

# Report to Chester Area Partnership Board

## Faith Sector Audit: West Cheshire in 2010 Faith is alive and well in West Cheshire

### Recommendations

As you read through this report I call upon our public, private, voluntary and community sector partners to:

- **Recognise** the important contribution that faith communities and faith based organisations have made historically, and can make in the coming years in providing services within local communities across Cheshire West and Chester
- **Acknowledge** the indispensable role that faith plays in the motivation and effectiveness of welfare programs developed by the faith communities and faith based organisations.
- **Encourage** and promote further initiatives and deeper partnership underpinned by legislation, which assess services based on best value and contribution to the whole community, without discriminating against the faith that is vital to the success of the work of faith communities and faith based organisations.

### Audit Work

Link Up have just completed their 2010 Faith Sector Audit across West Cheshire.

- Across the Cheshire West and Chester Council area
- Across all faith communities and groups
- Across all community facing activity, staff/volunteers and building resources
- Across all wards

### Audit aim

This Audit aims to provide a snapshot of all Faith Sector community projects in West Cheshire across all faiths and in all areas.

### Audit objectives

- To enable individual Faith Communities and Groups to see and recognise the extent of the wider Faith Sector across boundaries of faith, location and tradition.
- To connect community projects and initiatives already undertaken by Faith Groups to the Local Authority and other community agencies and partners.
- To provide a single source for Faith Groups and their community projects across the new boundaries of the Cheshire West and Chester Council area.
- For the Faith Sector to be appropriately represented within the wider Third Sector

### Audit Findings

This Audit process has sought to capture community action by all Faith Groups across all Communities. Key findings include:

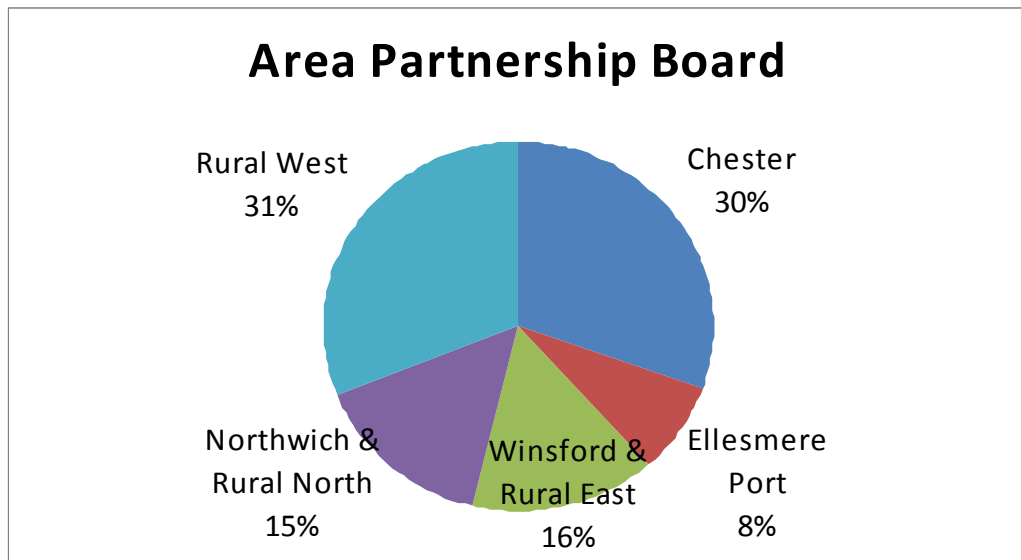
- 254 Faith Communities and Groups across West Cheshire of which 56% (144) responded to this Audit.
- 420 community initiatives serving 11,000+ users (nearly 6,000 weekly) mobilising 2,000+ volunteers and 47,000+ volunteer hours. This represents an annual contribution of nearly £500,000 to civil society in West Cheshire based on the current national minimum wage.
- If the sample is representative, this rises to nearly £490,000 from 740+ projects engaging 3,500+ volunteers drawn from nearly 20,000 people regularly attending a place of worship on a weekly basis. That equates to 6.08% of the total population, based on 2007 population figures.
- Faith Communities and Groups directly employ 150+ people.

### Financial contribution to West Cheshire economy

- The combined contribution of both paid and voluntary staff into the local economy is nearly £3,000,000
- However, if our sample is representative this figure would rise to nearly £5,000,000

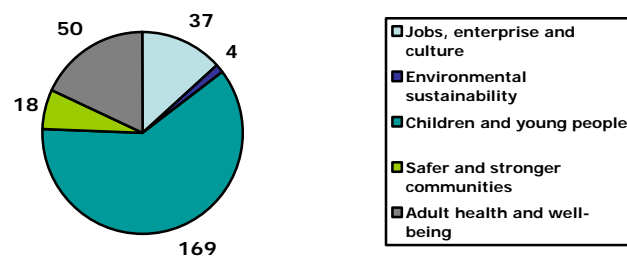
## Area Partnership Board

Here are the percentages of overall projects according to APB



The number of initiatives in the Chester APB area was 213

Relationship to the strategic priorities of CWaC



Within the Chester ABP

- Children & Young People 90 activities;
- Adult Health & Well Being 25 activities
- Safer and stronger communities 5 activities
- Jobs, enterprise & culture 20 activities
- Environmental Sustainability 1 activity

### What is Link Up?

Link Up is a relational network of Churches and Church leaders in and around Chester, West Cheshire and into North Wales. Drawn from across denominations and traditions, Link Up seeks to support and extend partnership working for personal and community transformation. We had the following sponsors in enabling us to complete the Audit:

West Cheshire Inter Faith Forum (formerly Chester Inter Faith Group); Cheshire West and Chester Council; Cheshire West Third Sector Assembly; Churches Together in Cheshire; Diocese of Chester; Faith to Engage; The Light Project; West Cheshire Together

Finally, it is my hope and prayer is that this survey will become a springboard for greater understanding, appreciation, co-operation and partnership. The future transformation and salvation of many of our ailing communities may just depend upon it.

### For more information

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