

Case Study 011	from www.communityplanning.net
<i>Theme</i>	Rural regeneration through masterplanning
<i>Project Title</i>	Upper Calder Valley Renaissance
<i>Location</i>	Upper Calder Valley, West Yorkshire, UK
<i>Project leader</i>	Yorkshire Forward, Regional Development Agency



Impressive project for regenerating an entire valley using a variety of community planning methods. More than 2,000 individuals and many organisations and businesses had their say in how to create a new, sustainable future. The outcome is a long term Vision which may take 20, 30 or even 50 years to deliver.

Context

- The Upper Calder Valley lies in the Pennine mountains of West Yorkshire between the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District and between the cities of Leeds and Manchester. It has five principle settlements - Walsden, Todmorden, Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge - with a combined population of approximately 36,000.
- A centre for weaving since the middle ages, the Valley was transformed in the 18th century with the arrival of industrial processes and a canal followed by a railway. But the second half of the twentieth century saw a decline in the textile industry and most of the textile mills in the Valley closed. There was a rapid decline in population as people left to find work elsewhere; in Todmorden for example, the population halved.
- By the end of the twentieth century some of the Valley towns were beginning to regenerate as economic growth in Leeds and Manchester increased demand for new homes in the area. But this was not true throughout the Valley where hill farms were declining and town centres suffering from neglect and a failing local economy.
- In 2002, the Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward, launched a Renaissance Market Towns (RMT) programme to make rural towns more sustainable; to make the region's 'rural capitals' places where people want and are able to live, work, invest and visit. The aim was to conduct a comprehensive programme of community involvement in each of the selected towns to develop a vision. Following this, 'Town Teams' would be formed in each town to continue to drive the process forward, each team comprising (mainly) local people with an interest in creating and delivering a vision for the renaissance of their town over the next 25 years.
- The Upper Calder Valley was selected as the first of Yorkshire Forwards' RMT projects.
- Consultants for the project were selected from Yorkshire Forward's Rural Renaissance Panel which includes leading UK practitioners in the fields of masterplanning, urban design, traffic and transportation, economic development, marketing, information technology, landscape, housing, art and culture, tourism and rural affairs.
- The local authority, Calderdale Council, has been a full partner in the initiative throughout.
- The Upper Calder Valley Renaissance project brought people from the five settlements of the Calder Valley together to create a joint physical, social and economic long term Vision for regeneration of the Valley.

Process

Year Month Activity

2002	Dec	Appointment of consultant team	John Thompson & Partners appointed as lead consultants
2003	Jan	Project launch	Upper Calder Valley earmarked as the first project in a 'Renaissance Market Town' initiative by the regional development agency, Yorkshire Forward)
2003	Feb/ Mar	Communications programme	Valley wide 'animation' programme of outreach workshops and meetings with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ schools ○ traders and local businesses ○ community groups ○ farmers ○ politicians ○ local interest groups ○ key public sector organisations ○ property owners
2003	Mar	Local community planning events	Action planning days held in each of the five main settlements: Walsden, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge. Open to everyone. Aim: to explore the towns and their surrounding countryside. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Walkabouts and bus trips ○ Workshop to identify key issues and actions needed ○ Small group hands-on planning sessions to explore issues in detail ○ Future workshop to agree strategic issues and actions
2003	Apr	Analysis by consultant team	Preparation of a long-term Vision and Masterplan for each town and its surroundings.
2003	May	Report back to public	Vision and Masterplan for each town presented at local public meetings.
2003	Jun	Bringing it all together planning weekend	Attended by a wide cross section of people from the Upper Calder Valley and representatives of key stakeholder organisations. Specialist team of consultants (from Yorkshire Forward's Rural Panel) led a series of topic workshops covering: highways and transport; farming and the rural economy; tourism, culture and heritage; young people; health and well-being; marketing and information technology; delivery mechanisms and leadership.
2003	Jul	Weekend Report Back	Results from the Bringing it all Together Weekend reported at a public meeting by consultant team. Including an emerging Charter and Vision for the Valley and Aims, Objectives and Actions for each Topic Group. Agreement that a Valley Forum be set up and a number of Action Groups.
2003 2003	Aug Sep	Formation of Steering Group and Action Groups	First monthly meeting of the Valley Forum, open to everyone, sets up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering Group with representatives of existing town partnerships and Calderdale Council, several co-opted individuals and the chairpersons of the Action Groups. - Seven Action Groups set up to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing; ○ Getting About;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Valley Setting; ○ Business; ○ Marketing and IT; ○ Tourism, ○ Culture and Heritage; ○ Farming and Rural Communities; ○ Social Wellbeing; ○ Young People; <p>Each group meets regularly and reports An extended valley consultant team continues to meet.</p>	
2003	Oct/ Nov		
2003	Dec	Regeneration company launched	Steering Group officially launched as Upper Calder Urban Renaissance (UCVR), a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Valley Vision published. Valley Charter – a document outlining a blueprint for future collective action – signed by many people.
2004	Jan/ Feb		
2004	Mar/ Jun	Investment plan	Action Plans refined and Investment Plan produced including a number of flagship projects. Calderdale Council contracted to deliver the flagship projects.
2005/ 2007		Flagship projects implemented	The Upper Calder Valley Regeneration company meets regularly and delivers – in partnership with Calderdale Council and town partnerships – flagship projects across the Valley (see outcomes).

