

# Overseas processes and offerings in Special Economic Development Organisations



## **Lou Brazier**

2012 Committee for Geelong Fellowship

Committee for Geelong / ISS Institute International Fellowship





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# Executive Summary

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In 2007, Northern Futures was established to take the lead in planning and leveraging whole of government and community support to minimise the social and economic impact on the northern suburbs of Geelong associated with the downturn in the manufacturing industries.

Since its establishment, Northern Futures has committed to developing an Economic Independence and Social Inclusion Investment Plan for the Northern Suburbs. Northern Futures is currently a collaborative partnership between concerned members of the community including government, business, schools and community groups that are working together to identify opportunities for improved economy, jobs and education and training for the area.

Northern Futures is one of many major initiatives (either planned or under way) that aim to deliver an integrated approach to regeneration of the northern suburbs through development of human and physical capital. Central to Northern Futures is a local approach to project delivery and services that will ensure a future of growth, prosperity and focus for the northern suburbs.

The purpose of this international scholarship was to learn from other areas abroad, garner information and determine whether Northern Futures was on the right track. The Fellow also used the international experience to identify effective and sustainable ways to address the issues of disadvantaged faced by the northern suburbs, with the ultimate aim of narrowing the social and economic gap between those who live in 3214 postcode suburbs and the rest of the region.

Northern Futures Strategic Plan consists of three action areas: Supporting Economic Growth; Linking Labour Supply and Demand; and Strengthening Education and Training. Achievements within each of the three specified Action Areas are already making a difference in the northern suburbs. However, it was clear to the Fellow during her travels that the original plan was to be viewed as a living document that needed enhancement and refinement as the organisation has grown and begun to achieve the outcomes it had set. It is now time to look at the broader aspects of the Northern Futures Strategic Plan.

The need to bring tertiary education into Geelong's northern suburbs was clearly evident during the international experience. It was noted in a number of cities around the world as the key to breaking the cycle of poverty - the provision of localised education and employment opportunities.

Currently in Geelong's northern suburbs, there is no coordinated planning authority to manage land or other significant resources. Significant improvements in outcomes have previously been achieved in this community when resources and activities were coordinated to achieve clearly articulated objectives under the unifying approach of Neighbourhood Renewal. Existing organisations are constrained in their ability to engage fully in partnerships with private and government stakeholders in order to generate the level and scale of activity required to transform the area.

It was evident throughout the Fellow's international experience that the primary factor that inhibits the success of any one agency to deliver large scale and sustainable improvement rests in the limited focus it operates with, i.e. education or health or transport – but not all of these. This is compounded by the limited control any one agency has in relation to the key levers that govern the resources required to address the many issues that exist in an integrated way.

The Fellow travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) to look at best practice in community development, regeneration and employment - from a practitioner's perspective. This report sets out the major findings from the research undertaken in the UK and the USA.

## Executive Summary

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In the UK, the Fellow spent two weeks meeting with representatives from education, training, tourism, local government and partnerships. Some of the highlights include:

- Meeting with Canterbury Christ Church University and Thanet College and gaining an insight into how they work together to deliver a locality based curriculum that delivers better outcomes for the community, both in terms of education and economic development.
- Meeting with Visit Kent Tourism, a public/private sector partnership dealing with tourism and marketing for the County of Kent. In particular, it was interesting to see the role tourism can play in contributing to regeneration, place making and fostering civic pride.
- Meeting with the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership to understand how to successfully select and engage with the right partners to deliver the best outcomes for the community and to help identify a strategic partnership model Northern Futures can aspire to become.

The Fellow then travelled to the USA, visiting Detroit, Chicago, New York City and Schenectady, New York. These cities have seen a shift similar to Geelong, from a traditional manufacturing base, and are recovering from significant unemployment (Chicago and Detroit) and to New York City where there is a specific emphasis by the City Council in supporting adult education as a pathway out of disadvantage. A particular highlight was visiting the City Mission of Schenectady, which operates under a similar framework to Northern Futures.

The overseas component of the Fellowship provided the Fellow with an insight into current approaches in the UK and USA to addressing disadvantage. To be able to talk with leaders in employment, economic development and those who have a passion for social transformation gave the Fellow valuable insight into the issues surrounding sustainability, partnerships and successful program delivery. It also provided validation that Northern Futures is on the right track and providing services targeted at a unique cohort of people. Northern Futures' approach was admired by the international colleagues and organisations.

The Fellow is now actively working to bring Bryan Raine, who assisted the Fellow during her UK tour, to Australia to continue to foster linkages and build upon the relationship established while in the UK.

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# Abbreviations/Acronyms

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ABCD	Assets Based Community Development
ABE	Adult Basic Education
AHURI	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
BENL	Basic Education in the Native Language
CIC	Community Interest Company
CLCR	Center for Labor and Community Research
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DHS	Department of Human Services
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FJF	Future Jobs Fund
FSB	Federation of Small Business
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	General Education Diploma
GLA	Greater London Authority
GM	General Motors
GVA	Gross Value Added
IT	Information Technology
KCC	Kent County Council
LDA	London Development Agency
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LLDC	London Legacy Development Corporation
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MAA	Multi Area Agreement
MaD	Make a Difference
MOAE	Mayor's Office of Adult Education
MP	Member of Parliament
MRC	Manufacturing Renaissance Council
NHS	National Health Services

## Abbreviations/Acronyms

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NY	New York
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PASCAL	PASCAL International Observatory
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SME	Small to Medium Enterprises
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TGKP	Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
WIB	Workforce Investment Board

# Definitions

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## Design

Design is problem setting and problem solving. Design is a fundamental economic and business tool. It is embedded in every aspect of commerce and industry and adds high value to any service or product—in business, government, education and training, and the community in general.<sup>DES</sup>

## Innovation

Creating and meeting new needs with new technical and design styles. (New realities of lifestyle).<sup>INN</sup>

## Skill deficiency

A skill deficiency is where a demand for labour has not been recognised and training is unavailable in Australian education institutions. This arises where skills are acquired on-the-job, gleaned from published material or from working and/or studying overseas.<sup>SKD</sup>

There may be individuals or individual firms that have these capabilities. However, individuals in the main do not share their capabilities, but rather keep the intellectual property to themselves. Over time these individuals retire and pass away. Firms likewise come and go.

## Sustainability

The ISS Institute follows the United Nations for Non-Governmental Organisations' definition on sustainability: "*Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*".<sup>SUS</sup>

# Acknowledgements

The Fellow, Lou Brazier, would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who gave generously of their time and expertise to assist, advise and guide her throughout the Fellowship program.

## Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

The International Specialised Skills Institute Inc is an independent, national organisation that for over two decades has worked with Australian governments, industry and education institutions to enable individuals to gain enhanced skills and experience in traditional trades, professions and leading-edge technologies.

- At the heart of the ISS Institute are our Fellows. Under the **Overseas Applied Research Fellowship Program** the Fellows travel overseas. Upon their return, they are required to pass on what they have learnt by:
- Preparing a detailed report for distribution to government departments, industry and educational institutions.
- Recommending improvements to accredited educational courses.
- Delivering training activities including workshops, conferences and forums.
- Over 200 Australians have received Fellowships, across many industry sectors. In addition, recognised experts from overseas conduct training activities and events. To date, 22 leaders in their field have shared their expertise in Australia.

According to Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010':

Australia requires a highly skilled population to maintain and improve our economic position in the face of increasing global competition, and to have the skills to adapt to the introduction of new technology and rapid change.

International and Australian research indicates we need a deeper level of skills than currently exists in the Australian labour market to lift productivity. We need a workforce in which more people have skills, but also multiple and higher level skills and qualifications. Deepening skills across all occupations is crucial to achieving long-term productivity growth. It also reflects the recent trend for jobs to become more complex and the consequent increased demand for higher level skills. This trend is projected to continue regardless of whether we experience strong or weak economic growth in the future. Future environmental challenges will also create demand for more sustainability related skills across a range of industries and occupations.

In this context, the ISS Institute works with Fellows, industry and government to identify specific skills in Australia that require enhancing, where accredited courses are not available through Australian higher education institutions or other Registered Training Organisations. The Fellows' overseas experience sees them broadening and deepening their own professional practice, which they then share with their peers, industry and government upon their return. This is the focus of the ISS Institute's work.

For further information on our Fellows and our work see <http://www.issinstitute.org.au>.

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## **Acknowledgements**

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### **Supporters**

Michael Betts, Chair, Committee for Geelong

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Kean Selway, Vice President, Enterprise & Engagement, Deakin University

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International Specialised Skills Institute

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- Bella Irlicht, CEO
- Ken Greenhill, Mentor

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Rebecca Casson, Senior Project Manager, City of Greater Geelong

### **Those involved in the development of the fellowship submission**

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### **Organisations Impacted by the Fellowship**

#### *Government*

City of Greater Geelong

Victorian Government

#### *Industry*

Northern Futures Industry Partners

#### *Professional Associations*

Committee for Geelong

#### *Education and Training*

Gordon TAFE

Deakin University

#### *Community*

Northern suburbs of Geelong

# About the Fellow

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**Name:**

Lou Brazier

**Employment:**

Executive Officer, Northern Futures

**Qualifications:**

1977 Associate of Science, Monroe Community College, Rochester, NY (USA)

Major: Human Services

1981 Bachelor of Science, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY (USA)

Major: Rehabilitation Counsellor Education

1982 Master of Science, Syracuse, NY (USA)

Major: Vocational Rehabilitation Services

1992 Mohawk Valley Leadership Program, Utica, NY (USA)

Graduate

**Membership/s:**

Shell Community Advisory Panel

Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board

**Short Biography**

The Fellow, Lou Brazier, has spent over 25 years working in community development and community service programs in the USA and in Australia. She is a former Councillor with the City of Greater Geelong and is the Executive Officer of Northern Futures, a multi-disciplinary, multi-sector community development organisation that works in the industrialised northern suburbs of Geelong. Since its beginnings as a 'good idea' several years ago, Northern Futures has grown under Lou's stewardship to be the acknowledged leader in community development in the northern suburbs of Geelong and more broadly in the Geelong region.

# Aims of the Fellowship Program

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The social and economic cost of failing to address the issues faced by the Norlane and Corio communities is great, and will continue to escalate unless steps are taken to reduce the underlying causes of disadvantage.

Northern Futures is already providing its efficacy in driving social and economic change within the disadvantaged community of Norlane/Corio through engagement of industry, the community, and training sectors to support increased economic participation and improved outcomes for particular individuals and their families.

Northern Futures is a platform for driving economic led social reform by improving social outcomes through economic participation. Geelong's northern suburbs have a set of relatively unique characteristics:

- Built post war with a focus on manufacturing with a migrant worker population
- Supported by government housing, which has declined over time
- A community with a high degree of welfare dependency and intergenerational poverty.

To enhance what Northern Futures is doing and build on its success, it is important to visit international communities defined by similar historic characteristics where there are strategies around economic participation and transport some of this back to Australia.

## **Personal Objectives**

To determine the most appropriate structure and mechanisms for delivering a practical whole of community work program to improve independent and social inclusion for residents of Norlane/Corio.

To investigate models of partnerships at a regional, state and national levels between public/private, government and non-government sectors that have led to:

- Strong improvement in social and economic participation in disadvantaged communities
- Local approaches to project delivery and services that will endure a future of growth and prosperity for disadvantaged communities
- Leveraged investment, purchasing power and influence to drive transformational change.

The primary aim is to conduct these investigations at the 'practitioner level' and insight into the practical action of successful community development models, rather than the theory of community development.

## **Committee for Geelong Objectives**

- Advocate for social and economic transformation in the northern suburbs of Geelong.
- Support Northern Futures to establish effective education, vocational, and employment pathways for residents who live in the northern suburbs of Geelong.
- Promote Geelong as a place that can deliver real benefits, advocating and delivering the social and economic infrastructure necessary to provide the opportunity for each citizen to achieve their full potential.

# The Australian Context

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Community redevelopment as a result of broader economic restructuring in the Australian context has taken a variety of forms and been generated by a variety of causes in different regions across the country.

The first wave of economic reforms that were introduced in the 1970s such as unilateral reductions in import tariffs, created the first wave of accompanying social upheavals in cities and regions that had traditionally relied on industries that were in turn reliant on the traditionally high levels of tariff protection and other forms of industry protection. While Australians no longer pay the relative prices they were for anything from automobiles to fresh fruit, clothing and footwear, many of the communities that produced these items have paid a price for this restructuring.

