

Fish Quay

Regeneration led by
conservation and the community



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Since the 2001 EDAW Regeneration Strategy, the Fish Quay has become a major focus for regeneration. This started with funding from Single Programme (Tyne & Wear Partnership), European Regional Development Fund and the Council to steer the Tyne Gateway regeneration programme. Achievements of the programme included a new food processing park, creation of new spaces for small businesses and the repair and refurbishment of historic properties such as the smokehouses and Vita House.

The Fish Quay conservation area was designated in 2003. The designation process underlined that local people had a passion for the area: a passion that needed to be harnessed in partnership with the Council to manage change positively for future generations. Since then, the area has been the focus of further remarkable regeneration initiatives, which would not have occurred without hard work, enthusiasm and successful partnership working.

A Fish Quay Working Group was established in 2003 that set up a project with local people to consider how they could influence the area's development. They collaborated with planning and design professionals to produce a document called "Design Know-how: Fish Quay Designs its Future" – a guidance document providing a framework for good design.

In 2005 English Heritage offered funds that were matched by the Council to be used in a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). Subsequent to this two year scheme was a successful Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) bid that saw Heritage Lottery Fund monies combining with funding from the Council to create a common fund of £1 million to be spent over six years. Both the CARS and the THI provided conservation grants for historic building refurbishment and public realm improvements, many of which are illustrated in this booklet.

The Fish Quay Heritage Partnership (FQHP) was created in 2005 to steer both schemes, guiding the funds and helping to formulate proposals for the area. The FQHP comprised of representatives from the Council, local businesses, local residents and conservation specialists, who worked in partnership to ensure the best for the area's future.

Alongside this, a character statement for the area was drawn up, led by FISHcast (a sub-group of community group Folks Interested in Shields Harbour). The document defines the special qualities of the area and is used to inform development proposals. It was nominated for a RTPI Planning Award 2006 and was highly commended at the 2006 Europa Nostra Awards. The Statement informed a Management Strategy for the Fish Quay and New Quay conservation areas, which was adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and has been key in guiding development and funding opportunities.

The SPD identified the area's buildings at risk. It is wonderful to report that those identified as being at "extreme risk" have now been rescued, thanks to the dedication and targeted funding of the FQHP.

The success of all this has depended on the enthusiasm and commitment of people connected to the Fish Quay. Without strong membership we could not have achieved so much. Similarly, without the thousands of pounds of "match funding" from private property owners, we could not have hoped for the spectacular results achieved with the grant schemes.

The success is destined to continue. The recent award of grant funding to local group The Net means that a Cultural and Heritage Centre (a long time aspiration of the community) will be developed in the Old Low Light. The adopted Banksides Management Strategy, that the FQHP helped deliver, will ensure the bankside's biodiversity and conservation value will be protected and enhanced into the future. In March 2011, the Department for Communities and Local Government chose the Fish Quay to be one of its 17 Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners. The Fish Quay was put forward by the Council as a potential Front Runner because of the impressive track record of pro-active community involvement in managing and enhancing the area. The result has been the community-led production of the Fish Quay Neighbourhood Plan SPD. The SPD aims to give certainty and confidence to all members of the community, including landowners and developers, about how they can be involved in the management and development of the Fish Quay. It will play a fundamental part of the neighbourhood's planning framework that can guide continued successful regeneration.





Great and small

The smallest features of a building can add to its significance. As the area regenerates they come together to add to the special character of the Fish Quay as a whole.





