

Speaker Biographies

Hugh Lang - Chair of Tees Valley Unlimited

Hugh studied at Glasgow University obtaining a BSc Hons in Geology (1978) and an MBA (1993).

During the first 5 years of Hugh's working life he worked overseas (USA, Africa, Middle East) in the oil and gas industry. He returned to Scotland in 1983 and held positions of commercial development manager and sales director within the electronics industry.

In 1993 he made a move into the Aviation Industry, taking up the position of Managing Director for Glasgow Prestwick International Airport as part of a management buy-in team. After a period of rapid growth the Airport was sold to Stagecoach in 1998 at which time he was promoted to the position of Managing Director of Stagecoach Aviation.

In December 2000 Hugh accepted the position of Managing Director for Teesside International Airport, as it was known then. His main achievements during his time at the airport have been to stabilise the business, deliver the privatisation of the Airport with Peel Airports Ltd and launching the re-brand of the Airport in September 2004.

Hugh continues to lead the re-development of the Airport and has recently submitted a master planning application to deliver (£56m of capital investment) a new airport product by 2007.

In 2008 Hugh became Group Airports Director of Peel Airports Group. Other directorships; Chairman, Tees Valley Unlimited (City Region), Airport Operators Association, North East Tourism Board, Peel Airports Group Board.

Prior to establishing Shared Intelligence, Lee was a founder Director of Conran Roche (which then became EDAAW). During the 1970s, he was Planning Director of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation. He is currently Chair of the Town and Country Planning Association

Rt. Hon. John Healey MP - Minister of State

John Healey was appointed as Minister of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government on 29 June 2007.

Since 2002 John Healey has worked at the Treasury, first as Economic Secretary and then later as Financial Secretary. From 2001-2002 he served as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Adults Skills at the Department for Education and Skills.

He has previously served as a member of the Education and Employment Select Committee and Parliamentary Private Secretary to Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has been Member of Parliament for Wentworth in South Yorkshire since 1997 and was appointed to the Privy Council in November 2008.

John Healey was born in Wakefield and educated at Lady Lumley's Comprehensive School, Pickering, and at Peter's

School in York and Christ's College, Cambridge. Mr Healey worked in the voluntary sector from 1984 to 1990 with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation and MIND campaigning to improve rights and services for disabled people.

From 1990 to 1994 Mr Healey worked in communications for Issue Communications, a campaign company, and the MSF Union. He was Campaigns Director for the TUC from 1994 to 1997. Mr Healey has also been a part time tutor at the Open University's Business School.

Mr Healey is married with one child and lives in his constituency in Rotherham.

Ada Burns

Ada Burns has been Chief Executive of Darlington Borough Council since August 2006. Prior to her appointment at Darlington, Ada was Director of Neighbourhood Renewal in the London Borough of Greenwich, a post she held from June 2001. Ada's experience also includes 18 years in housing, regeneration and development, within a variety of settings, but since 1991 in local government in Greenwich and Croydon.

Eamonn Boylan

Eamonn Boylan is the Corporate Director for New Ventures and Partnerships at the Homes and Communities Agency. He was previously Deputy Chief Executive (Regeneration) at Manchester City Council.

Eamonn began his career with Manchester City Council in 1983 eventually becoming Assistant Director of Housing in 1994. He was appointed to the post of Executive Director (Housing and Operational Services) at Sheffield City Council in 1997 before returning to Manchester in 1999.

Since then Eamonn has held responsibility for the City Council's housing and cultural services and has, since 2001, also held responsibility for the city's Regeneration division, incorporating all of the city's economic, social and physical regeneration initiatives.

Eamonn has played a leading role in the development of the proposals for new arrangements to take forward the physical regeneration and economic growth of the Manchester City Region. He has also led the development of the Manchester/Salford Housing Market Renewal Partnership which is taking forward a comprehensive strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal in the conurbation core.

Eamonn has also played a key role in developing the Manchester: Knowledge Capital project incorporating all four central Manchester HEIs and which is providing the focus for economic development of the city region. He is a member of the Core Cities Executive Group, representing the eight major English cities outside London, and a member of the Task Group responsible for the implementation of the Northern Way Growth Strategy.

