



Grainger town

Investing
in quality

Newcastle upon Tyne

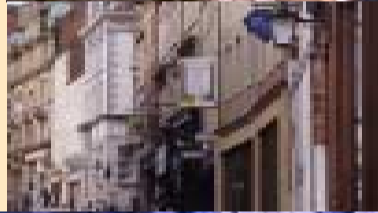

GRAINGER TOWN
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
THE HEART OF A GREAT CITY

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GRAINGER TOWN
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
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endorsements

We welcome this timely report on Newcastle's magnificent Grainger Town. We endorse its view that historic areas of city centres can become 'great places' for both investors and local communities while still conserving their heritage.

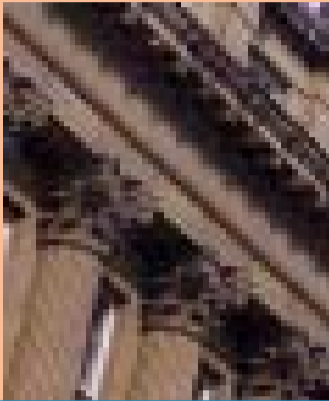
Some people, even some professionals, are sceptical of the value of retaining historic buildings and feel frustrated by the restrictions imposed on Listed Buildings in particular. But experience shows that with skill, creativity and persistence worthwhile solutions can be found to virtually all the problems involved. Success may take longer in a historic quarter, as it depends on promoting a mix of uses and raising demand throughout the area, but it is achievable and well worth achieving. The many examples, from Britain and abroad, show this to be true.

Newcastle contains some of the finest urban architecture in the country. The regeneration of

Grainger Town is creating a memorable historic area in one of Europe's re-awakening regional capitals. The public sector is making a substantial contribution. Now is the time for the private sector, led by the professionals, to be fully involved.

Grainger town

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- Brian Raggett** - President of the RTPI
- Simon Kolesar** - President of the RICS
- Sir Jocelyn Stevens** - Chairman of English Heritage
- Stuart Lipton** - Chair of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
- Richard Rogers** - Chairman of the Urban Task Force
- David Rock** - President of the RIBA 1998/99
- Nick Thompson** - Prudential Portfolio Managers
- Michael Gwilliam** - Director The Civic Trust
- Dr. Malcolm Ains** - Chairman of IHBC

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Foreword

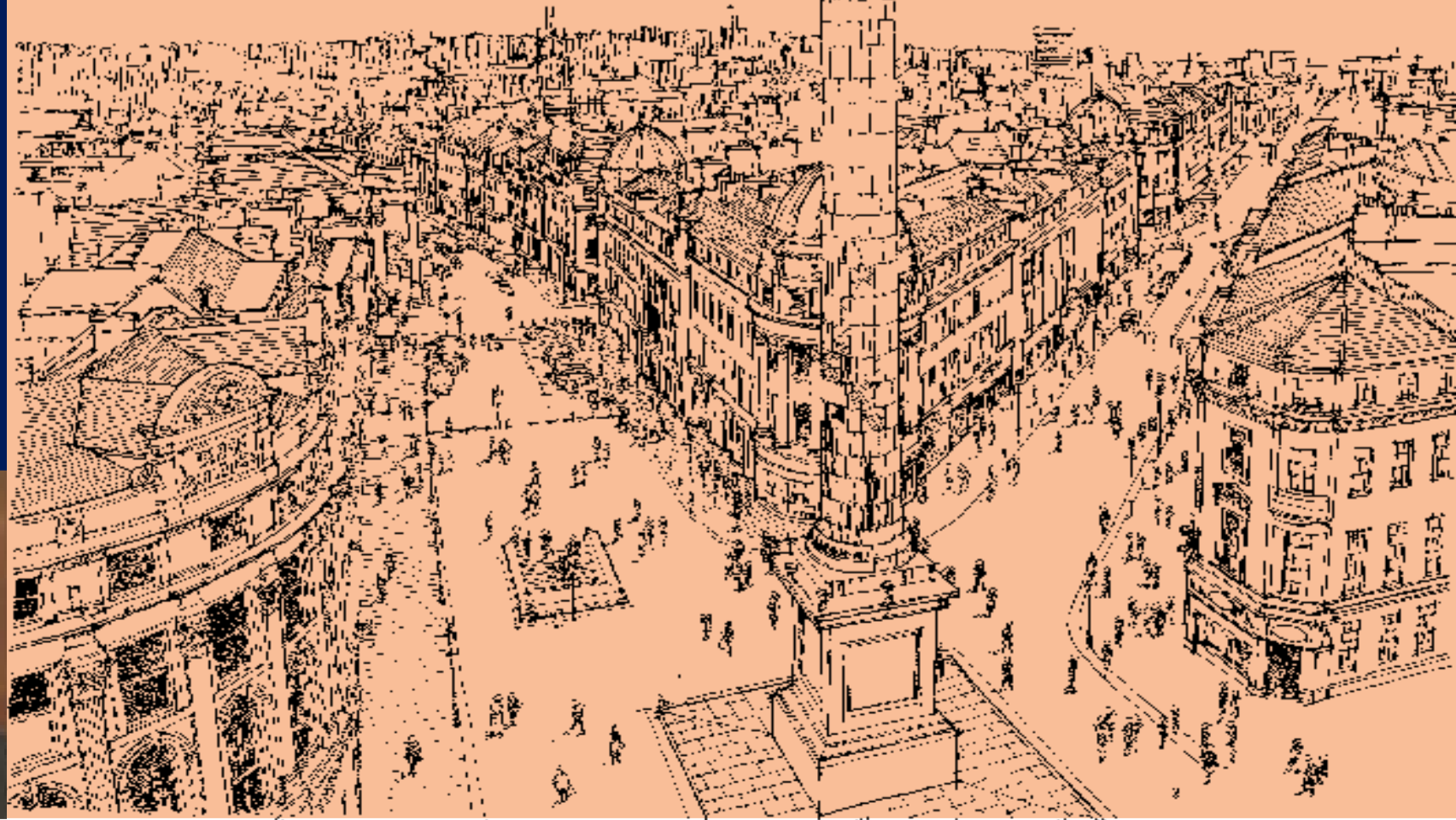
After the last few years, the name 'Grainger Town' now stands for 'quality' in our Northern urban environment. What visionary builder, Richard Grainger, and succeeding designers of flair and ability, have bequeathed to us, is a city centre of exceptional quality, second to none in the country.

But, although most of us by now respect this quality and its undoubted value to the economy of Newcastle, there are others who do not share this recognition and understanding. Personal development interests and short term gain sometimes get in the way.

This persuasive publication is aimed at these limiting interests. It urges doubters to think again and to admit the reality of the long term value of investing in quality. Telling statements are ordered and relevant evidence is marshalled to settle the sterile 'conservation versus development' argument once and for all.

So let us join in partnership to retain and enhance the quality in Grainger Town because now we all know it makes good financial sense too.

Councillor Tony Flynn
Chairman of the Grainger Town Partnership and
Leader of Newcastle City Council





As one of Britain's proudest and most distinctive cities – with over 2,000 years of history and more than 1,500 Listed buildings, and now one of Europe's emerging regional capitals – Newcastle has been actively promoting the regeneration of its city centre for some time. The results are becoming clearly visible, not only in its modern shopping centre and along the award-winning Quayside, but also in Grainger Town, its historic but previously run-down core.

This handbook has been produced by urban regeneration experts URBED to help property owners and investors and their advisers make the most of the potential of Grainger Town, and to ensure that the quality of any development matches the standards now required in the successful historic quarters of great cities. The handbook:

- explains why Grainger Town is of national significance
- reviews research into the value of quality in urban regeneration and the commercial performance of Listed buildings
- shows what is already happening in Grainger Town (through local case studies) and its future potential (drawing on success stories from comparable cities in Europe), and
- explains how the Grainger Town Partnership is able to help development projects.

Some people claim that conservation of a historic area and development that meets modern needs are incompatible. However, other cities have used their heritage to create memorable centres which combine economic success with the highest architectural and environmental standards. Elsewhere, developers have seen Listed buildings and historic environments as assets not liabilities. Thus the potential for building on Richard Grainger's splendid legacy to Newcastle to create a truly great and successful city centre is immense.

