

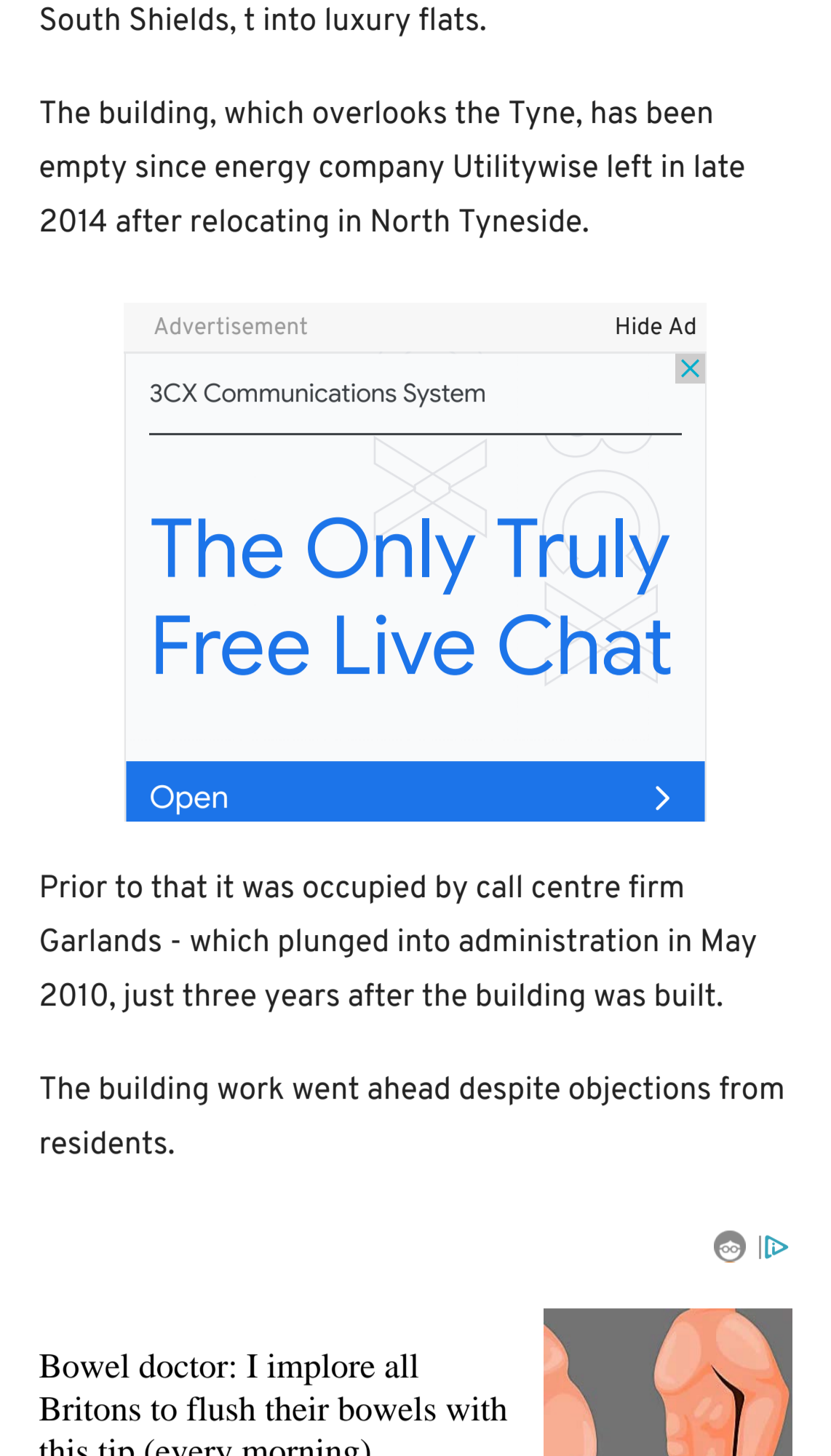
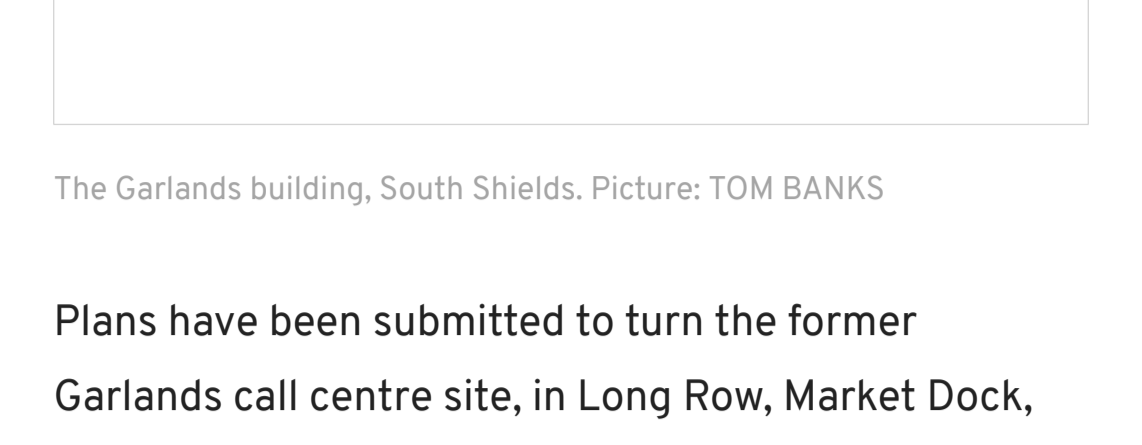
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**News**