Lee Shostak

Lee Shostak established Shared Intelligence in 2000. He specialises in economic development, urban regeneration and scenario planning throughout the UK. He has led the teams responsible for the first Regional Economic Strategy for the North East: *Unlocking your Potential* and *Moving Forward: the Northern Way*. He has worked closely with partners in the Tees Valley on a wide range of economic development and regeneration projects. Lee is currently working on strategies for Newcastle Gateshead, Greater Manchester, the Thames Gateway, and the Black Country.

Prior to establishing Shared Intelligence, Lee was a founder Director of Conran Roche (which then became EDAW). During the 1970s, he was Planning Director of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation. He is currently Chair of the Town and Country Planning Association.

Alan Welby

Alan Welby - who worked as Deputy Chief Executive of Black Country Consortium - and David Cramond - a former Consulting Director with KPMG and Associate Partner at Atos Origin - will join the Agency in the New Year.

Alan, 37, who was born in Mexico, raised in Oxfordshire and studied Government and European Community Studies at Newcastle University, will become One North East's new Director of Strategy in February. He has an outstanding track record in strategy and European and UK policy and has worked in Oxfordshire, Brussels and the West Midlands. Alan's experience in working with Sub-Regional Partners and with Multi-Area Agreements will be vital as he leads the preparation of the Integrated Regional Strategy.

Alan has previously worked at the European Commission, Advantage West Midlands, University of Greenwich and in Local Government.

Jonathan Blackie

Jonathan Blackie is the Regional Director of the Government Office for the North East.

Previous positions include Director of the Regional Development Agency, One NorthEast, Regional Director for English Partnerships, Director of Newcastle City Challenge and Regional Projects Manager for the Audit Commission.

He is the Government Office lead for the Department of Business and Enterprise and the management of European Structural Funds. He chairs the Interim Regional Transport Board, Regional Resilience Forum and the North East Programme Management Committee for European Structural Funds. He is also the Chair of New Writing North, the literature development agency for the North of England.

Martyn Pellew

Martyn has extensive industrial sector experience gathered from his time working at various high profile companies across the UK and abroad. His current role on the board of Middlesbrough specialist ports company PD Ports Limited follows his part in the company's successful 2004 stock market

flotation and subsequent sale to BBI in 2006.

Career background - After graduating with diplomas in industrial administration and marketing (CIM) in 1974, Martyn has worked in a variety of marketing posts - including a secondment at Saatchi and Saatchi. He moved from engineering group Morgan Crucible plc onto the position of commercial manager at German based chemical and pharmaceutical company Hoechst AG.

After roles as group strategic planning manager, sales and marketing director and then development director at Ladbroke Group plc he has worked for a number of years in logistics including launching Exel, now DHL, before spending nine months on business and market planning for the major regeneration project in East London at Docklands Light Rail.

Martyn moved to join the logistics focused Unipart Group of Companies in 1996 and into the position of director and general manager of Unipart Rail Logistics. He left the £1.5 billion turnover company to join PD Ports in 2002. As group development director, Martyn is responsible for growth of sales, new business and profits as well all company communications from staff and customers to wider stakeholders including both regional and central government.

Additional information - Martyn is chairman of the Tees Valley Chamber of Commerce as well as being on the North East Chamber's board and policy council. His charitable work has included his membership of the St Francis Children's Society adoption panel.

Martyn on his appointment to the Business & Enterprise North East board:

"I am confident that Business & Enterprise North East can make a very positive contribution to all businesses in the region.

"A service of this kind will not only help foster a thriving and enterprising existing business community, but must also play a significant part in attracting growing and inward investing companies into the North East. Both of these factors will have a positive effect on our local economy and help further improve the quality of life for those who live in the North East."

Chris Roberts

Chris was Executive Director of Tyne and Wear LSC from 30 September 2000 until January 2004 when he became Regional Director. Chris spent several years with Newcastle City Council and then moved to North Tyneside Council. At North Tyneside he held various senior management roles, finally as Executive Director. In 1992 he became Executive Director of North Tyneside Council. Chris sits on the boards of a number of organisations including the Tyneside Cinema, Northern Leisure and Northumbria Sports Foundation.

Alastair MacColl

Alastair MacColl is the Chief Executive of Business & Enterprise North East, a private sector led business that operates the Business Link and skills brokerage service for the North East of England. Business & Enterprise North East also operates the North East England Investment Centre and the North East England Service Provider Register. The principal role of Business & Enterprise North East is to help more North East businesses to start, succeed and grow by promoting business growth, enterprise and investment in skills.

