



# Transforming Somerset - Raising the Game

## Working together to promote Somerset's image and influence in order to ensure its economic prosperity for the future.

That was the topic under scrutiny when 200 business and community leaders attended the Somerset Strategic Partnership Annual Conference on 8th October 2004.

Leaders heard two internationally renowned speakers Sir John Harvey-Jones (of BBC's Troubleshooters fame), and Peter Cochrane (an ICT futurologist) offer their opinions before delegates discussed some of the key issues facing Somerset, including retaining and attracting young people, building a cohesive identity for

Somerset and using the power of new technologies to their advantage. A panel representing the business sector, regional and local government, then answered delegates questions before the event finished with a Somerset produce lunch.

Many business and community leaders have since signed up to work together to promote Somerset. This work will include involvement in the Local Strategic Partnerships, acting as an inward ambassador and helping to lobby government.

For more information, visit the Somerset Strategic Partnership's website at [www.somerset.org](http://www.somerset.org).

## Peter Cochrane recommends:



### Embrace change...

▶ Constant change is now the norm - we have to embrace it. If we stay still, this leads to

disaster. Our world is now very visibly chaotic and simple linear thinking seldom provides an adequate answer.

### Think strategically...

▶ Equal pain management and/or problem solving is nearly always a complete failure - we have to think and address strategically. Every complex problem has a very simple solution - and it is almost certainly wrong. Attention to detail at the start of a project is essential, it pays dividends and having to fix problems on

the fly is really expensive. Don't view the world through a soda straw; get a fire hose! It is vital to have a holistic view - see the whole and not just an element.

### Core of successful business...

▶ Networks, networking, and connectivity are now core to the success of any modern business.

**"Every complex problem has a very simple solution"**

## Sir John Harvey-Jones recommends:



### Somerset depends on the degree we care...

▶ Everything depends on the degree we care about enhancing and making Somerset better. The height we manage to raise the game is dependent on everyone here. It is tempting to aim low, this is a weakness, we are risk averse and we must learn to seek ambitious targets that are risky. The attitude to ambition in England is obstructive and is caused by the approach "one mistake and you're out!"

### Competition is everywhere...

▶ We have to re-create the whole time; if you are treading water you are dead. Competition is not in Somerset or the South West - it now comes from all over the world. We now need to look outwards: The world is our oyster.

### Tomorrow's world...

▶ Somerset is one of those counties that has the most potential to be in line with tomorrow's world. The future lies with small companies - as they want to change. Large

organisations take too long to change and will be left behind. Unless we are looking outward and setting our sights outward and upward we will not grow.

### The more we are measured, the less we achieve...

▶ The more we are measured and the more initiatives we have to do, the less we can achieve. No outfit can take on more than 3 initiatives at a time.

### The job of leadership...

▶ The job of leadership is to grow the self-belief of others. Making change is about focus, enlisting enthusiasm, caring and trusting others to meet tasks and deadlines. A key leadership skill is a belief in others. Most people want to make a contribution and to achieve change in their career.

### Enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things...

▶ The sign of leadership is enabling ordinary people to do extraordinary things and to help people to do things that they did not think they could do. There are no ordinary people ... there really aren't.

### Competitive success...

▶ Somerset represents the model for the future. Competitive business success depends on speed and constant innovation and is also a matter of your ability to think outside of the box. You can operate a business from anywhere now and they can be quite dispersed. But you do need a reasonable amount of time

for networking.

### Keep it small, keep it simple...

▶ If you understand the basis of competition, it's important that small outfits recognise the important contribution that they can make - keep it small, keep it simple and press like hell for speed. The small organisation sees everything holistically.

### Unlocking the door for small businesses...

▶ I hope we can unlock the doors that will help your small businesses. Any small company can set itself up with IT for less than £10k and can run in real time. We need to help small businesses to catch up with the IT revolution and to operate in a world market.

**"The world is our oyster"**



A delegate taking notes at the conference



Somerset Strategic Partnership Annual Conference 2004

## Interactive Somerset CD launch

**Early February sees the launch of the Interactive Somerset CD, at the Exchange, Express Park, Bridgwater's new conference centre and health club. This is part of the Somerset Strategic Partnership's ongoing drive to find innovative new ways to boost the image and influence of the county regionally, nationally and internationally.**

Delegates at the launch will be given the first chance to get their hands on the CD, which aims to promote Somerset's status as an exceptional business location, balanced with a fantastic quality of life. The CD provides all the information needed for any organisation looking to move to or expand within the county, including advice from those who have already done it. There are in-depth details of Somerset's

economy, infrastructure, skills and training opportunities, environment and cultural and leisure facilities.

Those invited to the launch will include many of the SSP's partners who made the CD possible. Successful organisations from all over the county have made a contribution such as Blueloop (North Perrott), Clerksroom (Taunton), Charity Commission (Taunton), Iconography (Crewkerne), Ivel FM (Yeovil), Rok (Yeovil), Western Provident Association (Taunton) and Yeo Valley (Cannington).

The message coming out of these organisations is very clear, Somerset can provide an exciting, dynamic environment to live and work, and it's time to let everyone else know.