

# News

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## Work starts to transform South Shields town centre

The bold vision for South Shields town centre has reached a significant milestone as work starts on The Word, the town's new state of the art cultural venue.

The construction of The Word, the North East Centre for the Written Word, is the first stage in the redevelopment of South Shields town centre as part of Muse Developments' £100million 365 masterplan.

The Word will boast an impressive range of facilities including exhibition space, computer gaming area, design and innovation studio with 3D printers, digitised archives, meeting rooms, children's immersive storytelling area, OpenZone IT suite, café and a rooftop restaurant and terrace.

Councillor Iain Malcolm, Leader of South Tyneside Council, said: "The start on site for The Word marks over two years of hard work. Our bold vision will totally transform South Shields and the town centre offer.

"It is vital that we do all we can to attract jobs and opportunities for local people and The Word is the first part of that jigsaw with work on future phases already well underway."

This phase of the redevelopment will also see much needed improvements made to the adjoining Market Place and a new 40-space car park.

The redevelopment is being delivered by Muse Developments, one of the country's leading names in urban regeneration, in partnership with South Tyneside Council.

David Wells, Development Director at Muse Developments said: "We have made significant strides behind the scenes on the 365 masterplan, however getting the physical construction underway is the most significant milestone. "

"Following planning approval we have worked quickly to appoint Bowmer and Kirkland as main contractor, who we are confident will complete the high quality build project.

"The Word will be a superb facility and the first phase in the plans to re-invigorate South Shields. We will continue to work tirelessly on the ongoing regeneration of the town and future phases, creating a vibrant town and a year round leisure and retail destination."

The Word is set to be open to the public in late 2016 and will mark the completion of the first phase of the 365 masterplan.