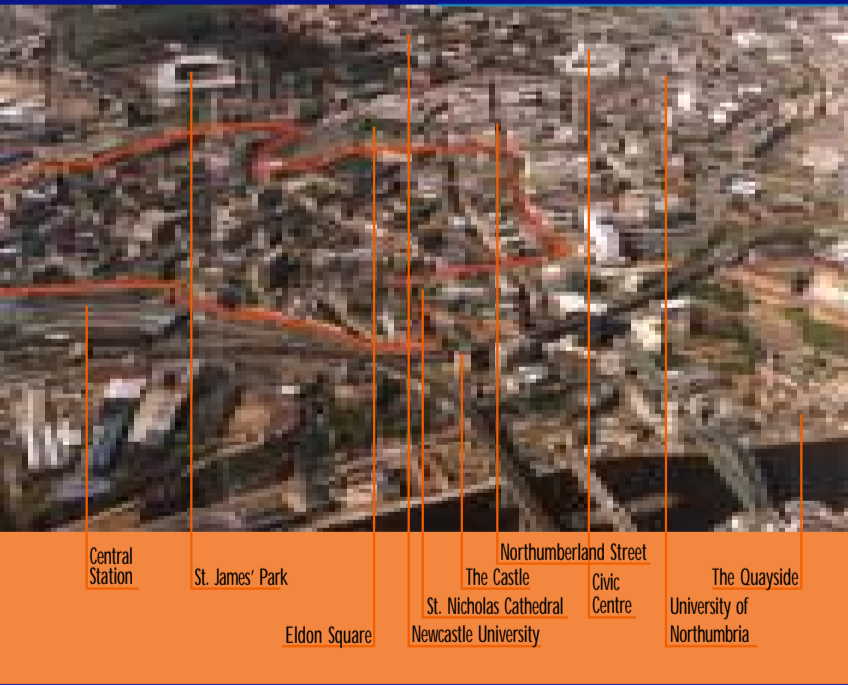
grew in Grainger Town Case studies referred to in this handbook

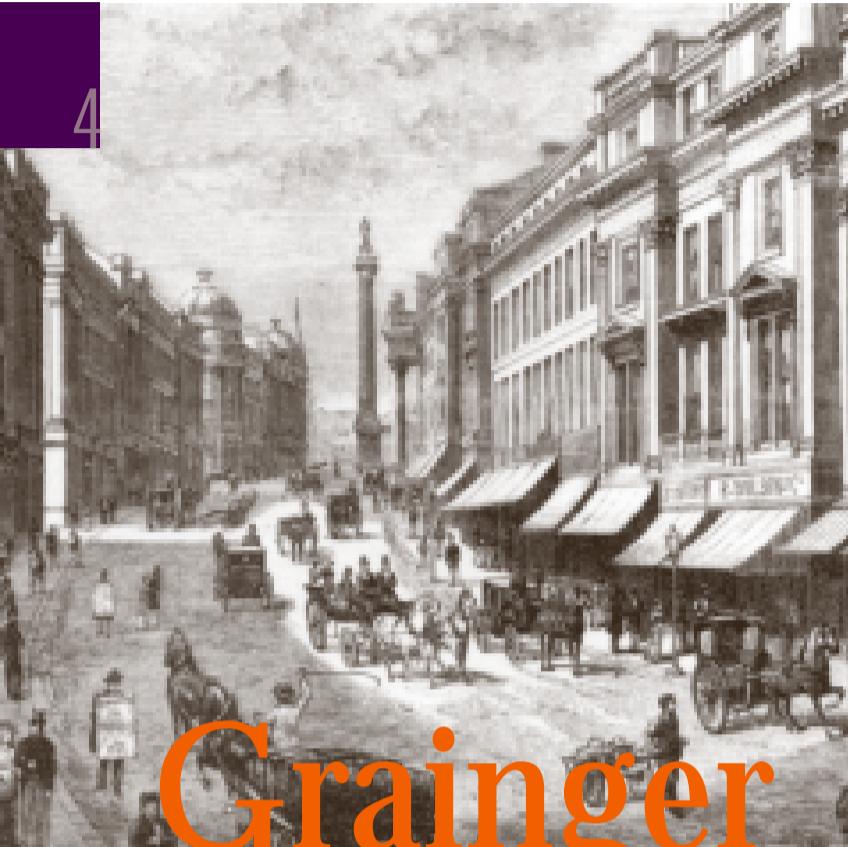
- 1 The Union Rooms
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purpose of the handbook

The Grainger Town Vision

"Grainger Town will become a dynamic and competitive location in the heart of the City. Grainger Town will develop its role in the regional economy with a high-quality environment appropriate to a major European regional capital. Its reputation for excellence will be focused on leisure, culture and the arts, retailing, housing and entrepreneurial activities. Grainger Town will become a distinctive place, a safe and attractive location to work, live and visit."





Grainger Town's significance

It comes as a surprise to many people that the great industrial city of Newcastle has one of the finest centres in Britain. Famous for its dramatic bridges over the Tyne and for being one of the world's great party cities, Newcastle has even been voted the most popular UK city to work in. Yet its magnificent central area – Grainger Town – is less well known, even though its architecture ranks with that of Bath or Edinburgh New Town.

'At two we went to Newcastle and saw the principal objects, including especially the fine church and lantern, the gem of an old castle and Grey Street - I think our best modern street'

Diary of W.E.Gladstone 1862

Nash's Classical Terraces:
A good investment

The great sweeping curve of Regent Street designed by John Nash, which links London's commercial West End with the large terraced houses around Regent's Park, may have provided an inspiration for Grey Street, but these imposing buildings fell out of fashion too. Restoration work by the Crown Estate has encouraged private investment in fashionable shops and offices, and houses that not long ago were considered not worth saving have now sold for up to £7 million.



The Cloth Market early 19th century, from an engraving by Thomas Miles Richardson

Of Grainger Town's exceptional architectural merit there is no doubt. Virtually all of it is included in Newcastle's Central Conservation Area, one of the first to be designated in England. 240 of its buildings, half of all those in the area, are Listed. What is more, an astonishing 30% of these are designated as Grade I or Grade II* – 'buildings... of particularly great importance to the nation's built heritage'. In the country as a whole, only 6% of Listed buildings fall into these higher categories.

Grainger Town occupies much of the southern part of the city centre, and takes its name from a series of elegant, classical streets conceived as a whole and built by Richard Grainger between 1835 and 1842, at the end of the Georgian period. Its centrepiece, Grey Street, with a wonderful rising curve, is widely acknowledged as 'the finest Classical street in England'. However the area also includes medieval streets like Bigg Market, the 13th century Dominican Friary of Blackfriars and remnants of the old Town Wall, and after Grainger's day it was extended with many fine Victorian commercial buildings. All this gives Grainger Town a great richness of character. It now covers some 90 acres right in the centre of the city, between Newcastle's Central Station and the thriving regional shopping area of Northumberland Street and Eldon Square. It is well served too by Newcastle's efficient Metro system, and the city's two universities, the Castle and the regenerated Quayside, with its stylish promenade, hotels and offices, are also close by. (See map page 2.)

Grainger Town was built as a commercial centre with shops below housing or offices. Although there are some truly palatial buildings, such as the Theatre Royal, the former Branch Bank of England and Grainger Market, most of the original buildings are quite small, but they are joined together to form terraces with beautifully proportioned facades. The overall character of the streets is therefore just as important as the quality of the individual buildings.

'Grey Street is... one of the best in England'

Nikolaus Pevsner,
Northumberland
(The Buildings of England)
1957



6

A Brief History

What makes Grainger Town exceptional is the series of classical streets developed in a period of frenetic construction between 1835 and 1842 which are overlaid on the pattern of the medieval settlement that was there before.

Newcastle was unusual in that up until 1830 there was a large property – Anderson Place – with extensive grounds within the city walls. This became available on the death of Major Anderson in 1831, creating a unique development opportunity. A number of schemes were drawn up but only Richard Grainger had the capacity to take the project on. As one commentator remarked: *'While others think, Mr Grainger acts'*.

Grainger's idea was to link the smart residential areas to the north with the cramped trading district above the quayside. In so doing he crea-



ted an entirely new commercial centre with wide, elegant streets. This was both difficult and controversial. The principal street, now Grey Street, had to follow the steep curve of the Lort Burn, but Grainger turned this to great advantage in designing what is acknowledged to be one of Britain's finest streets. Two other streets, Grainger Street and Clayton Street, provided linkages to Bigg Market and Westgate Road.

However several buildings, including the old theatre and the Butcher Market, had to be demolished, and a new Theatre Royal and Grainger Market were built as replacements. Other fine buildings, such as the Central Exchange, formed part of the overall plan, and the composition was completed by Grey's Monument which was erected in 1838, to commemorate Earl Grey, Prime Minister from 1831 to 1834, and his role in the passing of the Great Reform Act.



The map to the left shows the centre of Newcastle in 1830 prior to Grainger's developments. The plan above, drawn just 14 years later, shows Grainger's developments in their completed form.

Top:

An early artist's impression of the plans for Grainger Town (never fully realised).

Centre:

A portrait of Richard Grainger c.1830 from Laing Art Gallery (artist unknown).

What is possible

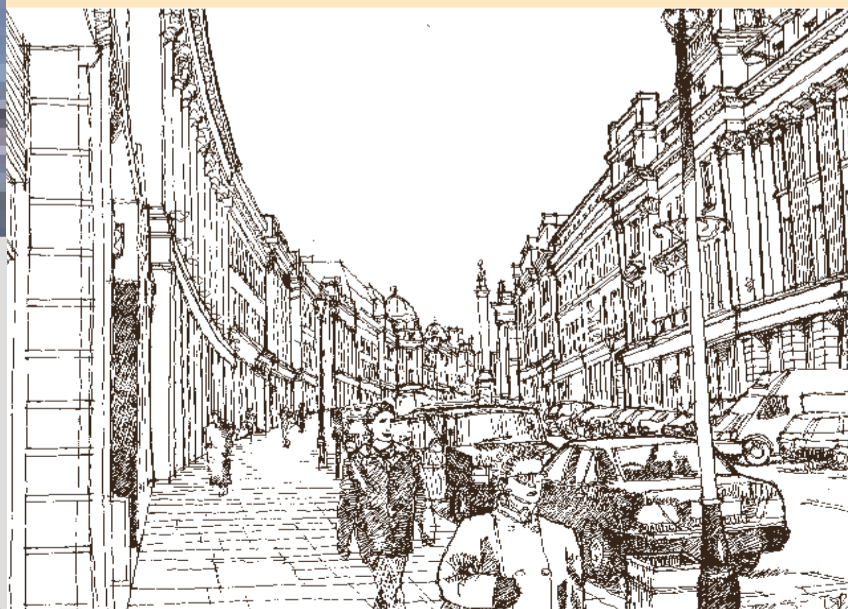
Leeds Victoria Quarter: A place to be proud of

Leeds has promoted its centre as a '24 hour city', and changed its image with specialist shops that have made use of grand 19th century buildings such as the Corn Exchange. A recreated arcade called The Victoria Quarter has attracted a branch of Harvey Nichols, and the superbly restored market is also highly popular.



