



# Bolam Coyne Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

**Completion** December 2011

**Project Type** Residential

**Client** Your Homes Newcastle

**Main Contractor** Wates Group Ltd

**Value** £2m

**Area** 825sqm

Byker was rebuilt in the 1970s to the designs of Ralph Erskine, with 2,000 houses and flats. Bolam Coyne is considered one of the most imaginative and remarkable developments within the Byker estate.

In the early 2000s, the development started to become socially problematic due to a complex arrangement of shared deck access to many of the units.

As a result, the site became derelict and was placed on the Historic England register of 'at risk' listed buildings, for almost a decade.

## Retrofit Strategy

The proposals for the revitalisation and refurbishment involved the reorganisation of the design to convert the existing apartments into 15 dwellings. The dwellings consist of a mix of two and three bedrooms each, for three and five persons.

**Retrofit Type**  
**Economic Regeneration**  
**Heritage**





Access desks were removed and the previously abused courtyard was reclaimed. This was redeveloped into an attractive garden space which has transformed the habitability of the area.

Deep retrofit works were carried out on the building envelope, which involved stripping back the existing building to its façades and timber superstructure.

The lightweight construction of the existing development allowed large amounts of materials to be separated and recycled.

The envelope was retrofitted with a significant uplift in both thermal and acoustic insulation. Air leakage was also drastically reduced.

The renovation is an excellent example of how a retrofit project can contribute to the regeneration of a local area and its community. The grade II\* listed estate had been left derelict for over a decade before the 2011 renovation gave it a new lease of life.

The new development provides safe and secure housing, whilst restoring the Byker heritage and reducing anti social behaviour in the area.



### Lessons Learnt

Early discussions with local residents and other stakeholders revealed a number of features of the original design which contributed to the complex becoming difficult to let. This information was critical to the success of the redesign.

For example, housing needs in the area had changed over time, leaving some of the original units too small with only one bedroom.

There was also a highly varied mixture of property types which led to different household structures living side by side.

Working within the building envelope and subdividing cross walls, the units were reconfigured to increase their size, each having their own front door and living space at ground level, with the remainder of the accommodation rising vertically through the building.