Outcomes

Immediate

- A community planning process involving over 2,000 people and generating over 10,000 person hours of community planning activity. A wide cross section of the valley population was involved.
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- Consensus on a Valley Vision: “To create a connected, creative, and sustainable Valley by redefining the role of its Market Towns through a people based process of physical, symbolic and virtual change, building upon the talents of the people and the quality of the built and natural environment.”
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- New links and alliances across the five settlements. Many local people and organisations signed up to a Valley Charter, a document outlining a blueprint for collective action in the future.
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- Key transformational projects identified, focusing on regenerating the public realm, and forming the basis for business and implementation plans

Mid-term

- Valley Steering Group formally constituted as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Its members are the Charter signatories and it includes one representative of each Action Group, each Town Partnership (or Town Team), the business and environmental communities, the Local Strategic Partnership, Calderdale Council and the Town and Parish Councils.
- Substantial funding - £2,911,000 - committed by Yorkshire Forward to deliver the Vision. Matched in various ways from other funding sources. Calderdale Council was contracted to deliver a number of projects using this funding.
- Progression of key projects identified in the Vision. Including:

Ted Hughes Project, Mytholmroyd - an annual, week-long Ted Hughes festival was inaugurated in 2006; detailed report produced on the feasibility of a local literary/poetry landscape trail and an outdoor interpretation hub as well as the acquisition of Hughes birthplace by the Elmet Trust which promotes and celebrates the work of Ted Hughes.

Bramshe Square, Todmorden - schemes developed by consultants for a pedestrian friendly centre for the town following public consultation throughout 2007.

Gateway Scheme, Todmorden - building purchased at entrance to town which is to be demolished to create a new public space and new vistas to the canal.

Sowerby Bridge/Copley Valley Transformational Project - appointment of private sector partners for the redevelopment of 14 hectares of brownfield land for new housing, offices, industrial units and associated transport and landscaping infrastructure.

Sowerby Bridge Market - Re-siting to create a more accessible, sustainable and vibrant market. New Market officially opened in September 2007.

For up to date information on progress visit the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance website: www.ucvr.org.uk.

Parties involved

<i>Party</i>	<i>Role</i>
Yorkshire Forward www.yorkshire-forward.com	Client
Calderdale Council (full title Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council) www.calderdale.gov.uk	Local Authority
John Thompson and Partners www.jtp.co.uk	Lead Consultant
Upper Calder Valley Renaissance www.ucvr.org.uk	Company set up to co-ordinate regeneration projects
Todmorden Pride	Community organisation
Royd Regeneration	Community organisation
Hebden Royd Partnership	Community organisation
Sowerby Bridge Community Forum	Community organisation

Funding and resources

- Community planning process funded by the regional development agency, Yorkshire Forward. This included consultants' fees, venues, publicity and setting up costs for a regeneration company.
- Capital funding for a few key flagship regeneration projects provided by Yorkshire Forward with matching funding provided from a variety of other sources including public and private sector partnerships.