Like all historic areas Grainger Town has been through many changes. First the fashionable residents began moving out to the suburbs, and the population decline continued for most of the 20th century. Even so Grainger Town, especially Grey Street and Mosley Street, was until recently Newcastle's prime office location. Grainger Street was its main shopping street and Clayton Street a secondary shopping area. But since the 1970s the development of the Eldon Square shopping centre and the redevelopment of the Quayside have greatly expanded the city centre, and many of the larger shops and offices have moved out of Grainger Town to more modern premises. As space, especially on upper floors, became empty and there was increased traffic on the streets, the area began to look down-at-heel.

Nevertheless Grainger Town remains an important part of Newcastle city centre, and it is still a distinctive place. It has survived with remarkably few modern intrusions, and its streets and buildings have an underlying quality which is comparable with the very best in Europe. It has all the potential to become a memorable and prosperous quarter at the heart of a great city – a highly desirable place to live in, to work in and to visit. Its regeneration is already seeing it start to reclaim its position as a place to be proud of, and an area worth investing in for the future.



the value of quality

The Union Rooms

The former Union Club in Westgate Road, a Listed Victorian building described in Pevsner as 'a splendid French chateau', lay empty for over 20 years in spite of its grand staircase and impressively-sized rooms and its location close to Central Station. The 22,000 sq. ft. building has recently been renovated and converted into a pub/restaurant/wine bar, which occupies the three lower floors, by the JD Wetherspoon chain. There is also space for up to 7 flats on the top two floors.

Although the original building contained much wasted space, and vandalism and dry rot had caused extensive damage, the renovation has largely followed the original design. The spacious, high-ceilinged rooms have been retained; the stone staircase and the



'The Grainger Town Project Team acted as facilitators. They oiled the wheels and helped us deal with the contentious issues... They helped a dream come true'

Ian Lear, Project Architect, Lawrence Tring Architects.

cast iron dome have been restored; the plasterwork, fireplaces, stained glass and other details have been replaced to match what was previously there.

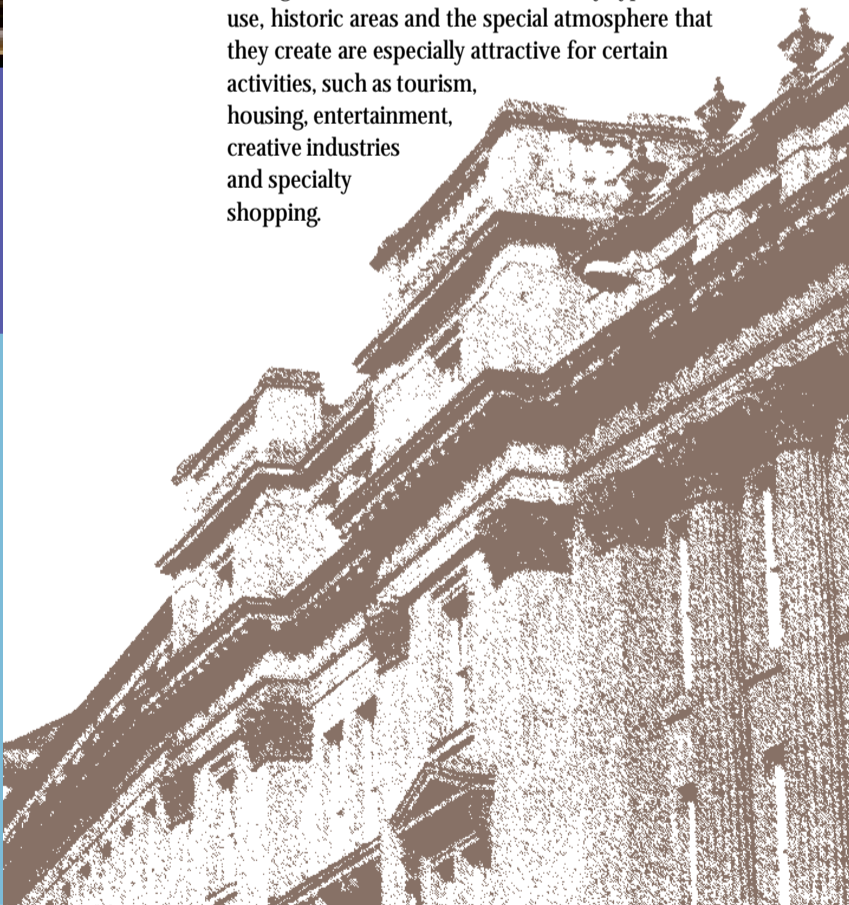
The total cost of the project was £4.2 million, but the result is a great success. Wetherspoons know that creating a special environment with high standards is essential in such a highly competitive business as theirs. They have several Listed buildings in their estate.



Only a small number of cities still retain their historic cores intact and Newcastle is one of them. Few places can boast of such a fine ensemble of streets and buildings right in their centres, and those that do now look after them with great care. Not only are they to be admired in their own right, but they are irreplaceable and, given the pressures on modern cities, unrepeatable. Above all they have the potential for creating a special atmosphere, a memorable sense of place, that can be very valuable.

It is ironic that over the years the historic areas of many cities have been destroyed, often in the name of progress, and their buildings replaced with utilitarian designs that have not stood the test of time. Only with hindsight can it be seen what a mistake was often made. In London, for example, there were serious plans after the war to demolish the Nash terraces that surround Regent's Park. Now they are among the most sought after and most expensive houses in the capital. Other areas such as Edinburgh's Old Town, Dublin's Temple Bar and London's Covent Garden have been threatened too, but all have survived and become world-famous attractions.

Historic areas in city centres are therefore rare, and those that do remain often enjoy great financial success, provided that sympathetic uses are found for their buildings and that the area as a whole, including its public spaces, is properly managed. While not suitable for every type of use, historic areas and the special atmosphere that they create are especially attractive for certain activities, such as tourism, housing, entertainment, creative industries and specialty shopping.





The Metropolitan

The conversion of the ground floor of 35 Grey Street into a fashionable bar and eating place shows just what can be done with the interior of a Grade II* building. The architects, Provin and Makin, have retained many of the original features but inserted a lightweight mezzanine floor to create a highly contemporary space with room for up to 170 diners.

The building was originally designed to house two banks.

Its new lease of life illustrates both the flexibility of many historic buildings and the growing market for stylish eating and drinking in the area. The Metropolitan's owners are now looking to expand elsewhere.

'The restoration of derelict buildings to enable contemporary economic uses sends out powerful signals to other property owners and potential investors in an area, which can spark a virtuous cycle of improvement'

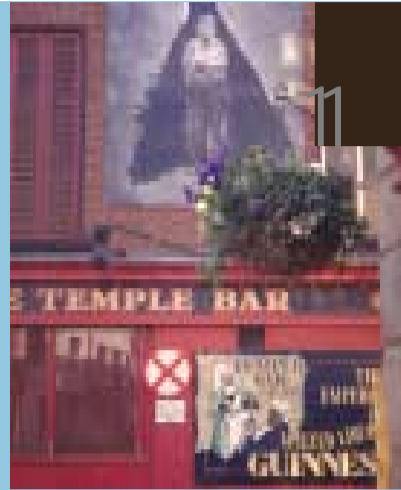
The Heritage Dividend, English Heritage, 1999.



What is possible

Dublin, Temple Bar: From liability to asset

At one time Georgian buildings were seen as an unwelcome hangover from British rule, but they now help to make Dublin one of the most successful tourist destinations in Europe. Temple Bar, right in the centre of the city, which was to have been demolished to make way for a new bus station, is now one of the leading attractions. Through a mixture of public and private investment, together with energetic marketing, it has been turned into a thriving cultural quarter and alternative shopping area, with many bars, hotels and restaurants.

