

# **South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme : Report to South Yorkshire authorities Sept/Oct 2002**

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## **1. Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to inform Members about the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme, and the progress being made on the South Yorkshire pathfinder.

We are seeking endorsement of the general approach set out in the report, and specifically:

- the programme of preparation work set out in appendix 2;
- the steering arrangements described in section 7;
- the programme of year 1 interventions set out in appendix 5.

## **2. Background**

South Yorkshire is one of nine national Housing Market Renewal pathfinders announced by the Deputy Prime Minister earlier this year. The pathfinder programme provides a framework for planning extensive housing market change in large areas of recognised housing market weakness, along with additional resources to support the process. The programme was developed in response to growing pressure from northern local authorities and housing providers, who were grappling with the problem of declining demand for housing. The programme is intended to address issues across all tenures.

The South Yorkshire pathfinder is the largest of the nine, covering 130,000 properties in north and east Sheffield, central Rotherham and the Dearne Valley. A 10-15 year programme will be required to achieve the kind of transformation needed in South Yorkshire. The first year to 18 months of the programme will concentrate on preparation work, including a detailed analysis of the housing market, and work to assess the impact of proposed interventions. This will culminate in the publication of a housing market renewal strategy for the whole of South Yorkshire, followed by a delivery plan for the pathfinder area.

The methods of delivering housing market renewal may include a range of familiar measures (such as environmental improvements, security measures, purchase and repair, clearance and re-development). Pathfinder status also provides the opportunity to test out new measures (such as Home-Swaps, equity stair-casing, home improvement loans).

### 3. Progress to date

Although the pathfinder is still in the early stages of its development, the partnership has already made rapid progress. So far we have:

- established initial steering arrangements;
- agreed a draft boundary for the intervention area with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister;
- agreed the structure of a co-ordinating team and started recruitment;
- agreed a programme of research and consultancy work for the first year of the programme;
- started initial discussions about the direction of the market renewal strategy for the sub region and the vision for the pathfinder; and
- identified opportunities for 'early wins', which we will be developing into a programme over the coming months.

Each of these is described in more detail in this report, but first it may be useful to reflect on the nature of the housing market in South Yorkshire and the issues the programme needs to address.

### 4. The housing market in South Yorkshire

South Yorkshire was selected because of the extent of housing market weakness in the sub region, based on a risk analysis developed by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Birmingham. The analysis was presented in a report launched earlier this year by the Regional Housing Forum and the Housing Corporation. The nature of the challenge in the South Yorkshire pathfinder can probably be summed up as follows:

- A local housing market in the **Dearne Valley** that has failed to keep pace with changes in the local economy. The economic base in the Dearne Valley has been significantly restructured and land reclamation work has greatly improved the quality of the environment. But the housing supply, developed around the needs of the collieries in the area, has changed very little since the 1950s. Those with reasonable incomes tend not to choose the Dearne as a place to live, despite the jobs being created in the area.
- **Rotherham's** industrial legacy has produced a fractured pattern of land use, particularly around the Don Valley. A number of housing settlements exist in very poor quality surroundings, close to unattractive industrial and commercial uses and disconnected from larger residential neighbourhoods. Dense areas of smaller terraced housing and monolithic inter-war council estates dominate the housing supply in the town. The growing BME

communities in parts of the district have helped to prevent more widespread abandonment, but there is now a need to understand the future housing options of these communities.

- In **Sheffield**, the contrast between the thriving south and west of the city and the struggling north and east has become increasingly evident over the last decade. The north and east is dominated by monolithic council estates and areas of dense pre-1919 terraced housing. Although values in the north and east of the city are now no longer falling in real terms, the gap in relation to the south and west of the city is continuing to widen. Average values in 2002 are 44% of those in south and west Sheffield, compared to 55% in 1995. The lack of aspirational housing in large parts of the city increasingly recognised as a hindrance to economic growth. The selective regeneration of the eastern inner city (e.g. the Manor, Norfolk Park) has shown that even the most unpromising areas can be re-integrated into the wider market, attracting residents from outside the immediate area, and even outside the city.

Areas of chronic low demand are evident across the whole of the pathfinder area, particularly in the social rented sector. And pockets of neighbourhood abandonment are also becoming apparent. Obviously one of the tasks of the pathfinder programme is to tackle these existing problems and prevent them spreading. But it would be a mistake to see the Housing Market Renewal Programme as entirely problem-driven. The programme presents a unique opportunity to affect the transformation needed to promote a successful sub-region and achieve the renaissance of our urban areas.

