



the **coalfields**  
regeneration trust

# Our strategy 2016 - 2019



# The Coalfields Regeneration Trust: Our purpose

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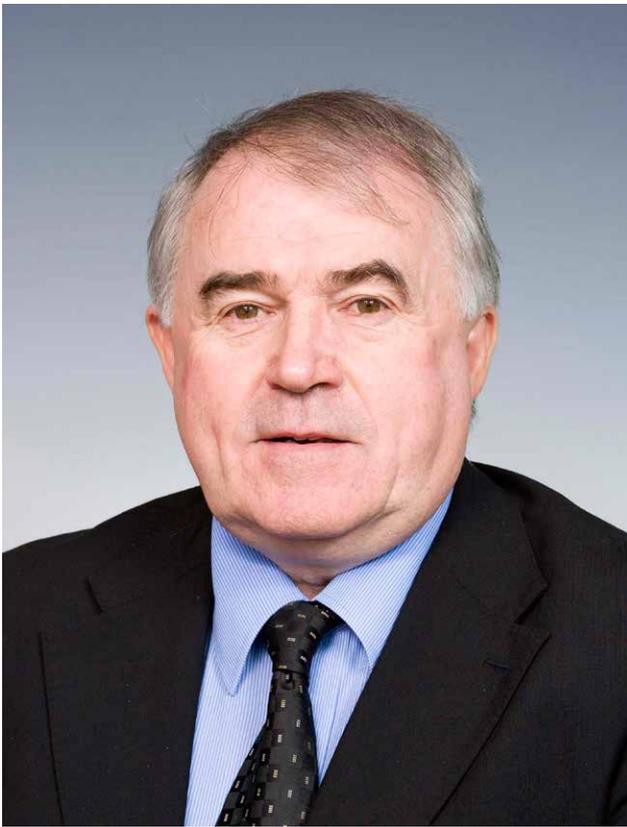
**At the Coalfields Regeneration Trust we are dedicated to supporting and improving the quality of life for the 5.5million people living in former mining towns and villages.**

With a mission to “champion and strengthen coalfield communities, generate resources to respond to their needs and deliver programmes that make a positive and lasting difference” we are aware that we still have a job to do.

We have a track record of delivering targeted and responsive programmes that have addressed many of the challenges still prevalent in the communities. Despite the positive progress that has been made, it is

essential that we continue to provide the coalfields with a voice, in order for us to be in the position to address the many and varied issues that still have a disproportionate impact on those living in these areas.

With the continued support of national governments and key stakeholders we know that we can make a life changing difference to these communities so that they can make a positive contribution to the social and economic performance of Great Britain moving forward.



# A message from our chairman

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The establishment of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust in 1999 was a direct response from the then Deputy Prime Minister, who recognised the need for an independent organisation that's sole purpose would be the regeneration of ex-mining communities. This followed clear evidence that ex-mining communities had not recovered from the mine closure programme that commenced in the eighties and from the recommendations made in the Coalfields Task Force Report, 'Making a Difference' (1998).

In the early days we developed as an innovative grant maker. We were there to fill the gaps left by other programmes and to act as the glue to hold things together or make sense of a patchwork of different programmes. We were also there to act as the first funder, providing essential investment to projects that would never get off the ground without this initial commitment. We were there to take risks.

Since then we have placed ourselves in a very unique position. We have helped to build local capacity and infrastructure and have not competed for scarce resources at the expense of others. We have tried to add value and supported those best placed to deliver vital services in our communities.

Over this period, and with the support of government funding, we have developed a niche as a catalyst and broker of social and economic change in our communities. Using our relatively modest resources, given the size of the task in hand, we have left our own positive footprint in coalfield communities throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

As we have matured so have our programmes. From grant maker to delivering specific in-house programmes that tackle key issues such as helping people into work through our Family Employment Initiative, building skills and capacity through Coalfield Community Futures and improving health through Game On.

We are also really proud to have led the way with BreathingSpace, the world-class innovative rehabilitation centre. This community service is based in Rotherham and is for people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and other respiratory conditions. This facility could be replicated with the provision of additional resources.

We have always recognised that we cannot solve all of the problems experienced by ex-mining communities. The size of the task requires us to complement existing provision

and redirect additional resources such as European funds, lottery funds and other programmes into coalfield communities. The gap between coalfield communities and the national average in just about every measure of deprivation needs addressing now and not in ten years' time.

