

## Example of a Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme



**Scheme title:** Past2Present, Hull Old Town THI  
**Applicant:** Hull Cityventure Ltd  
**Grant awarded:** £1,000,000  
**Scheme length:** 5 years



**Burnett House – before and after**

### 1. Summary

Hull is a major seaport of considerable historic and architectural importance and the Old Town is designated as a conservation area with its intact medieval street pattern and a variety of Grade II, II\* and I listed buildings from the Medieval, Stuart, Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian periods. Until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the area now called the Old Town was the walled City of Hull. It is characterised by a mixture of merchant houses and warehouses, along with later offices and shops, reflecting 700 years of commerce, shipping, law, religion, retail and residence.

The Old Town area of Hull has for decades suffered neglect and underinvestment as a result of both local and widespread economic conditions. This began during the post-war period, with the decline of the traditional industries such as fishing, shipping, and the associated professional services which had previously thrived in and dominated the area. The Old Town area consequently suffers from a fragile economy and low rental levels. The THI scheme has taken place in the context of a range of regeneration initiatives which have the ultimate long-term aim of enabling the property market in the Old Town to become self supporting by increasing investor confidence.

### 2. The aims of the scheme

The THI area comprises most of the central/eastern part and the central, western and northern part of the Old Town conservation area. The main aims of the scheme focus on:

- building repairs;
- reinstatement of architectural detail;
- bringing vacant historic floor space into use;
- infilling gap sites in key frontages; and
- public realm works.

### **3. Main works**

Examples include two major projects to restore vacant derelict buildings at 52 High Street and Burnett House, repairs at Jazz Café Bar (including, roof repair, render to gable end and stonework repairs), extensive streetscape refurbishment in the area around Silver Street and Land of Green Ginger (using granite setts and traditional Yorkstone pavements) and 3 Dock Office Row (reinstatement of Georgian door surround).

The scheme is ongoing. The Old Custom House, a prominent Victorian Grade II listed building on Lowgate and 7 Land of Green Ginger, a Grade II listed Victorian building with a red brick façade and sandstone detailing above the door and windows are undergoing repairs to the stonework. Future projects will involve several Grade II listed Georgian townhouse properties along Parliament Street. Here the grant will help to support restoration to a high conservation standard and give the properties a new lease of life as offices.

### **4. Benefits for heritage**

- The THI has helped to tackle some high profile derelict buildings that had become eyesores within the historic townscape.
- By supporting repairs and reinstatement using quality craftsmanship and materials, the THI scheme is helping to reverse a legacy of low grade repairs.
- By supporting good design and appropriate materials within public realm projects, the THI scheme is helping to make strong links between historic buildings and their surrounding spaces.

### **5. Benefits for people**

- Together, the projects supported by the THI scheme have helped bring vitality to the area and have strengthened the attraction of the historic environment of the Old Town as a place to live, to work or to relax. For example, office workers can enjoy a midday break in the refurbished St Mary's Churchyard and visitors to the Museum Quarter can appreciate the sensitive extension to the listed Oriel Chambers, home of the new Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation.
- The THI scheme, in partnership with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Hull College, has provided a series of one day workshops giving local construction workers opportunities to learn about conservation techniques.

### **6. Lessons learnt**

- Projects take a lot of negotiation before they can move forward. Bringing all the key players together at an early stage can save numerous re-negotiations further down the line.
- Projects can come and go over the lifetime of a THI scheme. Keeping in occasional contact with projects, even those that seem to have withdrawn from the scheme, encouraged some of them to come back into the programme at a later date.
- It is important to keep a strong local network and profile both to encourage projects to reach the application stage and to identify new opportunities if projects withdraw from the programme. The Old Town THI scheme established a strong steering group made up of key representatives of the Old Town community to help achieve this.

### **7. Long-term benefits**

- As a result of the THI, the Old Town can boast a range of building restoration, building repair and public realm projects which demonstrate best conservation practice and which set a benchmark for future conservation-led development.

## 8. The THI common fund

Total THI common fund	£2,108,548
HLF grant	£1,000,000
Contributions from other funding partners	SRB 6: £800,148 Hull URC (Citybuild): £300,000 Hull City Council: £8,400

## 9. Contact

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