

DQ

DOWNTOWN QUARTERLY • SPRING • 2011

A FRANK CONVERSATION WITH...

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DOWNTOWN DEBATE What's The Big Society Really All About?

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Welcome to your latest edition of DQ, brought to you by the 'business club with influence' Downtown in Business.

The response we have had to our new offering has been overwhelming, so thank you for that. The magazine is designed, written and produced in-house by the Downtown team, so all complimentary remarks have been gratefully received.

What can you find between the DQ covers this month?

Manchester is an outstanding success. We ask, why? Downtown's chairman takes a somewhat tongue-in-cheek look at how our political masters in Westminster are performing. The very lovely Kirsty Henshaw is a good sport as our 'Who Are Yer' subject, whilst we also get stuck in to the big issue that is the 'Big Society'. Top Tips from Tender Management Consultancy and an inspirational piece from Winning Pitch MD John Leach

are among other articles to keep you interested and informed.

And for those of you who just like looking at the pictures, we have exclusive galleries from the City of Manchester Business Awards and the launch event of Downtown Lancashire.

Talking of pictures, someone actually took time out to do an inventory of the number of photos that appeared of Frank McKenna in the last issue of DQ. Now

we all know how big-headed our chairman is and he ain't camera shy. But how sad are you for taking that much notice? Anyway, to save you a bit of time there are 13 pictures of Frank in this DQ. He will autograph them all if you ask nicely!

Other than that, I hope you enjoy our latest effort and keep your comments coming in – particularly the nice ones.

Best Wishes
Chris Wilcox

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A FRANK CONVERSATION WITH... **GED FITZGERALD**

Words: **Sophie Iredale, Downtown in Business**

Following his appointment as Chief Executive at Liverpool City Council in February this year, Ged Fitzgerald has been faced with the difficult task of assisting with UK wide, government-led budget cuts, which have hit Liverpool particularly fiercely. In a recent discussion with Downtown Chairman, Frank McKenna; Ged instils some hope in light of the deteriorating economic condition in Liverpool.

The public sector is now compensating for some of the largest financial market failures since the 1980's, and it was first feared that up to 1500 jobs may be lost within local councils. However, Ged indicates that further to recent efforts, some 400 of those jobs may still be saved and that very few will be compulsory.

"Liverpool was always going to be vulnerable to cuts because around 40% of



"WE NEED TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNMENT TO BE INTELLIGENT, BRAVE AND KEEP THE AGENDA MOVING FORWARD"

its economy is dependent on the public sector. The 1,500 number came from a finger-in-the-air exercise in response to initial government announcements; there is no substance to that. The figure now is probably about 1,000 to 1,100 tops. We are trying everything through voluntary severance. " he says.

Disputing comparisons with 1980s Liverpool, Ged said: "It is anything but. The feel of the place is completely different. There is a sense of confidence, partnership and collaboration for what needs to happen."

However, he also conveys frustrations in the lack of national government understanding for the sizeable expenditure cuts imposed on a minority Labour administration, "You have to be politically sensitive. You cannot take £91m out of a controllable budget of about £400m."

Ged also voiced concerns regarding dependency on the private sector for job creation, "It worries me about how the private sector can absorb reductions in the public sector."

Ged says that despite Liverpool's proactive response to the current situation, frustrations with 'government rhetoric', and a decidedly slow reaction to investment potential in the city still remain. He added, "If we get the planning and execution right, money and job creation will inevitably follow."

He indicated that we should call upon the local business community to promote Liverpool's progressive business values

and convey a positive 'open for business' culture. Ged praised the recent Liverpool Embassy initiative in London, saying "Liverpool City Council remain pleased by the reaction the embassy has had thus far and are looking forward to its continued success"

Ged suggested talks between Liverpool FC and Liverpool City Council regarding new football stadia were continuing. "There are conversations going on about a new football stadium and whether Everton FC wants to join in. The question is whether they think they can afford not to. But there are still challenges."

Dialogue around a Cruise Liner Terminal for Liverpool also continues, and Ged touched briefly but positively upon that,

"IF WE GET THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION RIGHT, MONEY AND JOB CREATION WILL INEVITABLY FOLLOW"

announcing 'The cruise liner terminal will happen – I can give you that assurance.'

Though Ged concedes that there are a number of current opportunities in Liverpool and prospects for the future, he admits there is no easy route to recovery. He reminds us that regenerative measures assumed in the 1980's and 1990's, are only really now beginning to reap dividends.

A sustained agenda committed to redefining Liverpool as a city with credible business and investment opportunities is required, and a more informed relationship with wider government needed. Ged finished by saying "We need to encourage the government to be intelligent, brave and keep the agenda moving forward."



FRANK JACKSON AND ALEX PLATT, IMPACT SECURITY; DAVE BLACKMAN, VENMORE; MIKE CARR, NSG

BUDGET 2011 – WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ENTREPRENEURS?



David Kitson, Tax Director

In the weeks running up to the Budget, the Chancellor declared that this would be a "budget for growth, enterprise and aspiration" and he didn't disappoint.

From partnerships and owner-managed businesses, to large corporate enterprises with international reach - the Budget 2011 contained some particularly welcome changes for all, but it's probably fair to say that entrepreneurs did particularly well.

First off is the doubling of Entrepreneurs' relief from April 2011 to £10m. This has been creeping up over the last couple of years and the announcement that it was doubling came as a bit of a surprise. The Government hopes that this will help kick start the economy and re-ignite the M&A market and by their calculations it appears that they are expecting to see around 250 deals between £5m and £10m in value in 2014. It is a good sweetener for those already considering their exit plans. Given that it is now such a potentially valuable relief it is more important than ever that the conditions to qualify for the relief are met, however, there are some unfortunate pitfalls for the unwary.

The increase of tax relief for investment into the Enterprise Investment Scheme from 20% to 30%, is also good news for the entrepreneur. Coupled with proposals to relax some of the conditions companies need to meet when investing in SMEs, this is likely to become a lot more attractive, if not now then certainly from next April.

There was little change for individuals on the personal tax front with many of the changes to rates and allowances having previously been announced, good news came in the form of the

Chancellor confirming that the 50% tax rate is temporary. We knew that it hadn't raised as much revenue as expected and that HMRC has been instructed to undertake a review of its effectiveness. Whilst the 50% tax rate may disappear within the next few years, it is likely that this will be replaced by some other form of taxation on wealth. There is much speculation as to what form this will take – the mansion tax is being muted again, as is an increase in Stamp Duty and we watch with interest as this unfolds.

Coupled with this came the announcement that the income tax and National Insurance systems are in line for a radical overhaul. Any changes are unlikely to be immediate and what will follow is a long consultative process, throughout which we will be representing the views of our clients. It will be interesting to see how the Government approach the potential headline basic rate of tax of 30%!

In a surprise move, Chancellor George Osborne announced a cut in fuel duty by one pence per litre. This comes as a recent poll commissioned by RSM Tenon showed that almost half the UK population would be happy to see an increase in tobacco duty if it meant a reduction of petrol prices in the UK. This move should be welcomed by individuals and businesses – particularly SMEs – who rely heavily on transport. We believe that this is a positive indication that the Government recognises the important role that SMEs play in helping the country out of the current economic situation, which can ultimately see the prevention of a double dip recession.

For more information on how the Budget 2011 could impact you over the coming years, please contact David Kitson, Tax Director, RSM Tenon.



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REFLECTIONS...

THE DOWNTOWN CHAIRMAN'S SIDEWAYS LOOK AT THE COALITION'S FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE

Words: **Frank McKenna, Downtown in Business**



As we approach the first anniversary of the coalition government, I thought this may be a good time to reflect on the performance of the respective political parties and the impact new government policies and strategies have had on the North West region.

The Conservative Party are in what they may well describe as 'rude health'. Their man is back in number 10 after

draw and quarter shoplifters for the same reason. Even the good lads in the city have to take a little bit of stick to keep the coalition partners on side. David Cameron has done a fantastic political deal, at least in the short term.

As for the official opposition, they are still in a bit of a state of shock following what, in fairness, could have been a much worse General Election defeat last year.

which we now live, political leaders, like football managers, don't have time. An hour is a long time in politics.

He will, however, be secure in his job in the medium term. The Labour Party is more Everton than Manchester City when it comes to sacking its manager. But Balls, Cooper, and yes even the Miliband who should have won, are watching with interest to see if Ed can up his game during this next year.

So what of the once loveable Liberals? In a word, they are screwed. They will lose thousands of council seats during the course of this parliament. Their activists will become increasingly disillusioned. They will get battered at the next General Election.

The last point actually provides a crumb of comfort for Nick Clegg. Though many of his MP's now fear that the marriage he has taken them into is more Ike and Tina than Harry and Sally. The fact is that the sooner the General Election, the sooner they lose their jobs. So, don't hold your breath for a Lib Dem rebellion to bring down the government.

Of course, the Lib Dems have secured a referendum on electoral reform. We will get the opportunity of introducing the Alternative Vote system (AV), to replace the existing first past the post process.

This is the most disproportionate of proportional voting systems. And it is how the Labour Party elected its new leader. Enough said!

For our great region, the new government agenda has presented many challenges politically and economically. Our local authorities are bearing an unfair burden in terms of the cuts agenda. The abolition of the Northwest Regional Development Agency saw the disappearance not

only of an organisation that had done far more good than harm, but also the removal

"I FIND IT INCREDIBLE THAT THEY CAN IGNORE THE DOGS DINNER OF A MESS THAT IS LANCASHIRE'S THREE TIER LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE"

of funding for a range of important initiatives, not least the 2012 Preston Guild.

The introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) in Manchester and Liverpool may bring some benefits to those respective city regions, and certainly the new Enterprise Zones at Manchester Airport and Mersey Waters offer interesting opportunities.

As I write, Lancashire is still to agree on an LEP structure, and for a government that says it is determined to cut out all public expenditure waste, I find it incredible that they can ignore the dogs dinner of a mess that is Lancashire's three tier local government structure.

Overall though, Cameron is performing well, Clegg is enjoying his fifteen minutes, and even Ed has his wedding to look forward to. As for the North West – as always we'll survive.



Gordon Brown was a disaster as Prime Minister, so obviously the Labour Party was going to elect the best person they had at their disposal to lead their recovery. Duh! Many in the party are now wondering if they elected the right Ed never mind the right Miliband.

It is clear that young Ed is not pulling up any trees at the moment. His performances at Prime Minister's Question Time are lacklustre to say the least and he has failed to develop a clear strategy that challenges the government's agenda. He isn't, let's face it, the most charismatic of blokes and whereas Brown was at least a political heavyweight, Miliband looks like he is learning on the job – and not quickly enough.

In the 24/7 news era in

"IT COULD BE THE 1980'S ALL OVER AGAIN"

an absence of thirteen years and by and large they are embarking on an agenda that chimes well with traditional Toryism. Cutting public spending, cutting down the state, introducing welfare reform, attacking a Labour council in Liverpool with a Royal Wedding to boot. It could be the 1980's all over again.

Of course, this time around they are having to share power with their new chums, the Liberal Democrats, and this is not going down too well with Conservative backwoodsmen. For the Prime Minister, his Chancellor and Tory modernisers though, the Lib Dems act as a perfect shield from their rabid right. The thorny issue of Europe cannot be tackled because of Nick & Co. We can't hang,

ARE YOU MISSING OUT?

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The biggest advantage you can give yourself is time

FIND OUT MORE

Find out everything you can about the buyer — even if you are only submitting a 'quote' for an easy job. Do your research on the web - get them to send you a brochure; know what your competitors are doing; find out what their customer service philosophy is, their mission statement and what their culture is about — regardless of the job you need to do. By doing this, you get a feel for what is important to the company, as well as some priceless ammunition that you can include when preparing your tender documents.

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DO WHAT YOU ARE TOLD

Human nature often makes us want to jump straight in and get the job done. In tendering, this is a recipe for disaster. Once you have your tender documents take a step back, breath and read the instructions, the contract specification and the evaluation criteria. Then read them again. As you write, reflect what you have written back to the instructions, to ensure you are on track. The level of detail required and the number of instructions can often mean that in-house bid writers become consumed by the tender to such an extent that they cannot see the wood for the trees. It is useful to ask colleagues or a bid writing consultant to proof read your tender.

DECISION TO BID

Many companies expend a huge effort on going for the wrong tenders in the hope that applying for every opportunity will result in their increased success. Understanding the distinction between the "right" and the "wrong" tenders will immediately save you a lot of hassle and a fortune in wasted effort (and dramatically increase your success rate).

Talk about their needs and how you can solve their problems

DON'T FALL AT THE FIRST FENCE

Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs) are designed to check that an organisation is fit for purpose to deliver this size and type of contract. It is a bit like a 'Company CV'. The level of detail required is frequently of similar length to some full tender response documents. Ensure that time is allocated to properly complete the PQQ and that all questions are answered. Many PQQ questions are designed to obtain an eligible or ineligible response and any ineligible responses may lead to an organisation being immediately rejected at the PQQ stage. Meeting your customers requirements is your sole objective. Answer carefully to ensure you don't get knocked out!

FOCUS ON THE CLIENT

Talk about their needs and how you can solve their problems. When you write about yourself, it's to prove you have the skills, experience and organisation to fulfil the client's requirements. Help the client by coming up with ideas - from alternative ways of doing things to how to tackle possible worries about future maintenance and staffing implications.

Get a feel for what is important to the company

Understanding the distinction between the "right" and the "wrong" tenders will save a lot of hassle

PRICE WISE

You are best placed to determine what your price will be. You should be experienced in your field and know what your bottom line is or that you will achieve full cost recovery. Interpretation of tender documentation can leave some scope for variations in prices. These invariably revolve around the level of quality or intensity of delivery of a service or product. As a rule of thumb, it is most advantageous to pitch your price in the mid range of what you believe the competition will be. Low priced bids may be rejected because it is unclear how quality can be delivered at that price or there is apprehension that an increase in the price of the contract will be negotiated following the award of tender. High priced bids may be rejected on value for money grounds. The key is to know your business.

Meeting your customers' requirements
is your **sole objective**

AVOID THE TOP 10 TENDER SUBMISSION MISTAKES:

1. Not proof reading and correcting simple typographical or grammatical errors.
2. Failing to answer all of the questions.
3. Answering "yes" or "no" questions and neglecting the opportunity to show expertise and professionalism or responding to a question requiring a "yes" response with a "no" reply without providing an explanation.
4. Neglecting to cross reference attachments.
5. Omitting some or all of the attachments.
6. Not including the correct number of requested copies.
7. Not including samples.
8. Including advertising literature.
9. Not sending in the correctly marked envelope.
10. Incorrectly cross referencing attachments.

TIPS ON EDITING YOUR TENDER

It is well worth spending some time looking at the presentation of your tender. Here are 10 tips on editing and supplying your tender:

1. Keep sentences and paragraphs short, punchy and businesslike.
2. Use bullet points and headings to break up text.
3. Decide on a typeface, layout and type size - not too small - and stick to them.
4. Make sure everything is consistent. Are CVs all presented in the same way?
5. Be careful when cutting and pasting text to make sure the format stays the same.
6. Make sure you have developed a logical argument.
7. Read everything again. Then get a colleague to read it - for meaning, typing mistakes and omissions.
8. Use appendices for supporting additional information.
9. Produce a front cover with the project title, date, name of the organisation requesting the tender and that of your own firm.
10. Number paragraphs and provide a contents page so material can be easily located.

