

COMPACT AT WORK



Kensington and Chelsea: Partnerships across borough boundaries

The Kensington and Chelsea Compact Implementation Group are helping to guarantee that services provided by the voluntary and community sector (VCS) are sustainable, with relationships remaining strong during a period of change.

Impact

The Compact Implementation Group (CIG) for the Kensington and Chelsea Compact has been instrumental in embedding the Compact in the borough, and is also working alongside neighbouring boroughs to improve VCS relations.

Kensington and Chelsea is part of an ambitious programme to share some services across neighbouring boroughs (Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham) with the aim to protect front-line services. These changes in service design and delivery present both new opportunities and challenges to local VCS organisations in seeking public sector contracts. To ensure that services provided by the VCS in Kensington and Chelsea are as resilient as possible the CIG have been:

- Supporting a council department to ensure a smooth transition from a grant programme to local third sector organisations to a contract process;
- Encouraging the council to protect its corporate grants programme at current levels whilst other local authorities make significant grant reductions;

- Contributing to a revised 'Organisations in Difficulty' procedure, which is linked to the Compact and which provides guidance and an agreed process for council departments in dealing with funded organisations that are experiencing problems.

Perhaps the most innovative thinking in this work is the recognition that VCS organisations in the three boroughs would now – in light of the merging of some functions between other authorities – require equally effective Compacts in neighbouring boroughs.

As such the CIG have been keen to engage with neighbouring local Compacts as the three boroughs develop closer relationships.

The CIG has worked to support local organisations and groups during challenging times, and it is considered locally to be an ideal place to have honest discussions about how to develop appropriate local services.

With a new Compact and Champion network it is hoped this will be strengthened further.

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Compact Principles

1: Partnership
working

Tags

Grants
Cuts
Local Compacts
Champions

Link

[The Kensington
and Chelsea
Compact](#)

Summary

Kensington and Chelsea was one of the first areas in the country to develop a local Compact across public, private and community sectors.

The Compact has served them well: helping to resolve local issues, brokering new relationships and strengthening partnership working across these sectors.

The strength of its success has been ensuring the ownership of the principles and commitments contained within the locally agreed document and through a variety of organisations represented in a local 'Compact Implementation Group' or CIG. This group works jointly on the range of local relationships to ensure all agencies understand how to be proportionate in their approach.

To demonstrate the commitment to the Compact, the group is jointly chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Kensington and Chelsea Social Council, and the Borough's Council for Voluntary Service, and head of the council's Community Engagement Team.

The group has recently modernised the Compact, initially adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership more than seven years ago. The Compact was jointly re-written by council staff and VCS representatives through the CIG. The CIG approved the draft for consultation, which involved engagement with both voluntary sector and public sector organisations through surveys, presentations and attendance at local events.

Responses were considered by the CIG and informed a final draft presented to the Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group, a formal committee of the Council with representatives including Cabinet Members and local VCS senior officers. The result is a more succinct document which is easier to read and understand, and is in keeping with the Compact agreed nationally.

A network of Compact Champions is being developed. Seven Champions have been recruited to date from across sectors and will be trained and supported on an on-going basis by the CIG. An annual Compact Champions meeting is planned to discuss issues and how best to promote the Compact.

Quote

"As a member of the CIG since its beginning - and as a 'Compact Champion' - I've had first hand experience of the Compact's usefulness in contributing to constructive cross-sector relationships, and of the CIG in keeping the lines of communication open, especially during times of change. We are all looking forward to sharing that experience with our neighbours."

Cynthia Dize, Chief Officer of Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea and member of the Compact Implementation Group



*Bridging London Boroughs:
Royal Albert Bridge, Kensington & Chelsea.*

Related links

[The Kensington and Chelsea Compact](#)