

Strategaeth Dinas Rhyl



Rhyl City Strategy

**Rhyl City Strategy**  
**Annual Report 2010-11**



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## ■ MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



It is both a privilege and a pleasure to be writing an introduction to another Annual Report on the achievements of Rhyl City Strategy and its work with local Partners to tackle worklessness and promote economic justice for all.

The last year has arguably been the most successful yet in the history of RCS, although ironically the end of the year coincided with the close of the City Strategy Initiative across the UK. Here in North Wales however the City Strategy Initiative will have a continued lease of life as RCS has been more than a Whitehall Government funded Project. It is a legal entity in its own right, trading as a Community Interest Company and that trade serves to ensure its continuation to at least the end of March 2013. In association with this functional base RCS has also developed significant strategic links with Government in Wales, the Regeneration Area and Denbighshire County Council and these relationships have played a major role in ensuring the continuation of the City Strategy brand in North Wales for the foreseeable future.

Examination of the detail of this Annual Report will reveal the range of influence that RCS evolved as a Broker, an Enabler, and a Commissioner and now also a Deliverer of provision geared to improve employability. No one can be in any doubt about the impact that RCS has proved itself capable of having in association with the very broad Consortium of private, community and public sector Organisations that it strives to lead in order to make a difference to people's lives.

At the heart of the success of RCS lies a responsivity, creativity and an appetite for innovation. These features combine to ensure that in coordinating the Future Jobs Fund across Denbighshire and Conwy, RCS and its Partners produced probably the most successful Future Jobs Fund intervention in the UK. Over 50 per cent of participants moving on into continued employment. Whilst at the other end of the developmental spectrum RCS has brought into being a new business in Rhyl, the 'Taste Academy', providing employment and training opportunities for more than 25 people; positioning a new Social Enterprise in the local community.

Looking ahead, RCS will shortly be launching a new Business Strategy, which will focus on driving forward current initiatives such as the very encouraging Fit For Work Service Pilot and pursuing a series of new initiatives such as the redevelopment of the Little Theatre, as a creative arts and performance centre of excellence.

Alongside the developmental and innovation priorities, Rhyl City Strategy will also renew its commitment to reducing duplication and improving communication in pursuit of the Economic Justice Agenda in Rhyl and across the Regeneration Area. Much remains to be done to improve the quality of and outcomes associated with a participant's journey towards skill enhancement and employment, and the challenges associated with this will be amplified by the continued impact of financial pressures in the local environment over the next few years.

On that note I commend this Annual Report to you and I hope that you will join with me in congratulating the RCS team on its achievement over the past year and join with the team in redoubling efforts to achieve economic justice in Rhyl and in the Coastal Regeneration Area.

**Barry Mellor**  
Chair, Rhyl City Strategy



## ■ OBJECTIVES AND MISSION

Rhyl City Strategy's aims and objectives focus on bringing partners together to develop ideas mobilise activity and create new opportunities. Our programmes offer those furthest from the labour market a chance to develop their motivation, aspiration, skills and confidence to play an active role in society, be it through employment, volunteering or further education.

Our mission it to create sustained opportunities within the welfare to work agenda, allowing freedom for organisations to work collaboratively in order to reduce duplication and give clear direction for future developments.





*Future Jobs Fund Candidates – Rhyl Youth Action Group*

## ■ MAKING IT WORK

In 2009 Rhyl City Strategy led a partnership bid to the Department for Work and Pensions to deliver a Future Jobs Fund programme, a UK-wide programme targeted mainly at young people and delivered in partnership with Jobcentre Plus. We were awarded funding to create a total of 322 new jobs in Conwy and Denbighshire across an active and committed network of local employers.

The jobs have offered six months' supported employment in real work settings across a whole range of organisations, including social enterprises, small businesses, voluntary organisations and other local employers. As well as valuable work experience, participants on the scheme have gained work-related skills and vocational qualifications. At the end of March 2011, 322 people, the majority being from the age group 18–24, had started with our Future Jobs Fund programme, and over half of those coming to the end of the programme had been kept on by their employers or had progressed into full-time education.

