



Inspired North East

INSPIRED FUTURES

For Historic Places of Worship in North East England

Churches Trust Forum Conference

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Why 'Inspired Futures'?



Needs and Opportunities

- Need to find sustainable futures for historic church buildings
- Opportunities for heritage, community use
- Heritage at risk if we don't take radical action
- What has been missing:
 - Availability of a high quality blend of expert input, experience sharing, capacity building and project planning know-how.





- Inspired North East experience
- Project concept – a way of working:
 - Influential precedents...
 - A ‘task team’ approach...
 - A ‘cohort’ working model...

Stage 1 achievements

- ✓ 17 local groups covering 18 sites
- ✓ Over 120 volunteers engaged
- ✓ 'Way Forward' reports
- ✓ Heritage assessments
- ✓ Over 200 training days
- ✓ Access audits and Statements of Significance
- ✓ 5 pilot heritage activities
- ✓ Recommendations agreed for Stage 2 treatment
(report available on Inspired North East website)





Elsdon local project group

Community Engagement workshop





'Regeneration Inspiration'
workshop

Alston art show



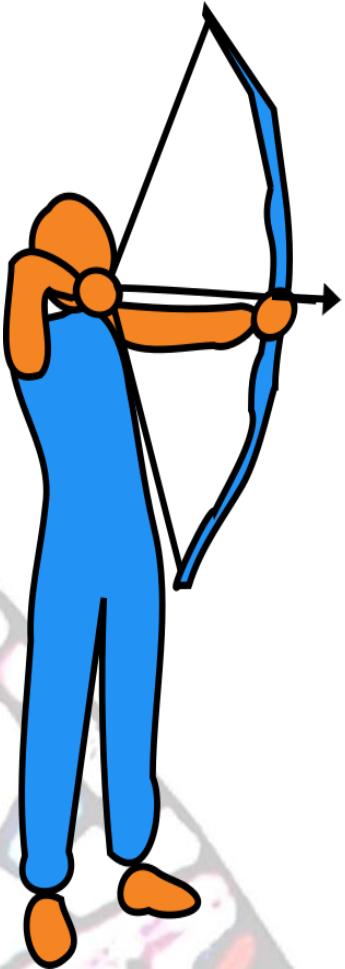
Stage 1 experience

- Vision, energy, ideas and momentum – beyond expectations
- Demonstrated benefits through ‘task team’ nurturing and connecting a cohort of local project groups ready to embrace change
- We want to build on this in Stage 2



Stage 2 Vision & Aims

- Create sustainable futures for historic churches, build upon heritage and wider community opportunities, and strengthen capacity of those caring for this heritage.
- Demonstrate new models, practical tools and concepts for working with historic places of worship and getting resources to where they are needed.





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Three levels of activity

Level 3: Wider access to training workshops, advisory resources, events, etc

Open to other churches to share in events & tools

Level 2: Some mentoring/support, training, heritage activities

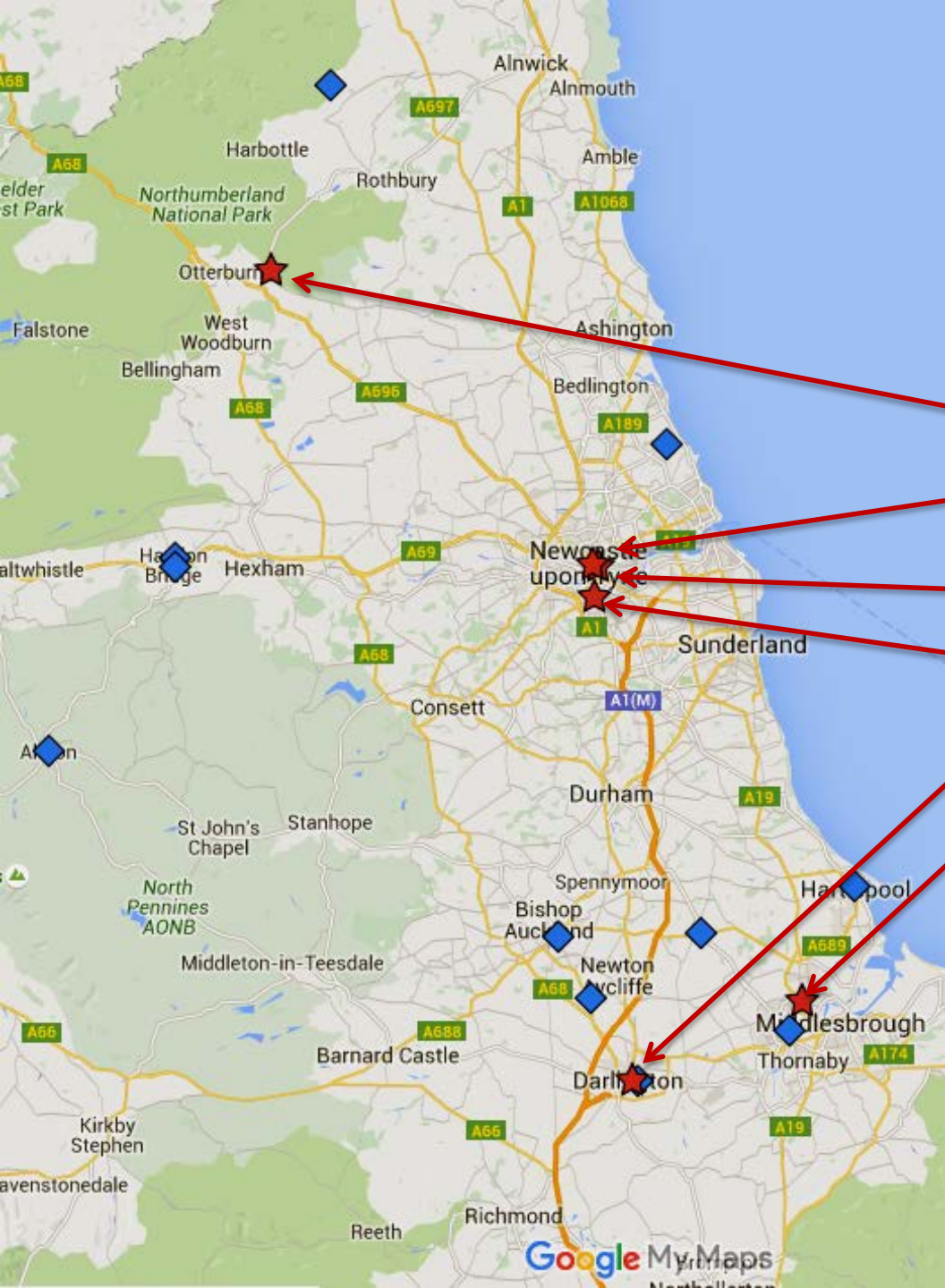
12 churches for Mentoring & Advice action