We recognise that the next five years for our communities is crucial. Austerity measures continue to have an adverse effect and with further reductions in welfare provision and the introduction of universal credit, the evidence is clear that ex-mining communities will be disproportionately hit.

We are mindful about our sustainability and stakeholders will expect us to act in the best interests of the communities we serve. Our Board of Trustees have endorsed plans to continue to use resources to benefit coalfield communities and to use them to act as a lever to bend in other resources from key agencies.

We have a strong brand and reputation in coalfield communities and there are organisations that are keen to work with us because our agenda is a simple one to understand. The problems that still remain

in Britain's coalfields are our drivers for future activity. The assets we have developed over recent years provide some income stability but they also enable us to become more enterprising in developing opportunities and contribute to the regeneration of coalfield communities.

There is a balance to be struck, but the social imperative exists now. How we use our assets will determine the scale of the social impact achieved and ultimately the legacy we leave.

With the continued support of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government we will continue as a British Trust serving the coalfield communities of England, Scotland and Wales.

We know given our reduced resources we will need to focus on fewer activities but we are determined to maintain a strong profile within our communities.

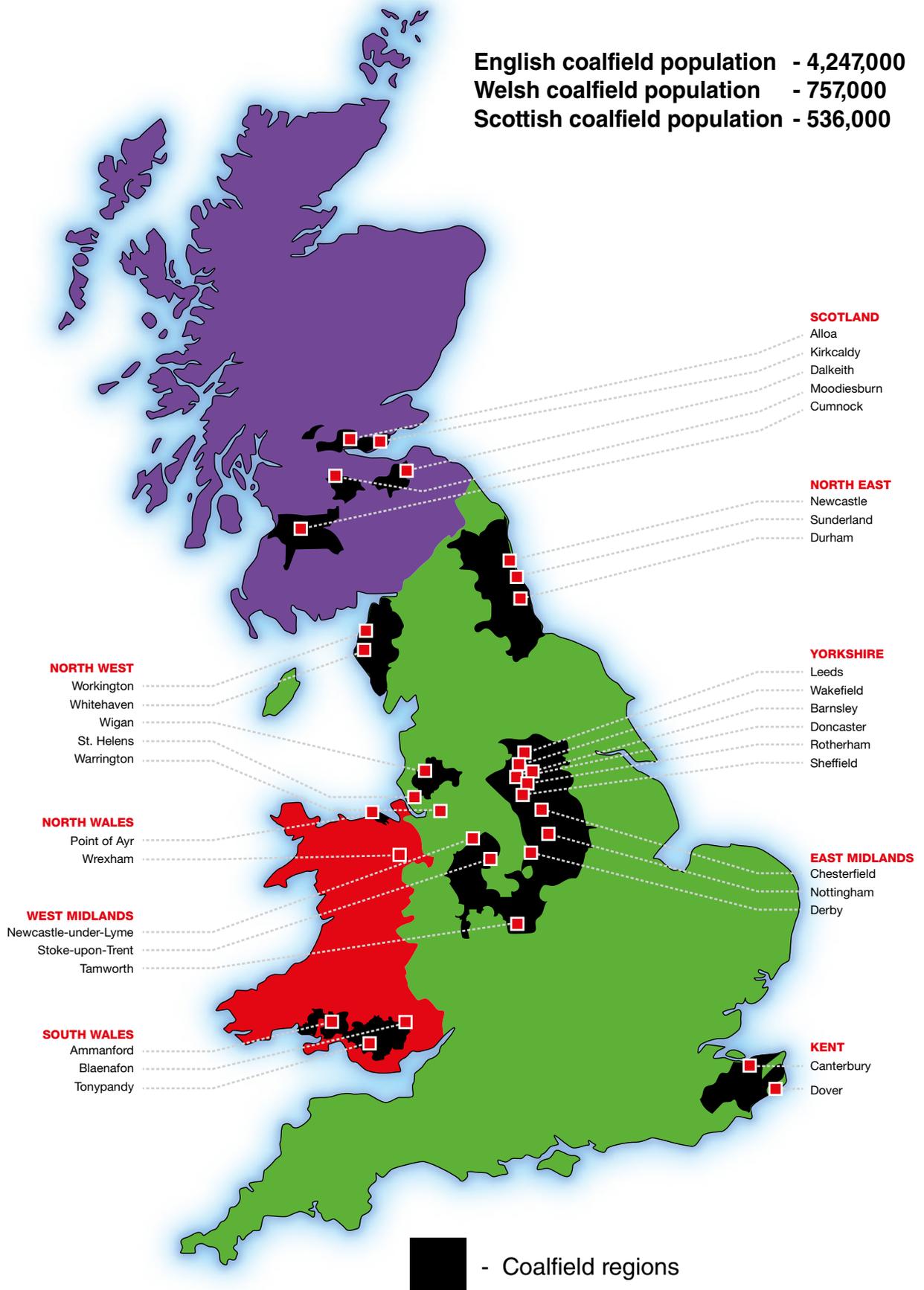
The disadvantages coalfield communities still face in terms of employment, skills and health are clearly evident and the statistics support the on-going need for economic and social regeneration.



