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Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay

March 2024

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 regeneration projects in North Shields town centre and riverside.

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

1. Thomas Brown Square
2. Unicorn House Affordable Homes
3. Riverside Embankment Walkway
4. Stephenson Street Gateway
5. Northumberland Square Heritage Tours

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](#)

Thomas Brown Square



The name of North Shields' new Town Square has been revealed at a special unveiling ceremony.

It has been named in honour of WWII hero Thomas Brown, the George Medal recipient who retrieved the Enigma codes at sea.

In 2023 North Tyneside Council invited people to be part of history by voting on a new name for the square from a shortlist of four significant local figures.

They were: Thomas Brown; Ellen Lee, the heroic ARP warden who saved more than 30 lives during a wartime raid on George Street; Charles Minto, the champion boxer and civil rights activist; and Mary Ann Macham, the abolitionist who settled in North Shields.

Thomas Brown took more than half the votes: 2,149 out of 4,247.

A stone memorial to Thomas, commissioned by his family, has been installed in the square and was unveiled by Elected Mayor of North Tyneside Dame Norma Redfearn DBE.

It bears a graphic image of Thomas based on an original by artist Marcus Reed, with the family overseeing the design. This is etched on to granite in colour and set into a large monolith of sandstone. It stands at a height of 6ft 6ins.

The inscription reads: "A memorial to Thomas Brown GM. A North Shields boy who helped shorten World War II by capturing vital Enigma code books from a sinking German U-boat."

Unicorn House Affordable Homes



Work is set to get underway on the development of 28 new affordable homes in North Shields town centre, thanks to a North Tyneside affordable housing partnership.

North Tyneside Council has completed the land sale of the former Unicorn House office block site to northern housing association Karbon Homes.

to start on site by the end of March.

The 28 new homes will be available for a mix of Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy, a scheme through which rents for the properties are set at 20% less than local market rent. This gives residents the opportunity to save the difference for a deposit towards buying the home in the future.

The development will be part-funded through Karbon's £165m strategic partnership with Homes England, funding which is enabling the housing association to deliver 2,200 much-needed affordable homes across the North East and Yorkshire by 2028.

The development is also backed by the North of Tyne Combined Authority, with £1.3 million from its Brownfield Housing Programme used to fund the demolition of the former office block and prepare the ground for new houses, roads and communal gardens.

Completion of the new homes is expected by Summer 2025.

Embankment Walkway



We have now completed the slope stabilisation works with the last piling completed week beginning 5 February. The large crane on Tyne Street used to do the piling works has been dismantled and removed from site.

point, we expect the road will re-open to single-lane traffic.

The road will reopen over Easter weekend to support hospitality businesses on the Fish Quay. It will reopen to single-lane traffic controlled by two-way lights on Thursday 28 March and return to a full road closure on the morning of Tuesday 2 April. On Easter Sunday, 31 March, the North Tyneside 10k route will run along the Fish Quay and there will be a rolling road closure in place during the event.

The estimated completion date for the scheme is December 2024.

We would like to thank everyone for their continued patience and understanding and we apologise to those residents who have been impacted by these works.



Drop-in Session

All are welcome at a drop-in information session hosted by North Tyneside Council and our construction partners Willmott Dixon, to provide progress updates and answer questions.

Where: Tyne View Room at the Maritime Chambers (Registry Office building), Howard Street, NE30 1LZ

When: Monday 18 March 4pm - 6pm

If anyone cannot make this session we will be hosting more in future.



Stephenson Street Gateway



Work continues on the new gateway to the town at Stephenson Street/ Albion Road, carried out by our construction partners Capita.

It will create an easier and safer route for pedestrians and cyclists and a more welcoming entrance to the town.

The scheme is on schedule and the expected completion date remains June 2024.

To date, the teams have completed the footpaths and kerb lines up to the base layer on the South side of Albion Road and the East side of Linskill Terrace. Drainage has been installed on the East side of Linskill Terrace.

The next phase of works will involve lifting and relaying the footpath on Albion Road close to the Upper Norfolk Street junction. There will be minor pedestrian diversions in place, please follow the on-site signage.

The three-way traffic lights at the junction will be replaced with four-way traffic lights as works progress.

Northumberland Square Heritage Tours



Tours of North Shields' historic Northumberland Square marked the end of the town's four-year Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) scheme.

Dr Lucy Jessop, senior Architectural Investigator at Historic England, led two 90-minute walks around the recently-restored square on Tuesday 5 March.

Using historic maps and images, she explored the history of the square and its buildings and the changing design of its garden over two centuries.

Works in 2021 and 2022 saw Northumberland Square taken back to something close to its original Georgian layout of footpaths and a perimeter of trees, enhancing the biodiversity of the park by introducing thousands of new plants.

North Shields is one of more than 60 High Street Heritage Action Zones around the country, part of a government-funded initiative led by Historic England. It aims to breathe new life into local high streets, from regenerating historic buildings to engaging local communities through art and cultural projects.

The HAZ scheme saw neighbouring Howard Street transformed from a traffic thoroughfare to a new pedestrian and cyclist-friendly zone.

Tyneside Council.

Communities were involved with the HAZ through The Culture Consortium, working in partnership with VODA North Tyneside, The Exchange Theatre, Helix Arts, North Shields Heritologists and Remembering the Past.

A bronze plaque is to be installed at The Exchange 1856 to remember the achievements of the 2020-2024 North Shields HAZ scheme.

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Council**

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