



Northern Lights 2011

the best and brightest in the North



Northern
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2011

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Despite living in tough times, ippr north has long made the case that England's North should be leading – not pleading – its way to renewed prosperity. As we head into 'awards season', we are very proud to publish a list of 50 of the brightest and most talented people from the worlds of business, science and technology, academia, public service, politics, culture, the arts and social and community action from across the North of England.

Northern Lights 2011 is part of a wider look at where ideas, innovation and inspiration will come from over the next few years as the North of England seizes the challenges and opportunities ahead. This is the inaugural edition of the ippr north Northern Lights Top 50, but it will be repeated each year to highlight the best and the boldest and help our communities shirk any notion that it's grim up North.

About ippr north

ippr north is the regional arm of the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr), the national think-tank. With bases in Newcastle upon Tyne and Manchester, we are passionate advocates for the North of England and are working hard for a fairer, more democratic and sustainable North. We want to make the North of England the 'place to be' for progressive policymaking in Europe and we recognise that one of the keys to ensuring the North prospers in the future is to develop and retain its talented people.



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BUSINESS & ECONOMY

The North has a proud industrial and post-industrial heritage, but also much to be proud of in terms of the young entrepreneurial talent that has been fundamental to centuries of innovation and success. Our young entrepreneurs are characterised by their innovative ideas, willingness to take risks and utilise new technologies, and their ability to think on a truly global scale. With all the Coalition government's recent talk of 'rebalancing' the UK economy, we look not only to the established business leaders but to the young entrepreneurs, the stars of emerging sectors and the economic experts who, despite the setbacks of a deep recession, will once again drive forward the great Northern renaissance.



Edwin Broni-Mensah • Founder, GiveMeTap

25-year-old Edwin made the news in August 2010 when he launched GiveMeTap, which raises money for drought-stricken countries through the sales of a special aluminium bottle. The initiative enables users to avoid spending money on bottled water by getting free water refills from a network of cafes and restaurant owners while helping the environment, by eliminating the use of millions of plastic bottles, and cafe and restaurant owners, by increasing foot traffic. Expect big things from Edwin, who was named Britain's top black graduate by Future Leaders magazine, featured in the Future 100 Awards, recognising the success of young entrepreneurs, and won a Shell LiveWIRE Grand Ideas Award.



Andy Clarke • CEO, Asda

2011 will be a critical year for the new boss at iconic Yorkshire supermarket group Asda. The chain is enjoying a renaissance under Andy, who rightly identified that Asda shoppers had become tired of food which didn't meet the store's former standards and has set the group back on track. But with serious belt-tightening expected this year – particularly in the North, which will be disproportionately affected by the public sector spending cuts – Andy has a real challenge ahead of him to help lower the cost of living. Also expect to see thousands of new jobs created by Asda through the conversion of nearly 150 Netto stores, many based in the North.



Gareth Davies • Managing director, Frogtrade Ltd, Halifax-based learning platform provider

The Frog Learning Platform is an online learning environment that allows students, teachers and parents to access all school information from one online location. Frog works with schools and local authorities to develop better ways of addressing educational needs and empowering students and staff to achieve excellence in education. Since forming Frog in 1999, Gareth has led the business to continued growth and success, doubling its turnover every year for the last four years. He has recently appointed a considerable number of new staff and formed beneficial partnerships to spearhead UK and international expansion.



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Marc Duschenes • Chief executive, Braemar Group

Marc founded Braemar, which is based in Cheshire, in 2001 following an earlier career in investment banking. Marc has steered Braemar, the AIM-quoted innovative real estate fund-management group, through turbulent economic times by diversifying into a range of counter-cyclical products, including Agricultural Land, Student Accommodation and Ground Rents, with assets and funds under management of over £325 million. He was crowned Young Entrepreneur of the Year by *EN* magazine in 2009.



