

# Union Quay Bites

The new monthly newsletter from Union Quay Dental

JANUARY 2026



# Welcome to Union Quay Bites

Welcome to our January issue of Union Quay Bites.

In this issue, we're starting our two part focus on kids' dental health. Looking after children's teeth can feel like a minefield. There are sugary party snacks and treats on offer every weekend, and confusing advice on social media. To make it easier, we have been putting together the key pieces of advice for kids using 'Delivering better oral health' - the official government guidance on looking after teeth. This month we're focusing on brushing techniques.

In this edition you'll also meet our new Treatment Coordinator, Lauren, and find out where to get the best Valentine's bouquet in North Shields. We hope you enjoy our interview with Alex from Remembering the Past, the charity recording memories of life in our local area for future generations.

Enjoy!



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## In this edition

**P.3 Small teeth, smart habits**  
A parent's guide to keeping kids teeth healthy, starting with brushing

**P.5 What is a TCO?**  
Meet Lauren, our in-house treatment coordinator

**P.6 Business of the month**  
Muscaris has your Valentine's bouquet sorted

**P.7 Remembering the Past**  
The charity that's recording memories from our local area

**P.9 Smile Transformations**  
See some of the results from composite bonding



**P.10 What's happening?**  
Local events and practice news

# Small teeth, smart habits: A parent's guide to healthy teeth



## Did you know?

The most common reason for children needing a general anaesthetic in the UK is for tooth extraction due to tooth decay.

Over 19,000 children aged 5-9 in England were admitted to hospital for tooth extractions in 2023/24. That's 50% higher than the number admitted due to tonsillitis.

Most of us know that sugary foods aren't good for our teeth, but how does that bag of pick n mix really end up with a trip to the emergency dentist?

## What causes tooth decay?

Tooth decay begins when bacteria create a sticky layer called plaque on your teeth over time. Bacteria in the plaque feed on sugar, and when they do, they produce acids which wear away at the protective outer layer of the tooth, called enamel. As the enamel is eroded, little holes called cavities are formed. As the tooth decay gets worse, it can progress into the soft inner layers of the tooth and reach the nerves, which can cause infections and become very painful, leading to the tooth needing to be removed. Ouch!



## Don't panic...

There are simple steps you can take to keep your children's teeth and gums healthy. We've sorted through the big government guidance document to bring you the essentials.



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# Brushing guide for kids



Age 0-3	Age 3-6	Age 6-18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start brushing your baby's teeth as soon as they erupt</li> <li>Brush twice a day</li> <li>Brush last thing at night (or before bedtime) and on one other occasion</li> <li>Use a toothpaste containing at least 1,000ppm fluoride</li> <li>Use only a smear of toothpaste</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teeth should be brushed by a parent or carer. As the child gets older, a parent or carer should assist them to brush their own teeth.</li> <li>Brush at least twice a day, on all tooth surfaces.</li> <li>Brush last thing at night (or before bedtime) and on at least one other occasion.</li> <li>Use a toothpaste containing at least 1,000ppm fluoride</li> <li>Use a pea-sized amount of the toothpaste.</li> <li>Spit out after brushing rather than rinsing, to avoid diluting the fluoride concentration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brush teeth at least twice daily (with assistance from parent or carer if required) on all tooth surfaces.</li> <li>Brush last thing at night (or before bedtime) and on at least one other occasion</li> <li>Use toothpaste containing 1,350 to 1,500ppm fluoride</li> <li>Spit out after brushing rather than rinsing with water, to avoid diluting the fluoride concentration</li> </ul> 

## At all ages:

- Some evidence suggests **electric toothbrushes** are more effective, but manual toothbrushes are still very effective at removing plaque when used properly.
- Use **sugar-free** versions of **medicines** wherever possible.
- Fluoride** helps to prevent, control and stop tooth decay from developing further. For children with active tooth decay, your dentist may prescribe applying a fluoride varnish twice a year, or using a higher fluoride toothpaste suitable for their age.

Fact: 81% of 15 year olds in the UK brush their teeth twice a day



Next month we'll be focusing on eating habits for healthy teeth!

Book your appointment via our website or speak to reception on 0191 2596506.