As a response of the success of the Future Jobs Fund Programme, the Welsh Government has communicated their interest in a Welsh Jobs Fund.

Due to our experiences during the Future Jobs Fund programme we wanted to continue the work by other means; by focusing our attention on a bid to run two Intermediate Labour Market Programmes. This also offers us the opportunity to work with new groups within the community of Denbighshire and Conwy in a very similar format to that of the Future Jobs Fund Programme. The Intermediate Labour Market Programmes are funded by European Structural Funds, Welsh Government, partly Communities First and are managed by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action.



“ It’s given me independence and a confidence boost not being on JSA, I am now earning my own money.” (FJF employee)

“ By earning my wage, it makes me feel good been able to pay my own way.” (FJF employee)

“ We have taken on people who may not have come forward through the normal routes; they have needed extra support to gain the skills in the workplace” (FJF employer)

“ The flexible structure of the scheme has enabled the creation of a full-time post, with the FJF portion acting as an employment subsidy. This pump-priming has, in turn, led to the securing of ongoing funding to allow the post to continue.” (FJF employer)





*Dame Carol Black presenting the Team with the Small Workplace Health Silver Award.*

## ■ YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Rhyl City Strategy is one of seven sites in the UK running a 'Fit for Work Service'. The service was sponsored by DWP and established in response to Dame Carol Black's 2008 report 'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow'. It aims to reduce levels of long-term sickness absence and flows onto incapacity benefit, offering a case-managed holistic intervention for employees or self-employed people in the early stages of sickness absence to help them return to work earlier than they otherwise would.

It includes early access to therapy services and signposting to a range of associated support services such as debt counselling, housing advice and bereavement support. In its first year, the Rhyl Fit for Work Service received almost 400 referrals, and facilitated a return to work for over 80% of clients who were discharged from the service.

The Rhyl Fit for Work Service is run in partnership with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Public Health Wales.





*Photo taken by Candidate on the 'Finding Your Voice' Project, funded by DCELLS*



*CJW Candidate on the 'Farmland Project', funded by DCELLS*

## ■ STEPPING UP

Throughout the year we continued developing a range of activities and programmes for people to be a part of Rhyl City Strategy's 'Careers Ladder' programme, reaching out to the long-term unemployed, with a range of learning opportunities to help people build their skills, aspirations and confidence. The 'Careers Ladder' Programme is a Welsh Government initiative, focusing on a person's pathway from gaining skills and making those steps towards in work support.

Between 2010 and 2011, the programme provided support for 627 people, with 465 gaining work-focussed skills and 277 gaining a vocational qualification. A total of 164 people went on into further education, and 75 secured employment. The programme was supported by the Welsh Government's Department of Children, Education, Life-long Learning and Skills, who also awarded extension funding in January 2011 to enable some Programmes to extend their provision, resulting in greater opportunities for those who access the Programmes and services.

← *Photo taken by Candidate on the 'Finding Your Voice' Project, funded by DCELLS*





## ■ GET SKILLED UP

'Get Skilled Up' is a programme that has been developed in partnership with Basic Skills Cymru, Rhyl City Strategy and Coleg Llandrillo, Rhyl. Funding was recently allocated for "Get Skilled up" to continue and expand in 2010/11.

The Programme fills the gap in current provision by providing 'intense' basic skills short courses within a variety of vocational career paths.

The purpose of 'Get Skilled Up' is to address basic skills needs, to engage participants and start to prepare them for further training and employment within specific sectors of their choice and to provide progression opportunities.

The "Get Skilled Up" Programme has been nominated for a U.K. Beacon Award.

**“** Since completing the courses I have gained employment. My whole life has changed. It has also set a really positive example to my son who can now see the different benefits working can bring both in attitude and material goods.”

**Retail Learner**





Candidates on the Vi-ability Programme, Heading 4 Success, funded by the Deprived Area Fund

## ■ CONWY CONNECTIONS

Rhyl City Strategy was awarded Deprived Area Funding in 2010 to work in partnership with local Organisations in facilitating skills within the County of Conwy. With the support from our Partners, we were able to support 8 Projects in running skills and employability training. The Projects ranged from IT Skills training alongside Communities First in the Tudno ward of Llandudno to basic skills and life skills programmes within the 'Vi-Ability' Programme and North Wales Training.

