



Bae
COLWYN
Bay

Delivering Bay Life

Development Proposals for Colwyn Bay
Bay Life Programme Board

August 2009



Bay Life - Vision Statement

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to describe how the objectives of Bay Life Programme can be achieved. It will help to inform and provide a context and a basis for schemes and projects. 'Delivering Bay Life' will guide our development priorities within the area, but will be sufficiently flexible to embrace new opportunities as they arise.

2 Background

- 2.1 Colwyn Bay is the second largest urban settlement in North Wales, and was until the late 1950s a prosperous community with thriving tourism and retail sectors. The decline of the traditional seaside holiday and the construction of the A55 has undermined the viability and affected the vitality of the town. The information in the Mosaic profile – a socio-economic picture of the area - clearly demonstrates the impact of these changes.
- 2.2 'Communities First' is a Welsh Assembly Government programme to help tackle those areas of Wales experiencing the most poverty and disadvantage. Colwyn Bay was identified in the 2005 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation with parts of the town being in the 10% most deprived wards in Wales. Communities First covers parts of the Glyn and Rhiw electoral wards from Eirias Park through to the West End of town. From the 2008 index, Glyn 2 has been identified as the most deprived area in Conwy County for Income, Employment, Health and Community Safety and the second most deprived ward for Housing.
- 2.3 This combination of factors resulted in Conwy County Borough Council identifying Colwyn Bay as its regeneration priority and with its partners preparing the Bay Life Development Plan 2007 – 2014. The Welsh Assembly Government has also now recognised Colwyn Bay as a priority and has included the town and surrounding areas in a Strategic Regeneration Area (SRA); this gives us a significant opportunity to facilitate the delivery of the Bay Life' vision' for the town.
- 2.4 The aim of the programme is to deliver:
- Improvements in space for living & housing
 - Better community cohesion
 - People enjoying better health & greater wellbeing
 - More integrated transport systems and an improved environment
 - Greater opportunities for people to improve their education and develop their skills
 - A sustainable economy

3 The Way Forward

- 3.1 'Bay Life' has laid the foundations for the regeneration of the town and its inclusion in the Strategic Regeneration Area (SRA) now offers a significant opportunity to develop this into an ambitious programme of initiatives that will redefine Colwyn Bay in a positive and exciting way. The SRA gives the opportunity to build an identity for Colwyn Bay that moves us on from the traditional seaside town into a modern, vibrant centre for commerce, tourism, employment and leisure, making Colwyn Bay an attractive and satisfying place to live.
- 3.2 This programme will centre on three initiatives: the relocation of Council offices to the town centre; a major programme of coastal defence, which will enhance the beach and the promenade, and the creation of a centre of sporting excellence at Parc Eirias. We believe these three initiatives will be a catalyst to drive investment and improvement.
- 3.3 They are aimed at increasing the number of people working in the town and the number of visitors to the town, as well as creating work and leisure opportunities for local people. Increasing the Council's presence in the town, will, for example, have benefits in terms of improved trade, business opportunities and employment. The coastal improvement scheme has the potential to be tied with improved transport infrastructure and hotel facilities to take advantage of the potential increases in business, leisure and sports visitor numbers.
- 3.4 Alongside these three key initiatives, improvements will be made to the physical infrastructure of the town, for example in housing, streetscape, transport and the built environment. We expect positive benefits for the community in Colwyn Bay, particularly in terms of improved access in and around the town. There will also be plans around health, education, training and skills initiatives aimed at young people.
- 3.5 All of these taken together provide a stimulus for investment in the area and a sustainable platform for business stability and development, providing new employment and prosperity for the local population.

