

Heritage responds -  
**Taking positive action  
on climate change**

## Case study

# Restoration of Finsley Gate wharf, Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Burnley

Canal & River Trust

A £2.9 million restoration of the historic Burnley Canal wharf, which is set to bring major benefits to the former textile town. An important canal wharf and three Grade II listed buildings have been saved and given a new use and by doing so, the lifespan of the buildings has been extended and embodied carbon has been retained.

### Background

Finsley Gate Wharf is a former canal maintenance yard on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal in Burnley, Lancashire, dating from c 1801. It contains three listed buildings including workshops, a forge and the superintendent's house. The yard has been disused since 1995 and following the unauthorised removal of roofing materials the buildings had become derelict.

The 18-month project saw the restoration of the three buildings: the workshops have been converted to a bar and restaurant and function room; the house to a guest house; the former forge has been restored to working condition and a class/community room has been created.

The site has been restored by the Canal & River Trust with financial assistance from National Lottery Heritage Fund, European Regional Development Fund and Burnley Council. The site will be leased to a management company, Finsley Gate Wharf Ltd who will run the bar, restaurant, and guest house.

Adaptive reuse of the existing buildings and building materials reduces the embodied carbon compared with the alternative of demolition. Refurbishment can improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings by adding insulation and replacing old systems with more energy efficient ones- these additions can extend the lifespan of the building and so help avoid the embodied carbon needed to replace an old building with a new one.

Sympathetic adaptations, informed by assessment and understanding of heritage significance, can serve to return redundant historic buildings to good repair and beneficial use, thereby securing their longevity and future on-going maintenance,

As part of the project, we engaged the local community who will help run the community room, help with interpretation, and restore the house garden.

The bar and restaurant are now operating; the forge is complete and has hosted a guest blacksmith for several community events. Works to the house are nearing completion.

retaining the embodied carbon and improving energy efficiency, whilst conserving the unique heritage value of these buildings.

### What's next?

Creation of a new community heritage and learning hub, wildlife trail, cafe bar, restaurant, function room, guest house and garden. It is hoped that the project will lead to further regeneration in this part of Burnley. The project will also lead to further engagement between canal and the local community, benefiting all. Read more about the project here: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/finsley-gate-wharf-gives-major-boost-to-historic-textile-town](https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/finsley-gate-wharf-gives-major-boost-to-historic-textile-town)

Image:

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