

Transforming North Staffordshire Evidence Paper C: Action Planning Group Recommendations

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Prepared for the North Staffordshire Regeneration
Partnership

March 2008



North Staffordshire Action Planning Group –

Recommended Vision and Actions

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Submission to the North Staffordshire Regeneration
Partnership and Leaders Group

11 October 2007

Vision – Introduction

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Will Hutton, CEO of The Work Foundation and Alexandra Jones, Associate Director of Research presented The Work Foundation's initial analysis of the North Staffordshire sub-region, based on an extensive literature review and interviews with a wide range of stakeholders, to a broad cross section of around 80 people at a North Staffordshire Forum event on 9 May 2007.

Using the Ideopolis: Knowledge Cities driver framework participants at the Forum voted on the aspects they felt were the most important and urgent to tackle.

Vision – Introduction



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The key issues discussed at the Forum are summarised below:

Driver	Threat	Opportunity
Physical city and connectivity	Not joining up physically with economic	Business offer
Diverse specialisation, high skills organisations	Lack of knowledge jobs	Potential business offer
Education	Lack of aspiration	Raise achievement and aspiration
Distinctive offer and building on what's there	Lack of belief in North Staffordshire	Create strong business offer
Leadership	No agreed strategy or priorities	'Bold leadership' around one North Staffs vision
Community engagement	Not taking advantage of opportunities	Small number of transformational projects

The major challenges were agreed as:

1. Building the business case
2. Improving the infrastructure
3. Raising the leadership contribution and delivery across North Staffordshire
4. It was agreed that this group – a coalition of interests – would focus on creating a new vision for North Staffordshire and create a submission for the Regeneration Partnership setting out their view of the business offer, infrastructure and leadership required to deliver the vision. This vision and submission would also be used to inform The Work Foundation's research report and the group would be asked to sign up, in principle, to the report recommendations to ensure that there was engagement in the vision from a wide range of stakeholders.

Vision – Commentary on Building the Vision



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1. The North Staffordshire Action Planning Group approached this work with passion and an absolute desire to build a successful, prosperous and rewarding area for the benefit of the whole community.
2. The group did not duck the hard questions, challenged assumptions and have built, within a very short timeframe, a compelling vision and a clear set of recommendations.
3. It commends the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership and the Leaders Group to consider these recommendations in detail. The group recognises that these recommendations and the final research report now have to be fully evaluated and that, inevitably, some actions will change shape. They ask, however, that the commitment, passion and energy by which they were generated be acknowledged and taken forward in the same spirit in which they originated.
4. The group stands ready to act as a future sounding board to the above leadership groups and to support implementation of the action plan when agreed.

Vision Framework



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Special Qualities

We have highly competitive land and labour costs
 Established highly successful businesses
 Our ceramics business cluster
 Two successful universities with strong academic and business building experience
 Significant design base and high-end design skills
 Key location with excellent accessibility and transport links

People & Communities

Values of hard work and integrity
 Adaptive workforce
 Strong sense of community
 Loyalty and strong work ethic
 Successful transformation and reclamation of derelict land

Business Offer

We recognise that achieving our vision requires the creation of an 'Enterprising NS culture'
 Focus on both Knowledge Economy clusters and business sectors that currently match local skills
 Work with new business to build opportunities and grow the business base
 Create a stronger and more aspirational enterprise culture

Leadership

Focus on delivery
 Pursuing a shared vision
 Agreeing priorities
 Culture of personal responsibility
 Ambassadors for North Staffordshire projecting clear and compelling messages
 Shared ownership

Infrastructure

Support radical options for estate renewal and neighbourhood transformation
 Making schools a focus of master plans for sustainable communities
 The greenest sub-region in the country through effective and sustainable regeneration
 Developing a transport infrastructure to support a thriving sub-region

Vision



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Our desire is to transform North Staffordshire, raising its business competitiveness and quality of life to and beyond the national level.

We will create this success through determined and passionate leadership, local enterprise, creativity and innovation.

