



## Upper Calder Valley, Yorkshire, UK

Market Town Renaissance:  
Regeneration through Physical, Social  
and Economic Masterplanning



The people of this valley will scream if you ask us to fill in another ‘post it’, but we’ll be damned if we’ll let this initiative die!



Roger Burnett, Sculptor, Sowerby Bridge

The Upper Calder Valley has five principle settlements of Walsden, Todmorden, Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge. In the second half of the twentieth century, a decline in the textile industry resulted in the market towns suffering from neglect and failing local economies.

The Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward, launched a Renaissance Market Towns programme to transform the region’s ‘rural capitals’ into sustainable places where people want and are able to live, work, invest and visit. The Upper Calder Valley was selected as the first Renaissance Market Towns project, presenting the complex challenge of generating a strategy for the transformation of an entire valley.

**Project Delivery**

- A Vision developed through a Collaborative Placemaking process that engaged over 2,000 people, organisations and businesses.
- A Vision that redefined the roles of the market towns by building upon the talents of the people and the quality of the built and natural environment to create a connected, creative, and sustainable valley.
- A Valley Charter to identify common aims and create new links and alliances across the five settlements.
- Investment and delivery plans produced by the Seven Valley Action Groups
- Seven Valley Action Group proposals for a number of physical transformation projects along the valley.
- A valley masterplan that presented a long-term vision to ensure future investment was strategy-led rather than driven by short-term funding.

**Client**

Yorkshire Forward & Calderdale Borough Council

