• As part of ensuring that dementia remains a priority and recognising existing areas of excellence in London, a specific programme has been developed to focus on the longer term commissioning of residential care for people with dementia and the impact of the increase of numbers of people with dementia on primary care.

• Led by Kim Wright (LB Hackney) ADASS is fully represented with NHS(L) and partners in preparations for the Olympics and Paralympics in 2012.

There is continued support for wider networks that engage assistant directors and key staff across London. These networks include: MCA/DoLS leads, dignity, safety and capacity leads, carers (in partnership with the GLA), performance leads and transformation leads. Fifty network meetings have been held over the past year, providing invaluable feedback to the region for operational and strategic development. Led by directors it also provides valuable insight into local and pan-London issues

As a new chair, I am enormously grateful to colleague directors, Ian Winter and the JIP Team and to our many partners for all they have done over the past year and I look forward to continuing to work together in the future.

North East

Throughout 2011 the North East branch of ADASS has continued to work collaboratively on a regional programme of work.

Rachael Shimmin chairs the regional branch on an interim basis following Nicola Bailey’s move to become interim chief executive of Hartlepool Borough Council. Paul Hanson was appointed to the role of secretary during 2011.

The North East branch continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis with standing agenda items for the regional director of public health and the Department of Health’s deputy regional director for social care.

Regional Programme Priorities

• Sector-led Improvement

Agreement was reached amongst DASSs about a regional approach to sector-led improvement. This included a pilot peer review in South Tyneside led by a combined regional and LGA team, a consistent approach to outcome measures to ensure that all LAs have a view on comparative performance and support to three LAs in the region which were rated ‘adequate’ following their last CQC inspection. The commitment from the region is the offer of time, resources and support to move on from the ‘adequate’ rating which has resulted in additional work around workforce, safeguarding and social work.

• Reablement

Reablement remains a priority for ADASS and this is supported by a regional network. This provides an opportunity for collaborative work between regional colleagues from local authorities and health. This network has been central to the discussions and agreements around additional winter pressures funding, the development of regional reablement outcome measures which has provided a consistent framework for the first time and the scoping of a financial evaluation of reablement which will take place in early 2012.

• Workforce

ADASS commissioned an evaluation of the PA market place in the North East which estimated around 5,000 personal assistants in the region. The branch is now looking to the future in terms of the role it needs to play in developing the market to meet future needs. ADASS is in early discussions with regional recruitment agencies to help them understand the current market and the business opportunities available to them.
• Adult Social Care Category Board
The ASC category board has been established throughout the last 12 months to offer local authority commissioners the opportunity to identify areas where joint procurement or market management will serve in the best interest of local authorities in the region. So far this has led to a collaborative approach and thinking around community equipment, prepaid cards and residential care.

Due to the high number of properties in the North East and their regional base the collapse of Southern Cross was particularly challenging. However, through the regional HUB, the local authority commissioner conference calls and SIT reports this was managed successfully across the region with minimum disruption to residents and their families.

North East ADASS also continues to oversee policy networks across the region. The region carers, dementia and autism networks continue to work on the implementation of national strategies and the older people network has designed a bespoke programme for officers and members in the region with the LGA. This network has also worked closely with Newcastle University and Age UK to develop a changing age charter for the North East which all local authorities have signed up to.

The NE safeguarding network has been particularly active in developing and agreeing regional thresholds for safeguarding, working with health partners to align processes and procedures for series cases and delivering a regional media campaign to raise awareness of abuse.

2011 has also seen the establishment of an ASC lead member network for the region with support from the LGA and the Association of North East Councils.

North West

During 2011 we continued to keep the communication and networks going between the 24 councils across the North West, through open executive meetings and regular regional workshops.

We participated in the establishment of the ‘son of JIP’, our NW transition alliance. This continued some of our JIP priorities, such as personalisation and safeguarding but also focused on monitoring and influencing the range of changes across the NHS. Its purpose was to ensure that ADASS could offer leadership across the new system, including transition to the new sector-led improvement. It has also helped to support our capacity to respond to some of the key policy drivers from the Coalition Government such as deficit reduction, localism, capable communities and active citizens.

This has also included work on the transfer of public health, dementia and the move to clinical commissioning and its impact on councils. As the year ended we embarked on further discussions on the options for 2012 and beyond.

We have held regional workshops the last of which in December focused on sector-led improvement and how we wanted to take this forward across the region. The region also continues to maintain a series of regional officer led networks such as complaints, performance, personalisation, workforce and Links to name a few.

John Rutherford continued as chair and Sue Lightup as secretary of the region.

NW directors have continued to participate in national work and networks. Richard Jones ended his year as President and the following are leads on national networks: Dwayne Johnson, Older People; Terry Dafter and Stephanie Butterworth, Mental Health and Samih Kalakeche, Equalities.

During the year we said goodbye to the following: our longest serving Director Bernard Walker from Wigan; Veronica Jackson from Oldham; Howard Cooper from Wirral; Phil Lloyd from Cheshire East; Stuart Smith from Liverpool and Charlie Barker from Sefton.

We welcomed Lorraine Butcher at Cheshire East; Samih Kalakeche at Liverpool; Paul Cassidy at Oldham; Robina Critchley at Sefton; Nick Hudson at Wigan, Gladys Rhodes in Blackburn, and Graham Hodkinson at Wirral.