

# Wakefield Compact Engagement Toolkit



The purpose of this Toolkit is to help organisations, both from the public and the voluntary and community sector, that are signed up to the Compact to improve their understanding of the Compact and to embed it in the way that they work.

By the public sector we mean the Local Authority, the Primary Care Trust, the Police and other public bodies who make up the local strategic partnership. The voluntary and community sector includes charities, not-for-profit organisations, community groups, campaigning organisations, faith based organisations, sports groups, arts groups, environmental groups and social enterprises. All of these agencies and groups will be referred to as 'the partners' for the rest of this document.

This Toolkit provides a baseline for organisations to measure their Compact compliance and helps them to develop an action plan to embed Compact principles more effectively in the work that they do. It is light touch, simple to understand, and focuses on the key areas where all partners are signed up to improve relationships. Ideally it should be completed annually.

In addition to this toolkit, there is a programme of information and training across the District to ensure that staff at all levels are aware of the Compact and the implications for their own areas of work. Further information and downloadable resources for staff are available on the VCS Single Portal website under 'Wakefield Compact' and on the Wakefield Together website.

We hope you find this Toolkit helpful for your organisation and that it helps pinpoint solutions to better relationship building between the public and voluntary sector.

**The Compact is an agreement between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together.**

**The Compact stands for better partnership working and creating better outcomes for individuals and local communities and is endorsed and supported by the Wakefield District Partnership.**

### Objectives of this Compact

This Compact provides:

- a framework for engagement between local partners
- opportunities for innovation and constructive challenge
- clear and fair funding processes
- a clear role for the voluntary and community sectors
- workforce development to enable us to work together effectively
- sharing good partnership practice
- links to the District's other strategies and policies



# Section 1: Key Principles

What this section contains:

A description of the key principles of the Wakefield Compact. These are the shared beliefs that underpin the whole of the Wakefield Compact.

What you need to do:

1. Read through these key principles.
2. Make sure all relevant staff in your organisation are aware of them. You could:
  - Present them at a management meeting
  - Publish them in a newsletter
  - Pin them up on noticeboards
  - Include them in inductions for new staff
3. You should make sure that staff involved in inter-agency working are aware of these principles.

## Our Key Principles

- The Compact encourages closer working, better communication, understanding and respect, in order to deliver better outcomes for the citizens of Wakefield District.
- The partners recognise that to make this partnership work we must communicate openly and regularly, treating each other with respect
- We must be inclusive and encourage diversity, actively seeking the involvement of marginalised and excluded groups of people.
- The partners also recognise the innovative role of the voluntary and community sectors in responding to the needs of diverse groups of people in particular localities
- All partners are committed to valuing and celebrating the contribution of volunteers, and promoting volunteering
- The partners recognise that the voluntary and community sectors need early engagement, support and capacity building to help them contribute effectively.
- All partners seek to understand the different constraints under which each operates, and to take these into account in working together.
- The partners are committed to supporting the voluntary and community sector including 'in kind' contributions, and in imaginative sharing and pooling of resources
- The partners recognise the independence of the voluntary and community sector and their legitimate right to campaign and challenge policy decisions
- All partners acknowledge that differences may arise, and are committed to resolving these in a constructive way.

# Section 2: Codes of Good Practice

What this section contains:

A description of the codes under the Compact which every partner has agreed to comply with.

What you need to do:

1. Read through the Codes
2. Make sure your organisation is compliant with them.

## Volunteering

Volunteers make a huge contribution and bring a range of social and economic benefits to the Wakefield District. Volunteering combats social exclusion, involves people in learning and builds experience and confidence.

- Partners acknowledge that the recruitment, training, support, mentoring and management of volunteers costs money. All partners recognise the need to invest in volunteering.
- Partners understand the importance of best practice standards to make volunteering a good experience
- Diversity is recognised and opportunities are open to all

## Funding and Resources

We all want the best possible social outcomes and value for money. Funding processes should be fair, accountable and consultative as appropriate to encourage best value. Partners recognise the need for:

- Sustainable funding and financial stability and will work together in a range of ways to achieve this (pooling mainstream resources, encouraging joint funding applications etc)
- Developing quality assurance systems that are open and meaningful and provide clear evidence of outcomes
- The voluntary and community sector to build reserves while trading in order to discharge their legal business liabilities.

## Infrastructure

Third sector organisations need access to advice and learning opportunities to help them achieve their aims. They are not able to pay a market rate for this support and neither public donations nor grant givers will fund infrastructure fully.

- Public sector partners recognise that strategic core funding is necessary to the provision of infrastructure support
- Partners are committed to the long term development of and investment in infrastructure support for the third sector
- Infrastructure bodies will maximise resources by co-ordinating delivery

## Consultation

Consultation helps to shape better decisions. It is important that consultation:

- Is open and honest, making clear what the limits are and what has already been decided and agreed
- Is inclusive and done in a variety of ways
- Has realistic timescales, e.g. a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultations
- Uses simple language
- Provides feedback on outcomes

# Section 3: Compact Quality Audit

What this section contains:

A description of each of the elements of the codes of good practice. There is space for you to identify which elements of the codes you already meet, and which you might have to take some action on. These actions should be recorded in the action plan on the back page.