In this sense the programme links very clearly to the development of South Yorkshire's spatial strategy, and the emergence of unique roles for the four urban centres. The timing is fortuitous - an initial study commissioned by the South Yorkshire Forum will report in November/December, just as the detailed analysis to support the Housing Market Renewal strategy begins.

## **5. The intervention area**

The South Yorkshire partnership has now reached agreement with the ODPM about the boundary of the pathfinder intervention area.

The original boundary proposed by Office of the Deputy Prime Minister covered 125,000 properties in north Sheffield, Rotherham and the Dearne Valley. At the request of the partnership, some successful housing market areas have been removed from the pathfinder, and adjacent areas of housing market weakness added. This results in a slightly larger intervention area, but one with broadly the same focus as originally proposed – 'north Sheffield and its industrial hinterland'. A map of the intervention area is attached at appendix 1.

Not all areas of housing market weakness can be included in the boundary – the resources for the pathfinder programme are finite, and the ODPM has sought to agree a sensible limit on the area in which they can be used. Housing market renewal activity can, and will, continue to happen outside the boundary. Equally, many areas within the boundary will be unaffected by the programme. At the time of writing we do not know what resources will be available to support the programme. But there is already growing agreement within the partnership that whatever we get, it will need to be targeted towards key strategic zones, rather than being spread thinly across the whole pathfinder area.

The area encompassed by the housing market renewal strategy will be far wider than the intervention area, covering the whole of South Yorkshire. And to develop the strategy, we will need to understand the workings of the market for an even wider area (including e.g. parts of north Nottinghamshire, north Derbyshire and north Lincolnshire).

## 6. Strategic planning process

The partnership has agreed the strategic planning process summarised in the table below.

Phase	Key tasks to be completed	Target date
Phase one: Partnership and communication	Agreement of partnership structures and decision-making and liaison arrangements.  Agreement of partnership's vision.  Establishment of team.  Production of communication strategy.	Nov 2002
Phase two: Research and analysis	Completion of detailed sub-regional housing study, agreement of final report and recommendations.  Identification of areas requiring action plans.	May 2003
Phase three: Delivery of year one programmes	All year one capital modernisation funding spent or committed.	June 2003

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Key tasks to be completed</b>	<b>Target date</b>
Phase four: Development frameworks and delivery vehicles	Agreement of objectives for action plan areas.  Development of draft action plans.  Development of appropriate delivery vehicles and preliminary local partnership structures.	December 2003

An important task for the first year of the programme is to complete detailed research about the housing market in South Yorkshire and its relationship with the local economy. This work, which is being conducted by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Birmingham, will form the foundation for the development of the housing market renewal strategy. The timing of the study in relation to the South Yorkshire spatial study is could not be better. The spatial study is expected to conclude by November this year, just as the detailed data collection on the housing market study is beginning.

Alongside this core piece of research, a number of other pieces of planning and consultancy work have been proposed. Some are about particular issues (e.g. the planning implications of housing market renewal). Some are designed to keep the momentum going in areas where the need for housing market change has already been identified (e.g. pre-masterplanning work in Thurnscoe and Edlington) and others are intended to assess the impact of existing or proposed interventions on the local housing market (e.g. the Southey/Owlerton impact assessment).

The proposed research and consultancy programme is shown in appendix 2.

Ensuring alignment with other strategies (e.g. education, community safety, economic development) is essential to the success of the programme. This will need to happen at all levels – from neighbourhood level, right up to regional level, and possibly beyond. As part of the development of the housing market renewal strategy, we will need to identify the critical linkages, address any conflicting objectives, and exploit opportunities for complementary action.

## **7. Steering arrangements**

The South Yorkshire Housing and Regeneration Partnership (an existing partnership of the four South Yorkshire authorities) will steer the programme initially. The partnership will provide regular reports to, and seek feedback from, a range of other local forums, including the South Yorkshire Forum, the four

Local Strategic Partnerships, Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Assembly and a newly created Housing Market Renewal Member group (see appendix 3).

The intention is to move towards the creation of a Board to steer the programme in the longer term, which would include independent, commercial and public sector interests, including those outside the housing field. Officers are currently exploring the possible arrangements, and will present proposals for consideration by the four authorities later in the year.

