

Evaluation Report  
Pioneering Species – Tynemouth Station Project  
September 2009



## Executive Summary

rednile Projects Ltd have delivered against all outcomes outlined in the original brief, as well as introducing further positive aspects to the project. This has provided Tynemouth Station, the local businesses, public, and participants of the engagement sessions, with a well considered, semi permanent public artwork, a month long floral installation, bringing the station back to its former glory and a series of engagement sessions exploring pinhole photography. This has all been delivered to a short deadline with a strict budget, which should be noted, was cut down significantly from the original proposal, which further enhances the quality rednile have brought to the project.

The engagement sessions were very well received, leaving a lasting legacy through the subject of pinhole photography. Both the allotment group and the fostering service have commented that they will continue to use pinhole photography; the allotment group through their own personal projects and the fostering service through integrating the subject matter in further projects with young people. Many of the young people involved have said they will be taking photography and/or art and design as a GCSE subject.

Further legacy to the project has been achieved through the visit to Moorbank Botanical Gardens at Newcastle University, where the young people engaged in a tour of flowers and plants relating to the Victorian era. This tour has now become part of a set programme that Moorbank offer to the public. Through the floral installation, the project was nominated for the In Bloom award which, although not won, is an extra positive of what this project has been able to achieve; rednile have also been nominated for the Arts and Business North Awards for Pioneering Species.

*Pioneering Species* has been very well received by local businesses, residents and partners, who were all kept involved with the project development through talking with rednile on site and through information and publications being hand delivered in the lead up to the launch event. The publications and invites to the launch were also handed out to the market stall holders at the stations weekend market.

Although these efforts were made, and to a certain extent achieved the aim of publicising the project, there was still a general consensus from the passing public that they were not aware of the projects origins and its links to the history of the station and upcoming regeneration programme. Although an interpretation panel was installed next to the work, further information on larger panels and information explaining how the project linked to the overall regeneration strategy for Tynemouth Station may have helped the general public's understanding and further enhanced their appreciation. Having said this, rednile's key objective within this artistic brief was the overall effect of bringing imagery and life to the station through introducing vibrant public artworks and not necessarily explaining the whole story. With the nature of the station being a site that is used by commuters, introducing the measures mentioned above may not have enticed people to read them.

This project is part of the larger project of regenerating the station and so in that respect has been extremely successful.

## Evaluation Brief

The brief for this evaluation was to report on the success of *Pioneering Species* based on quantitative data collected throughout the project and qualitative material gathered from partners, artists and participants. The success of the project has been based on the achievements of the project against the aims and outcomes set out at the beginning.

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### Project aims and outcomes

*Pioneering Species* was commissioned by North Tyneside Council and Tynemouth Station Working Group and created and coordinated by rednile Projects Ltd.

#### Outcomes

- 14 unattractive hoardings in Tynemouth station transformed into art work
- A high quality publication produced and distributed representing Tynemouth Station
- x amount of people employed (artists, writers, florist, scientist, designers, printers, technical)
- A high profile launch night
- Unique and innovative piece of contemporary public artwork in Tynemouth Station
- Engage children and young people in an interesting activity
- Develop their communication, team work, planning, confidence, aspirations.
- Encourage ownership and pride of artwork
- Encourage interest in local heritage and environment
- Encourage metro travel and tourism
- Assist in community cohesion and helping to achieve life long learning
- Creating a legacy
- Enhance creative activity within the station with links to the Sea Change bid



## Public Artwork

To understand this project fully and to give adequate credit to rednile Projects Ltd it is important to understand the origins of the project as explained below –

Hoardings were erected around the scaffolding that supports the columns within Tynemouth Station, as part of the planning towards renovating and regenerating the area. There is currently a bid into the national Sea Change programme therefore when *Pioneering Species* was being commissioned there was not a specific budget to develop projects. This being said it was felt that a project was needed to breathe some life into the station to start the regeneration process.

Discussions were held at the Tynemouth Station Working Group to establish ways in which a project could be developed. A case for commissioning a temporary public art project under tight budget constraints had to be made - varying degrees of understanding as to what could be done was apparent within the initial meetings. Many did not understand that this was an opportunity to develop a bespoke public art programme and not just to paint the hoardings in a generic design of sorts.

