

# NEWS RELEASE

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## How to engage a man

How do you manage to get men interested? A question often asked in general terms, but difficult to answer when you are talking about male interest in retraining, education and non-traditional employment sectors.

Engaging men formed the main topic of discussion at a conference held today at Barnsley's Oakwell football ground. The agenda considered the decline in full time employment opportunities in traditional sectors and the negative effect this can have on men and their families.

Speakers at the conference included local champions Dearne Valley Dads, who have led the way in encouraging young Dads under the age of 25 to take a positive role in bringing up their children. Route 66 a Rotherham organisation spoke about their work with men who have basic skills needs, debt problems, substance abuse and homeless problems. Their programmes are designed to help unemployed people back to work, to help men into work for the first time or to support older men changing occupations

Patrick Moran speaking for the conference organisers Objective 1 said: "With the decline in full time employment, especially in the traditional industries, many men are unclear about their role in the world. Many older men have a image that is wedded to traditional forms of male employment, which now don't exist and for young men the role models of full employment in the traditional sectors are not there anymore. Objective 1 is looking to fund projects that can help men to build their confidence, to enable them to gain the training necessary to progress to paid employment in new and emerging sectors"

Cinnamon Bennett the Gender Manager for the Objective 1 Programme said, "The conference has been successful in articulating the issues facing men and I am sure we can work together to develop some innovative projects to address some of the problems. We have £10 million earmarked to address gender imbalances. Engaging men in learning, training and employment is one of the four strands that make up our gender initiative. We are looking for projects, which address male engagement. If you have a project which tackles some of these issues, please contact Toni Westerman on 01709 763649 for a registration of Interest form".

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.

To date the Programme has committed over £260 million of European money to over 260 projects in South Yorkshire. Objective 1 funds are supporting the development of new businesses, 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 inhibit economic growth.

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