

New Developments

Belfast is a positive thriving city and within the overall development there are several jewels that will build Belfast's base for future generations.

Victoria Square

The flagship Victoria Square development, Belfast's new retail hub opened in March 2008, the £320 million scheme is one of Europe's largest urban renewal projects and a milestone in the revitalization of Belfast city centre. This imaginative project, which includes 680,000 sq ft of retail floor space and 106 residential units, will create 3,000 temporary construction jobs, 3,000 permanent leisure and retail jobs, 5 acres of redevelopment and £100 million net additional retail turnover.

Victoria Square is planned out as a new urban neighbourhood. It incorporates 17 buildings with existing historic structures being refurbished. At the centre of the scheme is a new square and gardens. This central square is covered by an immense glass dome, with a viewing gallery from which the public can enjoy breathtaking views across the city. The completed dome is now part of the city centre skyline, an iconic symbol of Victoria Square.

The opening of Victoria Square in March this year has consolidated Belfast's position as the second largest retail centre in Ireland. Home to the largest House of Fraser in the UK and bringing some of Europe's top retail and leisure names to Northern Ireland for the first time, Victoria Square has significantly increased the attractiveness of Belfast for shoppers, particularly because the scheme has brought together Belfast's shopping district with its waterfront by providing a much needed link between the City Centre and Laganside. The transformation of the Lower Chichester Street link, in front of the High Court, has provided not just a much-needed facelift – with a landscaped pedestrianised area – but also signals the removal of the last security barriers in the city.

Laganside

Victoria Square builds on the successful regeneration that been achieved on the banks of the Lagan over the past fifteen years. The Laganside Corporation, which was wound up in 2007, rejuvenated the riverfront and the Cathedral Quarter, attracting over £1 billion private investment; building nearly 3 million sq. ft. of office accommodation, over 1 million sq. ft. of retail/leisure space and nearly 900 residential units; and creating

nearly 15,000 jobs. The Corporation also developed 39 acres of public space and 15,000 ft of walkways along the River Lagan and made major streetscape improvements in Cathedral Quarter.

The Waterfront Hall and The Odyssey are now well-established visitor attractions. Sites such as Belfast Gasworks, Lanyon Place, Clarendon Dock and Mays Meadow have been developed into thriving areas of economic activity, with a range of employability initiatives successfully encouraging local communities to take advantage of new job opportunities in this revitalised area.

St. Anne's Square and the development at Four Corners in Cathedral Quarter are underway. With the new OBEL Tower at Donegall Quay beginning to rise over the riverfront, new developments will soon move forward to complete Lanyon Place in 2008.

The North East Quarter

Since the onset of the peace process, commercial development market interest and demand, which had been pent-up for many years, is now being realised. Victoria Square and Laganside are just the first steps in a much longer journey. The North East Quarter ►



The redeveloped Laganside