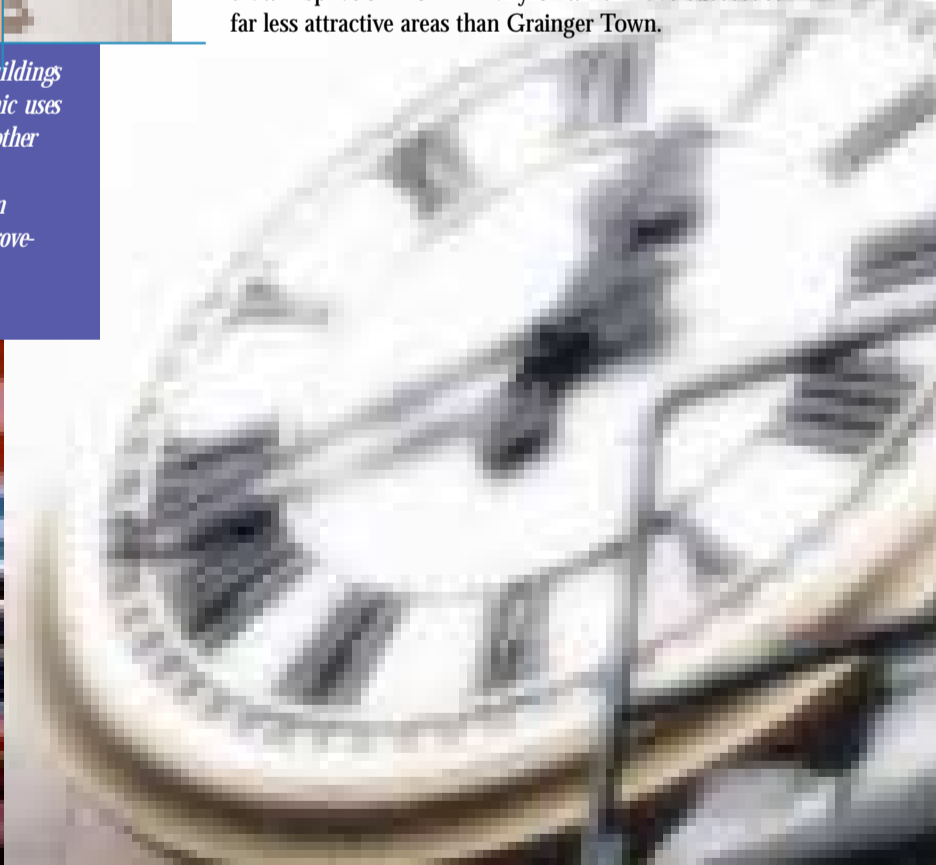


As well as attracting large numbers of visitors, Temple Bar is also becoming a popular place to live. What was once a blighted area is now a recognised economic asset for the city.

However all areas go through bad periods as well as good, through decline as well as renaissance.

Historic areas can take a long time to adapt to new roles, and the process needs careful assistance. What is essential is to retain and build up the special character of the area as a whole, and to bring life and vitality back to the streets.

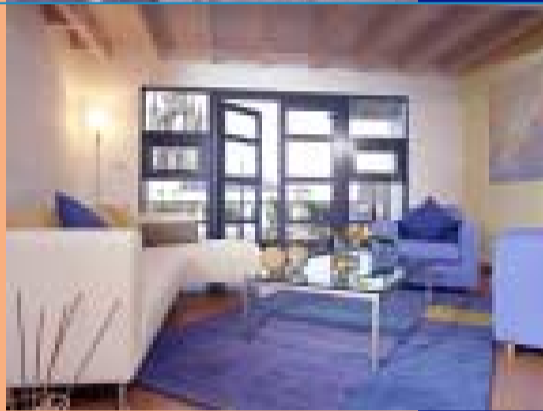
Economic regeneration and the restoration of historic buildings need to go hand in hand, for the best way to preserve a fine building is to find the right use for it. This requires creative, flexible thinking, not necessarily standard solutions. Interim uses may need to be encouraged to create demand and to prevent buildings, or significant parts of them, deteriorating by being left empty for long periods. However, there is now no shortage of examples to draw inspiration from – many of which have succeeded in far less attractive areas than Grainger Town.



The Red Box

Newcastle's former Post Office, an imposing Grade II Listed building in Grainger Town with over 100,000 sq. ft. of space on 3 floors, which was empty for 5 years, is now undergoing an imaginative conversion to a range of uses. These include offices, 2 restaurants, 12 flats, a gallery and flexible space that may be used for artists studios. The principal architectural features of the building have been retained and a new roof garden created. The flats are on the market for between £140,000 and £380,000, reflecting the growing interest in 'city living' in Newcastle.

The scheme was devised by local architect, Alan J.



Smith, who saw that, with care and creativity, different uses could be fitted into the existing space. It received £1.7 million in funding from English Partnerships through One NorthEast, the Regional Development Agency and member of the Grainger Town Partnership.

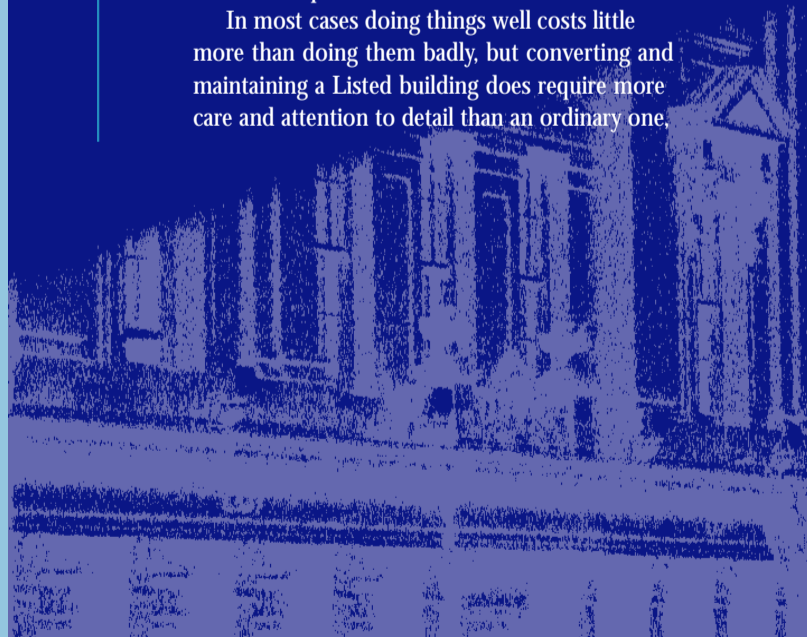


As part of the overall process of regenerating Newcastle city centre, Grainger Town now has its own Project Team to help guide its regeneration. They understand the special problems of historic areas and Listed buildings

Some buildings, particularly along Grey Street, Mosley Street and Collingwood Street, do provide space for large institutional users, but the majority are much more suitable for the wide mix of small-scale uses – small offices, specialist shops, restaurants, cafes, flats or houses above shops – which are now found in many successful city centres. Each of these has its own special factors for success. Some buildings just require upgrading; others may need conversion to 'new' uses, but often these could be remarkably similar to what they were originally built for.

The Grainger Town Project Team can provide information and a wide range of specialist advice (see pages 25-29.) Financial assistance is also available and has been tailored to suit the particular problems that need to be overcome (See page 31.) Often, however, the biggest change required is in the development approach that needs to be taken. In historic areas it is the entrepreneurial developers, and those who understand the long term value of quality and distinctiveness, who usually lead the way, as many of the examples in this handbook illustrate.

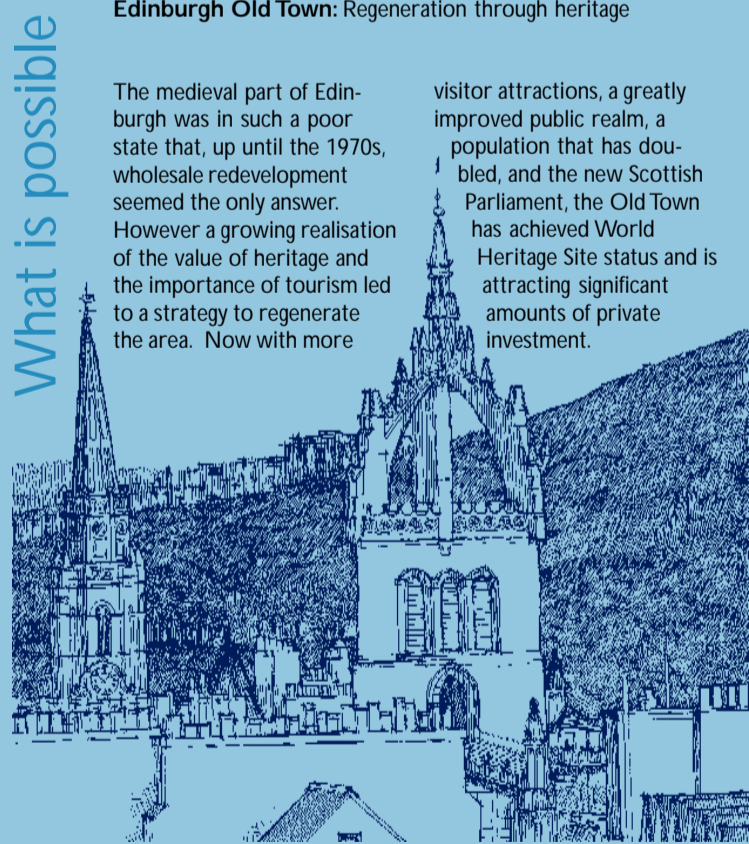
In most cases doing things well costs little more than doing them badly, but converting and maintaining a Listed building does require more care and attention to detail than an ordinary one.



Edinburgh Old Town: Regeneration through heritage

The medieval part of Edinburgh was in such a poor state that, up until the 1970s, wholesale redevelopment seemed the only answer. However a growing realisation of the value of heritage and the importance of tourism led to a strategy to regenerate the area. Now with more

visitor attractions, a greatly improved public realm, a population that has doubled, and the new Scottish Parliament, the Old Town has achieved World Heritage Site status and is attracting significant amounts of private investment.



London, Covent Garden:
A magnet for visitors

After the old fruit and vegetable market moved out of Covent Garden in the 1970s, the cheap empty space was taken over by small businesses and independent shops. These attracted growing numbers of visitors and helped provide customers for new galleries, wine bars and restaurants. Entertainers started performing in front of St. Paul's Church. Temporary community gardens were created on

development sites. Coutts Bank moved into new offices behind a Georgian facade, and new investment was drawn in as the area began to develop a lively character of its own.