Our five priorities

- Economy:** To attract new businesses, grow and develop existing business and to build a stronger entrepreneurial culture.
- Place:** To create a stronger sense of place, develop the physical infrastructure to increase pride and belief, be bold and creative around the design of new space and buildings and ensure that the enabling infrastructure of housing, transport, education (pre-school to university, apprenticeship to life-long learning) and new technology supports our vision.
- People:** To strengthen the community through good jobs, health and well being, quality housing and sustainable development.
- Leadership:** To show the leadership that delivers the vision and promotes North Staffordshire to the wider world.
- Image:** To catalyse cultural change to raise civic pride, purpose and belief.

Serving the communities of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands and Stoke-on-Trent

Realisation of the Vision



Realisation of this vision by 2021 will mean that North Staffordshire will have: the work foundation

A thriving city centre linked to vibrant town centres, prospering business parks and beautiful countryside, supported by appropriate infrastructure;

An **enterprising, creative and innovative culture** that supports business creation and growth and enables the sub-region to prosper, with GVA, employment levels and business start-up rates at the regional average;

Distinctive specialisms and business growth (albeit not necessarily high numbers of jobs) in ceramics and design, medical and healthcare technologies and environmental technologies, with growth also in logistics;

A high quality of life for all people and communities, linked to high quality housing, high performing education institutions and good health;

A more highly skilled population that continues to invest in the skills of its residents;

A positive external image that attracts inward investment, tourism and students;

The **passion and leadership** for different agencies to work together across the sub-region.

Vision – What are the crucial success factors? (1)



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Commitment

Alignment of the leadership around the vision and the drive for delivery.

Ambition

High conversion of strategy into tangible outcomes.

Clarity

The ability to simplify the complex and articulate a compelling narrative of the journey for North Staffordshire.

Communication

For the leaders to establish and agree the communication process and use the whole range of communication channels to inspire, sell and promote the vision.

Vision – What are the crucial success factors? (2)

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Consistency

Staying true to the beliefs and values inherent in the vision and using it as a vehicle to achieve success.

Leadership

The ability to properly balance the needs of the whole community of North Staffordshire with local drivers and to reflect and respect the different constituencies.

Delivery

Clarity of delivery priorities and associated delivery skills training requirement. Establishment of performance and monitoring framework with clear and agreed measurement criteria. Align with existing programmes.

Vision – Special Qualities

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1. We have highly competitive land and labour costs.
2. Two successful universities with strong academic and business building experience.
3. Our FE colleges are among the leading colleges in the UK and play a significant role in entrepreneurship and business development.
4. Significant design base and high-end design skills.
5. North Staffordshire has a wide tourist offer.
6. Quality of life and easy access to beautiful open space.
7. Multi-agency collaboration to move North Staffordshire towards its vision.
8. Strong cultural offer – museums, theatres, galleries and entertainment/leisure.
9. Ceramics business cluster.
10. Key geographic location with close proximity to four international airports with excellent accessibility and transport links – a gateway to three English regions.
11. Strong manufacturing base and skills.

Vision – Special Qualities



Required Actions

1. Build a strong narrative around North Staffordshire's special qualities and encourage its use across local and county authorities and related agencies.
2. Create intensive energy in building and delivering the business offer.
3. Build strategies to maximise benefits of universities and colleges.
4. Be proud of the history and what has already been achieved, but recognise the size of the challenges ahead.
5. A failure to recognise and respect the strengths, rights and desires of all authorities and agencies will continue to undermine progress.

Vision – People and Communities (1)



1. Our people have a strong work ethic that is characterised by hard work, creativity and integrity.
2. They are welcoming and outward looking, balancing traditional skills with global trends.
3. Changes in the industrial landscape have created an adaptive and innovative workforce.
4. A strong sense of community has been sustained.
5. Loyal workforce with a track record of high productivity.
6. North Staffordshire has a travel to work catchment of one million people.
7. A growing coalition of political, civic, business and community leaders who understand the challenges and are passionate about achieving success for North Staffordshire.
8. Attractive and congenial living environment.
9. Tackling issues to reduce worklessness.
10. Successful transformation of the landscape through reclamation of derelict land.

