

Union Quay Bites

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a building's exterior. The building features a mix of dark blue and orange panels. A prominent feature is a wooden door with a light-colored frame, set into an orange panel. To the right of the door, there is a window with a wooden frame, and a wooden fence is visible through it. The lighting suggests a bright day, with shadows cast across the building's surface.

The new monthly newsletter from Union Quay Dental

MAY 2026

This month:

Exclusive interview with local artist Anthony Downie

The truth about dangerous dental trends on social media

Dental implants special: Restoring smiles and confidence

Business of the Month: Perfect Housekeeping

Practice news: Our dentists train for an Ironman challenge

Welcome to Union Quay Bites

Welcome to the latest edition of Union Quay Bites. This issue is packed with inspiring stories from both inside and outside the practice.

We're delighted to feature an exclusive interview with local artist Anthony Downie. He shares the inspiration behind his unique style of painting as we unveil his commissioned artwork of the iconic Richard Irvin Building - home to our practice and a much-loved part of the local landscape.



We also take a closer look at some of the latest viral dental trends in our feature article, 'Don't believe the hype', exploring why social media "hacks" can sometimes do more harm than good.

Dental implants are another focus in this edition, including a powerful testimonial from David Thomas, who explains how treatment has restored not only his smile, but also his confidence and quality of life.

Elsewhere, we shine a spotlight on our valued Business of the Month, Perfect Housekeeping, whose hardworking team helps keep the practice looking its best every day.

Finally, don't miss our practice news section, where two of our dentists are taking on the enormous challenge of training for an Ironman triathlon.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Union Quay Bites.



UNION QUAY
DENTAL

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Business of the Month

Perfect Housekeeping

This month we're shining a light on our fabulous cleaners, who keep our practice spotless all year round.

Sandra Brodzik came to Newcastle 15 years ago. Originally from the north east of Poland, she studied English at Newcastle College and began to work for another cleaning firm whilst her son was little.

Sandra quickly found she got along well with her clients and was frequently being referred by word of mouth. In 2014 she decided to set up her own business, Perfect Housekeeping, and has never looked back.

She now has four members of staff cleaning homes and businesses across Newcastle and Tyneside. Sandra says "We always start a new client off with a deep clean to get everything beautiful and fresh, before moving to a weekly or fortnightly clean."

Looking for a trustworthy cleaner to keep your home fresh and sparkling? Why not give Sandra a call on 07803580800.



Couldn't recommended Sandra and her team enough. She is friendly, reliable, holds extremely high standards, and is responsive to messages. She has never once let me down, and she is also employed by some of my friends and family following my recommendation. I fully trust Sandra and her team with our home. She frequently goes the extra mile, to the point that I feel like an imposter in my own home. There's no better feeling than coming home after Sandra has worked her magic. If you're lucky enough to find availability with Sandra and her team, it's the best decision you'll make.

21:24

Sandra has cleaned my home for over 8 years, and her reliability, attention to detail, and the pride she takes in her work is truly second to none.

She is incredibly trustworthy, professional, and always goes above and beyond to make sure everything is finished to the highest standard. Walking into my home after Sandra has been is the best feeling – everything is spotless, fresh, and cared for so thoroughly.

Over the years she has become someone I completely rely on, and I honestly wouldn't trust anyone else with my home. Her standards never slip, and the consistency and care she puts into her work is hard to find. I couldn't recommend her highly enough – she is absolutely amazing at what she does.

20:03

Don't believe the hype



The internet is awash with quick-fix, 'affordable' dental solutions, but the reality is often disappointing, painful and even dangerous. From cut-price treatments abroad to DIY whitening kits and mail-order braces, many patients are discovering that when it comes to your smile, cheaper doesn't always mean better. Here's the lowdown...

Holiday nightmares

A brighter smile and a beach holiday rolled into one package may sound tempting, but "dental tourism" can come with serious risks. In a survey by the British Dental Association, 86% of UK dentists reported having treated patients who had encountered problems after having dental treatment abroad. Crowns and veneers are among the most common treatments people travel overseas for, often because they appear significantly cheaper than treatment in the UK. However, these procedures can be rushed, with little attention paid to long-term dental health. Some clinics even shave down perfectly healthy teeth into sharp pegs to fit crowns, causing long-term sensitivity or tooth death.

