Shortlisted nominations

Showcasing excellent partnerships:
The best of Compact working from the last 12 months
The Compact Awards shortlist this year is without doubt the strongest we have had to date. We also received more nominations than ever, over 50 in total, so a huge thank you goes to everyone who entered. All of the shortlisted nominations demonstrate real, replicable examples of where partnerships across sectors are delivering tangible benefits for communities.

This year’s nominations display an impressively broad range of partnerships: including private sector organisations, small community groups, large national charities, central government departments and local commissioning bodies, to name just a few. This collection also demonstrates a wonderful balance between local and national partnerships, and the effectiveness of the Compact as a framework for supporting positive, outcome focussed partnership working, wherever and at whatever level it is taking place.

In particular, we are especially pleased to see so many nominations demonstrating excellent partnerships between voluntary organisations and new commissioning bodies. These nominations display innovative, responsive partnerships formed with Police and Crime Commissioners, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Enterprise Partnerships – among others. Local Compacts have again proven they are a valuable tool for establishing links and building foundations for partnerships. We all know how important this is at a time when the commissioning landscape is changing and evolving, and having an ever bigger impact on the lives of those that voluntary organisations work to support. Encouragingly, these are all partnerships that can be replicated across the country.

Compact Voice has been privileged to support so many dynamic, creative partnerships delivering real change for real people over the past 12 months.

Simon Blake OBE
Chair of Compact Voice
## Compact Advancing Equality Award

**Shortlist:**

1. Merton Community Health Champions Programme ............................................. 6  
2. Bristol BME Voice ................................................................................. 8  
3. JobCentre Plus Harlesden ........................................................................ 10  
4. Sova Support Link and 'The Bridge Project' .................................................. 12  

## Compact Engagement Award

**Shortlist:**

1. Voluntary Norfolk: Voluntary Sector Engagement Project ......................... 16  
2. Children England and the TUC: Declaration of Interdependence ............... 18  
3. Transforming Families in Merton ............................................................. 20  
4. JobCentre Plus Woolwich and Charlton Athletic Community Trust .......... 22  
5. Daffodil Advocacy Project ..................................................................... 24  
6. Marches Social Inclusion Mini Group ....................................................... 26  
7. Department for Communities and Local Government – Community Rights and Neighbourhood Planning Divisions 28  
8. Newcastle Voluntary Sector Liaison Group (VSLG) ................................. 30  
9. HMRC: Needs Extra Help Service ......................................................... 32

## Compact Impact Award

**Shortlist:**

1. Brighton and Hove City Council: Third Sector, Communities and Equalities Team ............................................................... 34  
2. Merton Adult Education and St Mark’s Family Centre ................................. 36  
3. JobCentre Plus Lewisham and Community Teachsport ............................... 38  
4. Home Office, Clinks and Social Firms UK ............................................... 40  
5. Voscur and Bristol Compact ................................................................... 42  
6. Sutton Compact Group: Infrastructure Support and Capacity Building Fund ...................................................................................................................... 44
Compact Innovation Award

Shortlist:

1. Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group 46
2. Work Redbridge and Volunteer Centre Redbridge 48
3. Redbridge First Response Service 50
4. Newcastle Open Doors Consortium 52
5. Sutton Compact Group: Social Value Framework 54
7. Watford and Three Rivers Trust 58

Compact Leadership Award

Shortlist:

1. Lola Barrett – Chair of Merton Voluntary Service Council 60
2. Mark Hubbard – Bristol Compact Liaison Officer 62
3. Department for Work and Pensions – Compact team 64

Local Compact Partnership Award

Shortlist:

1. Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner 66
2. Essex Compact Steering Group 68
3. Voluntary Sector Liaison Group: Newcastle New Compact 70
4. Peterborough Plus VCSE Partnership 72
5. Quaker Social Action: Futureproof 74
6. Surrey County Council and Surrey Compact 76
7. St. Albans Museum and Galleries Trust 78
Overview

Merton’s Community Health Champions project is a partnership between London Borough of Merton Public Health, Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC), five members of community groups, and the NHS through LiveWell Merton (HRCH). The programme identifies, recruits and trains Community Health Champions from diverse backgrounds to support local community groups and their members, and promote healthy lifestyles within hard to reach, at risk communities.

There is an income, health and skills gap between the east and west of Merton. The Community Health Champions project is focused on the more deprived east of Merton and on those communities that are harder to engage or have specific health needs. The aim is to tackle health inequalities and support health improvement by developing skills within community groups themselves.

The programme, run in partnership with MVSC, voluntary groups and LiveWell Merton, encourages local people to volunteer their time to motivate, empower and support their peers to make realistic, healthy lifestyle choices to benefit their long term health.