Vision – People and Communities (2)



Required Actions

1. Engage the community in shaping and owning the vision.
2. Developing an effective multi-level communication strategy that defines policy, process and delivery expectations. It may include:
 - Community group consultation at ward level
 - Through local councillors
 - Local authority presentations, newsletters and updating through planned communications
 - Online consultation as an easily accessible part of authority websites plus links from partner agency websites
 - Leaflets at council/agency offices, libraries, police stations etc
3. Tell a compelling story of what has already been achieved, what needs to be done and what sustained success will look like.
4. Demonstrate belief and resilience around what needs to be done and don't shy away from the difficult and hard choices.

Vision – People and Communities (3)



Ensuring that actions are informed by the principles established in the 'Academy for Sustainable Communities' framework document.

Governance – Well run communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership.

Transport and Connectivity – Well connected communities with good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, health and other services.

Services – Public, private and community and voluntary services that are accessible to all.

Environmental – Providing places for people to live in an environmentally friendly way.

Equity – Fair for everyone in our diverse world and for both today's and tomorrow's communities.

Economy – A thriving and vibrant local economy.

Housing and the Built Environment – High quality buildings.

Social and Culture – Active, inclusive and safe with a strong local culture and other shared community activities.

Vision – Business Offer (1)



We recognise that achieving our vision requires the creation of an 'Enterprising North Staffordshire' culture. We will:

1. Ensure that we have a common understanding of the specific gaps in our business supporting infrastructure for existing and new businesses.
2. Develop a fast multi-agency solution to plug these gaps.
3. Create 10,000 new jobs in the City Centre and Newcastle by 2017
4. Leadership to act now to define city centre and Newcastle business profile and describe scenarios for where existing and future residents will live, educate their children and travel to the city to work.
5. Commence early stage discussions with a range of target city centre businesses sectors, ie professional services, creative economy within and outside NS to build understanding of their needs and to pre-sell the city centre (plus the housing, education and transport) offer.

Vision – Business Offer (2)



We recognise that achieving our vision requires the creation of an 'Enterprising North Staffordshire' culture. We will:

1. Work with new businesses to develop opportunities.
2. Work with potential high growth businesses in any sector to develop them.
3. Help businesses **choose** to be here.
4. Provide effective after-care for businesses attracted to the area.
5. Respond to the issues that lead to companies not moving to the area.
6. Maximise the benefits of our existing cultural offer.
7. Build on our existing manufacturing base.
8. Ensure that Information and Communication Technology planning is at the heart of business planning and that future business digital needs are accommodated.

Vision – Business Offer (3)



Focus on knowledge economy clusters. These are high value sectors that tend to have high value knowledge jobs – but not necessarily high volumes of employment. Key sectors are:

1. Higher and further education specialisms (eg health and medical technologies, environmental technologies).
2. Market services (consultancy, law, accountancy – supported by FineST).
3. Developing local capacity to respond to public sector procurement.
4. Ceramics – high quality design.
5. Developing other creative industries.

Focus also on other sectors that generate less GVA but have more employment suited to local skills and assets:

1. Logistics and distribution.
2. Services offer (retail and tourism).
3. Supply chains of large employers.
4. Continue to build on manufacturing base.

Vision – Business Offer (4)



Through the Enterprise & Innovation Group we will ensure that the business offer is:

- Private sector led.
- Public sector supported.
- With joint responsibility for delivering on vision;
 - Clear targets
 - Alignment of funding
 - Strong programme coordination
 - Engage with workless and skills agenda
 - Clear brand and sub brand
 - One message, one team

Enterprising North Staffordshire

End goal = Attract investment and grow our business base

Vision – Business Offer (5)



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Our business offer priorities include:

Enterprise

- Create a stronger enterprise culture – eg Enterprise Academies.
- Enable sustainable business start-ups through:
 - provision of appropriate business support
 - intervention packages to support growth
 - professional advice on copyright and intellectual property
 - develop a range of business premises – growing with the businesses
 - supportive financial investment/enabling funding
 - social entrepreneurship

Innovation

- Encourage business productivity through application of innovation.
- Encourage stronger relationship between R&D and business.

Inward investment

- Develop opportunities to attract a range of new investment.
- Public Sector Procurement Compact.

