

CONFERENCE REPORT

Committee: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Subject: THE DEFENCE OF EUROPEAN REGIONAL AID

Conference Organiser: COALFIELD COMMUNITIES CAMPAIGN

Venue: HAYDOCK THISTLE HOTEL, ST HELENS

Conference Fee: £65.00

Date(s): FRIDAY 8TH NOVEMBER

Recommendation: ELECTED MEMBER & OFFICER ATTENDANCE

The Defence of European Regional Aid

A ONE-DAY CONFERENCE

Director of Econ Development
N Lanarkshire CI
Civic Centre
Motherwell
ML1 1TW

24th September 1996

Dear Colleague

I enclose publicity material and a booking form for a conference on the Defence of European Regional Aid, to be held on Friday 8th November 1996.

With many billions of aid now apparently under threat, the conference is potentially of immense importance to local authorities and all other participants in the regeneration process.

I do hope that your authority or organisation will be represented at the conference, and that you will subsequently play an important part in the campaign to maintain this vital source of support for the UK regions.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Fothergill
CCC Director



Organising Secretariat:

Coalfield Communities Campaign, 9 Regent Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2EG

Tel: 01226 200768 Fax: 01226 296532

Reservation Form
One Day Conference

THE DEFENCE OF EUROPEAN REGIONAL AID

Friday 8th November 1996, 10.00 am to 3.30 pm

Haydock Thistle Hotel, St Helens

I wish to reserve.....place/s at £65 per delegate

Local Authority/Organisation.....

The names and official position of delegate/s attending area:
(Please type or use block capitals)

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

6.....

Contact name.....

Address.....

.....

Daytime telephone number.....

Name and address to whom invoice should be sent (if different from above)

.....

.....



Please return to:
Jackie Last, CCC Secretariat, 9 Regent Street, Barnsley S70 2EG
tel: 01226 200768 fax: 01226 296532

Conference places are limited to 300 - early booking is advisable.

The Defence of European Regional Aid

**A one-day conference for all
Objective 1 and Objective 2 areas
in England, Scotland and Wales**

Friday 8th November 1996

Haydock Thistle Hotel

St Helens

*Convened by the Coalfield Communities Campaign with the support of
RETI (The association of European industrial regions)
Steel Action
Local Action for Textiles and Clothing*



European regional aid to Britain is under profound threat. Indeed, Objective 2 aid to older industrial areas could disappear entirely.

Funding up to the end of 1999 is secure. But beyond then the very structure of EU regional policy is up for renegotiation. The present message from Brussels is that in order to fund new member states in Eastern Europe, and to provide support to countries joining the single currency, something will have to give. That something is aid to lagging regions, above all Objective 2 but perhaps even some Objective 1 aid.

At present more than £500 million a year comes to the UK under Objective 2 alone. Its loss would be a crippling blow to the efforts of countless local authorities and other agencies who are trying hard to rebuild the economies of their areas.

And even if Objective 2 were to survive, perhaps in truncated form, how can British regions expect to benefit now that the official unemployment figures hide so much of the problem?

The conference is intended as the first step in a campaign to defend EU aid to Britain's regions. The decisions about the post-1999 framework are likely to be taken during the next two years. We do not have long. We must make our voice heard. And we must stand together - all the older industrial areas of England, Scotland and Wales, whether our background is in coal, steel, textiles, defence, shipbuilding, motor vehicles or whatever other sector.

- * **What are the causes of the threat?**
- * **What are our best arguments?**
- * **Who do we need to influence?**
- * **When do we need to act?**
- * **Who are our allies?**
- * **How do we organise a fightback?**

The conference is being convened by the Coalfield Communities Campaign - the largest and most experienced of the industry-based local authority associations - but representatives from all Britain's Objective 1 and 2 areas should attend.

THE DEFENCE OF EUROPEAN REGIONAL AID

A one-day conference for all Objective 1 and Objective 2 areas in England, Scotland and Wales.

Confirmed speakers include:

- * Graham Meadows
(DGXVI, European Commission)
- Wayne David MEP
(Leader, European Parliamentary Labour Party)
- Arlene McCarthy MEP
(Socialist group spokesperson on regional policy)
- Rembergt Behrendt
(European President, RETI)

Date: Friday 8th November 1996
10.00 am to 3.30 pm

Venue: Haydock Thistle Hotel, St Helens

Delegate fee: £65
(Includes lunch and refreshments)

Who should attend?

