

NEWS RELEASE

2 October 2003



PHOTOCALL

**Regeneration Minister, Yvette Cooper MP
Addresses European Commission Conference in Sheffield**

COMPETITIVE REGIONS

Shaping Best Practice

Cutlers Hall, Sheffield

Thursday 9th October

Yvette Cooper MP, Regeneration Minister will address over 150 delegates from European Union funded regeneration programmes, like South Yorkshire's Objective 1 Programme, at a conference in Sheffield. The conference is looking at how the EU can become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social inclusion.

The conference has been organised by the South Yorkshire Objective 1 Programme Directorate, the European Commission and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to allow funding programme professionals from across Europe to share their successes and learn best practice from each other.

You are invited to attend the conference to hear the Minister's address. The Minister is due to speak at the Cutler's Hall at 12:30?. The minister will be available for interview following her speech.

Please contact Richard Holmes on 01709 763618 or 07754 714784

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 over £395 million of European money to over 360 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.

Issued by

Richard Holmes
Communications Manager
Objective 1 Programme Directorate
Silkstone House
Pioneer Close
Wath Upon Dearne
ROTHERHAM S63 7JZ

Telephone: 01709 763618

Fax: 01709 763679

Email: richardholmes.goyh@go-regions.gov.uk