



## Foreword by **Anthony Nelson** Vice-Chairman, Citigroup Corporate and Investment Bank Chairman, Gateway to London

Every day that I arrive for work at Citigroup's new HQ by Canary Wharf, I am amazed and inspired by the sheer scale of the London Docklands project. Back in the 1980s there were plenty of cynics who dismissed the plans as unworkable. But not even the most enthusiastic supporters of the project could have envisaged the speed with which this city within a city would develop and the enormous success that it has undoubtedly become.

It says a lot for the area, for its business environment, the location and the services on offer, that Citigroup, the largest banking group in the world, with a quarter of a million employees, chose to make London Docklands its HQ for Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

But we are not here simply to make use of the area. We want to contribute to, as well as benefit from this key location. It is a demonstration of Citigroup's commitment to the regeneration of the Thames Gateway, that we have a major presence in Canary Wharf and Lewisham. Over 5,500 people work in our Canary Wharf building alone, which represents a major financial contribution to the area. We are also involved in local community projects and charities and Citigroup works with a number of organisations which affect directly the day to day lives of the people working in the area. Transport for London is one example, as the movement of working people in a reliable and respectable way is key to the growth of business in any region.

In addition, and as part of my personal commitment, I have taken on the role of Chairman of Gateway to London the inward investment agency for the Thames Gateway. The successful redevelopment of London Docklands is just the start and quite rightly the Government attaches huge importance to the regeneration of the wider Thames Gateway area. It is the largest and most ambitious urban regeneration project in Europe, home to over 2 million people. At Gateway to London, we are determined to ensure that this is a two-way process and that the people who live here benefit as well.

The area has suffered in the past from a negative perception and that is the first thing we must change: it is a rich and diverse sub region offering, with its strategic proximity to London and to Europe, opportunities which make it hugely attractive to businesses both in the UK and from abroad. We are determined that existing businesses flourish and the new business activities benefit the sub region. It is essential that local people benefit in terms of housing, public services and above all, job opportunities. We already anticipate an enormous demand for skills training, particularly among the young people, to fill the new business activity in the area.

In recent years Docklands has come to be seen as a model to emulate. Representatives from other countries intending to build their own financial districts, come over here to look at the wonder that is the Docklands today and to see how it is done. As someone closely involved in its development and future, I am proud to show them around.