

Lifelong resident Trevor Smitheram reflects on how investment in Hayle’s historic foundry has sparked the revival of this once 'down and out' Cornish mining town.

In its heyday, the port of Hayle was an industrial powerhouse that stood at the forefront of Cornwall’s booming mining industry. For over 200 years, businesses like Harvey’s Foundry supplied the area's heavy industries and were a beacon of Cornish ingenuity and engineering excellence.

But as Cornwall’s mining industry collapsed, like so many of the county’s towns and villages, Hayle went into rapid decline. By the late 1970s the fortunes of the town were in what seemed an unstoppable spiral of decline. As the fortunes of Hayle demised, so did its businesses. Harvey’s was abandoned and its buildings became derelict.

Today, the outlook for Hayle is looking bright. It’s experiencing a major renaissance and once again Harvey’s Foundry is leading its revitalisation.

[quote=Trevor Smitheram]Hayle is now on the map and it's the regeneration of Harvey's which has been the catalyst for change[/quote]

Lifetime Hayle resident and volunteer at the Foundry, Trevor Smitheram has seen first-hand how a ten-year regeneration programme at Harvey’s has not only transformed the foundry into a vibrant hub housing 40 businesses, it has also had a major impact on the economic health of the whole town.

Trevor said: “When I was growing up and until very recently, Hayle was down at heal. The town had very little to offer local people or visitors and investment always seemed to go to other nearby towns.

“These days it’s a different story. Today Hayle is vibrant and busy. New investment is coming in, new shops are opening up which means more local jobs and more visitors. Hayle is now on the map and it’s the regeneration of Harvey’s which has been the catalyst for change. People I speak to just can’t believe the change they see in Hayle – it’s fantastic.”

Today, we’ve announced a new £3.7million investment in Harvey’s Foundry that will enable the final buildings on the site to be saved.

Awarded through our Heritage Enterprise programme, this money is enabling two Grade II listed buildings to be brought back to life by transforming them into 18 high quality office units with the capacity to create a further 80 new jobs for the town.

Commenting on the new funding, George Eustace, Member of Parliament for Camborne, Redruth and Hayle, said: “I am really pleased the Heritage Lottery Fund has decided to award almost £4million to complete the restoration of Harvey’s Foundry in Hayle. We have a rich industrial heritage in Camborne, Redruth & Hayle and this funding will allow Harvey’s Foundry Trust to preserve an important historical site, attract new jobs and businesses to the area and provide an exciting range of learning activities to schools and visitors.”

If you know of a much-loved, yet derelict building in your area that could benefit from Heritage Enterprise funding watch our film to find out how we can help.



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of historic Cornish foundry

Credit: Katomi Creations

New ideas need old buildings



HLF’s Historic Environment Advisor, Ben Greener

Lottery opens its doors to private business