For Geelong and in particular Geelong's northern industrial suburbs this meant the commencement of decades of reversal of what had been steady and secure employment and population growth. Over the course of the ensuing decades this reversal has continued with the closure, restructuring or relocation of various automotive and other manufacturers such as elements of Ford's Australian operations, International Harvester and Henderson Springs. This has been similar in the agricultural and commodity trade based industries such as Pivot Fertilisers and a significant number of wool processors that shifted from buyers to contract processors and then could not compete with Chinese processors.

At the same time that this reduction in tariffs was affecting the private sector a significant restructuring was also occurring in the public sector. Large government utilities such as power, water and rail corporations had not only been the traditional source of jobs, they had become a significant source of skilled labour through their high numbers of apprenticeships and formal training. Faced with competition often for the first time and sometimes from each other or from privatised versions of each other, these organisations looked for options to reduce costs to improve returns. It followed that the traditional role of these organisations as providers of surplus skilled labour to the wider economy reversed to purchasers of existing skilled labour from the wider economy.

The effect of these twin forces of private and public sector reform in places like Geelong was to reduce investment in employment producing institutions and activities which then risked a compounding capacity to deter further investment to replace that which had been lost.

Or at least that is one way that many have observed the situation in Geelong and its northern suburbs.

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) looked at the effects of economic restructuring in two Victoria towns over the course of the 1990s. The town of Shepparton and the La Trobe Valley Region were coincidentally but for different reasons part of the broader economic restructuring of the 1990s. The Shepparton region with its large cannery had been the bedrock of the Northern Victorian food processing industry for decades. By the late 1990s it had downsized significantly, been the subject of a flight of capital and a subsequent employee buyout and had to contend all that time with continued loosening in the regulatory arrangements that had shielded its domestic markets from foreign competition based on both price and product innovation.

The Latrobe Valley on the other hand more than any region, certainly in Victoria and possibly Australia, wore the brunt of the mass privatisations of the 1990s. The AHRI work focussed on an approach pioneered in the USA by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) and a process called 'community assets and capacity mapping' to, "formalise recognition of the existing and potential contribution the social economy can make to local social and economic development. This community based research process involves identifying the skills and capabilities of individuals (artistic and sporting abilities, for example); familial, cultural and community associations and networks (such as church, migrant and Aboriginal groups, voluntary community groups, and sporting clubs); and the institutions and businesses located in the region (including hospitals, educational institutions, government agencies

and local businesses). It works to mobilise these assets and capacities in the form of local enterprises that take a variety of traditional and alternative forms”.

This approach has been developed and delivered in a number of communities globally as a response to events variously described as change or even devastation; it is well recognised in the USA and elsewhere with First Lady, Michelle Obama having utilised the work of Kretzmann and McKnight in her work with Public Allies developing the next generation of community leaders in Chicago. There are flagship projects in the USA and the approach can be found in many other places - anywhere from Kenya to Southern Sudan, South Africa, the UK, Ireland, Canada and Australia.

This Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) approach where the role of formal corporations, public and private along with both transitory and resilient community networks are mapped with a view to integration and harnessing for broader community and economic development goals, was one way suggested by the AHRI as a way reimagining a way forward for the development of communities such as those in the La Trobe valley and Shepparton. The AHRI proposed that a regional landscape, “can be seen as comprised of many features, including cultural, artistic and creative relationships, diverse social groups and associations that enrich and enliven the lives of community members, as well as large scale businesses and a multitude of family, sole-person, collective and small scale enterprises that create and transact products and employ people in the formal and informal economies”.

They propose the ABCD approach of measuring and harnessing community strength that goes beyond looking at the broader movement of economic institutions as they believe that this denies the very real insights that flow from examining the resilience and vitality that flows from less apparent community networks. Importantly the ABCD approach does not just attempt to map community strengths and vitality at a deeper and more profound level than say statistical measures of employment or education levels. The important next steps in the ABCD approach are to examine what issues are important enough to communities that they wish to act on them and then determining how they will act. However the actions of individual communities are or can be as diverse as the communities themselves. This means that across the many communities adopting this approach, there will be as many again, lessons to be learnt or case studies to be examined with the possible solution sets developed limited only by the imagination, aspirations and experience of individual members of those communities.

Proponents of the ABCD approach would recognise much of the work of Northern Futures organisation in the northern suburbs of Geelong. Northern Futures grew out of a ‘Jobs Summit’ held in 2007 that sought to address the chronic unemployment issues facing the northern suburbs of Geelong. From that summit a steering committee was formed and in September 2008, a Northern Futures ‘3214 Way Forward’ Forum was held, bringing together leaders from the broad spectrum of government, industry, health, education and employment services to agree on a course of action for the next three years.

The end result was the Northern Futures Strategic Plan – The Way Forward: A Strategic Plan for Social Transformation (2009-2013) that has helped to guide the work of Northern Futures to date.

Today Northern Futures harnesses that broader network of community players anticipated in the ABCD approach as part of its steering committee and in its program design and delivery.

So for instance its steering committee includes a range of private, community and public sector representatives that guide the organisation as it works to deliver training and educational opportunities in Geelong’s northern suburbs. These sector representatives provide both formal and informal opportunities to leverage or improve Northern Futures program delivery. At this stage in its life cycle Northern Futures has engaged in a variety of community asset mapping processes by either design or default. It is now actively working with the community to determine priorities for action and these are both being delivered through the organisation’s strategic plan, and evolving, informed through both Northern Futures formal networks and through its very embeddedness within the community.

However this next stage in the development of Northern Futures, determining the ‘how’ of community development delivery would benefit greatly from direct interaction with and information from the practitioner level in community development and transformation projects in a range of other contexts.

While Shepparton and the La Trobe Valley provide two case studies and others in Australia may provide some lessons, their breadth is limited in number (i.e the Hunter Valley; Newcastle) and applicability due to the unique local economic, historical and social environments in these other potential domestic case study regions.

The following SWOT analysis provides further support for extending exposure at the practitioner level to a broader number of international contexts.

### Strengths

- Northern Futures is an organisation that has broad community ‘buy in’ with senior levels of the public, private and community sector represented on its steering committee.
- Northern Futures is embedded in the community – with good local networks and the capacity to identify and respond to evolving local needs.
- Northern Futures has a well-developed strategic plan.

### Weaknesses

- Northern Futures has no recurrent funding stream which impacts upon future planning and sustainability.
- Northern Futures has an operational staff of 4.4EFT which limits its capacity to delivery more programs and services.

### Opportunities

- Northern Futures is a young organisation therefore it can be more nimble than similar organisations that have developed an internal narrative that supports the status quo – hence it is more open to innovation.
- The neo-liberal economics that have dominated western industrialised democracies over the last 30 years have generated many case studies that may be of direct relevance to the northern suburbs of Geelong.
- The opportunity for interaction at the practitioner level with others experiencing the same global economic and cultural trends to foster innovation.

### Threats

- Northern Futures risks being unable to fully utilise the strength of local community networks if it cannot find optimal solution for the issues facing the community.
- Northern Futures risks being unable to attract external funding and project delivery partners if it cannot demonstrate that its programs are efficient and effective based on comparable organisations and regions.

# Identifying the Skills Deficiencies

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## Skills and Knowledge Deficiencies to be addressed

This program will look at a number of community development or transition case studies with particular reference to the following:

- Models of public private partnerships in delivery of vocational training programs

Vocational training in the Australian context is limited by its historical evolution from the craft guilds of the 17th and 18th Centuries to the formal apprenticeship models of the 19th Centuries. The evolution since has been inextricably linked to the unique arbitration and conciliation based industrial framework that developed since Federation. The UK, the USA and the Republic of Ireland have all developed from the same craft based guild system of bonded vocational training, however they have all diverged from each other over the 100 years by virtue of design, deterioration or the effects of great external shocks such as the global financial crises, wars and evolution in each society's views of workers and indeed human rights.

- Investigate at the practitioner level to understand what makes successful community development models

The opportunity to interact at the practitioner level with the people running community development or employment programs in these countries will allow exposure to problems that may have their genesis in the same cultural echoes of those that appear in Australia but will in fact manifest differently and therefore may generate very different solutions.

While it is possible to get some insight into these countries from a range of academic studies; in the field of community development this would be time bound and by design, not always of great utility at the practitioner level. This means that an academic study that dealt with issues of today's economic and strategic issues may take more than a year to be peer reviewed, presented and published and even then may not see the light of day. Whereas direct interaction with program managers and the people delivering projects will allow more immediate learnings on coalface issues such as:

- How are your industry partners justifying their involvement in community development activities to their shareholders?
- How are you dealing with the interaction between your vocational training system and the vocational training systems of source countries for your current intake of refugees?
- What is the structure of your program delivery vehicle and what mechanisms does it use to promote and harness broader community resilience and support?

This proposed program will be essentially a career development program where current information is sourced that can better focus and sustain Northern Futures' current work and will also allow for the development of personal networks that will sustain Northern Futures' work over years to come.

# The International Experience

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## VISIT 1

### Destination

Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent, United Kingdom

### Contact/s

Professor Robin Baker, Vice Chancellor

Sue Kendell-Seatter, Director of Partnerships

Audrey Songhurst, Director, Research and Enterprise Development Centre

Penelope Kimber, Director Communications & Marketing, Thanet College (now East Kent College)

### Objectives

The aim of the visit to Canterbury Christ Church University was to understand the relationship between Higher Education (University) and Further Education (TAFE) in the context of the role these education institutions play in the regeneration of a disadvantaged area through their economic impact.

### Outcomes

Understanding the role Higher Education (University) and Further Education (TAFE) plays in regeneration is an important component of this study tour. The discussion centred on the importance of Higher Education and Further Education institutions to work closely and the benefits of greater cohesion between tiers of education.

Canterbury Christ Church University and Thanet College are located in the County of Kent and have an established partnership; most of the higher education courses offered at the college being validated by the University.

This partnership was a result of the Thanet Regeneration Forum, which brought together education and public sector organisations to properly focus joint resources to make a difference in Thanet. There was a wide ranging regeneration agenda in Thanet including improving buildings and public spaces in its towns, development of business parks and working with community groups to help bring their ideas to fruition to improve the area.

The decision to bring Higher Education to Thanet was based on research that showed people did not leave Thanet for education, work or leisure. Therefore in order to address this problem it was important to provide opportunities locally to people who would otherwise be marginalised.

Thanet is a local government district of Kent and is governed by Thanet District Council. It is located on the north eastern tip of Kent, and is predominantly coastal with north, east and southeast facing coastlines. It is bordered by the City of Canterbury to the west, and the Dover district to the south. Its population is currently estimated to be 135,000 and the main towns are Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs. While the district has a higher than average proportion of white people (97.7 percent compared with 90.9 percent nationally) between 2001 -2005 its black and minority ethnic population doubled. This is primarily due to a large number of migrants from Eastern Europe.

## The International Experience

The whole district suffers from seasonal unemployment, in spite of its proximity to London, because of various factors, among them being inward migration; high numbers of old people; and low numbers of affluent people. It is not helped by poor overall indicators for health. As of July 2010, overall indicators of health were poor for Thanet, with a lower life expectancy and worse health in general compared to the national average. The region has also experienced a significantly higher incidence of diabetes, mental health problems and admittance to hospital due to alcohol specific conditions.



*The Fellow toured the Broadstairs campus of Canterbury Christ Church University*

In a study of resilience to economic downturns, Thanet was poorly rated at 295th out of 324 districts. Unemployment levels are nearly twice that of the South East of England as a whole, and as a result a great deal of planning is being done to encourage more businesses to relocate to the District.

Associated development has taken place around the shopping centre spawning other retail parks. Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs each have shopping centres with a mix of local and national retailers. Thanet has seen significant funding and development of new projects in recent years including a new community centre in Broadstairs, redevelopment of Margate's Dreamland (a Heritage Amusement Park); a large retail and residential development on Ramsgate seafront started construction in 2011; the multi million pound art gallery The Turner Contemporary opened in April 2011; the introduction by the District Council of an empty property initiative, which has compulsory purchased empty and derelict buildings with the objective of bringing them back into use, and extension work to Thanet's large hospital, the Queen Elizabeth, which started in 2007 is still ongoing.

Canterbury Christ Church University's Broadstairs Campus and Thanet College provide thousands of students aged 16 and over with access to high quality courses including A-Levels, Higher National Qualifications and vocational skills.

This has been supported by the strong partnerships that have been forged with local businesses, the University and Thanet College in offering employers access to employee development, student places, specialist research and development capabilities.

Creating the right curriculum mix has been a challenge, however delivering a locality based curriculum verses one that is set at a national level has been an important component of this partnership's success, in matching the curriculum the schools offer to the job opportunities available locally.