DON'T GIVE UP!

Because you didn't win a tender, it doesn't mean that the company will not want to do business with you sometime in the future. Make sure you keep in touch with them, with telephone calls, newsletters, interesting news articles as well as 'how are things?' letters. These show that you care about them. Get some feedback - then you will learn to improve your scores.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

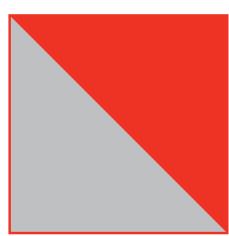
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DQ WHO ARE YER?

WHO ARE YER



Name: Kirsty Henshaw

Company: Worthenshaws Ltd

Position: CEO/MD/Tea Girl

Company Website Address: www.worthenshaws-freedom.co.uk

Football Team: RED (as in Man Utd!)

An Elected Mayor For Lancashire: Eh?

Favourite Bar/Restaurant: Cocktail Factory & Angels (Ribchester)

What's Your Tipple: Vodka & Diet Coke or Cosmopolitan

Which Business Person Do You Most Admire: Richard Reed (innocent drinks)

Favourite Band: Take That

Top Tune: Rihanna – Only girl in the world

Favourite Book: Confessions of a Call Girl / Duncan Bannatyne – Anyone can do it

Favourite Movie: The King's Speech

Who Would Play You In A Film: Demi Moore

Favourite TV Programme: The Apprentice / Dragon's Den

Most Visited Website: www.twitter.com

Snog, Marry, Avoid!: Snog-Ryan Giggs, Marry-Rio Ferdinand, Avoid-Wayne Rooney

Interesting Fact About You: At 17 I was earning £250 a night selling 'Kiss Me' shots in bars in Preston

Why Downtown: Because Frank's ace and they don't force me to make daft referrals or eat bacon butties at 6am when I'm a vegetarian!!



LIVERPOOL EMBASSY UPDATE

All of you will by now have seen or heard about the Liverpool Embassy in London; an initiative launched in January by Liverpool City Council, driven by DLIB in partnership with Liverpool Vision and backed by representatives from the private sector business community. The aim of the Embassy is to help raise the profile for Liverpool as a credible city to do business and to attract inward investment from the capital.

Originally the brainchild of Guy Wallis, co-founder of DWF Solicitors, and spawned at Liverpool Business Week 2009; the premise behind the embassy was to dispel the poor representation and perceptions of the city within the UK. Liverpool is typically recognised as a business-friendly city on an international stage, though suffers nationally.

An opportunity was identified that would see Liverpool proactively capitalise on its positioning at The World Expo in Shanghai, where Liverpool was the only UK city outside of London to invest.

Following its opening on January 21st at London's New Broad Street, near Liverpool Street and the capital's financial district, the Embassy has so far seen more

"SOME OF THE MEETINGS THAT HAVE BEEN HELD AT THE EMBASSY COULD LEAD TO SOME EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS, CREATING JOBS AND REGENERATION"

than 40 meetings and has attracted UK-wide publicity.

Initially scheduled until the end of April 2011, a three month extension was confirmed on 21st March, allowing sponsors, supporters and ambassadors more time to promote the city and their own wares on a national platform. It is yet another example of Liverpool leading by example, reacting positively and resourcefully to what is an increasingly concerning economic situation.

City Council Leader, Joe Anderson said: "The Embassy has been all we could have hoped for, it's essentially about putting Liverpool on the map in London and we've attracted a lot of interest

as a place to invest and do business. Some of the meetings that have been held at the Embassy could lead to some exciting developments, creating jobs and regeneration."

He added: "It's great to see Liverpool businesses getting behind this initiative and offering their financial support so we can extend the lease on the embassy building by a further three months."

Businesses to pledge their support include The Flanagan Group, Downing, Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University

took place throughout March, including a presentation for Korean delegates and a Creative and Green Industries event organised by ACME, which attracted delegates from the creative and digital industries in Liverpool and London.

Guy Wallis continues to champion the Embassy, saying: "The Embassy is successfully taking our city to "The City", and helping to tell investors and decision-makers all about the good things that are happening in Liverpool.

"When David Cameron took office, he committed his government to rebalancing the UK economy in favour of the regions, in order to establish broader foundations for growth. In the same way, the Embassy is our initiative to rebalance the local economy in favour of a stronger and more diverse private sector as the driver for new jobs and prosperity."

"THE EMBASSY IS OUR INITIATIVE TO REBALANCE THE LOCAL ECONOMY IN FAVOUR OF A STRONGER AND MORE DIVERSE PRIVATE SECTOR AS THE DRIVER FOR NEW JOBS AND PROSPERITY"

Hospital, PH-Creative, Sutcliffe and NSG UK.

Max Steinberg, Chief Executive at Liverpool Vision, who have been responsible for orchestrating the embassy alongside DLIB, said: "During its first two months of operation the Embassy has been able to engage with a number of high profile individuals from London, including investment advisors, managers of investment funds and senior MP's.

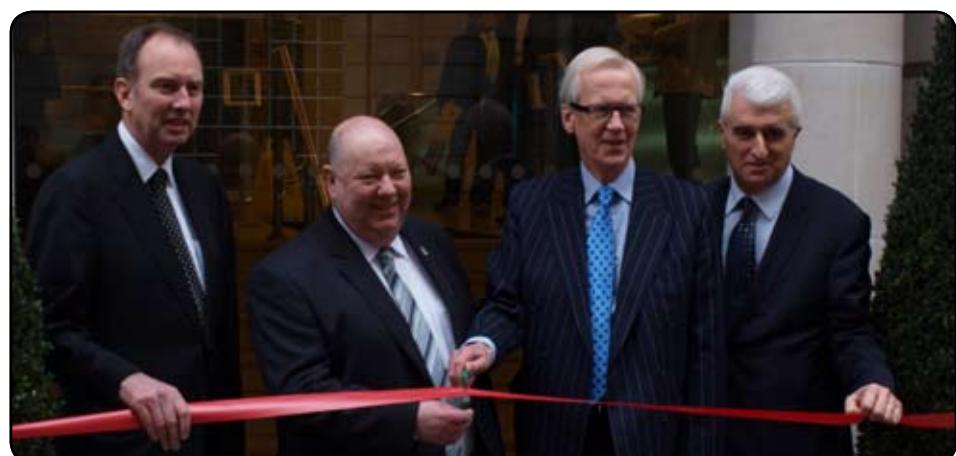
"Our team is working hard to ensure the right meetings continue to be set up with the right people and I am confident that this hard work will inevitably bring dividends to the city. We've made important contacts with high net individuals in the Middle East and China, which could lead to some exciting developments in Liverpool."

A number of significant meetings

Downtown Chairman Frank McKenna added:

"The City Council deserves great credit for taking a risk in investing in this new initiative at a time when it is facing the prospect of imposing unprecedented budget cuts. Nonetheless, the leadership has recognised that if Liverpool is to continue its momentum of growth, then new private sector investment is essential. This project is already proving to be a huge boost to Liverpool's marketing offer, and a number of potential investors have expressed an interest in the city."

"In the end, this initiative will be judged on how much new investment it attracts, and how many jobs it subsequently creates. I don't think we will be disappointed, and Downtown is proud to be associated with such an innovative idea."





THE WORLD'S

GREATEST

BUSINESS

THINKERS



Words: Roger Jonas, Downtown in Business

THINK LIVERPOOL

The Kauffman Foundation is recognised as the world's largest foundation devoted to entrepreneurship, with a spending endowment of over £2 billion.

This non-profit foundation based in Kansas City, Missouri, works "to understand further the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, to advance entrepreneurship education and training efforts, to promote entrepreneurship-friendly policies, and to better facilitate the commercialisation of new technologies

strategists and business thinkers such as Tom Cannon, Professor of Strategic Development at the University of Liverpool and Maggie O'Carroll, CEO of the Women's Organisation.

The bid document itself, a mind blowing 10 page catalogue of Liverpool's achievements, outlines how capable a city, Liverpool really is.

On Tuesday 29th March, the Kauffman Foundation named Liverpool as the successful host city for the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Congress, a gargantuan

worldwide, a natural ability to search beyond and question convention, a tenacity that manifests into solutions, significant across multi sectors, yet, an unfortunate reserve in our ability to shout about how great a city Liverpool is!

Renaissance, resurgence, call it what you will, translates as a steady and constant incline, affected by confidence, cash and courageous leadership. More so than ever, it feels (and that is important) that Liverpool's confidence is paying off, however evidence is only of value if emotion rides as high and I sense that we need to shout just a bit louder on the world's stage to maximise the effect of our achievements.

The successful Global Entrepreneurship Congress bid document is a magical history tour of innovation, achievement, risk management, forward strategic thinking, social understanding and confidence.

May the legacy live on!

"LIVERPOOL HAS MATURED AND GRASPED THE CONCEPT THAT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROVIDES THE ONLY CERTAIN SOURCE OF LONG TERM GROWTH"

by entrepreneurs and others, which have great promise for improving economic welfare".

It was Max Steinberg, the CEO of Liverpool Vision, who recognised a significant opportunity to yet again launch Liverpool onto the worlds stage, and acknowledge that Liverpool has the confidence and infrastructure to host the Global Entrepreneurship Congress in 2011, organised by the Kauffman Foundation.

Max led the Liverpool Vision bid team, who sensibly engaged the support of

event that will bring together over 400 of the WORLD'S leading business thinkers.

I have been critical in the past of how we mismanaged the legacy of events such as the Capital of Culture, something I now happily retract. This kind of recognition, by a world leading foundation, is part of that legacy.

Liverpool has matured and grasped the concept that entrepreneurship provides the "only certain source of long term growth". There is a DNA unique to Liverpool and its people that is recognised

"THERE IS A DNA UNIQUE TO LIVERPOOL AND ITS PEOPLE THAT IS RECOGNISED WORLDWIDE"



... .MAX STEINBERG

Interview: Frank McKenna, Downtown in Business

IN THE LATEST SERIES OF 'A FRANK CONVERSATION WITH...' EVENTS, THE DOWNTOWN CHAIRMAN INTERVIEWED THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF LIVERPOOL VISION, FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EAST LANCASHIRE'S REGENERATION COMPANY ELEVATE AND RABID LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER MAX STEINBERG.

FM: The first thing I want to talk to you about is your past experiences and how your career started, just to give people a flavour of your background, let's go back to when you first started your career in regeneration.

MS: I suppose the first major exposure I had to regeneration was when I was working for an organisation called 'The Housing Corporation'. I got a call from a guy called Geoff Jacobs, who worked with Michael Heseltine in 1981. He said 'we're looking for someone to join the Heseltine team and we've heard about you'. So I joined and that was probably the best year of my life in one sense, because the focus on Liverpool was very sharp... disturbances resulted in extra money coming into the city which was much needed at the time.

It was the start of what has almost become a lifelong friendship with Lord Heseltine, who I've kept in touch with now for 30 plus years. He brought significant money back to the city and was the catalyst for some major projects that would shape inner-city areas, including Stockbridge Village, Princes Boulevard and of course, the Albert Dock. In a sense, they weren't connected but they were just signs of change for a city that greatly needed it.

Another interesting thing about that period for me was the political exposure it gave you, because there were times when relationships with the local authority were very tricky. You had central government, who wanted to go one way and local government pulling in the opposite direction.

I was very much involved with commissioners and gradually took responsibility for larger parts of the North of the country in my roles with the housing corporation, but carried on doing some major regeneration work.

Another project I have spent a lot of my career on has been the Eldonians, which I think for me, despite the noises that have been going on about the initiative, is the best example I've seen anywhere of the Big Society working in practice.

From that, there was a phenomenon that was developing very quickly here in the 90's, where areas of the city were becoming vacant. There was no public programme that I knew about that could keep up with what was happening; the area was just being abandoned. At the time, I was working for former Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott on accessing funds so that projects may continue in the city.

Then; a man called David Taylor

put his arms on my shoulder and said 'would you like to come and work in East Lancashire?' Which I did for seven years. Because housing was never considered a solution in these areas, it was about economic regeneration primarily, I had to convince them that housing had a significant part to play. We developed an economic regeneration company, called 'Regenerate' of which I was Chief Executive. But I ached to come back to Liverpool having spent such a long time here. So I've now been back at Vision for 10 months.

FM: So you obviously have a wide range of experience in the field of regeneration. But going back to the early days of the 80's and working with Heseltine; coming in to find Liverpool almost decimated, certainly no private sector to speak of or to work alongside, he almost had to create a business community. You mentioned the tensions between the local authorities back then and central government. Fast forward to now and we're in a similar situation, where we have local government cuts implemented on the back of a huge deficit reduction scheme by central government. Clearly there has been a different approach from Liverpool City Council this time around, obviously they're concerned about the cuts and they have tried to articulate them the best they can. Nonetheless, there seems to be an acceptance that the budget needs to be reduced in the way that central government is asking. Which of those approaches do you think works best and do you think that the experience of the 80's is something that still damages Liverpool's reputation nationally?

MS: I think there is a dichotomy about Liverpool now in this country, that still sees Liverpool as being routed in the 1980's and actually does not know the

changes that have gone on here. I say that because the vernacular switches very quickly back to a 1980's mood about the city, which is past history. In Shanghai this city has a hugely popular reputation, so I do think there is still something in the psyche of

this country at the moment that doesn't understand fully the renaissance that's gone on here.

In terms of today, my own view is that these reductions could be better managed over a longer period of time. They are very invasive and very serious. I think the city council has handled it very well. I suppose if I'm honest, I was slightly disappointed

that it had to be our city that went into bat about the Big Society, even though I might have agreed with some of the reasons, in a sense it plays into the fact that Liverpool is *different*. That's not necessarily me disagreeing with what was said, but more about how we conduct our message. At the end of the day, in my experience, a city like ours needs to do business with the government.

F: You mentioned people's perceptions and the local media playing into some of the negativity that surrounds this city still. We were very conscious about the fact that when we launched the Liverpool Embassy in London recently we were selling a very positive image of Liverpool, then you have MPs and city and council leaders, as we go through the budget process, describing Liverpool as the neediest city on the planet almost, so how do you get the balance right on that debate?

MS: Can I just say that Manchester has some very deprived areas, Newcastle and Leeds the same, I worked there for 10 years of my career and there are some very major issues. And yet, when I say 'Leeds', you would typically envisage 'Financial Centre', you wouldn't associate it with deprivation. So I think what we have to do is present a very positive image about the city at all times, recognising that there are challenges here; and I don't think that that's any different from any other city.

It's not an either/or, this is a city on the up. This is the fastest growing community in the UK outside of London, fastest growing airport in the UK, 3rd most popular visitor destination. Liverpool is the place with more alumni in the city centre than any other northern city, and you have to keep on pushing that forward because people and investors don't necessarily want to get involved in regeneration issues, there are other places to have those debates.

What I'll talk to people in Shanghai about is Liverpool waters, the city centre, the Knowledge Quarter, the Baltic, Pall Mall, I could go on. I think we can manage this if we're skilful about it and sensitive to the issues.

