

# PIONEERING

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## SPIRIT



*The marina, situated in Hull's Old Town*

**The brand seeks to communicate Hull's identity as a pioneering city, imbued with core qualities of discovery, leadership, innovation and creativity**

The city of Hull is undergoing a transformation. Founded on strong branding, Hull's regeneration programme covers all aspects of social, cultural and economic life. **Jon Pywell** and **Linda Scott** outline the reasoning behind the extensive range of measures being taken to inject new vitality into the city and explain why, collectively, they are succeeding.

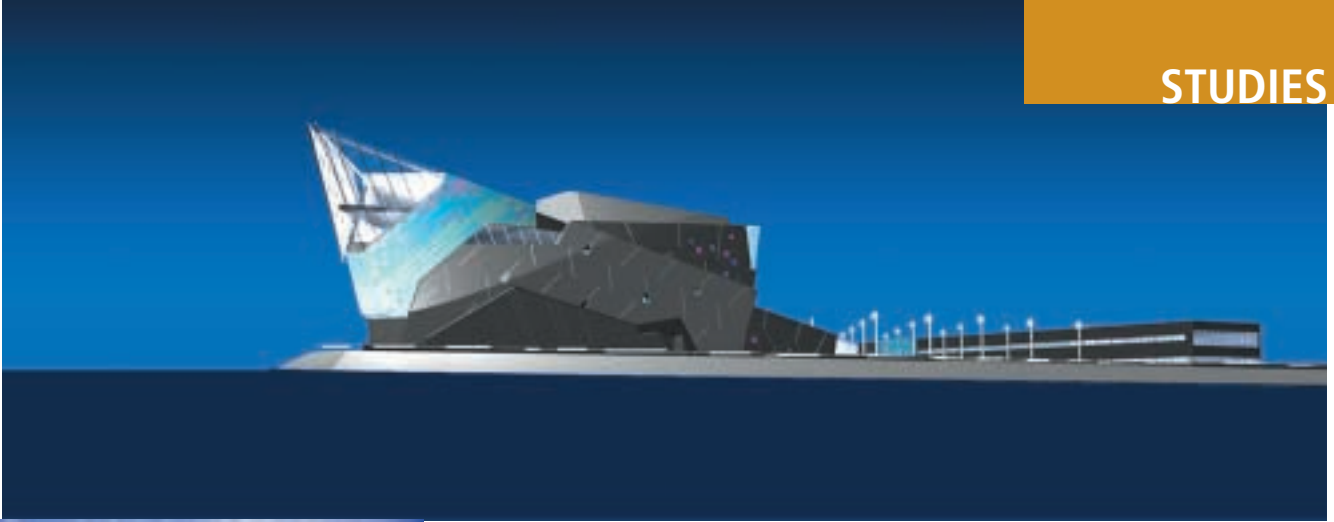
By 2010, Hull will be widely recognised as a top ten city, once again at the centre of maritime Europe and a major city destination for visitors and those wishing to invest in a city with a pioneering vision of its future. A bold statement perhaps, but one which is underpinned by a clear vision encompassed in a city regeneration strategy that has the support of local people, businesses, and many other agencies. Hull Cityvision, formed in 1995, is a public, private and voluntary partnership responsible for shaping the future of Hull. This pioneering effort, reflecting Hull's ambition to lead in urban regeneration, is having considerable impact on the city's tourism product and Hull as a destination.

### **Branding the city**

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A key decision to tackle Hull's image locally, nationally and internationally led to the formation of Cityimage, a private company operating within the context of Cityvision. Led by City Marketing Director John Till, the Cityimage team worked with international brand consultants Wolff Olins to develop a brand for the city. The branding process locked together the collective aims of physical, social and economic regeneration in order to create a new identity for the city. Tourism is seen as a crucial vehicle for transmitting the brand and its values to the international audience. The brand seeks to communicate Hull's identity as a pioneering city, imbued with core qualities of discovery, leadership, innovation and creativity.