**Plans to turn 'white elephant' call centre building into apartments**

A 'white elephant' building could soon be transformed into 43 riverside apartments.

**By The Newsroom**  
 3rd Feb 2017, 5:00am - 2 min read  
 Updated 3rd Feb 2017, 6:46am



The Garlands building, South Shields. Picture: TOM BANKS

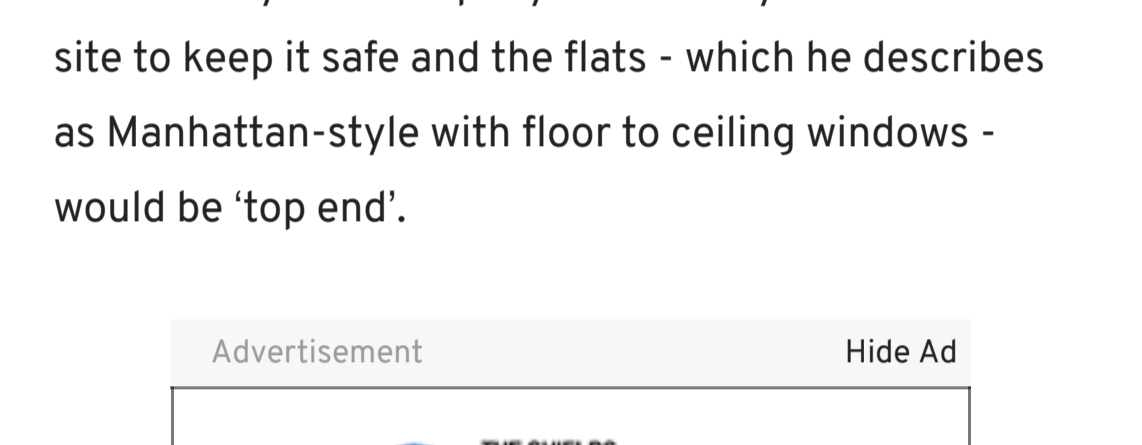
Plans have been submitted to turn the former Garlands call centre site, in Long Row, Market Dock, South Shields, into luxury flats.

The building, which overlooks the Tyne, has been empty since energy company Utilitywise left in late 2014 after relocating in North Tyneside.