Peter McNestry  
*Chairman of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust*

# Map of the coalfields

English coalfield population - 4,247,000  
 Welsh coalfield population - 757,000  
 Scottish coalfield population - 536,000



# The challenges

5,540,000 people live in the British coalfields. The figures below highlight the scale of the challenges facing Great Britain's coalfield communities.

English Coalfields			
English Coalfield Working Age Population	2,718,080 (16-64yrs)		
Key Challenges for the English Coalfields	No. of people (working age) out of work on benefits	No. of people (working age) with no qualifications	No. of people with long term health problems that limit day-to-day activities
As a %	12.77%	19.42%	10.90%
By population	347,000	527,851	462,923

Welsh Coalfields			
Welsh Coalfield Working Age Population	484,480 (16-64yrs)		
Key Challenges for the Welsh Coalfields	No. of people (working age) out of work on benefits	No. of people (working age) with no qualifications	No. of people with long term health problems that limit day-to-day activities
As a %	17.10%	23%	14.90%
By population	82,846	111,430	112,793

Scottish Coalfields			
Scottish Coalfield Working Age Population	348,000 (16-64yrs)		
Key Challenges for the Scottish Coalfields	No. of people (working age) out of work on benefits	No. of people (working age) with no qualifications	No. of people with long term health problems that limit day-to-day activities
As a %	14.16%	31%	10.50%
By population	49,333	108,004	56,280

GB FIGURES FOR COMPARISON			
GB Population	61,370,000		
GB Working Age Population	39,890,500 (16-64yrs)		
Key Challenges	No. of people (working age) out of work on benefits	No. of people (working age) with no qualifications	No. of people with long term health problems that limit day-to-day activities
GB % for Comparison	10.90%	England and Wales 15% Scotland 27%	8.60%

Statistical Source: 'The State of the Coalfields – Economic and Social Conditions in the Former Mining Communities of England, Scotland and Wales,' Foden, Fothergill and Gore. CRESR, Sheffield Hallam University (June 2014)

# Our impact in numbers

Since 1999 we have worked with coalfield communities to respond to the challenges they face. Through our investment and the provision of resources we have made a huge difference for many thousands of people. Our investments have impacted positively on over two million people during this time and we are pleased to share our results that showcase just how far we have come.

## SKILLS

**1,300,025**

people have improved skills and qualifications

## EMPLOYMENT

**25,342**

people have been supported into work

**5,375**

jobs have been created or safeguarded

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

**225,452**

people have participated in activities that have improved health



# Our new objectives

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Our new strategic objectives are simple and respond directly to the evidenced problems. We are committed to changing the outlook for people in our communities and recognise that improved health, skills and employment prospects will greatly contribute to this aspiration.



## Employment

*Develop pathways to increase the number of people in work*

Many people want to work but need bespoke support or the removal of barriers before they can take the first steps to get a job. We redirect training and work based opportunities into the communities to encourage more people into part and fulltime employment.

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## Skills

*Grow the skills of people to increase their opportunities*

Through learning new skills people are able to access new opportunities whether that is to develop as leaders, secure training and employment or to start up a business of their own. Fundamentally skills improve confidence and give individuals self-belief, which subsequently impacts on family and friends around them.

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## Health

*Support activities that improve the health and wellbeing of all age groups*

The coalfields have some of the worst levels of health and the highest cases of long-term illness in Great Britain, where appropriate, we seek to address these challenges with programmes that focus on encouraging people to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle. We recognise the impact that mental health has on a persons ability to take up opportunities and will continue our support for work in this field.

