

Derelict, under-used and neglected land

Project Summary

The creation of community woodland on derelict, under-used and neglected land.

Background

As a legacy of its industrial past, the north west of England has over 25% of all the derelict land in the country. This is land which the Northwest Development Agency is committed to regenerating and it does this in part by supporting its environmental improvement, recognising the contribution that a pleasing and well-resourced environment can play in stimulating new economic growth.

The Project

Between 2002 and 2005, the Agency allocated £10 million to the creation of community woodland on derelict, under-used and neglected land in the region. The purpose of the funding was to both provide a high quality setting for new development and to turn the land into an economic, social and environmental resource in its own right.

The Agency chose the Mersey Forest, working in association with the Red Rose Forest and the Forestry Commission, to deliver the project, capitalising on the Forest's pioneering work in the 1990s on woodland planting on brownfield sites.

What has been achieved?

To date, over 700 hectares of derelict land has been reclaimed as community woodland. In addition, measurable contributions have been made to community capacity building, to neighbourhood renewal objectives and to the implementation of community strategies.

The project is a large-scale example of environmental regeneration in

action, providing real evidence of how community forestry can improve the environment and image of an area. Today, the Forests are seen as 'centres of excellence' for the reclamation of derelict land, with study tours and visitors coming from the UK and abroad. And over £20 million of NWDA funding has been secured by the Forestry Commission to continue the work in the Mersey Belt.



| KEY FACTS | |
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| DATES | 2002-2005 |
| Partners | Forestry Commission, Northwest Development Agency, Environment Agency |
| Costs | £10 million |
| Funder | Northwest Development Agency |
| Size/scale | Merseyside and Greater Manchester |