At this point rednile Projects Ltd were invited to undertake a period of research and development and present their proposals to the Working Group. rednile presented their case successfully using visual aids showing what could be achieved within the time frame. It is also worth noting that no money had been put forward at this point from the Working Group to develop a project but after rednile had presented their ideas, any scepticism within the group quickly dissolved. It should also be noted that rednile were very hands on in their approach to marketing, adding further value, by working with already established contacts to promote and develop the work.

The purpose of introducing the project in this way is to allow for understanding of the nature of the commissioning process, in that it was not straightforward and to emphasise the value for money that was achieved through the project, in comparison to the budget received.

*'Sometimes, expectations or hopes for a project will not quite work out; it won't go wrong, exactly, but will be lacking something. On other occasions, expectations are exceeded; not only is the outcome as good or better than hoped for, but the process to get there achieves more than expected or hoped for - in terms of community interest, public feedback, stakeholder engagement, artistic approach, etc. This was one of those projects.'*

**Mike Campbell, Arts and Creative Development Manager, North Tyneside Council**



*Pioneering Species* links art, heritage and science through the use of the Victorian influences of pin hole photography, botany and taxonomy of natural species. Rednile artists have used this as inspiration to create printed artworks that have transformed the 14 hoarding units in the Victorian designed Tynemouth Station and reintroduced a botanical aspect to the station for which it was once famous.

The dynamic designs combine imagery taken from the local environment and exotic species found during research visits to Edinburgh Royal Botanic gardens and Newcastle University's Moorbank gardens. This research ran parallel with engagement sessions with the Fostering Service, Local Allotment groups and keen gardeners from the area who worked with rednile and artist Sarah Bayliss to learn the time honoured art of pinhole photography.



## Hoardings and Floral Installation

After in depth research rednile decided to look at the history of the station and bring the station back to its former glory through the use of old and new technologies creating a more contemporary stance.

The public art piece and the floral installation work well because they are sympathetic to their surroundings and are sensitive to the history and sense of pride that the station has established over the years. The management of the project is a major factor in this as they built communications with businesses, groups, and communities that surround the station and to whom the public artwork would most affect. By creating these links and taking a sensitive approach to the subject matter, rednile were able to not only create a stunning central focus to the station but they have built up a new feeling of positivity and change that was not always apparent before.

*'Rednile brought people on board, secured co-operation and managed to enthuse people about the project – this was what was hoped for, and what the original brief and project outline stated, but it isn't necessarily the case that what is set out at the start of a project is what actually happens - so it is a big positive in this instance'*

**Mike Campbell, Arts and Creative Development Manager, North Tyneside Council**

The two public art pieces are both temporary in that the hoardings will be installed for a period of 12 months and the floral installation for one month. Although the floral installation was an added component to the project, in that it developed out of research and understanding of what the community wanted and not an initial idea of the artists, it somehow became just as important as the semi permanent work that was created for the hoardings. Many people felt that the installation should have been a more permanent feature and would have liked to have seen it developed throughout the station. This however was not possible due to budget and health and

safety constraints but more significantly, it was always only intended to be a time limited artwork of one month and so to extend this piece would have taken it away from its artistic origins.

rednile received fantastic support from North Tyneside Council's Clean Neighbourhoods service, through the free plants and flowers that were donated to the project as well as the work time of several employees to assist with the installation, which would not have been possible without them.

Having spoken to passengers using the metro on two separate mornings, the general consensus was that they liked the work and felt it brought a new freshness and lease of life to the station, which they found comforting. However, more could have been done to make people aware that the floral installation was a time limited aspect to the project and not as long standing as the hoardings. Most viewers were really interested when they found out the background to the piece and its links to the heritage of the station but were not aware of this beforehand.

*'The artwork brightens the station platform and creates a very welcoming atmosphere. The floral installation was a lovely idea and was appreciated by locals and visitors through feedback I have received'*

**Business owner, Tynemouth Station**

Many of the negative comments received were not so much about the artwork but the fact that nothing was being done about the infrastructure of the actual station. With this in mind it would have been useful for more links to have been made to the overall regeneration strategy of the station and the Sea Change programme. The general public were not aware that this temporary public artwork was actually the beginning of huge changes within the station.