Joanna Feeley • Founder and creative director, Trend Bible

One of the new generation of female entrepreneurs in the North, Joanna clearly knows the benefits of doing business on a global scale. 2011 will see Trend Bible – her consumer behaviour consultancy – conquering the world: Joanna has recently signed a deal with the biggest global distribution agency to export their trend books via a network of sales agents, giving her product a presence in India, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, France, Spain and Russia among others. She will also launch an online trend offering, which is a very exciting new channel for the business, again ensuring they tap into a global audience.



Alex Fowler • Eaga

An up-and-coming star of renewable energy, Alex worked at the regional development agency One North East before moving on to Eaga, where he is developing innovative approaches to support the rapid transformation in the way we generate and utilise energy in buildings. A North-Easterner through and through, Alex has been instrumental in the region's positioning on low-carbon economic activity, especially offshore wind and ultra low-carbon cars.



Baron Frankal • Director of Economic Strategy, Manchester Commission for the New Economy

As Manchester City Council chief executive Sir Howard Bernstein's 'go-to man' in Manchester, Baron has gained a reputation for being at the forefront of economic planning for the city region. Baron was central to the Greater Manchester Strategy and the securing of city region status under the last government, as well as the Combined Authority under this. A sophisticated strategist, Baron is currently working on a single investment framework for the various funds Manchester can access and on practical ways for the 10 authorities, and the agencies they work most closely with, to jump the gun, from cuddly collaboration to intensive resource-sharing that delivers efficiencies but preserves quality services and the activities that actually drive economic growth.



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Gérard Jones • Founder and director, Gérard School of Football Ltd

Gérard, a former youth professional footballer, founded the Gérard School of Football, now regarded as Britain's leading specialist football and character development centre, at the age of 19. GSF appeared on the Top 100 Best Business Start-ups list in 2010 and is now working in partnership with Arsenal FC Plc to operate Arsenal Soccer Schools. He inspires and increases enterprising behaviour among people throughout the UK as an ambassador for Enterprise UK, along with increasing and improving children and young people's physical and mental health, lifestyle and life skills, and helping them to aspire and achieve.



Joanne Leng • Director of Business Development, NOF Energy

Joanne was awarded an MBE for services to the oil and gas industry in the Queen's New Year Honours List this year. It was certainly well-deserved, as Joanne was instrumental in leading the team that has helped members secure in excess of £140 million of new business in recent years. She is well-known in the UK and international oil, gas, nuclear and offshore wind sectors and has led more than 30 overseas market visits in the past three years to countries including Brazil, Australia, South Africa and Norway.



Phil Northall • Partner, Creative Industries Networking Group

Phil is a partner in the Creative Industries Networking Group (CING) which helps people working in the creative industries in Manchester to network and collaborate. While his background is in local economic development and community consultation, Phil's passion for the region's creative industries was apparent at university where he focussed on the development of the arts and creative sectors in Manchester and Liverpool. Expect to see Phil achieve the goal he is committed to: advancing the region's creative talent, and the development of Manchester as a whole.



Professor Geoff Parker • Scientific Director, BiOxyDyn

As well as being director of the University of Manchester Biomedical Imaging Institute (BII) and managing a large scientific research team, Geoff is also the founding director of BiOxyDyn Limited, a new University of Manchester spin-out company. BiOxyDyn has just won BioNoW Biomedical Startup of the Year 2010 and is being praised for developing new diagnostic magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) tools for lung diseases, a part of the body which is very difficult to scan effectively using existing technologies.

POLITICS

Politically, 2011 will be an important year for the North of England. With a political North/South divide increasingly evident, finding a Northern voice in Whitehall will be key, and the relatively few Northern Conservatives will have a special role to play. But with such a focus on decentralisation and localism, 2011 presents much greater opportunities for 'leading and not pleading', and so we have chosen a group of politicians who we feel will drive new policy ideas in crucial areas of reform. May is also likely to see some significant developments on the council scene and so we've picked a handful of councillors who may well step further into the limelight of local politics in our key towns and cities.