# Meet the team

## Our new Treatment Coordinator Lauren talks us through how we plan your treatment

### **Tell us about the role of treatment coordinator and what you do here.**

Treatment Coordinator is a great role to have in the practice. Sometimes patients come in to see me because they dislike one particular thing about their smile, or have an issue where they need a bigger treatment plan. I go through all the treatment options, discussing solutions with them that they may not even know exist. I'm here to reassure them that, 9 times out of 10, there is something we can do to help them achieve what they're looking for. I use visual aids to help them get a better understanding of what the treatment may look like or what happens during the process. We also go through before and after photos so they can see results achieved from work we've done before. It's really, really nice to be involved in that process.

### **What is the timescale for a course of treatment?**

If you choose clear aligners or braces, some patients may need as little as 6 months, sometimes it takes up to 24 months, depending on what we are trying to achieve. If you're having a dental crown or a bridge, usually the process would be an initial appointment of about 2 hours, and then we would usually plan to fit the permanent solution a couple of weeks later.

At Union Quay Dental we have an on-site lab which is very handy, and makes for a quicker turnaround because crowns and veneers are all made by our own technicians. If something needs adjusting, it means that we can amend things really quickly. It does just eliminate that lengthy time frame and makes for a very personalised treatment.

### **Are there any treatments that are particularly popular at the moment?**

We have had a big influx of people wishing to straighten their teeth recently. Not just the younger generation, we've had a lot of older people finally fixing an issue that's been bothering them for a long time.

Composite bonding is really popular at the moment too, because it can help patients achieve a straight smile without fixed braces or liners. Edge bonding can help with fractures or chips, or we can do full bonding over the full tooth surface, which can change the colour and shape.

Book your appointment with Lauren via our [website](#) or speak to reception on 0191 2596506.



# Business of the Month

## MUSCARI

Innovative floral designer based at Harbour House, North Shields.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white and grey striped shirt, is smiling and arranging a bouquet of flowers. She is holding a pink calla lily and a red carnation. The bouquet also includes small red flowers and greenery. She is working on a white, textured surface.

Amy Richardson fell in love with weddings while planning her own back in 2013. She started hiring out styling props and decorations, and then turned her hand to floral displays. With a background in visual merchandising, she craved a change from her retail career, and while on maternity leave in 2015, Muscari Events was born. Amy has become known for the modern and imaginative twist she puts on all her bouquets and arrangements, with elegant dried florals alongside lush seasonal blooms and greenery.

A chance encounter led her to Harbour House. "Even when it was a building site, I knew I'd love to be in here as a florist," she says. "When I came back in after Christmas, as soon as I unpacked my first flower delivery I just felt so happy. Everyone in the building is so supportive and all champion each other's businesses."

With Valentines Day just around the corner, Amy has a stunning range of bouquets and arrangements available for pre-order, alongside ready-prepared selection in the shop. She also stocks an eclectic selection of candles, cards, home wares and gifts.

Muscari is located in Harbour House, 112 Little Bedford Street, North Shields. Open Weds - Sat 09:30-15:30  
Follow on Instagram [@muscari\\_hh](https://www.instagram.com/muscari_hh)