A more strategic approach to the PR for the project between rednile and the council could have benefitted the project however, interpretation panels were situated within the station, each local business received a batch of publications to give out to the general public, local press were aware of and reported on the project and rednile promoted the project at the Mouth of the Tyne Festival prior to the event.

Although more could have been done to generate understanding with the general public, the support received from local businesses and Friends of Tynemouth Station have been extremely positive. Ylana First, Secretary, Friends of Tynemouth Station was involved in the development of the project from the beginning, helping to build links with Union Quay Artists who were working in residence within The Bridge and providing information on the history of the station. Ylana was extremely supportive towards the project and aided rednile throughout the whole development process, and promoting the project to a wider audience.

*'The whole project has gone really well and I have been very impressed with rednile and the way they work – they like experimenting but also link their contemporary practice with the history of a place – they are sensitive to their subjects'*

**Ylana First, Secretary, Friends of Tynemouth Station**

Union Quay Artists are an arts group based within North Tyneside who formerly occupied artist studios at the Fish Quay. They now work on collaborative projects, and during *Pioneering Species* were holding a work in progress style residency within The Bridge, during which time they responded to the public artwork installed by rednile. rednile built communications with the group and used cross publicity to promote both of their projects which allowed for both groups to benefit from each other's knowledge and networks.

*'The hoardings are fantastic, dramatic and create a big effect – huge space to make an impact on and they done this really well. It highlights a potentially great cultural space which is different to The Bridge space as this is personal.'*

**Claire Money, Union Quay Artist**

During the development process rednile initiated an additional creative link by working with poet Peter Mortimer to create a new piece of work inspired by the station and the up and coming

regeneration process. The new piece was performed by Peter Mortimer at the launch event creating a sense of finality to the installation of the artwork. Writer Juliana Mensah was also involved through documenting rednile's work creating an end result of an interpretation panel for the station to explain the work and its process and history.

By working with both poet and writer, rednile have been able to engage with artists from differing art forms, linking it into the overall project; a process that comes from rednile's understanding of the public art commissioning process and the importance of working with artists in order to create a project that delivers a whole package and not just what was initially set out in a brief.



## Engagement Sessions Fostering Service group

5 participants started the project and 3 participants completed the project,  
5 sessions, 10 hours engagement time

rednile worked with a group of young people looking at pinhole photography and its history, alongside using more modern day technologies such as the digital camera and Photoshop. By combining the two rednile were able to allow the young participants to see how technology has changed through the ages and how by using different processes and different techniques, inspiring artwork can be created. Through this project the young people were introduced to many new creative ideas and aspects for the first time, from the use of pinhole photography and Photoshop, working in an artist's studios to assisting with the mounting of an exhibition.

One of the most successful parts of the sessions was the visit to Moorbank Botanical Gardens during which they were taken on a tour of all the species which related to the Victorian era and allowed to use their pinhole cameras to take images of everything they found interesting

From feedback received from the young people, rednile and Jane Pickthall from the Fostering Service this was a very productive session and the young people were very interested in all the different kinds of plants and flowers. Jane Pickthall has commented that the Moorbank visit...

***'was good for them aspirationally, to go to a university and see that people actually study botany made it a lot more real. Having a professional photographer there was also really beneficial as they saw ways of creating a future from the artform they were practising'***

The initial sessions held looked at pinhole photography and how the young participants responded to the process in comparison to the ready to use digital cameras that are now widely used. They did find the long process of working with the pinhole cameras quite frustrating but were interested in the process and how an actual camera works.

rednile responded well to the young people and engaged them in sessions that lasted for up to two hours. Having spoken to Jane Pickthall from the Fostering service, she deems this to have been a great success as it can be very hard to keep their concentration for long periods at a time.

Due to budget constraints the project felt a little stunted and the young people would have benefitted from a longer programme to develop their ideas further, especially in terms of working with Photoshop which could have been developed further into different creative digital packages. They were however, very pleased with the outcome to the sessions, having an actual end product that they had created and wanted to take home.



*'It was always a good indicator when three of them [young participants] saw the project through to the end. One participant was travelling independently from Newcastle and all wanted to take their images home with them - all positive signs that they really enjoyed themselves'*

**Jane Pickthall, North Tyneside Fostering Service**

The young participants were able to keep the pinhole cameras they created and they also spent a morning at the NSA Studios in North Shields with rednile, mounting their work in preparation for the exhibition at the Health and Horticulture Show. This again allowed them to experience what it is like to have a career within the arts sector and to help them understand how projects come together.