FM: Just in terms of how we did market the city, whilst you were away did you feel the city was able to display a more positive image; and do you think that people perhaps do not understand that we have progressed? Did you feel, sat over there in Lancashire that people in the North West had a sense that Liverpool was starting to take a different direction?

MS: Yes to both. I think they did, and I think Vision has a very strong influence within the city but also outside of the

city, in terms of what it was doing. Jose Manuel Barosso, President of the EC said that it was the most successful capital of culture, but I don't think we capitalised on it enough. We can't put all our eggs in one basket though. Liverpool can't have an international strategy which is based in Shanghai, because that's not a strategy it's a relationship with one city in one country. Vision is developing a wider international strategy for this city because I for one think that this is a credible international business city. I agreed that I would write to Mayor Bloomberg, about opportunities for cultural and business exchange with New York. It might have been 'Steinbergs Bloomberg' and he could have come back with a very curt answer, but the following day the deputy commissioner of New York telephoned my office to say can we have a conversation about Liverpool and New York, and can I bring my head of marketing in. He said 'Liverpool is a product that we recognise has a huge value'. At the moment, they're very internalised because the 10th anniversary of 9/11 this year and they're putting a huge amount of effort into dealing with that; but he said beyond that, New York want to start looking outwards again, as they feel that they have been very internally focussed since 9/11, understandably so.

Our reputation abroad is excellent. When we were in Shanghai I went in to the Mayor's office, where he had a picture of Stephen Gerrard on his wall. This led to a conversation beyond business to the football, music, golf, the general culture of the city and the buzz it creates. Outside of the city, the Beatles and football are huge positives and make the city is easy to sell. Liverpool acquires maritime and cultural attributes that I don't think we've realised yet.

When I look back at 2008 I think brilliant, well done to the city, you did fantastic, but have we kept going upwards? I'm not entirely sure we have. Jerry Goldman from the Beatles story told me that in the first two months of this year they have had 1000 Chinese visitors to the Beatles story, which is a significant increase in one month than before. He reckons we are now beginning to reap the benefits from

"THE EMBASSY IS A CLEAR DEPICTION OF LIVERPOOL EXTERNALISING ITSELF IN A PLACE THAT SOMETIMES DOESN'T *RECOGNISE* OR *UNDERSTAND* WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER"

Shanghai. I know it's only early days but I think we have a product on our hands that we don't quite yet know what to do with.

We're in talks with two other locations, one in America, and one in South America about establishing relations with this city, and Liverpool as a product almost sells itself without us having to do anything. But I still think there could have been more we could have done throughout these years. Is the image internationally more positive? Yes! Is the image more positive to the rest of the country? I'm not so sure.

FM: I've always felt that internationally, Liverpool's reputation was very strong, but as you say, maybe not as good in the UK. That's why Downtown is so keen to support the Embassy initiative in London. Can you tell us how that's progressed? Also, could you expand that to the One Plan initiative that the city is offering and the opportunities for businesses to get involved?

MS: Someone once said to me 'don't make brave or courageous decisions because they turn out to be things you'd rather not do, just make wise decisions'. I think it was actually a wise decision to do what we did, despite the economy. The Embassy, like every new initiative, had a decidedly slow start. But I've looked at the diary recently, and it is getting fuller and fuller; there are meetings taking place and more businesses actually wanting to engage. Throughout March I will be working alongside other groups and individuals to present Liverpool to Korean delegates, there will be a creative and digital showcase and there have previously been property forums and important meetings with other foreign countries to discuss investment. The Embassy is a clear depiction of Liverpool externalising

itself in a place that sometimes doesn't recognise or understand what we have to offer.

I'd like to hope the Embassy will continue beyond the initial three month period, because it takes time to develop success and encourage participation. Our thanks go to Downtown for your involvement and the major role you've played and the members for supporting it.

Beyond that the One Plan Liverpool is part of a homogenous economy that is the city region. The assets are primarily Liverpool and yet, of course there is the Safari Park, the Southport Theatre, the golf courses in the Wirral and Sefton, the Science Outlet in Halton... There are major opportunities in all the Boroughs that surround Liverpool, but the attack brand will always be 'Liverpool'.

After due recognition that Liverpool as a core city is a more attractive brand, the one plan is about Liverpool City Council, Liverpool Vision and other groups promoting our key assets and opportunities. Coming up, we've got Spring on the Waterfront as a replacement of the Boat Show, we've got the River Festival, On The Waterfront, the 100th anniversary of the Liver Building, the Titanic Commemoration; for which we're planning something that will be bigger than the spider. Major events!

My understanding of working with the private sector and what makes business work better here is actually if they have; a) people in the city b) if their working in the city has a positive impact in terms of investment coming to the city. Life is increasingly about working hard and playing hard, you want people to be able to enjoy the places they work in.

We said to the private sector 'What do you want? What is it that sells things for you? What is it that makes your businesses more productive because of our focus on culture?' and we'll try and do it for you. The quid pro quo is we'll give you signage, property rights, ticketing, reduced hotel rates, access to places... whatever you want within the venue we're developing it. What we want is support and sponsorship from you over the next three years. Not this play or that event, I want you to be a genuine partner with us to deliver a programme where can take equal ownership.

FM: I do think that's well understood. Over the coming weeks, there will be press around a poll that we commissioned at Downtown Liverpool, outlining a desire from the private



sector for The Mersey Partnership and Liverpool Vision to merge, because we think there is duplication and unnecessary overlap. I won't ask you to comment on that because it would be unfair of me to ask you to do so.

But just very briefly, because East Lancashire is somewhere Downtown is about to get involved in, I'd like to touch upon a couple of interesting aspects. You identified problems around regeneration in Lancashire similar to those you have identified in North Liverpool and parts of Sefton, but the approach you took there was to involve Tony Wilson. This was fascinating to me, because not many people would have taken the risk of involving him and, in fact, this city didn't allow his participation, which I think was a mistake. What was it that instigated the relationship/partnership with Tony and his partner Yvette and how did that develop, because some of the things that happened there are really innovative?

M: When I went up there, the deputy prime minister indicated to me that there was almost a community of warring tribes, that didn't work together terribly well and it was almost better that investment didn't go to the neighbouring borough but went somewhere else. So there was a job to get people to realise or to understand that the future of one local authority is inextricably linked with the next one. Here was a community of half a million people who together actually, as an economy, had some serious challenges, with a lot of problems. But no-one in authority had real power. There was also a major image problem and investors would say to me 'tell me the three positive things you know about East Lancashire'. I used to get Blackburn Rovers, occasionally the countryside, very few people knew anything positive about the place, and I'll say to you personally, although I've worked in the north, besides on business occasions, I had never been there. I had never thought of going there, despite the fact that we are only 45 minutes away.

I'd known Tony before he'd passed away and I was very, very sad about that, because we worked very closely together. He was completely bonkers, completely mad, but he had this vision and the ability to see things in places. So he came back to me a few weeks later and said, "You've got one of the best countryside offers in the UK, nobody knows about it. You've got these historical town centres, which nobody seems to know about. You've got the canal." He coined this phrase 'Pennine Lancashire', and the risk paid off because Pennine Lancashire grew.

Before I had gone up there I had forgotten that Hyde Peak was a name conjured up by the people of that area. Hyde Peak isn't a geographical name; it's something that the people have made. Estate agents told me that they added £5-

10k on the better houses, simply because it became a much more attractive location to live.

We then built the Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture. It grew from nothing and the year I left in 2010, we had 45,000 visitors to a festival... so you can change an image but it takes time, it takes a long time and you have to start somewhere. It was a risk to involve Tony, but thank God it turned out ok.

FM: I just want to end on a note of optimism hopefully. I know we going through difficult periods of time as far as budget cuts at the City Council is concerned, but we've still managed to secure a significant chunk of cash for economic development and support for Liverpool vision, which I think is very positive. What would you hope to develop over the next three years, both in terms of Vision's role but also in terms of the city? Perhaps making it a little easier for the private sector to invest; because, I think one of the other things that I would say to you, is that I take absolutely the point you made about not taking advantage of the way in which we marketed and promoted ourselves on the back of 2008, as positively as we might have. But equally, we've certainly been involved with companies that have been keen to come here and invest, or developers who are keen to actually build things; there have just been frustrations with the pace, or lack of pace in the process and that can result in them going elsewhere. They've got fed up and said, actually it's too hard, Liverpool is too hard to deal with. What's going to happen over the next three years that can change that? How can we perhaps overcome some of the difficult public sectors cuts we're going to face?

MS: Just to start with a slight negative, it's not enough for a city to say it is business friendly; it has to act to be business friendly. Businesses want, deserve and need a quick response to what they're about. Otherwise, in a hugely competitive environment they will go elsewhere and the city, people in this room and me included; have to make it clear to the people who have the power in the city, what they want. If they don't get it they'll go elsewhere, because Liverpool has no given right to investment, it has to merit that investment. Whether that's through Liverpool Vision or through The Mersey Partnership or even through the new regeneration park that's been created, what businesses want is clarity. Who do I deal with? Do I get a quick response? Are we dealt with in a proper and professional manner? If the answer to those questions is yes, yes and yes, we will secure more business. If the answer to those questions is no, then businesses will walk away.

From my perspective, Liverpool Vision



will in the future be developing SME's or working with businesses coming into the city to attract inward investment. My ambitions are starting abroad with a wider national agenda; I think we have got to carry on with Shanghai. China is the fastest growing economy in the world for trade. Business to me is like a marriage, you have to keep working at it. It is the same with professional relationships, you have to keep on and on, and keep going back to that dialogue.

The city centre does not yet have the critical mass that it needs to be self-sustaining in the long term. There are still some vacant properties in Liverpool One, despite huge numbers visiting each month. There are still, in the periphery of the city centre, too many areas in need of upgrading. There are areas where we need to secure the city centre in a way that will make it fit for a long term future; that's another priority for this city.

For me also, Peel's proposal for the development of Liverpool World Waters is one of the biggest opportunities we have. It's not going to happen overnight, we've got to work at it. We've got to make it happen and we have to deal with the heritage issues. That is the biggest hope I can see for north Liverpool to connect people into that set of jobs and opportunities that will arise there.

I know there are people who have a huge affinity to this city, but in their darker moments worry that this city will not deliver what they want for them to be business friendly. And I'll just end with this story, a business in the city that has an office both here and in Manchester, said to me recently they were very pleased with something that we had done. What they said though was that in relocating part of their operation from Liverpool to Manchester a year or two ago, the chief executive of the council (Sir Howard Bernstein) was on the phone to them every month or so just to check how things were. That's how you do business. You keep in touch with people, you work with people, you form long term relationships and actually you go the extra mile, because at the end of the day, it is this city that benefits.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF THE INTERNET – AN ENTREPRENEURS PERSPECTIVE



Thanks to the internet, businesses can be started for less money and scaled up more quickly than ever before. At Coutts, from our conversations with entrepreneurs across many different types of business, we have seen an increasing awareness of these new economic models and are working with clients as they look to exploit them.

These days, the dividing lines between traditional and digital businesses are, to say the least, porous. Yes, we can look at companies as diverse as Amazon, Google and Facebook and conclude that they are easily identifiable products of the digital age. But look beyond these pure internet ventures and it quickly becomes apparent that just about every company operating in Britain or elsewhere in the world has some sort of digital element. That might take the form of a transactional website, an online marketing campaign or a smart, just-in-time supply chain system. The common factor is the power of new technology to deliver more efficient ways of doing business while cutting costs.

To take an example, an organisation that spent £500k on marketing ten years ago could achieve the same objectives for a fraction of that cost today by moving its campaigning online. Similarly, companies working in the retail sector have slashed distribution costs by moving at least some of their activities to the internet. The low cost model may be most apparent in the case of Amazon-style purely internet players, but it also benefits the traditional high street and mail order brands.

The internet has also had a huge impact on the speed at which entrepreneurs can take a business from the start-up phase through to exit. Not only are the start up costs lower - making it easier to raise or pull together the required finance - but the whole process of scaling up to address a

national or potentially global audience is also cheaper, easier and faster. Where once it might have taken 10-20 years to build a business to the point where it can be sold, today's digitally-aware entrepreneurs can do it in two, three or five.

So what we're seeing is a fundamental shift in the economics of doing business. It's a change that all entrepreneurs should embrace, both in terms of their own business plans and implications for fund raising and exit valuations.

Let's take fund raising. On the face of it, the fact that potentially very successful businesses require less capital to get them started should be good news. It is, but only if you understand the new rules of the game. From the entrepreneur's perspective, it's hugely important to understand what the new technologies offer in terms of the potential to cut costs and scale up quickly. If you don't understand this, you'll not only be at a disadvantage when faced with more agile and tech-savvy competitors, you may also find it difficult to convince investors that your figures add up.

Of course, some investors will themselves be behind the curve and maybe you ought to be prepared to educate them as part of the pitch process. For instance, some may raise an eyebrow at an apparently low marketing budget or your projected sales, unless they fully understand the model.

When the time comes to sell the business, the criteria applied to valuing a business are still a work in progress. Recent flotations - such as that

of Betfair – demonstrate that investors have to approach the valuation of purely digital ventures with fresh eyes. Again, it's hugely important for the entrepreneur to understand where the value and potential lies in his or her business before putting the company on the market.

Thanks to new technology entrepreneurs have a chance to generate wealth more quickly than ever before. That potential is not limited to purely digital ventures. It's something that everyone should be aware of.

There are many issues for entrepreneurs to consider, the internet is just one, albeit one that is becoming increasingly important. At Coutts in Liverpool and across the North West, we have built up strong expertise in helping entrepreneurs address the many challenges facing their businesses. With bankers trained in entrepreneurial issues at the Cranfield School of Management, our team is well placed to advise you on a range of issues affecting your business and personal wealth.

Whether you run an established business, are looking for funding to grow, are considering selling, or are looking for your next challenge, we can support through our own expertise and our wide network of partners. From presenting business angel investments to opportunities to get involved with social enterprise, as well as the chance to meet other like-minded local entrepreneurs in a variety of sectors, it is unsurprising that 20,000 of the UK's leading entrepreneurs have chosen Coutts as their wealth manager.

By David McNiven, Private Banker, Coutts & Co
Call 0151 471 8408 or 07966 810045; email david.mcneniv@coutts.com; or visit www.coutts.com for more information about becoming a Coutts client.

SO WHAT'S THE BIG SOCIETY REALLY ALL ABOUT?

The Prime Minister David Cameron, says it's a big idea. The Leader of Liverpool City Council, Joe Anderson says it's an idea that cannot be delivered against a backdrop of huge public sector spending cuts.

Regularly publicised and much debated, the proposed incentive, according to Mr Cameron, is to transfer power from Whitehall and allow people to take charge of their lives and communities.



On the day following the anti-austerity demonstrations, I watched an 80-year-old woman break a world record in the pool. Competing at a masters swimming event in Somerset, she clocked a time of 1m23s for the 100m freestyle – three seconds ahead of world record pace for the 80-84 year age group.

She dived aggressively from the blocks, she performed three text-book tumble turns, she demonstrated excellent freestyle technique and she saw off opposition a third her age. She didn't bother with the steps and hopped out of the pool to take the applause as the galleries erupted. It was a special moment to share.

To put the achievement into context, I challenge you to match her time for four lengths next time you're at your local leisure centre.

If it's still open.