The brand's core values resonate through leading-edge businesses such as Smith + Nephew and Seven Seas, through the challenges faced by famous



Computer model of The Deep, a £38 million attraction due to open in October 2001

**Situated at the confluence of the River Hull and the River Humber, the traditional heart of the city, The Deep will be a world ocean discovery centre**



The Princes Quay Shopping Centre, built over a former city centre dock in the early 1990s



A new pedestrian swing bridge will span the River Hull connecting visitors to the heart of the city's Old Town quarter Photograph courtesy of Michael Palframan

Hull names from history such as Amy Johnson and William Wilberforce, and through the creativity today of John Godber and The Beautiful South.

Visitors to Hull already experience a city with a proud heritage, which is celebrated both in the city's award-winning museums and galleries and in its historic contribution and achievements.

## Innovation and integration

In 1999, 6.8 million leisure and business visitors discovered the city. With its stunning marina and waterside, the city has a concentration of architecturally significant buildings in the historic Old Town contrasting with the modern Princes Quay Shopping Centre, built over a former city centre dock in the early 1990s. Combine this with attractive public spaces, parks and gardens, historic pubs and a growing café/bar culture, and Hull's offer as a city destination is clearly multidimensional. Hull Tourism, the tourism marketing and development team of Kingston upon Hull City Council, identified in its 1997 tourism strategy the need for major investment in a new visitor attraction that would be designed to build on and highlight the already significant tourism infrastructure centred around the historic Old Town. The strategy additionally

stated the need for supplementary regeneration of the transport network and associated facilities, and for the creation of further creative and cultural opportunities. The combination of these strategic targets illustrated the genuine will to promote Hull as a vibrant, modern, dynamic city to communities within Hull and beyond.

The physical appearance of Hull is changing rapidly, in dramatic and innovative ways. The major new attraction called for in the tourism strategy is now under construction. Situated at the confluence of the River Hull and the River Humber, the traditional heart of the city, The Deep will be a world ocean discovery centre. Due to open in October 2001, the £38 million attraction is housed in an iconic building designed by Terry Farrell & Partners, and incorporates a visitor attraction, research facility and business centre.

Designed as an underwater research station, the visitor attraction element of The Deep will include exhibitions on marine life, legends of the sea, and resources from the world's oceans, all set within an aquarium environment. It will offer an innovative and challenging learning opportunity within a radical, pioneering building. From January 2001, The Deep will provide specialist incubator units for marine-based SMEs, and a maritime research facility within its business centre.

To link the development with the city's main tourist route – the Seven Seas Fish Trail – a new pedestrian swing bridge will span the River Hull, bringing visitors to the heart of the historic Old Town and enabling them to explore the embryonic creative industries quarter, the expanding traditional museums quarter and the River Hull Corridor development.

## Improving infrastructure

Across the rest of the city centre, stunning buildings are to transform the landscape of Hull, including a £150 million state-of-the-art transport interchange and leisure facility adjacent to Paragon Railway station. This development, the St Stephen's project, has been designed by Sir Norman Foster and is being constructed by London & Amsterdam Developments Ltd. It will redevelop a 28-acre site, improving the image and substance of the transport infrastructure and the principal routes into the city centre.

The dominant feature of the project will be a dramatic 'floating sail' roof bridging the main public boulevard, a focus for a 24-hour leisure and cultural offer. This ambitious project will not only create a new leisure and retail quarter in the city centre, but will also provide a new home for one of the major creative forces at work in the city, the



Hull's new 25,000-seat Community Super Stadium will cost £43 million and include a range of facilities

## Everyone living in Hull has a vital role in promoting the city as a destination

Hull Tourism is spreading the word about the tourism product, its potential for the community, and the qualities and aspirations of the city by training over 500 Hull Tourism 'Ambassadors'. Our Ambassadors come from over 60 private, public and voluntary sector groups in the city as diverse as traffic wardens, hotel staff, taxi drivers and the award-winning Hull Navigators (city centre guides). All have direct contact on a daily basis with visitors to the city and all can convey their own civic pride in their day-to-day work.

Underlying this and other proactive partnerships such as the Hull Tourism Business Network is the simple message that everyone living in Hull has a vital role in promoting the city as a destination. Initiatives are currently taking place in schools to explain the future for the city and the impact on the community of the branding process.