Organisation changes

The Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR) continues to evolve. The structure was reorganised in 2007 reflecting the reality that servicing all the Renaissance groups as they had been in the past was neither sustainable, nor desirable. Five 'town teams' became four, all with proven track records. Some action groups were disbanded having never really got started.

The new structure is intended to be non-hierarchical and allows all members and groups in the community to be part of the process. The number of meetings community representatives are expected to attend has been reduced and the new structure allows for specific 'task and finish' groups to be formed to deliver specific projects.

The new structure comprises:

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR) Community Forum

Remit:

discussion of issues, sharing best practice.

Administration:

by Calderdale Council. Meets 2 or 3 times per year. All Valley-wide ward members to be invited, all community town team members and members of the community and Yorkshire Forward.

Town Teams

Remit:

Each team has its own constitution and works on issues in its particular vicinity.

Administration:

By each Town Team. Aim to meet a minimum of every 2 months.

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR) Ltd

Remit:

- Company established with its own constitution to coordinate Valley-wide projects and share best practice. - Co-ordinates Town Team activity and ensures the sharing of best possible practice and other information.
- Considers links and priorities between Town Team activities
- Acts as the main driver for Valley-wide initiatives and priorities, led by the "champion" appointed by the appropriate task group, supported by town team representatives where valley-wide activities impinge on the towns.

Administration:

- by the UCVR company
- Calderdale Council officer attendance to discuss projects when necessary
- Support: Calderdale Council involvement as per the Town Teams above.

Membership:

- 3 from each Town Team, 1 from each valley-wide "Task & Finish" group plus the Chair, Vice Chair, Company Secretary and Treasurer.
- Power to co-opt to provide a route from the Community Forum or for any potential new valley wide initiative.

Valley-wide task and finish groups

- These arise from suggestions made by the Community Forum, the Town Teams, UCVR Ltd or the Steering Group.
- Each "Task & Finish" group appoints a leader who is co-opted to membership of UCVR Ltd.

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR) Partnership Steering Group

Remit:

To oversee and monitor overall strategy and delivery.

Administration:

- By Calderdale Council
- Attendees: - 1 representative nominated from each Town Team, 2 representatives from UCVR Ltd., 1 representative from Yorkshire Forward, 1 representative from the Parish Councils, 1 representative from Calderdale Council (member), 1 officer from Calderdale Council
- Meets 3 times per year, alternating with the Community Forum.

Photos

Bristol reinvigorating process – in sequence



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley01.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley02.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley03.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley04.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley05.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley06.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley07.jpg



Walkabout

Upper Calder Valley08.jpg



Workshop

Upper Calder Valley09.jpg



Hands-on planning

Upper Calder Valley10.jpg



Report back

Upper Calder Valley11.jpg



Report back

Upper Calder Valley12.jpg

Documents

Upper Calder Valley

Renaissance - weaving it all together

Report of the community planning process

Hard copies from:

UCVR,

Hebden Bridge Visitors Centre,

Butlers Wharf, New Road,

Hebden Bridge, HX7 8AF

Download from website at: www.communityplanning.net/casestudies/casestudy011.php

Quotes

"We've found out so much about each other... now let's connect up with everyone else!"

Participant at the Bringing it all together weekend held in 2003

"It's the first time we've been asked to think long-term"

Participant at the Bringing it all together weekend held in 2003

Review

"This is the most ambitious intervention planned so far in the Upper Calder Valley ... it's a real commitment to regeneration based on a long term Vision rather than the short term initiatives of the past"

Andy Tordoff, Head of Rural Renaissance and Tourism, Yorkshire Forward, Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Report, 2003, published by Yorkshire Forward

Contacts and links

Yorkshire Forward portal

http://www.rmtportal.com/view.asp?content_id=2834&parent_id=2792

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[www.jtp.co.uk/public \(projects/towns\)](http://www.jtp.co.uk/public/projects/towns)