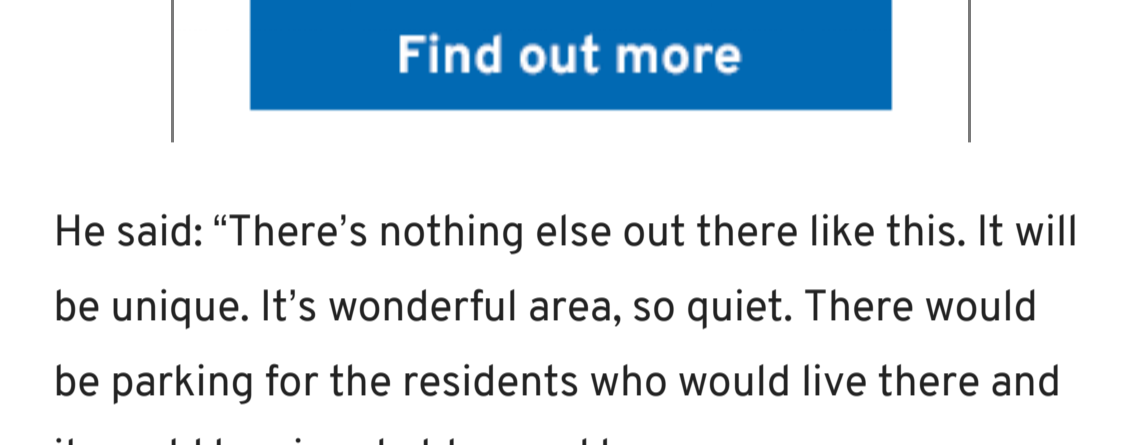
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Prior to that it was occupied by call centre firm Garlands - which plunged into administration in May 2010, just three years after the building was built.

The building work went ahead despite objections from residents.



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Developers Keywest Three, based in Maxwell Street, South Shields, hope to bring life back to the site after buying the building in December.

The company has now submitted their plans to South Tyneside Council asking for permission to change the property's intended use from offices into dwellings.

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Norman Fada, one of the company's directors, said: "For years this building has been a white elephant, with many people opposed to it and objecting to it being used by the companies.

"We bought it with the intention of turning it into residential properties because of its beautiful surroundings.

"I know many of the residents living nearby are pleased that something could finally be happening with the site as it has just been left."

Mr Fada says his company has already sealed off the site to keep it safe and the flats - which he describes as Manhattan-style with floor to ceiling windows - would be 'top end'.

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He said: "There's nothing else out there like this. It will be unique. It's wonderful area, so quiet. There would be parking for the residents who would live there and it would be aimed at top end buyers.

"It would be a secure site, with CCTV and a video entry system."

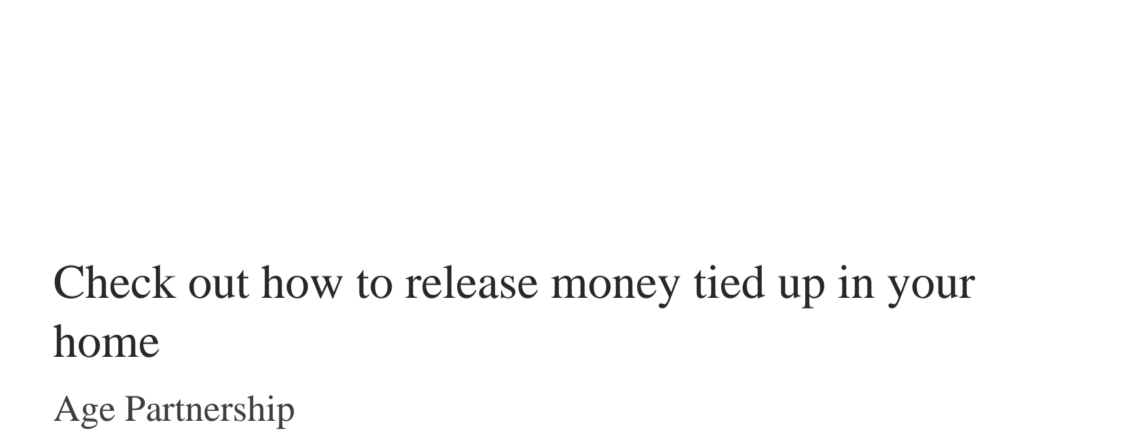
If the proposals are given the go-ahead by the council's planning department, Mr Fada says all the necessary changes and modifications would be carried out within two years.

He said: "It would realistically be a two-year development.

