Leading into the futures – integrating foresight into our work

Cat Tully (SOIF Founder & Managing Director)
A world-first infrastructure project in South West Wales

Seven ways the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon would improve life in Wales

...according to the woman tasked with making sure Wales is handed over to the next generation in the best possible shape
Our journey since 2012...
“all of our knowledge is about the past, but all of our decisions are about the future”

Kenneth Boulding
What is foresight: enabling long-term mindset, hearing to periphery & action NOW

Strategic Foresight: an organized and systematic process to engage with uncertainty regarding the future.

Maree Conway, 2014

A systematic, participatory, future-intelligence gathering and medium-to-long term vision building aimed at enabling present-day decisions and mobilizing joint action.

European Union For-Learn Project 2009
The three key benefits of foresight

Strategic foresight helps leaders better manage under conditions of uncertainty:

1. Make strategic choices to shape the future you want (Build vision)

2. Build preparedness for alternative possible futures (Manage risk)

3. Create future-ready and alert organisations that can adapt as the future evolves (Anticipation, Awareness & Agility)

Does this resonate with your work and the mission of your organisation? What’s important for you?
Understand the intent for thinking about the long-term

- Strategy Development
- Innovation
- Sector Vision & Engagement
- Strategic narratives & mission
- Organisational Purpose
- Risk Management
The value of long term thinking

“New research...found that companies that operate with a true long-term mindset have consistently outperformed their industry peers since 2001 across almost every financial measure that matters.

Harvard Business Review
Finally, Evidence That Managing for the Long Term Pays Off
by Dominic Barton, James Manyika, and Sarah Keohane Williamson
FEBRUARY 07, 2017 UPDATED FEBRUARY 09, 2017
Growing appetite from key public sector leaders

“Strategic foresight means better policies – it is about questioning what we expect, and testing whether our hopes are realistic. It is about reaching beyond forecasting into exploring the unexpected”.

Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General, 2018

“Present generations shall ensure that their decisions and actions do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs“

President Macron, Proposed Global Pact for the Environment, 2017

 “[We] need enhanced capabilities in foresight methodologies and approaches that take volatility and complexity as their starting point to generate insights that enable transformative actions towards inclusive and sustainable development”

UN Secretary General’s 2030 report, 2018
To develop a methodology (framework and toolkit) that allows for a systematic and impartial assessment of public policies according to criteria of intergenerational fairness.
UK Government foresight

2019: Future of Mobility

2018: Global Strategic Trend (6th edition)

2017: Well-being in Wales

2008: Remote Service Futures
What can the NHS learn from the experience of Canterbury?

There are clear parallels between pressures the Canterbury health system was facing at the start of its programme of transformation and current pressures on the NHS – including financial deficits, rising demand and declining performance in emergency and elective care. Given the positive impact that the changes in Canterbury have had, it is worth considering the lessons the NHS can learn as it embarks on its own journey of transformation.
“To help provide space for the thinking needed to plan effectively for the future, the Health Foundation is scoping a new programme of work looking at some of the long-term issues shaping health and health services in the UK, and what they mean for policy.

Our aim is to:

• provide new analysis on some of the key issues shaping health and health services over the next 10–25 years, particularly in areas where current understanding is limited

• support policymakers to better prepare for the future by incorporating thinking on these issues and the choices they present into today’s plans and policy decisions

• test and develop the methods and approaches that can be used to think long term
No silver bullet...

...it's about how you bring foresight to life in your organisation
Creating a forward-looking, resilient and anticipatory organisation!

- Structure & culture
- Staff, leaders & champions
- Processes & Programmes
- Communication
Recognise foresight is hard...

...bring commitment, bring your people & keep moving!
Next Generation Foresight Practitioner Prize 2018

“Change will come from many arenas and peoples. It will come from a new generation, millennials, with new aspirations and values…”

2019 competition now accepting applications

Cathy Madge

Futures Confidence: building the confidence of organisations in Wales to use futures techniques and think long-term

@cathy_madge

Isabel Bottoms

Futures Literacy: a collaboration to enable 15-17 year olds to reach their potential. Designing innovative processes for schools to shift how futures work and careers advice works in Wales and internationally

@IBottoms

https://nextgenforesight.org/
Final Thoughts

• Radical participation integral to foresight exercises – keep listening
• Being future-prepared – an internal and external organisational endeavour
• Stick at it as a community and nation – through the pendulum swings

SO WHAT - NOW WHAT?
Thank you!
If you want to explore more, please get in touch!
Final Thoughts

What is still outstanding:

1. How to **INSTITUTIONALISE**
2. **ALLIANCES**
3. Beyond Cassandra: foresight for **PREVENTION**
4. Key to **DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL**
Our four stage approach and learning journey

SCOPING
understand the context and people, and set the question.

ORDERING
create contrasting, coherent futures using drivers of change.

IMPLICATIONS
work through the consequences of the futures.

INTEGRATING FUTURES
embed insights from your work into your organisation and beyond.
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<td>Understand what you want to do</td>
<td>Scoping note</td>
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<td>Understand who it is for</td>
<td>Futures Triangle</td>
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<td>Embed the insights of your work into decisions today</td>
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Horizon Scanning

Design-a-job: Changes in the contractual nature of work

Quenching the thirst: international water shortages?

Managing the tensions between regional and national identities in a globalising world

Space: a revival of manned space flight?

Leaving the “ever-closer Union”: Could Britain withdraw from the EU?

AN EXAMPLE: THE SIGMA SCAN 2007, UK