Vision – Business Offer (6)



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Required actions:

Task the Enterprise Group with considering these recommendations and implementing a stronger and more attractive business offer for North Staffordshire.

1. Size, scope and timeline the work required to develop:
 - Provide the highest quality office spaces for all businesses.
 - Provide faster/cheaper next generation broadband for all our businesses as a source of distinct geographical advantage/attractiveness.
 - A full business engagement process.
 - Addressing the disqualifiers and building the inward investment offer/opportunities.
 - Reviewing the current after-care services and joining these up into a more compelling picture.
2. Deliver the 'Public Sector Procurement Compact' as the first quick-win.

Vision – Business Offer (7)



Required actions (cont.):

3. The Enterprise and Innovation Group to review the opportunities identified by this group in the manufacturing, healthcare and medical technologies, cultural and creative, logistics and finance sectors to identify key growth opportunities and appropriate responses.
4. Social enterprise and entrepreneurship opportunities are recognised as important elements of the business offer and must be given appropriate consideration.
5. The physical business offer needs to address the diverse business needs from start-up to large organisations and 'sell' this to both local, national and international businesses.
6. Build greater speed, energy and interest into city centre business development.

Vision – Infrastructure (1)



Communication

The essential core of delivering our vision is through the delivery of a strong supporting infrastructure that:

1. Builds Information Communication Technologies (ICT) into all planning activities for future infrastructure projects.
2. Actions the North Staffordshire Integrated Digital Strategy.
3. Develops a comprehensive communications and education strategy.
4. Complements and extends existing investments for next generation broadband.
5. Invests in mobile communication services in urban centres to create a leading edge digital offer for businesses, education and residents.
6. Develops a North Staffordshire sub-regional spatial strategy

Vision – Infrastructure (2)



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Transport

1. Strategic approach to sustainable public transport.
2. Invest in improving key internal links in North Staffs.
3. Invest in mobility services in urban centres.
4. Review of contribution and development of waterways to North Staffordshire's transport and economic growth.
5. Develop a multi-area transport strategy agreement
6. Build on the strategic importance of the gateway routes – M6, A50/500, West Coast mainline.
7. Maximise the economic opportunities of the four international airports within an hour's radius.

Vision – Infrastructure (3)



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Transport (cont.)

8. Prioritise creation of a new bus station.
9. Prioritise a quick transport solution between the rail station, university quarter and the city centre (*nb: Birmingham's links are displayed on S-o-T station!*).
10. Prioritise the development of S-o-T station as a major gateway to North Staffordshire (*it is an under-utilised asset*).
11. Identify park and ride sites now and ensure they are brought on-stream with city centre development.
12. Prioritise East-West developments.
13. Ensure that the transport plan fully links residential areas with employment sites.

Vision – Infrastructure (4)



Housing

Our housing offer will:

1. Support radical options for estate renewal and neighbourhood transformation.
2. Make the area the residential area of choice for high earners, as well as retaining the existing population.
3. Improve the quality of the affordable housing offer.
4. Grow the aspirational housing offer throughout the housing chain.
5. Promote and establish high quality design and environmental principles.

Vision – Infrastructure (5)



Prosperity will be enhanced by:

1. Agreeing and delivering a master plan for Hanley to become a great city centre, Newcastle to be the second 'hub', and with strong complementary roles for the other towns.
2. Staffordshire University's support for the creative industries cluster.
3. Keele University's support for medical, health and science technologies.
4. Supporting the ceramic technologies cluster and the work of Ceram.
5. Supporting the art and design industries cluster.
6. Directing investment to established centres and restricting investment in out-of-town locations.
7. Linking Staffordshire Moorlands' economy, residents and tourist offer more closely to growth in Stoke on Trent and Newcastle.
8. Promoting a thriving night time economy.
9. Broadening leisure and tourism opportunities to attract visitors.
10. Creating a vibrant Cultural Quarter promoting high quality creative goods and services.
11. Preparing frameworks and end use plans for key investment sites – ready made offers rather than reactive consideration.