Even when the Board is in place, all four authorities, through their cabinets, will still need to consider matters of strategic importance (such as the development of the housing market renewal strategy for South Yorkshire, and the delivery plan for the pathfinder area). Before these reports reach each Cabinet, there will be extensive consultation with a wide range of partners with an interest in Housing Market Renewal, including council leaders, and portfolio holders for Housing and Planning.

Until the Board is in place, we are asking for decisions on other matters to be delegated to the Executive Director in consultation with the portfolio holders for Housing and Environmental Services and Economic and Development Services. The scope of such decisions will include the content of the preparation programme, changes to the co-ordinating team, or minor changes to the partnership arrangements.

## **8. Establishment of staff team**

A staff team is being created to support the development of the strategy and subsequent delivery arrangements, which Sheffield has agreed to host. The core team will be based in the council's offices in Carbrook, which is relatively accessible from the rest of South Yorkshire. The staffing structure agreed is shown in appendix 4. Some of the posts have already been filled through secondments from the authorities. Others, including the Programme Director's post are being filled through open recruitment.

## **9. Agreeing a vision**

The housing market in South Yorkshire, and its relationship to the local economy, is quite complex. We are emerging from a major period of transition as a sub-region, and seeking a new identity and sense of purpose. In this context it is quite difficult to agree a meaningful vision for the sub-region's housing market. Just as the local economies in the sub-region need to develop distinctive identities and functions, so too do the sub-region's housing markets. And this is why the links to the spatial strategy, along with the work to develop a sound evidence base, are so important.

However, we now need to start discussing the future for housing in South Yorkshire in a more 'visionary' way. It is clear that collective ownership of the housing market renewal process relies on a sense that it can deliver real improvements for the sub-region, and the communities within it. The officers involved in the project have had some preliminary discussions about the vision for the pathfinder, and in the coming months we will be organising events for a range of other partners, including Members.

## 10. Early wins

The allocation from the ODPM for 2002/03 allows some scope for limited 'early wins' (see financial implications below).

A small programme has now been agreed by the SYHARP. Because of the need to deliver the programme quickly, it involves the acceleration or enhancement of a number of existing schemes as well as some small-scale new projects. The intention is create a deliverable programme, which provides learning opportunities for the strategy, as well as having a visible impact in areas needing urgent action. A summary of the programme is attached as appendix 4.

## Financial implications

Each pathfinder has been allocated £2.66m in **2002/03**. This is intended to be used primarily for set-up and planning costs.

The cost of set-up and planning in South Yorkshire is expected to be £920,000 in 2002/03, based on quite generous assumptions about the cost of IT and the development of Geographic Information Systems.

With a programme of early interventions totalling £1,259,000, this leaves £361,000 not yet committed. This amount is likely to increase as we refine the costings for IT and set-up.

The ODPM has given informal indications that it is acceptable to carry some money over into next financial year, as long as the spending is agreed before the year-end. A number of possibilities for using the remaining funding are already being considered, which include the collection of baseline data, and further physical interventions. We expect to agree the use of remaining funds early in the New Year.