The young people that were involved with the project are all considering photography and/or art and design as a GCSE option – a great way to introduce them to these subjects through this project.



### **Allotment group**

5 participants,  
6 sessions, 2-3 hours each

*'Best workshops I have ran in terms of engagement and enthusiasm from the participants'*

**Sarah Bayliss, workshop facilitator**

The 6 sessions with the allotment group worked extremely well and the process seemed to grow organically due to their enthusiasm and commitment. In each session they visited a different allotment or area that could be explored, looking at various flowers and plant life. The feedback from the participants was overwhelming with many of them choosing to commit to the project during their own personal time and developing many more reels of film than had first been anticipated.

*'I am definitely going to carry on using pinhole photography after this project; I enjoy using the Black and White Film the best. Introducing the tripods has been great as it really makes you think about how you position your shots. So intriguing, it's so basic and I love that.'*

**Annie, allotment group workshop participant**

The workshops were led by local artist Sarah Bayliss who commented that this project has not only been extremely beneficial to the participants but also to her own professional development.

*'This is the first time I have used Pinhole photography since school and would not have tried it again without this project – really enjoying myself.'*

**Mona, allotment group workshop participant**

The participants became very involved in the project and were very hands on when it came to ideas on how to exhibit the work at the Health and Horticulture Show and assisting with the floral installation. Sarah Bayliss and rednile worked well in engaging the participants in both groups but the dedication from the participants was also a major factor in the success of the outcomes.

Both groups were proud that they were able to showcase their finished work to the public and provided an opportunity to promote the project to a wider audience.

## **Health and Horticulture Show**

8 participants exhibited in the show, 680 visitors attended over 2 days

Photographs produced by the two engagement groups were showcased at the Health and Horticulture show at The Parks centre, North Shields in August 2009.

Mike Brannigan, Outdoor Facilities Development Officer and organiser of the Health and Horticulture Show, assisted with the initial call out for participants for the engagement sessions but through further discussions with rednile regarding the overall purpose of the project, offered to showcase the work as a small exhibition. This was another example of added value that rednile brought to the project through their communication with the local community.

This worked well at promoting the overall project to the public and making links between the two events really helped to establish more community support for both.

*'the two projects linked well together and provided the opportunity to cross promote both events, the display was very appropriate to the theme of the show and was visually stimulating'*  
**Mike Brannigan, Health and Horticulture Show**

Councillor Michael Huscroft, Chairman of North Tyneside Council, opened the show and introduced the project to audience members and the project was promoted live on BBC Radio Newcastle which allowed information to be disseminated to a wider audience.

Both groups were really interested and involved in the curation of this show, looking at ways to display their work and how it would appear in collaboration with the actual show. All but two participants (who had other commitments) came to see the exhibition and commented on how well it looked and how proud they felt of their work. The fact that one of the participants from the Fostering Service group came to the show and was so actively involved in the work shows the positive impact working with artists can have on young people. One of the participants submitted their photographs into the photography competition and won first prize which again shows the enthusiasm and real enjoyment that has been gained. It also shows real development of their skills that was able to occur during the sessions.

The Fostering Service group spent a morning at the NSA studios in North Shields working alongside rednile to mount the work and to look around the studios. They seemed to really enjoy this session and again it gave them an understanding as to how artists work and make a living. The work from the Fostering Service group is anticipated to go on display within the Council offices to show more people the positive impact and quality of artworks that have come out of this engagement project.

## Findings

From the general public that completed a feedback form –

- 92% liked the semi permanent artwork and floral installation
- 86% thought the artwork made an improvement to Tynemouth station, with the following comments being made:

*'has brightened the place up and adds character'*

*'brings back memories through the floral installations'*

*'more attractive,' 'improves look of station – adds class,' 'creates a focus point,' 'much cleaner looking'*

*'makes the station a more interesting place to be'*

- 78% thought the work linked well with the historic botanical aspect of the station
- 71% would like to see more permanent artwork by rednile Projects Ltd within the station
- 39% said that the new artwork would make them use the station more often.