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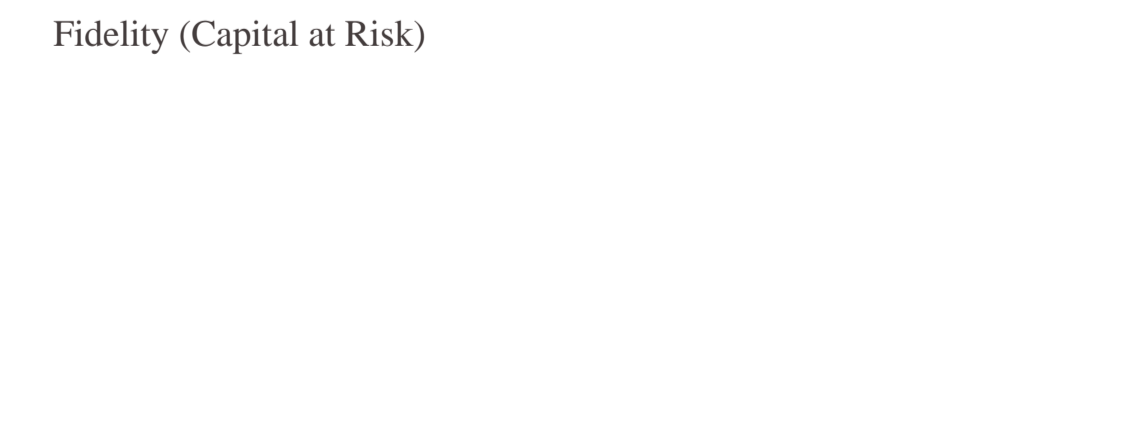
"We've already recently redeveloped Grosvenor House in Grosvenor Road, South Shields, and properties, opposite the Little Italy restaurant in Seaburn, both of these have been recommended for awards."

No date has been set for a planning decision.

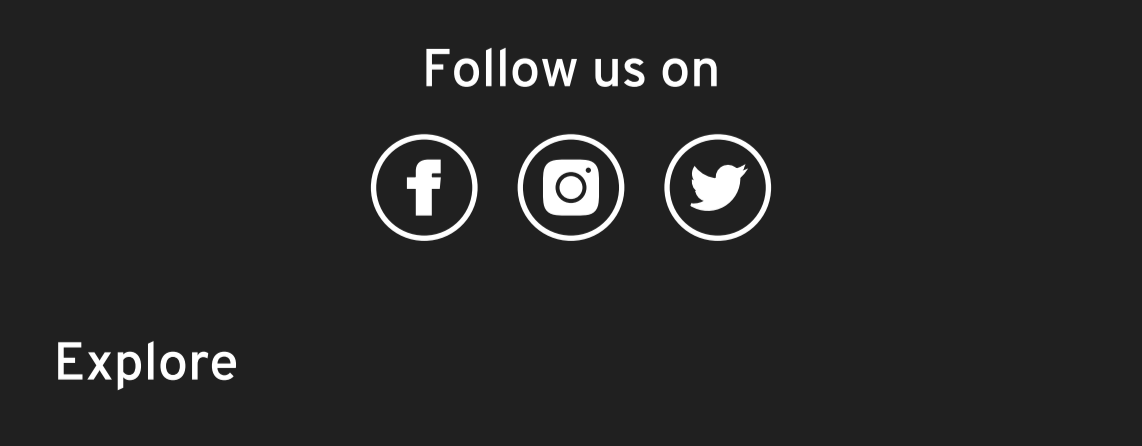
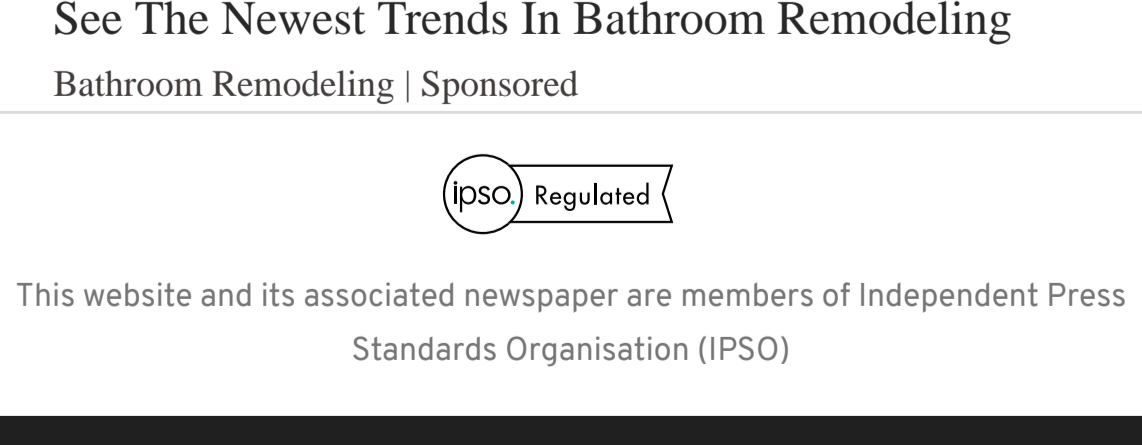