Stephen Akers-Belcher • Councillor, Hartlepool Borough Council

Stephen, who represents Rift House ward on Hartlepool Borough Council, was commended in the LGA Group Young Councillor of the Year category at the 2010 Councillor Achievement Awards. His focus in 2011 is to continue to champion community causes and build on his work with young people. In his role as chair of the Health Scrutiny forum for Hartlepool, Stephen continues to challenge changes within health services and campaign for a fairer service. 2011 will be dominated by government cuts and policy changes – Stephen will ensure a focus on how these affect communities in Hartlepool and be an advocate for preserving local services.



Tom Blenkinsop • Member of Parliament for Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland

As an officer with the Steel Union Community, Tom helped to lead the Save Our Steel Campaign and fights to keep steelmaking on Teesside. He recognises the need to attract new jobs from emerging green and digital industries and to support local businesses and tourism by working to improve local high streets. Tom was appointed to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee and the Standards and Privileges Committee in June 2010.



Matthew Colledge • Leader, Trafford Council

Matthew has been leader of the Conservative Group and Trafford Council since May 2009. In that time, he has worked hard to consult with members of the community in Trafford about how best to cut government spending through the 'Spending Challenge' debate, even holding a live webchat to answer concerns and questions from readers of the Trafford Advertiser. As leader of the only Conservative council within the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and a board member of Greater Manchester's Commission on the New Economy, Matthew has a crucial role in driving economic development in the Manchester city region.



Julie Elizabeth Cooper • Councillor, Burnley Borough Council

Julie is leader of the Labour Group in this Lib-Dem controlled council. A passionate Burnley resident, Julie campaigned as a prospective parliamentary candidate for the Labour Party in 2010. She sits on the Audit Committee, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Committee, Member Structures and Support Working Group and the Standards Committee. With the possibility of a significant swing towards Labour in the May local elections, Julie is one of a handful of council opposition leaders in significant council areas who may well steal some of the spotlight.



Julie Dore • Councillor, Sheffield City Council

Julie grew up in Arbourthorne in Sheffield, the ward she now represents. Despite her previously low profile as a relative 'outsider' in the battle for leader of the Labour Group at Sheffield City Council, Julie defeated her rivals and is garnering a reputation for taking a fresh approach – not least as shadow cabinet member for education and a school governor. After a turbulent time for the Lib-Dems in Sheffield in 2010, with one councillor even defecting to Labour, Julie is hoping to translate rhetoric into reality if she finds herself as the new leader of the council this May.



Tim Farron • Member of Parliament for Westmorland and Lonsdale

In May 2005, Tim secured the Westmorland and Lonsdale seat for the Liberal Democrats, defeating the Conservative candidate to break that party's 95-year stranglehold on the seat. Tim is a leading national advocate for farming and rural communities and, in particular, for the need for more genuinely affordable homes for local people in order to keep those communities viable. Tim will keep the Northern 'rural agenda' clearly in focus within the Coalition government.



Kris Hopkins • Member of Parliament for Keighley and Ilkley

A former soldier, Kris was elected to Parliament in 2010. Prior to this he was a member of Bradford Council from 1998, rising to become the council's deputy leader in 2004 and leader in 2006, which gives him a thorough understanding of local politics and the challenges and opportunities of that changing landscape.



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Alison McGovern • Member of Parliament for Wirral South

2010 has been a momentous year for this young Labour MP who was elected in May, appointed as former prime minister Gordon Brown's parliamentary private secretary in July, and selected to become a member of the International Development Select Committee in November 2010. 2011 will see Alison investigating barriers and opportunities for employment and skills for younger people in the UK and globally, as well as making the argument for public support for culture.



Ann O'Byrne • Councillor, Liverpool City Council

Ann represents the Warbreck ward in Liverpool. She has been a city councillor for four years and has held opposition posts in the fields of Children's Services and Environmental Services during that time. When Labour took control of the council in May, Ann was appointed as Cabinet Member for Community Safety and has responsibility for community cohesion and diversity, the youth offending service and the City Safe Board. She also has responsibility for the Integrated Youth and Play Service. Ann has spent most of her working life involved in community development and, as a champion of her local community, sees her role as a councillor as an extension of this work.