4 Core elements of the plan

- 4.1 The core elements of this plan for Colwyn Bay are centred on the waterfront, Parc Eirias and the town centre. These are outlined below.
- 4.2 **Coastal Improvement and waterfront developments**
The Colwyn Bay Coastal defence scheme will alleviate coastal erosion, flooding and improve the beach as well as reducing the risk posed to the A55 and railway. The associated plan for environmental improvements along the waterfront will significantly enhance the attractiveness of the area, by improving the hard landscaping and facilities, including enhanced provision for water-sports, community use and improved links to the town. This will encourage an increase in visitors and attract private sector investment.
- 4.3 **Council offices established in the town centre**
The opportunity to create a land-mark development in the town centre and an improvement in the way the Council connects with the public. This would have a positive

economic impact on the town, with potentially several hundred council employees being based there. Benefits to local trade and employment could be expected, either directly from the influx of paid jobs, or from relocating business' and agencies that might gain from proximity to a major Council establishment.

4.4 Parc Eirias hosting a Centre of Excellence for sport, leisure and culture

Parc Eirias has the potential to develop into a significant facility in North Wales. For example, the agreement that Eirias will be the home ground of Rugby Gogledd Cymru demonstrates the potential for the park to become a regional centre of excellence for sport, culture and leisure. The current site of the Council offices could become a leisure hotel facility that would complement these developments, and provide accommodation for visiting teams and supporters as well as other visitors to the area. These proposals will be consistent with its essential 'green' character of the park, enabling it to serve as both a regional and national visitor attraction as well as a high quality leisure and recreation facility for the local community, particularly for families and young people.

5 Examples of Strategic needs

5.1 Our Partners

We will work with our partners to improve the delivery of services to the people of Colwyn Bay. As a Council and in partnership with others we will work to improve and enhance the services needed to deliver the benefits of the regeneration programme to the people of Colwyn Bay.

5.2 Listed below are a number of projects that taken together with the three main themes have the capability to bring significant benefits to the town.

5.3 Creation of a 'Community Hub'

A learning and information centre within the Communities First area of the town. Pivotal in the regeneration of Colwyn Bay, it will provide advice, information, support and learning to those who have most need to up-skill in order to improve their life prospects. It would act as a central hub for regeneration activities as well as making a significant contribution to community cohesion.

5.4 Improved housing in the town

Parts of Colwyn Bay, particularly those adjacent to the town centre are in significant housing need. Action is required to improve housing conditions as well as leisure, amenity and the use of space.

5.5 Evening Economy

With Colwyn Bay developing as a visitor destination, an administrative centre and with renewed community confidence, there is an opportunity to develop the town centre as an evening destination. It is to be expected there will be an increased requirement for restaurant and café facilities, hotel accommodation and a safe and comfortable environment to relax in.

5.6 Integration between the town centre, waterfront, Parc Eirias and residential areas

It is essential that if Colwyn Bay is to fully benefit from these developments, then the traffic flows, parking, walking routes and public transport will all need to be reviewed to

ensure that there is easy and logical movement around the town. Thoughts also have to be given to improved signage, in particular the routes into Colwyn Bay.

5.7 Enhancing the townscape

The town centre is not well provided with open and recreational space, much of the surrounding area appears tired and in need of re-invigoration. An improved and welcoming environment will create a better image and encourage people to spend more time in the town centre.

5.8 Improvements for Young People

We recognise that young people have a significant stake in the future of the town and that there is a need to improve the provision of facilities for them. This will provide us with an opportunity to engage young people in the regeneration of Colwyn Bay and their part in its future.

5.9 Improvements for older people

Colwyn Bay has a higher than average proportion of older people and it is therefore important that we consider their needs in the way that we approach the regeneration of the town. Housing, care, transport, recreation and access to services will be of particular concern to older people.

5.10 Skills

Coleg Llandrillo is leading the development of the community hub and learning centre in the town, which will be a vehicle for delivering skills and training to the community. In addition, the City Strategy partnership will be exploring avenues to promote employment.

5.11 Sustainable Economy

Promoting economic development will be a key objective - the proposed office development in the town being an important example.

5.12 Improving Health and Social Care

The Local Health Board is leading a project to develop improved primary health care facilities in Colwyn Bay, by combining two or more GP practices and integrating with NHS and Social Care services.

6 Next steps

6.1 The proposals within this document will be widely consulted upon, so that the communities of Colwyn Bay can be fully engaged in its development and delivery.