

# DEWSBURY

TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE



BUILDING ON THE PAST  
TO SECURE THE FUTURE



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## What is the ‘Townscape Heritage Initiative’?

The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a 5 year Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) regeneration programme which is jointly funded between the HLF and Kirklees Council.

It is centred around the landmark building of Pioneer House and other key buildings within the Northgate part of Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area.

The initiative will offer *grant funding* to aid restoration, bring buildings back to life and raise awareness of Dewsbury’s heritage.



This investment will in turn encourage business and help boost the economy and profile of the town making our local area a better place to live, work or visit.

It’s not just about physical restoration, the scheme also offers opportunities to learn and engage with the town’s heritage, through training at two levels:

- i) To create greater understanding of the town’s quality architecture
- ii) Technical training of restoration techniques, which will help support local employment opportunities.

Wherever possible, we aim to use local services, labour and products throughout the delivery of the programme, further strengthening skills and employment in the area. We will promote community involvement through regular activities and events, to help raise awareness of Dewsbury’s wonderful architecture.

See page 6 for grant eligibility >





## Why Dewsbury?

Dewsbury is a historic town with roots that can be traced back to Saxon times, where in 627AD it is documented that St Paulinus, the first bishop of York, preached on the banks of the River Calder and Dewsbury Minster was considered important as a central place in religious terms.

The town grew with a market being established in the 14th Century, a tradition which remains strong to this day, with a bustling market which continues to bring the town to life. However, it was the 'industrial revolution', the opening of the canal in 1770 and railway in 1848 and the textile industry that brought real growth to the town.



Dewsbury was pivotal to the *Shoddy & Mungo* industries, which recycled woollen items by mixing them with new wool to make heavy blankets and uniforms. It was the success of these industries and the wealth they created that inspired mill owners, and groups such as *the industrial pioneers' society*, as members of *the co-operative movement* to build grand, beautiful buildings, to display their pride and offer benefit to the town.

It is the legacy of these buildings such as Pioneer House, built by the industrial pioneers' society and opened in 1880, which lies in the heart of the THI. Whilst the uses of the building and the town centre have evolved the buildings remain. It is the aim of the Townscape Heritage Initiative to restore the pride in the buildings once again, through restoration and regeneration.

## What difference will the investment make?

Provide opportunity for building owners and tenants to apply for grant funding. Embrace the principles of 'Conservation Area' requirements and heritage methods, and where eligible, offer grants to undertake works to their premises.

Support schemes to help Dewsbury meet the challenges of changing retail habits and support new uses for buildings.

Boost confidence and pride, building upon the strong heritage that the town has, ensuring stability for the future.



## Community Involvement

The local community will be involved throughout the implementation of the THI scheme.

Through training and educational activities the Townscape Heritage Initiative will build upon significant community interest in key buildings of high architectural quality. One of the activities we shall undertake is to capture people's memories and experiences of the key buildings, such as Pioneer House.

### Activities will aim to:

- Widen knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Dewsbury's heritage, both locally and nationally.
- Offer opportunities for a variety of partners to come together to enjoy and utilise the buildings within the THI area.
- Create a high quality, attractive environment for people to live, work, and visit, which will benefit the town as a whole.



## Building conservation

The Townscape Heritage Initiative sits within the Dewsbury Conservation Area, which is an area of special architectural and historic interest.

The THI will seek to repair and restore historic buildings whilst providing a long term viable use for them. To do this the THI will provide training for building owners, the community and local construction businesses to promote the importance of traditional skills, materials and understanding.



## Grant eligibility

Key properties within the THI area have been identified and prioritised. These include the critical project of Pioneer House and priority properties such as the former Co-op funeral parlour, Northgate House and Northgate Arcades. In addition a number of reserve properties have been identified within the area too.

Property owners and tenants (with a minimum of a 10 year lease) can apply for grant aid funding for works on their properties which could include:

- i) Exterior repairs to properties, including structural works.
- ii) The restoration and reinstatement of architectural features, such as traditional shop fronts.
- iii) Bringing empty space within buildings back into use, such as unused space above shops or derelict parts of buildings.

Where a property is in use the grant may cover up to 75% of the cost of eligible repair/structural works and 90% for reinstatement of architectural features. For vacant properties/floorspace the grant could cover an average of 50% of the costs.

## Application process

The objective of the grant is:

‘To put into sound repair the structure and external envelope of the building, which will make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.’  
(Dewsbury THI Grant Application Guidance)

Please see the map on the back page to see if your property is eligible for a grant.

For more details or to start your application please contact:

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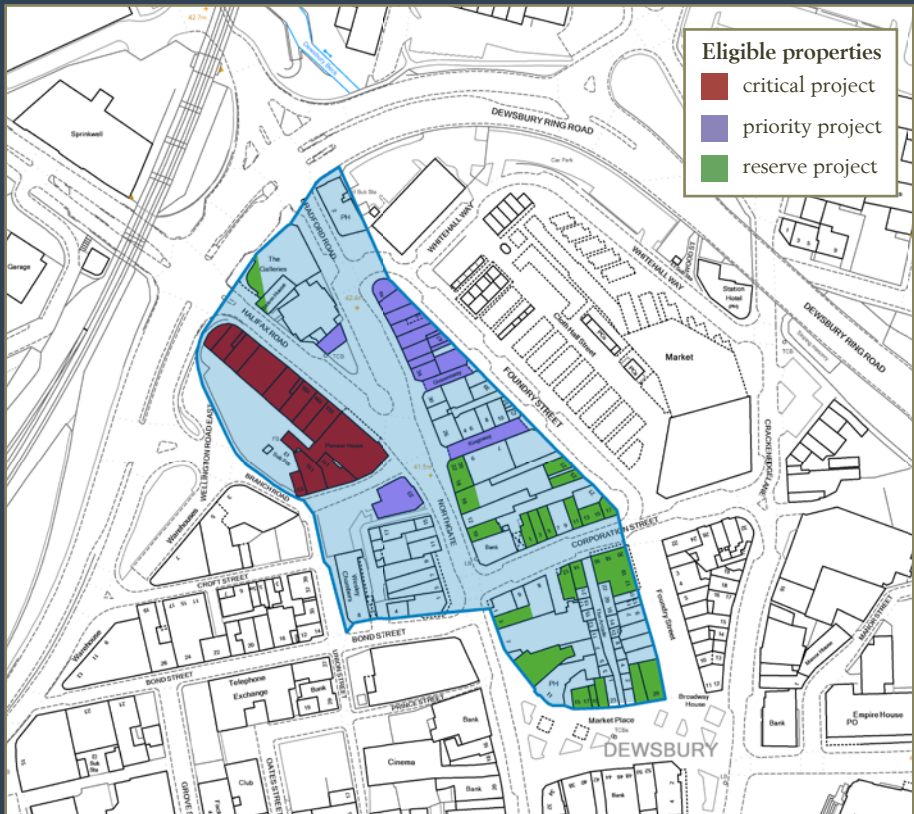
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# Townscape Heritage Initiative area



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