

# Hi!

## **Heritage Action Zone-Led Regeneration in West Yorkshire Historic England**

**WYCA Place, Regeneration & Housing  
Committee, 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.**

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# Session Aims

- Introduce Historic England's place-based work in the region through its High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative.
- Provide some initial reflections on lessons learned, though full evaluation will not be completed until the autumn.
- Look at the emerging practice of Heritage-led regeneration in West Yorkshire local authorities.
- Consider how WYCA might inform and support next steps.

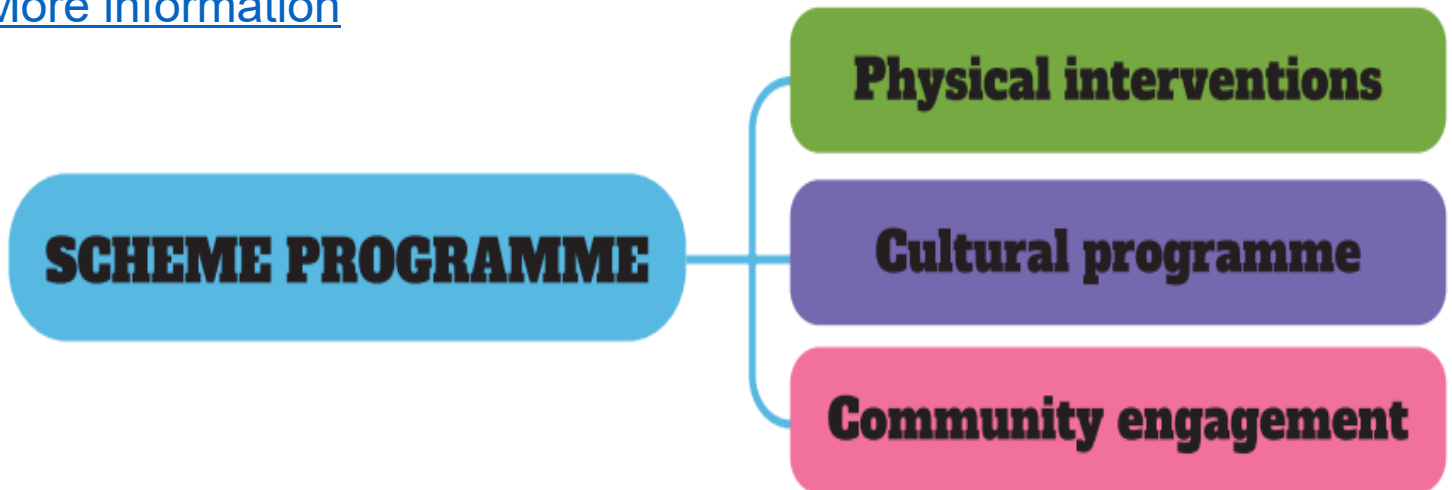


# What is a High Street Heritage Action Zone?

*A delivery model developed by Historic England, that combines capital investment to repair historic high streets, with cultural programming and community engagement, to unlocking the potential of high streets across England.*

*The pilot HSHAZ was in the Burges in Coventry and delivered by the Historic Coventry Trust to coincide with City of Culture.*

[More information](#)



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## High Streets Heritage Action Zone National Programme

### A four-year programme across England:

- Administered by Historic England
- **66** scheme programmes plus a Demonstrator project (Coventry). Delivered by Lead Partners
- Delivery began **April 2020**. Closes **March 2024**

### Objectives:

- To change perceptions of heritage and high streets
- To support sustainable economic (retail / commercial) and cultural growth on and around high streets
- To restore and enhance local historic character

### Funded by:

- Department for Digital, Media, Culture & Sport £40m
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities £52m
- National Lottery Heritage Fund\* £3m



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\* Cultural Programme only

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## HSHAZs in Yorkshire

- Barnsley
- Huddersfield
- Hull
- Leeds
- Northallerton
- Selby
- Skipton
- Sowerby Bridge
- Wakefield



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## Huddersfield: Victorian Development by the Ramsden Estate.



ESTATE BUILDINGS  
HUDDERSFIELD



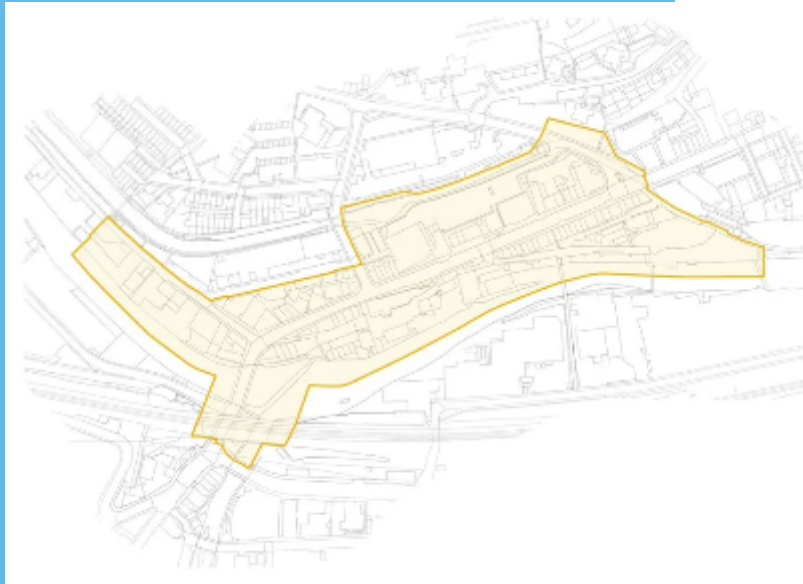
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## Sowerby Bridge – Stone, Fire & Water



