

4 NW

Annual Report  
2008 & 2009

4NW  
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REPRESENTING  
englandsnorthwest

Regional Leaders Board

*4NW*  
*Annual Report*  
*2008 & 2009*



## *4NW is providing a truly regional voice*

During 2008/09, 4NW continued to develop its remit to ensure that issues that are important to the Northwest are defined and agreed by people in the Northwest.

This report reflects the important work that 4NW has undertaken on behalf of the region, often working in strong partnerships with the Northwest Regional Development Agency and the Government

Our task is to look ahead beyond the current economic downturn and put the plans in place that will ensure successful and sustainable regeneration.

### **“a significant development for regional accountability”**

We are still a relatively new body, made up of people who represent the leadership of Northwest organisations including local authorities, local business and the third sector.

Office for the North West, as well as other strategic organisations, including the Joint Economic Council on which I represent 4NW.

I believe 4NW is setting the benchmark for other English regions to follow and in the coming year we are set to make significant progress on developing a long-term approach to the most significant and pressing issues facing our region.

As part of the changeover arrangements from the Regional Assembly for the North West, the 4NW Leaders Board was created in July 2008. This marked a significant development for regional accountability and provided us with a sound democratic foundation.

During 2008/09, significant progress was made in the development of an effective Regional Housing Strategy, the review of the regional funding allocation programme and our local authority led scrutiny of the NWDA. These were all key examples of how 4NW is making a significant contribution to the sustainable economic development of the Northwest – helping make a better place for people to live and work.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Lord Peter Smith, my predecessor, who as the first chair established the principle of working by consensus, and wish him well in his new role on the NWDA Board. I would also like to thank the professional and highly committed team of staff at 4NW who so ably support the work of the Board.

By drawing together leaders from public, private and third sector bodies we are building a powerful approach to consultation, consensus building and decision making. 4NW is providing a truly regional voice that can speak with authority to represent the interests of the region as a whole. This approach is now shaping central Government thinking and spending decisions that affect the future of the Northwest, its people and places.

We are now building on this work as we develop the single integrated regional strategy (RS2010) in partnership with the NWDA, which will address the region's challenges across the economy, housing, transport, spatial planning and skills development within a sustainable framework.

### **Councillor, Sir Richard Leese Chair, 4NW**



## *A year of progress and development*

Regional Leaders Board established in July, the first such Board in the country. Its creation has allowed us to push forward, with the NWDA, on developing the single integrated regional strategy.

### **“the Leaders Board is now focusing its resources on those areas where it will have real influence”**

Considerable progress has been made this year, most notably in the preparatory work for the creation of the single integrated regional strategy (RS2010). This has involved organising and participating in an extensive series of presentations to senior regional stakeholders to determine the scope and approach we will take in developing the strategy and the evidence that must underpin the work.

The Leaders Board is now focusing its resources on those areas where it will have real influence and is therefore winding up its activity on regional scrutiny.

Finally, I would like to thank St Helens Council for providing support to me and our excellent team to ensure the continued smooth running of our organisation.

We were delighted to win another National Royal Town Planning Institute award, this time for our DVD on Gypsies and Travellers. The award reflected the priority the Board has given to highlighting the needs of the travelling community, while also helping local authorities who have responsibilities for site provision in their localities.

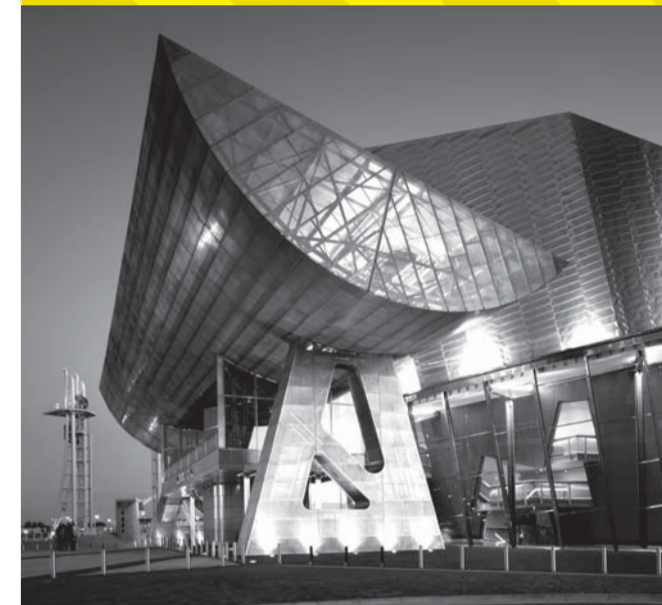
### **Phil Robinson Chief Executive, 4NW**