While, more recently, established retail chains have begun to move in, the area still retains a distinctive vitality that makes it a magnet for visitors from both home and abroad. The market buildings remain a focus of activity and the local property market is buoyant.



Corner of Clayton Street and Westgate Road showing the contrast between Grainger's architecture and the Victorian exuberance of the corner buildings

grown in
Grainger Town

76-80 Clayton Street

Flats fit particularly well into the upper floors of Grainger Town because that is what many of the buildings were originally designed for. The scheme for 76-80 Clayton Street is a good example. The vacant space above ground floor shops in three Grade II Listed buildings has been converted into 12 flats by Home Housing Association. The flats are served by a separate entrance at the rear which gives access to a first floor roof-terrace. They are let at market rent (around £350 per month).

Care has been taken to retain as much of the original buildings as possible. Loadbearing walls have been retained along with staircases, windows and, where possible, doors. The overall

cost was approximately £54,000 per unit, but grants were obtained from three public sector sources. Obtaining all the necessary permissions and consents took time, but the Grainger Town Project Team helped smooth the way. The flats are now fully let to a variety of tenants, including professionals, overseas students and local business people.



and can be more expensive. Furthermore returns can be lower, particularly for offices, where older buildings often contain more unlettable space than modern ones, or lack facilities that some tenants require, such as car parking, disabled access or air conditioning. However, since a Listed building cannot normally be demolished and the site redeveloped, the best return will usually come from finding a use that fits the building well.

It is widely believed in the property market that Listed commercial buildings perform less well financially than unlisted ones, and they remain unpopular with institutional investors. Research by Cambridge University¹ provides some support for this, concluding that there is a one-time loss of value at the time of listing, although this is less marked in Conservation Areas. Uncertainty about what alterations might be permitted and potential delays in obtaining permissions may also lower values. However, studies by the Investment Property Databank² show that over a longer period (1980-1995) the Listed office buildings in their database outperformed unlisted buildings in terms of their total annual return, although over shorter periods this was not necessarily so. This study also excluded the effect of maintenance costs which are usually borne by the occupier not the owner.

Further research by the University of Reading and DTZ Debenham Thorpe on *The Value of Conservation?*³ concludes that the economic benefits of conservation are felt throughout a wider area. The repair of Listed buildings tends to add value to adjoining properties. Repairs and improvements to conservation areas attract more people to live and do business there. Furthermore well maintained



Glasgow, Merchant City
The importance of entrepreneurial developers

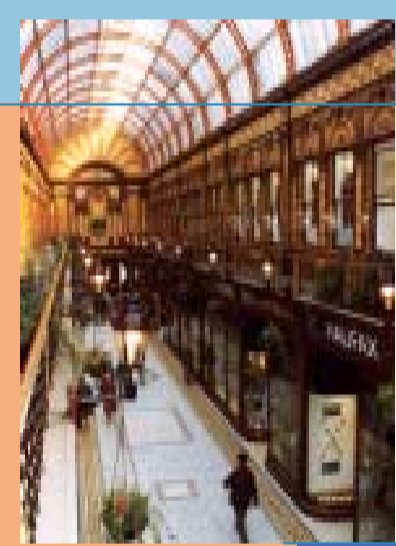
The imaginative marketing campaign of 'Glasgow's Miles Better' is credited with changing the city's image, and it has won a number of European awards and distinctions. However some

of the success is also due to entrepreneurial developers who renovated old buildings for housing and other uses, such as hotels and cafes, with memorable names like Babbity Bowster.

Central Exchange Buildings

Central Exchange Buildings at the very heart of Newcastle right next to Grey's Monument originally contained a magnificent hall, which Richard Grainger intended to be a Corn Exchange. Instead it became a successful newsroom, art gallery and meeting place, but after a disastrous fire in 1901 it was converted into a tiled arcade with offices above.

However because of its many changes in level, it was never ideal for offices and the top two floors have remained empty for 5 years. Miller Homes is now converting this



space into 14 maisonettes along with managed workspace above part of the arcade. The scheme is the first to attract a major private housebuilder into the area and provides a long-term solution for an important building.



The view up Clayton Street, virtually all of which was developed by Grainger

historic areas encourage visitors, bringing money into the area and so increasing values. This view is also strongly supported by English Partnerships and English Heritage.

Thus while individual commercial buildings or sites may suffer a short-term loss in value when they are listed, that loss can be recouped over the longer term if they form part of an area whose special character can be developed and exploited. Experience shows that the restoration of a historic area in a central location raises its appeal and liveliness, and leads to increasing values over time. In Grainger Town, everyone can benefit from the special legacy of the past, which makes the area unique and potentially valuable. But this extra value will only be achieved if standards are raised in the whole area.

Everyone, particularly property owners and occupiers must play their part. The public sector is making a major contribution. It is investing over £40 million in the area (with £25 million coming from English Partnerships, £11 million from the Single Regeneration Budget £2 million from Newcastle City Council and £1.75 million from English Heritage and £250,000 from Tyneside Training and Enterprise Council). It is upgrading the public spaces and the overall environment, and it is making available expertise and support to help property owners and occupiers take advantage of the opportunities that the regeneration of Grainger Town now brings.

'People are drawn to attractive sustainable environments as places to invest and as places to live and work... A high quality environment makes good business sense. It will create value and attract investment'
Space for Growth, English Partnerships, 1999.

1. K. Scanlon et al, *The Listing of Buildings: Its Effect on Value*. English Heritage, The Department of National Heritage and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, 1994.
2. Investment Property Databank, *The investment performance of listed buildings*. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and English Heritage, 1993, up-dated 1994, 1995, and 1996.
3. G. Allison et al, *The Value of Conservation?* Department of National Heritage, English Heritage and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, 1996.

Bilbao: restoring the heart of the city



Once known as a decaying steel town with huge redundant docks, Bilbao has recently reasserted its position as the leading city of the Basque Country. Regeneration started with the restoration of the Old Town's historic shopping streets, and has continued with a stylishly designed metro system and the Guggenheim Museum, which has put it on a world map. It is a place to be proud of once more.



St John's Church on the corner of Westgate Road and Grainger Street - a reminder of the areas Medieval history

plans for the future

The Former Bank of England

The former Bank of England building, described in Pevsner as 'a grand palazzo', is the most imposing building on the west side of Grey Street. It is Grade II* Listed and has a spectacular row of Corinthian columns in its facade.

The Bank moved out in 1971 to smaller premises nearby. The building continued to be partially occupied until it was bought in 1996 by Thomas Chu, a local entrepreneurial developer who wished to make it a landmark once again. It was in comparatively good condition, but needed refurbishment to suit the needs of different tenants. The ground floor has become a stylish brasserie. (See page 10.) The upper floors

are now occupied by Coutts Bank, Knight Frank property consultants and a recruitment agency. Thomas Chu's own offices are on the top floor in converted roof space.

The project took almost two years to complete, and required constant liaison with the Grainger Town Project Team, the City Council and English Heritage. However it is now considered a resounding success. All the occupants are delighted to be in such a prestigious building in a splendid location. What is more Thomas Chu is already engaged in restoring other Listed buildings in Grainger Town.

'I am proud to have this landmark building in my portfolio. Restoring it has at times been a long and difficult process, but now that it is complete, it has all been worthwhile'

Thomas Chu, Owner



Now that the Quayside has been regenerated with such success, the next stage in bringing Newcastle city centre up to the standard of a major European regional capital is to focus on Grainger Town. The Grainger Town Partnership has been established to channel the public sector partners' contributions into the area and to take the lead in implementing the agreed strategy for the area.

The main elements of the strategy for Grainger Town, up to 2003, are:

- Extending the retail core south of the main shopping area
- Creating residential units above shops in Grainger Street and Clayton Street
- Strengthening the office core around Grey Street, Mosley Street and Collingwood Street
- Introducing corridors of leisure activities
- Upgrading the quality of public spaces and the environment.
- Improving accessibility and substantially reducing through traffic.

Manchester, Whitworth Street Corridor:

A desirable place to live

Several thousand of apartments have been created in what were previously old warehouses to make a popular new residential quarter in the heart of Manchester. Initial projects were carried out by housing associations and they were followed by volume house builders. However, it is local specialist developers that have had the greatest success through their stylish designs, imaginative marketing efforts and attention to detail.