What patients often don't see in glossy online adverts is the lack of aftercare. Once you return home, any complications can become difficult and expensive to correct. In many cases, UK dentists are left trying to repair damage that could have been avoided with proper planning and professional oversight in the first place. A reputable dental practice will always take the time to carry out a thorough examination, discuss all treatment options, explain risks clearly and ensure a procedure is genuinely

suitable for you. High-quality dentistry is not about rushing to achieve a 'perfect' smile overnight, it's about protecting your long-term oral health while achieving natural, lasting results. Think twice before clicking on an advert promising a luxury holiday and a flawless smile. The problems may last far longer than the tan.

DIY Teeth Whitening Kits

Social media has fuelled a huge rise in DIY whitening products, with influencers promoting dramatic "before and after" transformations that can make professional treatment seem unnecessary. Unfortunately, many of these products are poorly regulated and potentially harmful, and transformation pictures may not even be genuine.

A Which? investigation found that 21 out of 36 (nearly 60%) home teeth-whitening kits tested from online marketplaces (Amazon, eBay, AliExpress, Wish) contained illegal, dangerous levels of hydrogen peroxide (bleach). This can lead to extreme tooth sensitivity, enamel erosion and even chemical burns. Ouch!

Teeth whitening is still one of the safest and most effective cosmetic dental treatments available, but only when carried out correctly by a professional. A reputable dental clinician will assess your teeth and gums beforehand, ensure whitening is appropriate for you, and tailor the treatment to achieve safe, natural-looking results.

Professional guidance also helps avoid unrealistic expectations and protects the long-term health of your enamel. When it comes to whitening, it's important to remember that "cheap" products bought online may end up costing far more in corrective dental work later on.

To book your consultation, call our reception team on 0191 2596506 or email reception@unionquaydental.co.uk

Straight teeth via mail order?

In recent years, dentists have also seen an increase in problems caused by at-home clear aligner kits, which promise straighter teeth without regular dental visits. While the convenience and lower price point may appeal to some people, moving teeth is a complex medical procedure that should never be done without proper supervision.

Many patients who have used mail-order aligners have experienced gum damage, bite problems, loose teeth and, in some severe cases, tooth loss caused by badly fitting trays or inappropriate treatment plans.

The General Dental Council (GDC), which regulates dental professionals in the UK, has stated that there is no effective substitute for an in-person clinical examination before orthodontic treatment. Teeth do not move in isolation, and healthy gums, bone levels, jaw alignment and overall oral health all need to be carefully assessed before any treatment is prescribed. Choosing a trusted dental practice means you benefit from expert monitoring throughout your treatment journey.

In short, if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. A bargain treatment today can quickly become a costly problem tomorrow. Your smile is an investment in your health, confidence and wellbeing, so it's worth choosing a dental practice that prioritises quality, safety and patient care above quick fixes. Experienced clinicians, personalised treatment plans, modern technology and ongoing aftercare all make a huge difference to both your results and your long-term oral health.

If you're considering a smile makeover, why not book a free consultation to discuss the options available? With tailored treatment solutions and flexible finance plans we can help you achieve your goals safely, comfortably and with confidence.

Artist in action

Union Quay Dental unveils commissioned painting of historic Irvin Building



As part of our major refurbishment project, we were thrilled when local artist Anthony Downie agreed to create a piece of his signature artwork especially for Union Quay Dental.

You might recognise the style - Anthony was recently one of the mural artists chosen to create a piece of wall art for the North Shields 800 Mural Trail. Featuring our historic Richard Irvin Building, the finished painting has been hung in our newly decorated entrance hall. We spoke to Anthony to learn more about the inspiration behind his work, and how he came to create the North Shields 800 mural in his distinctive signature style.

Anthony's creative career began when he studied photography at Newcastle College, where he got his foundation degree. He has always had an interest in street art and murals, working with Shatila Street Art in 2012 before moving to Brighton where he gained experience working in events. Moving back to the North East in 2017, he joined local art collective Nowt Special, working on set design for theatres such as Northern Stage and the Tyne Theatre. Continued...



He went on to paint the mural in July 2025, using masonry paint colour matched exactly to his canvas paintings. The mural was unveiled in a celebration with local choirs singing sea shanties and a speech by Anthony. Are the paintings always of specific street scenes in North Shields or made up? Anthony explains "You've got to have creative licence because some stuff in reality doesn't make a good painting. So I'll take a street scene and I'll add garage doors or remove garage doors. I might add doorways, remove chimneys, move windows. So it's real, but there's a sense of unreality to it, which I think adds to the whole thing. It gives it a slightly dreamlike edge, a misremembering."

He started painting in earnest in 2022. After about 10 initial paintings, he hit upon what is now his signature style - North East street scenes in sunny orange, yellow and blue hues. He explains the process "I started a painting of my back lane on a bright sunny day and the light was making all the shadows look kind of blue." He decided to do the whole painting in yellow and blue and was really pleased with how it looked. "I just realised nobody else really does paintings like that, so I carried on. Over time the colours have evolved to blue with an orange to yellow gradient."