Guy Opperman • Member of Parliament for Hexham

Guy was elected at the 2010 general election and since then has been determined to see the North-East play a leading role in the Big Society agenda. As part of this, Guy has established his own internship programme offering local kids work experience in his office and the opportunity to break into politics and policymaking. Expect to also see Guy's blog continue to garner praise in 2011: it was awarded a 'Top MP's Blog' award by *Total Politics* magazine in 2010 and Guy continues to be one of Westminster's most prolific bloggers: <http://guyopperman.blogspot.com/>



Bridget Phillipson • Member of Parliament for Houghton and Sunderland South

Following her election to Parliament in May 2010, Bridget has shown herself to be a passionate advocate of her constituency and all that Sunderland as a whole has to offer. Bridget has been elected as a member of the Home Affairs Select Committee, the influential cross-party committee which examines in detail government policy and proposed changes to the law on crucial issues such as crime and anti-social behaviour, policing and immigration.



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Rachel Reeves • Member of Parliament for Leeds West

Rachel is the first female MP to represent a seat in Leeds since Alice Bacon, who served between 1945 and 1970, and since her election Rachel has sat on the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee, utilising her economic expertise to challenge the government's approach to regional and national economic strategy. She has also been appointed as shadow Minister for Pensions in Ed Miliband's shadow frontbench team at the Department for Work and Pensions.



Rory Stewart • Member of Parliament for Penrith and the Border

Rory has been hailed as one of the 'new breed of politician' and it is fair to say that he is one of the more adventurous Northern MPs. Having tutored Princes William and Harry, served as an officer in the Black Watch, joined the diplomatic service and walked by himself 6,000 miles across Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, India and Nepal, Rory was elected MP for Penrith and the Border in May 2010. He regularly walks the length and breadth of Cumbria meeting his constituents and listening to their concerns. Most recently, Rory was elected by his Conservative colleagues to sit on the Foreign Affairs Select Committee.



James Wharton • Member of Parliament for Stockton South

Following his election as 'Teesside's Tory' in May 2010, James has championed the cause of the North East in Parliament and the world of business, as well as playing a key part in securing its new Local Enterprise Partnership. As one of only two Conservative MPs representing the North East, James will have a crucial voice locally and in Whitehall as public service reforms roll out across the region.



John Woodcock • Member of Parliament for Barrow and Furness

Sheffield-born John worked for cabinet minister John Hutton, his predecessor as Barrow MP, before becoming a special adviser to former prime minister Gordon Brown from October 2008 to October 2009. He received glowing praise from Mr Brown, who said he was 'passionate' about the area and would make a 'brilliant MP for Barrow and Furness'. Just six months after being elected, John was also given the position of shadow Transport Minister.



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Lucinda Yeadon • Councillor, Leeds City Council

Lucinda has represented Kirkstall ward on Leeds City Council since 2008 and is the youngest Leeds Labour councillor. She was appointed executive board member for Adult Health & Social Care in May 2010 and she also chairs Leeds' Year of the Volunteer steering group. Previously, Lucinda was employed by Royal Mencap Society and has a particular interest in the rights of people with disabilities. She is a governor for the Leeds Partnership Mental Health Trust and serves on the Learning Disability Partnership Board. Lucinda is an active trade-unionist: she served on the TUC Women's Committee and as vice-chair of the TUC Young Members' Forum.

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION

Whilst the North of England has a rich tradition of creating art and culture which is embraced by the rest of the country, we wanted to find out who will be inspiring the next generation, coming up with new ideas and challenging the status quo. With the BBC making a significant move north, we highlight just a few of the future stars of MediaCity in Salford as well as some other Northern Lights from the worlds of culture, the arts and academia.



Mohamed Al-Daradji • Film director

Human Film, based in Leeds, took home the coveted Raindance Award at the 2010 British Independent Film Awards. Director Mohamed Al-Daradji and producer Isabelle Stead received the award for *Son of Babylon*, which tells the story of a mother's desperate search for her son in Iraq following the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. It is the latest in a long line of accolades for the film ahead of its UK release on 11 February. *Son of Babylon*, produced by Human Film and co-funded by Screen Yorkshire, has also been selected as Iraq's official entry for the foreign language Oscar.