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# Delivering across countries

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**Our objectives to improve the employment, skills and health opportunities for people in the coalfield communities fits well with the government policies of all three countries; England, Scotland and Wales.**

**Each country team translates these objectives into activities that respond to the individual, complex and varied needs of the communities.**

## England in action

With over 4.2 million people living in the English coalfields the team in England will build on its impressive track record and continue to place 'communities' at the heart of its approach going forward.

Our Community Investment Programme will provide access to finance and practical support to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations who can help us meet our strategic objectives. These organisations play a vital role in supporting our communities and will act as our 'champions' helping us to direct resources where they are needed the most. This support is vital as austerity measures continue to affect mainstream services and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors continue to experience increased demand.

In recognition that our resources are more limited, we will deliver more targeted area based projects in some of the most deprived coalfield

communities with the aim of preventing them from falling further behind.

Our Communities that Work programme has social and economic regeneration placed firmly at the heart of it. We will develop assets that provide space for SME's to grow, deliver local housing solutions or provide vital community facilities. The aim is to stimulate job growth in coalfield communities, provide apprenticeship and training opportunities and create space for community groups and the delivery of local services. These assets will only work if the community can benefit from them. To ensure this happens, we will invest in resources on the ground to build relationships and capacity, build skills and connect people to these opportunities to achieve our goal of building stronger coalfield communities.

*Andy Lock, Head of Operations (England)*

## Wales in action

Former Welsh mining communities, which make up over 25% of the Welsh population, continue to face some of the most challenging economic and social problems in Wales, the UK and Europe.

Although much has been done to regenerate coalfield communities the scale of the regeneration task in Wales is still very challenging, with much to do to reverse the consequences of industrial decline. We have worked tirelessly to support communities to grow by developing projects that tackle low skills, worklessness, poor health and building community capacity.

Over the past 16 years we have applied a unique approach to community regeneration which is rooted in listening to the community and helping to provide the means to resource programmes whether by providing funding or building partnerships in flexible, innovative and creative ways.

Our track record of delivery is impressive demonstrated by the use of limited resources to maximum effect and impact, evidenced by the continuous funding support from the Welsh

Government and a wide range of partners.

Our future programme will address the highest priority areas, accentuated by the last recession by offering grants and development support in partnership with Welsh Government, local authorities, social housing and the health service. Particular focus will be placed on asset transfer and development to support communities to take ownership of buildings and services under threat of closure. In addition we will focus on job creation, apprenticeship training and up skilling in low paid employment.

High priority will also be given to improving health, with specific programmes addressing mental health and wellbeing and engaging with young people in healthy lifestyle projects such as Game On. We are committed to continuing to build the capacity of coalfield communities to take a lead role in shaping the future for generations to come.

*Alun Taylor, Head of Operations (Wales)*

## Scotland in action

In Scotland we have emerged as a key player facilitating the development of community capacity, by encouraging small voluntary, charitable and other organisations to expand their scope, build new partnerships and tackle more ambitious projects.

Funded by the Scottish Government, we have become an authoritative voice for coalfield communities, one that is best placed to pursue uniquely Scottish priorities and will perform as a champion for the former coalfield communities, target resources at those communities in greatest need, work as a partner for government in programme delivery and shaping policy, be responsive to local needs at grass roots level and deliver real improvements to coalfield communities efficiently and effectively.

We work in the heart and soul of the coalfield communities, delivering on the Community Empowerment Act, Land Reform and Social Justice and the Scottish Government Regeneration Strategy by investing resources, expertise and knowledge to ensure local people are able to fulfill their potential.

Our motivation comes from being the facilitator of a community or an organisations vision and

therefore it is vital that we appreciate what a client's objectives are so we can form a strong sense of partnership with them.

Using an asset based community development approach we are responsible for the development, management and delivery of a range of programmes, balancing the needs of the communities by encouraging the use of local resources in a way that enhance economic opportunities whilst improving social conditions in a sustainable way. We have extensive experience of working with vulnerable and excluded communities in the former coalfield areas.

A key component of our role is to ensure that local residents, groups and organisations are assisted to participate in helping them to make the right connections and working with them to develop the influencing skills and the relationships that less deprived communities benefit from. Moving forward, our role will be to encourage learning and the pooling of resources to help to deliver our new strategic objectives.