The Health Champions are members of community groups representing residents in the deprived east of Merton. Many already volunteer in the community, or are frontline staff in community settings and have regular contact with local people. The Health Champions raise awareness of local opportunities to encourage a healthy lifestyle, for example stop smoking classes, advice on nutrition and reducing alcohol consumption, and can signpost people towards available support programmes.

Volunteers receive training and support from MVSC and LiveWell Merton to give them the skills, knowledge and confidence to help them make a difference in their community. They also take a Royal Society of Public Health NVQ accredited health improvement course.

The Health Champions’ toolkit includes a health guide booklet, with information about healthy lifestyles and free clinical prevention services, e.g. childhood immunisations and cancer screenings. It includes space for people to write down goals they want to achieve and to track their progress.
Impact

The Health Champions play a lead role in encouraging people in their local community to participate in activities and services to promote a healthy lifestyle, and supported more than 132 local people between April and August 2014.

A total of 21 people who live, work and volunteer in Merton have so far signed up to be Community Health Champions to encourage others in the community to make healthier lifestyle choices. MVSC worked with a range of Black and Minority Ethnic organisations including EMC, Focus4One, African Educational Cultural Health Organisation and the Association of Polish Families to ensure engagement of diverse communities. Health Champions come from local community groups and are respected by their members. This makes it easier for people who may have previously felt excluded because of language or culture to find out about and access the health support and services available to them. The goal is to identify and recruit champions from all communities of interest in the east of Merton during 2014/15.

The Community Health programme has wider implications than health improvement, as MVSC provides support to the participating community groups to develop their organisational capacities. In addition, MVSC has worked directly with the community groups to formulate bids for the East Merton Community Health and Wellbeing Fund. These have used evidence on local need and solutions drawn from the frontline work of the Health Champions, and passed on directly from the community. This means that commissioned interventions meet the needs of the communities within Merton that are most disadvantaged.

Pictured: The first health champions who have been trained, with their certificate from the Royal Society of Public Health with Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Dr Kay Eilbert, Director of Public Health.
Overview

Bristol BME Voice has worked to promote the inclusion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people and communities in Bristol’s public agencies - and among organisations working with those communities.

Since the demise of organisations such as the Black Development Agency and Bristol Race Equality, Bristol BME Voice (BBV) has brought together new partnerships to champion race equality. The key objective is to increase opportunities for BME people and communities in Bristol to have a greater say in decision making processes impacting on their lives within the city. In particular, BBV focuses on issues related to health, education, employment and criminal justice.

BBV activities include the following:

1) **BME Fair**: This annual event (run in partnership with SARI, Voscur and Bristol City Council) enabled BME organisations to showcase positive work, demonstrate delivery of services to communities and celebrate achievements through Awards recognition. The categories include Young Motivator, Improving BME Lives, Tackling Inequality, Exclusion or Disadvantage, and Demonstrating Resilience through Difficult Times.

2) **Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality**: The manifesto, developed through a partnership of organisations, is a call to public and voluntary agencies to ensure that race equality remains a high priority in public sector strategies and services. It is a revival of Bristol’s former Joint Declaration on Race Equality. It includes work under the headings: education and young people, mental health, criminal justice and economic inclusion.

3) **BME Diversity Group in West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)**: Several organisations worked together to ensure that race/equality issues are embedded in the LEP’s strategies and policies aimed at developing employability and training.

4) **Commissioning and BME organisations**: Provided workshops in partnership with Bristol City Council’s BME Employees’ Group and Bristol Compact to support BME organisations in commissioning processes, and to work better together.
Impact

Bristol BME Voice is committed to ensuring Bristol people have a voice and that it is reflective of the diverse communities it serves.

**BME Fair** – BBV organised this event alongside their partners. Black-led organisations showcased their work, and individuals and organisations were recognised for achievements in serving different sectors of the community. Awards were presented by the Bristol Mayor, and the event helped to raise the profile of Bristol’s BME sector. BBV want future events to be community-led, and have partnered with Avon and Somerset Black Police Association who will host this year’s event.

**Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality** – Community Partners engaged in a consultation to formalise actions and priorities, with the aim of influencing change for Bristol. These actions and priorities include:

- Lack of representation of BME people in senior positions in public agencies in the city
- Addressing BME under-representation in some mental health services
- Addressing BME over-representation in other services (e.g. sectioning)
- Disproportionate numbers of BME males in prisons and criminal justice system

Communities were invited to consult with partners at the Stop and Search Summit in September before the launch.

**Commissioning and BME organisations** – BBV supported research commissioned by the police which focussed on recruitment, and a subsequent seminar with young people around Stop and Search. A film was commissioned by a local film maker which will be aired at the Stop and Search Summit.

