

*Blackpool beach, Lancashire. Parts of the seafront are being reclaimed and extended as part of ambitious plans for Blackpool as it redefines itself for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*



# Foreword

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*Bryan Gray has been chairman of the NWDA since 2002. He is a member of the Liverpool Capital of Culture Board, a trustee of National Museums Liverpool, a member of Liverpool Cathedral Council and a director of Culture Northwest. Bryan was chief executive and deputy chairman of Baxi Group Limited, one of Europe's leading heating companies and is now chairman of Baxi Technologies. He joined Baxi in 1993 having previously worked for ICI for almost 20 years.*

**T**HE importance of business leaders and successful entrepreneurs as role models for existing and future generations of entrepreneurs has long been recognised.

No one will disagree that the North West of England needs young people with their energy, ambitions and visions and we want to encourage and inspire them to drive the region's growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Entrepreneurship is essential to a successful economy and the importance of promoting an enterprising culture throughout the region at all levels, particularly among young people, is one of the main platforms for the NWDA.

The profiles in this book are a reflection of our – and the government's – determination to increase entrepreneurship in the UK by inspiration, challenge and role models, through both the Enterprising Britain competition and Enterprise Week, designed as a national celebration of enterprise to inspire young people to make their ideas happen.

This book is only a 'snapshot' of the entrepreneurial spirit that exists across the North West: and across the social, gender, age and racial spectrum. But, as well as being a celebration, I believe it will be a long lasting reminder of that success.

Yet the North West still ranks in the bottom two-thirds of various indicator scales for business start-up and survival rates in Britain, and we need to stimulate others to take up the challenge.

The NWDA is, therefore, committed to increasing the formation, survival and growth rates of enterprises in the region, as well as improving the availability of business finance and influencing government policy on small business regulations.

We are committed to creating an enterprise culture that encourages individuals and businesses to take opportunities, start new businesses and make existing businesses become more innovative.