# Remembering the Past

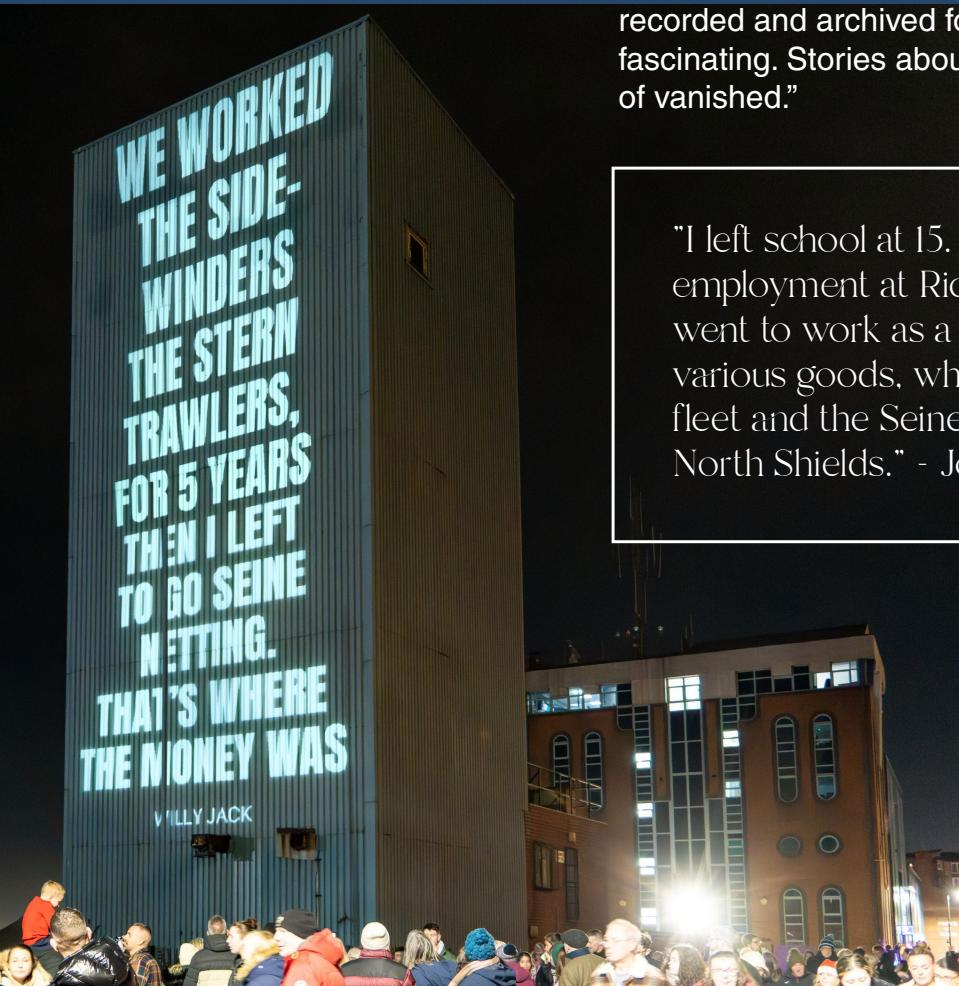


Alex Watson tells us about the charity recording memories of life in our local area for future generations.

For North Shields, the past year was a huge celebration of culture, recognising the heritage and history of the town. At the centre of the celebrations was Remembering the Past, a small charity based at the Linskill Centre in North Shields that encourages people to share their memories and experiences of life in North Tyneside. If you attended the North Shields 800 parade with its stunning light displays, you might have spotted some those memories, projected on to the striking backdrop of the Ice Factory.

Alex Watson, director of RTP, explains how the charity was formed. "It was actually a project that started at the library back in 1997, when the librarians realised that people were coming in purely to chat and reminisce about the past. They found that when they put out old photographs, it started a conversation, and that was the seed of our organisation. We began to realise that these conversations really needed to be recorded and archived for the future because they were so fascinating. Stories about life, and ways of life, which had sort of vanished."

"I left school at 15. My father sorted out the employment at Richard Irvin's on the Fish Quay so I went to work as a stores boy, taking coils of rope, various goods, whatever was needed for the trawler fleet and the Seine net fleet that were fishing from North Shields." - John Hastie



Right from the beginning, Remembering the Past has been a digital organisation, which Alex explains was a bit unusual in 1997, having a website and doing digital recordings. Continued...

The charity has a dedicated team of volunteers who go out interviewing participants, transcribing, doing sound edits and uploading. Alex says “We've got thousands of stories and images on our website, some going back to the turn of the 20th century.”

With the North Shields 800, the charity was able to look at using their stories in new and creative ways. For the North Shields Voices exhibition, they worked with photographer Hazel Plater to depict their interviewees in their favourite places and displayed those photographs in the Beacon Centre.

Alex says “We were also super proud to have worked with Jay Halim who's a projection artist. He took some of our stories relating to the Fish Quay, herring girls and fishermen that used to work there, and projected snippets of their stories onto the buildings. We've just been so pleased with the public reaction and really proud of that project because it brought that content to a new audience.”

One of their charitable objectives is to work with older people who might be at risk of loneliness or social isolation. “We're always looking for new volunteers to join the team, whether that's on a permanent basis or just trialling or giving a couple of hours.” Alex says. “We find that when you have a conversation with somebody about their life, it can help them see the value in it. The number of times that people have told me that they've done nothing in their life, or that they haven't got anything to tell me, and then we start talking and the everyday details of their life are interesting because that kind of lifestyle has completely vanished now.”

Alex has heard stories from Union Quay's very own Irvin Building. “It was the headquarters of the Richard Irvin fishing company, so we've got stories of the workers going in there to get their wages. They'd apparently give it to some of the fishermen in advance of a trip, and there's a really funny story in our archives about someone coming back and all they had left in the pay packet to give to their wife was about sixpence.”

We'll be delving into more stories from our local area and the Irvin building in Union Quay Bites over the coming months.