Although this percentage is low, most people did comment that they would be interested in seeing the station brought back to its former glory and would definitely use the station more often for other purposes such as visiting local businesses, if not to commute from.

## Recommendations

This project has been highly successful creating a starting block for future projects to aid the progress of the regeneration of Tynemouth Station. Looking to the future, the following developments should be kept in mind –

Permanent public artwork should be considered to mark the beginning of the creative regeneration process and/ or a rolling temporary public art programme.

Information regarding artwork within the station should be more readily available and noticeable.

Contacts and communications built up throughout the projects cycle needs to be sustained in order to move forward.

Information regarding the future developments of Tynemouth Station needs to be disseminated through local residence, allowing them to feel they have a say in their local environment and will help to link up with projects developed in the future

Images created by the two engagement groups, as proposed by Mike Campbell, should be exhibited within the council offices – this is a good step forward in promoting the project as a whole and how public art engagement programmes are important in terms of public interest and their appreciation and pride towards their local environment.

The images should also be displayed, as proposed by Ylana First, within The Bridge Space, possibly alongside information on the current Sea Change bid and planned future developments of the station.

## Appendix I

### Comments

‘Great working with rednile as they are very supportive but from a distance so allows you to put your own stamp on the project’

**Sarah Bayliss, Workshop Facilitator**

‘Thank you for your email and really looking forward to the event. We will be there of course and bringing our own plants. If we can help with anything please let us know.’

**Eve Bowman, Porters Coffee House, Tynemouth Station**

‘Definitely going to carry on using pinhole photography after this project, introducing the tripods has been great as it really makes you think about how you position your shots. So intriguing, it’s so basic and I love that.’

**Annie, workshop participant**

‘The artwork has brought the station back to life but needs to be continued in some way. Definite feeling of loss now that floral installation has gone which shows we need to keep developing ideas and projects like this’

**Ylana First, Secretary Friends of Tynemouth Station**

‘rednile are a very professional group and are making a great impact on the art scene in North Tyneside.’

**Claire Money, Union Quay artist**

‘Would like to see more public artwork in the future in the station – good idea!’

**Member of public**

‘the floral installation has thoroughly brightened up the area, it will be sad to see it go’

**Graeme Towers, Towers Lee Hair Studio**

‘rednile were already an organisation we wanted to work with, but this project has confirmed that they have the potential to play a key role in the arts development programme in the next few years.’

**Mike Campbell, Arts and Creative Development Manager, North Tyneside Council**

‘Fascinating – absolutely amazed that there is all this technology around to assist with photography and you can use a plastic box and receive some really interesting results. Really looking forward to seeing the final results at the show.’

**Laura, workshop participant**



## Appendix II

### Partners

North Tyneside Council,  
Friends of Tynemouth Station,  
Nexus,  
Newcastle University,  
Tyne Metropolitan College,  
Union Quay artists,

Tynemouth Station Working Group,  
North Tyneside Council Fostering Service,  
Moorbank Botanical Gardens,  
Tynemouth Flower Club,  
Sponsors Club for Arts and Business,  
Station Developments Ltd

### **Tynemouth Station Working Group -**

Morris Muter, Chief Executive, Station Developments;

Bob Lawrence, Station Developments

Steve Bishop, Senior Manager, Arts, Tourism and Heritage, North Tyneside Council;

Francis Lowes, North Tyneside Council

Tracey Hives, Nexus

Bernard Garner, Nexus

Veronica Hubbard, North Tyneside Council

Paul Hanson, North Tyneside Council

David Farrington, English Heritage

Carol Pyrah, English Heritage

Alison Hesselberth, North Tyneside Council

Ken Wilson, North Tyneside Council

Rod Stevens, Nexus

Graham Sword, North Tyneside Council

Jan Bessell, Partner Equivalent - Chartered Planner, Dickinson Dee

Christine Spoor, Dickinson Dee

Tobyn Hughes, Nexus

Allen Lambert, Project Manager, Station Developments

## Appendix II

3000 printed publications leaflets printed with 4 limited edition designs to choose from

e-flyer sent out to mailing list of 2,000 + people, also sent out through Council's extensive mailing list

