Bradford rejuvenates city centre with heritage led



Bradford's business and cultural fortunes are changing thanks to National Lottery players and heritage led regeneration Simon Sugden

Bradford’s 'Top of Town' city centre conservation area will benefit from £2million National Lottery funding, it was announced today.

The four-year scheme will play a key part in an exciting heritage-led regeneration story in the city. It is the latest in a number of innovative projects improving the business and cultural fortunes of Bradford.

Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, the £2m grant will complement existing projects including the re-use of empty retail units, plans for transport infrastructure, incentives for business owners and major investment to create a flagship entertainment venue in the city.

Changing fortunes of high streets in decline

The ‘Top of Town’ investment news comes amid concerns from MPs who last week launched an enquiry into the state of the UK’s town centres and footfall to our high streets.

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>
> *Si Cunningham, Chair of Bradford Civic Society*

Since 2012, Bradford has led the way in the North with efforts to rejuvenate its city centre. In the past six years, the city has seen 45 new start-ups take advantage of a scheme offering business grants to revitalise the city centre, creating 730 new jobs.

Magnificent architecture and thriving communities

The ‘Top of Town’ boasts some magnificent Victorian architecture, such as the old Yorkshire Penny Bank, Church House, the Institution for the Blind, Bradford Dispensary and the statue of Richard Oastler - the ‘Factory King’.

Bradford Council’s vision for the ‘Top of Town’ is for it to become a thriving, well-connected city centre quarter, vibrant during the day and night. It will boast independent shops, offices and apartments breathing new life into historic buildings and enhancing the heritage of the area.

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>
> *David Renwick, Head of HLF Yorkshire and Humber*

David Renwick, Head of HLF Yorkshire and Humber, said: “Our historic city centres are the beating heart of our communities, and where they fall into disuse and disrepair, the community pays a heavy price.

"Bradford is a vibrant city with a young population and strong entrepreneurial and community spirit. I’m thrilled to see Bradford continue to lead the way in its approach to focused heritage-led regeneration to create a striking and economically robust city centre that is a better place for everyone to live, work, and play. ”

Word from the street

Furakh Iqbal, local businessman and owner of the 1873 Grade II listed Church Institute on North Parade, said: “Developers like myself will be able to realise the full potential of our listed buildings, and to showcase their beauty, architecture and internal features.”

Yaseen Mohammed, a development and regeneration consultant, said: “Quite simply, the city can have a bright future based on unlocking its heritage. Without this funding Bradford would fail to capitalise on its potential.”

> The funding is an absolutely phenomenal opportunity for Bradford.
>
> *Kamran Rashid, Co-Founder of 30 Chapel Street Ltd in Little Germany*

Si Cunningham, Chair of Bradford Civic Society, said: “It’s a great time to be a Bradfordian. This funding shows a tremendous amount of confidence in this city and we’re very encouraged to see people of all backgrounds coming together to make [it] a place to be really proud of.”

Kamran Rashid, Co-Founder of 30 Chapel Street Ltd in Little Germany, said: “The funding is an absolutely phenomenal opportunity for Bradford. This will help kickstart a micro-economy in the city centre. The streets around North Parade are quickly developing into an independent area and the focus on heritage will also help the independent retailers by bringing back a sense of character and history.”



Templemore Baths is the last surviving Victorian baths in Ireland



d Templemore Baths

St George's Hall at night

National Lottery win for St George’s Hall in Bradford



Bradford Lost Ancient Woodland