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<https://sowerbybridgehshaz.org.uk/>

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## Upper Briggate, Leeds: The Grand Quarter



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## Case Study: Upper Westgate, Wakefield

- Authentic 'High Street'
- Critical mass of quality buildings
- Each contributes to the story of the town
- Welcome surprises during research and restoration
- Conservation work is transformative in its impact
- Great partnership working and participation



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## Nocturno: A nightclub and former cinema brought out of the shadows



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Landmark building benefiting from external cleaning, repairs and heritage finishes. one of 19 buildings and 5 ginnels repaired, including 9 shop fronts.

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## 50 – 52 Westgate - Grade II town house and former bank



External repairs and removal of modern granite façade to reveal the C19th bank frontage with day to night-time offer. This has enabled internal works to be undertaken with a view to utilising the upper floors, part of 2210m<sup>2</sup> of vacant or underused floor space brought back in to use.



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## Demonstrator: From Retail to Residential



Work underway at 115 and 115a Westgate – creating 3 new residential units from former retail premises, demonstrating how this can be done in harmony with the streetscape.



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## Elephant & Castle Yard



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Creating light industrial units and attractive workspace for start-up businesses, in a former burgrave plot dating from medieval times. The yard is part of 545m<sup>2</sup> of public realm that has been enhanced.

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## Revealing the past: The Black Swan



Grade II early C17th timber framed building – structural repairs and removal of render to reveal timber framing with some replacement timber needed. It has become the flagship project of the scheme and created huge local interest in the timber framed buildings of Wakefield



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## Employment and Building Conservation Skills Development



Construction training programme for Wakefield Building College at the Grade II\* listed chapel, using traditional lime mortar.



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## Learn, connect, share... Adult learning and Hidden Histories



Local volunteers from the Wakefield Civic Society and Wakefield History Society researched the building and added to list descriptions.

13 blue plaques were in place, including some in partnership with the Forgotten Women of Wakefield project.

<https://wakefieldcivicsociety.org.uk/>

<https://www.wakefieldhistoricalsociety.org.uk/>

<https://forgottenwomenwake.com/>



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## A Greener Westgate

581 people attended 45 events (in person and online) through cultural and community programmes such as creation of a community garden and art installations.



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## The Figures

£1,919,000 Historic England

£1,898,000 Wakefield Council

£3,818,000 scheme

£300,311 of private funding plus  
further investment in fit-out costs.

## Inputs and Outputs

- 19 buildings repaired, including 8 shop fronts as well as 5 ginnels
- 2210m<sup>2</sup> of vacant or underused floor space back in to use
- 545 m<sup>2</sup> of public realm enhanced
- Completion of a revised Conservation Area Assessment
- 14 training events to upskill the sector and teach private owners how to maintain their historic buildings
- 3 new residential units created
- 581 people to 45 events (in person and online) through cultural and community programmes such as creation of a community garden and art installations.



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A pink pennant-shaped logo with the text 'OUR YEAR' in white and 'Wakefield District 2024' in white below it.

OUR YEAR  
Wakefield District 2024

*‘Our heritage will be at the heart of the sustainable development of the district, creating growth and higher living standards for everyone.’*

Wakefield Heritage Framework

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## Emerging Lessons Learnt

- Make the target area large enough to give flexibility and small enough to be manageable;
- Cluster investment to create impact;
- Address landmark buildings where possible;
- Communicate well and in person on the ground;
- Use shopfront schemes to bring light-touch improvements to benefit more businesses;
- Work with a range of council departments and partners to inform approaches, build partnerships and gain buy-in – public, private and community interest;
- Build flexibility into your plans as property owners and tenants may need time to come on board, especially during times of economic change or uncertainty.



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## What will be the legacy?

- Relationships and trust built between partners
- New ways of working established;
- Community capacity built;
- Virtuous impact of exemplars on the high street which help to lead the market with new private sector investment to support Levelling Up;
- Further investment being considered by local authorities to build on the legacy of the HSHAZs, as Heritage takes a central role;
- Integration of capital, community and cultural activity becomes the norm;



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## Will there be further Heritage Action Zones or Heritage-led Regeneration?

- Further investment being considered by local authorities to build on the legacy of the HSHAZs; eg. £610k investment in the John William Street Shop Fronts Scheme in Huddersfield.
- Heritage frameworks built into plans for place, with Heritage Lottery Funding to support this work in Calderdale and Wakefield, linked with their Years of Culture.
- Bradford Council is developing proposals from its Heritage Framework for a new HAZ for Bradford city centre, to coincide with City of Culture 2025.

For discussion:

- ***How can Heritage-led investment help the WYCA deliver its ambitions for our places?***
- ***How can we align funding opportunities to make this happen?***



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