

The Parc de la Deûle, Lille Métropole

The idea for the Parc de la Deûle first emerged in the 1960s, but met with local objections and was abandoned. Twenty years later, the project resurfaced and this time was positively received. In 1995, a plan was formalised by Simon–JNC International to design the entire park. Work started in 1999 and, from the very outset, one of the key issues was the protection of the quality of the drinking water which supplies a third of the metropolis with water. As well as being working waterways, the Deûle and Sechin canals are host to biotopes of great ecological interest. In the past the park suffered from a lack of identity because of the way in which the land had been divided up. The new developments in the area reapportioned the land between Lille and Lens, which created a link between these urban areas and an array of new social, biological and economic opportunities. The existing attributes of the landscape were used to redevelop the space without reinventing it. The project had three main components: nature rediscovered (La Gîte in Santes), a transformation of industrial wasteland; nature tamed (Les Ansereuilles in Wavrin), a reconciliation of the urban and rural world with agricultural and leisure environments close together; and nature imagined (The Mosaic Garden in Houplin), reflecting the different cultures of Lille's communities. There has been constant interaction between the locals and the park users from the start, as both groups will be ensuring the maintenance and success of the space in the future.



The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe conferred the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 1st Session of the Award 2008-2009 on the organisers of the project, considering that it fulfils the criteria for the award concerning sustainable territorial development, exemplariness, public participation and awareness-raising, and bearing in mind the success of the links between urban space and rural space, as well as the important commitment of all those involved in the cleaning up and new use of the landscape.