



> ouseburn valley covers an area of 100 hectares, and is a designated conservation area with unique heritage features.

ouseburn valley

**Newcastle City Council,
"Regeneration Strategy for Lower Ouseburn Valley," January 2003.**

"By 2010, the Lower Ouseburn Valley will be a thriving, sustainable, urban village in a unique riverside location. The best heritage features of the area will have been preserved and enhanced within a vibrant townscape and an attractive landscape that will reconnect people with the diverse natural environment. A wide range of businesses especially those related to creative, innovative, multi-media and cultural activities will be prospering.

"The valley will also be home to a stable, mixed residential community. A wide variety of services and leisure opportunities will be available for residents, employees and visitors to the area."

ouseburn valley:

its riverside location, rich industrial past and cultural present are inspiring the creative industries, providing fertile ground for the city's most interesting leisure pursuits, and making residential and commercial developers take note.

The backdrop to Newcastle's industrial revolution, the Lower Ouseburn Valley was once a lively quarter filled with glassworks, tanneries and flint mills. Although the overcrowded tenements that housed factory workers are long gone, the heavy industries left a surprisingly romantic legacy. Ouseburn is still characterised, in parts, by the historic buildings of Victorian Newcastle. The once bustling Ouseburn River might be quiet except for a variety of small boats, but it is about to experience another revolution as a new waterside community emerges.

The Ouseburn Trust was formed in the 1990s by a group of people who are passionate about the area, and in 1999 Newcastle City Council - working with the Trust - launched the Lower Ouseburn Valley Regeneration Strategy with its vision to deliver around 28,000 square metres of new and refurbished workspace, £140 million of private and £12 million of public sector investment. The programme will create new jobs and an exciting live, work and play destination close to the city centre and the already regenerated East Quayside area.

The term "urban village" is attributed to all manner of less deserving neighbourhoods, but Ouseburn truly lives up to the title. The area has been attracting an artistic community for over two decades. In fact, says sculptor Fiona Gray, Ouseburn was one of, if not the only, place for artists to work in Newcastle. She is now based at the 36 Lime Street co-operative, which has been offering affordable studio spaces since the 1980s.

As countless examples around the world have proved, a burgeoning artistic community is a successful catalyst for wider regeneration. Last year, a Grade II listed former flour mill by the river was beautifully converted into the award winning Seven Stories, the UK's only exhibition space dedicated to the work of children's writers and illustrators. Next door Ouseburn Farm, an environmental training, education and visitor centre, was completed late last year. Ouseburn's first purpose-built theatre is under construction within 36 Lime Street. Meanwhile, further up the Valley, The Biscuit Factory is Britain's biggest original art store with more than 3,250 square metres of exhibition space and two floors of artists' studios.

The current regeneration programme, under the guidance of the Ouseburn Advisory Committee, will expand the area's strengths. There are already 300 businesses based in the area, which Newcastle City Council aims to increase to at least 400 by 2010. Companies looking to relocate will be spoilt for choice, with plenty of units of different sizes, at various stages of completion.

Project North East has just finished the first four units at its 500 square metre Woods Pottery development and is preparing to submit a planning application for a further 1,600 square metres of small to medium sized business accommodation at Woods Pottery South.

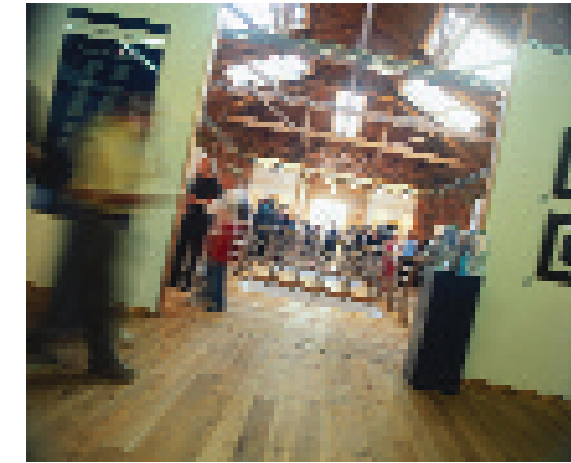
Meanwhile, Priority Sites (a joint venture between English Partnerships and Royal Bank of Scotland) is about to apply for planning consent for its 2,800 square metre commercial scheme at Upper Steenberg's Yard offering long lease and freehold units between 186 square metres and 370 square metres. "We have already received strong enquiries from potential occupiers," says senior development manager, David Codling, who points out the "significant regeneration potential" that Ouseburn holds. Priority Sites hopes to begin construction this autumn with completion expected in September 2007.

Recently purchased by Gaba Properties, 7-17 Lime Street is destined to become an office/commercial development, while AWG Developments has approval for over 9,000 square metres of office space at East Quayside. It will include an additional 1,500 square metres of leisure space and 61 apartments.

Ouseburn is also an up and coming residential location. Commenting on the investment potential offered by the valley David Leslie, consultant to property agent Sanderson Young, says: "People should remember what the Quayside used to be like compared with now. The same thing is happening in Ouseburn." Developers Metier and Howard Holdings have just completed the area's first major residential-led scheme at Lime Square. Most of the 104 one- and two-bed apartments, as well as three penthouses and four city houses, have already been sold at prices ranging from £149,950 to £399,950. Lime Square also has a

right:
the biscuit factory
and lime square

below:
seven stories, the centre
for children's books



below:
map of ouseburn valley and
art by paul harvey at the biscuit factory

400 square metre flexible office building available for let or purchase. Metier recently gained permission for 112 residential units at Tyne Square (formerly the Ice Factory).

Meanwhile, developer Harrison has started construction of 107 one- and two-bed apartments and three-bed maisonettes on the former Porters site on St Lawrence Road. The homes, all of which have been sold already, should be welcoming residents next spring.

A new waterside community is being created and although the Lower Ouseburn Valley is already a regeneration success story, the area's transformation is far from complete. Over the coming years, a stream of new schemes will add to the transformation (see below). And with Ouseburn falling within a Bridging NewcastleGateshead Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area, development will focus on more innovative, sustainable schemes with a proportion of affordable units and family housing.

Coming soon . . .

Byker Buildings site – 0.264 hectares

Submissions were invited for a residential scheme encompassing 10 to 12 family homes with a 150-year ground lease on this site, neighbouring the Ouseburn Valley, by March 31st. Earlier this year, Newcastle City Council planning officer Clair Battersby says there has been significant interest. More details to be released.

Lower Steenberg's site – 0.79 hectares

This Quayside site houses the former Maynards Toffee Factory and presents a mixed-use development opportunity. It was due to go to the market as *Renaissance* went to press.

Portland Road – 3 hectares

Metnor Properties has assembled this three hectare site at the northern gateway to the Lower Ouseburn Valley and will be bringing forward plans for an exciting retail, office and residential development in the next few months with Phase One due to start onsite later this year.

Already here . . .

PR company Karol Marketing has been based in the Ouseburn Valley since 1993 and invested in its own award winning premises six years ago. Among its clients are the Newcastle Great Park developers and Walker Riverside regeneration partner, Places for People. "When we chose to convert an old pub on Albion Row into a contemporary office building, most people thought I was crazy," says company founder Stefan Lepkowski. "But I believe if you are involved in regeneration and from a creative background it is good to demonstrate commitment with your actions." □

