

# UPDATE

From Ashington Town Team

July 2015 Edition No.4

## ***A Message from the Chair of Ashington Town Team***

*It seems a while since we were all invited to attend a Town Centre Briefing Session by Arch Northumberland. At that meeting in March, we were given the positive news that Arch and Northumberland County Council were pressing ahead with plans to develop the North East Quarter/Portland Park and simultaneously starting to look at options for improving Station Road.*

*I am pleased to report that since the Spring event a lot of work has been progressing 'behind the scenes' on implementing the Ashington Investment Plan, which is highlighted in this newsletter.*

*A number of you have queried the position on funding for the improvements to Station Road and I did ask Arch for clarification. They have assured me that there is sufficient budget to progress the initial design stage, which means that subject to consultation, the formal planning process and further bids for funding, construction works could start perhaps as soon as next year.*

*I am delighted to see that the demolition of buildings at the rear of Lintonville has now commenced. Getting this site cleared ready for new offices, roads, retail and public realm is a significant sign of progress and we are looking forward to a decision in Autumn on the potential relocation of County Hall.*

*These schemes will have a massive impact on the economy of Ashington and I know you are keen to keep up-to-date with progress and want opportunities to give your views wherever possible. I will be making sure that the voice of the town's business community is heard.*

  
Sir John Hall

## **ARCH Stakeholder Group**

A new steering group has been set up by Arch for attendees to focus on the redevelopment of Station Road and to find out the latest progress on the North East Quarter. Representatives from Ashington Town Council, Northumberland County Council and Ashington Town Team meet every 3 weeks to discuss the programme of works, data collection, design considerations and the consultation process.

The Town Team Management Committee ensures there are two representatives plus the Co-ordinator at these meetings so that the views of town centre businesses are put forward. We would welcome new members to the Management Committee, and are particularly keen to hear from any business based in the pedestrianised part of Station Road who could help to champion the views of traders in this area.



## **Latest news on the development of the North East Quarter/Portland Park**

- Demolition of former Arriva depot and other buildings on the site underway
- Bus stops will temporarily move for a few days to ensure safe demolition of the old Arriva depot
- The bus station will remain operational until main development works commence
- Hoarding will be erected to close off the site
- The decision on the relocation of County Hall now due in Autumn
- Leisure Centre on time and on budget, opening to the public in November
- 'Hybrid' planning application for the site expected in Autumn (includes a mix of detailed and outline plans/design)
- Arch, as the developer, will be carrying out pre-application consultation to take into account the views of the public, businesses and others in September
- The North East Quarter and wider town centre improvements will be designed based on the principle of 'low speed streetscape' / 'shared space'
- Car park surveys and traffic counts have been completed to support planning

## Station Road Redevelopment – Latest News

Arch and Northumberland County Council have already commenced with collecting data on Station Road (the pedestrianised section) as part of a ‘constraints mapping’ process.

This includes checking the location of utilities under the street, verifying retail frontages, connections and basements, identifying current street uses eg; the market, events and street traders. In a few weeks three trenches will be dug (on a Sunday) to identify the materials under the street surface and locate the original carriageway, letters will be issued about this.

All businesses with frontage onto this area (Poundland at the top-end to Shoezone at the bottom) have already received a questionnaire from Northumberland County Council asking for brief information about their premises and the relationship with the street including how deliveries are handled.

We would urge you to complete these and return them quickly as the more information the Council and Arch have at this stage the easier it will be to design a scheme that takes business needs into account.

The current aim is for Arch’s Project Team to draft initial design proposals by September, which will build-in options for:

- Opening the street to two-way traffic
- Creating ‘shared space’
- Identifying locations for bus stops
- Options for taxi services
- Parking provision (including disabled spaces)
- Street furniture and landscaping
- Options for locating the Tuesday Market and future events

Arch are intending to consult as widely as possible on the initial designs before any planning application is submitted and are organising to display the latest information in a unit at Wansbeck Square. For updates on the Ashington Investment Plan go to: [www.archnorthumberland.co.uk](http://www.archnorthumberland.co.uk).



For the latest information on the regeneration plans and Town Team activities Follow us on Twitter and Like us on Facebook

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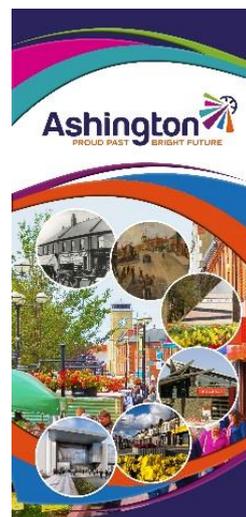
## New Banners Promote Ashington’s Proud Past and Bright Future

Our new banners commemorating the town’s links with ‘The Pitmen Painters’ have helped to kick-start the campaign to promote Ashington’s ‘Proud Past and Bright Future’.

Chair of the Town Team, Sir John Hall, said, “These banners are full of character and really bring the town centre to life, supporting the regeneration schemes.”

Thanks go to Northumberland Archives, Woodhorn Museum, Northumberland County Council, Ashington Town Council and the Trustees of the Ashington Group Collection for their support.

*Many businesses have asked us to promote the principle of ‘Shop Local’ so we are busy developing ideas including printing stickers for shop doors and windows and using social media to publicise special promotions and ‘offer of the week’. More to follow soon.*



## New Ashington Leaflet Launched

The Town Team has published a full colour leaflet promoting Ashington and the local area.

22,000 copies are being distributed to tourist offices and leisure attractions as well as visitor accommodation across Northumberland. It is also available to download at: [www.visitnorthumberland.com](http://www.visitnorthumberland.com)

*This newsletter is produced by Ashington Town Team with support from Ashington Town Council and ARCH Northumberland.*