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## General Principles

We will:

We already  
do this

We could do  
this better

Consult on new proposals and changes in a way that complies with the Compact i.e. is open, inclusive, gives a minimum of 12 weeks for responses, uses simple language and gives feedback on outcomes.

Our funding processes are fair, accountable and consultative.  
We recognise the need for sustainable funding to the VCS and work in partnership to achieve this

Our financial monitoring systems are open and meaningful and based on clear evidence of outcomes

Our funding systems recognise the need for the VCS to build reserves

We invest in volunteering

We comply with best practice standards in our use of volunteers

We encourage diversity in volunteering and opportunities are open to all

We are committed to the development of the 3rd sector

We support VCS infrastructure with core funding

We co-ordinate support to the 3rd sector across the partnership

## 2 Funding

We will:	We already do this	We could do this better
Recognise the importance of sustainability and of longer term planning, and the impact that short term funding has on these issues.		
Recognise the importance of developing new ways of meeting core costs.		
Encourage joint bids wherever these help achieve value for money, improve the viability of the project or bring benefits to the funded organisation and users from the sharing of expertise and resources.		
Recognise that voluntary and community organisations have a right and a responsibility to hold reserves.		
Agree monitoring and evaluation requirements at the time that the grant is given that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are proportionate to the size of the grant</li> <li>• are clear about the roles and responsibilities of partners</li> <li>• recognise the cost of monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>		
Respect the voluntary and community sectors' independence and their right to campaign, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist.		
Be aware that investing in the infrastructure of the voluntary and community sectors is vital for their development.		
Aim to work together to improve cooperation between different funding streams, including developing joint approaches to monitoring and evaluation where practicable.		
Provide transparency and objectivity in administrative, assessment and monitoring procedures.		
Give notification of decisions as soon as possible, and where possible three months before the grant is due to commence.		
When we reject an application, we will give feedback on the reason for the refusal, along with a contact for the funded organisation to raise any queries.		

### 3 Consultation

We will:	We already do this	We could do this better
Recognise that it is important that all sectors are involved in consultation, and that the voluntary and community sectors are involved in consultation on public sector policies and plans.		
Build consultation into our regular planning cycle and carry it out at an early stage		
Leave enough time to respond. When consulting with the voluntary and community sectors, we will aim to allow at least 12 weeks for all consultation.		
Be clear about the purpose of the consultation.		
Ensure consultation documents are written in simple language and are available in a range of formats to ensure accessibility.		
Make it clear where decisions have already been made, and what consultees' views can influence.		
Allow for confidentiality, to encourage honest answers.		
Analyse carefully the results of the consultation and report back on the views received, and actions taken as a result.		
Ensure that our responses to consultations are accurate and have been researched in an objective and unbiased manner.		

### 4 Community Groups

We will:	We already do this	We could do this better
Recognise the value, diversity, strengths and contribution of the community sector.		
Take into account the community sector's needs and role when developing policies and services.		
Ensure that staff and decision makers are fully aware of the strengths, needs and concerns of the community sector when taking decisions that affect it.		
Seek to identify, wherever possible, in kind support such as premises, equipment or access to training.		
Seek to develop funding policies and procedures for community groups that are in proportion to the scale of the funding and the capacity of the groups.		

## 5 Volunteering

We will:	We already do this	We could do this better
Recognise that volunteering is a substantial social investment that creates social capital and is a vital part of active citizenship, and that volunteering makes a major contribution to raising the quality of life.		
Recognise that although volunteers give their time for free, they need resources with which to work.		
Support the principles of best practice in the promotion, development and celebration of volunteering.		
Work in partnership with other organisations and agencies to help potential volunteers find opportunities that fit their needs, interests and abilities.		
Reimburse out of pocket expenses by volunteers, including care costs, wherever possible.		
Treat volunteers fairly, including allowing them access to training and support according to the resources available to our organisation.		
Accept volunteer time as having an equal status to cash for the purposes of matchfunding, as long as the volunteer time can be properly measured and recorded.		

### The Compact Group

The Wakefield Compact group will be the delivery group for the LAA workstream on growing the voluntary and community sector 2008-11. It will be made up of key strategic officers nominated from each of the WDP partners. Members of the group will be responsible for championing the Compact within their organisations and for identifying and reporting on examples of positive or innovative practice across the partnership in achieving partnership goals. The Compact group will report to the Wakefield District Partnership.

In the event of a concern that the compact way of working has not been followed, all partners will have access to a procedure agreed by the Partnership to deal with this. Final resolution rests with the Board of Wakefield District Partnership.

For more information about the Wakefield Compact, or for help with this toolkit, please visit:

The Wakefield Single Portal at [www.wakefieldvcs.org](http://www.wakefieldvcs.org)

or contact:

Mark Cranmer, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council on 01924 306 090 or  
Peter Skinner, Voluntary Action Wakefield District on 01924 367 418