Higher education in the Thanet district relies on its success through its relationship with the local Further Education college. Simply put, it makes good business sense for the University and Further Education providers to work together as it delivers better outcomes for the community.

Initially the partnership was driven through more of a top down approach in terms of who decides how the funding was spent and the community had not been formally engaged in the conversation. However this has changed with an increasing drive from Central Government to ensure community involvement in decision making process.

Support from Central Government has been crucial to the success of the partnership and the outcomes delivered thus far. It was also highlighted that it was important to select partners carefully and to focus the energy of the partnerships on key outcomes.

## The International Experience

All agreed the sustainability of partnership and delivery of services depends almost completely on high degrees of trust and collaboration. This partnership has demonstrated the power of a successful collaboration, in particular the trust and loyalty shown between the two institutions has matured and led to greater risk-taking in curriculum development and more successful outcomes for the local community and business sector.

The Fellow was then given a tour of the Broadstairs Campus of Canterbury Christ Church University and Thanet College (now East Kent College).



*Thanet College (now known as East Kent College) during its 2012 open day*

### VISIT 2

#### Destination

Kent County Council (KCC), Kent, United Kingdom

#### Contact/s

Dr Peter Welsh, Head of Research & Intelligence and PASCAL International Observatory (Dr Welsh formally worked for KCC, now operating as a Change Management Consultant in both the private and public sectors).

#### Objectives

The aim of the meeting with Dr Welsh was to gain an understanding of what are the essential elements to ensure the sustainability and success of an organisation, particularly focussing on the role of governance and the importance of a formal structure.

#### Outcomes

As the previous Head of Research and Intelligence, Dr Welsh held corporate responsibility at KCC for a wide range of policy, monitoring and research studies relating to the social, economic and demographic circumstances of the County. His team provided the strategic evidence base to the County Council, the Kent Partnership and others on major land use and infrastructure developments, planning policy options, forecasting and the implications of economic and demographic change for policies and services. Peter has a wide experience base in Higher Education, Local Government and private sector research consultancy.



*Dr Peter Welsh*

Dr Welsh is also a Board member of PASCAL International Observatory. PASCAL is a dynamic organisation which aims to connect the communities of policy makers, practitioners and researchers through an innovative approach to the sharing and exchange of cutting-edge best practice research, ideas and policies relating to the development and renewal of place, including social, economic and cultural development, with particular emphasis on the role of social capital and lifelong learning.

The discussion centred on what makes for a successful program and that the common theme for all successful programs, regardless of funding, is good governance. The importance of good governance is crucial to an organisation's success, especially if working towards a more sustainable future as a lack of formal structure will eventually be to the detriment of the organisation.

It is important to regularly look at and review supporters and partners to determine who has the right background and demonstrated commitment to the objectives and direction of the organisation. Before considering any restructure, it is important to acknowledge that actions have consequences and to avoid unintended outcomes. Central to this is to consider the make-up of the board with the 'magic number' being between seven to nine people. Organisations grow and change, so reviewing the board's make-up is crucial to the success of the organisation – it is important to get the right people around the table with the relevant skill set and who share the same vision.

Three practical points were highlighted:

- Good governance: Establish a board through the legal entity and each member should have a designated role or responsibility. Understand and have a clear framework and vision.
- Good project management: Leadership and governance – will the organisation continue to exist and deliver if the leader isn't there. Importance of succession planning and instilling the notion of leadership at all levels. Successful project management needs the foundation of solid project management methodology.
- Good data and analysis of that data – demonstrate to others and reassure money is being spent well, progress is being made and outcomes are being achieved. Consider that data tells you nothing more than a walk down the street will tell you.

### VISIT 3

#### Destination

Visit Kent Tourism, Canterbury Kent, United Kingdom

#### Contact

Sandra Matthews-Marsh, Chief Executive Officer

#### Objectives

The aim of the visit with Visit Kent Tourism was to collect information regarding the important role tourism can play in contributing to regeneration, place making, and encouraging civic pride.

#### Outcomes

Visit Kent Tourism is a public/private sector partnership dealing with tourism and marketing for the County of Kent (population 1.3 million). It was established in 2002 as a not-for-profit company to take responsibility for boosting the local economy by marketing all areas of Kent and Medway as visitor destinations, together with growing tourism business through research, development and training.

It now operates successfully with a marketing budget of over £2 million a year and is supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, the District and Borough Councils, the leading private sector tourism businesses and European Funding. In addition, the industry has always enjoyed strong local political leadership and support. It is this shared identity and focus that helps Visit Kent Tourism to deliver an ambitious tourism strategy for the benefit of all.

Tourism contributes £2.5 billion to the Kent and Medway economy and supports more than 50,000 jobs and 3,000 businesses. Kent is a geographically well defined area and research demonstrates that it is a clearly understood destination by its residents, its businesses and visitors with a strong sense of place and identity. It has a strong tourism product with rich heritage, areas of outstanding natural beauty, iconic chalk cliff coastline and blue flag beaches, quality local produce and a vibrant cultural and arts offer – recently augmented by new products including the £21million Turner Contemporary Art Gallery and the £17 million Marlowe Theatre. Since the Fellow's visit there is now a proposal to bring a Disneyland style development to a massive brown-field site in North Kent bringing around 12,000 jobs and a further massive boost to Kent Tourism.

Kent and Medway are also benefiting from major improvements to infrastructure including the arrival of high-speed rail services, enabling residents and visitors to access London's city limits in approximately 17 minutes.

Visit Kent Tourism brings local tourism businesses and local people together to develop a vision for their individual areas and then takes those visions to market. Many other areas in the UK are now seeking to adopt this successful delivery model.

It has also successfully developed international campaigns, specifically targeting areas of the USA such as New York, Washington and Virginia and undertaking trade missions to those areas for the benefit of its members. In addition, Visit Kent has successfully bid for many European funding programs worth millions of Euros; to run innovative marketing campaigns and to drive forward major new initiatives

showcasing the tourism industry to local residents and gaining support from local Kent people as ambassadors.

The discussion centred on the importance of tourism in terms of encouraging civic pride and local resident and business involvement in strategic planning and in turn, creating local tourism ambassadors. Importantly, central to the success of Visit Kent Tourism was the belief that thriving tourism businesses and services make a major contribution to the quality of life of local residents.

The experience of Visit Kent Tourism highlights that events and attractions developed locally, and have strong local connections and local employment impact, are the initiatives that work the best. To have a product that would be attractive to visitors, it is important to understand the existing communities and their needs. It also has to be driven by brave decision making, financially backed (sustainability) and championed by government, business and community leaders.

Visit Kent Tourism has made a significant contribution to place making in the county. Through discussions with key stakeholders it has developed across the sectors a brand strategy around 'the Garden of England' proposition. It has influenced the recognition of tourism in key planning, regeneration and economic development strategies and takes a proactive role in securing investment, supporting the growing cultural and leisure offer and getting improvements in infrastructure.

For example Canterbury Festival started as a local initiative and has grown into a significant attraction in its own right. The Festival attracts an audience of over 70,000 people of all ages to free and ticketed events, drawn from across Kent, London and the South East. With over two hundred events in two weeks there is something to suit everyone from classical music to contemporary dance and from comedy to world music with theatre, walks, talks, visual arts and much more.

Lessons learnt from Visit Kent Tourism's experiences can be applied on a much smaller scale. Change does not always come about through big, bold and expensive projects and many small and successful local schemes provide a mosaic approach to change. If you have a good product, make it great by 'sharing the story'. Success will come out of a constant striving for greatness through evolution and change.

A public and private sector partnerships and investment into tourism is also important. Pooling resources, being creative and collaborating with sustainable budgets, Visit Kent Tourism is enabling the local tourism industry to 'punch above its weight'.



Sandra Matthews-Marsh, Chief Executive Officer of Visit Kent



Canterbury Festival started as a local initiative and has grown into a significant attraction in its own right.

### VISIT 4

#### Destination

Kent County Council

Dartford, Gravesend and Margate, Kent, United Kingdom (see below for full list of venues visited as part of this tour):

- Groundwork UK, Social Enterprise Café located within SusCon, Dartford
- SparkIT, Swanscombe
- The Grand, Job Club and Community Services, Gravesend
- Employ Thanet, Ramsgate & Margate Job Club
- Marine Studios, Margate
- Margate Task Force, Margate
- Team Green, Margate
- Gravesham Gateway, Gravesham.

#### Contact/s

David Hughes, Head of Engagement and Economic Development, Kent County Council

Susan Berdo, Employment and Skills Manager, Kent County Council

Diane Snell, Employment Services Manager, Groundwork Kent & Medway

Liz Reid, Manager of The Grand

Kate Kneale, Marine Studios, Margate

#### Objectives

The aim of the visit was to better understand the role local authorities play in the economic development and regeneration of an area, particularly focusing on business development, unlocking barriers to growth and engaging with government, education and the private sector to ensure success and sustainability of key projects.

The aim was also to see in action a number of employment, training, community and partnership programs and initiatives being delivered to a highly disadvantaged area and to understand what makes them so successful.

#### Outcomes

The purpose of this visit was to see in action a number of community development and employment programs and initiatives in an area that was one of the most disadvantaged in the southeast of the UK.

KCC governs the majority of the county of Kent in the UK. Its geographic area comprises of 12 district councils and around 300 town and parish councils. The current estimated population is in excess of 1.4 million people.

Kent is the busiest gateway between the UK and Europe's population of over 450 million, with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and international ports providing easy connections to the 'London – Paris – Brussels' triangle. The Thames Gateway is a significant growth area located southeast of London, with easy access to the high speed rail link to London, high quality of life, outstanding natural environment, coastline and rural areas; diverse cultural heritage; and rich variety of cities, towns, ports and villages make the county a popular place for working, living and leisure.

Economic development and regeneration in Kent is a leading priority for KCC and many of the district councils, and is also a view held across the different political parties – it doesn't matter who is in government, it is a key priority in its own right.

KCC's focus on developing effective relationships with the business community was demonstrated when they had recently successfully lobbied Central Government for £40m towards grants and soft loans for businesses in the eastern part of the county who were struggling in the existing economic downturn. This program is now being delivered in partnership with the main banks and business support organisations in the area. Even more recently, KCC has secured a further £20m from government to support businesses in north Kent.

Other key strategic issues for business development in the Kent area include the need for increased (high-speed) broadband capacity and provision, and increasing the supply of incubator workspaces for start-up and fledgling businesses, both of which are seen as being central to creating the right conditions for economic growth.

Also highlighted was the importance of working in partnership with education at all levels, including Higher Education (University), Further Education (TAFE) and schools. This has been a key component in creating pathways for people with disadvantage and the need to take education to where they are and match the curriculum to the local skills needs. In practice however, this has often proved difficult to implement successfully because higher and further education institutions frequently tend to adopt 'silo mentality' working practices which sometimes means that supply does not always satisfy local needs.

The focus of this visit was the employment and community development initiatives being delivered in Margate, which is located in the far northeast of Kent, in the Isle of Thanet and London is approximately 120km by road. The improvement to rail linkages has improved connectivity and reduced journey times with high-speed domestic services to east Kent, including hourly services from Margate to London via Ashford, and has reduced journey times to around one hour and 20 minutes. The recent re-introduction of passenger services at nearby Manston Airport has also assisted in attracting businesses and tourists to the town and surrounding areas.

The rise of Margate as a popular seaside resort in the early 20th Century, and its subsequent decline, follows a similar pattern to other seaside resorts in the UK. The presence and availability of cheap rentable housing has helped the area to become a destination of choice for a transient population, ranging from the homeless and immigrants from other parts of Europe, to those attracted by the seaside lifestyle.

The economy of the area has been particularly reliant on the visitor market and seasonal trade. There is also a heavy reliance on the public sector, in particular health. Presently, the area suffers from high unemployment and low skills levels and key sectors for future growth for Margate, as identified by the Thanet Regeneration Strategy, are the creative and cultural industries, retail, leisure (including the visitor economy) and healthcare.

## ***The International Experience***

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The Margate Renewal Partnership was set up to spearhead the regeneration of Margate. Made up of key stakeholders who have an important role to play in the transformation of Margate, the partnership's aim was to create a vibrant town with a mix of traditional seaside attractions and modern and creative quarters.

A number of organisations and venues were visited by the Fellow over a two day period, which was orchestrated by Susan Berdo, Employment & Skills Manager for Kent County Council. The purpose was to provide an overview of the variety of employment, training, community and partnership programs run within the Kent County Council region.

The first two initiatives visited were examples of employment and training partnerships in the Dartford and Swanscombe areas of North Kent.

