

Creating a Setting for Investment



The South Yorkshire Forest is the UK partner in a trans-European project to investigate the positive contribution that an attractive environment makes in shaping investment decisions.

The project, 'Creating a Setting for Investment', seeks evidence for what environmental professionals have long maintained – that there is a strong link between landscape improvements and securing inward investment.

£3 million has been secured from INTERREG IIIB, a Community Initiative of the European Regional Development Fund, one of whose three strands is specifically for

transnational co-operation on spatial planning. Further match funding has come from Yorkshire Forward and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Sheffield is the lead city in the UK, with the European partners being a regional development agency in Belgium, the University of Liege, and the Research Institute for the Federal State of North-Rhine Westphalia.

The project has three elements:

- ◆ Evidential research to include interviews with regeneration professionals and investors, supported by cost benefit analyses and before-and-after computer visualisations.
- ◆ Environmental improvements on demonstration sites to 'market test' the research.
- ◆ A marketing exercise for South Yorkshire and the other areas and promotion of the work throughout Europe.

A website is currently under construction at www.environment-investment.com. The site will provide information on the progress of the project, and give access to a range of related materials on the links between a good environment and economic wellbeing.

As well as improving the image of South Yorkshire with investors, the project will provide firm evidence for the argument that a good environment plays a key role in shaping strategic economic decisions – evidence that will benefit environmental regeneration work throughout the UK and Europe.

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