

**News release**

**5 July 2017**

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## **NEW DRIVE TO BOOST TOURISM IN DERBYSHIRE MARKET TOWNS**

Nine Derbyshire market towns now have a new ally to help them swell and share visitor numbers, realise their full tourism potential and boost their vibrancy.

Ashbourne, Bakewell, Belper, Bolsover, Buxton, Glossop, Matlock/Matlock Bath, Swadlincote and Wirksworth can now count on the expertise of Jessica Grocutt, who has been appointed Market Towns Project Officer by official tourist board Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire.

Jessica – whose previous professional experience is in hospitality and events – will be working closely with town teams, councils, local businesses and other organisations to make the county’s tourism-focused market towns even more attractive to visitors.

Her new role also involves promoting tourism-related Derbyshire products, with special emphasis on food and drink, to improve the quality of local services for tourists and encourage them to spend locally.

“We’re working with towns that have been identified as having potential to develop further as thriving tourist attractions, and my job will be to act as a catalyst to help them fulfil that potential – organising everything from workshops and seminars to business support and advice,” said Jessica.

“The aim is to attract visitors to come and see what our varied market towns have to offer, to stay and spend money in Derbyshire, and we’ll be developing itineraries to persuade them to visit more than one of our towns while they are here.

“We’ll also concentrate on promoting Derbyshire-made products, with the main focus on food and drink, to encourage local businesses to use local products, and to make it clear to visitors that they are. So there’ll be workshops and advice on branding, and we’ll also be linking in with food fairs, farmers’ markets and other events.

“I’ve already been in touch with many of the town teams and councils about the project, but would also like to hear from businesses across the nine towns to discuss what type of support they need to help their communities flourish and prosper in the future.”

Though primarily focused on the nine towns, the project’s events and business support opportunities will be also open to tourism businesses and market towns across Derbyshire to help them boost their visitor potential and promote what is special about the county.

Jessica's appointment is part of a £1.49 million support programme funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) over three years, secured by the tourist board to boost business quality, profitability and performance.

Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire is working closely with partners Derbyshire County Council, the Peak District National Park Authority and Business Peak District to deliver the programme – which also includes business workshops and networking and the Inspired by the Peak District and Pedal Peak District projects.

Businesses and organisations who would like to get involved in the Market Towns project are invited to contact Jessica at [jessica.grocutt@marketingpdd.com](mailto:jessica.grocutt@marketingpdd.com) or on 01246 212924 ext. 2008.

Ends.

For further details, please contact Janette Sykes, PR Manager, Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire, at [janette.sykes@marketingpdd.com](mailto:janette.sykes@marketingpdd.com) or on 07792 924839.

### **Note to Editors**

An accompanying digital image is attached. Caption: Jessica Grocutt, Market Towns Project Officer at Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire.

The Peak District and Derbyshire's visitor economy currently supports 27,000 jobs and is worth £1.9 billion a year.

Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire's mission is to develop and grow a successful and sustainable tourism economy, working closely with a wide range of partners to make the Peak District and Derbyshire the destination of choice – regionally, nationally and globally.

The approved business support programme is receiving up to £1.49 million of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, European Regional Development Fund funds help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>



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