Clare Bamba • Professor of Public Health Policy, Durham University

A professor at just 33, Clare is quickly making a name for herself as an authoritative voice on health inequalities and the social determinants of health. She has three main areas of interest: labour markets and the relationships between work, worklessness and health; the influence of welfare state policies and political structures on international variations in public health and health inequalities; and tackling health inequalities by addressing the wider social determinants of health. With a growing focus on this field and with such radical changes in health policy afoot, Clare's research will provide a clear evidence base in a highly contested sphere.



Emma Blackburn • Multimedia journalist

Emma's talent for video journalism is evident from watching any of the many films on her personal website. The Royal Television Society agreed, awarding her Yorkshire's Most Promising Newcomer Award 2010. Tackling issues from Somali gang culture to Rotherham's latest bobsleigh technology, Emma brings a fresh approach to local news reporting. Expect to see much more of Emma on your screens in the coming years as she finds the next big story and reports it live. With journalistic talent like this in the North, BBC's *Look North* is bound to be a great success.



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Cheryl Frances-Hoad • Cultural Fellow, University of Leeds School of Music

Ms Frances-Hoad's approach has been described as 'individual, quirky perhaps, but distinctly special' (*Guardian*) and 'mercurial, impassioned, and always compelling in its authority' (*Spectator*); she describes her own work as 'romantic music with lots more notes in it'. At the age of just 30, she has made her name as composer in increasing demand. Her fellowship at the University of Leeds is funded by the Future Fund of Opera North, as part of the groundbreaking DARE partnership between the university and the opera company, which sees her embrace various roles – creating exciting new music, collaborating with Opera North, working on community arts projects, and supervising students.



Benjamin Hennig • Postgraduate researcher, University of Sheffield

Benjamin works with the highly respected Professor Danny Dorling at the Social and Spatial Inequalities Group. The group conducts interdisciplinary research that contributes to an evidence base for policy development aimed at reducing social inequalities. Benjamin's research focuses on global and national visualisations of topics related to contemporary issues, a number of which have already been released to the public eye, such as the striking visualisations of the UK and US elections. Benjamin is certainly one to watch over the next few years as he completes his PhD research and, together with Danny Dorling, works on a book project on world population, due out in 2012.



Ruth Johnson • Actress

With a stand-out performance playing Moley in Alan Bennett's *The Wind in the Willows* at Newcastle's Northern Stage to her name, Ruth is set to take the theatre world in the North of England by storm. After leaving her role as Head of Drama at Cramlington Learning Village in order to follow her dream of becoming an actress, Ruth combined her interest in education with her theatre work and set up 'The Dorothy Key', a theatre company with members from around the country which meets in Newcastle to create new and original work.



Simon Judd • Development Producer, BBC Drama North

After spending three years at *Emmerdale* as a storyliner and script editor, Simon joined BBC Drama North two years ago, and is the development producer for their new groundbreaking BBC Daytime drama series *32 Brinkburn Street*, which transmits this March. Working alongside executive producer Hilary Martin, Simon is developing dozens of other dramas for the BBC, with the aim of championing Northern talent both on and off the screen.



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Alice Nutter • Writer

With the BBC's move to the Salford Quays and MediaCity, who will be the new stars of broadcasting production? Expect to hear more about Alice Nutter in the next few years as, in addition to TV work airing in spring 2011 – including episodes of *32 Brinkburn Street* and *Justice* – Alice has been commissioned by Radio 3 to write *My Generation*, a drama dealing with the connections between Britain's protest movement, music and rebellious youth culture. She is also developing a TV drama set in Afghanistan. Definitely one to watch.



Ross Philips • Freelance animator

Ross is a freelance animator and illustrator currently living in Manchester. While still a student at the University of Sunderland, Ross won a prize at the prestigious Radar Festival Awards for his animation depicting a giant Yeti rampaging across the countryside to deliver his girlfriend a bouquet of flowers. Since graduating, Ross has made a short film funded by Northern Film & Media and an animated nursery rhyme for ITV Sign Post, and set himself up as a successful freelance animator. Expect to see him on the festival circuit in the coming years with more original work.