**If you're interested in volunteering or sharing your story with Remembering the Past, you can email Alex at [enquiry@rememberingthepast.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@rememberingthepast.co.uk). Check out the website [here](#).**



For more stories and events, follow Remembering the Past on Instagram [@rtpnorthyyneside](https://www.instagram.com/rtpnorthyyneside)



# Smile Transformation

## Real life results using composite bonding

Composite bonding uses a tooth-coloured resin to repair, reshape and improve the appearance of your teeth whilst keeping a natural look and feel. Benefits include:

- Zero drilling.
- Often requires no removal of the natural tooth structure.
- Fast and convenient: usually completed in one session.
- Protective: Creates a strong layer that protects the underlying tooth from further damage.

Works for:

- Chipped or cracked teeth
- Gaps between teeth
- Stains and discolouration
- Misshapen or small teeth
- Minor misalignment or crowding
- Worn-down front teeth

This patient saw an improvement in colour and texture, in addition to straighter and more even teeth.



Take your first step towards transforming your smile by booking a consultation with our Treatment Coordinator.

Call our reception team on 0191 2596506 or email [reception@unionquaydental.co.uk](mailto:reception@unionquaydental.co.uk)



# Practice news

Our practice refurbishment continues and the first of our upstairs treatment rooms is now complete. The original features have been restored beautifully by our building team, and integrated seamlessly with new cutting edge equipment. We're a little bit in love with the ceiling rose. The building work is on track to be complete in March.



## What's on?

WeGot Tickets

SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY. 6PM.

SYNTERGY HOUSE, LAWSON ST, NORTH SHIELDS.

RED.

Check out these local events in February

### Valentine's Chocolate Decorating

Join Jennie 'The Cookie Fairy' at The Linskell Centre for a relaxing evening of chocolate decorating and take home your own box of treats to enjoy.

Thurs 12th Feb 18:00. Tickets [here](#)

### Made with Love Artisan Market

Salt Market Social are offering 2 for 1 deal on entry to their Valentine's artisan night market.

15th Feb 2026 18:00 - 22:00. Tickets [here](#)

### Tommy Scott Duo

Remember the indie band Space? Front man Tommy Scott comes to RED North Shields. Sat 28th Feb 2026. Tickets [here](#)

### Seed Social Gardening Event

The Linskell Centre invites you to come and swap or buy seeds, potatoes and fruit bushes from local gardening enthusiasts.

Sat 28th Feb 10:00 - 14:00. £1 entry.

# Leave a review

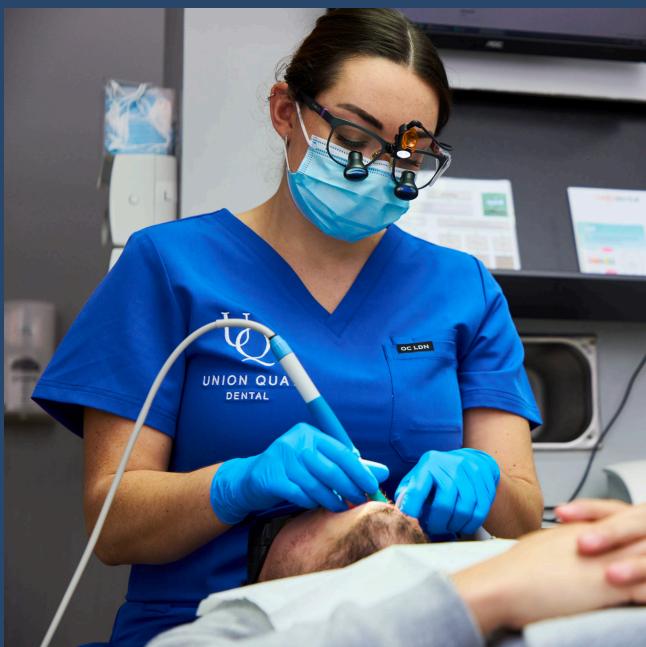


Thanks to all our patients who have left us 5 Star reviews over the last few months.

We are proud to be providing you with the highest level of care. We would love for you to leave us a review.

[Leave us a Google review.](#)

"I have had a great experience at this dental practice. The staff are very friendly and welcoming, and they make you feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. The dentist (Katherine) explained everything clearly and was very gentle and professional. The practice is clean and well-organised, and my appointments always start on time. The hygienist (Farah) was very thorough and professional. She gave me some very useful advice on oral hygiene. I really appreciated how Farah took the time to answer my questions. I would definitely recommend this practice to anyone looking for quality dental care." - Rachel W.



# Get in touch

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