She's an inspiration. She teaches; she coaches. She moves like a sprightly 50-something. She is the embodiment of the mantra 'Sport for Life'. She proves for me the link between participation – social and physical – and health.

There are thousands of masters' swimmers in the UK. We pay our own way to take part in events; spend hours training and hundreds of pounds on coaching fees, pool time, physiotherapists, travel, entry fees and hotels. There is no glory and we compete for medals that cost pennies.

We are supported by volunteers – zillions of them; volunteer coaches, timekeepers, race-starters, judges, stewards, event organisers, administrators, statisticians, lifeguards, communicators.

Is this Big Society? Perhaps.

But it's under threat. Not from a lack of volunteers, but from a lack of infrastructure. The pool of volunteers can be replenished. The pool itself cannot.

Cameron claims he wants to be the first in a generation to leave office with **LESS** power than he started with and feed the control back into local neighbourhoods.

But is this really the case? Or is it any easy way for our Prime Minister to pass the buck on the difficult task of bridging the deficit? Downtown in Business asks the question, what is the Big Society really all about?

When pools are closed or access is restricted, as is happening in many districts, you deny moments like the one I've detailed.

Infrastructure needs protection and funding. Close or restrict the community centres, day care operations or swimming pools and they won't return.

Of course, all these operations can be run more efficiently. But there is no need for an operating profit – that's not what they are there for; their benefits are less easily measured. That's why they need to stay under local authority control. They are needed and they are the mark of a functioning society.

Simple savings are there to be made. Yes, it means tightening up at the sharp end and that will mean reduced hours and redundancies for leisure centre staff, but there are also opportunities at the top. In Lancashire, my neck of the woods, we have 12 district authorities, two unitaries and a county council layer. That means we have 15 chief executives and 15 fully-staffed departments of everything.

Here and in other public sector areas including education and health, senior managers are routinely paid six-figure salaries with benefits to kill for.

This is not replicated in the private sector. Why not? Because it knows it can't afford it.

Yes, we have inefficiencies in the private sector, but that's paid for by shareholders and owners; not the taxpayer. It's a crucial difference.

The public sector can and should be the head on the body: facilitating, drawing funds, administering, keeping non-profitable and essential services ticking; then utilising the efficiencies of the local private sector – the job and wealth generators – to deliver the rest.

Now that would be a Big Society splash.

Richard Slater,
Lancashire Business View



This is not a Love Song.
There is nothing wrong with the concept of Big Society. We can all support the ideology behind giving communities more power, encouraging people to take an active role in their communities and transferring power from central to local government. In fact it seems both brave and empathetic. But please don't confuse the ideology with the reality. Run your local library yourself or we'll close it does not sit well with my understanding of local community need.

Twenty years of regeneration have changed the face of modern Manchester. It is a fantastic European City; we've got implausibly wealthy football clubs, The Trafford Centre, Salford Quays, Manchester International Airport, the massive redevelopment of the City Centre, the academic excellence of our universities and our ability to stage spectacular, world class events.

Our local neighbourhoods are amongst England's most deprived areas; marginalised through poverty, ill health and isolation. In Greater Manchester that's over 200,000 people living in naff circumstances.

But these areas are full of thousands of people who epitomise

the Big Society. It's the Mancunian spirit, people who have the guts to stand up and be counted, people who spot things that are going wrong in their street and want to do something about it, not wait for a government report or for the local council to discuss it or wait for the media to brand their neighbourhood, feral or squalid or uncontrollable. They are carrying on a great tradition of creativity; they are the glue that can hold communities together; whether they are running a boxing club in their spare time or showing people how to grow their own food on an allotment. They don't need patronising and they don't need to be told or invited to get involved.

Some of the Big Society ideology is built around the work of neo-Marxist, Saul Alinsky, a community organiser and writer, who whipped up local opinion and gave communities the anger and tools to stand up to authority and challenge decisions. We've already seen a good example of community activism here last year – the students marching and protesting about fees... perhaps if Mr Cameron wants us to believe in his vision of a new Britain – he shouldn't have water cannoned them off the feckin' street.

Nick Massey DL
Chief Executive, Forever Manchester



It's a real pity the brand of "Big Society" has become so quickly tarnished. The policy of increasing community development and engagement is at the heart of what is a really good set of ideas and future policy practice. Opening up innovative procurement opportunities and social enterprises, as long as it is based upon the principles of quality, sustainability and cost effectiveness are to be welcomed. Allowing people to take charge of their lives is at the centre of what "Big Society" is all about.

Businesses and individuals have the opportunity to take control and make

informed decisions about how they do business – do they support profit, people, or both? The Recycling Lives (<http://www.recyclinglives.com>) private and voluntary sector partnership is a working example of how choosing people and profit can contribute to our "Big Society". Recycling Lives sees two independent, and culturally different entities creating opportunities for disadvantaged people and the general population: offering relevant and appropriate training, and real employment opportunities within one of our economies growth sectors – the green economy. Recycling Lives can only offer these opportunities by being allowed the opportunity to develop sustainable income streams through procurement and social enterprise projects.

The label has unfairly become bigger than the outcomes that can be achieved.

There will be challenges, not just over public money and seed corn projects, but also ensuring good governance and maintaining quality in all that is delivered.

It's not about dumping expensive services in the arms of "community do-gooders" – it's about refreshing the way we deliver services and projects into our communities and using new and innovative approaches.

So then, in a managed way let's give it a go – ensuring of course that the community engagement and the opportunities are available to all, not just the well organised middle classes – that will be the largest challenge "Big Society" will face.

Professor Steven Broomhead
non-executive Chairman of Recycling Lives



Big Society aims to "take power away from politicians and give it to people". If we contrast this against the definition of a democracy; a form of political organisation in which all people, through consensus, direct referendum, or elected representatives exercise equal control over the matters, which affect their interests;

we see that what the government are really saying is, "...we are thinking about actually giving Britain a democratic regime."

This cynicism is further confirmed by the official cabinet office rhetoric on the topic, which states, "Only when people and communities are given more power and take more responsibility can we achieve fairness and opportunity for all. Government on its own cannot fix every problem. We are all in this together."

The fact is the incumbent 'style' of government in the UK simply didn't work,

and landed us with a pseudo-democratic, neo-liberal form of society, which proved extremely profitable for some, and hugely disempowering for most.

"Big Society" in the UK context simply means outsourcing elements of government to the private sector, which the government can no longer afford to deliver. This is not democracy. If we truly want a "Big Society" the structural flaws in our democracy must be sorted first.

Vikas Shah
Founder, Thought Strategy



The Government has renewed its focus on the "Big Society" and emphasised its fundamental place in the future of the UK, following David Cameron's recent defence of the concept and announcement that it is 'here to stay'. In practice, however, there is no broad consensus on how the idea will work, or how it will complement existing or formalised structures and processes in public services.

The withdrawal of high levels of public investment and the move toward greater local accountability is essentially about replacing one set of complex systems with another. Such a process is technically challenging and poses a risk to service

continuity and fairness if managed ineffectively. As public services change, public bodies, council mandates and citizen expectations alike will need to adapt in response.

The resulting uncertainty does provide opportunities for local people and community organisations to take on new responsibilities. But, critically, the users of public services and people who have a stake in specific communities will need to see clear value to justify their participation in management and delivery decisions. How new systems and organisations are held accountable and governed will also be a key issue as the 'Big Society' takes shape.

Mark Lawrie
Head of Local and Regional Government, Deloitte



It is much hyped, much commented upon and even was mentioned in passing at the last Liverpool Game, which is when you know politics is hitting home.

So, the Big Society - what is it, whose idea was it and what does it mean for you and me? Is it member's only? Do you have to be on a list to join? Will we get a rewards card??

Well the original idea was launched by our own Prime Minister himself - which one I hear you cry? David Cameron when he was spearheading the Conservative Election Campaign - he was seeking to empower people to drive the country forward. He acknowledged that there are plenty of philanthropists, entrepreneurs, economists from the high brow corners of the country, operating in tandem with community leaders, volunteers, social enterprises and even people like you and me who perhaps would like a say in how our society is run.

Not a bad idea in concept, although the Labour Party representatives have claimed that it was their idea in the first place!

What troubles me, is how this will all work in practice. In my career, I have always believed that the devil is in the detail. I own and run a successful business myself and this could not have been achieved without the commitment of everybody working within it. If everybody understands the bigger plan, they can then actively contribute to the successful delivery of it. I am only as strong as the weakest link in the organisation, my challenge is to ensure that the weakest link is educated, coached and encouraged, finally being empowered to take part. In one company that's a challenge - in one country that's a mountain to climb.

As much as I believe that some facets of the idea are laudable, again I have reservations about the practicalities.

For instance - Mr Cameron cited an example that the local community could

take charge (buy out) a local pub.

Easy to say - but not so easy to deliver, despite however "wet" the appetite is! Let me give you a scenario - bear with me.

A local village has held a fete since Adam was a lad and for probably 60 years there has never been an issue. However in today's society things have changed. There are now numerous forms to fill in; road closure forms, accident forms, first aid forms, fire regulation forms, insurance forms and the mandatory but dreaded "risk assessment form" - why? I hear you ask.

Well, in the actual society today (which is the overriding challenge to the Big Society of tomorrow) we have a culture. Yes that's right - a culture. The culture of a Mum suing the fete organiser if her son inadvertently trips over during the fete itself - madness! The ambulance-chasing culture appalls and disgusts me.

Here's the point; Mr Cameron is trying to empower the very people who organise these events to sign up for the Big Society - but they aren't going to. Why? Because they can't be bothered with the red tape of trying to organise a little event, never mind a Big Society.

I wonder whether the Big Society was a mere election pledge to encourage people who may not have bothered voting in the past to get on board, or am I just being cynical.

So from last year with the pledge, to this year, a year of austerity. How easy is it to get people empowered and motivated now? The practicalities that face us now are that of cuts, cuts and more cuts. Some local councils are facing some of the biggest problems that they have ever experienced. A 28% cut in funding is a common problem faced by many. It is a "big ask" to launch a "Big Society" where David Cameron seeks empowerment from the very people who may be asked to take compulsory redundancy. That will be a hard nut to crack.

And what about our beloved Liverpool? We have not been spared and some would say we are probably feeling the cuts more than others. I am not a political animal myself and I will keep my political party

persuasion to myself. However I do feel for our current council. I attended an event in the year leading up to the local council elections and I witnessed Joe Anderson speaking - I liked what he had to say. He told me that Liverpool Council's annual budget (before the cuts) was one billion, eight hundred million and that he thought that leading that budget / council was a full time job - as a businessman, I agreed. That is common sense isn't it? The fact is, he took a pay cut to do it - admirable. He also told me that he wanted to take the Labour Council image far and away from the Militant image of the 80's and further, he wanted to be the Conservative Government's favorite Labour Council. He had lots of other ideas, which were empowering, innovative, challenging and engaging. He most likely was developing these ideas all the time he was in opposition and in waiting. He probably would have been a "big pillar" in a "Big Society" but I fear that as a result of Public Spending Review, the appetite / relationship may be irreparably damaged?

However, I also feel for David Cameron. His Government was not responsible for the economic mess that we, the country find ourselves in. He inherited that. He is now trying to do something about that. Together with his "Big Society" agenda he has also introduced other measures of a more practical nature. Take the tax on Banks - yes, we are all unhappy with the level of Bankers Bonuses, but the taxes that the Banks will pay amounts to billions into the country's coffers. Cameron introduced that, he listened to the country and acted - admirable.

He has drive and determination (sound familiar?) and a passion to lead this country out of recession and into growth for future economic prosperity. We all want that don't we? The question is whether David's Big Society Agenda is the tool that will help to deliver it.

Whatever it really is and however it will eventually deliver are questions that I fear may be asked for some time to come.

Michael Carr
Managing Director, NSG

The Manchester Family



Manchester is widely regarded as the most successful city in the UK outside of London. Building strong partnerships with the private sector and its local authority neighbours across Greater Manchester, Sir Richard Leese, Sir Howard Bernstein and their team at Manchester City Council have led the transformation of the city for over a decade now. DQ asks "What makes the Manchester city region tick?"

Reasons to Be Cheerful . . . part 3

In these times of austerity, when 'public servant' seems to be a by-word for the more unpalatable entries in the dictionary, it would be easy to be disillusioned with our lot. But I am not. I remain optimistic about our approach to recovery and resolute in my view that local government will continue to play a critical role in creating the right environment for investment and growth.

And there are a whole host of reasons that my optimism is maintained.

I have great colleagues. Although we are a disparate group of ten chief executives, all used to managerial power in our own organisations and who must be like a bag of monkeys to manage, we choose to be lead and work as a team – focussing on a single set of objectives and a broader geographic landscape than our own patch. Somebody said to me recently that you could take any two Chief Executives from Greater Manchester, who in private may vigorously disagree, and you would never get a cigarette paper between them in public. That's because place and people matter much more than individual personalities.

This approach follows on from a long history of collaborative political leadership – a political leadership that lifts your sights high and focuses not on a sterile debate about who is the 'second city' but more on whether we are up for a bi-polar economy based on a London / Manchester model and the fact that in investment terms our sharpest competitors are much further away than anywhere in the UK. Their mature political debate stops us falling into the trap of competing for individual investments and instead takes a much longer term view about both the demand and supply side of the GM investment offer, the critical sites that need to be brought forward to maximise employment and the financial models, which need to be developed to get us through the current financial climate.

Others sometimes portray us in Greater Manchester as 'getting it all'. I

have to confess I can't tell you the amount of times I have come back from lunch to find a fully financed investment all loaded up and ready to go just sitting on my desk amazing or is it just that there is a lack of understanding or recognition from elsewhere that what you achieve can be largely measured by what you are willing to put in. This is not an agenda where everything comes to those who wait. We have fantastic leadership from our business community and I really value being able to work hand in glove with our developers to bring forward the opportunities that exist – Greater Manchester has not regenerated itself on a wait and see basis, nor will it do so in the future.

So if you want to know our secret, of how we continue to pull it all together, I cheerfully refer you back to Mr Drury to simply reiterate, "A bit of grin and bear it, a bit of come and share it".

Barbara Spicer
Salford City Council



What next? Driving Manchester forward

A city's lifeblood is its economy and what made Manchester's greater once upon a time was enterprising minds and a combination of a moist climate, imperialism, routes to market like the ship canal and a sustained knack for innovation and marketing, which somewhere along the line was lost to an inability to see and seize change. So came the inevitable decline, as we ceased to rule the waves and invest in the untried technologies of tomorrow. When the tide goes out, you see who's swimming naked – and we were.

The UK's third largest port in 1963, 20 years later it was gone, with hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs. Following that nadir though, trade, tourism and a talent to harness the property boom brought something like a renaissance, symbolised by the Commonwealth Games, Metrolink, Salford Quays, the towering Beetham Tower and Manchester United. Bombed in 1996, the region's city centre was regenerated as it was rebuilt, into what, outside London, passes for a thriving urban metropolis in the UK. Manchester though aims higher: we benchmark ourselves against Barcelona and Lyon, not Bradford and Liverpool.

And change is ever with us: an evolving population, environmental concerns, the end of the property boom, which will not return, and the massive fiscal contraction, all mean that the economy is fundamentally changing and the opportunities to seize are once again difficult to discern and risky to invest in.