Local people started to notice the paintings and he was surprised when they gained interest from outside the area too. "People told me it's universal because these kind of scenes are everywhere. They could literally be anywhere in the north, it's nostalgic for so many people."

In 2025 he was commissioned by Elevation Walls to paint one of the murals for North Shields 800 (Anthony's mural is located at the top of Trevor Terrace, opposite Scott and Wilson). How did he win the commission? He laughs "I was proper cheeky. I saw the Elevation Walls Instagram page had been created and I knew they were going to do some murals in North Shields so before they'd announced anything. I mocked up one of my paintings on it on a gable end in North Shields and sent it to them on Instagram with a winky face." It wasn't quite as easy as that to win the commission though. "They were like, oh, yeah, thanks for that, but we're not into the planning stages yet, but do get in touch when we're starting the artist selection process. So I did, and I got picked!"

Anthony works in acrylic paint, which he tells us was originally chosen because he has two young children at home and couldn't risk them putting their fingers on oil paints while they dried. He now works full-time on his own artwork and assists other artists with installing murals, thanks to his background in set design and joinery. He has exhibited at Republic Gallery in Blyth and his work is currently on display and available to purchase at The Biscuit Factory in Newcastle.

Anthony welcomes commissions like the one he has created for us here at Union Quay Dental. "It was important to us to support someone local and create something that felt connected to the area" Jamie Dury, our principal dentist says. We can't wait for you to see the artwork on your next visit to the dentist.

Check out Anthony's website:
www.adillustration.co.uk

Follow on Instagram:
[@anthonydownie.art](https://www.instagram.com/anthonydownie.art)



Smile Transformation



A sporting accident 4 decades ago left David Thomas with anxiety about his smile and problems with eating. He tells us how he transformed his smile and regained confidence with dental implants from the Union Quay Dental team.

"When I first came to see Jamie, I had a real problem with the front of my teeth. I had a sporting accident around about 40 years ago, so I'd always had some type of denture in my front teeth. Those caused me real problems to eat and obviously caused me quite a lot of anxiety with my smile as well."

"I was an extremely nervous patient. I'd always been nervous at the dentist ever since I was a young child, but Jamie and the team put me really at ease. The treatment plan we put together was to have three implants on the front of my mouth, and we've also done some further dental work to cover in the gaps in terms of my smile as well. It was really encouraging because we did it together as a team, I felt really looked after."

"On each of the subsequent appointments, it was almost like no nerves, which was really good. In terms of my smile now, I never stop smiling. It's fantastic. I'm really proud of my smile, really proud of the work that we've done as a team together."



BEFORE



AFTER

Focus on: Dental implants

Looking for a long-lasting and natural-looking solution to replace missing teeth?

Dental implants are small titanium posts that are carefully placed into the jawbone, where they act as artificial tooth roots. Once healed, a custom-made crown, bridge, or denture is attached to create a secure and realistic replacement tooth.

Restoring Confidence

Many people choose dental implants to transform their smile because missing or damaged teeth can affect confidence, speech, eating, and overall oral health.

A permanent solution

Unlike removable dentures, implants are fixed in place, allowing patients to smile, speak, and eat comfortably without worrying about movement or discomfort. They are designed to look, feel, and function like natural teeth, helping people regain both confidence and quality of life.

Durability + longevity

With proper care, dental implants can last for many years and are considered one of the most reliable tooth replacement options available. Implants also help preserve the jawbone by stimulating the bone in the same way as a natural tooth root, preventing the bone loss that often occurs after tooth loss. This can help maintain facial structure and prevent the “sunken” appearance that can develop over time.

Comfort + convenience

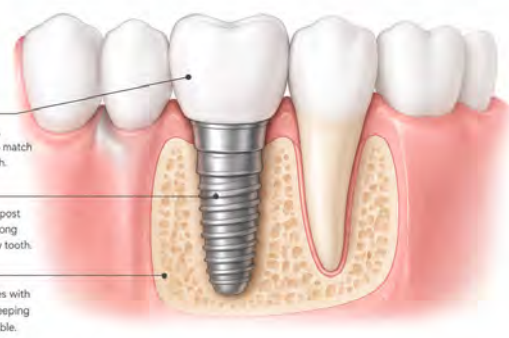
Dental implants are securely fixed, so there is no need for adhesives or removing them at night. They make everyday activities such as eating and speaking feel more natural compared to traditional dentures. In addition, implants do not rely on neighbouring teeth for support, meaning healthy surrounding teeth can remain untouched.