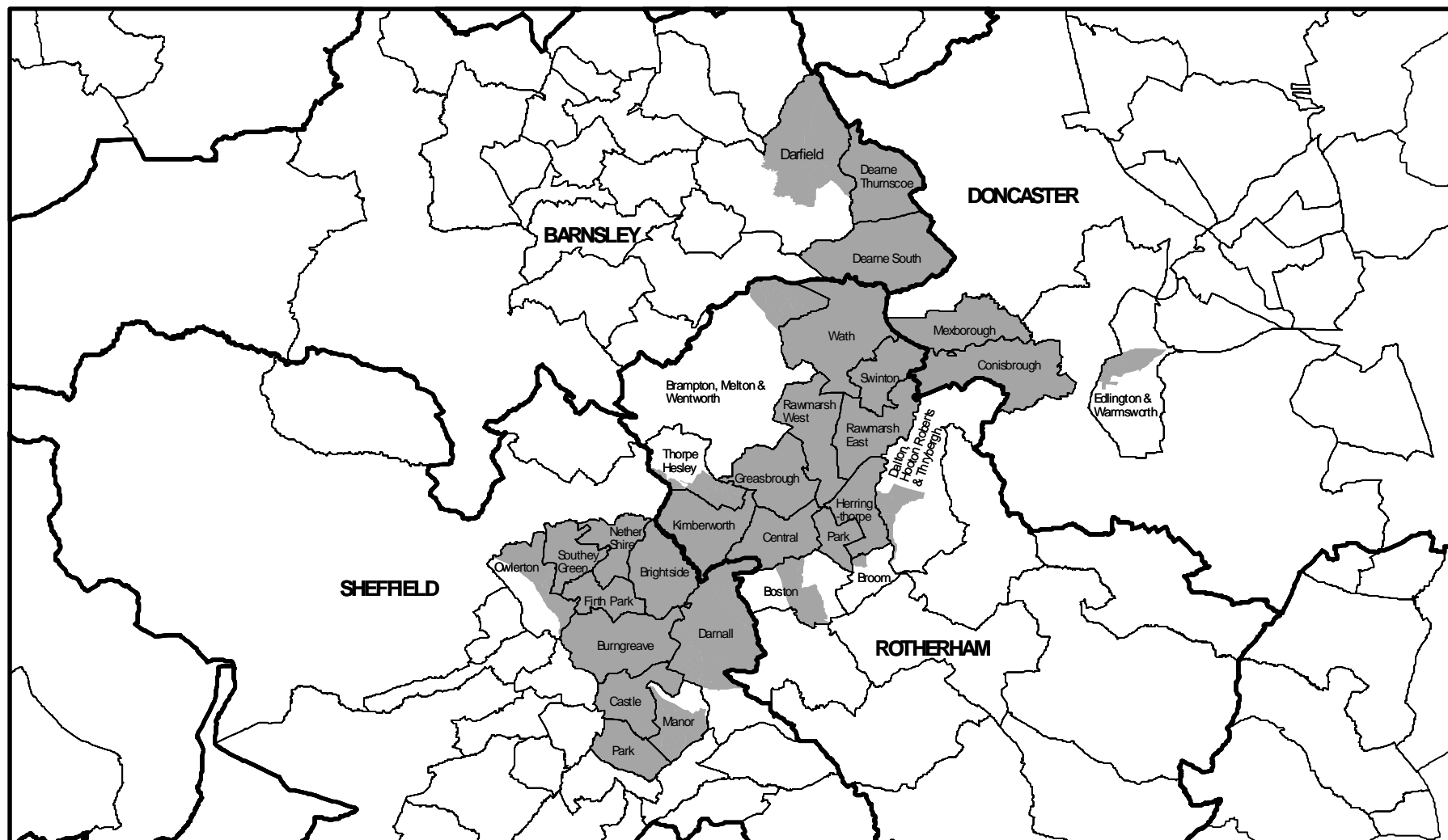
£'000

Co-ordinating team & recruitment (inc. on-costs)	250
IT costs, including Geographic Information System, separate server & web presence	250
Housing market analysis & linked consultancy	350
Publicity, information & stationery	30
Events & training	40
Additional mainstream activity linked to Housing Market Renewal (e.g. planning, research, property services)	120
Early wins	1,259
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 2,299
Uncommitted	361

An announcement is expected during October about the resources available nationally for the pathfinder programme from 2003/04 to 2006/07. We will not know how much will be available for South Yorkshire until our delivery plan has been agreed by the ODPM during the latter half of 2003/04.



## South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Area



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## Appendix 2: Initial research & consultancy work

PROJECT/ITEM	HMR	OTHER
<b>Research</b>		
Core CURS study	£84,150	
Optional new housing survey (maximum)	£35,325	
North Sheffield neighbourhood strategies preliminary Impact Assessment	£12,500	£12,500
Subtotal	£131,975	
<b>Planning &amp; design</b>		
Scoping of planning issues across pathfinder	£20,000	
North Sheffield masterplanning: Support for North Sheffield design panel	£6,667	£3,334 (CABE)
Delivery of development design briefs for existing sites	£40,000	£20,000 (NRF)
Preparation work for Housing Regeneration Company, Firvale	£60,000	
Edlington masterplanning	£30,000	to be identified
Thurnscoe East masterplanning	£30,000	to be identified
Design consultancy Lidgett Lane Thurnscoe	£20,000	
Subtotal	£116,667	£35,834
<b>Total</b>	<b>£328,642</b>	<b>£35,834</b>