Reaching a regional consensus around spending priorities of RFA2 (particularly in the area of transport) once more proved the value of a high level strategic and accountable regional body.

Our impressive list of outputs, which you can read about in this report, demonstrates that we are on target to deliver our agreed 2009/2010 business plan and also underlines the quality of the working relationship that 4NW enjoys with the NWDA.

4NW has worked closely with the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) during this year to develop a joint Change Management Plan for the Northwest. We are already benefiting from new regional arrangements, most notably our



# Board Members & Stakeholders



## Local Authority Representatives:

- 01** County Councillor Mike Jones, Leader, Cheshire West & Chester
- 02** Councillor Ian Marks, Leader, Warrington Borough Council
- 03** Councillor Wesley Fitzgerald, Leader, Cheshire East
- 04** Councillor Hazel Harding, Leader, Lancashire County Council (until June 2009)
- 05** Councillor Ken Hudson, Leader, Preston City Council
- 06** Councillor Michael Lee, Leader, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- 07** Councillor Lord Peter Smith of Leigh, Leader, Wigan Borough Council
- 08** Councillor Sir Richard Leese, Leader, Manchester City Council
- 09** Councillor Dave Goddard, Leader, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
- 10** Councillor Ronnie Round, Leader, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- 11** Councillor Steve Foulkes, Leader, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
- 12** Councillor Tony Robertson, Leader, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council
- 13** Councillor Tim Stoddard, Leader, Cumbria County Council (until June 2009)
- 14** Councillor Brendan Jameson, Leader, South Lakeland District Council
- 15** Councillor Stewart Young, Deputy Leader, Cumbria County Council
- 16** Bill Jefferson, Chairman, Lake District National Park Authority

## Social Economic And Environmental Partners (SEEPS):

- 17** Alan Manning, Regional Secretary, NW Trade Union Congress
- 18** Richard Caulfield, Voluntary Sector North West
- 19** Malcolm McVicar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Central Lancashire
- 20** Geoff Muirhead, Group Chief Executive, The Manchester Airports Group
- 21** Deborah Shackleton, Group Chief Executive, Riverside Group
- 22** Mike Blackburn, North West Regional Director, British Telecom
- 23** Mike Damms, Chief Executive, North West Chamber of Commerce

## Participating Observers:

- 24** Carole Hudson, Chief Executive, St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
- 25** Liz Meek, Regional Director, Government Office North West
- 26** Steven Broomhead, Chief Executive, Northwest Regional Development Agency
- 27** Mike Farrar, Chief Executive, NHS NW
- 28** Deborah McLoughlin, Regional Director, Homes & Communities Agency



4NW has the responsibility for signing off the single regional strategy for the Northwest of England. RS2010, which will be produced in partnership with the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA), will cover planning, transport, housing and economic development issues. The strategy will promote the sustainable regeneration of the region, and 4NW, through the Regional Leaders Board, will ensure it is democratically accountable.

During 2008/09 significant progress was made in developing the strategy in the areas of planning, transport and housing, all of which will support the long-term economic potential of the region.

## Planning

Of particular note in 2008/09, was 4NW's ability to work successfully with NWDA to provide central Government with agreed funding priorities on behalf of the region (Regional Funding Allocation RFA2).

The advice covered the region's transport, housing and regeneration, economic development and skills priorities and outlined how funding can be most effectively spent in the region over the next 3 years and beyond.

The advice will assist Government in developing policy and in making public spending decisions that impact directly on the region.