Before joining Business & Enterprise North East, Alastair worked in newspapers and media-related businesses across the UK for almost twenty years. Over the last ten years, he has led publishing businesses for Trinity Mirror plc and the Daily Mail and General Trust Group.

Alastair is a Governor of the University of Teesside, chairs the Teesside Business School Advisory Council and is a member of the Leadership Board of Tees Valley Unlimited.

John Orchard

Born in Essex but raised in Pembrokeshire, John Orchard studied design at Berkshire College of Art and Design before working as an Interior Designer in London. He joined the commercial property company Marchday in 1989 specialising in running development projects and became a director in 1995. Marchday have become known as regeneration specialists and John is currently working on plans for the UK's largest sustainable mixed community at Lingfield Point, the award winning development in Darlington. John is married with two sons and a daughter and lives on the Kent coast near the town of Deal. In days past he was a keen rugby player, turning out for Wasps, London Scottish and London Nigerian RFC of which he was Secretary for many years. A keen, if infrequent painter John now revels in the delights of links golf and is a regular visitor to the Kingdom of Fife.

Pat Ritchie

Pat Ritchie took up the post of Regional Director, North East on 1 December 2008. Prior to joining HCA, Pat was with the Regional Development Agency, One NorthEast from January 2004 initially as Director of Strategy & Development. She was promoted to the post of Assistant Chief Executive in 2007.

At One NorthEast, Pat led on developing the North East's Regional Economic Strategy and its Action Plan and oversaw its delivery. She also had a key role in the RDA's implementation of the Sub-National Review (SNR) by leading a national RDA SNR Advisory Group. Pat was responsible for key strategic relations in the Agency, particularly with local government and local councils.

She lead on joint strategic planning and investment with the city regions and local authorities including Tees Valley MAA on behalf of the Agency. Pat's other responsibilities included negotiating the North East's ERDF programme 2013, the national RDA responsibility for Communities & Local Government policy and leading on skills.

Prior to this Pat was Deputy Chief Executive of The Wise Group, a third sector employment and training company with over 350 staff across Scotland and the North of England.

Pat has extensive experience of economic development and regeneration. In 2002 she was seconded to Glasgow Housing Association to lead on economic and social aspects of the stock transfer a senior manager with EDI, a property and economic development company owned by Edinburgh Council. From 2000-2003 Pat was Chair of the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum, SURF, an independent network of regeneration policy makers and practitioners.

She worked in the North East from 1983 to 1998 in various roles in economic development and regeneration in Newcastle City and Sunderland City Councils.

Neil Etherington

A Teessider born and bred, Neil has operated at a senior level in both the Public and Private sectors and frequently in high profile roles.

A graduate economist Neil started his working career with Dunlop (subsequently BTR) and after an initial position in Industrial Relations was an Export Sales Manager for 5 years. A three year stint as Deputy Regional Director of the CBI brought him on to a wider stage and he became Chief Executive of Teesside Tomorrow in 1992. In 1996 he became the first (and only) Chief Executive of the award winning Tees Valley Development Company (TVDC) which championed the area in terms of both Inward Investment and Tourism and demonstrated the strategic and collaborative capacity of the five Tees Valley Councils. With the merger of TVDC with the Tees Valley Regeneration Neil became the Strategic Investment & Marketing Director.

In 2005 he was appointed Chief Executive of Redcar Racecourse and in a four years led a significant improvement in both the performance and profile of Redcar's principal asset.

In 2008 Neil joined Able UK Limited as its Group Development Director overseeing the Company's expansive land bank (3,000 acres) across the North of England.

Neil is a Governor of the University of Teesside, a Trustee of the Tees Valley Community Foundation and has been Chairman of Tees Valley Living (TVL) since 2006.

Note: In its relatively short life (5 ½ years) the partnership that comprises TVL has had a significant and positive impact on its partners and on the wider community that it serves. In addition to the recent funding approved under the Growth Point TVL will have (by 2011) generated an additional £86 million (and that does not count any leverage) injected in to Housing Market Renewal.

Alison Thain

In April 2008 Alison became Group Chief Executive of social housing manager and developer Fabrick Housing Group, a strategic partnership of Tees Valley Housing (where Alison was previously Chief Executive) and Erimus Housing. With a turnover approaching £60m, over 700 staff and a capital spending programme of £100m p.a., Fabrick is one of the top companies in the Tees Valley.

