



## Groundwork Dearne Valley

### Background

Set up in 1995 and funded by the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, Groundwork Dearne Valley was formed through a joint initiative between Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster Councils, as a means of encouraging greater community engagement and empowerment.

Each of the borough councils provide different packages of support to help realise the objectives of the project. The organisation, which today has 34 members of staff.

Working alongside schools, Groundwork Dearne Valley also offers a range of educational services, helping to combine practical skills with vocational learning. The programme of work is integrated into the national curriculum and helps children to develop practical skills.

The charity is part of the national groundwork federation, which is committed to enhancing the environment of local communities.

### Responding to a need

Groundwork Dearne Valley invests in community projects within a 5km radius landfill waste sites. Working in partnership with the local authorities, areas are identified and work is undertaken to help improve the quality of life for people living there.

Rob Saw is the Development Manager at Groundwork Dearne Valley:

*"Decline in communities can often be traced back to the loss of traditional industries such as mining. The projects we help to initiate are aimed at reversing this trend. Groundwork has a unique relationship with the public sector. Local authorities understand the capabilities available to projects and GDV understand the community, which helps to ensure a proposed scheme is delivered."*



### PROFILE IN BRIEF

## Groundwork Dearne Valley

#### Services offered:

Education outside of the traditional school setting, including:

- Horticulture
- Creating nature areas for schools
- Outdoor classrooms
- Growing vegetables and plants

#### Who do you work with?

- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Schoolchildren across the Dearne Valley from Key Stage 2 upwards
- Local communities:
  - Maltby & Thurcroft
  - Rawmarsh & Swinton
  - Roundhouse
  - Kendrey
  - Central Doncaster
  - Thome/Stainforth

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## Engaging with the public sector

Groundwork Dearne Valley enjoys a unique relationship with the public sector. Although the organisation does not directly influence policy decisions made in local government, it helps to successfully deliver services, as well as helping to provide an independent voice to local community groups.

Once a scheme has been identified, Groundwork Dearne Valley works closely with the Local Authority, to ensure that a proposed scheme can be successfully delivered. Issues such as capital investment and maintenance are negotiated, and if agreed with the local authority, work upon the scheme begins.

The nature of the rolling programme means that support is given to local communities for a period of three years. Examples of successfully completed projects have been very diverse ranging from the creation of BMX tracks and skate parks to childrens play areas and sculpture trails.

## Amazing achievements

One of the first projects undertaken by Groundwork was the former mining village of Thurnscoe. A total of 15 projects have been implemented in the area including the creation of new parks, play areas and, streetscape improvements. Groundwork Dearne Valley also helped to form the TEG community group, which is responsible for overseeing development work within the village.

Through the work undertaken, the environment has improved dramatically, and as a result, Thurnscoe has successfully been able to create a new identity for the community, helping people living in the area to play an important role in the future of the area:

Rob Saw said:

*"As a project draws towards completion, it is great to see local area committees being set up in their own right and meeting regularly. It shows a sense of responsibility for the new developments and often leads to sense of empowerment, ownership, but perhaps most importantly of all – pride in their local area. It can be very rewarding work"*

## Looking ahead

Looking to the future, Groundwork Dearne Valley is aiming to continue their work with local communities around South Yorkshire. New projects are already underway in Roundhouse, Maltby and Thurcroft.