Preparing the funding advice required 4NW to make some tough, but critical choices, to ensure the successful development of our region. That 4NW and the NWDA were able to agree this strong set of priorities demonstrated the maturity of regional decision making in the Northwest. The decisions were made by local authority leaders from each part of the region together with senior figures from business and the third sector and truly reflected the needs and aspirations of the Northwest.

The Principles and Issues paper was designed to stimulate a discussion on how the Northwest can integrate the traditionally separate agendas of spatial planning and economic development, the environment, and sustainable communities and social cohesion.

**“tough but critical choices to ensure the successful development of our region”**

Further development of the single integrated regional strategy (RS2010) was facilitated by the creation of a dedicated website to create additional channels for consultation and engagement beyond the on-going face-to-face stakeholder work taking place across the region. A Principles and Issues paper, designed to help frame the strategy was co-written with the NWDA and a three month consultation began in February 2009.

This paper did not intend to offer solutions, or potential policy or investment recommendations. Its purpose was to set out in a clear and direct way those issues (both positive and negative) which we expect the region will want to consider and prioritise before it moves on to detailed strategy development. The findings of this consultation will provide an important foundation for the development of RS2010.

# Planning, Transport & Housing: towards a single strategy

## Transport

A modern, high-quality, efficient and well-integrated transport system is essential to support the competitiveness of the North West's industry and commerce, and to facilitate the region's social and recreational needs.

Our aim during 2008/09 has been to develop a strategy that will maintain, manage and improve transport networks in ways that contribute towards the region's sustainable development policies. Access is important too for attracting new investment, particularly to areas where declining traditional industries need replacing by new development.

Our strategy is being developed in consultation with the Northwest Regional Development Agency, Highways Agency, Network Rail, local authorities and other stakeholders. The strategy will only work if it takes full account of the concerns and aspirations of local communities across the region. This year has been about establishing the regional context for the preparation of the strategy and agreeing priorities for investment and management across all modes of transport. This has involved extensive stakeholder consultation which will continue next year.

## Key achievements

- Government advised on region's top priorities
- Regional Housing Strategy launched
- Ground work carried out for regional transport strategy

## Housing

A significant milestone was reached in March 2009, when the 4NW Regional Housing Group (RHG) launched its regional housing strategy at the North West Housing Conference, attended by the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears MP. It was the culmination of months of detailed consultation with a wide range of local stakeholders.

The strategy is designed to ensure sustained long term economic growth, inclusion and regeneration. It will achieve this by strengthening and focussing interventions to ensure that housing markets operate effectively to address the tension that can exist between creating a long term housing offer that looks to people's aspirations and reacting to short term pressures to meet immediate housing needs.

The strategy provides a framework for the 5 sub-regions to shape their own housing strategies and work with their districts in establishing market interventions that will create balance across their housing markets. Using intelligence gathered from Strategic Housing Market

Assessments these interventions will address the issues we have identified and allow locally determined solutions that will tie housing into a wider policy environment. In the coming year, further work will be undertaken to ensure greater understanding and effective implementation of the strategy.

We have also been working on the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) covering Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and regional parking standards. This will be published for consultation at the end of July 2009.

## Meet The Team



Hazel Harding  
Chair of Planning Group  
(to 2009)



Cllr Steve Foulkes  
Chair of Housing Group



Michael Gallagher  
Director of Planning,  
Transport & Housing



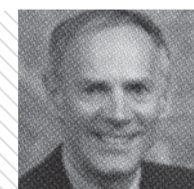
Cllr Ron Round  
Chair of Transport Group

4NW is playing a critical role in ensuring policy development across the region is developed in a joined-up, comprehensive and sustainable way. Tackling climate change has become a major priority for central and local government and 4NW is taking the lead in supporting sub-regions to integrate the climate change agenda into all aspects of policy making. We have had an important role in scrutinising the work of public bodies to the benefit of all stakeholders, although this aspect of our work is now winding down. As European regulation and funding becomes increasingly significant, we are providing a voice for the region in Brussels.