Another Programme was supported to deliver a 'For Us, By Us' Project delivered by Diverse Arts. This was a two week intensive skills programme focusing on the strengths of young people in developing their own learning and providing them with the tools they need to take charge of their lives. 70% of those young people gained employment from this Programme.

Rathbone Cymru were supported in developing their Detached Youth Engagement work within the County of Conwy as well as Coleg Llandrillo Abergele and ITACA in supporting the 'Stepping Up' Project in conjunction with the development of the new Dewi Sant Centre in Pensarn.

Coleg Llandrillo were supported with their Glyn ward engagement worker to actively promote and engage with prospective learners who may be interested in increasing their skills at the Bay Learning Centre in Colwyn Bay. BTCV were funded to provide horticultural course within the Tudno wards of Conwy and Tape Community Music and Film also received a contribution from the Deprived Area Funding in support of their 'Count Me In' Project, to support the work taking place within the ward of Tudno.



## taste.academy

Rhyl City Strategy has opened an ambitious new venture in partnership with Rathbone Cymru; 'taste.academy'. This stylish training restaurant was created by Rhyl City Strategy to provide supported employment opportunities for up to forty people a year. taste.academy employees gain work experience and a range of professional qualifications in hospitality and catering, and are supported to find permanent work once their placement has finished.

taste.academy is a unique and vibrant facility, designed by the award-winning Jamie Alcock, and with a delicious menu created by Michelin trained manager Suzanne Wilbraham.

taste.academy has been financially supported by the Department for Work and Pensions, the Welsh Government, the Drug Intervention Programme and the Conwy and Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership.





## ■ STIMULATING GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Rhyl City Strategy's aim is to develop, support and sustain local enterprise through new initiatives and encouraging inclusive partnership working amongst the public and private sector. We have provided this support through the Future Jobs Fund as well as the Fit for Work Service.

A number of the Careers Ladder Programmes have also seen great developments in creating their own enterprises, such as Community Justice Intervention Wales' 'Farmland Project'. This Project is developing quickly in becoming a self sustaining enterprise. The farmland has a clear link to 'taste.academy Restaurant by providing the venue with its produce, amongst other local outlets.

'Finding Your Voice' through Chris Stronge, has now become a Social Enterprise and is trading in partnership with Cambrian Photography in Colwyn Bay.

'Coastal Hawks' has been successful in their bid to obtain a building and land to create an educational/visitors attraction in Llandudno.

'Community Harvest' is moving on to create further opportunities for the town and surrounding areas within the horticulture arena, as well as producing and developing the honey project.

The 'Catering Project' within the North Wales Women's Centre has continued to develop their own enterprise in specifically providing the catering for the Centre's events and meetings and they have catered for the Rhyl City Strategy's Consortium Meeting in November 2010.

Rhyl City Strategy would welcome the opportunity to be involved in a similar Future Jobs Fund Programme in the future to continue the work and opportunities this Project has brought to the area.

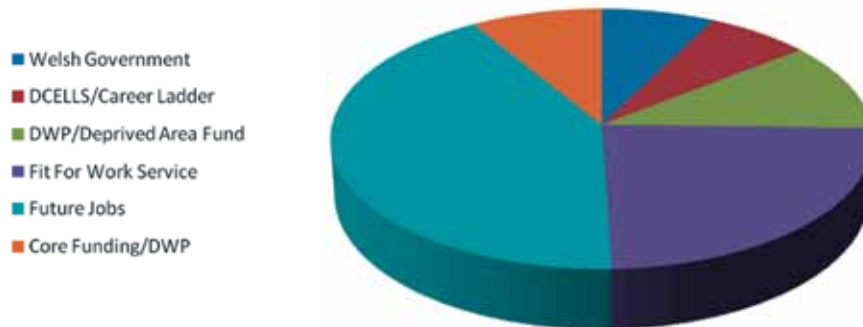
Through Rhyl City Strategy's Intermediate Labour Market programmes we aim to work alongside enterprises of all sectors in order to create new partnerships and opportunities for future development work and 'open doors' to new initiatives.