Invest though we must, if the people and businesses of Manchester are to flourish. Part of New Economy's role is to understand these changes and translate evidence and intelligence into the policies that will make a difference in the long term to produce prosperity in Manchester. We are developing the ideas that help make Manchester grow, and be an ever better place to live and work. This includes good governance, with the Local Enterprise Partnership and Combined Authority – the new twin towers around which all Manchester's private and public policy will now revolve – cutting edge in the UK and a significant competitive advantage for us.

We also inform UK policy. A renowned piece of evidence we have is the Manchester Independent Economic Review. As in the title, this was independent: it was in the hands of people like Harvard's Prof. Ed Glaeser, one of the leading urban economists in the world and Jim O'Neill, Goldman Sach's Chairman of Global Asset Management (and leader of the Red Knights). They found that more than any other city outside London, Manchester has the scale and density to become an economic powerhouse. Our politicians, officers and businesses have acted on MIER's conclusions, but so far it is small steps in a marathon, whose route is continually changed.

Part of what we need is clear: bringing in people, talent, and capital. The benefits of attracting bright students to our universities and enticing them to stay and of foreign benefactors "taking over" or actually investing in businesses like Manchester City are phenomenal. We need more. Relative to other places in the UK outside London and the South-East, Manchester has done very well these last years, but success in the future does not look like success in the past. While we argue endlessly about 200 miles of high speed rail, China, now, is building 11,000 miles of it. Manchester became great by understanding then what the world demanded, and supplying it. Today, that demand is in places like China, and designers, consultants, architects, pension providers, healthcare, logistics and a hundred other experts can supply it. The challenge is how do we incentivise ourselves to be bold and to invest for the long-term and persevere. We are in the Asian century and so investment there, now, however difficult or slow burn, will pay the greatest dividends.

Hugely important is our skills base – particularly dealing with high-skills, which is difficult for the public polity as all roads lead to getting people up to an "acceptable" level and not higher. Hundreds of thousands of people around us do not have the ability to read, write and apply maths at a level deemed acceptable of an 11 year old, a searing and enduring problem. Yet, the numbers employed with lower skill levels hover around 50%, whilst the higher are consistently at 90%. The solution to this though, often said but rarely invested in, is early years. By age four you can predict with frightening accuracy the income decile someone will spend their whole life in. We are trapped in a low-skills equilibrium that can be remedied in the short term by importing skilled labour and keeping more of our brightest and best, with a medium-term dent made through skills programmes and training. In the long-term however, the only way is a focus on under fives and that's mainly a story of our most deprived areas, the worst 5% of the country, that includes 20% of our conurbation.

There are many more words to throw in at this point: science, research, development and design, high-tec, venture and risk capital, creativity, innovation and enterprise. Exporting is key, as is facing up to the fact that, contrary to our history, we're not that good at it: too many of our traders and businesspeople, even against poor national comparators, are timid, unambitious, parochial and afraid of the challenge of internationalisation. The BBC may well represent a possible turning of the tide, but not unless we engineer the tidal flows around it and attract, retain and nurture many more

BBCs.

Social capital is needed for all this, a fancy term for something between networks and friendships. In our Victorian heyday we had an elite with money-making zeal, civic pride, responsibility and an ethos to build a just and prosperous society in its own image. There's an old Greek proverb that a society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in. That elite was white, middle class and male, and there is no desire to recreate it. However, we do desperately need that cluster of modern civic elite, of professionals, university folk, elected leaders, successful businesspeople and society movers and shakers, closely interacting together, over time, collegiately, developing ideas in a fierce heat of wit and debate, with a common purpose, existing as a part of the city in which they live. If that's a contribution Downtown can help make to Manchester, the returns on it are potentially enormous.

Manchester is a city that plumb the depths, picked ourselves up and had a good run. But what next? If you don't know where you're going, all roads lead nowhere. Someone has to stake out a destination, discuss it, set it in lights. The ship canal was an idea that came from a dinner of industrialists in a house in Didsbury. It was an era of ideas and of actions, of risks and of failures. There was no inevitability about Manchester supplying textiles to the world – we saw a niche suited to our circumstances, we had a vision, we acted on it and we seized the opportunity. That took leadership. What's next? The best way to predict the future is to invent it.

Baron Frank Hal
Manchester's New Economy



Together we are greater than the sum of our parts

For the last two decades the ten local authorities of Greater Manchester have voluntarily proved that to be true.

The power of AGMA, the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, working at a city region level, comes from these very individual councils working together with the private sector to drive new investment, co-ordinate planning and deliver results for the greater good.

Now plans are well developed to take these twenty years of voluntary co-operation and cohesion to the next, more formalised level. Lord Peter Smith, the Chair of AGMA and Leader of Wigan Council said: "the move to become a Combined Authority will allow us to work together more effectively on regional issues like the economy and transport and to do it on a proper basis.

"In this economic climate we will have to make some tough decisions and you cannot do that on a voluntary basis.

But I believe that we will still work on a consensual basis because all ten authorities believe the outcomes will be better."

To help drive this approach Greater Manchester is at the forefront of involving the private sector in our decision making and we have developed the capacity to enable the private sector to play a key role in influencing the strategic direction.

The members of the Business Leadership Council are wholly from the private sector and take responsibility for providing advice on our major policy areas where we all have difficult choices to make.

We are also setting up a Local Enterprise Partnership, involving the private sector, which will continue to build on our strong approach to private/public sector collaboration.

AGMA's unique partnership approach, supported by the private sector and the Universities, has the seemingly simple goal of improving the quality of life for those who live, work or visit Greater Manchester. This will mean providing energy efficient housing, improved public transport, higher education and targeted training, with access to jobs through sustained economic growth.

The Manchester city region, because of its size and business structures, will be the main driver for economic growth in the region, a conclusion supported by the Manchester Independent Economic Review, but it cannot grow independently. AGMA recognised this by developing the Greater Manchester Strategy, which sets out a framework of targets involving all authorities.

We cannot deliver this challenging agenda alone. The plans we have resonate strongly with many aspects of the Government's proposals across a number of key areas. We believe that the programme of reform that we have developed collectively across Greater Manchester cannot be replicated elsewhere. However, maintaining that momentum of change is dependent on building on existing strong partnerships between our ten local authorities, our businesses, public sector and voluntary partners and Government.

Sir Howard Bernstein
Manchester City Council





Downtown Manchester in Business celebrated its first anniversary with the inaugural 'City of Manchester' Business Awards evening at the spectacular Manchester Cathedral. Over 400 people attended the '24 Hour Party People' themed event, and they were entertained with a truly outstanding performance from Rowetta. The event was supported by Manchester City Council, and sponsored by Leader 1 and Lombard.



LEADERI
PROJECTS

 **Lombard**



1. Clare Lawrence, MC2; Sir Howard Bernstein, Manchester City Council

2. Barbara Spicer, Salford City Council; Gary Chaplin, Stark Brooks

3. Sir Richard Leese, Manchester City Council; Paul Iredale, Leader 1

4. Rowetta

5. Frank McKenna, Downtown in Business

6. Michelle Bennett & Jamie Anderson, Pickled Walnut; Siân Peak, Ph.Creative

7. Alan Townley, Downtown in Business; Nadine Merabi, Merabi by Nadine (bespoke evening and fashion wear); Christine Oxenburgh, Freeth Cartwright Solicitors

8. Charlotte Whitehead, The Alchemist; Lisa Morton, RDPR

9. Louise Kemp, Living Ventures; Ian Geoghegan, IMG Finance; Vicky Jaycock, ACC Liverpool





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10. Peter Donnelly, RSM Tenon; Amanda McAllister, Russell Jones & Walker

11. Ray Evans, Kitbag; Colin Sinclair, Bruntwood

12. Victoria Gabriel, Jaguar; Laura Wolfe, Journey 9; Ian Kilpatrick, Geason; Alexandra Rowne, Jaguar

13. Tim Bacon, Living Ventures; Simon Dufton, Lombard

14. Jennifer Edge and Ian Hudson, Hudson Hill Consulting

15. Vicky Collins, White Events; Kirsty Henshaw, Worthenshaws Ltd

16. Frank McKenna, Downtown in Business; Victoria Brown, High Performance Consultancy



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DQ ROUNDUP

DOWNTOWN LANCASHIRE LAUNCH

Downtown Preston in Business has extended its reach to take in the whole of the county, and Downtown Lancashire was launched at a cracking event at the glorious Stanley House in March. Over 150 delegates heard a keynote speech from entrepreneur Martin Ainscough at an event that was sponsored by Marsden Rawsthorn Solicitors and Lancashire Business View.

1. Downtown Chairman Frank McKenna, Speaker Martin Ainscough with event Sponsors Marsden Rawsthorn & Lancashire Business View
2. Frank McKenna, Downtown in Business; Debbie Pettit, Marsden Rawsthorn; Stephen Bolton and Nick Hyde, Lancashire Business View
3. Karl Wilson, Marsden Rawsthorn
4. Keynote Speaker Martin Ainscough
5. The Marsden Rawsthorn Team
6. Ian Kilpatrick, Geason; John Haynes, International Coaching Academy; Adam Hosker, Downtown in Business


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International Women's Day

Words: **Jennie Lewis, Downtown in Business**

You may recall from the winter edition of DQ earlier this year that Downtown in Business reported on disappointing statistics outlined by Cranfield University, which reflected disproportionately low figures of female representatives in senior boardrooms and in enterprise.

Downtown have continued to follow this agenda with interest; working alongside experts in the region, including the Liverpool based Women's Organisation (WO), to help buck what is becoming an increasingly unacceptable trend in the professional workplace.

March 8th this year marked the 100th International Women's Day, and members of the Downtown team were at a special event hosted by WO to help observe the day's activities, dubbed by many as 'truly inspirational'.





'Meet the Experts' was attended by more than 150 budding business women, who were given the opportunity to sample a selection of master classes delivered by leading female entrepreneurs from the business, education and corporate sectors.

International Women's Day, an annual event aimed at highlighting the academic, political and cultural achievements of women globally, provided the perfect opportunity for The Women's Organisation to showcase its new £5.5m building, situated in St James Street, Liverpool.

Welcoming everyone to the event and the new international facility, The Women's Organisation's Chief Executive Maggie O'Carroll, said: "International Women's Day is an opportunity for us to mark the achievements of women but also to focus on how we can drive forward their participation in all levels of business and commerce.

"It's a time to capitalise on all of the positives and to see how, as a community of entrepreneurs, we can help and support each other.

"This new facility demonstrates that Liverpool, Merseyside and the UK at large are serious and have the ambition to encourage more female entrepreneurs to start and grow their own businesses."

Master classes throughout the day were run by:

- Jeanette Kehoe-Perkinson, former Vice President on the board of international fashion business Mexx and Founder of her own company Just for People Ltd
- Ellie Kerr, Founder of the Women in Business Network on Merseyside
- Molly Harvey, Founder of Corporate Soul Woman
- Victoria Brown, Managing Director of High Performance Consultancy
- Maggie Mullan, partner at Austin-Smith Lord (ASL)
- Katherine Corich, founding

Director of the Sysdoc Group

In her opening speech Jeanette Kehoe-Perkinson, said: "It is wonderful to be here in this fantastic new building, it really shows just what can be achieved. There is no better place in the country to have an event like this."

Clare Lara, first female winner of 'MasterChef', 'The Professionals' also took centre stage at the event to talk about her experiences and to answer questions from the women who attended.

"It's not easy for a woman in the [commercial] kitchen," she told the audience. "I always thought I couldn't do it and, in the end, this only made me

more determined to succeed. It is really important to focus on what you can do and not what you can't do."

Following her MasterChef win, Clare is set to open her very own restaurant in Merseyside this August.

Businesswoman Mia Evans, who has set up her own counselling business Calma, told us how she enjoyed the event. "It has been truly inspirational," she said. "The master classes were fantastic and I was really moved by Clare Lara. The event has been the perfect way to celebrate International Women's Day."

Businesswoman Lin King agreed: "I have very much enjoyed today's event and I've met a lot of people who will be able to help with my business. It has been very informative and a good opportunity to talk to other women and share ideas and

experiences."

In addition to the 'Meet the Experts' event, International Women's Day was also celebrated with coffee mornings held across Merseyside, offering drop in sessions for women to go along and learn more about setting up their own business.

An evening reception was also held at Liverpool Town Hall. Guest speakers included our own Chairman, Frank McKenna, who said "Downtown in Business fully supports the agenda to improve equality in business and enterprise. I feel it is important for business to identify a culture that capitalises on the strength of a diverse and conversant organisational body.

"Some of the most successful businesses in the region have recognised that flexible ways of working in understanding individual restraints instils a good code of ethics and encourages the talents of a wider workforce.

I for one can say that without important female influence, Downtown in Business would not have achieved the successes of the last seven years".

The Women's Organisation moved into its new centre in January this year, just weeks after undergoing a major re-brand that included a name change from Train 2000, to better reflect the breadth of services it provides.

The centre will provide a range of services focused on women's start-up businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises. This includes 'incubation' units for new and high growth female enterprises, as well as an international research and knowledge centre focused on women's enterprise and wider economic development issues.

Maggie O'Carroll, added: "Our success lies in the real, positive impact we have on women's lives, whether we're nurturing new businesses, driving improvements in legislation and power structures or helping to increase social awareness. We're looking forward to working with lots more women to help them realise their full potential."

WICED has been developed by the Women's Organisation following a £2.4m investment from the European Regional Development Fund programme, part of a £5.2m loan finance package. It came after the North West Development Agency identified women's enterprise as a priority.



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DQ 30 IS SPONSORED BY:**DQ 30****THE LIVERPOOL 10****BRYAN ADAMS - MANAGING DIRECTOR
PH.CREATIVE**

With a solid background in creative and digital communications, Bryan has a demonstrable, strong track record in establishing long term relationships and enhancing reputations for both local and international organisations. Ph.Creative, his fast growing internet marketing agency, has successfully achieved rapid growth and acquired a strong presence within the Liverpool and North West area, after being recognised as a leader in online creative solutions.

With a natural entrepreneurial style, having developed several businesses in the North West, Bryan offers sound business acumen and a 'hands on' approach to management. Regular and proficient networking; through events, professional memberships and public speaking, has allowed him to build on numerous solid relationships and expand his contacts at both operational and senior level, within the Liverpool area, and across the UK.

It is via efficient leverage of these well-established relationships that contributed to building a professional reputation, developing resources and obtaining further operational knowledge within a variety of industry sectors.

As a successful Managing Director, and in his earlier career, a University Lecturer in web design, Bryan excels in forecasting and developing efficient business planning methods, strategic thinking and design. The procedures he has managed have consistently produced remarkable success.

Bryan is a people's person, with a passion for what he does, and the ability to engage others with his creative innovations.

In 2011, Downtown will be looking across the North West to find 30 of the best, brightest and most influential entrepreneurs, decision makers and business people that the region has to offer.

Whether it is someone who is running their own business; playing a key role in the public sector or progressing in one of our leading professional service companies, we will be selecting ten people from each Downtown area, Liverpool, Manchester and Lancashire, who have demonstrated talent, innovation and the ability to succeed in the future.

Our objective is to create a unique 'DQ30' network that will grow annually, enabling our region's most talented individuals to come together on a regular basis and form a powerful business forum.

We kick off this series with our 'top ten' from Liverpool, an impressive collection of individuals, we hope you agree.