Groundwork Kent & Medway is an organisation that aims to help people and organisations make changes in order to create better neighbourhoods, to build skills and job prospects, and to live and work in a greener way, with a particular focus on disadvantaged communities.

Groundwork's philosophy and strength lies in a partnership approach – making a difference to the lives and aspirations of the people in the communities it serves. They are committed to enabling local people to improve their own quality of life and give them back the responsibility for regeneration of their own local environment.

Such an example is the partnership with SusCon, a sustainable construction training and research centre that has been built at The Bridge – a mixed business and residential development in the district of Dartford. SusCon subcontract the café facility within their training centre to Groundwork Kent & Medway, who operate the café as a social enterprise. Diane Snell provided an overview of the training and employment opportunities the café provides.

The next stop was the SparkIT Training Centre, based in Swanscombe, also in the district of Dartford. SparkIT operates from a local community facility and offers a wide range of IT related courses and back to work programs. The Centre also operates as a hub for a range of community activities and provides a comfortable, modern, well equipped training room.

The centre was established in response to the 'Access to Employment' study, carried out in 2004 in Kent Thameside. This highlighted the need to increase resident's skills levels by delivering community learning hubs. SparkIT has been delivering high quality courses to the communities of Kent Thameside for three years and Groundwork delivering services in Kent Thameside for 18 years. SparkIT was also the highest achieving Microsoft IC3 accredited centre in the UK.

Ongoing engagement with the community provides SparkIT a good insight into the aspirations and needs of the community. As a result, the centre is able to deliver what the community wants, enabling people to get accreditation and the support network needed for lifelong learning.

The following stop was Gravesham Borough Council's The Grand Healthy Living Centre, which opened in May 2002 delivering a wide variety of programs and services which relate to health.

Now based at the Civic Centre (Woodville Halls), the Grand has developed and delivers health related programs tailored to meet the needs of the community in which it services. All the programs have either been directly requested by residents or have been developed because there is an identified need highlighted through documents such as the Health Profiles produced by the Association of Public Health Observatories. The Grand is funded through a variety of partners including Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council (via Employ Kent Thameside) and National Health Services (NHS) West Kent, which enables the majority of services to be available for free and the remaining services at a subsidised rate.

## ***The International Experience***

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The aim of the service is to support residents to improve their health in whatever way suits them best. This is based on the belief that a person's health is impacted by both their own behaviour and the community they live in. The Grand supports communities to develop social networks, run community safety initiatives, develop committees which give young people a voice and run projects which provide opportunities for older residents to learn alongside younger residents.

The Grand provides eight public computers which are used for a variety of specific courses including the Silver Surfers course, an eight week program to teach people how to use the internet and set up an email account, as well as dedicated job club and job search sessions to support people into work (which is funded by Employ Kent Thameside).

Programs are also developed to support people to change their behaviour to lead a healthier lifestyle. This includes support for people who want to stop smoking, a variety of projects which support people to eat a balanced diet and increase physical activity, a young person's sexual health clinic and a Health Trainer service to provide one on one support.

Whilst also at the Grand, we met with a Future Jobs Fund (FJF) employee who has been retained on contract following the FJF period. FJF was a Department of Work and Pensions/Jobcentre Plus initiative and its aim was to enable the creation of temporary jobs for long term, unemployed, young people and others who face disadvantage in the labour market.

Two examples of 'Job Clubs' were then visited – Ramsgate and Margate. These job clubs provide individual support to job seekers including pathways to free training, CV writing, job clubs (two per week), individual intensive job search and interview guidance and support. These clubs are run in the local library and participants are referred through Jobcentreplus, other agencies and the library itself.

This was followed by a visit to Marine Studios, a Community Interest Company based in Margate. Marine Studios is a creative hub, committed to supporting artistic practice and enabling cultural participation. Their project space is used to host regular events showcasing multi-disciplinary art and craft as well as leading their own community based projects.

They believe the creative sector has an important role to play in developing models for sustainable development, including skill sharing, training and job creation. This visit provided an example of business engagement and linkages to funding to ensure skills development and sustainable employment.

Next stop was the Margate Task Force, a multi-agency approach to tackle economic inactivity, skills gaps, social and wider issues within the community. The program is focused on two areas – Margate Central and Cliftonville West. The taskforce brings together a range of interventions including housing, health, employment and multi-agency working to bring about positive impacts and outcomes in local communities.

Despite the efforts and successes of the regeneration work undertaken in Margate, deprivation levels have worsened in both Cliftonville West and Margate Central wards. A number of key local partners have recently come together to radically rethink joined up working in these two most deprived wards.

The taskforce is part of an initiative called Total Place, which looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid duplication between organisations, which will hopefully deliver a change in service improvement and efficiency at a local level. Kent is one of the 13 pilot areas participating in the scheme. As a pilot area Kent has a real opportunity to rip up the text book and redesign the way public services are planned and delivered.

## The International Experience

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The following visit, again in Margate/Ramsgate, was to Team Green, another initiative which provided an example of business engagement and linkages to funding to ensure skills development and sustainable employment. This was a partnership between Employ Thanet (KCC), Groundwork UK and Skill England where community remedial works were being undertaken for and on behalf of Thanet District Council.

The final visit was to Gravesham Gateway. Gateway is a joint initiative between Kent County Council and the twelve district councils across Kent. It works on the belief that what customers want, and where, should directly shape the services they receive locally.

Back in 2003 the vision was town-centre or high-street locations in every district across Kent, with retail-style opening hours, comfort, convenience and customer service. The program started out with a focus on transforming face-to-face contact for public service access, and began with the Ashford Gateway pilot which opened its doors in 2005. It was envisaged that as the Gateway program expands it will deliver a technology-enabled network that will join up information across multiple channels.

The vision was for each Gateway to offer its customers access to a unique mix of services, reflecting the needs of the community it serves. Services are delivered by a wide-range of partners, including county and district councils, the national health services and voluntary sector. The list of partners delivering through Gateway changes and grows regularly.

Gravesham Gateway is located in the Civic Centre at Gravesham and is set up as a 'one stop shop', providing access to range of community services including:

- Meet and greet reception, where the team will ascertain who the visitor needs to speak with and direct them accordingly
- Customer waiting areas and meeting rooms
- Access to a range of services from local Council, Kent Police, to a variety of community service providers including employment, elderly and disability support, migrant help, mental health, carer support, volunteering and children's services
- Two payment kiosks where council related bills can be paid
- Accessible toilets and a fully equipped Changing Place facility (Changing Place toilet facilities are fully accessible, well-equipped facilities to support those with complex and challenging needs, their carers and families. They include a hoist, height-adjustable changing bench and peninsula toilet for maximum access)
- Internet café - situated within Spotlites café are six self-help computers providing free access for customers for up to one hour per day
- Woodville Theatre – a versatile performance space which hosts everything from local dance concerts to national talent. Its main auditorium is capable of seating 720 patrons across three levels or of being transformed into a flat floor space for cabaret performances. It also houses an art gallery, The Blake Gallery.

This community hub was bustling with activity during our visit and it was evident this space was not only used by residents accessing services, but it was also a meeting place for the local community.

## The International Experience

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*The Fellow visited SparkIT, a local community facility and offers a wide range of IT related courses and back to work programs*



*SusCon is a mixed business and residential development in the district of Dartford, who subcontract the café facility within their training centre to Groundwork Kent & Medway*



*Marine Studios is a Community Interest Company based in Margate, which provided an example of business engagement and linkages.*

## The International Experience

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### VISIT 5

#### Destination

Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, Kent, United Kingdom

#### Contact/s

David Liston-Jones, Chief Executive Officer – Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

#### Objectives

The aim of the meeting with Thames Gateway Kent Partnership was to understand how to successfully select and engage with the right partners, to define different and better ways of achieving outcomes and to help identify a strategic partnership model Northern Futures can aspire to become.

#### Outcomes

The Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) is a private and public sector partnership formed in 2001 to champion sustainable economic growth across North Kent area.

The Partnership Board is chaired by the private sector and comprises senior representatives from across the North Kent business, local authority and higher/further education community, from national government and agencies - the Homes and Communities Agency, the Environment Agency - and a North Kent Member of Parliament.

The main aims of the Partnership are to:

- Create the best conditions possible to attract investment and deliver sustainable, private sector-led economic growth across North Kent
- Promote and enable collaboration between the private and public sectors to help achieve growth
- Ensure that the Thames Gateway remains a key priority for Government.

TGKP is not an operational partnership in terms of helping individual groups into jobs, but it is a strategic coordination partnership with the aim of long term regeneration (20-30 years thus far) with another 20-50 years to go.

The regeneration was born out of a Conservative Government policy in the early 1990s and was driven by a former Cabinet Minister, Michael Heseltine who identified the Thames Gateway as a national priority and ever since, governments of both persuasions have supported this vision.

Thames Gateway Kent stretches from East London to the estuary coastlines of Kent and Essex and is home to 1.5 million people and a workforce of 500,000. The main concentrations of population are in Medway and in the towns of Dartford, Gravesend and Sittingbourne. It is an ethnically and socially diverse sub-region with areas of prosperity, but also has some of the most deprived localities in the South East.

A generation ago, the decline and closure of many staple industries left a legacy of unemployment, a damaged environment, worn out and inadequate infrastructure, below-average educational attainment and under-investment in skills.

Unemployment, though greatly reduced, remained above the regional average, and much of the area's growth had been in consumption related sectors such as logistics and retail, rather than in 'knowledge' industries with their potential for sustained high value-added growth. With fewer jobs in wealth-creating industries than elsewhere in the UK's South East, many people commute to London and elsewhere, while fewer graduates and other skilled people stay within the area. As a result, like the Thames Gateway as a whole, North Kent still lags behind London and the wider south east region on many key indicators of economic and social well-being.

## The International Experience

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Sheppey Crossing at Swale, linking the Isle of Sheppey with mainland Kent



Ebbsfleet Station – an international transport point connecting London to Thameside Kent and on to mainland Europe.

However, the area also has many outstanding assets – its heritage, countryside, town centres, riverside and people with a strong identity and pride in their communities. It also has tremendous potential – an excellent location on strategic transport routes (namely Ebbsfleet Station – an international transport point connecting London to Thameside Kent and on to mainland Europe), near major UK and European markets, close proximity to London, large tracts of brownfield land and a rapidly developing infrastructure.

The current Coalition government, which was elected in 2010, continues to recognise the importance of the Thames Gateway regeneration and this has been demonstrated in the appointment of Bob Neill MP as the Thames Gateway Minister (succeeded in the recent Ministerial reshuffle by Brandon Lewis MP) and the Thames Gateway still remains the only part of the country (England as opposed to the UK) to have its own dedicated Minister.

It had also introduced a new 'localism approach' in delivering the Thames Gateway agenda by working in partnership with local authorities and other local interest groups to set the agenda, rather than directing the initiative. This means that the impetus is to come from local partners to drive the Thames Gateway initiative forward. As a result, TGKP worked to set strategic economic and investment priorities for the region and collectively make the case to the government for policy and investment, including bidding directly for Central Government funding streams such as the new Regional Growth Fund.

[Update October 2012: the Partnership has been successful in securing £20million from the Regional Growth Fund to provide financial assistance for small and medium sized businesses to create jobs].

Under the previous Administration a Multi Area Agreement (MAA) for the North Kent region was developed in 2009 between Central Government, local authorities and key partners in the region and sets out a road map for Central Government and local partners to deal with some of the critical issues currently faced, that must be overcome in order to achieve targets for sustainable economic growth.

It also contains a range of actions and agreements on housing, transport, skills and employability, with some very demanding milestones and targets. The new Coalition Government decided at the national level in 2010 not to continue the MAA approach, although it has introduced its own 'City Deals' approach which has similar ambitions.

TGKP is a successful strategic partnership model that engages its partners to work together and work smarter to achieve its agreed goals of long-term and sustainable economic growth and regeneration. Its success so far is a result of local authorities and other partners identifying ways of doing more things collaboratively, rather than individually, with Central Government.

The Fellow felt that TGKP is a strategic model that Northern Futures should aspire to as the future is partnerships working, not just partners meeting.

### VISIT 6

#### Destination

Haringey Council, London, United Kingdom

#### Contact

Anne Lippitt, Program Director, Tottenham Regeneration Program

#### Objectives

The aim of this visit was to understand the important role of community engagement and ownership in regeneration projects as a means of creating civic pride in an area that was devastated both physically and socially.

#### Outcomes

Anne Lippitt is responsible for the Tottenham Regeneration Program, which was launched following the 2011 London riots, which saw significant damage to the High Road area of Tottenham. The program aims to increase civic pride through community ownership of the regeneration process.

