that it brought him 'full circle' back to the place where he once dreamt of a life in music.

He told North Tyneside Council that the new-look Exchange building would be an important addition to the North Shields Cultural Quarter and would help to nurture the next generation of creative talent.

🎄 **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!** 🎄

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