'Open Doors' aims to be the RCS pilot Project for this year focusing specifically on the aspects of stimulating growth and opportunities for not only those who are seeking employment, but also those who are in work as well as being a support for employers, offering a job brokerage/matching service catered to specific employment/skill needs. This pilot will initially be focusing on the area of Rhyl in the hope to extend throughout the Regeneration Area, creating synergy between the Counties as well as compliment the footprint Rhyl City Strategy has had along the Regeneration Area through the Future Jobs Fund Project and the Fit for Work Service.

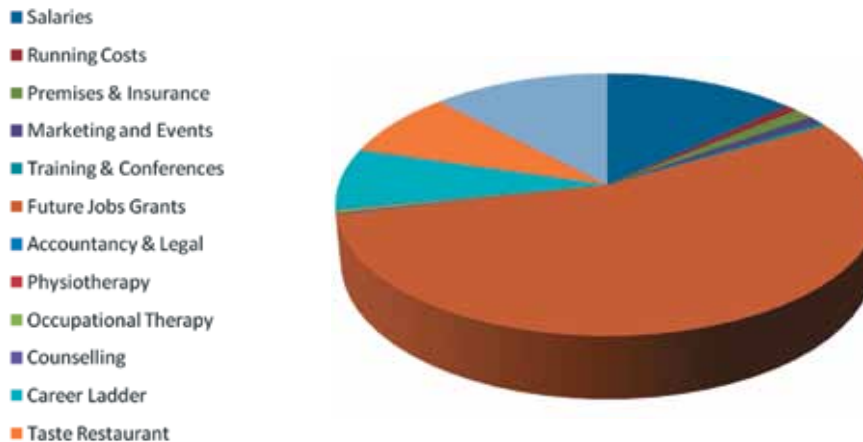
Programmes throughout the year have delivered a strong message around the opportunities which can result from minimal monetary contributions. They have grown into inspiring and opportunistic projects with success being driven by partnership approaches and the acceptance of embracing change.



### Rhyl City Strategy Income 2010/11



### Rhyl City Strategy Expenditure 2010/11





## ■ EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Barry Mellor, *Arriva Buses Wales*

Celia Jones, *Coleg Llandrillo Rhyl*

Chris Ruane, *MP*

David Johnson, *Betsi Cadwaladr*

Debbie Hawkes, *Jobcentre Plus*

Delyth Jones, *Public Health Wales*

Edith Frodsham, *Clwyd Coast Credit Union*

Gareth Matthews, *Rhyl City Strategy/Serco*

Graham Godfrey, *Jobcentre Plus*

John Watkin, *Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council*

Karen Evans, *Denbighshire County Council*

Phil Fiander, *Wales Council for Voluntary Action*

Steve Ray

Wyn Roberts, *Welsh Government (SRA)*

Wyn Thomas, *Betsi Cadwaladr*

## ■ RHYL CITY STRATEGY STAFF

Ali Thomas, *Programme Manager*

Jo Howes, *Employer Liason Officer*

Jennie Walker, *Community Coordinator*

Susan Jeffrey, *Programme Administrator*

Eleri Jones, *Future Jobs Administrator*

## ■ FIT FOR WORK SERVICE TEAM

Bridgette Handley, *Service Manager*

Eileen Higton, *Partnership Development Manager*

Paula Walsh, *Case Manager*

Mark Sanders, *Case Manager*

Graeme Johnson, *Case Manager*

Lloyd Beattie, *Administrator*

## ■ STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS WHO LEFT US IN 2010-11

Rukhsana Nugent: *Thank you to Rukhsana for being involved in the initial development stages of starting the Fit for Work Service, your focus was paramount in shaping the service and its vision for the future.*

Iwan Prys-Jones, *Denbighshire County Council*

Shane Owen, *Rhyl Youth Action Group*

Rob Kirman, *North Wales Police*

Ian Williams, *Welsh Government (DCELLS)*

Jean Williams, *Careers Wales*

Thank you to all Board Members who left us in 2010/11 for your commitment and support throughout the year.