



Passionate about business

The 'Passionate people. Passionate places' campaign highlights the region's best assets to raise awareness of North East England as a great place to do business, live, work, study and visit.

Aiming to create strong and positive new perceptions about the North East regionally, nationally and internationally, the campaign features the very best the region has to offer.

Our pioneering heritage, location, universities, fantastic workforce, culture and work/life balance mean that North East England is a great place for innovative businesses to start and thrive. This is one of the key campaign themes.

A number of business people from a wide range of organisations across the region are featured in the print adverts and poster campaigns which have been running nationally to reflect the North East's passionate and dynamic outlook in the 21st Century.

Now's your chance to meet one of them.

For Fiona Raglan, there's no question why North East England is a great place to live and work – it's because that all-important work/life balance is so much easier to achieve here.

Doing that doesn't mean you can't also have a highly successful business. Fiona set up her media market research company Dipsticks 10 years ago in the South Northumberland market town of Allendale and now it numbers names such as the BBC, ITV and Emap among its clients and it employs 38 staff.

Dipsticks has prospered by being highly innovative, pioneering the use of texting and handheld computers in market research and even the use of tiny cameras hidden in sun glasses to monitor the behaviour of shoppers.

The company has been so successful it has outgrown its Allendale premises and will shortly be moving down the road to Hexham.

Fiona is convinced Dipsticks' rural location has made a significant contribution to its success.

She says: "We live in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and my team really appreciate it. They can go for a walk at lunchtime and go to look at the llamas in the field above us and then come back and feed our pigs.

"My staff will typically go down to London two or three times a month, doing presentations or debriefing clients, which they find all very exciting, but they are always glad to get back.

"We put great emphasis on a work/life balance. Our people work very hard, but they also enjoy everything North East England has

to offer – the countryside, the beaches and the fantastic cities. We are so lucky up here, we have it all."

Fiona also believes the region has an exceptionally fine workforce.

"The people you employ up here are passionate and they want a business to succeed as much as the owner does. People in the North East give you 110%. I would not have my company without my fantastic team, they are as much the company as I am."

Fiona is passionate about the region herself and is a big believer that it should sell itself hard, which is why she was so keen to support the 'Passionate people. Passionate places' campaign.

"We have to do as much as we can to ensure the graduates coming out of our universities are aware of what great opportunities there are in the North East.

"And outside the region, there is a ready audience. When the advert featuring me appeared in The Times colour supplement loads of old acquaintances from all around the country rang me or emailed me to say they thought it was fantastic."

north east
england