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Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay

March 2025

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. The big screen
3. Mary Ann Macham sculpture
4. Riverside Embankment Walkway

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



A major scheme of improvements for Bedford Street continues, with the work going ahead as planned and on schedule.

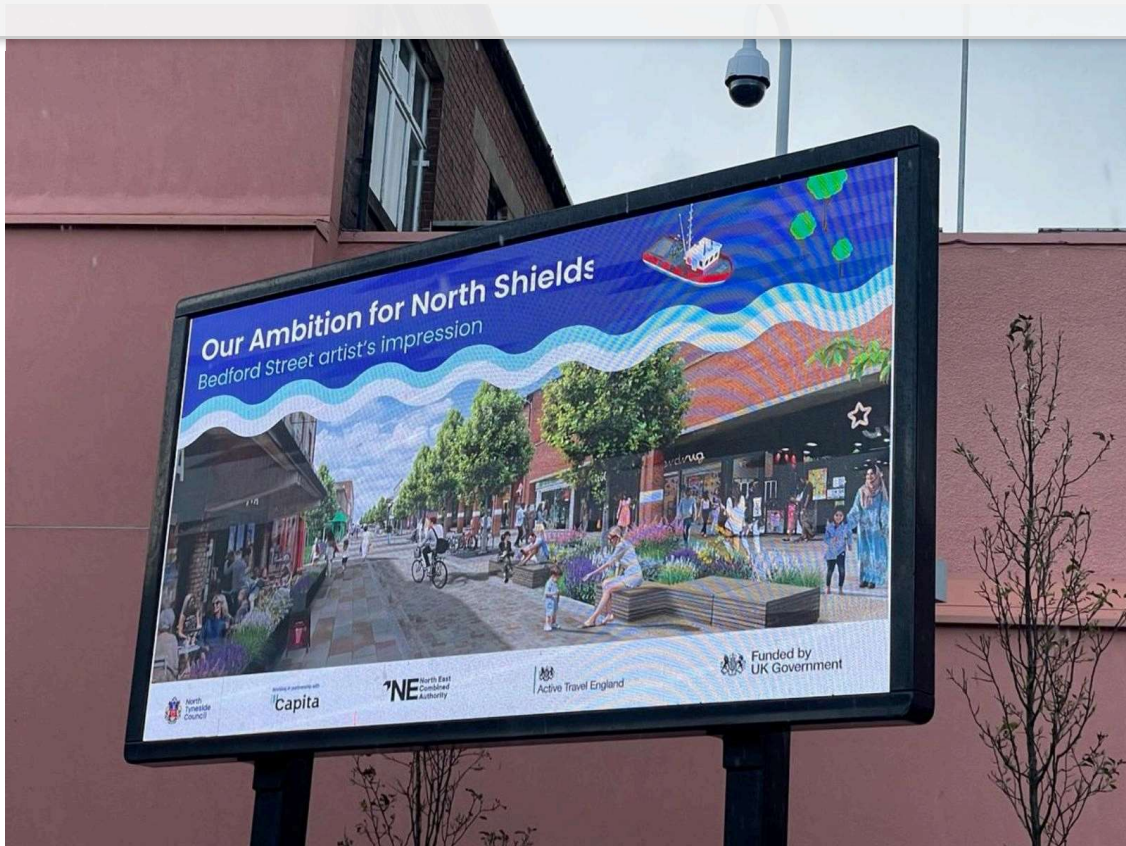
Bedford Street is getting smart new paving, mature trees and modern seating to create an attractive, high-quality finish.

The pedestrian area is being extended along the length of the street, with access for emergency and maintenance vehicles only. The new layout will improve safety and create extra outside space for café seating, other business use and events.

Our contractors Capita are working to ensure access is maintained to all businesses. Staff are on site to help if any issues do arise.

We would like to thank businesses and customers for their patience and understanding while these works are carried out.