From the ground up

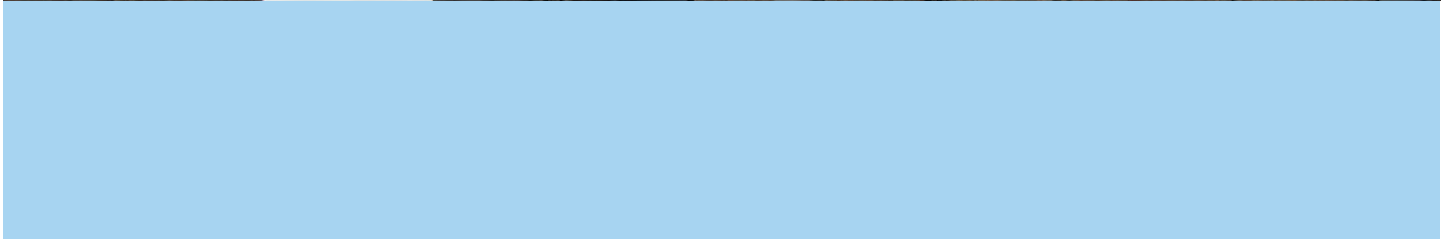
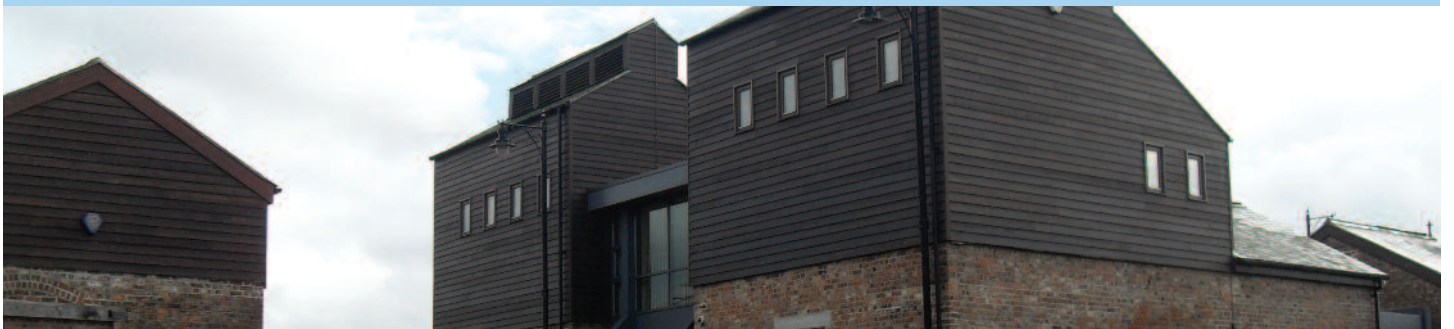
Improvements to the public realm have been a big part of the area's regeneration. Although work is ongoing, already there has been much positive change, including in and around Clifford's Fort, as illustrated here.





Landmarks

In recent years, much work has been done to ensure the removal of unsympathetic buildings, and the retention and refurbishment of those that are significant.





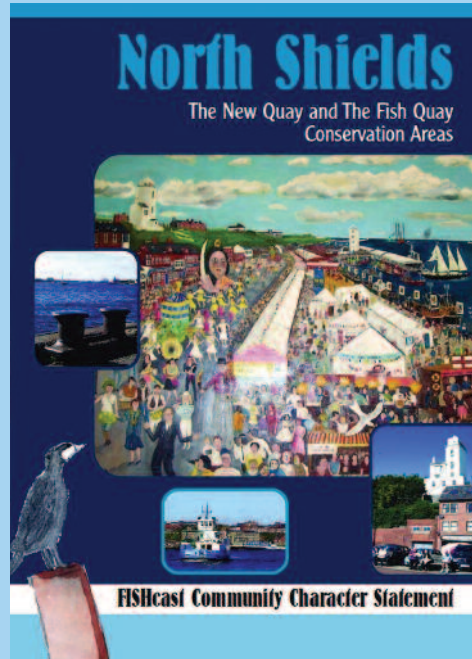
Open for business

Grant funding that has been steered by the Fish Quay Heritage Partnership has allowed for the refurbishment of buildings where commercial enterprises have been able to flourish.





North Shields Fish Quay Neighbourhood Plan 2013 Supplementary Planning Document



The future

Over the years, the community of the Fish Quay have worked together to produce documents that guide development in the area; the most comprehensive of these is the new Neighbourhood Plan SPD. This will be a consideration in planning and regeneration proposals for the next five to ten years, ensuring positive change that the community endorses will continue. Along with the exciting new heritage and cultural venture at the Old Low Light, led by local group The Net, the future of the Fish Quay looks bright