Tottenham is proclaimed to be the most ethnically diverse area in Britain and possibly in all of Western Europe, but it is also among the most deprived. The unemployment rate in Tottenham as of March 2011 was 10 percent, which is well above the national average of 7.6 percent, and the highest level of unemployment in London. Youth unemployment is also a major challenge for the Tottenham area, which is in excess of 50 percent. There are also many families who have more than one generation that have never worked. Additionally, the percentage of those in social housing is at 60 percent, with overcrowding being a problem for over 25 percent of all households. Low levels of educational achievement and poor health are also chronic problems for the area.

However, there are also considerable positive aspects to community life in Tottenham which provide the foundation for developing effective regeneration plans to overcome these challenges. Tottenham has excellent transport links both to central London and to Stratford for the 2012 Olympics, along with a historic High Road and hundreds of acres of open space. There is also considerable pride in the area, as evidenced by the success of the 'I Love Tottenham' campaign since the riots. There is a strong not-for-profit sector and a thriving small to medium sized enterprise (SME) sector in the area. Regeneration efforts have been built on these strengths in order to recover from the disturbances and long-standing and complex causes of deprivation in the area.

The Council's regeneration plans focus on four strategic priority areas that it intends to target: Northumberland Park as a mixed used leisure destination; Tottenham High Road; the Green for culture and open space; and the Hale to become a new urban centre.

Riots across England in August 2011 shook the country, but nowhere more so than in Tottenham where the disturbances began. Over 100 properties and households in the area were directly affected by the riots and 130 people were arrested – half of whom lived in Haringey. Considerable clean-up efforts took place from local residents and community groups and numerous public meetings have been held to discuss and analyse what happened and why.

A year later, the rebuilding and regeneration of the area has become a key priority for the Council,

the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and the community. This includes not just rebuilding the damaged physical environment, but also addressing the causes of disenfranchisement and anger that fuelled the riots in the first place. Negative media portrayal and public perceptions of Tottenham have added to the challenge of regenerating the area. Inevitably, the confidence of the local community and businesses has been shaken – though there are already signs that the community's resilience is bouncing back from this. Haringey Council is attempting to address this by creating a Community Panel for Haringey which has consulted local stakeholders about regeneration projects.

In the public and stakeholder consultations undertaken since the riots, the local community in Tottenham indicated they wanted to see comprehensive regeneration to deliver fundamental improvements for the local community. A particular focus is on the regeneration of High Road, which was heavily affected. It was understood that while changing the built environment is important, effective regeneration cuts across health, housing, community safety, education and employment had to take place. This involves key stakeholders investing in empowering communities. Some of the key focus areas include the creation of more housing and work space opportunities, increasing the skills of local people and transforming Tottenham's image for local people and external investors. Local people want Tottenham to be a thriving place where people choose to live, work and stay throughout their lives.

As a result, 'A Plan for Tottenham' was launched in August 2012 to set out a vision for the area from now to 2025. The plan outlines proposals for regeneration of key sites, quality housing; stronger communities; a vibrant arts and culture scene; a welcoming civic heart; wide retail mix; attractive public spaces; and successful businesses.

The Fellow then visited such an example in the form of a vibrant café, located in a former toilet block at the edge of a village green. This venue was established with the support of the local council and is now a bustling community enterprise that provides a meeting place for local residents, workers and visitors to the area.

This visit highlighted the importance of place making and holistic approaches to the regeneration process. It also emphasised the value of effectively engaging with the community throughout the process to ensure the community's ownership of the strategic direction to ensure its sustainability and success.



Tottenham High Road.

### **VISIT 7**

#### **Destination**

Islington London Borough

#### **Contact**

Ray Manning, Islington Working

#### **Objectives**

The aim of this visit was to gain insight into how local government in the UK is addressing employment, health and education disparities within their communities.

#### **Outcomes**

Islington lies to the north of London's city centre and is London's second smallest borough. It is very densely populated and is home to approximately 200,000 people. There is great diversity within Islington with a high population from ethnic minority backgrounds, and although it is statistically one of the most deprived boroughs nationally (eighth in the country), it does contain areas of affluence – the very wealthy and very deprived live in neighbouring streets and sometimes buildings. Islington is home to the vibrant Upper Street, Camden Passage and Chapel Market and the residential areas around Angel tube station have become very popular amongst wealthy young professionals in recent years, pushing up property prices

Islington has almost 12,000 commercial companies of all types operating within the borough and a significant proportion of the borough's working age population is highly qualified, and in managerial, professional and technical jobs. However a large and increasing number of residents not only have few or no qualifications, but also are out of work and dependent on benefits.

The divide between the 'two Islington's' – the wealthy and the poor – impacts the quality of life for all its residents. The gulf between the two in earnings, health and education is wide and threatens to negate a sense of shared experience between residents and is not favourable to a thriving community. Their lives are so different it makes it difficult to relate to each other.

There are two key groups of particular concern - workless parents and young people. Islington has the second highest rate of child poverty in the UK with over 18,000 children living on less than the poverty threshold, which is defined as 60 percent of median income after housing costs. These families are overwhelmingly workless, rather than simply low paid. Worklessness perpetuates the cycle of poverty with these children having lower levels of education, income and life expectancy than the general population.

For parents with young children, affordability and availability of childcare was identified as the primary obstacle for finding work. Childcare needs to be available at different points of the process when a parent is studying or gaining experience, as well as when they ultimately find a job.

Youth unemployment is a particular concern as research suggests that once a young person becomes unemployed, particularly if they come from families less well-off and less educated, will find it hard to find employment than people of other age groups continuing the cycle of disadvantage. The Borough have identified a number of factors which are likely to push up the number of unemployed young

people in the next few years, including cuts to educational maintenance allowances, rising costs of high education, and local cuts to services which support young people.

The gap in educational achievement between Islington and the national average, and between children from different communities, has narrowed in recent years. However, the mobility and diversity of the population in the borough continues to pose challenges.

In response, the Islington Fairness Commission was set up in 2010 to spend 12 months looking into how to make Islington a fairer place for everyone who lives and works there. The Commission made 19 recommendations and the council and its key partners engaged in wide ranging efforts to deliver the actions in the recommendations, the majority being about key services such as housing, community safety and health and education.

Reducing unemployment in Islington is a key priority for the Council and Council's Leader has placed an expectation on all departments within Council to take an active role in responding to local unemployment. Offering apprenticeships is an important part of this plan and the scheme offers Islington residents aged 16 or over an opportunity to work as an apprentice. Successful candidates undertake paid work experience, have the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification (National Vocational Qualification) and are provided a dedicated mentor to help settle in and support during their employment.

Research by Council has also shown that lots of local employers are ready, willing and able to offer skills and expertise to local residents. A Business Employment Support Team has been established by Council in response to the recommendation of the Islington Fairness Commission for a 'Single Employer Interface' to make it easier for businesses to contribute to social regeneration through the provision of work experience, apprenticeships and permanent employment opportunities.

Partnerships are crucial to the success of these programs, and Council sees the focus of its role not to duplicate the work of other providers, but to facilitate and focus the energy of multiple agencies and the private sector behind the single objective of getting people into work.

### VISIT 8

#### Destination

Greater London Authority, London UK

#### Contact

Vicky Clark, London 2012 Employment and Skills Legacy Manager

#### Objectives

The aim of this visit was to gain an insight into how authorities are planning to deliver a lasting legacy in terms of skills development, employment and business development in the wake of the London 2012 Olympic Games.

#### Outcomes

Vicky Clark is the head of the London 2012 Employment and Skill Legacy program at the Greater London Authority (GLA). Vicky's role is to design and deliver a program to achieve the Mayor's objectives for securing employment and skills benefits from hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. At the time of the meeting, the 2012 Olympics were just a couple of weeks from commencing.

The Games presented London a unique regeneration opportunity, not only in a physical sense, but also for its people. A key commitment of the London bid was to increase job and business opportunities for the communities in the area, improve skills development and reduce worklessness. The Greater London Authority's website ([www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)) states almost one in five households in London are workless, which is consistent with the national average, however one in five children live in workless household, which is the highest of any UK region.

The GLA focused on three main areas:

- Creating employment opportunities
- Experience and skills development
- Developing young people.

The intention was to create opportunities in all three areas, to support the achievement of longer term sustainable job outcomes for all. Partnerships were a crucial component to the success of the program. Working with relevant public-sector agencies and contractors to deliver successful outcomes through employment and skills initiatives, GLA was committed to the creation and improvement of 'sustained employment' – jobs which lasted for a minimum period of six or twelve months.

GLA took over the former London Development Agency's role in delivering Olympic employment and skills initiatives when the LDA was dismantled by the Central Government in early 2011. £14 million in funding was used to deliver the 'Host Boroughs', 'Construction Employer Accord' and the forthcoming '2012 Employment Legacy' projects, all of which were designed to help economically inactive (not in receipt of a benefit which is conditional upon looking for work) Londoners improve their skills and find sustained work. Taken together the three projects are targeted to work with around 13,000 people and support just over 4,000 into 12 months sustained employment.

The Construction Employer Accord aims to increase job and training opportunities associated with major construction projects for Londoners through a site-based, embedded approach with contractors, sub-contractors and developers. It helps people to prepare for jobs, through support and appropriate training across all London boroughs. Support is also provided to move people to jobs on other sites if their contract comes to an end.

The Host Boroughs employment and skills project provides targeted training and employment support to residents of East London and assists them to take advantage of the full range of employment opportunities of the 2012 Games and other jobs in their local economy. The boroughs involved are Newham, Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Barking and Dagenham and Hackney, with Hackney acting as the accountable body for the distribution of funds.

The 2012 Employment Legacy initiative provides support for people from across London into jobs, using the 2012 Games to stimulate interest in working and helping them with activities such as CV writing, interview skills or pre-employment training.

Olympic job opportunities broadly fall into three categories:

- Construction opportunities associated with building the Olympic Park and Athletes Village: 40,000 people worked on the build of which approximately 50 percent were from London, with more than 7,000 from the Host Boroughs.
- Games-time roles: The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) forecast thousands of jobs needed to help deliver the Games, particularly in areas such as catering, cleaning, security and stewarding. At the peak of the games, a workforce of up to 200,000 was required to deliver the Games, made up of around 6,000 paid staff, up to 70,000 volunteers and around 100,000 contractors (employed by third-party organisations).
- Legacy roles: Vicky was also looking to partner with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) to match skills and training to evolving jobs that are an outcome of post-Olympic use of facilities.

#### Other GLA Employment Initiatives

London's Mayor is also commissioning an education review focusing on outcomes for London's school children, promoting apprenticeship schemes and has a target to create 200,000 new jobs in his four year mayoral term.



The first neighbourhood established in the future Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park will be Chobham Manor.

### VISIT 9

#### Destination

Make a Difference (MaD), Milton Keynes, UK

#### Contact/s

Denise Davis Boreham, Chief Executive Officer

Anna Peters, Social Enterprise Manager

#### Objectives

To see firsthand how a youth led social enterprise company can be sustainable and can successfully engage with young people and provide them with volunteering and training opportunities.

#### Outcomes

Make a Difference (MaD) is an organisation with the aim to improve the lives of young people (8-25) in Milton Keynes, located approximately 70kms North West of London and home to approximately 250,000 people. It meets this objective through the activities and training it provides for children and young people. The organisation was founded in 2005 and incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC).

It has grown over the years and in 2010/11 enjoyed a turnover of £700,000, however due to the new coalition government and subsequent budget constraints, the largely grant-funded turnover is expected to be severely curtailed. MaD has received a Transitions Grant for 2011/2012 that should result in this financial year showing a small surplus.

This change of circumstances has forced MaD to migrate its business model away from grant dependency towards selling services as a service provider. The organisation has developed a plan that makes it self-sufficient from 2012.

To this end, MaD has analysed the elements of its business, defined four business units, and set each unit a set of sales objectives. The business streams are; Inclusion; Activities and Training; Central Bedfordshire Youth Service, Venue; and Social Enterprise. A manager has been appointed for each stream and each manager has developed their own product, identified potential purchasers and has embarked on a marketing campaign. Initial results are encouraging and several revenue raising events have already taken place.

Examples for each business include:

- Activities and training: Positive activities for young people, enrichment activities in schools, holidays schemes, training and accreditation, youth service contract in Central Bedfordshire
- Venue: conferences, film nights, gig nights, private hiring, art exhibitions
- Inclusion: Transitions, youth group, befriending project (young people supporting and encouraging others to get involved in youth programs) out and about project
- Social Enterprise: Thrift Shop, café, car park.