Dr Teela Sanders • Reader in Sociology, University of Leeds

Dr Sanders' is an increasingly high-profile and influential voice on the UK sex industry, exploring the relationship between human sexuality, regulation and the state. Her latest study investigates the economy of the UK sex industry, in particular its 'supply and demand' aspects, providing commentary on how new regulatory systems will affect the lapdancing industry and the working conditions of dancers. The study, which includes interviews with 300 dancers, is due for publication this year and its interim findings last year sparked widespread media debate on the social and economic position of lapdancers in the UK.



Stuart Varrell • Founder and director, Fluid Pixel Studios

Stuart established Fluid Pixel Studios, a media development company specialising in mobile phone and PSP content using Flash Lite. In just over two years the Newcastle-based business has grown to eight fulltime staff and they have worked on projects with worldwide clients. Fluid Pixel Studios has built valuable relationships with Nokia, Adobe and various distributors around the world, and Stuart has travelled to China, Barcelona and Boston to display at several large exhibitions. He was awarded a scholarship with the prestigious Kauffman Foundation programme in America and has also won the Dedipower Entrepreneur of the Year award and the Best New Business Creative Industries award.



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Pamela Welsh • Journalist, Manchester Evening News

A recent addition to the Manchester Evening News politics team, Pamela has garnered a reputation in the North-West as a trusted voice on local politics. During 2010, she secured interviews with then-prime minister Gordon Brown, William Hague and Baroness Warsi, bringing local issues to bear when leading national politicians visited the region. Described as a 'social media whizz', Pamela is a prolific Twitterer and regularly uses the social networking site to harness public opinion on the issues of the day.



Erica Whyman • Chief executive, Northern Stage

Described as politically-savvy and forward-thinking, Erica develops new writing in the North-East and is passionate about theatre in the North. As an ambassador of the North-East, Erica knows the importance of touring Northern Stage productions around the UK: *Apples*, a play adapted from the book by Middlesbrough writer Richard Milward, received widespread critical acclaim and sold-out its show at the 2010 Edinburgh Festival. Erica also led Northern Stage to employ the first ever Creative, Technical and Cultural Apprentice and will no doubt inspire many more young people to work in theatre.



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SOCIAL ENTERPRISE & COMMUNITY

Call it what you will, the North of England has been doing 'Big Society' for decades and leads the world with its co-operative movements, social enterprises and straightforward community spirit. ippr north is a place that highlights the best and the boldest, not least in those spheres where community action is transforming approaches to tackling poverty and exclusion and reinventing public space and public service.



Rhiannon Bearne • Social Enterprise Executive, Business and Enterprise North East

2011 will be a year of challenges for the third sector in the North and those organisations supporting it, so people like Rhiannon are vital to ensuring mainstream enterprise support is responsive to the 'profit with a purpose' difference. Expect to see Rhiannon as one of the key figures advancing the Big Society debate in the North. As far as Rhiannon is concerned, there is a big policy gap waiting for delivery detail and the North has every reason to be at the forefront of filling it.



Roz Davies • Altogether Better Health Champion

'Wonderful project, wonderful woman' is how Roz and her work were described by one colleague, and it seems that many of her Altogether Better Health Champions are also amazing and inspirational people, committed to activating the full potential of community and workplace health champions across the country. In 2011, expect to see Roz making sure national and local policymakers realise that community health champions' offer to the health system (and beyond) is one that just cannot be refused. She will also be studying for an MSc in Economic Development and enjoying life as mother of her own two little Northern Lights!



Sarah Dunwell • CEO, CREATE Foundation

Sarah has grown CREATE, a not-for-profit company in Yorkshire, from one employee to employing 34 people, and has trained and supported many more, all with a focus on helping former rough-sleepers and vulnerable people back into the workforce. Sarah was recently named Yorkshire Forward Ladies' Business Woman of the Year 2010 and has led CREATE to win the Prime Minister's second Big Society Award. 2011 will see Sarah expand CREATE nationally – a bold move to go 'multi-local' – but, supported by an expanding CREATE team and the bloody-minded tenacity that led her to start up in the first place, Sarah's conviction that CREATE's business model and successes to date can have a real social impact on marginalised people locally remains the key driver.