Vision – Infrastructure (6)

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Education will be enhanced by:

1. Publishing good news:
 - Continuing the improvement programme for all our schools and vigorously tackling the skills deficit.
 - Potteries schools have 7th highest proportion of gifted and talented pupils out of 149 education authorities nationwide.
2. Involving pupils in next phase of Building Schools for the Future.
3. Strengthening links between schools and the locally emerging knowledge economy.
4. Making schools a focus of master plans for sustainable communities.
5. Engaging school governors, head teachers, staff, pupils and parents as key stakeholders in their neighbourhoods.
6. Focusing on school results valued by potential residents ie KS1, 2, 3, GCSE and AS level results in schools.
7. Promoting entrepreneurship and creative thinking.
8. Recognising the importance of 0-5 development and the support requirements of young families together with the important role provided by the voluntary sector.

Vision – Infrastructure (7)

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We will create a safe, green and healthy environment by:

1. Promoting community cohesion in partnership with the police and other authorities.
2. Ensuring health and wellbeing services are delivered in a uniform and timely manner.
3. Creating the greenest urban core in the country through effective regeneration.
4. Working with the community and partners in the public and private sectors to plan development so it benefits everyone.
5. Providing architecture of high quality.
6. Providing leadership to raise the skill levels of everyone who makes decisions about new development.
7. Developing a clear environmental plan for North Staffordshire that demonstrates the part the authorities, businesses and citizens need to play in tackling climate change, conservation of resources and environmental protection.

Vision – Infrastructure (8)



Required actions:

1. Join up the thinking, strategy and actions around the infrastructure elements to ensure that North Staffordshire tells a compelling and coherent story.
2. Require all agencies/developers to reflect our thinking in their approach and proposals.
3. Build the understanding and integration of ICT opportunities into all planning activities.
4. Develop an architectural guidance framework for all developers/builders/professional architects.
5. Create a 'Knowledge Economy' development group across the education and learning and skills community.
6. Establish a complementary retail offer across the towns to identify and develop offers around areas of distinctiveness.
7. Develop a new transport plan for North Staffordshire.

Vision – Leadership (1)



Our collective leadership will be characterised by:

Pursuing a shared vision

- Creating a North Staffordshire story to tell internally and externally.
- Political engagement with electorate through local councillors and MPs.
- Commitment at all levels.
- Strong civic leadership.

Agreeing priorities

- Means agreeing on what does not happen as well as what happens.

Shared responsibility

- Businesses, local authorities, councillors, voluntary sector, universities, public bodies etc.
- Community engaged at every level with LSPs as one of the major delivery/communication channels.
- Recognition and respect of the positive contribution that all authorities/agencies play.

Vision – Leadership (2)



Our leadership model will reflect:

Named North Staffordshire accountabilities

- Accountability for specific delivery of major elements of the overall plan.
- Improving our delivery capabilities and sharpening our decision-making processes.

Culture of personal responsibility across North Staffs

- Development groups to build capability and focus on solutions and personal contribution.
- As part of this transition agree what needs to stop happening.
- Agree what process and performance activities need to be started or improved.

Ambassadors for North Staffordshire

- Lobbying and promoting, working together, at national & regional level.
- Local events to engage with community and get them involved.
- Understand that: Accountability = Responsibility + Authority.

Vision – Leadership (3)



Required actions:

1. Recognition by the political, civic, business, agency and community leadership of the absolute necessity to align around the vision for North Staffordshire.
2. For the leaders to represent the whole of North Staffordshire and respect the contribution and legitimate requirements across the whole leadership spectrum.
3. For the leaders to execute their roles in support of the business, infrastructure and leadership recommendations described in this document.
4. For the leaders to be clear and agree the establishment of the NSRP delivery arrangements.
5. For the leaders to play their part in communicating the drive, ambition, determination of the whole community of North Staffordshire to build a more prosperous and rewarding society.
6. For the leaders to make the difficult and tough choices to prioritise what needs to be done.
7. For the leaders to be clear about their accountabilities for delivering these recommendations.
8. For the leaders to play a more positive role in promoting North Staffordshire locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
9. For the leaders to recognise the opportunity of a new beginning and leave behind the factors that have held North Staffordshire back.