What is possible



Former Binns Store

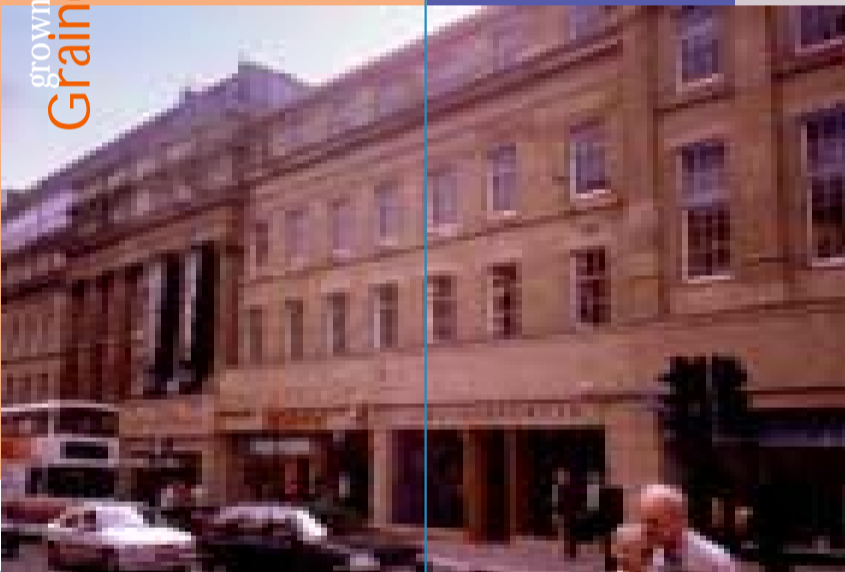
Just as the closure in 1995 of Binns department store on the corner of Market Street and Grainger Street was a huge blow to Grainger Town, so its refurbishment for fashion outlets is a potent sign of recovery. The £10 million first phase of the development by Commercial Development Projects Ltd. has created 60,000 sq. ft. of retailing. This was completed in March 1999 and has been let to Oasis, Karen Millen, Jigsaw and Envy. Phase Two is planned for completion in 2000 and will include further retail units in Grainger Street

as well as three restaurants on Bigg Market.

Over the years the interior had been greatly altered since it was originally built. The new scheme has inserted modern retailing space behind the Grade II Listed facades. It illustrates that, with imagination and skill, the needs of contemporary users can be met while still respecting the quality of the existing buildings and townscape – thus achieving the best of both worlds.

'What we are looking at is the Bond Street of Newcastle.'

James Marshall, developer



Prague:
A delightful place to stroll in

Following UNESCO's designation of the historic core of Prague as a World Heritage site, the municipality started restoring the pavements with patterned sets. Pedestrians now have priority, and there is excellent public transport, making it a wonderful city to stroll around. Many of the buildings and public spaces have also been restored, and a series of festivals keeps the centre popular with tourists and local people all year round. A large amount of foreign investment – attracted in part by the unspoiled heritage – has now started to flow into the 'Golden City'.



The International Centre for Life on the edge of Grainger Town designed by Terry Farrell

Several flagship schemes are already transforming the area:

- The former Bank of England building and the Metropolitan (See pages 10 and 18)
- The former Binns store (See opposite)
- The Red Box scheme in the old Post Office (See page 12)
- Repaving the area around Grey's Monument (See page 22)
- The International Centre for Life (just outside the area).

Particular emphasis is now being put on:

- Upgrading office space, especially for small and medium-sized firms
- Encouraging 'city centre living' and bringing upper floors back into use through Living Over The Shop schemes
- Improving the environment to a high quality
- Resolving car parking difficulties
- Repairing run-down buildings, including shopfront improvements
- Providing tailor-made assistance and grants to encourage private sector investment.

Careful shopfront design can create a contemporary feel while respecting and indeed enhancing the original building



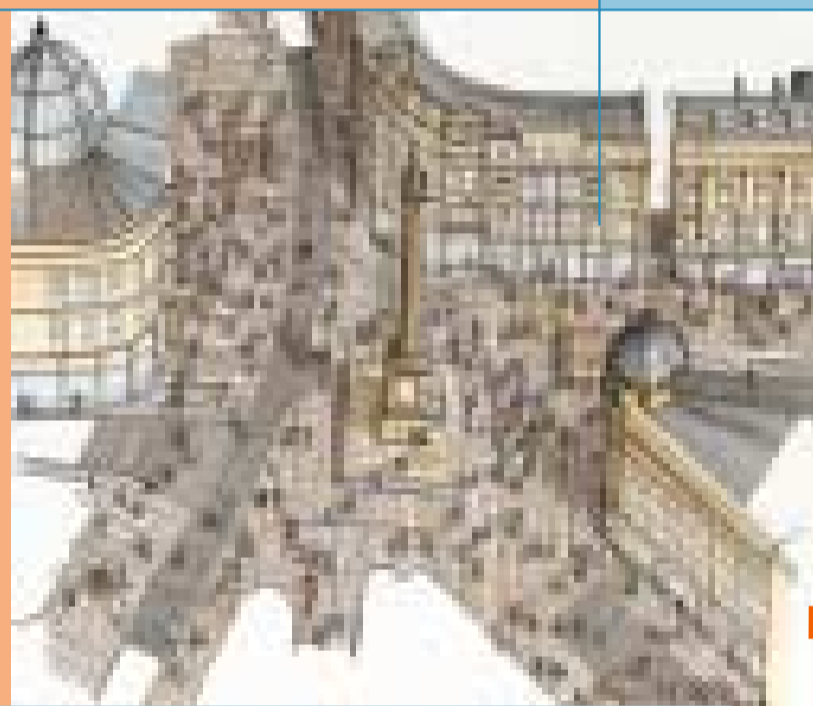
Improving The Public Realm

A public realm strategy for Grainger Town was prepared in 1998 by landscape architects Gillespies. This called for 'improved links', especially pedestrian routes, both within Grainger Town and with other parts of the city, and 'improved key streets and spaces'. Upgrading the area around Grey's Monument ('arguably the most important public open space in Newcastle') was recommended as an immediate demonstration project.

Detailed designs were

undertaken by the City Council's Engineering Services in conjunction with Gillespies, and the first phase is now complete. The aim is to create a high quality pedestrian-priority precinct that encourages appreciation of the surrounding architecture, makes walking a pleasure, improves existing linkages and helps promote social and civic activity. This is a first step in bringing the quality of the public realm in Grainger Town up to the standards found in Europe – where it has long been recognised that streets are the 'living places' of cities.

What is possible

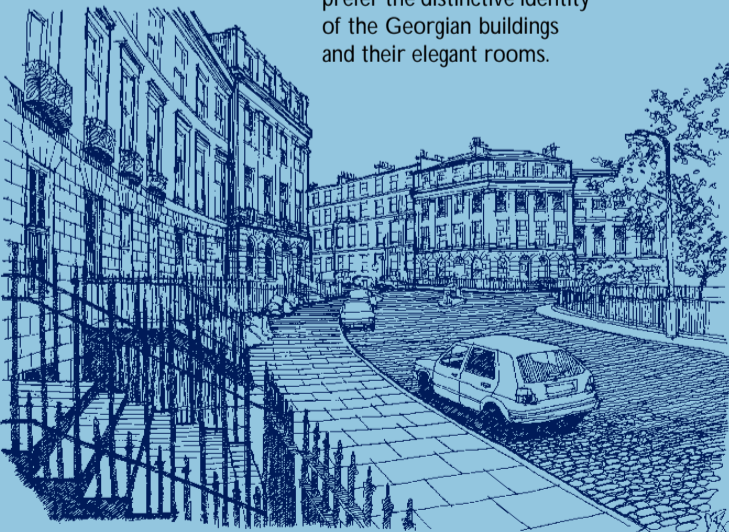


grown in
Grainger Town

Edinburgh New Town: An attractive identity

Built at the end of the 18th century as a residential area, the New Town quickly became Edinburgh's leading commercial quarter.

Although some of the larger legal and financial firms have recently moved out to modern office buildings, many of the smaller firms still prefer the distinctive identity of the Georgian buildings and their elegant rooms.



What is possible

Gothenburg: A change of attitude

Once Sweden's great ship-building city, now better known as the headquarters of Volvo, Gothenburg has both broadened its attractions for business visitors and encouraged people to live in its centre once more. This has gone beyond just a focus on

buildings. In a country which until recently frowned on drinking, the city now provides splendid pavement cafes on streets that are kept meticulously clean and cared for, making it much more pleasant to visit.



This is a strategy that will benefit both Newcastle as a whole and individuals who invest, live or do business in the area. Its aim is to make the most of Grainger Town's magnificent buildings and streets – medieval, classical, Victorian and modern – to create a lively and distinctive quarter of the city that people will feel proud of and be attracted to. This in turn requires that the improvements that are made both respect the exceptional architectural quality of the area, and provide facilities which are suitable for a lively mix of present day activities.

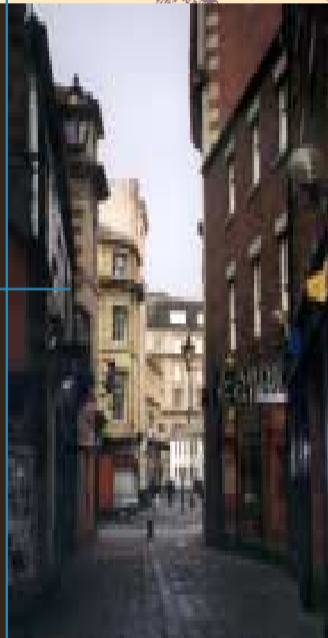
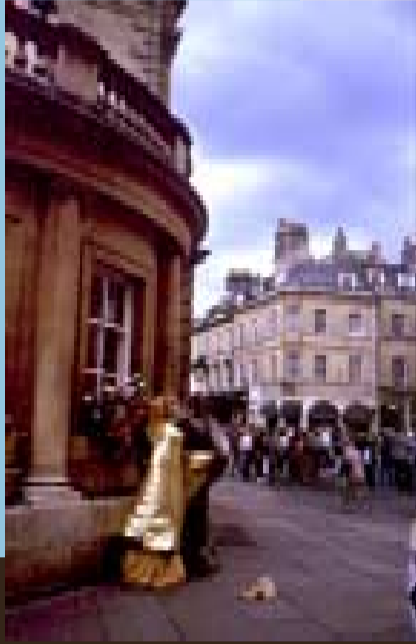
These two aspects must be carefully balanced. New investment is required and imaginative projects will always be welcome. But while good quality modern design can enhance a historic area, all new development must be judged within the context of its surroundings and its effect on the area as a whole.