- Council Leaders and Chief Executives
- Chairs and Directors of Economic Development
- CCC representatives
- European Officers
- TECs
- Chambers of Commerce
- * Development agencies
- * MEPs
- * MPs

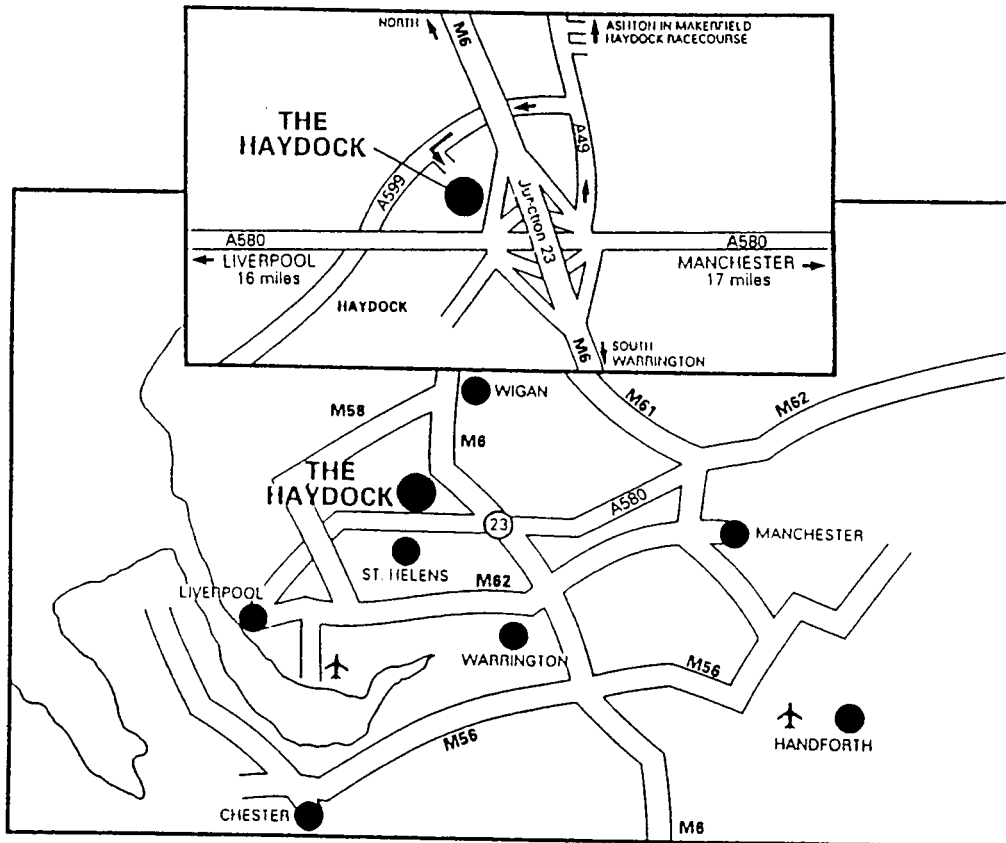
Conference places are limited to 300 - early booking is advisable.

THE VENUE

The Haydock Thistle Hotel is located on the outskirts of St Helens next to the junction of the M6 and the A580 Manchester to Liverpool road (the East Lancs road).

Manchester airport is 20 minutes away by car.

The nearest main-line railway stations are Wigan and St Helens.



The conference is being convened by the Coalfield Communities Campaign, the all-party association of more than 80 local authorities in present and former coal areas in England, Scotland and Wales. CCC has a long history of involvement with European regional aid. CCC is widely credited as the main architect of the RECHAR programme, now worth more than £500m, and it played a crucial role in the battle to secure additionality for EU grants.

CCC's member authorities comprise nearly two-thirds of all the Objective 2 areas in the UK.

The conference is open to all Objective 1 and 2 areas in England, Scotland and Wales, irrespective of CCC membership.

*CCC Secretariat, 9 Regent Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 2EG
Tel: 01226 200768 Fax: 01226 296532*