#### Key achievements

- Sharing best practice on responding to the recession
- Launching the Economic Development Group
- Practical support on climate change for local authorities

#### Meet The Team



Cllr Ian Marks  
Chair of Economic  
Development Group



Anne Selby  
Chair of NW Sustainable  
Development Group



Cllr Flo Clucas  
Chair of NWREP  
European Group



Cllr Brian Spencer  
Chair of Scrutiny Group



Steve Barwick  
Director of Strategy

#### Policy development

During 2008 we established 4NW's Economic Development Group (EDG) made up of representatives from the sub-regions, business and third sector bodies. One of the first tasks of the group has been to assess the impact of the recession on the region and draw together best practice from the sub-regions to dealing with the downturn. The EDG has also co-ordinated a regional response to the Communities and Local Government Department's consultation document 'Transforming Places: Changing Lives – a framework for regeneration. This has been another successful example of 4NW providing a single, authoritative voice for the region.

#### Sustainable development

During 2008/09 4NW made a major contribution to the implementation of: 'Rising to the Challenge: A Climate Change Action Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2009' through the part-time secondment of a member of 4NW staff to the NW Climate Change Unit. We published a significant study into the potential carbon savings that are feasible in the Northwest by 2020, which will feed into RS2010, and continued to develop our Sustainable Development Group, with a successful bid to Defra for funds related to sustainable development. We have created a web based Integrated Appraisal Toolkit to be used in assessing sustainability content within our regional strategies. 4NW also contracted

## Policy development, sustainable development, scrutiny & Europe

#### Scrutiny

4NW has had a regional scrutiny function covering both the work of the North West Regional Development Agency and the Regional Leaders Board itself. 4NW has been widely recognised as providing an effective model of scrutiny, acting as a critical friend

#### Europe

Representing the interests of the region in Europe, a series of consultation meetings were held across the region on the proposed Thematic Priorities for the revised European Framework for 2009-13. The North West Regional European Partnership is also preparing a regional response to the European Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion which when combined with existing European and Social Cohesion policies will provide a holistic approach to European cohesion.

### "4NW providing a single authoritative voice for the region"

with the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) to deliver a programme of support to all Northwest local authorities working on the new national indicators for climate change adaptation and mitigation. A network of local authority officers has been set up along with a NW web portal and a series of seminars and workshops across the region. In line with our role in monitoring and recording the region's performance on waste management, 4NW prepared the 4th annual waste management monitoring report.

to the NWDA. However, the Government has decided that scrutiny will no longer be a function for Regional Boards. The Government intends the newly created Regional Select committees of MPs to take on a scrutiny role. This year though, scrutiny work continued with an inquiry into the operation and impact of the Business Link service in the North West. We will work closely with the Chair of the Select committee, David Crausby MP, who has already met the Board.

4NW believes that regional decision making requires meaningful engagement with stakeholders beyond the local authority sector. By establishing a pragmatic public and private sector partnership with leading regional organisations such as the TUC, BT, Chambers of Commerce and universities, 4NW is better able to represent the region and take better decisions on its behalf. The success of the organisation is in large part based on the strength of this public and private sector partnership.

## Stakeholders

### Meet The Team



Mike Damms  
Chair of Stakeholder Group



Simon Crawshaw  
Director of Corporate  
Development & External Affairs

Stakeholder members bring a unique cross sectoral perspective to policy development. One example was a highly successful Deprived Communities symposium, which has fed into the development of the new single regional strategy which 4NW will co-develop with our colleagues the Northwest Regional Development Agency.

Stakeholders made significant contributions to the principles and issues consultation and will continue to work in close partnership with local authorities throughout the development of this critically important single regional strategy.