### Description of projects

Core CURS Study	Builds on existing analysis of changing housing markets in Yorkshire and Humberside to develop a stronger and more detailed picture of the operation of the housing market at the sub-regional level, and within that, the pathfinder area. Will include a detailed analysis of areas at risk and their likely futures, and identify policy zones and opportunities for and barriers to change. Will also include thematic studies about BME groups, the nature of the private rented sector, links to employment, and
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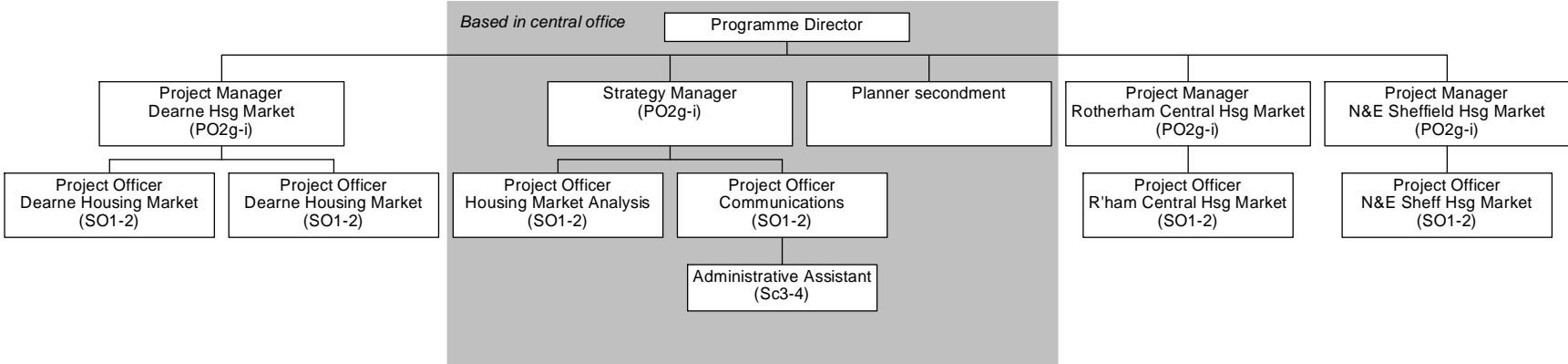
	issues related to affordability.
New housing survey	Focussing on housing history of residents of new private housing in Rotherham Barnsley and Doncaster. To assess potential for new developments to attract residents from outside the sub-region, in relation to risks of drawing residents from neighbouring areas of older housing.
North Sheffield Impact Assessment	A large area of housing market weakness, dominated by large council estates. The local regeneration partnership has developed five neighbourhood strategies, which it now wants to assess the social and economic impact of. A contribution by the pathfinder will enable a preliminary housing market assessment to be included, in partnership with CURS, paving the way for a more thorough assessment as part of the CURS study itself.
Scoping of planning issues across pathfinder	Initial work to scope the planning implications of the pathfinder programme, as proposed by SY Planning Officers' Group. To be commissioned and managed by a planner secondee.
North Sheffield masterplanning	Will enable the development of design briefs for the four existing sites in North Sheffield identified for redevelopment (3 of them stock reduction sites)  Will enable a design panel to be created, supported by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), to advise on urban design in north Sheffield, and develop skills within the community in dealing with design issues. The panel would meet monthly.
Preparation work for Housing Regeneration Company in Firvale	Consultancy to prepare a brief and manage the selection process for a Housing Regeneration Company in Firvale, an area of private sector housing in North East Sheffield with a very weak housing market.
Edlington Masterplanning Thurnscoe East masterplanning	These is two of the worst areas in the sub-region for housing abandonment. Selective demolition is already underway in both areas, but generally failing to keep pace with the problem. It is already clear that Edlington and Thurnscoe East will require development frameworks, and we are suggesting that work begins as soon as the CURS study is able to provide clarity about the sustainability of the housing and its relationship with the wider housing market. The costs identified would be

	for preliminary masterplanning work.
Design consultancy, Lidgett Lane Thurnsoce	The Lidgett Lane area has undergone selective clearance and redevelopment. More is planned, radically altering the street frontage on Lidgett Lane. A scheme is now required to tackle dereliction and enhance the design around the remaining (partially commercial) buildings.

