

Strategy Document for Name of Group (@ 07/09/07)

Identity of the Group

The Group is a partnership between the following organisations;

Wrexham Social Services, Day and Employment Opportunities

The Erlas Garden Project

Groundwork Trust

Wright Landscapes

The Erlas Garden Project is a registered charity, registered number 1111370, first registered on 20th September 2005. It is a partnership between Wrexham Social Services, Mencap Cymru, The Welsh College of Horticulture and Wrexham County Forum for Learning Disabilities.

Background

We have evidence from Tithe Maps going back to 1838, that the site of the garden was used as a Kitchen Garden. Since that time, the gardens have been cultivated by generations of gardeners, of which we only have a fairly patchy history.

During the 1st World War, many Victorian Gardens would have fallen into disrepair, and it is probable that this was the case with the Bryn Estyn Garden (the former name of Erlas garden).

When the house was opened as an Approved School for boys in 1942, the gardens were again utilised for their original purpose, and the boys developed many horticultural skills, growing fruit and vegetables. When the approved school closed, in 1975, the gardens fell again into disrepair, until the early 1990's, when parts of the gardens were briefly cleared.

Unfortunately, the 1990's revival was brief, and it wasn't until the early 2000's that a group of people got together and applied to The European Social Fund, (ESF) with the aim of improving the employability and skills of people whose disabilities and/or circumstances prevent them from accessing mainstream employment and training.

As a result of this funding, a partnership was formed between:

- **Wrexham Work Opportunities** (part of Social Services, W.C.B.C.,) who identify, recruit and support the beneficiaries whilst they are being trained. A job-finder also finds other work opportunities for those beneficiaries who have completed their qualifications/ want to move on
- **Welsh College of Horticulture**, who deliver the Horticultural and I.T. training. The college will continue to deliver training as long as there is a turnover of 8 beneficiaries a year