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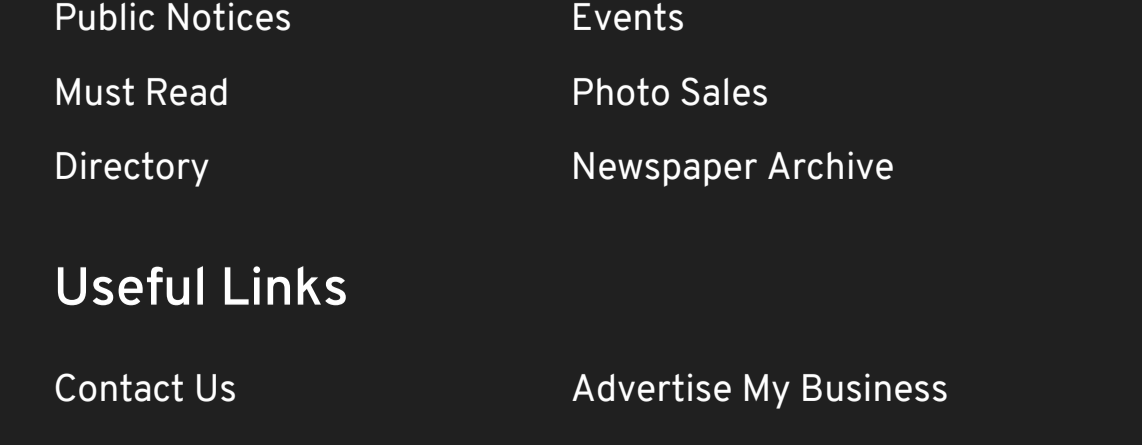
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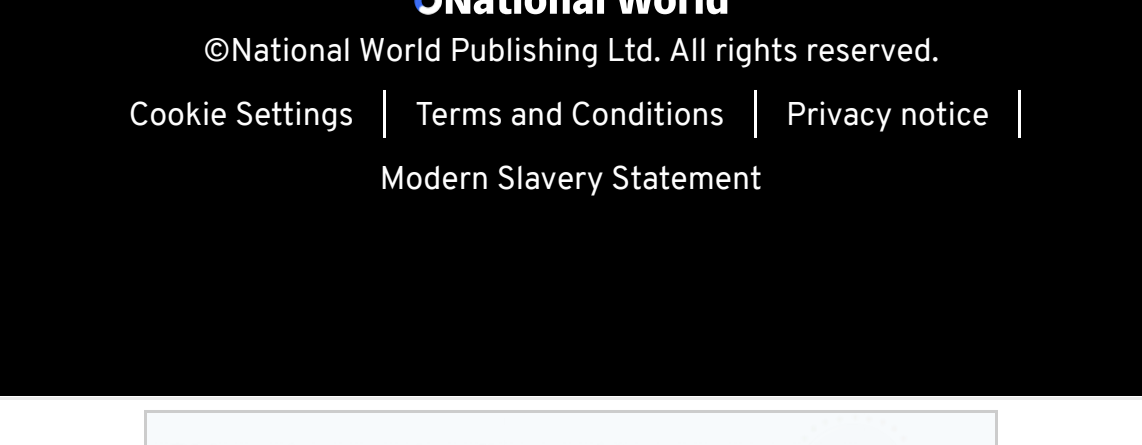
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