*Pauline Douglas, Head of Operations (Scotland)*

# Our values

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The values by which we engage with our stakeholders are:

**Good Governance**, we will ensure our activities demonstrate accountability and transparency underpinned by robust procedures that deliver value for money.

**Targeted Resources**, we are committed to investing our resources into the communities that need them the most.

**Sustainability**, we recognise the need for activities to deliver in the long-term; to build capacity and expertise and develop innovative resourcing models that achieve a lasting legacy.

**Partnerships and Collaborations**, we will develop relationships with key stakeholders and likeminded organisations where there are demonstrable benefits to coalfield communities.



## Third Sector

We know from experience that one size does not fit all and that the challenges that are faced by the communities differ depending on a number of factors including level of deprivation, local infrastructure and ongoing commitments to the regeneration of the coalfields. This is why we work closely with individuals, organisations and networks that are 'on the ground'.



## Private Sector

As a community led organisation we are able to provide private sector businesses with an opportunity to become socially responsible by developing mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations that allow us to deliver our programmes into the communities. In addition we work alongside contractors and developers to encourage them to employ local people in order to ensure that when we are regenerating a community we also direct funds back into those areas.



## Public Sector

Working with national and local government including Local Enterprise Partnerships, local authorities, Community Planning Partnerships, housing bodies and key public sector stakeholders means that we are able to strengthen our offer and to meet with the specific challenges that are faced by the communities. Aligning our thoughts and approach means that we can have a stronger impact as a result.

# Working with partners

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## Resources

Organisations, volunteers and networks across community, public and private sectors all provide a valuable resource to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, which means that we are able to have a much wider impact on the problems we are tackling. Redirecting assistance into the coalfields allows us to work together to give the communities the support they need to help themselves.



## Investment

Ongoing austerity measures continue to have a disproportionate effect on the coalfield communities and that is why we work hard to encourage investment from external funding bodies, the government, private and corporate investors. Without the funds we are simply not in a position to make the difference that we need to in order to make a lasting change.



## Assets

When appropriate, we will support communities to secure the ownership of essential community buildings and services which contribute to a financially sustainable future. Increasingly local authorities and public bodies are closing community facilities so we support communities to protect and develop them through community asset ownership.

We also view people as assets and many of our activities invest in people through the provision of support and resources to give them the skills and capacity required so they can take the lead on strengthening their community.



## Support

Without support we simply would not be here. We benefit from an extensive network of ambassadors, community supporters and champions. In addition we have public and private advocates, sponsors and partners. It is essential that we continue to encourage people to show their support for the coalfields so that we can continue to make a lasting difference.

# Our approach

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**At the Coalfields Regeneration Trust communities are at the heart of everything that we do and that is why we continue to work so hard to make a lasting and positive difference. We often work where others do not or where there are gaps in provision. This work is driven through innovation to add value and achieve results.**

We will work with the most disadvantaged former mining towns and villages in the country before creating bespoke programmes to address the ongoing difficulties they face. We will work with individuals, groups and organisations providing access to funding, advice and guidance for the benefit of those who need it most.

From grass roots groups that build social capital and create stronger support networks, sports initiatives that engage young people or projects designed to raise skills and help people to find work, we will continue to deliver programmes that make coalfield

communities more resilient.

In addition, we will use our resources as a catalyst to lever in new funds in order to achieve a lasting and positive impact.

We will continue to consult with our communities and stakeholders to review our work in relation to the needs of the coalfield communities. We will do this by embedding robust evaluation processes in the delivery of all our activities, reviewing performance and social impact to help inform our future plans.

# Committed to the future

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**We have achieved a great deal since 1999 but there is much more to do. The scale of the challenge is huge as coalfield communities continue to lag behind national averages. Vital community facilities are being lost or are under threat, local support services are experiencing greater demand and deprivation levels remain high in many places.**

The majority of the investment that creates many of the new job opportunities is focused in the major towns and cities making it difficult for those living in coalfield villages, where transport and travel to work distance can be a barrier, to access them.

We will continue to directly engage with coalfield communities and develop solutions with them that address these challenges. We

will invest where the impact will be felt the most and will encourage others to do the same. We cannot do this alone but through partnership working and collaboration believe both current and future generations will benefit from the legacy of our work.



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# Get in touch

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