ELAINE CUNNINGHAM - OWNER ELAINE CUNNINGHAM INTERIORS AND BO-CONCEPT

Following a childhood immersed in home design and retailing, through working with her father Hugh Doherty, founder of the City's Rapid hardwarestores, Elaine offers 30 years of experience in the home furnishing sector and has forged a prominent channel for herself within the Liverpool community.

Elevating the interior of a room comes first hand to Elaine, but elevating the disposition of a community feeling the pinch during a time of austerity was Elaine's ultimate objective, launching a design concept developed upon the premise of making high end furnishings accessible to everyone whether residential or commercial.

Opening her first home store in 2006, Elaine Cunningham Interiors on Aigburth Road, Elaine has proven style never stays still for long; after establishing the BoConcept showroom on Chapel Street and duly expanding into the City Centre to The Elaine Cunningham Home Store, located on the ground floor of the iconic Unity Building.

In its 5th year of production, Elaine Cunningham Interiors has gone from strength to strength. Reflecting the ethos of the surrounding commercial district, the business has continued to adapt and grow, offering the newest range of soft furnishings, fabrics, floor coverings and wallpapers from legendary brands such as Andrew Martin, Cole & Son, Vivienne Westwood, Romo, Brian Yates, Osborne & Little, Sanderson and Harlequin.

Presenting a distinct combination of classic designs with contemporary new lines, Elaine finds beauty in the functionality of furniture and integrates her wealth of personal experience into the creative process combined with cutting edge technical solutions, such as 3D representations of finished interiors.



ESTHER MCVEY - MP WIRRAL WEST

Esther's background is a combination of business, media, charity and social enterprise. She initially studied to become a lawyer, but on graduating, traded law for TV and became a graduate trainee for the BBC, initially working for Janet Street Porter on award winning youth current affairs programmes. Esther remained working in the media for 14 years. Highlights include being the youngest person ever to host GMTV, falling off the BBC studios rooftop for a specially filmed stunt and holidaying with Take That and Danni Minogue!

In 2001, Esther left London and the world of TV to return home and set up in business as well as embarking upon her political journey. Initially, Esther did media training for large PLC's, but decided to change focus from PLC's to SME's, providing them with a cost effective marketing and PR service.

From there the business women's network Winning Women was established and grew to become the biggest in the northwest, as well as setting up co-operative office and incubator space for start-up companies. Winning Women was recognised as best practise in the Merseyside Entrepreneurship Commission, for which Esther was nominated for Merseyside Woman of the Year and Cheshire Woman of the Year.

A firm believer in lifelong learning, Esther went back to University in 2008 to study Corporate Governance and went on to get a distinction in her MSc, as well as winning the North of England Excellence Award for her studies.

Esther has always supported Charities and local community groups and some of her proudest moments have been working alongside inspirational people like Gee Walker, who set up The Anthony Walker Foundation; Jean Taylor, who set up Families Fighting For Justice and Dorothy Crowther, who set up Wirral Holistic Cancer Care.

In May 2010, Esther was elected MP for Wirral West, making her the only Conservative MP on Merseyside and the first since 1997. It wasn't an easy journey, but the drive was to come home to represent the area Esther knew and loved. Since arriving in Parliament last May, Esther became the first MP to employ an apprentice and now other MP's of all parties are following suit. Last November Esther was made PPS (Private Parliamentary Secretary) to Chris Grayling the Minister for Employment and so will spend the next 3 months in committee working through the entire Welfare Bill.

It isn't an easy time to be a politician but, Esther has never done things because they were easy, but purely because she believes in them.



GED FITZGERALD - CHIEF EXECUTIVE LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

Ged is, to his own admission, very much a corporate man with a clear public sector ethos; change, innovation and continuous improvement are fundamental to his work ethic. Service excellence is how he says he measures success.

Ged began his career in Local Government in 1983 and has held a range of posts grounded in economic development, policy and European Affairs. Ged's first appointment as Chief Executive was at Rotherham MBC, South Yorkshire in 2001. From there, he moved to be Chief Executive at Sunderland City Council in 2004 and subsequently was Chief Executive at Lancashire County Council in 2008 before taking up post in Liverpool.

Ged recognises that the huge spending constraints the public sector faces over the next few years will undoubtedly be a real challenge; but sees this as a huge opportunity to reshape local government for the future; to identify the best balance between improvement and efficiency and focus more effectively on the needs of the customer.

Ged says, "Whether Liverpool City Council acts as a direct provider, commissioner or facilitator it can and should unlock potential; harness the drive, commitment and passion the City has to transform the way we think and behave. Working with the business community, I believe we can create a city where innovation is fostered and valued and risks are managed to deliver real change during these tough times."



HELEN GRIFFIN-BOOTH - MANAGING DIRECTOR BLUEROW LETTINGS

Helen Griffin-Booth is the Managing Director of one of the North West's leading lettings firms, Bluerow. She started the firm in April 2008 and has seen the company grow from a germ of an idea into one of the premier residential letting agents in Liverpool.

Bluerow now has a portfolio of more than 400 rental properties and Helen has grown the company's turnover by more than 40% in the last two years. She puts this success down to the expertise and service they offer both tenants and landlords.

Helen started out in a different world to property and at the age of 18 took it upon herself to leave the UK and start a job doing volunteer work at an orphanage in one of South America's major cities, La Paz, in Bolivia.

After a year working in Bolivia, Helen continued with her love of working abroad and went to the University of Salamanca in Spain to study economics and politics.

Helen came back to the UK after graduating and followed a passion she'd always nurtured for, property, taking up a role as a trainee estate agent in Crosby.

Since then her career has gone from strength to strength, working for a number of the North West's big names in property before she decided to go out on her own and launch Bluerow Lettings.

The company has grown to a team of three permanent staff, who operate from offices on Liverpool's Duke Street offering a comprehensive service, including renting residential properties on behalf of landlords, property management and property valuations.



MAGGIE O'CARROLL - FOUNDER THE WOMEN'S ORGANISATION

Maggie O'Carroll has more than 20 years experience working in the private and social enterprises sectors as a business owner, non-executive director and in a chief executive officer role.

In 1996 Maggie founded The Women's Organisation – and has grown it into the largest UK-based women's economic development social enterprise. This has enabled Maggie to pursue her passion for women's enterprise – having a real, positive impact on women's lives, whether nurturing new businesses towards a viable future, driving improvements in legislation and power structures or contributing to social awareness.

Maggie also currently works as a specialist advisor with a portfolio of high value Irish and Merseyside based SME's, enabling them to successfully achieve business sustainability, innovation, growth and access to international markets.

Maggie holds a number of non executive board positions in the private and public sectors.

Maggie represents The Women's Organisation and UK Women's Enterprise development nationally and internationally through her involvement in task groups, expert panels and research groups. She lectures on women's enterprise around the world and recently led the only UK social enterprise delegation to the World Expo in Shanghai, gaining national and international press attention.



JAMIE ANDERSON - MANAGING DIRECTOR PICKLED WALNUT BESPOKE CATERING COMPANY

Jamie's career began in the kitchen where he was classically trained by numerous Michelin starred chefs across Europe. Jamie has worked at some of the UK's best hotels and restaurants and also ran the VIP kitchen for the prestigious Cirque de Soleil in Australia.

On returning from his travels, Jamie changed direction and set about bringing quality British banqueting food to the masses. Born and raised on Merseyside Jamie is very much a local lad and likes to reflect this in Pickled Walnut's menus. Jamie says, "we should always strive to use local produce and embrace the region's food heritage, when producing menus and advising clients".

Pickled Walnut Bespoke Catering Ltd was born from a long friendship with fellow chef Mark Kershaw. Mark and Jamie had worked together on several projects and it was fitting that they start up together.

Pickled Walnut has thrived during the recession winning high profile contracts through competitive pricing and excellent delivery of products and services. Jamie, as Managing Director, has installed infrastructure to this growing business. Pickled Walnut also has a long standing relationship with Downtown in Business, catering awards ceremonies in Liverpool and Manchester.

Jamie oversees the sales and marketing team, finance team and works closely with Mark on the operational side of the company to ensure that this business stays on track and fulfils its potential as the premier events caterer in the country throughout 2011 and beyond.

With further growth planned for 2011, Jamie remains confident about the potential of the private marketplace and states that Pickled Walnut's success can continue due to its adaptability and unique bespoke approach to customer service.

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SIMON GIBSON - MANAGING PARTNER KIRWANS SOLICITORS

Liverpool born and bred, Simon joined Kirwans, a law firm with 4 offices across Liverpool and the Wirral, in 2002 and was made a Partner 6 months later at the age of 26. Simon became the youngest Managing Partner of any law firm in the country when accepting the role in March 2010.

During his first year, Simon had driven a 38% growth in turnover for the firm, managed the opening of a second Liverpool office near Brunswick Dock and encouraged significant development of the firm's IT and Business Development teams.

Simon has been tasked by the Partners in developing Kirwans as a national legal brand, a vision that has been set for 2015.

"I believe that the future of the legal profession and business generally lies with firms who are innovative and focus their investments upon key areas identified for growth. In my view, success lies in such investments as being focussed upon IT, marketing and systems rather than more lawyers and more law."

Simon views the 105 employees at Kirwans as the firm's biggest asset, saying "My job as Managing Partner is an exciting and fulfilling one. I am surrounded by a highly driven and innovative management team who are committed to thinking outside of the box. We share all of our plans and successes with our staff and give each member of the team the means to reach their full potential."



VICTORIA BROWN - DIRECTOR HIGH PERFORMANCE CONSULTANCY

From the depths of South Liverpool emerged a young woman who somewhat lacked height but made up for it in determination, focus and business acumen.

Victoria attended university like many other bright young individuals, to study Psychology, gaining a first class degree and latterly a Masters in Occupational Psychology. However, unlike many other pupils the work load wasn't enough for Victoria so she began her first business at the tender age of 19; a mobile nail business aptly named Glamor. She had a part time role as a fitness instructor at the time to support her whilst studying, so she cleverly tapped in to her database of fitness fanatics! Like any of Victoria's endeavours, Glamor has blossomed into a renowned, well established Hair and Beauty salon in Aigburth, Liverpool.

Victoria's plan has always been to set up her own consultancy and once Glamor was self sufficient she decided to capitalise on her knowledge, experience and business acumen. Having also become a Chartered Member of the CIPD at this point, as well as having an extensive knowledge and experience within areas of employment law, employee relations, redundancies and change management, she decided to take a calculated risk. Having identified a niche in the market, to deliver an affordable outsourced HR service to small to medium sized businesses, High Performance Consultancy (HPC) was founded in 2007 by Victoria and has witnessed unprecedented growth, going from strength to strength in a very short period of time.

Victoria has worked within large HR Departments within the private and public sector; she therefore wanted to bring large corporate HR processes and strategy to the SME market. Victoria and her team manage to deliver this to an incredibly high standard and within budget for the client. Her other key objective, and HPC's unique selling point, is the personal, bespoke service each client receives.

HPC currently has an envious client base across the U.K and with future plans to take the brand across Europe. Victoria's recent work has involved the development and launch of HR software directly designed and targeted to the SME market.



TONY CALDEIRA - FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR CALDEIRA LTD

PRESIDENT, CITY OF LIVERPOOL CONSERVATIVES

Tony Caldeira, founded Caldeira Ltd in 1991 after leaving Essex University with a degree in Economics and Government. Caldeira Ltd, which is based in Merseyside, is the UK's market leader in the supply of cushions to volume retailers and has won many awards for sales growth and entrepreneurial flair. Caldeira Ltd has grown from a market stall in Liverpool to become Europe's largest cushion company within 15 years.

The company owns a majority stake in Caldeira China, a joint venture company based near Hangzhou, which has recently opened a 250,000 sq ft factory complex and supplies products to over 20 countries. In 2007 Tony opened Caldeira USA on 5th Avenue in New York City and starred in Channel 4's critically acclaimed documentary "Brits Get Rich in China". In 2008 Caldeira Retail was formed with the acquisition of 14 Fabric Warehouse stores. In 2010 Caldeira Holdings reported sales of over £20m and had over 400 staff worldwide.

Politically, Tony is President of the City of Liverpool Conservatives and is leading the rebuilding of the Conservative Party in the Liverpool city region. Tony Caldeira is on the Conservative Party's approved list of candidates and advises several members of the government on business issues, Chinese issues and regional matters during visits to Merseyside.

Bruntwood investing in communities.



Abseiling in Liverpool

Bruntwood is a family owned property company with a difference. Yes they develop, let and manage over 100 properties across Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham. Yes they offer conventional offices, serviced offices, retail units and meeting rooms. And yes they provide enormous flexibility to their customers from a single desk for one day to a whole building for 25 years. **(See bruntwood.co.uk for more details).**

However, the difference is they have always had an active involvement in the communities they operate in. Every year they invest 10% of their profits in arts, charitable and civic initiatives.

So how are they investing in the communities in Liverpool and Manchester right now?

In Liverpool...

Working with charities is more important than ever in a recession. Bruntwood are supporting Claire House, a children's hospice and are going to raise £50k over 3 years for them. This will be the result of many fund raising events by staff, customers and suppliers, including a Bruntwood Liverpool Golf Day.

Arts are key to a vibrant community and they help bring people to the region. Bruntwood are keen to play their part here and support various arts organisations like Tate Liverpool, The Everyman and The Playhouse. At The Tate Liverpool, David Guest, Bruntwood's Liverpool Director is a member of the Development Board, helping to connect business with the arts and the company also supports The Tate through their corporate membership scheme.

The Everyman and the Playhouse, continue to have long term visions of delivering challenging new theatre a vision that Bruntwood shares by supporting new productions as well as providing advice on how to redevelop or refurbish their space.

In addition to working with the larger arts organisations, the smaller arts organisations are really important to their local communities. Bruntwood supports The Plaza Community Cinema in Waterloo. This is a local cinema that is close to the heart of the people in Waterloo and beyond, and Bruntwood are assisting them to become self financing through improving the facilities on offer.

As well as charity and the arts, Bruntwood is keen to assist where it can in the communities it operates in understanding that developing Liverpool for the long term from a place making perspective is crucial to its long term prosperity. They are a member of The Mersey Partnership and are also involved in the Liverpool Commercial District Partnership, (LCDP).

This LCDP is a local area group that provides a leadership role for the private sector in the commercial heart of Liverpool. Each business has individual requirements in running their business, but at the LCDP the focus is on understanding how best to ensure the area is a successful commercial district for the people who live, work and play there. The partnership looks at how to improve the area sustainably to ensure it attracts and retains the best companies. David Guest has chaired the LCDP for three years and is fully behind the drive towards a business improvement district, which will have the vote in May this year. Go to www.liverpoolcdp.com for more details.

Bruntwood also supports Sefton Chamber of Commerce helping to drive the value of the Chamber's business support and services to businesses in Sefton and the Liverpool City Region.

In Manchester...

Alongside Liverpool, Manchester has a vibrant arts community. The Manchester International Festival has just launched its programme for 2011 and Bruntwood is a founding supporter of this exciting festival which commissions diverse work from around the world. In addition the largest playwriting competition in the UK is run by Bruntwood in partnership with The Royal Exchange theatre (www.writeaplay.co.uk for more details). They

also realise that it is important to continue support for long standing organisations like The Manchester Art Gallery, The Lowry Theatre, The Bridgewater Hall, The Royal Northern College of Music and The Bolton Octagon, which Bruntwood is proud to do.