Making the most of Grainger Town is, therefore, a joint enterprise. While the public sector can take the lead, private investors and existing property owners must also play their parts. Grainger Town, as one of the least known areas of great quality in a city centre, represents an outstanding opportunity for investment, but its full potential can only be achieved by working together to ensure that its special character is retained and enhanced.



Bath: A thriving inheritance

Founded by the Romans, Bath was relaunched as a fashionable spa in the 18th century, and contains a wealth of Georgian buildings. Despite being later eclipsed by seaside resorts and suffering extensive war-time bombing, the city centre has carefully retained and enhanced its elegant character. It now has many historic buildings open to the public and draws huge numbers of visitors from all over the world. It is also a thriving shopping centre and very popular place to live.



An important part of Grainger Town's character is the contrast between the grand classical streets and narrow medieval alleys

finding help and *expertise*



The main staircase of the newly refurbished Union Rooms

The Grainger Town Project Team has a staff of 14 professionals, based at Central Exchange Buildings in Grainger Street, who can provide advice and assistance on all aspects of the regeneration of Grainger Town, including how to deal with the problems and complexities of historic buildings. The Project Team is in close contact with the other agencies that are working in partnership to improve Newcastle city centre, including:

- Newcastle City Council
- One Northeast (the Regional Development Agency which has taken over English Partnerships' local responsibilities)
- English Heritage
- Tyneside Training and Enterprise Council

It is therefore the natural first port of call for all matters concerning investment or doing business in Grainger Town. The contact address is given on the back cover of this handbook.

Helsinki: Encouraging small enterprise

Helsinki is a comparatively isolated city that knows the value of enterprise and communication. Finland's mountainous terrain and scattered towns helped Nokia become the pioneer of the mobile phone industry.

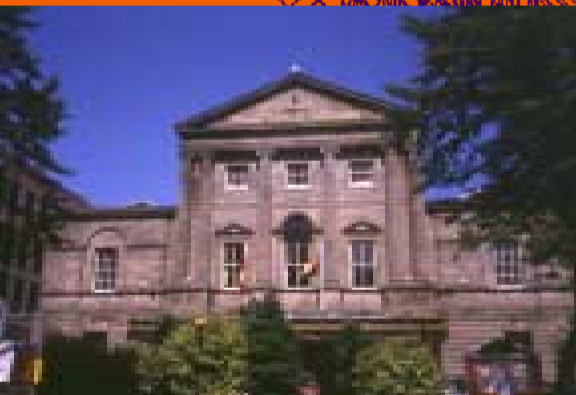
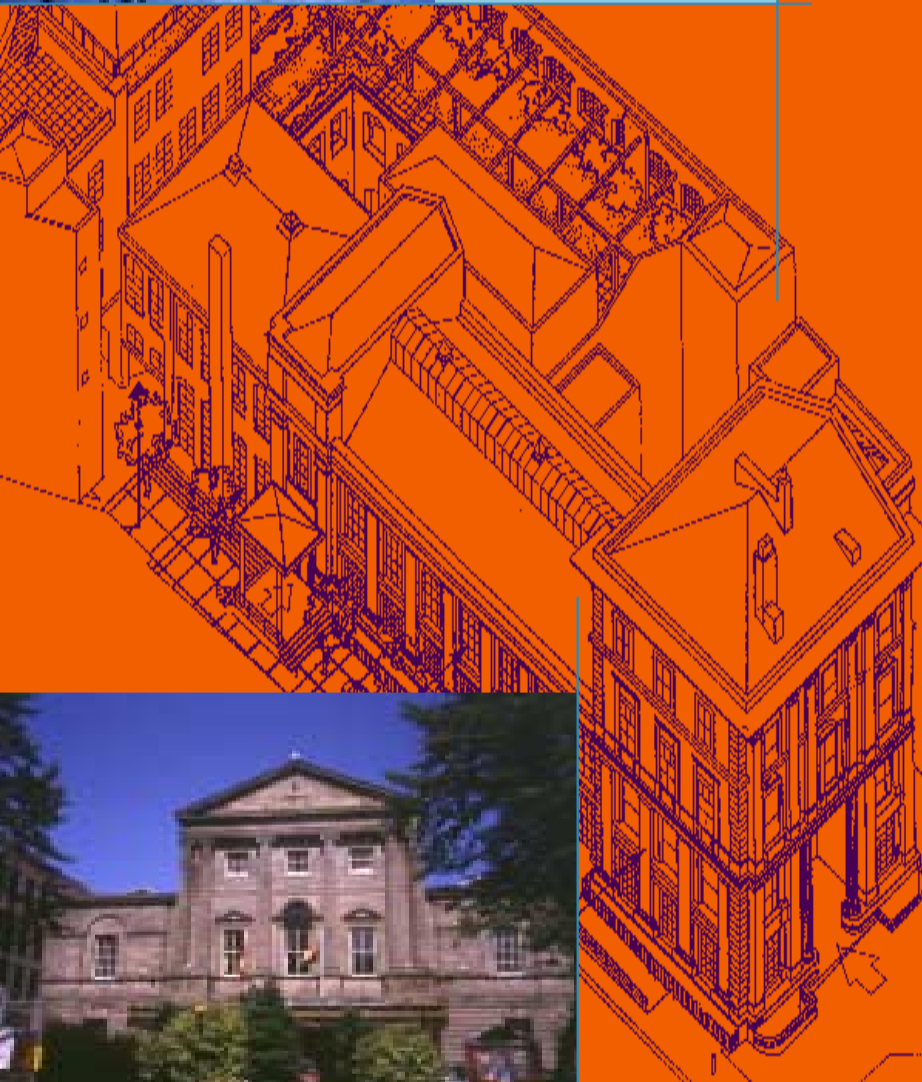
Continued innovation is being encouraged through a network of business incubators that provide workspace for small firms on flexible terms backed up with training and advice. They include schemes like Helsinki's Design Village which helps ensure that new graduates can remain in the city and develop business there.



The Grade I Listed Grainger Market which has been the retail heart of the area for 165 years

The Project Team is available to help everyone concerned with Grainger Town, including property owners and occupiers and their professional advisers, as well as those who are interested in any of the many investment or business opportunities that the area now offers. Its aim is to help make Grainger Town a distinctive, dynamic and attractive quarter which benefits to the full from its historic environment. The team's philosophy is to do all it can to assist those with projects that will contribute to this aim, by working constructively with them to ensure that their schemes respect the unique heritage of the area as well as achieve adequate financial returns, and by helping them cope with the extra requirements of Listed buildings and Conservation Areas.

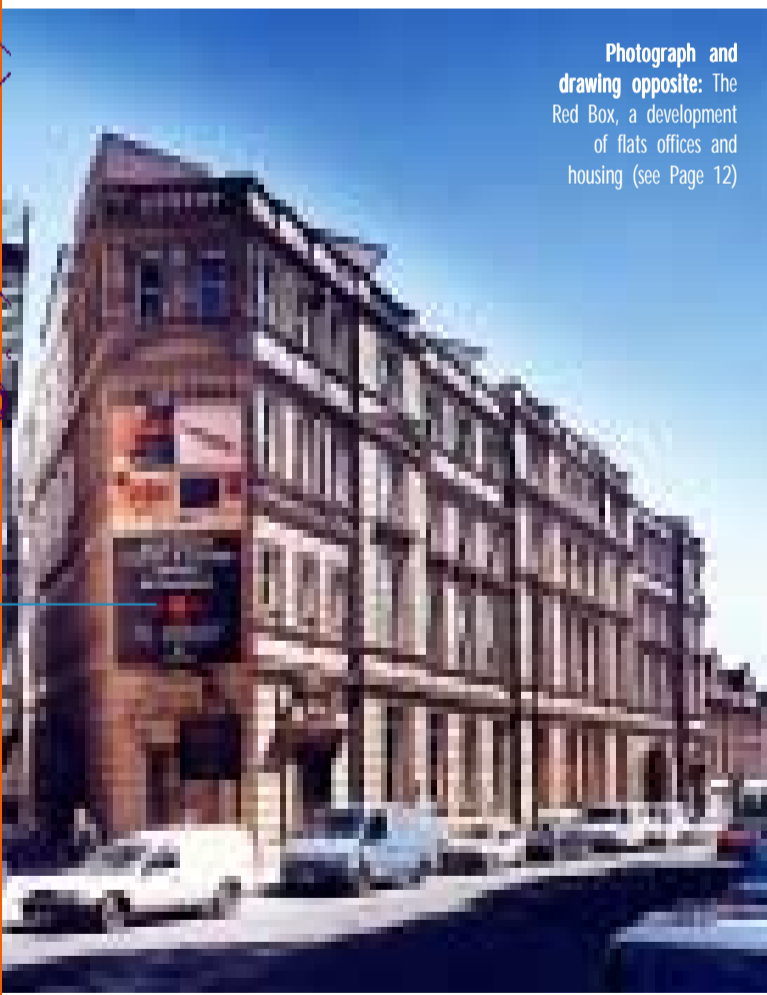
Photograph and drawing opposite: The Red Box, a development of flats offices and housing (see Page 12)



Above: The Assembly Rooms on Fenkle Street, a Grade II* Listed building dating from 1776



Below: The Tynes Theatre and Opera House on Westgate Road from 1867, built as a rival to the Royal Theatre





Galen House

This former pharmaceutical warehouse on the corner of Low Friar Street and Dispensary Lane was built at the turn of the century. It has now been converted into 62 furnished apartments after standing empty for many years. The scheme was undertaken by Collingwood Properties and is being let at

market rents by Home Housing Association. The £2.3 million capital costs were supported by English Partnerships and the Conservation Area Partnership grant scheme. The architects for the project, Greenall Winskell, have also been involved in other 'living over the shop' schemes in Grainger Town.