Key customers have been identified for each of the planned services:

- Local authorities and schools represent the major customer through their education, youth and social services budgets. They are existing buyers of MaD's services and appear to be receptive to paying for services by contract rather than grant funding.
- The local University and Colleges have been identified as an important new funding stream. MaD has established contacts at both student union and university administration levels and hopes to create a substantial new client base.
- Conference facilities have already been provided to three social enterprises. These have all been successful and MaD believes that word of mouth among delegates will allow this service to develop.
- Relations with local corporates have already yielded successful programs. MaD regards building on and strengthening these relationships as crucial to continued growth. Sponsored activities include volunteer programs for the café, sports activities and provision of IT equipment.

MaD aims to keep the cost of activities as low as possible so all young people can access them. This is made possible through income raised through a number of social enterprises primarily located at the Buszy.

The key physical asset is the Buszy, the Milton Keynes central bus station regenerated, which is an award winning arts and cultural hub, offering cinema, art, creative space, live performance space, as well as a bustling café, thrift shop, skate park and car park (used by commuters and office workers) and offices, all of which provide sustainable income for the programs and activities provided.

MaD provides activities not only at the Buszy, but also at local Youth Centres in Arlesey, Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Sandy, local schools and other venues.



The Buszy provides a performance and creative space for young people.



The MaD Thrift Shop provides young people with volunteer and real work experience.

A committee of young people also has been formed to provide input into the activities and programs provided by MaD to ensure they are getting out of the facility what they want. Young people are provided with volunteer and relevant training opportunities within the Buszy, whether it is at the café or thrift shop, providing them with real work experience. This has been a great success with between 80 to 90 percent of existing staff being former volunteers. This in turn encourages loyalty as the staffs have a unique understanding of the ethos behind MaD and in turn can inspire other young people. Further support is provided to young people through CV and reference writing.

MaD is an Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) registered provider of positive activities and training for young people aged eight to 19. These include a variety of workshops from graffiti art to cooking designed to ensure that young people learn new skills as well as have fun. Courses operate within a safe, structured and friendly environment and staffs are selected for their expertise and enthusiasm. MaD also offer a range of awards and accreditation that young people can work towards whilst participating in their activities and workshops.

In 2011, MaD was the recipient of the Prime Minister's Big Society Award for having engaged over 3000 young people in five years and secured over £1 million in funding for numerous projects.

The main driver of MaD's success is and will continue to be the highly motivated and experienced staff team. The key individuals have been with MaD for some time and have developed excellent relationships with funders, potential clients and other stakeholders. Their interpersonal skills are proved and they have met and frequently exceeded targets for grant funded work.

### VISIT 10

#### Destination

First Steps To Employment, North Kent, UK

#### Contact

Neville Gaunt, Founder of First Steps and Chairman of the North Kent Branch of the Federation of Small Business and Chairman of the Swanley Chambers of Commerce

#### Objectives

To understand a localised approach to reducing youth unemployment that is sustainable and provides real life work experience and knowledge.

#### Outcomes

Neville Gaunt is a passionate businessman and a staunch supporter and advocate for young people who are trying to make a break into employment. As a father of five, Neville recognised the need to help young unemployed people who had the potential to becoming a tradesperson. The problem was a simple one – to become employed, employers want experience, but without employment how does a young person get the experience?

Neville founded a program called First Steps, an organisation that helps young people unable to find jobs, get back or into the workplace through real work and real jobs. His focus is on vocational training and the apprenticeship concept. Where his operation differs from others is that it is specifically set up as a business vehicle to support young people.

In addressing local youth unemployment, he saw the need for sustainable schemes that had the flexibility to meet the needs of a specific area, rather than the blanket approach taken by the Central Government, such as the Future Jobs Fund.

In delivering real unemployment solutions for young people, Neville strongly believed that service providers needed to stop ticking the boxes with flavour of the month schemes and look to a triple helix model of education, public and private sector partnerships that provide a pathway out of poverty and long term unemployment, and in to long term, sustainable work. Neville saw the real challenge being the importance of getting the balance right between knowledge and practice.



Neville Gaunt

## ***The International Experience***

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First Step's business model is designed to encourage and engage proactively with people in the community to make a difference in the lives of others. Key to success is that young people have the right attitude, behaviour and mindset to grow. Using the Mind Fit program, the process starts in less than a day, for even the most difficult of cases. Young people are assigned to a variety of different jobs from small repair and maintenance jobs for primarily elderly people in the community, to large construction and event management jobs.

They also learn what makes a business tick – marketing, research, advertising, cash flow, profit, collaboration, communication, customer service and admin – skills that every employer now demands from all their staff. The program follows three steps to build confidence in a young person: 1) Building a skill set, 2) Creating opportunities, and 3) Making linkages.

Neville is also the Chairman for the Kent & Medway Region Federation for Small Business (FSB), which supports and acts on behalf of over 6,500 members across five branches. The FSB is the UK's largest campaigning pressure group promoting and protecting the interests of the self-employed and owners of small firms.

## ***The International Experience***

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### **VISIT 11**

#### **Destination**

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

#### **Contact**

Susan Priest, Executive Director

#### **Objectives**

To better understand the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships in the context of setting strategic objectives and delivering regional priorities for areas of disadvantage.

#### **Outcomes**

Susan Priest is the Executive Director of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Previously, she worked as the Executive Director for Business Development at the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), delivering an economic development, regeneration and growth agenda. SEEDA was a statutory body delivering programs across multiple local authorities on behalf of Central Government and had a wide ranging brief across rural development, enterprise, skills, trade and investment.

In 2010, the newly elected Coalition Government abolished Regional Development Agencies and instead focussed on Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP). There are currently 37 LEPs across the United Kingdom.

The South East LEP, which is considered as the nation's gateway to Europe, encompasses East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. It is home to 156,000 businesses, almost four million people, eight ports, eight major universities and 32 district authorities. Over 1.5 million people work in the area which contributes almost six percent of Britain's GVA (Gross Value Added, which is a measure of the value of goods and services produced by an area, sector or producer minus the cost of the raw materials and other inputs used to produce them). The South East LEP is the largest partnership of its kind between private and public sector bodies outside London working together to develop and deliver sustainable economic growth across all parts of the LEP area.

With eight ports around the Essex, Kent and East Sussex coast the LEP area is a critical gateway between Europe, London and the rest of the country. This will be further enhanced with the opening of the London Gateway port in Thurrock over the next few years. Once complete the deep-sea container port with an adjacent business and logistics park will create 12,000 direct jobs and over 20,000 indirect jobs.

The key challenges for the South East LEP includes being home to three of the top 50 most deprived areas in England - Brooklands and Grasslands (Jaywick – Essex) Cliftonville West and Margate Central (both Thanet - Kent). Also, 3.1 percent of people of working age across the LEP receive Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) compared to 2.5 percent in the South East.

The LEP is not an authority. It is a public/private partnership with a focus on a new localism agenda. As a partnership of leaders – from the business community and from local authorities with their democratic mandates – the LEP performs a leadership role setting out a broad vision for the LEP area over the next twenty years.

This leadership role means the LEP acting as a strong advocate for the area it serves, working with Government to find solutions to deliver the strategic transport infrastructure that will drive national prosperity and economic growth.

The LEP is not a 'delivery body' rather it is an 'enabling body' and a dynamic catalyst for change. It is the job of the LEP to identify the very high priority actions which must happen and, collectively, use the talents and resources of LEP members to ensure that these actions take place.

The single goal for the LEP is to promote steady, sustained economic growth over the next two decades, and in achieving this growth, enhancing and protecting the valuable natural assets which make its communities and landscapes attractive and distinctive.

Four areas of 'enabling activity' have been identified the LEP will concentrate in order to realise its strategic objectives. This includes:

- Working with government to improve strategic transport infrastructure, including establishing key road and rail network priorities, along with key investments necessary to strengthen sea and airport offers.
- Advocating for universal superfast broadband on behalf of business and local authorities, who agree it is central to accelerating economic growth.
- Improving the skills of the existing workforce and those of young people entering the workforce and encourage better matching of skills to business needs now and in the future as new technologies develop.
- Promoting the best use of new financial instruments being considered by government and private investors to the benefit of south east businesses.

Minimal government funding is provided to the South East LEP through the Central Government's Capacity Fund, and this is insufficient to create a professional secretariat. Susan leads a junior team of three provided by local authority partners.

Susan discussed the main future challenge for Government policy will be the emerging diversity of the LEPs, while the biggest intellectual challenges will be the commercialisation and internationalisation of the areas knowledge base and working with the local Higher Education providers to develop entrepreneurship.

Susan compared Northern Futures to a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), rather than an LEP, which are very enterprise and economy focussed. A LSP is also a multi-agency partnership, bringing together different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to address local problems, allocate funding, discuss strategies and initiatives. LSPs exist in nearly all local area authorities in the UK, allow for wider involvement and engagement with the delivery of public services and are an advisory body which is non-statutory and non-executive.



*Susan Priest, Executive Director of South East Local Enterprise Partnership*

### VISIT 12

#### Destination

Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council & Austin Polytechnical Academy

#### Contact

Erica Swinney, Career and Community Program Director (Austin Polytechnical Academy)

#### Objectives

To understand how education and industry partnerships can help overcome disadvantage through private sector investment in public education.

#### Outcomes

Erica Swinney has worked for the Center for Labor and Community Research (CLCR) since 2008 as the Director of Career & Community Programs for Austin Polytechnical Academy, an innovative Chicago Public High School on Chicago's Westside. Erica was responsible for successfully developing, implementing and managing a number of career preparation initiatives for Austin Polytech students during the formative stages of Austin Polytech's development.

Erica works closely with Austin Polytech students on a variety of leadership programs related to careers, entrepreneurship, economic and community development including starting initiatives such as: co-leading a trip with nine students to Mondragon in Spain in 2009, Sustainability Leadership Club, Patent Law Savvy Workshop, SkillsUSA chapter and a student-owned manufacturing business planning process.

Manufacturing is still big business in the United States. It accounts for 11 percent GDP (US\$1.6 trillion), and 12 million workers. In Chicago alone there are currently 11,000 factories employing 320,000 staff. The public, however, still perceives manufacturing as a dirty, dangerous and dying trade. Since 2000 most low-skill jobs have been moved offshore due to financial pressure; there are no education programs producing high-skill employees, no government assistance and in the current culture of consumption, there is no interest from younger workers. The vibrant economy of manufacturing is at risk.

The Center for Labor and Community Research (CLCR) was established in 1982 by Dan Swinney, a former machinist and union organiser in the manufacturing sector, in response to the thousands of manufacturing plant closures in the Chicago area. The CLCR is a not for profit consulting and research organisation that specialises in developing innovative and effective approaches to community development, industrial job retention, education and business development in the Chicago area.

In 2005, Dan also established the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council (MRC) with the aim of maintaining and expanding high skilled manufacturing jobs in a partnership between business, labour, government, community organisations and educational institutions.

The Chicago MRC model is a public-private partnership with a local focus that operates regional programs in support of advanced manufacturing. The partnership has in fact successfully led to resurgence in the manufacturing sector in the Chicago area and the flow on productivity growth.

## The International Experience

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Growth in manufacturing also spills over to other sectors, with every new manufacturing job creating three more jobs in other industries.

Since its establishment the Chicago MRC has worked with the City Colleges of Chicago to improve post secondary manufacturing degree and credentialing programs by aligning curriculum with industry needs and connecting students with high quality careers in manufacturing.

The Council's main achievement so far is the Austin Polytechnical Academy, a public school established in 2007 to meet the educational requirements necessary to rebuild the manufacturing economy, help revitalise communities and empower students with the skills and knowledge for a career in manufacturing.

In addition to the normal curriculum of science, maths and English, it teaches its students four years of pre-engineering courses and advanced machinery. All students graduate with nationally recognised credentials. It also teaches business practice, including ownership, management and law relating to intellectual property and labour rights. There are 65 partner companies in Chicago, which offer internships, mentoring and work experience.

It is anticipated that producing a high-skilled workforce will produce a middle class and end wage disparity, generate new jobs in other areas of the economy, and contribute to the end of the environmental crisis.

The school is attracting national and international attention. Similar schemes are in operation in other parts of the world – there is a cooperative manufacturing-based civil society in Mondragon, Spain; the state of Emilia-Romagna has 60,000 small manufacturing companies working in conjunction with the Italian government; and Germany and Denmark have advanced manufacturing training in their school system, which has enabled them to remain globally competitive.



*DeCardy Diecasting during summer job program at Austin Polytechnical Academy*

## The International Experience

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Although the school is part of the Chicago Public School, it is much more than a typical high school. Its career program connects students with a rigorous college prep engineering curriculum as well as work-based learning experiences like job shadowing, mentoring, professional machining certificates and paid internships.

