

NEWS RELEASE from

devon renaissance
working for rural prosperity



16 August 2006

Devon Renaissance celebrates first year

Devon Renaissance, the rural regeneration partnership organisation for the county, invested almost £2.75 million in 27 economic and community projects across Devon in its first year of operation, which will create almost 200 jobs and safeguard another 50, and help to create 43 new businesses.

The organisation's investment, using funds from the South West Regional Development Agency, also brought in another £11.25 million from other public and private funds, which Devon Renaissance says will "have a transformational impact on the economy and quality of life in rural Devon".

Through the projects started in its first year of operation Devon Renaissance is also helping to create almost 5,000 square metres of managed workspace, and is assisting 1,300 people acquire skills to help them become more employable.

The organisation's 27 projects covered North Devon, West Devon, Torridge and South Hams, and in many cases projects covered more than one area.

North Devon had 19 projects worth £2.5 million; West Devon 21 projects worth £3.6 million; Torridge 19 projects worth £2.1 million and South Hams 14 projects worth £5.7 million.

Projects ranged from providing money and advice for businesses to buy the right information and computer technology equipment to building community centres, and from providing vocational training to the delivery of rural Citizens' Advice services.

Robin Makeig-Jones, the programme manager for Devon Renaissance, said "The money we have invested and the additional resources we have levered are critical for the regeneration of rural Devon.

"We have got off to a flying start in our first year and we intend to build on that success, through funding more of the economic and community projects which will make a real difference to the county."

Peter Tansey, the chair of the Devon Renaissance management board, said: "We must work hard to reinforce this success. This not only means keeping the pressure on, but also expanding our relationships with other funding organisations, so that we can maximise leverage and develop creative partnerships.

"We have been successful because we work at staying local. Regardless of the pressures that will come we must retain our local focus.

Devon Renaissance has produced a DVD highlighting some of the projects it has supported in its first year. The DVD is available at a small cost and anyone interested should contact Devon Renaissance on 01837 658643.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

Devon Renaissance is the rural regeneration partnership organisation for the county. It is a not for profit partnership of the private sector, local authorities and community-based organisations. The organisation is funded by the South West Regional Development Agency and North Devon, Torridge, West Devon and South Hams district and borough councils. Devon Renaissance provides grant funding and works with projects to help create prosperity and jobs and improve access to services in rural areas. It has funding of £7 million over three years which is estimated to be worth £20 million to the Devon economy with match funding.

www.ruraldevon.org

Release issued by pr dogs, public relations consultants, on behalf of Devon Renaissance. For further information contact John Taynton of PR Dogs on 01822 859294 or 07843 436526 (mobile) or email john.taynton@prdogs.com