### Press Coverage

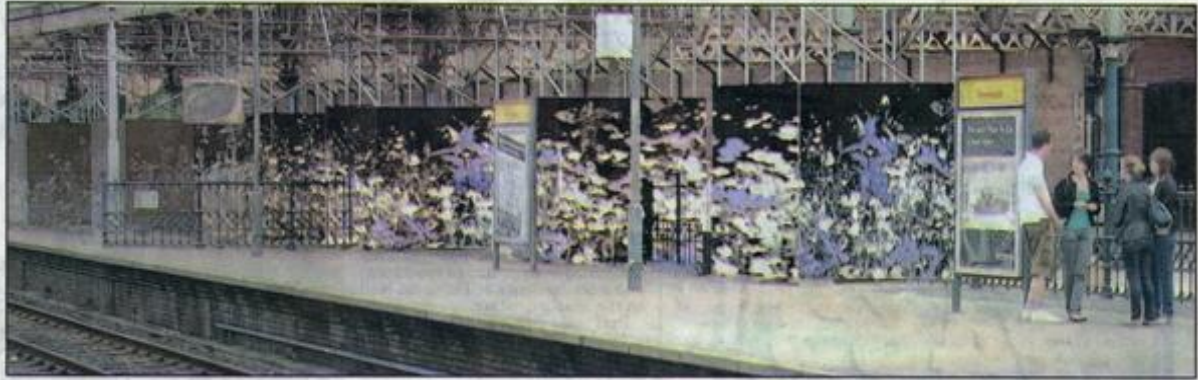
- BBC Radio Newcastle, promoted Pioneering Species live from the Health and Horticulture Show, 1.40pm Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> August

### Websites

- Locatorart, Pioneering Species, [www.locatorart.org/event\\_listing.php](http://www.locatorart.org/event_listing.php) (one page, plus image)
- Nexus, Bloom Time at Tynemouth Station, [www.nexus.org.uk/wps/wcm/connect/Nexus/Art+on+Transport/Art+news/Art+on+Transport+news+Bloom+time+at+Tynemouth+Station](http://www.nexus.org.uk/wps/wcm/connect/Nexus/Art+on+Transport/Art+news/Art+on+Transport+news+Bloom+time+at+Tynemouth+Station) (one page, plus image)
- Tynemouth Market, Pioneering Species, <http://www.tynemouthmarket.co.uk/about.html> (half page, with request for feedback)
- Entrepreneur, Blooming great - greener than ever; MASSIVE PLANTING OPERATION PAYS DIVIDENDS, [www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article](http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article) (one page)

### Newspapers

- Friends of Tynemouth Station Newsletter, March 2009 edition (391 word advert)
- North Tyneside Chronicle Extra, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009, Pg 7 (below)



COLOURFUL: How the hoardings will look, with botanical images generated by the Victorian art of pinhole photography

# Victorian art helps station to bloom

THE borough's unique Victorian railway station is set to blossom thanks to a community art project which will rely on the bygone use of pinhole photography.

Work began last year to make safe certain sections of historic Tynemouth station's unrestored glass canopy.

Now, 14 hoardings that surround the scaffolding will show botanical images generated by the Victorian art of pinhole photography.

North Tyneside-based rednile artists are behind the project, called Pioneering Species.

They were commissioned by the Tynemouth Station working group, which includes North Tyneside Council, Millhouse Developments, Nexus and English Heritage.

Funding has been provided

By ZOE BURN

by Arts & Business Sponsorship. The new hoardings are likely to be installed in mid-June.

In addition to creating the artwork for the hoardings, rednile artists are inviting local people to learn pinhole photography and produce their own artworks.

They plan to work with the council's fostering service, which is based in the station, the Friends of Tynemouth Station and allotment holders at nearby Mariners Lane.

The artworks produced will be showcased at North Tyneside Council's horticulture and health show in August at the Parks Sports Centre in North Shields.

North Tyneside Council and Millhouse Developments

jointly own Station Developments Limited, which in turn is the owner of Tynemouth Station.

Last month, it was announced that the station's revitalisation could benefit from up to £4m of Sea Change funding, through the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE).

Janine Goldworthy, of rednile artists, said: "This is a project that links art, heritage and science."

The Grade Two star listed Tynemouth Station has deteriorated structurally over the years and has been included on English Heritage's 'Heritage at risk' register.

The current work to make safe certain sections of the station's canopy was funded by Station Developments Limited and a grant from Tyne and Wear Partnership.