Erica attributed the success of the Austin Polytechnical Academy to the pragmatic approach taken to ensure students and educators meet the current needs of industry. Also, connecting with industries and education providers who share the same vision and want to accomplish the same goals has been paramount to the Academy's success. Erica also noted that the School was made possible through private investment.

[Update: On November 15, 2012, the Mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, announced that the city will invest US\$1.25 million in advanced manufacturing education programs led by the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council and its managing partner, the Center for Labor & Community Research (CLCR).The funds will support the Austin Innovation Park, Austin Polytech Career Program, Austin Manufacturing Training Center, outreach to elementary school students around advanced manufacturing education and careers, and a new bridge program to prepare African-American males for advanced manufacturing training.]



*Austin Polytechnical Academy student Alex West at Atlas Tool and Die Works*

### VISIT 13

#### Destination

City of Detroit, Mayor's Office – Detroit Works Project

#### Contact

Kizzy Montgomery, Director of Government Relations, Mayor's Office

Objectives To understand what a city that has experienced great disadvantage, in particular industry, job and population loss, is doing in terms of short term and long term planning for regeneration.

#### Outcomes

Detroit was once one of the most productive industrial cities which put not only the USA, but the majority of the world, on wheels. But the post-industrial era and decline of the auto industry in the United States, followed by the exodus of the middle-class to the suburbs, has left Detroit a commercially starved city.

Detroit's population plunged 25 percent in less than a decade to just over 700,000 in 2012. The greatest impact is on the density of houses with 185 homes per block in 1950 to just 40 homes per block in 2012, leaving whole neighbourhoods near deserted with just a handful of homes occupied. To put into perspective, the cities of New York, Boston and Pittsburg could all fit within the Detroit city limits.

Although two of the USA big three car companies - General Motors (GM), Ford and Chrysler - still have their headquarters in the city, most of the manufacturing has been squeezed out by the low labour costs of overseas competitors and by imports of foreign cars. In general, the car-makers tackled market pressures 'largely by walking away'.

Two-hundred-thousand jobs were lost in the space of three years - and this had a huge effect on the city. What went with that were the neighbourhoods that were around it. Entire neighbourhoods have yet to recover from the economic downturn.

It always has been painted as a separated community - the suburbs versus the city. These developments left Detroit with a modestly affluent suburban area, but an empty, sprawling post-industrial wasteland in the middle. It is what city planners call a 'doughnut'.

The real goal, however, is to bring back workers and their families. This mass exodus has placed the city under pressure to maintain 139 square miles of infrastructure with a US\$300 million budget deficit, and 85 percent of the land area still experiencing population decline.

Now, empty boulevards and deserted neighbourhoods have become symbolic of the city and the municipality can't afford public services in degraded suburbs anymore. Bus service to some neighbourhoods has been restricted or halted, leaving residents without public transportation.

Public safety is a top priority for the Mayor Dave Bing, who has also embarked on a commitment to tear down 10,000 dangerous abandoned or vacant structures and is lobbying the federal government for US\$10 million in funding to help with the demolition. To date 6,000 have been torn down. It is estimated Detroit has as many as 40,000 vacant and dangerous structures and some are a magnet for criminal activity and create a hazard for children walking to schools.

Kizzy Montgomery is the Director of Government Relations in Mayor's office. She spoke about how in 2010, the Mayor announced the Detroit Works Project as his signature effort to improve the quality of life for Detroit residents. Its purpose is to create a blueprint that redefines the physical, social, and



*The Midtown Art Centre Community Garden is part of the Detroit Works Project, which is designed to revitalise select neighbourhoods in the city.*

economic landscape of the city.

Mayor Bing pledged to breathe new life into his Detroit Works Project, designed to revitalise select neighbourhoods in the city. The mayor announced that US\$10 million has been pumped into the three areas targeted by the Detroit Works Project. Formed in 2010, the program is designed to realign some city services, leverage available resources to make improvements in neighbourhoods and motivate citizens to move back into the city's core neighbourhoods.

There are two separate tracks for the project - short term actions, which is led by city government; and long term planning that looks at citywide issues over the next 50 years, led by a steering committee.

The project was split in to two parts in direct response to feedback received from nearly 10,000 residents who attended meetings, summits and forums about the project between September 2010 and May 2011. Initially the project was all about the long term planning for Detroit's future, but the City soon recognised a need to start using some of the data from a neighbourhood analysis to help neighbourhoods now.

This data included looking at existing land use, population, commercial centres, transport and industry. Also the conditions of the city's housing stock; vacant land and homes; the median sales prices of homes; subsidised rental stock; dangerous structures; foreclosures; and bank-owned property, were examined. This analysis provided an overview of the existing physical and market conditions that are impacting neighbourhoods across the city, therefore enabling the municipality to strategically align its limited resources for maximum impact.

The analysis identified the conditions of Detroit's neighbourhoods and separated them into three different market-types, which are:

- **STEADY:** A steady market has homes in good physical condition with the majority being owner-occupied. Homes in steady markets typically are valued high. There are limited vacancies in steady markets and a relatively stable population.
- **TRANSITIONAL:** A transitional market has changing dynamics; a relatively high presence of real estate owned properties; a mix of rental and owner-occupied homes; and in a transitional market there has been some vacancy and some population loss.
- **DISTRESSED:** A distressed market shows signs of long term physical decline; near absence of market activity; high vacancy rates; and high concentrations of vacant land.

This data provided city officials with new information to help them determine how they could utilise the city's limited resources in a new way to make the most positive impact possible; starting with three parts of the community called demonstration areas.

In the demonstration areas, the city is working closely with the community development corporations, not for profits, block clubs and churches to gain greater knowledge about the specific services and resources they feel are necessary and how to best align them based on the market conditions.

The focus of the short term actions will be able to affect change in the neighbourhoods, improve how some city services are delivered; and the results of the progress being made with the short term actions will help to inform the long term planning. These areas are being used as anchors to draw people to the area and to also encourage the commercial and small business sector.

The City has a partnership with Citizen's Bank, which provided matching grants for homeowners in the three demonstration areas. Over 150 residents have participated in this grant program. So far, several people have benefitted from US\$2 million of combined investment opportunities. The majority of the homes received new windows and roofs. According to a local government official this clearly demonstrates that people who have options to move and probably have the finances to move, instead of moving are saying 'You know what? I'm going to stay. I believe this is a good investment and I'm going to invest in my house and be a positive contributor to the city'.

The reconfiguration of the city centre is beginning to take shape. A health, education and university precinct is beginning to dominate the city centre and nearby surrounds, which also includes new housing. Healthcare is shaping up to become the leading job market in the future. The vision for the future is that this will provide students, their families and the community with access to a range of health, social and community services in addition to providing new opportunities for post compulsory learning.



Mayor Dave Bing has embarked on a commitment to tear down 10,000 dangerous abandoned or vacant structures.

### VISIT 14

#### Destination

New York City Mayor's Office

#### Contact

Tara Colton, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Adult Education

#### Objectives

To see in action the role Adult Education plays in impacting upon the lives of people with disadvantage and to gain insight into the delivery of these programs and initiatives.

#### Outcomes

Tara Colton is the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Adult Education (MOAE), an office that serves as a bridge between government, industry, education providers and community groups in helping to build lifelong skills for New Yorkers. Her office plays a vital role coordinating and priority setting the delivery of adult education in New York City. Previously she worked as Director of Strategy and Partnerships at the New York City Department of Education's Office of Adult and Continuing Education. Her passion is strengthening collaborations with a diverse range of partners to ultimately deliver the best outcomes for participants of adult education.

The MOAE was established to create better outcomes for the City's adult education system. The office coordinates strategy, promotes best practices and connects participating agencies to the local government administration's education, community development and social priorities. The office works with a range of City, State and Federal agencies to advance adult education in New York City.

A 'Visioning Retreat' held in 2007 of key stakeholders including educators, former students, City and state officials and others to come together to envision the future of adult education in New York City, set the goals for improving the system.

Over 70,000 adult New Yorkers have enrolled in classes at one of the City's publicly-funded free classes. For all their differences, adult learners usually start from the same place – a goal. For some the goal is to become a citizen, earn a General Education Diploma (GED), or learn English to get a better job. For others, the goal is to put an end to not being able to read, to take their child or grandchild on their lap and share a book, or to be the first one in their family to go to college.

When adults are able to see their goals begin to materialise, they are likely to persist in their education despite considerable obstacles. When the adult learner's motivation and abilities are encouraged by the skills and insights of well qualified, highly trained teachers working in programs with the resources to support achievement, the results are nothing short of transformational.

The current adult education sector in New York City consists of publicly-funded free classes offered by:

- The Department of Education
- The City University of New York
- The Public Libraries
- The Human Resources Administration

## The International Experience

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- Numerous community based organizations under contract to the Department of Youth and Community Development or to the State.

There are four main types of instruction offered in the system:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL, also referred to as English as a Second Language, ESL), including a range from very basic classes for immigrants who do not know the alphabet to more advanced classes for those who have college degrees and some fluency in English, but need to improve for work or further study; some programs offer English classes geared specifically towards passing the citizenship test
- Adult Basic Education (ABE), including literacy (i.e., help with reading and writing), pre-GED classes, and GED preparation; these classes are for adults who already speak English and include many immigrants
- Basic Education in the Native Language (BENL), consists of literacy instruction in adults' native language, often a precursor to an individual moving into an ESL class (only a small number of people are currently educated using this approach)
- Career and Technical Education (CTE), small number of classes offered by the Department of Education in areas such as licensed practical nursing, barbering, clerical skills, computer networking, and limited classes or workshops on topics related to employment preparation offered by a wide range of programs.

The journey to reach their goals is not always easy and in order to get there, the adult education system must be innovative, collaborative and dynamic to help learners achieve their goals. This is a major challenge for the MOAE, with a focus on ensuring there is 'no wrong door' for anyone wanting to further their education.

The economic value of adult education is well documented. Those who haven't a high school diploma end up costing the government in the long run, in contrast to the value of those who do have a high school diploma. A focus on adult education actually saves government money by reducing impact on healthcare, public assistance and justice system costs. Adult education also improves and expands the available pool of skills by helping motivated, but under educated people, achieve gainful employment in today's increasing high tech job market and at a far lower cost per learner when compared to higher education.

Importantly, improving the education of adults is not just about them but also about their family, as upgrading adult skills can bring large returns for their children, impacting on the occurrence of generational poverty.

The aim of the MOAE is to increase participation in adult education across the city. They aim to achieve this through the following:

- Offering more classes with more hours of instruction
- Feature programs with different areas of expertise and helps learners find the right program for their needs and strengths
- Involve learners and alumni in meaningful ways to strengthen programs
- Use television and the internet for learning opportunities outside the classroom
- Prepare adult learners for college education and job training opportunities
- Broadening civic participation improves health of families, enhances the competitiveness of the City's workforce, improves community re-entry of formerly-incarcerated persons and expands economic opportunity for low-income individuals and families.

## The International Experience

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Recently the MOAE and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) merged. The merger of the MOAE and WIB will help to ensure that skills gaps identified by the WIB are met through the provision of appropriate skills training via the adult education providers.

The WIB was established to support the Mayor's economic development agenda by effectively and efficiently connecting New Yorkers to jobs and ensuring employers have the skilled workers they need to grow and prosper. The WIB oversees federally funded workforce development programs, which assist businesses by helping to ensure access to qualified workers and to provide workers with skills training.



70,000 adult New Yorkers have enrolled in classes at one of the City's publicly-funded free classes.

## The International Experience

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### VISIT 15

#### Destination

City Mission of Schenectady, NY

#### Contact/s

Michael Saccocio, Chief Executive

Timothy Castle, Director of Operations

#### Objectives

To see in action a service provider who operates under a similar framework to Northern Futures and to gain insight in to what they do differently and successfully.

To understand how City Mission have undertaken to build a sustainable community.

#### Outcomes

City Mission of Schenectady (located in the state of New York) was founded in 1906 to meet the needs of the hungry and homeless in its community. Their aim is to help people who are in poverty, help people get out of poverty and help people stay out of poverty.

They do this through three branches of service:

- Community outreach and emergency shelter services, which includes meals served to the community on a daily basis and emergency shelters for both men and women, as well as women with children
- Bridges to Freedom, both long and short-term discipleship and recovery programs
- Transitional housing and ASPIRE (a leadership training program), which provides training and mentoring in education, career building, financial management and leadership - and sees people through their transition after graduating from Bridges to Freedom.

City Mission does not receive any government funds and depends entirely on the contributions of concerned individuals, churches and businesses.