## The regeneration effect

Regeneration is about every aspect of the life of a city and its people. The total investment in Hull's major regeneration programmes is in excess of £1 billion, which is being used to make vast improvements to sports and leisure facilities, to encourage tourism as a key growth sector, to upgrade education and transport infrastructure, and to attract serious inward investment. But not all the successes of a regeneration strategy are physically visible. Regeneration is also about renewing civic pride, active citizenship and a belief in what the future has to offer people.

The regeneration of Hull is flowing from the creation of the new Hull brand, which is being adopted and absorbed by all sectors of its community and by investors and visitors outside the city, as it becomes recognised once more as a pioneering destination. Its vision of becoming a top ten city is already beginning to look realistic thanks to the rapid development of tourism. Hull is being placed firmly in the mind of potential visitors as a dynamic destination, a city that is making dramatic changes. The message is clear: Hull is a city that, while retaining pride in its past, has set its eyes firmly on the future. A place to live, to invest in and to visit to capture the pioneering spirit.

**Jon Pywell** is Tourism Marketing Officer for Hull Tourism, and **Linda Scott** is Tourism Marketing and Development Manager for Hull Tourism.

internationally recognised Hull Truck Theatre. Under the creative directorship of John Godber, the company has become famed for its challenging explorations of equally challenging issues and situations through plays such as *Bouncers* and *Up 'n' Under*.

In addition to these two major capital projects, Hull is also planning a £43 million Community Super Stadium. This 25,000-seat venue will boast cutting-edge conference and corporate hospitality facilities, a multi-purpose indoor sports arena and extensive all-weather facilities.

Another development is also underway at Island Wharf. Here on the waterfront, at the entrance to the Albert Dock, a £48 million campus will be the new home for the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside.

Access to Hull is being upgraded through a number of initiatives. The route from the port is being redeveloped as part of a £50 million Highways Agency project to improve access to the city centre whilst also addressing the environmental and aesthetic aspects of the route through imaginative landscaping. This work coincides with the arrival of the world's largest 'superferries' in March 2001, operated by P&O North Sea Ferries from a new £10 million terminal on the riverfront.

To enhance visitors' experience as they travel into Hull from the west, leading-edge street lighting is being used to create a corridor of light. This unprecedented use of white light, incorporating new public art commissions, will highlight the Humber Bridge – celebrating its twenty-first birthday in 2002 – and key buildings and developments along the River Humber. One of these, the new ARCO building, is already a landmark, using innovative technology to light the entire structure with the same level of energy needed to run a two-bar electric fire.

Further creative use of street lighting is to be found within the city centre itself, along with street furniture and new signage, all of which combine

to transform the streetscape and add to the regenerative effect.

The creative industries quarter, centred around the historic High Street and River Hull Corridor, will offer support to the city's own design culture and encourage creative freedom. The relocation of Hull Time Based Arts and Quay Art, both with an international reputation for contemporary art, has acted as a regeneration catalyst for investment in this area.

Adjacent to the city centre, the lower River Hull Corridor is becoming a focus for investment. The regeneration of the fruit market area, the museums quarter and the creative industries quarter is stimulating private investment in the Old Town and beyond. The whole corridor is becoming a centre for learning.

## People power

Residents of all cities demand and deserve a decent standard of local facilities, a meaningful range of employment possibilities and a fulfilling lifestyle. In Hull, the regenerative action being carried out is aiming to deliver precisely these requirements. With learning at the core of redevelopment, basic skills will be improved and training will focus on sectors of the economy which have a potential for growth, such as tourism.

Entrepreneurship is being encouraged in the local economy, with lifelong learning and healthy lifestyle initiatives being developed alongside effective actions to combat crime and the causes of crime. Locally, communities are being encouraged to lead regeneration and take a more active part in city life.

Even where the implementation of comprehensive regeneration programmes is not currently possible, local residents are working with agencies in new ways to improve their localities. Residents are being encouraged to lead a change in culture. All these elements and the new sense of vibrancy and aspiration contribute to project a positive image.