Alison is also a member of the Board of Regional Development Agency, One North East, where she is Chair of the Regeneration Committee and Design Champion. She is also a Governor of Teesside University and one of the private sector partners of Tees Valley Unlimited Leadership Board where she has the housing brief. She was awarded the OBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours in June 2004.

Richard Bass

Richard started as a Quantity Surveyor at Leech Homes and was educated at Northumbria University in Building Studies.

He then went on to graduated from Nottingham Trent University on 14th June 2001 with a Master of Science Degree in Residential Development.

Richard Bass joined Keepmoat Homes North East just after it was formed in May 1994, when a team of four was developing just two sites.

In his former role as Land Director, Richard, from Monkseaton, was instrumental in the rapid expansion of the past five years which saw construction rocket from around 150 properties in 2003/4 to a peak of 500. Over the same period the company has moved to bigger new offices at Team Valley.

A key player in Keepmoat Homes' rise to become one of the North East's top five builders, he took over as the new Managing Director in May 2007. Today the company is operating throughout the region, building circa 300 homes a year and specialising in regeneration projects providing affordable properties for first and second time buyers. The Company also has close links to Local RSLs and is delivering over 100 social properties this year.

Martin Crookston

Martin Crookston BSc (Econ) Dip TRP is a Director of Tribal's Urban Studio team. He is an urban economist (LSE) and planner (Glasgow University) who, before leading his practice into the Tribal Group in 2008, worked for Llewelyn-Davies Planning, for three London Boroughs, and on a two-year Technical Assistance contract in Algeria.

He is the director responsible for our innovative work on Residential Futures for the Northern Way. He has directed major studies such as Four World Cities (with Professor Sir Peter Hall), Thames Gateway Development & Transport and The Case for Key Worker Housing Solutions: Extent, Patterns & Impact. Overseas, he has been closely involved in our tourism, conservation and social development work in the Near and Middle East, and in Know-How Fund advice to the transition economies of the Czech Republic and Poland.

His studies on urban capacity have been at the leading edge of policy development nationally, and have included national research for ODPM and Rowntree, a regional framework (Exploring Urban Housing Potential) for the North West, and local studies for individual authorities. This has led on to an increasing engagement in the issue of housing provision - in the Growth Areas in the South East, in the Market Renewal "pathfinders" in the Midlands and North; in the context of Scotland's social inclusion agenda for Clydeside and Edinburgh; and most recently with the work for the Northern Way.

He led a major community master-planning project (Walker Riverside) in the East Newcastle housing market renewal area, on behalf of the Places for People Group; our inputs to the Area Development Frameworks and Neighbourhood Action Plans for the North Staffordshire HMRA Pathfinder (with Professor Brendan Nevin); and the Regeneration Framework for Granby-Toxteth, for the South Central Cluster Partnership in Liverpool. These bring together our urban design skills and the understanding and analysis of local communities and housing

As a member of the Richard Rogers Urban Task Force appointed by and reporting to the Deputy Prime Minister, Martin is frequently invited to speak and advise on issues of urban quality and management associated with the government's "Urban Renaissance" objectives.

Peter Hetherington

Peter Hetherington, former regional affairs editor of The Guardian, writes for Society Guardian on regeneration and communities. He was a board member of the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC) for three years, until it was absorbed by the Homes and Communities Agency last December. He was instrumental in launching an ASC action project in Milton Keynes, beginning with the understanding of sustainable communities in schools, which will soon see a new university college embracing a foundation degree in sustainable communities - a project which is taking off in a string of English universities. He is an adviser to the HCA's new academy.

Peter is a visiting professor at Newcastle University's centre for urban and regional development studies, is a vice president of the Town and Country Planning Association, and chairs the TCPA's Connecting England commission, which has called for a more balanced planning and economic framework across England, strengthened with better communications. He was a member of the Local Government Association's independent commission, which made a series of recommendations to reorganise the LGA and give the organisation greater clout at national level - something which, he believes by accident or by design, the LGA is now achieving.

Peter's abiding interest in communities began as an activist in Co Durham, campaigning against a village re-settlement policy which consigned former colliery villages to demolition.

Richard Alty

Richard Alty has been Assistant Chief Executive at Darlington Borough Council, with responsibility for regeneration, since 2007. He joined the Council in late 1999 as Assistant Director with responsibility for planning, major projects, land and property, economic regeneration, transport and other development and business-facing services.