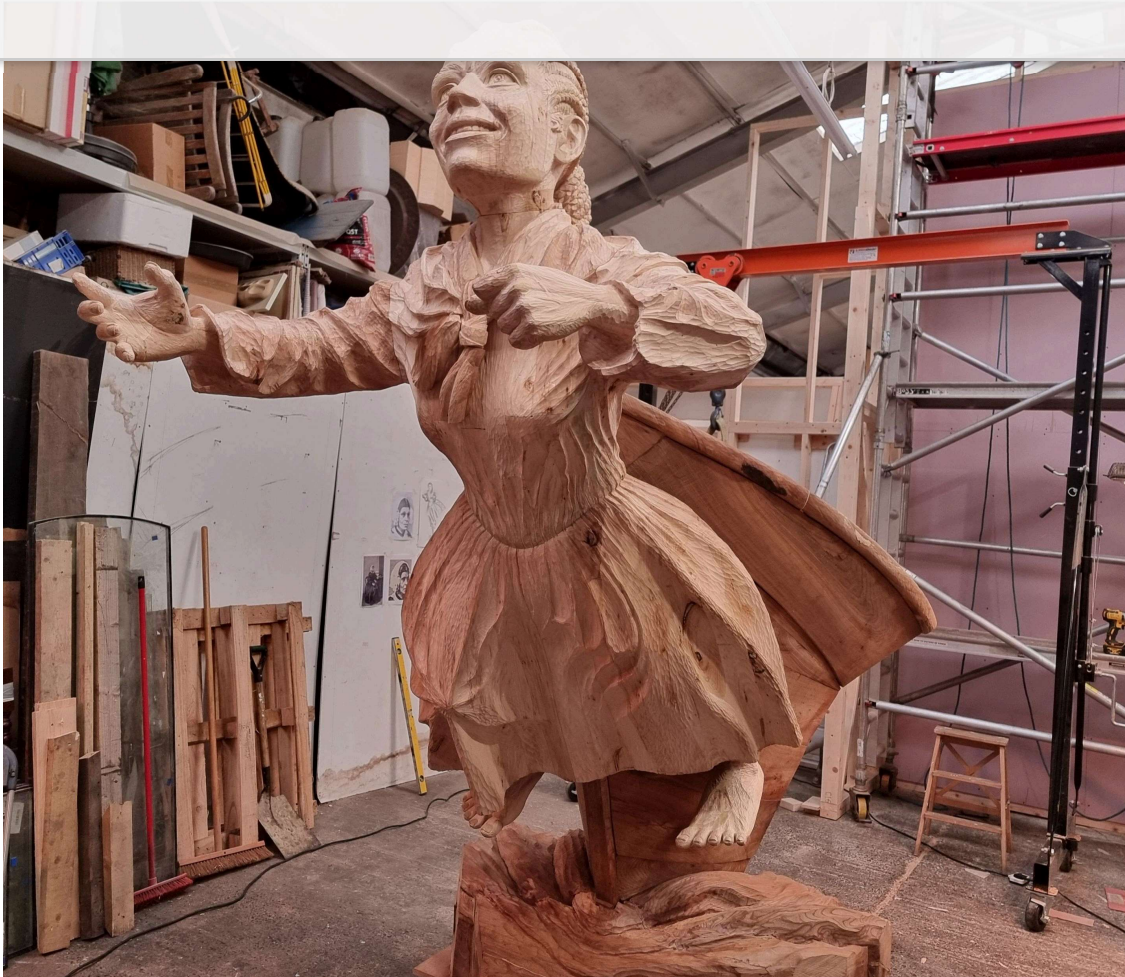
The big screen



The big screen in Thomas Brown Square is now working after technical issues were fixed.

It's showing some Council campaigns at the moment, with plans for more content coming soon.

Mary Ann Macham sculpture



A sculpture of escaped enslaved woman Mary Ann Macham is taking shape at a studio in North Shields. It is one of a series of public artworks as part of our Ambition for North Shields.

Created by artist Keith Barrett, Mary Ann has been carved from wood and is about to be cast in bronze ahead of her installation on the town's spectacular Riverside Embankment Walkway later this year.

The artwork is based on the one surviving photo of Mary Ann, and depicts her moment of freedom as she arrived in North Shields on Christmas Day 1831. She fled a lifetime of abuse at a plantation in Virginia, USA, evading a search team with blood hounds before stowing away aboard a ship.

She settled in North Shields, where she married and lived into her 90s. She was supported by the Spence family, well-known Quakers who pushed for the abolition of slavery.

Funding was provided by the North East Combined Authority from the region's Transforming Cities Fund.

Riverside Embankment Walkway



North Shields' Riverside Embankment Walkway has been shortlisted for an award by the Institution of Civil Engineers North East, in the Large Project category.

Engineers and landscape architects Fairhurst submitted the entry and the winner will be announced on 10 April.

Photo by Hewitson Ltd, Civil Engineering and Groundworks.

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