

# MOLTON METAL

“I must have one of the best jobs in the country!”



Colin Molton does not actually say those words, but speaking to him gives you the strong impression that's what he thinks.

Colin is Director of Operations and Development at the South West RDA and its Deputy Chief Executive. So he undoubtedly holds a very senior position.

## But what does that mean in practice?

He manages a team of 120 people, which administers £80m annual spending on regeneration and economic development. With these not insignificant resources at his fingertips, Colin aims to deliver a substantial programme of urban and rural regeneration throughout a region whose size will surprise many.

Colin has a number of pressing challenges. These include helping to devise strategies to deliver major regeneration initiatives such as Millbay, Plymouth; Temple Quay, Bristol and Gloucester Docks (pictured). He is also involved in the provision of much-needed serviced sites such as Bristol Science Park and Plymouth International Business Park, and the region's strategy for incubation space and other workspace where the market fails to provide.

He also plays a leading role in delivering the Objective One programme in Cornwall and is a board member for two urban regeneration companies.

## Leading role

### What motivates Colin to lead such an active working life?

“I've learnt from my time with Leeds UDC and then as Head of Regeneration with English Partnerships in the West Midlands that you need to tackle problems head-on,” he says. “I believe strongly that whilst it's essential that we consult a wide range of interested parties from all walks of life, regeneration needs leadership and a strong desire to see results on the ground. You need to be prepared to intervene where necessary and make things happen.”

Colin's approach is producing results, with the South West RDA earning a reputation for turning strategies into action.



He sees one challenge being to increase the involvement of private investors in regeneration. “Apart from a few exceptions, such as Priority Sites, parts of the South West have not featured on the radar of many major property investors for some time. But we're determined to encourage people to take a closer look at Camborne, Pool, Redruth in Cornwall, Plymouth, Taunton and Glastonbury where exciting things are starting to happen.”

## Foresight

“Priority Sites have shown great foresight and taken the decision to invest in a number of these areas and found that not only can they deliver a quality development and create new jobs, but also achieve a commercial return.”

It seems like the Yorkshire lad, who took a gamble and moved his family to Somerset five years ago, is well and truly committed to seeing the job through. “I'm not sure that living in the South West is that much of a gamble,” he argues. “After all, it's a great place to live and work, as more and more people are finding out, and there really are some superb regeneration challenges and opportunities here. This is a region that's really going places, and I'm loving every minute of it!”

Sounds like it might just be one of the best jobs in the country after all.