Bradford, Little Germany:
A historic commercial quarter

Bradford's historic merchant quarter, Little Germany, contains one of the finest collections of Victorian warehouses in Britain. Covering just 20 acres it includes 83 buildings, two thirds of which are Listed. The buildings, however, no longer suit the needs of the textile industry, and by the late 1980s much of the floor space was vacant and the area was starting to become derelict. It was said that there would never be any demand for space there.

Since that time Little Germany has been successfully regenerated. The first step was

a programme of environmental works and cosmetic improvements to buildings. This was followed by public investment in a number of building conversion schemes which demonstrated that there was indeed a market for the space. Concerted efforts followed to promote Little Germany and to generate a range of uses to animate the area and its buildings. This promotion included attention-grabbing events (such as the performance pictured above) which have certainly raised the profile of this once neglected historic quarter.

What is possible

Sheffield, Cultural Industries Quarter: Encouraging creative firms

A group of redundant industrial buildings between the railway station and Sheffield city centre have been converted into workspace for creative firms, and are helping to change the image of a city once known only for steel.

Partnerships between the City Council and local businesses have led to the creation of many new jobs in a range of business including recording studios, an arts cinema, restaurants and cafes. The project took over ten years to complete, but it has succeeded in creating an entirely new quarter in Sheffield in and removing a major source of blight.

The Project Team works both by making contact with property owners and occupiers in Grainger Town, through its business and residents' forums and other contacts, and by welcoming approaches made to it by those with ideas or problems to discuss. The Team:

- provides advice to help make projects more acceptable for planning purposes or for financial support
- arranges contacts with appropriate local experts to help bring in specialist advice
- provides information (if available) on local markets, including the local property markets
- provides information on government grants and other forms of assistance (see next section)
- acts as an advocate for suitable schemes and helps 'fast-track' them through planning and other procedures.

Not all parts of Grainger Town are the same and different standards can apply in different places. High quality modern design can often fit well into a historic area, and imaginative proposals will always be welcomed. As this handbook shows, good quality is fundamental to the success of the area as a whole and this in turn will also determine whether individual investments achieve their full potential value. The Project Team will therefore ensure that Grainger Town's magnificent heritage is preserved in order to make it a memorable and highly successful area as a whole – for the benefit of all.

Cross House, a landmark
at the junction of
Westgate Road and
Fenkle Street.

Turners Building

Project North East is one of the UK's pioneering Enterprise Agencies with a track record of providing work-space and services to small firms. Since 1989 it has been refurbishing premises around Pink Lane and now has some 45,000 sq. ft. of space, accommodating 50 businesses.

Turners Building, 7-15 Pink Lane although not Listed, is a fine 6-storey Victorian brick building. It was vacant and in poor condition and Project North East has raised £750,000 in grants and loans to refurbish the space. Using local architects and contractors it has created 27 units for creative businesses. Each unit has internet access and forms part of one of Britain's first urban televillages. Tenants such as Enigma Interactive, a multi-media and internet solutions company, are delighted with the results.

Project North East's Richard Clark has long been convinced that there is strong demand for space in the area from small busi-

nesses that appreciate the identity that comes from operating in a historic city centre. The Turners Building project shows that he has now convinced others, including a major bank, to support him. It has taken much time and effort, and an unconventional – or entrepreneurial – approach to development, but it is achieving impressive results.

'I needed an open plan office that was fairly prestigious due to the type of clients we attract... I think we will benefit from being part of a thriving community of media businesses based here'

Stephen Grainger, M.D. Enigma Interactive.



What is possible

Barcelona: A shining example

Barcelona suffered for years from being seen as a grey and industrial city, famous only for its football team. This has all changed. Environmental improvements – imaginative landscaping of neglected sites, restoring buildings and facades, introducing and co-ordinating colour schemes and promotion of public art – started the transformation through a long-term campaign *Barcelona Make Yourself Look Pretty*, which also included a series of activities to sustain public interest in improving the city.



As Barcelona's image has risen, so too has private investment which has enabled larger projects, including the Olympic Games, to go ahead. Now the city is seen as colourful and dynamic, and a shining example of successful urban regeneration.

A wide range of grants are available to assist those operating in or investing in Grainger Town. These include:

- **The Office Investment Programme:** Grant aid towards office improvements in targeted commercial streets
Source: English Partnerships.
Grainger Town Contact: Alastair Haworth (Tel: 0191 269 9105)
- **Living Over The Shop Programme:** Gap funding to assist the conversion of vacant upper floors into housing
Source: Single Regeneration Budget.
Grainger Town Contact: Alastair Haworth (Tel: 0191 269 9105)
- **Heritage Economic Regeneration Programme:** Percentage grant aid to assist the traditional repair and conservation of targeted Buildings at Risk
Sources: Newcastle City Council, English Heritage.
Grainger Town Contact: David Lovie (Tel: 0191 269 9114)
- **Shopfront Improvement Programme:** Percentage grant aid towards removing canopies and recreating traditional or other well designed shopfronts
Source: Single Regeneration Budget.
Grainger Town Contact: Jill Young (Tel: 0191 269 9103)
- **Business Support Programme:** Finance may be available for start-up or established businesses in Grainger Town and for relocations to the area
Sources: Single Regeneration Budget, EU Funding.
Grainger Town Contact: Kari Kiernan (Tel: 0191 269 9113)
- **Arts and Culture Programme:** Funding for individual artists and cultural organisations in Grainger Town
Source: Single Regeneration Budget.
Grainger Town Contact: Ned Buick (Tel: 0191 269 9111)

grant
schemes
available



Illustrations and photographs

Cover: All photographs URBED. Illustration – David Rudlin URBED. Inside Cover: All photographs URBED except view down Grey Street and photograph of Councillor Flynn – (City Repro. City of Newcastle upon Tyne). Illustration – David Rudlin URBED. Page 2/3: Map based upon Ordnance Survey base plan, aerial photograph courtesy Air Images. Dome photograph – (City Repro. City of Newcastle upon Tyne), photograph bottom – (URBED). Page 4/5: Engraving – (Tyne and Wear Museums Service), photograph Bath – URBED. Big Market Engraving (Laing Art Gallery), historic photograph of Grainger Street – (Tyne and Wear Museums Service). Page 6/7: Historic artists' view of Grainger Town – (Tyne and Wear Museums Service), portrait of Richard Grainger courtesy Laing Art Gallery, maps – (Tyne and Wear Museums Service), Leeds photo – URBED. Illustration Grey Street – David Rudlin URBED. Page 8/9: Photographs – URBED except The Union Rooms – Lawrence Tring Architects. Page 10/11: Dome photo courtesy – (City Repro. City of Newcastle upon Tyne), Metropolitan Bar – Neil Blackburn, Temple Bar and clock – URBED. Page 12/13: Red Box photographs – Alan J Smith Partnership. Page 13 photographs – URBED. Edinburgh illustration – David Rudlin URBED. Page 14/15: Covent Garden photograph – GRE Properties, illustration – David Rudlin URBED. Page 16/17: All photographs – URBED except Glasgow – Charlie Baker and the Inside of the Arcade (City Repro. City of Newcastle upon Tyne). Page 18/19: Photographs – URBED except Manchester Whitworth Street – Charlie Baker. Page 20/21: Photographs – URBED. Page 22/23: Avonometric – Gillespie, photographs and illustration – URBED. Page 24/25: Photographs – URBED except staircase – Lawrence Tring Architects. Page 27/28: Photographs – URBED except Red Box illustration and photo – Alan J Smith Partnership. Page 29/30: Photographs – URBED except Little Germany – Charlie Baker. Page 31/32: Photographs – URBED. Back cover: Photographs – URBED except Grainger Town Team photograph – (City Repro. City of Newcastle upon Tyne).



Price £5.00



For further information on all aspects of Grainger Town please contact Chris Oldershaw at the Grainger Town Project address below.

In conjunction with this handbook the Grainger Town Partnership is publishing a series of detailed guides (available from the address below) on ways of achieving quality in a historic area. The first guide, currently under production, is:

- Grainger Town Shopfront Guide

Other planned guides include:

- Grainger Market Stalls Improvement
- Grainger Town Character Assessment
- Care and Conservation of Historic Buildings
- Owning a Historic Building
- Reuse and Refurbishment of Historic Buildings

Point of contact

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Credits

This handbook was commissioned by the Grainger Town Partnership and has been researched, written and designed by URBED (Urban and Economic Development Group). The preparation of the handbook has been guided by a steering group consisting of David Lovie (Grainger Town Heritage Officer), Chris Oldershaw (Grainger Town Project Director), Graham Bell (North East Civic Trust), Colin Haylock (Newcastle City Council) and John Edwards (English Heritage).

The handbook has been researched and written by Christopher Cadell of URBED, assisted by Nicholas Falk with design and illustration by David Rudlin. Preprint by M15 Design. Printed by Communique.

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