Section 6
Revising, renewing or creating your Compact
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Creating a local Compact

There are no rules about how a Compact should be structured or presented but what follows are some useful guidelines:

1. Good local Compacts are those which reflect the needs, circumstances and aspirations of local partners – the clue is in the name! A local Compact should be the product of an open discussion between local partners – in fact, its strength will likely be determined by the extent to which partners have been engaged in the process.

2. However, the national Compact provides a useful template on which local Compacts could be based or take their inspiration from. Indeed, some areas have adopted the national Compact as their local Compact as a temporary measure whilst they update their local document.

3. Local Compacts contain principles which provide a crucial framework for local relationships, but sometimes people find it hard to see how they affect their work on the ground. By providing practical examples (either real or hypothetical) it is possible to make the commitments in the document come alive to new audiences.

4. Some Compacts are designed documents with pictures whilst others are simple word documents. There is an argument that says that giving the Compact a distinctive local visual brand can help to raise its profile but style should not be substituted for substance.

5. Backing a local Compact up with supporting documents, such as guides and toolkits can ensure that people know how to use it, turning it from a wish-list into a powerful tool.

6. Why do all the hard work when you can look at other local Compacts and copy the best ideas from them?
Example: Updating the Leeds Compact

Leeds revised their Compact to bring it up to date with changes in the financial climate, tackle indifference from the voluntary and community sector, and lack of knowledge of the Compact from the statutory sector. The revision and subsequent promotion has achieved a huge amount of positive change.

The Compact group:

- Successfully requested a voluntary and community sector lead officer and a voluntary and community sector focused Councillor
  
  “There is no doubt that having those kinds of people with those labels definitely helped us feel that the council was taking the Compact more seriously.”
  
  David Smith, Chair of Compact Implementation Group and Director of LeedsVoice (pictured)

- Set up ‘Third Sector Leeds’ – an alliance of key networks and larger organisations, whose members talk about and promote the Compact in meetings with both sectors

- Is using the new Compact to help clarify how the NHS and public health bodies can engage effectively with service users, and have put on a major event which focuses on this

- Developed a link with Leeds’ ‘Year of Volunteering’, a volunteering toolkit explaining what the Compact means in practice, and a kitemark, which acts as a quality guarantee that organisations will meet Compact commitments on volunteering practice. This offers quality reassurance to potential volunteers and funders, resulting in less monitoring

How Compact Voice can help:

Compact Voice has developed a renewal support programme. An Engagement Officer can provide support, both in terms of advising on the process and also facilitating sessions. Sometimes local partners react better to a facilitator who is independent of local associations.

Please visit the Compact Voice website to book the ‘Renewing your Compact’ package free of charge from our training options.

We can

- Provide tailored support to help you renew your local Compact
- Share good practice about what’s working well elsewhere.