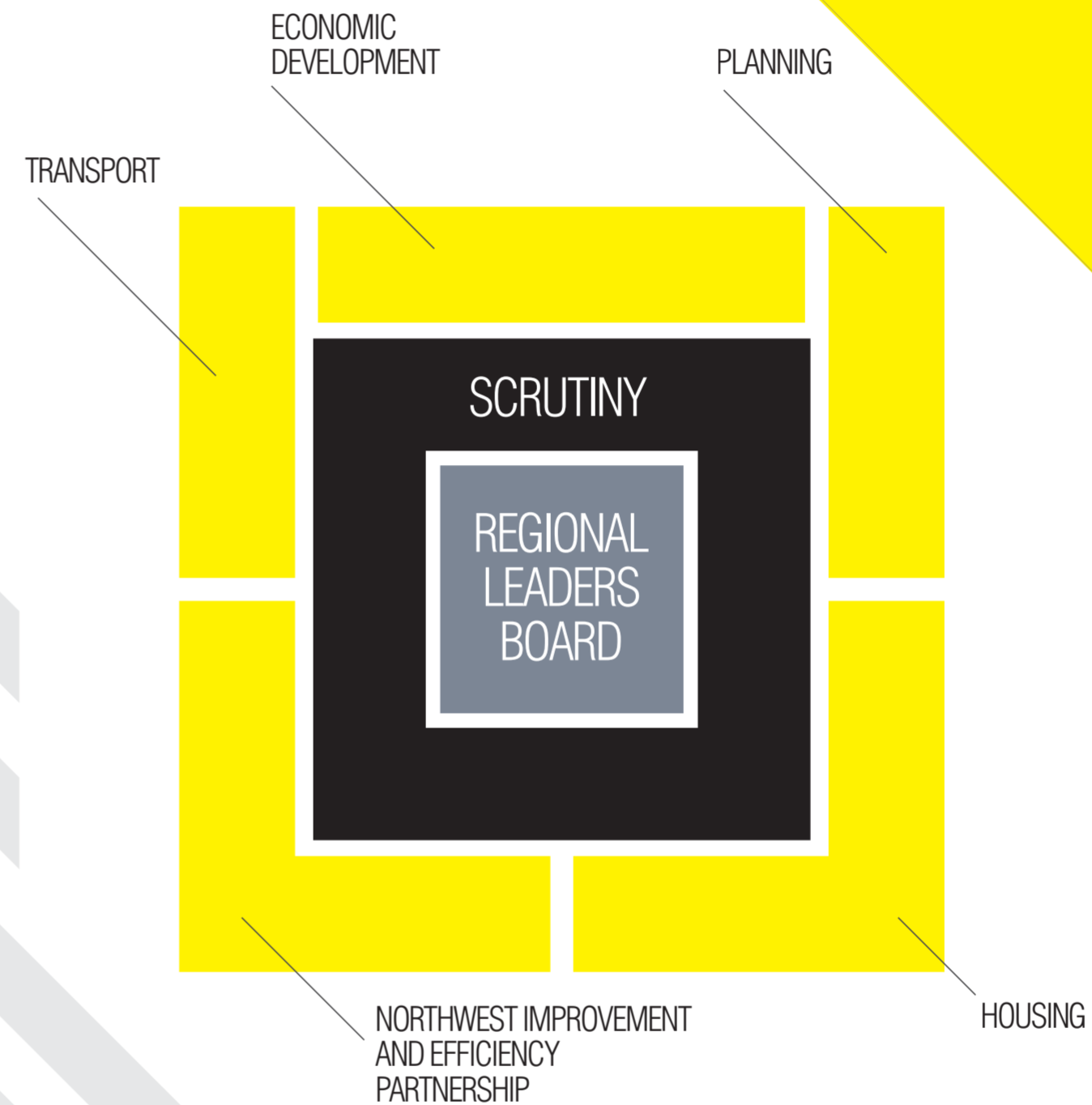
## What They Say About Us

"The response of 4NW in the Northwest seems to be an eminently practical and pragmatic approach by the political leaders in that region to make things work. I believe that it deserves our support. I am delighted that they are approaching the matter in such a positive and inclusive way"

Rt Hon Nick Raynsford MP, former  
Regional Government Minister

"I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the important work you have undertaken on a range of matters including Regional Spatial Strategies, regional scrutiny and sustainable development"

Rt Hon John Healey MP, Minister  
for Local Government



### Contact us

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4NW has a highly professional team of subject specialists who will be happy to answer any questions you may have about our work.

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