The Royal Manchester Children's Hospital is Europe's largest single site paediatric hospital and Bruntwood has just completed a 5 year pledge which raised funds to equip the spinal and orthopaedic ward. Now they are focusing on raising funds for a new North West youth initiative called 'Onside'. The vision is to build, deliver and sustain a network of 21st century youth centres to provide young people with top quality, safe and affordable places to go. Onside is building 5 new youth centres and Bruntwood has seconded a project manager full time to help with the build programme and they are committed to specifically supporting one of these facilities which is currently being built in Harpurhey, North Manchester, called The Factory Youth Zone.

Bruntwood is also keen to continue to support the development of Manchester for the future and is helping with many local area partnerships like The Piccadilly Partnership, The Oxford Road Corridor and Cityco, the city centre management company.



Kate Vokes, Bruntwood's HR Director sums it up really, 'There is no doubt that investing in our communities is a win-win activity for Bruntwood as a business. It makes a real difference to the places where we operate, it improves the work-life balance of our people and adds immensely to the vibrancy of our culture. That's why, even in challenging economic circumstances, we're not afraid to say that we're in it for the long term.'

bruntwood ●

SIR TOM FINNEY: A LIVING HERO

LEGEND

Words: **Julie Cheston, The Write Angle PR & Marketing**

The 'Preston Plumber', as he is affectionately known, regularly features on England's best ever 11 footballer lists and if you ask those who played with him, or watched him, they would always agree. Bill Shankly praised him as 'the greatest player I ever saw in all my time'.

Sir Tom Finney was the first ever player to win two Footballer of the Year awards – and the first sportsman to advertise Shredded Wheat in the early 1950s!

It's not just his skill on the pitch that makes Sir Tom Finney a true legend; it's the measure of the man. A gentleman of the game, he has great humility and integrity. During his playing career he never had so much as a booking. He never saw a red or yellow card. Take note Wayne Rooney.

Sir Tom Finney enjoyed a 12-year career with England, scoring 30 goals in 76 appearances. He appeared in three World Cup tournaments. That's an impressive record considering he had a six-year gap during the Second World War where he saw close combat in Egypt.

He made his England debut at the age of 24 years. David Beckham, a onetime PNE loanee, had earned 50 caps by then. Tom Finney has even scored a penalty for his country with both his left and right foot.

Proud as he was to represent his country, he loved his club more. He played for Preston North End between 1946 and 1960 when the club was a force to be reckoned with in the First Division. His career spanned 14 years, including his break to fight in the war.

In his 2003 autobiography, he says: "North End has been a love affair for me. I could never properly explain my level of affection for the place. All I ever wanted to do was play for Preston."

Despite lucrative offers from other clubs, North End refused to sell him, describing Finney as 'irreplaceable'. In 1952, he was offered a record £10,000 signing-on fee from Prince Roberto Lanza di Trabia of Palermo in Sicily which would have taken him ten years to earn at Preston.

EARLY YEARS

Finney was born in Preston in 1922, which was a Guild Year, and lived in the city all his life. After leaving school he joined a local plumbing firm, Pilkington's, but football was always his dream.

He spotted an advert in the Lancashire Evening Post inviting any footballers aged 14 to 18 to contact the club. The young Finney was devastated not to get a reply to his letter, but his father met North End trainer Will Scott in a pub and persuaded him to give the young Tom Finney a trial.

The trial was successful and Tom was initially offered a role as part of the ground staff but his father made him turn it down. He joined the amateur B side and when his talent shone through, he progressed to the youth team.

Naturally left-footed, Tom spent hours putting in extra training until eventually he was able to play with both feet almost equally. Ironically, he spent most of his playing career as a right-winger. He enjoyed cutting inside for a shot on goal or crossing with pinpoint accuracy with his right foot, the same one he used when taking penalties.

It was this skill that made him so difficult to play against as the opposition never knew which way he was going to turn. His

"SIR TOM FINNEY IS AN INSPIRATION, NOT JUST TO FOOTBALLERS BUT TO EVERYONE"

VIEWS ON SIR TOM FINNEY:

Sir Tom Finney is a true legend of the game and embodies everything that is good about football. He had great skill, passion for the game and he is a true gentleman, conducting himself with integrity and great humility. During my time at PNE FC, he was a source of inspiration to the club, the team, the fans and the city, and also to me. I think most modern day managers would love a player like Tom Finney in their side.

DAVID MOYES, MANAGER OF EVERTON FC

Sir Tom Finney is a lovely man, very humble and he couldn't do enough to support local charities. I never saw him play but my dad thought he was fantastic. He is a great ambassador for Preston North End and is very highly regarded by the club, team and fans. He has a huge effect on the club and the city.

ALAN IRVINE, FORMER MANAGER OF PRESTON NORTH END FC

Tom Finney would have been great in any team, in any match and in any age ... even if he had been wearing an overcoat.

BILL SHANKLY, FORMER MANAGER OF LIVERPOOL FC & PLAYER FOR PRESTON NORTH END FC

talent made him a versatile player and he played in five different positions for PNE, mainly on both wings and at centre-forward.

However, even the great Tom Finney had his off days, in 1954 Preston played West Bromwich Albion at Wembley in the FA cup final. He says it was his worst performance in a North End shirt saying he was feeling 'heavy legged'.

Preston North End was relegated from the First Division the season following his retirement in 1948-49. After relegation he discussed a transfer with the club, with Blackpool and Manchester United reputedly ready to open their cheque books and pay a record fee but the chairman persuaded Tom Finney to stay at the club and two years later PNE were back in the top flight.

AN EYE FOR BUSINESS

As well as a football career, Tom Finney had a successful business career running an electrical and plumbing firm, Tom Finney Ltd, with his brother Joe. He often worked as a plumber at the same time as playing football for club and country.

After retiring from the game, he worked as a media pundit for publications such as the News of the World, as well as driving the plumbing business forward. In 1984 he retired from the company to join the local Health Authority. He also served as a magistrate.

In 1972, Sir Tom Finney was made a Freeman of Preston and was knighted in 1998. The now infamous 'splash' statue in his honour stands outside the ground at Deepdale, which is on Sir Tom Finney Way.

Sir Tom Finney is an inspiration, not just to footballers but to everyone. Hard work, determination and steely ambition can be combined with professionalism, integrity and a caring nature. Modern day footballers take note. That's the stuff of legend.

It is impossible to say a one liner on Sir Tom for the amount of impact that he has had on a football club.

Sir Tom played football, his great passion, for his local side to the best of his ability. That to me speaks volumes that this great game of ours can give you that opportunity.

He was a working class individual who applied himself in sport and proudly represented his hometown.

It is absolutely fantastic what he has done for this place and he has, rightly so, been knighted for it.

PHIL BROWN, MANAGER OF PRESTON NORTH END FC





Words: **John Leach, Winning Pitch**

INSPIRED BY FAST MOVING COMPANIES

It's great when your job involves surrounding yourself with ambitious, highly talented people. More specifically, those who display courage and take risk with family money to pursue their passion and desire to grow their own company. I have spent the past 10 years researching and writing about high performance entrepreneurship then spreading messages of what great strategy, sales, leadership, personal performance and innovation looks like. Very much looking at the gritty end of "how to"...do these things better.

I have a particular fascination, almost obsession, with trying to understand what makes successful entrepreneurs tick. Inspired by initiatives like the Sunday Times Fast 100 and the North West High Growth programme, delivered by our business, Winning Pitch plc – this involves coaching some 1,700 companies to create bigger and better futures. It is one of Europe's largest programmes targeting fast moving SMEs commonly known as gazelles. My ambition is to model and understand what these entrepreneurs do and how they do it, then share it with other entrepreneurs. I believe that ambitious individuals running these gazelle like companies are the unsung hero's of the economy. These are the men and women who create 50% of jobs and deliver 50% of GDP – they will drive the UK out of the mess we found ourselves in.

**I HAVE A PARTICULAR FASCINATION,
ALMOST OBSESSION, WITH TRYING TO
UNDERSTAND WHAT MAKES SUCCESSFUL
ENTREPRENEURS TICK**

PEOPLE WHO SET UP THEIR OWN BUSINESSES ARE BRAVE – WE NEED MORE!

Entrepreneurs are individuals who make brave and courageous decisions. With focus and drive they become the SMEs that drive economic recovery. Often started by people

who have lost their job or given up highly paid regular salaries and the safety net of a great package to go and have a go at doing their own thing. A proportion of them go on to achieve massive success and become the gazelles of the economy – the high growth job creators. Others achieve more modest results (which nonetheless achieves something fantastic) become self-employed and created opportunities for others.

I am convinced that the pioneers of the economy of tomorrow will be born in these difficult times – the optimists who see opportunity when others see challenge and obstacles. The successful entrepreneurs I have worked with have a dream and a vision, care is needed here because a vision without action becomes a mere hallucination – to be avoided at all cost.

Successful entrepreneurs invariably take risks. More importantly, they choose to subject themselves to pressures and situations many would not even consider for a second. But still they go on and give it a go, even if they get it wrong when the potential for everything to implode around them is more than a possibility. This means family holidays, commitments to the kids, house and other luxuries. But still they carry on. What is the driving force and the mindset that takes them to this place? As Winston Churchill said, "When you are going through hell keep going". This is exactly what they do.

My crusade in life has become to help, support and provide practical tools to allow these ambitious individuals to embrace the right mindset and apply the appropriate commercial good practice to drive the results.

**WHEN YOU
ARE GOING
THROUGH
HELL KEEP
GOING**

SO WHAT IS BUSINESS SUCCESS?

I have been told that successful entrepreneurs have the right mindset – what does this look like? What drawer do you open to find it? There are some great books and thinking around this space – ‘The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People’, for one. However my take on the successful mindset is actually that it’s like a jigsaw with many component parts. The other issue is that success is a relative thing to some. It’s a red Ferrari and a multimillion pound global empire but to others it’s a £500,000 turnover business employing 10 people. What does success mean to you? I see so many multi millionaires still searching for more – they are not content nor are they fulfilled – in fact they are miserable when to the world at large they appear successful. Slightly confusing that the flash car and the mansion is what society perceives as success. The fact is success is relative to each and every person; it’s a personal thing only you can define for yourself.

PEOPLE WANT MORE – FLICK THE SWITCH TO DRIVE PERSONAL CHANGE

From my interaction with people, I find that 80% want more from their career, life or business. However the two biggest challenges are:

1. Defining what more looks like.
2. Having the ability to change behaviour to achieve more.

Here lies the heart of debate – most people are resistant to change and they are not willing to take the necessary steps to initiate the changes – only action will drive change. A study of 11,000 patients in the US who had undergone major heart-bypass surgery revealed that only 11% had changed their lifestyle habits to accommodate their new situation – that means 89% carried on with business as usual even though their life was at risk.

For me, Darwinian thinking applies in these instances – it’s about the survival of the fittest and those willing to change who usually enjoy long-term sustainability. Big changes do not usually happen overnight it is often achieved in small steps – a bit like a dimmer switch – slight turns make the light shine brighter. However, embracing a mindset that welcomes small changes can have an almost profound impact on personal progression. The challenge is defining it then acting on it.

The starting point for anyone on a mission, ambitious project or wanting to

achieve a big goal in business, is to pull the trigger of personal change, recognise that if you don’t you will at best, stand still or at worst, go into reverse.

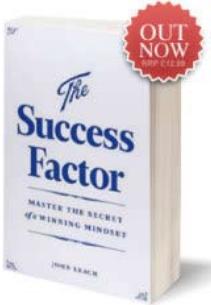
Personal change is likened to the turning of an oil tanker, it takes time, and very few of us are blessed with the ability to change at the pace of a gazelle. However, if we recognise that change is constantly needed we are more likely to take action to get what we want.

THE HIGH GROWTH FOUNDATION – ALLOWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GAZELLES TO FLOURISH

To support the ongoing efforts of 1,700 highly ambitious entrepreneurs who have participated on the North West High Growth Programme, Winning Pitch has decided to establish the High Growth Foundation, a legacy vehicle of the initiative. This will be a resource available not only to participants of the programme but also to other ambitious individuals wanting help and support to take their business to the next level. I have assembled some of the best coaches and specialist advisers in the Region – those who genuinely care about enterprise; who together with Winning Pitch plc and Downtown, we will create the conditions to allow gazelles to flourish and create much needed new jobs. This is my mission for the next three years. Fingers crossed.

**EMBRACING A MINDSET THAT
WELCOMES SMALL CHANGES CAN
HAVE AN ALMOST PROFOUND
IMPACT ON PERSONAL PROGRESSION**

THE SUCCESS FACTOR



An enlightening and practical book that offers both motivation and inspiration to business owners and entrepreneurs, whilst reminding us all that if you ain’t enjoying what you’re doing, it’s probably time to get out! The author is John Leach, head honcho of Winning Pitch. Well worth a read, particularly if you need to be reminded why you started your own business in the first place and if you are a little scared of change.



Winning Pitch®

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About TNT Post

TNT Post is the largest challenger to Royal Mail in the deregulated postal market and has the resources to deliver both addressed and unaddressed mail. Currently we are predicted to handle more than 3.2 bn items this year; roughly 1 in 6 mailing items that land through the letter box.

Since the liberalisation of the UK postal market on 1st January 2006, TNT Post has continued to impress businesses and public sector organisations in the UK with its innovative, sophisticated mailing services that bring unrivalled value and flexibility to clients.

TNT Post has developed a number of un-sorted and pre-sorted postal solutions for customers including Premier, Premier Sort, PremierSort Flex and now our latest arrival; FirstSort. FirstSort is a flexible, physical alternative to Royal Mail, allowing customers to benefit from next day delivery and so far has been adopted by both the public and private sectors. In addition, TNT Post's best in class approach with product and service innovation has resulted in the delivery of a number of added value solutions, such as 'yourStamp', '3-DM' and 'adScents' direct mail concepts.

What is TranSend?

TNT Post has recently launched its hybrid mail solution, named TranSend. TranSend revolutionises the way users send letters and documents; documents are now sent electronically straight from a PC, to TNT Post's state-of-the-art print and fulfilment facilities. In seconds TNT Post receive, print, fulfill and inject mail into their nationwide network for delivery. It's secure, easy to set up and offers track and traceability of documents.

Cost Savings

TranSend is the ideal integrated solution for any size of business, posting any volume of mail, which is looking for a cost saving of up to 60% without mass disruption or implementation to existing postal processes. Additionally TranSend offers the perfect solution for businesses with fragmented mail production, or for smaller organisations that have no post room facilities. Whether mailing items are transactional or direct mail, TranSend is the efficient mailing platform. Many organisations use cost savings as a key driver in reviewing postal services. Our TranSend service doesn't just reduce the cost of postage; it reduces the cost of the entire postage chain including print, production and fulfillment.

Time Saving

Time as well as money can be saved by using TranSend.

TNT Post TranSend reduces the time required of an organisation's staff to produce and fulfill mailings, allowing staff to spend more time on core activities. A typical mail piece can take up to 4 minutes to print, produce and prepare for postage individually. By saving 95% of the time spent on producing a mailing allows staff to concentrate on core business activities.