For the Council, he has led work with partners to devise and implement the Darlington Gateway regeneration strategy, attracting development and improving economic outcomes. Darlington's two national transport demonstration projects have produced increases in sustainable travel and decreases in urban traffic in this period.

Richard Alty worked as Borough Planning Officer at Sedgefield Borough Council from 1990 to 1999, and before that at Sheffield City Council and South Yorkshire County Council. At Sheffield he led the team producing the 1986 'A City Centre for People' plan.

He was educated at Ferryhill Secondary School in County Durham, St John's College, Oxford, and University College London.

He has served on the Royal Town Planning Institute national Council, has been an external examiner at Sheffield Hallam University, and chairs an inter-church youthwork organisation. He is current chair of the Tees Valley Directors of Regeneration.

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Les Southerton

Les is an Economist and Chartered Town Planner and has worked on Teesside since 1970. He was Chief Executive of a City Challenge Partnership between 1992 and 1996, a Director in the local authority between 1996 and 2000 when he became the first Chief Executive of Middlesbrough Town Centre Company. In June 2007 he retired from this role, but immediately took up the position of a part-time role as Director of the Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative.

Ian Wardle

Ian was born in Sunderland in 1974 and brought up in Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne & Wear. He studied undergraduate and post-graduate degrees in Town Planning at the University of Newcastle.

Ian started his career as a graduate trainee with George Wimpey (now Taylor Wimpey) in Middlesbrough and Leeds and progressed to land manager, covering Yorkshire to the Scottish borders and later became a development director. At George Wimpey, Ian was responsible for property acquisition, design, engineering, urban renewal, CDM and environmental management and delivered a number of high profile conversions of listed buildings, large scale urban regeneration projects, and a variety of homes including the award winning Westoe Crown Village in South Tyneside and The Staithees in Gateshead.

In 2003, Ian joined The Sunnyside Partnership as project director, a regeneration agency formed by One NorthEast, English Partnerships, Sunderland City Council and the urban regeneration company Sunderland arc to revive the historic heart of Sunderland. During the 3 years Ian was working in Sunnyside he and his team secured over £50M of private and public sector investment and delivered a number of regeneration projects including award winning public realm improvements, conversion of listed buildings into business space, a business and arts centre and grant schemes.

In 2006, Ian joined Redcar & Cleveland Council as Head of Regeneration and last year become Director of Regeneration Services with responsibility for planning, strategic housing, land and property, area regeneration, economic development, culture, leisure and tourism.

Ian is married to Louise and they have a daughter. They live in County Durham and in his spare time he likes to paint.

Richard Buckley

Since January 2006 Richard has been Director of Development of Tees Valley Regeneration. This role co-ordinates the five key projects for regeneration in the region with the remit to deliver over £2b of private sector investment

over 700 acres. This consists of 7500 homes, 2.5m ft2 of commercial space and 1.8m ft2 of B1, B2 space. Over £200m of public funds are to be used as leverage to deliver the projects.

Prior to working at TVR, Richard was Regional Director for the Banks Group running the development division in the North East and Midlands. The role was to build up a property portfolio of brownfield land for various development uses. In nine years at the Banks Group a substantial land bank of opportunities were delivered including 170 acres in Stockton on Bowesfield Riverside. On leaving the company a forward programme of 4500 acres was being progressed through development or the planning process.

Richard started his career from Newcastle University by joining Ward Hadaway Solicitors as a planning consultant and build up a large base of regional clients.

Steve Gawthorpe

- Area Director North East, Homes and Communities Agency.
- Studied for RICS examinations in Newcastle.
- Started career as chartered surveyor in 1972 with Newcastle City Council moving to English Estates, English Partnerships, and One NorthEast before returning to English Partnerships as Area Director North East leading the North East team in developing and delivering a strategic approach to regeneration in the North East of England in line with English Partnerships' national objectives including sustainability and quality.
- Has been involved in many major regeneration initiatives in the North East, including North Tyneside City Challenge and Grainger Town, both as a practitioner and director on both boards, as well as board member and Chair of Meden Valley Making Places in Nottingham/Derby coalfield.
- Board member of Sunderland ARC, Tees Valley Regeneration (two regional Urban Regeneration Companies), South East Northumberland North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative, Regional Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Communities.
- Resident of Morpeth, married - wife retired head teacher, two children, a son who is a major in the Army, a daughter who is a biomedical scientist.