City Mission offers many services to people in need from the local community of Schenectady, including serving over 500 meals each day and providing shelter to approximately 90 men, women and children each night. It also operates a thrift store, a Learning and Resource Centre, chapel, medical clinics and opportunities for volunteer participation.

In addition to meals and shelter, City Mission provides free clothing such as warm winter wear - hats, coats, mittens, scarves and gloves - all through the cold, winter months to anyone in need. City Mission also offers an annual Back to School Boost program where they distribute donated school supplies among local families in need. They also work with teachers in the local school districts to help them reach children and families that might not come directly to the Mission.

The Thrift Store sells furniture, clothing, house wares, shoes, books and a variety of other items to support the ministries of the Mission. Gift certificates are made available for those in need. The 18,000 square foot Distribution Centre processes donated items, as well as providing vocational training and employment opportunities. Donated items are processed for use in Community Outreach, the thrift store and clothing repurpose/reuse operation.

The Learning and Resource Centre provides residents (both program participants and guests) with access to many different resources during their stay. Some need to re-establish their identity or

## The International Experience

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recover necessary documentation that may have been lost or never acquired. Others may use one of the eight computer work stations to look for work, or use the tutorials to sharpen their academic or computer skills. The Resource Centre also provides classes in literacy, budgeting, and career planning, as well as on-the-job training opportunities.

For men and women who come to the shelters seeking life change, City Mission offers Bridges to Freedom, a discipleship and recovery program, which is similar to the 'Bridges Out of Poverty' framework. 'Bridges Out of Poverty' is a powerful model for economic and social change, sustainability and stability. It inspires innovative solutions in those looking to counter poverty and its impact at all levels in a community. This approach helps employers, higher education, community organisations, social service agencies, hospitals, individuals, and others address poverty in a comprehensive way. People from all economic classes come together to improve job retention rates, build resources, improve outcomes and support those who are moving out of poverty.

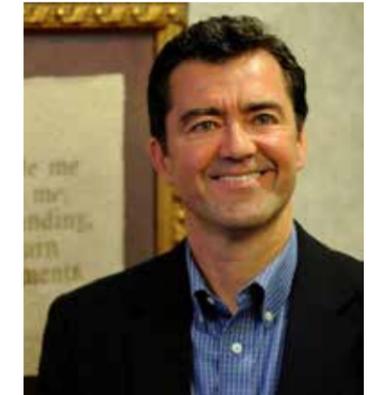
During their time in Bridges to Freedom, men and women are given the opportunity to take classes in everything from the most basic life skills, such as time management and personal hygiene, to educational classes and career building.

Bridges to Freedom is tailored to each individual's unique needs, giving them the opportunity to really focus on the problems and issues that brought them to their state of crisis. The goal is that by the time an individual graduates from Bridges to Freedom they will have reached a level of sustainability and a place where they have a desire to give back to the community out of gratitude for what they have received.

City Mission undertakes a holistic approach to helping people out of poverty and a seamless linkage of their services, to better enhance the success of their participants. Housing is a major barrier for disadvantaged people and City Mission provides 24 apartments on the City Mission campus. This transitional program provides graduates with an opportunity to continue their transition to full independence and self-sustainability within the supportive environment of the City Mission campus under the direction of assigned life coaches.



The City Mission of Schenectady, New York



Chief Executive, Mike Saccocio

The central co-location of services, all within walking distance on one major campus and located in downtown Schenectady close to central parklands and public transport linkages, makes access for clients easier.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The overseas component of the Fellowship provided the Fellow with an insight into current approaches in the United Kingdom and United States to addressing disadvantage. It also provided validation that Northern Futures is delivering leading edge programs and services targeted at a unique cohort of people that is admired worldwide.

To be able to talk with leaders in employment, economic development and those who have a passion for social transformation gave the Fellow valuable insight in to the issues surrounding sustainability, partnerships and successful program delivery.

The Fellow noted the focus many of the conversations had during this visit to the South East of England was on recognising the quick fix nature of many externally funded programs and all agreed future success and sustainability would be achieved through mainstream funded programs.

Two weeks into the international experience, the golden thread that ran through the conversations was the recognition that the route out of poverty is via localised education and employment opportunities. However no one the Fellow met with was looking specifically at the same group as Northern Futures – those from intergenerational poverty. It can be said that on a global level, a whole of community approach to place making was the most effective way of achieving this.

Furthermore, those locations visited with established authorities accountable for the economic and social regeneration, demonstrated a coordinated and targeted approach that delivered tangible outcomes.

The ISS Institute Fellowship program has made a major impact on the Fellow's focus for the future of Northern Futures and has crystallised her thoughts on the direction and changes that are necessary.

The Fellow would like to thank all those who so generously gave of their time and knowledge to meet during the international experience, those who contributed to the development of the international program, and those who provided input and assisted with the writing of this report.

# Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

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A forum presenting the findings of the report, featuring Bryan Raine (who assisted the Fellow during her UK tour) to be held on 7 February 2013 in Geelong. Bryan's expertise is in relationship management and facilitation through coaching and mentoring, design and delivery of organisational change, and providing an interim management solution where required. As Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration for Essex County Council, he was responsible for aspects of economic development and regeneration including: European funding; tourism; strategic sport and 2012; inward investment and regeneration partnerships.

Those to be invited, not limited to, are:

- Department of Human Services
- City of Greater Geelong
- Deakin University
- Gordon TAFE
- Committee for Geelong
- Northern Futures Steering Committee
- Committee for Geelong Leaders for Geelong Alumni
- Geelong Chamber of Commerce
- Industry partners including: Alcoa, Avalon Airport, Barwon Health, Cotton On, Costa Logistics, Godfrey Hirst, Ford, McColl's, Target, Wettenhals, St Laurence, TAC
- Local partners including: GForce, Shell, MatchWorks, Encompass, WorkSkil, Centacare Employment
- International Specialised Skills Institute.

Briefings regarding the findings of the report to:

- Northern Futures Steering Committee (14 December 2012)
- Committee for Geelong Board (date TBC)
- Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board (13 February 2013)

It is envisaged that all of the above could be undertaken in Geelong and would commence within 12 months of publishing the report. The ISS Institute could be seen as having a role in the coordination and management of the projects. The Fellow would be available for consultation and participation in all of the projects.

# Recommendations

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## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Northern Futures – Broadening Our Approach

The purpose of this international scholarship was to learn from other areas abroad, garner information and determine whether Northern Futures was on the right track. The Fellow also used the international experience to identify effective and sustainable ways to address the issues of disadvantaged faced by the northern suburbs, with the ultimate aim of narrowing the social and economic gap between those that live in 3214 postcode suburbs and the rest of the region.

Having successfully established the Work and Learning Centre, it was clear to the Fellow during her travels that the original plan was to be viewed as a living document that needed enhancement and refinement as the organisation has grown and begun to achieve the outcomes it had set. Northern Futures Strategic Plan consists of three action areas: 1. Supporting Economic Growth; 2. Linking Labour Supply and Demand; 3. Strengthening Education and Training. Achievements within each of the three specified Action Areas are already making a difference in the northern suburbs.

It is now time to look at the broader aspects of Northern Futures Strategic Plan in order to ensure its sustainability and relevance. Through the implementation of future activities and partnerships, Northern Futures will aim to achieve Social Inclusion policy objectives for Geelong's northern suburbs by taking a whole of community approach. It was clearly evident during the international experience, the key to breaking the cycle of poverty was through the provision of education and employment opportunities. The next stage in the process is to address issues such as job security, support for disadvantaged children and families, service availability and accessibility and connectedness to family and social networks.

Northern Futures is well placed to drive a coordinated and targeted approach to tackling disadvantage in Geelong's northern suburbs, and this is well supported and documented in its Strategic Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION 2

#### Introducing Tertiary Training to the Northern Suburbs

It was clearly evident during the international experience that the key to breaking the cycle of poverty is through providing localised education opportunities. It is therefore a key recommendation of this report that Northern Futures work with local tertiary providers to establish a TAFE facility in the northern suburbs, at a site such as Corio South Primary School, via the Regeneration Project.

This enhanced TAFE physical presence facility and service model would include accommodation for young students who are engaged in the Work and Learning Centres' training programs. The importance of working in partnership with education providers at all levels including Higher Education (University), Further Education (TAFE) and schools (primary and secondary) was evident in both the UK and USA. These partnerships have been a key component in successfully creating pathways for people with disadvantage.

This research demonstrated the need to take education to where the residents are, and to match the curriculum to the local skills need requirements and job opportunities available locally. The education and employment programs must be tailored to address the complexities of disadvantaged communities and be responsive to the specific needs of local industry partners.

The Gordon TAFE facility would work in partnership with other education providers including Deakin University. This initiative would aim to further expand the engagement of young people and people disengaged from the labour market in education and training of the community.

This will be achieved by integrating services through a key service portal to enable greater flexibility in tailoring wrap-around client centred services packages that will deliver better outcomes and not to divide the current training market amongst providers.

The northern suburbs of Geelong have a high percentage of residents who are aged between 19 and 65 years of age. Many of them are disengaged from education and training. A locally based TAFE facility that offers an enhanced range of services including youth accommodation, links with health providers and specialises in engaging disadvantaged learners of all ages will provide tangible pathways to higher education and real opportunities for them participating in all aspects of the community and the economy. Participation by this age bracket will become even more critical as redundancies occur in local traditional industries downsizing as part of the local economy in transition.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

#### Structural Changes

The will to tackle the complex and inter-related problems that contribute to the entrenched social, physical and economic disadvantage in the northern suburbs of Geelong remains strong. One of the primary factors that inhibit the success of any one agency to deliver large scale and sustainable improvement rests in the limited focus it operates with i.e. education, health or transport – but not all of these. This is compounded by the limited control any one agency has in relation to the key levers that govern the resources required to address the many issues that exist in an integrated way.

Significant improvements in outcomes have previously been achieved in this community when resources and activities were coordinated to achieve clearly articulated objectives under the unifying approach of Neighbourhood Renewal. While this approach achieved some success, it was time limited and constrained by its perceived lack of independence from one government department. It had no authority invested in it to manage land or other significant resources and it was constrained in its ability to engage fully in partnerships with private and government stakeholders to generate the level and scale of activity required to transform the area.

The Neighbourhood Renewal governance structure was based on a partnership model that delivered some significant benefits but lacked the rigour necessary to drive strong decision making, draw in the necessary expertise or offer high levels of accountability.

These issues need to be addressed if there is to be wide scale and sustainable change achieved. A number of communities with similar histories and demographics as Norlane and Corio have taken steps to arrest and reverse their social and economic decline such as the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) which features in Visit 5 of this report. The TGKP is a private and public sector partnership formed to champion sustainable economic growth across the North Kent area. The main aims of the Partnership are to create the best conditions possible to attract investment and deliver sustainable, private sector-led economic growth across North Kent and promote and enable collaboration between the private and public sectors to help achieve growth.

This has been achieved by investing the responsibility and authority to generate and drive the level of change required in a designated Development Authority. This approach has not only improved the outcomes for those communities but has generated substantial benefits to the regions in which they are located. What is more, arresting the decline of these communities generates huge savings that are returned back to government and society as a whole over generations.

It is proposed the structure and strategic model of Northern Futures be informed by successful national and international models such as the TKGP. Northern Futures is well placed to take a lead role in driving the change needed in the northern suburbs of Geelong. It is therefore proposed that Northern Futures is incorporated in a Development Authority/Statutory Body charged with the task of addressing the issues of disadvantaged faced by the communities living in the northern suburbs of Geelong as defined by the 3214 postcode.

This Development Authority/Statutory Body would set the strategic objectives for the area, taking into consideration all the existing relevant strategic plans affecting the northern suburbs (i.e. the G21 Regional Plan, City of Greater Geelong Strategic Plan and relevant state and federal government policy frameworks).

The Development Authority/Statutory Body would be managed by board which be charged with the responsibility for developing a vision for transformational change and creating the best conditions possible to attract investment and deliver sustainable growth across the northern suburbs. The board would operate within an agreed framework and with clearly delegated powers to enable it to achieve its objectives.

## ***Recommendations***

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The board would develop and publish a series of plans articulating how each of the priority issues impacting on disadvantage is to be addressed, and who and how each of the investment partners will contribute to achieving these outcomes. The board will produce annual reports detailing its performance and be accountable for meeting specified improvement targets.

In addition, this Development Authority/Statutory Body would be guided by a diverse team of representatives drawn from government and non-government sectors, industry and business, health and education and the wider community, who are suitably skilled and share a commitment to the economic and social advancement of the northern suburbs of Geelong.

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