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Hannah Eyres • CEO, KeyFund

Keyfund is a charity that aims to help disadvantaged young people meet their potential in life, by engaging them in a dynamic youth-led learning process. Hannah was one of the first charity CEO's in the country to develop and implement a social licensing business model and was rewarded with the North East Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2009 for Best Social Enterprise. Keyfund later fended off even public sector competition to be named Not-for-Profit Organisation of the Year 2009 at the North East Business Awards. Hannah is credited with leading her team into 2011 with excitement and energy at a time where many organisations are burying their heads in the sand – for that she is a true Northern Light.



Dominic Llewellyn • Associate, Shaftesbury Partnership

Newcastle certainly worked its charm on Dominic, who moved to the city in 2002 to attend university. He currently works for the Shaftesbury Partnership, an organisation which sets up charities and social enterprises to achieve social reform, and through that role has become an adviser to Big Society guru Lord Nat Wei. In 2011, Dominic will continue to create and inspire social reforms, including the expansion of FranchisingWorks, a social enterprise which connects people facing unemployment to robust franchise businesses.



Toby Lowe • Head of Programme, Helix Arts

Toby has many fans in the North-East for the work he does at Helix Arts, a charity working with artists, in partnership with public and voluntary organisations, to create opportunities for people to participate in high-quality arts activities. 2011 is shaping up to be a very exciting year for Toby, who will be helping Helix Arts to meet the challenges of a radically different policy and funding landscape while continuing to set standards in participatory arts. He will be working with Newcastle University Business School to improve the way that people think about and measure the outcomes that public policy interventions produce. And he even hopes to bring an international ping-pong festival to Newcastle!



Jodie Marshall • Managing director, A Mind Apart Theatre Company Ltd

Jodie founded A Mind Apart Theatre Company in her home town of Sheffield at the age of 21. Now 25, she is passionate about seeing the arts made accessible to all and using performance and theatre to help young people to develop confidence, self esteem and social skills. This year Jodie is working hard to develop a confidence and self-esteem course to be rolled out into schools for students who struggle to engage in a classroom setting. Jodie is also passionate about Brazil and learning from other cultures, and is in the process of setting up an internship for Brazilian young adults to train with A Mind Apart, learn about the English culture and share the Brazilian culture.



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Dominic Mills • Prince's Trust Young Ambassador of the Year 2010

Dominic has become an active part of his community and a Young Ambassador for the Prince's Trust after the Trust helped him to turn his life around after he was released from prison. Dominic hopes to set up his own recording studio in his local community with the help of the Enterprise Programme and he continues to support a group of young people, many of whom are young and ex-offenders, on a voluntary basis. He also sits on the Huddersfield Carnival Committee, where he utilises his past experiences and music skills to engage different cultures across the area.



Lee Taylor • Ryder Architecture

Lee is a rising star in the cultural architecture world in the North. He was part of the architectural team responsible for Newcastle City Library: the now-completed and much-loved library is a civic landmark, a meeting place and a highly transparent building which encourages people to visit and enjoy its spaces. Lee is now working on refurbishment plans for Manchester's Grade II*-listed Town Hall Extension and Central Library, as the regional hub for historic and archive material. Given the wonderful work Lee has done in Newcastle, the Manchester Central Library refurbishment is bound to be a huge success.



James Whewell • Wyresdale Park Estate

James is developing his family home – Wyresdale Park Estate in rural Lancashire – into a holiday and tourism destination and community hub. One of the founders of the award-winning Secret Garden Party, James is aiming to host large-scale annual events at Wyresdale Park that showcase the best of England's creative endeavours (whether they be food, craft or music) as well as promoting the rural tradition of celebrating the changing of seasons. Look out for James and Wyresdale Park on Channel 4's *Country House Rescue* this coming Easter.