David Cramond

David joined One NorthEast in January 2009. A Town Planner by profession, David worked first in local government economic regeneration before spending 20 years in management consulting with KPMG and Atos Origin. David has contributed to many financial initiatives including Coalfield, Urban Regeneration and Tourism regeneration strategies in both the public and private sectors. David has also undertaken major business change programmes in central and local government clients. His current role is to focus investment on programmes that will have a strategic economic impact in North East England.

John Lowther

John Lowther is the Director of the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. A geographer and town planner by training, John has been involved in planning, housing, transport and economic development for the last 30 years in London, Scunthorpe and the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit is responsible for developing sub-regional planning, economic development, housing and transport strategies and programmes for the Tees Valley. The JSU has developed the Tees Valley City Region Development Programme and the Tees Valley City Region Business Case.

The JSU supports Tees Valley Unlimited, our public/private sector partnership whose task is to coordinate action to improve the economic performance of the Tees Valley.

John has also led on the preparation of a Multi Area Agreement for the Tees Valley which brings together the regeneration, housing and transport capital funding streams into a single city region capital programme to implement the city region business case. The Multi Area Agreement was approved by Government in July last year.

Cathy Francis

Cathy joined the Department for Communities and Local Government in April 2007. She is responsible for delivering on the Government's SNR commitment to facilitate a focus on economic activity in the sub-region through the development of Multi Area Agreements (MAAs). She is also responsible for designing and developing the policy that will guide the development of city-region pilots. Prior to this Cathy was Secretary to the independent Equalities Review commissioned by the Prime Minister. Before that Cathy worked in the Government Office for London where she was head of the youth and crime unit, she was also latterly responsible for developing London's Resettlement of Offenders Strategy. Cathy is a former member of the Social Exclusion Unit. While in the Unit Cathy worked on the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy - the Government's Strategy to improve the lives of the most deprived people and places.

Chris Leslie

Chris Leslie has been Director of NLGN since September 2005. Chris was previously Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Constitutional Affairs (2003 to 2005). Prior to this, he was a minister at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002 to 2003) and before that at the Cabinet Office (2001 to 2002). He was elected Member of Parliament for the Shipley constituency in May 1997 and was re-elected in June 2001, serving two whole terms (until the May 2005 General Election). From 1994 to 1998, Chris was a councillor on Bradford City Council.

Linda Edworthy

Linda has worked in economic development for almost 22 years. Linda started her career with Durham County Council in 1986 as a planner working on rural development. During her time at Durham she gained a broad range of experience including rural development, economic policy development,

programme management and strategic project development. Linda became the Economic Development Team Leader with Durham County Council in 1996. She was also the Secretary to the County Durham Economic Partnership. Her focus was co-ordinating the Partnership's activities to ensure the development of County Durham's economy. As well as economic development duties Linda also had responsibilities for other corporate activities, such as performance management and equal opportunities within the economic development service.

Linda became Chair of the Chief Economic Development Officer's Society (CEDOS) in November 2006 and has been the CEDOS Advisor for the North East since 2003. On behalf of CEDOS, she develops the Society's relationships with other professional societies, government departments and organisations involved in economic development and regeneration. Linda has also led on the development of performance indicators for economic development and regeneration and the development of the Society's benchmarking group.

Linda moved to Tees Valley to take up the role of Senior Assistant Director (Corporate Support) in the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit in February 2008. She is responsible for the development of business planning, performance management, communications and stakeholder engagement for Tees Valley Unlimited and for the JSU. Linda has also been focussing on the development of the Tees Valley Multi Area Agreement.

Trudy Birtwell

Trudy has a background of almost 10 years working in the public sector in the field of organisational development and capacity building.

During that time she has designed and managed a series of leadership programmes for senior managers and elected members to build trust and strengthen relationships in support of improved partnership working.

Over the years, Trudy has forged links with regional and national bodies such as Higher Education Funding Council for England, Open University and the Institute of Leadership and Management to influence the development and integration of curriculum modules for new and existing learning programmes.

Kamal Panchal

Kamal leads on the IDEa's economic development stream of work and has overall responsibility for its environmental sustainability and climate change programme. His main economic related projects can be divided in three broad areas: helping councils deal with the impacts of the recession; tackling local employment outcomes (such as worklessness); and developing local capacity for delivering longer term economic prosperity. Specific projects of interest include the recently launched diagnostic and benchmark 'Driving Economic Prosperity', a comprehensive guide for action on dealing with the recession and developing sector-led guidance for carrying out an economic assessment.