Take your first step towards transforming your smile by booking a consultation today.

Call our reception team on 0191 2596506 or email reception@unionquaydental.co.uk

How Dental Implants Fit into Your Mouth

A strong foundation for a natural-looking smile.



CROWN
The part you see. Custom-made to match your natural teeth.

IMPLANT
A small titanium post that acts as a strong root for your new tooth.

BONE
The implant fuses with your jawbone, keeping it secure and stable.

THE IMPLANT PROCESS

- 1 MISSING TOOTH**
A tooth is missing, leaving a gap in your smile.
- 2 IMPLANT PLACED**
The implant is gently placed into the jawbone.
- 3 HEALING TIME**
Over a few months, the implant fuses with the bone.
- 4 CROWN ATTACHED**
A connector is placed on the implant, and your custom crown is attached.
- 5 NATURAL RESULT**
A strong, natural-looking tooth that feels and functions like your own.

Dental implants are designed to look, feel and function like natural teeth—so you can smile, eat and speak with confidence.

Practice News

Ironman training underway for dentists Jamie and Kathryn

Union Quay dentists Jamie Dury and Kathryn Eccles are busy training for the gruelling Copenhagen Ironman event on 16th August.

An Ironman is an endurance triathlon event where participants complete a 2.4mile swim, followed by a 112mile bike ride, and finish with a 26.2mile (marathon distance) run.

Jamie and Kathryn have each previously completed half-ironman events but this will be the first full distance event for both of our dentists. Kathryn says "I enjoy the variety triathlon brings. My best discipline is swimming but I prefer training for the running and cycling, especially coming into summer. I rarely get bored of running up and down the coastline."

Jamie's favourite part of the event is running. He says "I've always liked running and of course that's the finishing part of the event!"



Kathryn says the hardest parts of training so far are time management and motivation. "Trying to fit in 10+ hours of training a week alongside work and maintaining a social life is a challenge!"

The weather has turned very warm for their long training sessions now, with Kathryn up to 87 miles on the bike and Jamie up to 13 miles on his long runs.

Asked how she feels about the upcoming event, Kathryn says "A mixture of excited and nervous. Mostly nervous as it's a huge undertaking, but excited for the sense of achievement and camaraderie surrounding the event."

Jamie and Kathryn will be fundraising for The Percy Hedley Foundation, which we will be focusing on in an upcoming edition of Union Quay Bites - watch this space!



What our patients are saying

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 you to leave us a review.

[Leave us a Google review.](#)



Jackson Finneran

2 reviews · 1 photo



a week ago **NEW**

I'd wanted composite bonding for a long time. Everyone always told me I already had good teeth — and I did — but I had gaps between my front six teeth that I'd never felt confident about.

From the moment I met Jess, she completely understood exactly what I wanted and made me feel comfortable throughout the whole process. The procedure itself was an absolute breeze, and Jess and Molly honestly smashed it out of the park.

I genuinely haven't stopped smiling since I left! The results are better than I could've imagined, and the new facilities are absolutely top notch too.

I would 100% recommend Union Quay Dental to anyone considering composite bonding or any dental work. Thank you again Jess and Molly!



Dawn French

4 reviews · 4 photos



5 days ago **NEW**

Had teeth cleaned today absolutely 🙌 best clean ive had thank you to Farah 😊



Sharlize Sowden

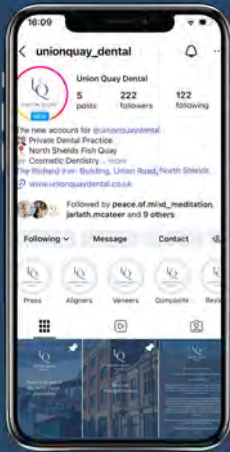
Local Guide · 57 reviews · 10 photos



a week ago **NEW**

I was recommended Union Quay by family after multiple uncomfortable dentist appointments at another dentists. Lauren on reception was very kind, and very quick at getting me booked in. Dentist Jarlath was fantastic, and made me feel comfortable even though I'm a very anxious patient. I've also seen hygienist, Elaine, who was one of the best hygienists I've encountered. She got rid of my staining and now I feel like I've got my smile back! She also made me feel very calm about my routine, which eased my anxiety. Everyone has been very caring. So far, my experience has been top quality and I would highly recommend Union Quay. Thank you all!

Are you following yet?



Our new Facebook page and Instagram are live!

Follow [@unionquay_dental](https://www.instagram.com/unionquay_dental) on Instagram for all new content and updates.

Get in touch

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