Brand Control

A common problem with organisations that send out mail from multiple sites or those businesses that have limited marketing resource, is keeping control of the company's branding.

Both the You-Send and Auto-Send drivers allow administrators to define templates and production requirements for users so that brand consistency is maintained and guidelines adhered to.

Using our mail-merge service allows customers to upload a mail shot and database quickly and easily with no ability to alter the document once uploaded to our system. Therefore responsibility for producing the mailings can be passed over to colleagues once approved by the brand owner.

Impact with Speed

Receiving an item of mail through the door still has an impact electronic substitutes struggle to match. Email is commonplace and has certainly transformed the way the world communicates, but its widespread use and the proliferation of spam has served only to raise concerns of deliverability and read-rates. TranSend gives users the impact of a mail piece with the effortlessness of sending an email.

For more information contact 01628 816772 or visit www.transendit.co.uk/info.php



FUSION ROOM is modern British Restaurant that is striking and contemporary. Located in the heart of Preston City Centre, based on two floors, the restaurant provides the ultimate, modern British dining experience. At Fusion Room we pride ourselves on using only the finest locally sourced (where possible) produce. All of our dishes are prepared daily at the restaurant, and cooked to order, which has lead us to win The Lancashire Evening Post Restaurant of The Year 2011. Fusion Room was opened in November 2008 by Russell Lee. Russell trained as a chef at Blackpool and The Fylde College, which opened the door to his success. While training he was involved in a number of national competitions, including Gordon Ramsey's "The F-Word" (series 1, runner up) and the Nestle Torque D'or 2007 competition (national winner). Russell is working alongside a young energetic team with passion, experience and the professional skills needed to produce a fantastic dining experience. Fusion also specialise in: Functions, Outside Catering, Private hire, Business lunches, Wedding breakfasts and Conferences. Please go to our website (www.fusionroom.co.uk) to see our latest offer's ie. STEAK NIGHT which runs every Wednesday night 3 courses for only £14.95.



JAGUAR

JAGUAR TRACK EXPERIENCE How does it feel to pilot a supercharged 5.0 litre V8 Jaguar on one of Britain's most challenging tracks? To floor the throttle and sense the irresistible surge of a 510PS engine rocketing you to 60mph in less than five seconds? Here's the perfect opportunity to find out. Jaguar's professional driving team will accompany you on a variety of high-speed track activities, guiding you as you witness the dynamic qualities of the cars as they come alive on our course of slaloms, lane change and brake/avoidance elements. Exhilaration guaranteed! Upcoming track and dates include Thruxton, Hampshire, 10th - 13th May and comprise of 3 sessions a day taking place at 08:30, 11:00 and 13:30. Due to high demand places are filling up quickly, for more information, availability or to book please call 0800 015 8603 quoting Partner 1, for a highly preferential rate of £150 per person. *All drivers must be 28 years or over and have held a valid, current and full licence for more than 5 years with no more than six penalty points. Car specifications are subject to change without prior notice. Jaguar Cars Limited. Registered in England No. 1672070. Registered Office: Abbey Road, Whitley, Coventry, CV3 4LF For full terms and conditions, please see www.jaguar.co.uk/trackexperience

THE GRILL ON NEW YORK STREET



THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL BUSINESS AWARDS

Downtown Liverpool in Business are delighted to announce that the seventh annual City of Liverpool Business Awards, dubbed the business 'Oscars', will take place on the evening of Thursday 21st July 2011. This black tie dinner will be held in one of Liverpool's most spectacular venues, the Sefton Park Palm House. A three course meal will be served, entertainment provided, and you will have the opportunity to network with some of the regions leading movers & shakers.

THE GRILL ON NEW YORK STREET opened on Saturday 2nd April. This new kid on the restaurant to the ever popular Grill on the Alley, will undoubtedly be stamping its own mark on Manchester's culinary scene. This stylish restaurant and bar will provide the perfect setting for a lunch, a leisurely dinner or simply cocktails after work. The carefully selected menu is capable of tempting a wide range of palates, offering a combination of innovation and traditional favourites. The common thread lies in the quality of the ingredients which are prepared with the minimum of fuss and maximum effort. Grill on New York Street Telephone 0161 238 9790 www.bladefish.com

THE CLASSIQUE
AT DE VERE MOTTRAM HALL 2011

8 - 10 JUNE 2011

JOIN US AT THE EVENT
OF THE SUMMER

World class tennis and superior hospitality provides the ultimate backdrop for the North West's most elegant garden party. From 8-10 June, De Vere Mottram Hall in Cheshire will play host to the great and good of the North West corporate market. In true Downtown fashion, it will be networking on a different level. The day includes:

- Veuve Clicquot reception
- Gourmet three course lunch
- Afternoon tea
- Souvenir programme

Book a table with us on Downtown Tennis Thursday and you will receive a complimentary private box on quote DTTENN IS on booking. To book 0151 707 1243 or visit www.theclassique.com

THE CLASSIQUE TENNIS TOURNAMENT

superior hospitality provides the ultimate garden party. From 8-10 June, De Vere Mottram Hall in Cheshire will play host to the great and good of the North West corporate market. In true Downtown fashion, it will be networking on a different level. The day includes:

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- Afternoon tea
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t to availability and members must
k and for further information call
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FORUM Situated on Preston's most cosmopolitan street in the elegant Georgian Winckley Square area, FORUM has been quietly catering to Preston's more discerning clientele since 2005. A focus on high quality drinks, food & service in a relaxed, informal & stylish environment have allowed us to stay at the forefront of the city's bar scene for many years. We are unique in the city as we offer both high quality food & high quality drinks. Our drinks list includes classic & contemporary cocktails, world beers & an extensive wine list including sparkling wines & champagnes by the glass, while our food menu consists of high quality, home-made, contemporary bar food, which due to popular demand, will shortly be available in the evenings as well as Monday to Fridays. FORUM has also become the most popular & glamorous choice for private & corporate functions in the city.

t. **01772 563789**
e. info@forumbar.co.uk
w. www.forumbar.co.uk



ONE CARD Following the success of the 08 Card, with over 100,000 members, Livesmart are delighted to be re-launching the card this month as the One Card. Liverpool City Region residents can now enjoy all the features of the 08 Card plus some new and exciting additions. As well as continuing to enjoy exclusive savings and benefits in venues across the cultural, retail, dining, leisure and wellbeing sectors, cardholders can now also earn One Card Points via a unique online shopping portal, upgrade to a 'smart transport' One Card, view City Region events information through a new 'Whats On' guide and access the latest offers with the One Card iPhone App. If you are interested in becoming a One Card partner and promoting your business to a growing membership via our online and e-communications, please contact karenpodesta@livesmart.biz.



LIVERPOOL SOUND CITY 2011
www.liverpoolsoundcity.co.uk

LANCASHIRE *Business Week*

23rd - 27th May

LANCASHIRE BUSINESS WEEK Downtown Lancashire in Business will host the fourth annual Lancashire Business Week, taking place from Monday 23rd - Friday 27th May at venues across the county. Highlights of what promises to be a cracking series of events include the first invitation only 'DQ Networking' evening and a 'Woman in Business' session featuring Kirsty Henshaw of Dragon's Den fame and lingerie entrepreneur, Miss Fit UK Nikki Hesford. Lancashire Business week is sponsored by Marsden Rawsthorn Solicitors, RSM Tenon and Lancashire Business View.

LAYLA

LIVERPOOL

LAYLA is Liverpool's newest 5 star boutique hotel set to open in Summer 2011. The 84-bedroom hotel will offer exceptional design, blending original Renaissance and Victorian architecture with contemporary features, mixing the sumptuous past with the best that the modern world can offer. Delectable dishes from sophisticated restaurant 'The Annexe' – which also has its very own wine-tasting room – and New York-style bar and brasserie 'Madison's' – complete with DJs at the weekends – will delight both foodies and those looking for casual yet delicious fare, while the spa at Layla will provide luxury and relaxation with indulgent therapies and the most effective wellness treatments. The private screening room will suit those looking for exclusive viewings of favourite movies or corporate events, the Cigar terrace is perfect for cigar aficionados and The Ballroom will provide a stunning setting for weddings, conferences, events and special occasions.

Date: Monday 9th - Thursday 12th May 2011

Time: Various

Venue: Various

Manchester Business Week will take place from Monday 9th to Thursday 12th May 2011

"**CREATING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CITY**" is a series of informative events, presented throughout the week by some of Manchester's leading lights in business.

MANCHESTER *Business Week*

9th - 12th May

Date: Thursday 19th May

Time: 6.00pm - 8.00pm

Venue: Forum

Join Downtown for our next No Ties Networking event on Thursday 19th May 2011, which will take place at the fantastic Forum.

LANCASHIRE *No Ties Networking*

Date: Monday 23rd – Friday 27th May 2011

Time: Various

Venue: Various

Downtown Lancashire in Business, in association with Lancashire Business View, Marsden Rawsthorn Solicitors and RSM Tenon, will host the fourth annual Lancashire Business Week running from the 23rd - 27th May.

The week, which will be themed '**LANCASHIRE PLC**', will focus on how the county's business community can overcome challenges during times of austerity, whilst also looking at some fantastic success stories from across the region.

Speakers already confirmed include Nikki Hesford of MissFit UK, Preston entrepreneur Kirsty Henshaw and the non-executive Chairman of Recycling Lives and former Chief Executive of the Northwest Regional Development Agency, Steve Broomhead.

LANCASHIRE *Business Week*

23rd - 27th May

Date: Monday 20th – Thursday 24th June 2011

Time: Various

Venue: Various

"**CREATING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CITY**"

With an unprecedented level of public expenditure cuts planned across the UK during the next three years, and Liverpool bearing more than its share of the pain, the need for the city to rediscover its entrepreneurial spirit has never been more necessary.

The Liverpool Business Week will explore how existing businesses can grow through austerity; how the issue of encouraging more women in business can be supported; and what the private and public sectors can do in genuine partnership to meet the challenges ahead.

To discuss these important topics Downtown Liverpool in Business, in association with Liverpool Vision, has invited business leaders, entrepreneurs, decision makers and academics to present their thoughts to a series of seminars in June.

LIVERPOOL *Business Week*

20th - 24th June

Date: Thursday 21st July 2011

Time: 6.30pm - 12.00am

Venue: Sefton Park Palm House

THE CITY OF LIVERPOOL *BUSINESS AWARDS 2011*

Downtown Liverpool in Business are delighted to announce that the seventh annual City of Liverpool Business Awards, dubbed the business 'Oscars', will take place on the evening of Thursday 21st July 2011.

This black tie dinner will be held in one of Liverpool's most spectacular venues, the Sefton Park Palm House. A three course meal will be served, entertainment provided, and you will have the opportunity to network with some of the regions leading movers & shakers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT WWW.DOWNTOWNINBUSINESS.COM

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ACC Liverpool

Tel: 0151 703 7268
Fax: 0151 475 7777
Email: kate.nolan@acciliverpool.com
Web: www.accliverpool.com

Alma De Cuba

Tel: 0151 702 7394
Email: info@alma-de-cuba.com
Web: www.alma-de-cuba.com

Bem Brasil

Tel: 0151 709 0044
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Web: www.everymanplayhouse.com

Gusto

Tel: 0151 708 6969
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Hilton Liverpool

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Il Forno

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Email: info@ilforno.co.uk
Web: www.ilforno.co.uk

Liverpool Empire Theatre

Tel: 0151 708 3200
Email: JayneLloyd@theambassadors.com
Web: www.liverpoolempire.org.uk

Malmaison Liverpool

Tel: 0151 229 5000
Email: ssimons@malmaison.com
Web: www.malmaison-liverpool.com

Merchants Bar & Restaurant

Tel: 0151 702 7897
Email: dining@62castlest.com
Web: www.62castlest.com/merchants-restaurant.php

Novotel Hotel

Tel: 0151 702 5100
Fax: 0151 7025110
Email: h6495-sl@accor.com
Web: www.novotel.com

Radisson BLU Liverpool

Tel: 0151 966 1500
Email: info.liverpool@radissonblu.com
Web: www.radissonblu.co.uk/hotel-liverpool

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Tel: 0151 210 2921
Email: donna.stuart@liverpoolphil.



com

Web: www.liverpoolphil.com

Sakura

Tel: 0151 236 2113
Web: www.sakuraliverpool.com

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Email: liverpool@sapporo.co.uk
Web: www.sapporo.co.uk

Sir Thomas Hotel

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Email: reservations@sirthomashotel.co.uk
Web: www.sirthomashotel.co.uk

Sofrito L1

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The Living Room

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Web: www.thelivingroom.co.uk

The Noble House

Tel: 0151 236 5346
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Web: www.thenoblehouse.co.uk

MANCHESTER

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Web: www.bembrasilrestaurants.com

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Email: info@eastzeast.com
Web: www.eastzeast.com

East Z East - Ibis Hotel

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Email: info@eastzeast.com
Web: www.eastzeast.com

Grill on New York Street

Tel: 0161 238 9790
Web: www.blackhouse.uk.com

Grill on The Alley

Tel: 0161 833 3465
Web: www.blackhouse.uk.com

Living Room

Tel: 0161 832 0083
Fax: 0161 8320082
Web: www.thelivingroom.co.uk/venues/manchester

Piccolinos

Tel: 0161 835 9860
Fax: 0161 834 9563
E-mail: piccolino.manchester@piccolinorestaurents.co.uk
Web: www.piccolinorestaurents.co.uk

Restaurant Bar & Grill

Tel: 0161 8320082
Email: Cherryl.Pinnington@ircplc.co.uk
Web: www.restaurantbarandgrill.co.uk

Royal Exchange Theatre

Tel: 0161 833 9833
Email: box.office@royalexchange.co.uk
Web: www.royalexchangetheatre.org.uk

Rosso

Tel: 0161 832 1400
Email: enquiries@rossorestaurents.com
Web: www.rossorestaurents.com

Sapporo Teppanyaki

Tel: 0161 831 9888
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Email: Manchester@sapporo.co.uk
Web: www.sapporo.co.uk

Tom's Champagne Bar

Tel: 0161 834 7788
Email: enquiries@champagnebars.net
Web: www.champagnebars.net

LANCASHIRE

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Email: info@eastzeast.com
Web: www.eastzeast.com

Forum

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E-mail: info@forumbar.co.uk
Web: www.forumbar.co.uk

Fusion Room

Tel: 01772 880180
Email: info@fusionroom.co.uk
Web: www.fusionroom.co.uk

Glovers Bar

Tel: 01772 561410
Email: www.facebook.com/gloversbar
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Holiday Inn

Tel: 01772 567 000
Email: enquiries@hipreston.com
Web: www.hipreston.com

Invincibles - PNE

Tel: 01772 759 900
E-mail: info@invincibles-pne.com
Web: www.invincibles-pne.com

Legacy International Hotel

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E-mail: res-prestoninternational@legacy-hotels.co.uk
Web: www.legacy-hotels.co.uk/legacy-preston

Marriott Hotel

Tel: 01772 864087
Fax: 01772 861728
Web: www.marriott.co.uk/preston

Mitten Hall Hotel

Tel: 01254 826 544
Web: www.mittonhallhotel.co.uk

The Grand Hotel

Tel: 01253 643 424
Web: www.the-grand.co.uk

The Whalley Wine Shop

Tel: 01254 822581
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