

NEWS RELEASE

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Five South Yorkshire neighbourhoods to be focus for Objective 1 European funding

Five new neighbourhoods have been designated as "Pioneer Communities" by the Objective 1 Programme and will be the focus of intensive support and investment to ensure that they can participate in, contribute to and benefit from the regeneration of South Yorkshire.

The designated communities, which will each receive around £300,000 of support, are:

- Wheatley in Doncaster
- Kimberworth Park in Rotherham
- Batemoor/Jordanthorpe in Sheffield
- Westfield in Sheffield
- Three areas in central Barnsley surrounding the town centre – around Eldon Road North, Doncaster Road and Dodworth Road.

The Pioneer Community Development initiative is part of the Community Economic Development strand of the Objective 1 Programme for South Yorkshire. Pioneer Communities will be helped to build local community infrastructure by empowering communities to develop themselves. They will receive intensive support and resources to identify issues of local concern and need, put in place resources and representative structures to enable the community to organise itself, act as a catalyst to encourage the development of partnership strategies and develop community leaders.

"Objective 1 is making significant investments in local communities to ensure that the benefits and opportunities created through this European money are as widely available as possible. Overall some £80 million from Europe is being pumped into our most deprived communities to help them help themselves," said Objective 1's Jackie Mould.

"These five new Pioneer communities will be supported to establish an effective neighbourhood partnership structure and helped to develop an integrated plan for the area to act as a catalyst for change," said Jackie. "They will receive funding to help strengthen community infrastructure and provide a community chest fund to let them support grassroots community-owned and managed activities and organisations."

The neighbourhoods were nominated by the Local Strategic Partnerships that are currently seeking and securing the match funding that is required in order to access these European funds.

Jackie Mould said: "We firmly believe that for community regeneration to succeed and be sustainable it should be led by the communities themselves. But that is only possible if the communities have the capacity, infrastructure and skills necessary to play their part to the full. Pioneer communities are characteristically those with little existing infrastructure or capacity so we are investing to help them build their ability to participate. Six other communities have been in the Pioneers initiative for around a

year and it is the progress and success of these six communities that has been instrumental in our decision to provide funding for five more.”

Existing Pioneers are the communities of Swinton and Valley in Rotherham, Worsborough and Darfield in Barnsley, Edlington and Dunscroft in Doncaster and Arbourthorne, Shirecliffe and Southey in Sheffield.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

The Objective 1 Programme in South Yorkshire is a £1.8 billion investment programme that draws on over £700 million from the European Union's Structural Funds that are provided to help Europe's poorest areas regenerate their economies and create jobs. South Yorkshire is one of those poorest areas with fewer businesses and fewer and less well-paid jobs than other European regions.

South Yorkshire was designated as an Objective 1 area, which is the highest category of European support, at the Berlin Summit in 1999 along with Merseyside, Cornwall and the Scillies and West Wales and the Valleys. The Objective 1 Programme in South Yorkshire was launched in July 2000 and runs until the end of 2006.

To date the Programme has committed £270 million of European money to more than 280 projects in South Yorkshire. Objective 1 funds are:

- supporting the development of new businesses,
- supporting firms to set up or relocate in South Yorkshire,
- helping businesses to innovate and grow,
- supporting the development of skills and training,
- supporting social enterprises,
- supporting the economic development of deprived communities in South Yorkshire
- helping to bring forward the development of sites and premises for increased economic activity
- and helping to tackle both financial and transport bottlenecks that constrain economic growth.

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