Vision – Delivery Agenda 2007



Priorities:

1. Agree the Vision and recommendations of the North Staffordshire Action Planning Group.
2. Create a design-based masterplan for North Staffordshire, to include:
 - Business offer
 - Housing
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Transport infrastructure
 - Complementary town development plans
 - Education and Entrepreneurship
 - The enabling ICT infrastructure
3. Establishing an agency specifically dedicated to tackling the worklessness issue (working with JCT, Connexions, PCT, Colleges, Voluntary Sector).
4. Launch of local public procurement compact.
5. Review existing strategies to ensure alignment with these recommendations.

Vision – Delivery Agenda 2008



Priorities:

1. All sites assembled for full University Quarter vision to be realised.
2. Transport plan and delivery priorities agreed.
3. Working closely with universities to significantly increase the number of spin-off companies.
4. Secure LAA targets for new business growth and investment.
5. Significant progress on digital infrastructure roll-out.

Vision – Delivery Agenda 2008



Priorities:

1. Phase 1 of city centre public realms works completed.
2. Ceramics village and National Auction centre established in Burslem.
3. Establishment of park and ride.
4. Stoke City authority has achieved excellent local authority status.
5. Considerable progress and delivery on:
 - Business offer
 - Housing
 - Transport infrastructure
 - Complementary town development plans
 - Education and Entrepreneurship
 - The enabling ICT infrastructure

Vision – What will it look like?



- In 2021, success would look like:
 - An attractive city centre that provides high quality office facilities and a good retail experience with well-established brand name stores, high levels of employment and a strong night-time economy safe for families;
 - A prosperous Newcastle town centre with increased levels of employment that specialises in independent shops and professional services, has an economy linked to the universities and is well connected to the city centre and the station;
 - Distinctive functions for each of the towns in the sub-region of which they can be proud, for example art and design cluster in Burslem, ceramics cluster in Longton and thriving Moorlands market towns;
 - A range of high quality residential areas both urban and rural for workers to educate their children and experience a high quality of life, and easy access to a wide range of recreational opportunities including the North Staffordshire Peak Park;
 - Skills that match or exceed the national average;
 - All new developments are complementary, with the majority in urban centres except where an out-of-town development is absolutely necessary.

Vision – Commentary on Building the Vision



The North Staffordshire Action Planning Group was made up of people drawn from:

Stoke-on-Trent City and Newcastle-under-Lyme Councils

YMCA

Chamber of Commerce

Synetrix

Aspire Housing

Instaffs

Stoke College

Keele and Staffordshire Universities

Learning and Skills Council

Renew

NSRZ

AWM

Connexions Staffordshire

Groundworks

CIMA

Urban Vision

Vision – Commentary on Building the Vision



The North Staffordshire Action Planning Group committed to a series of eight workshops to produce the vision and associated recommendations. As part of the process they 'soft' tested the emerging themes within their own organisations. The feedback was used to refine the recommendations.

The group has consistently averaged 20 people at every meeting which clearly demonstrates their commitment and passion for greater success for North Staffordshire. It has also demonstrated that collaborative multi-agency working can produce high value outputs in relatively short timescales.

This work complements and contributes to the evidenced based research report from The Work Foundation.

Vision – Commentary on Building the Vision



In order to establish a productive working environment the group established:

- **Commitment to shared behaviours**
 - Solution-focused, good communication, working together.
- **Commitment to being accountable**
 - Champions and Ambassadors
 - Soft testing in own organisation
 - Connecting with other strategies and informing The Work Foundation's work
- **Commitment to developing shared vision**
 - Positive and transformational
 - Relationship between vision and improvement
- **Commitment to developing actions**
 - Business offer
 - Infrastructure
 - Leadership

Vision – Commentary on Building the Vision



Before building the vision the group reflected the key principles that it should represent:

- Proud of the past but excited by the future
- Energised – 'reason to bother'
- Risk taking
- Removing the 'them and us' between 'leaders and citizens'
- Enterprising
- Clean, safe, healthy and green
- Aspirational, passionate and creative
- Friendly

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We provide:

Research

Consultancy

Leadership

Advocacy

Partnership

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