### Appendix 3: Initial steering and consultation arrangements

Body	Role	Membership
National Pathfinder Working Group	Receives progress reports & reports on key issues emerging from the local programmes. Ensures engagement of national interests and co-ordination with national programmes. Agrees cross pathfinder policy issues.	ODPM, 1 representative from each pathfinder, Govt. Offices, Housing Corporation, CURS
South Yorkshire Forum, Regional Assembly & RDA	Endorse market renewal strategy. Receive reports on key regional issues emerging from the programme. Ensure co-ordination with other regional programmes.	Unchanged
Local Strategic Partnerships & LAs	Endorse market renewal strategy. Receive progress reports & reports on key district issues. Ensure engagement of district interests and co-ordination with district activities.	Unchanged
South Yorkshire HMR Member Group	Acts as sounding board on development of strategy and delivery plans. Ensures engagement of district interests and co-ordination with district activities.	Cabinet members with housing and planning portfolios from each authority
South Yorkshire Housing & Regeneration Partnership	Main body for SY Market Renewal Programme. Acts as Programme Board, receiving regular reports from the Market Renewal Group. Steers programme and ensures co-ordination with other sub-regional programmes.	Chief Housing & Planning Officers, GOYH & HC reps, RSL, lender and private developer reps, RA link officer, expert advisor
South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Group	Does the work - develops strategy & delivery plan, and communication & consultation programme. Commissions market analysis & outcome evaluation. Manages funding & monitors delivery. Makes recommendations to SYHARP.	4 HoS/ADs for Housing Strategy, 4 Planning Officers, HC & GOYH reps, RSL & house-builder interests
Area delivery partnership (new or existing)	Develops Area Development Framework. Delivers Area-based programme. Manages community engagement. Accountable to SY HMRF Group	To be agreed on an individual basis
HMR task groups	Time-limited 'task & finish' groups. Work with partners & interest groups to progress key issues where need identified (e.g. education, community safety, land use). Reports to Housing Market Renewal Group.	To be agreed on individual basis

# Appendix 4: Proposed team structure



## Appendix 5 : Year 1 programme of interventions

Scheme/Project	Funding from HMR
<p><b>Firvale and Edlington (Granby Road) target hardening</b> – targeted security to vacant properties and neighbouring properties in two areas of housing market weakness, where developing trust and support of community needed as we enter process of planning for change. Typical measures could include external lighting, alarms, locks, shrub clearance, gates. Estimated cost £500 per dwelling. Completion May 2003.</p>	£115,000
<p><b>Edlington clearance</b> – contribution to agreed clearance of Thompson/Dixon, to enable momentum to be maintained, and to avoid further vacants and dereliction emerging as a result of delays to the programme. Dependent on Edlington being included in the boundary. Completion May 2003.</p>	£300,000
<p><b>Norfolk Park owner-occupiers</b> – to enable owner-occupiers to be offered subsidised external repairs, as part of improvement of sustainable housing recently transferred to North British. Norfolk Park has undergone significant stock reduction (2,400 demolished out of 3,000). Will provide learning opportunities for HMR, particularly around take-up. Work will start October and continue into 2003/04</p>	£210,000
<p><b>Canklow.</b> Accelerated demolition of 28 vacant private sector terraced dwellings, and up to 50 council-owned dwellings. This will help prevent further vandalism of empty properties, enhance the environment for other residents and improve access to the adjacent neighbourhood centre.</p>	£358,000
<p><b>Thurnscoe – Lidgett lane.</b> Accelerated acquisition, demolition and environmental work in an area where some selective demolition has already taken place. Includes demolition of former coal-board housing, and acquisition of private sector commercial and residential properties. Thurnscoe is an area requiring major change on a relatively large scale. Acceleration will help the neighbourhood to move into a more positive phase of the planning process.</p>	£150,000

<p><b>Longley neighbourhood centre.</b> Final contribution towards phase 1 of the development of the 'Four Greens' at Longley shopping centre - £120,000 has already been found from other sources. Will enable progress on strategy to strengthen key local centres agreed as part of Southey &amp; Owlerton regeneration plan. Longley is regarded as a sustainable neighbourhood, within a large area undergoing significant change to address housing market weakness. Use of space proposed provides learning opportunities for the programme.</p>	<p>£30,000</p>
<p><b>Great Houghton show home</b> - Purchase and repair of three terraced properties currently owned by private landlords to encourage owner-occupation and improve the environment. Acquisition £20k, repair £12k per property. Will test success of targeted purchase and repair in small areas of market failure in otherwise popular areas</p>	<p>£96,000</p>
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<p><b>1,259,000</b></p>