Level 1: Core Heritage activities & Regeneration planning Working across 6 high priority sites

6 churches for Regeneration & Heritage action



Sites proposed for 'Level 1' action:

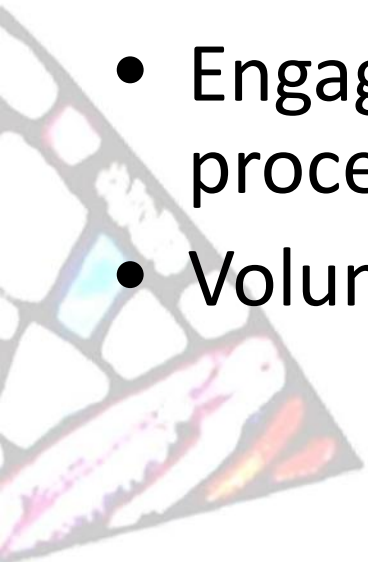


- Elsdon St Cuthbert's
- Haymarket St Thomas'
- Shieldfield Christ Church
- Bensham St Chad's
- Darlington St Cuthbert's
- Billingham St Cuthbert's

Plus 12 other sites for
'Level 2' support.

'Level 1': Regeneration Support and Heritage Activities for 6 churches

- Options appraisals and plans
- Regeneration plans, concept testing
- Budgets, maintenance plans
- Partnership agreements
- Heritage activities, displays, materials, digital
- Engage people with stories and planning process
- Volunteer development



Example: St Cuthbert's Church, Elsdon



Significant support for needs assessment (access, heating etc), exploring village heritage role (e.g. 'Elsdon Story'), business case for concert venue, community facilities, project governance etc.

Also training and skills in story-telling, digitising archives, photographic project, website.

Example: Christ Church, Shieldfield, Newcastle



Significant support on defining needs and new opportunities, business planning, local market research, funding strategy.


Community heritage potential linking to circus project. Need to get building open more, e.g. exhibition, community cafe, engage local people, make this more of a destination.

Example: St Chad's Church, Bensham, Gateshead



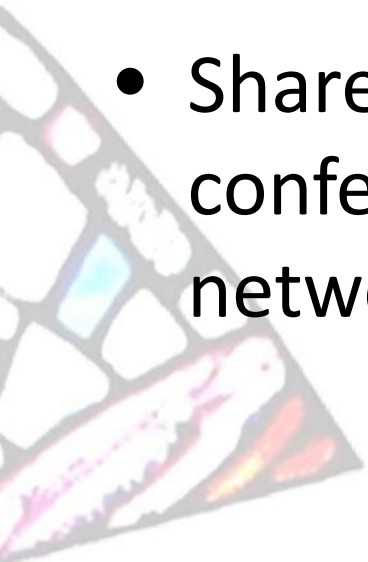
Significant support needed.
Heritage fabric issue, community need, good urban exemplar, need to mobilise group now, engage with community, broaden range of activities to reach a wider demographic, potential for good social outcomes.
Niche heritage offer for visitors, education.

‘Level 2’: Mentoring and Advisory Support for 12 churches


- Mentoring/advice via workshops, site visits, email etc.
 - Encourage to act on Way Forward reports and Heritage Assessments.
 - Access to 3-year programme of learning /skills events.
 - Cluster churches for mutual support within the wider project cohort support network.
 - Business plan/budget templates, ‘how to’ guides etc.
 - Encourage adoption of culture, sustainable models & practices from wider project.
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Other project actions

- 3-year programme of learning/skills events
- Planning tools, video guide to Statements of Significance; Access Statements
- Equip local groups to record visitor data and other baselines for monitoring/evaluation.
- Share results, tools, video guide etc via conference, case studies, online and partner networks



What we hope to achieve...

- Heritage activities delivered, new displays in place
 - Heritage better recorded, managed & accessible
 - Churches adapted for worship plus community activity, better managed and supported
 - People trained to care for heritage and welcome new users.
 - Churches mentored to achieve improved management, wider use, access to heritage, etc.
 - Tools/models promoted for wider take-up.
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Project Partners

Newcastle Diocese & Durham Diocese (C of E), The Churches Conservation Trust, Historic England, National Churches Trust & Northumbria Historic Churches Trust

Project Team

Peter Biggers - Durham Diocese

David Lovie - Newcastle Diocese

Andrew Duff - Newcastle Diocese (Project Co-ordinator)

Matthew McKeague & Regeneration Team – CCT

Jo Scott Associates – Heritage Consultant

Nicola Bell - Evaluation Consultant

Website www.inspirednortheast.org.uk

