

MAD ABOUT CORK

QUAY POSITION – a fresh look for Kyril's Quay

This month we've begun our latest project – to bring some pride back to one of the most central quays in the city through urban gardening and street art.

Kyril's Quay, like other quays in Cork, looks as if it's turned its back on the river Lee. Despite the excellent views looking across the water up towards Sundays Well and the Shandon area, there is no reason for people to come here other than to use it to get to somewhere else. There really is little to nothing here. Two of the main features of the quay are the back of a closed-down shopping centre and the pale-grey hoarding around a large vacant site at the end of Cornmarket St which was once a timber yard.

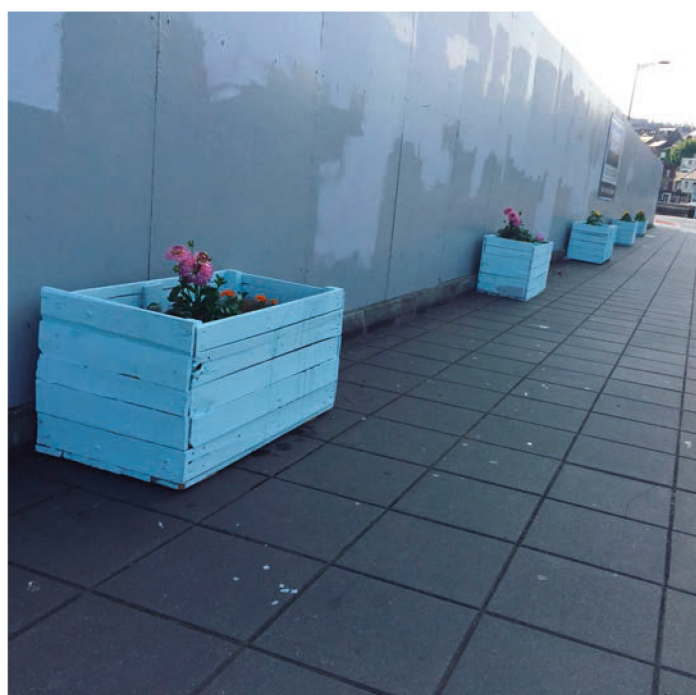
All around it are other areas that have seen improvement in recent years. Places like the Coal Quay, North Main St, and across the water at Pope's Quay, have all benefitted from efforts to improve the urban realm. While there is still room for improvement in these areas, Kyril's Quay has been left to decay and has become a place that Cork has forgotten about.

A brief history of the area shows its importance to the city. Excavations in 1992, carried out when the North Main St car park was built, uncovered well-preserved sections of the old city wall on the Kyril's Quay side. This defensive wall was originally constructed by the Normans in the 12th century and the walled area, in between the north and south channels of the Lee, eventually expanded into the city we know today.

Kyril's Quay has also played a big part in Cork's trade over the centuries with ships docking on this quay since the city was founded. It was even named after one of the city's 'merchant princes', Sir Richard Kyrle, who exported timber from his estate in Dromaneen near Mallow through the quay. It was also at Kyril's Quay that Tanora, a well-loved soft drink amongst the Cork faithful, first arrived in the city in the 1930s thanks to John Daly & Co, a merchant who operated on the quay.

To walk down Kyril's Quay today, however, is to see a decaying urban area that belies all of its rich history and culture. Given that it might take years to redevelop vacant sites on the quay, we plan to make an immediate impact on the area by adding lots of greenery and street art. We have already begun adding planter boxes around the former timber yard site, and also on Shandon Bridge, to bring some life to the area. We'll be adding street art in several places, too. The biggest piece will be a large scale, colourful design on the unsightly pale-grey hoardings that surround the timber yard.

By the end of this project, we hope to transform the area by giving it the Mad About Cork treatment and making it a place that people will want to stop and enjoy the plants, the art, and the beautiful views of the Lee.



Along with this project we'll also be working on lots of other urban gardening and street art projects in the coming months. Keep up to date with our work @MadAboutCork on Facebook, twitter and Instagram, and to get involved email info@madaboutcork.