**BME Diversity Group in West of England LEP** – called for an Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out on the LEP’s strategy and services. A working group is producing an action plan for BME inclusion.
JobCentre Plus Harlesden

Overview

Harlesden JobCentre Plus (JCP) worked with a wide range of partners to address specific barriers to work faced by Black and Minority Ethnic and other disadvantaged communities. Partners included JCP Harlesden, Price Waterhouse Coopers and community members and groups in Harlesden.

Harlesden JCP staff actively participated in a co-creation process to understand - from residents - the issues and needs of service users, and involve local communities in the design and delivery of local services. They worked alongside the local community, voluntary and community sector organisations, and public and private sector partners.

Harlesden is an area of London which is very multi-cultural; according to JCP Harlesden, over half of residents were born outside of England, and 45% do not speak English.

This innovative community/customer-led approach has resulted in actions to address the needs of BME groups, notably the Somali community, which makes up the largest percentage of the population of any BME group in the area.

JCP staff held meetings and hosted open discussions with the community and partners. By working collaboratively they identified communication as a primary concern.

JCP staff identified solutions - including the delivery of outreach activity, and the introduction of a ‘Community Desk’ in the Jobcentre, which was staffed by a local community group. The Community Desk provided an interface between local people with language barriers and JCP staff.

Impact

Outcomes have included:

- Breaking down communication barriers;
- Building trust;
- Better signposting, encouraging individuals to take up services both in the JCP and in the community;
• Improved understanding of community issues amongst JCP staff; and
• Raised awareness of the JCP offer, collectively helping to level the playing field for a disadvantaged customer group.

The approach is quoted as contributing to a 15% reduction in Harlesden’s claimant count since April 2013.

Harlesden has applied this collaborative method of working to target other entrenched barriers to work, e.g. ex-offending, drug and alcohol addiction, and gang membership. It is endorsed by Price Waterhouse Coopers as ‘A fantastic example of working in partnership with the local community, the voluntary sector, employers, claimants and the education sector to co-create a more efficient and effective outcome for individuals’.
Sova Support Link and ‘The Bridge Project’

Overview

Sova Support Link (SSL) is a charity working across London supporting ex-offenders with serious psychological problems. They work with those individuals who are leaving prison or hospital who have extremely limited options for social inclusion or for re-integration into their communities.

SSL has formed a partnership with Oxleas NHS trust and the Bridge (a community charity) to create ‘The Bridge Project’. The project offers new opportunities for ex-offenders who are normally unable to access leisure facilities to develop social skills.

SSL began in South East London in 2009, with funding from the NHS and Lloyds TSB. The original partnership was between the Police, Probation Service and the NHS. Each organisation had differing views on how the service should be organised and the relationship developed. Now, with Sova’s involvement, they have worked effectively and successfully for the benefit of clients and volunteers alike.

SSL’s clients are a demonised and discriminated group. Many have committed serious sexual or violent crimes and spent years in various institutions. This was the first project to try to improve the lives of offenders with personality disorders.

Volunteers, working in pairs or small groups, model appropriate adult relationships for clients. They develop and encourage new interests with them - from cricket and cycling to reading and cinema - as well as helping fill in forms, or just meeting to chat.

Started this year, 'The Bridge' has been a great success and has helped reduce clients' isolation. Clients meet with volunteers and project staff in the café. Activities include board games, art work, films and most importantly cooking and eating together. New skills are acquired and a space to meet and talk is provided. Clients have produced three newsletters describing their experiences. They are immensely proud of their achievements.
Clients are involved in recruiting volunteers, training and attending Steering Group meetings. The project aims to increase confidence and responsibility in our clients and ensure their voice is heard in all areas of the work.

**Impact**

Clients at the Bridge Project say the following:

'It makes me feel I can be part of a group again....'
'It allows people like me to express their feelings through activities with drawing, painting and cooking ....'

And in a poem one writes:
'They wash over you with welcome and warmth and take away the burdensome thoughts ...."'

Clients also say they:
- Are more able to make decisions and take responsibility.
- Feel more empowered and involved in their community.
- Have begun to change their views of themselves, from being defined by their offence, and are now more confident of their ability to desist from reoffending.

Volunteers have shown:
- Increased confidence and competence.
- Increased awareness of the needs of vulnerable adults.
- Increased interest in pursuing careers and education in the judicial system.

An evaluation of the project so far shows:
- The start of peer relationships.
- A reduction in anxiety amongst attendees.
- Participants increasingly involved in organising the evening activities.

Our last annual report shows 362 mentoring sessions occurred last year between volunteers and 32 ex-offenders. Reoffending rates have been greatly reduced among the client base. Of the total client base, 84% are still engaged in the project and remain in the community.
Overview

A pre-consultation engagement process was undertaken to develop a new Equality Code of Practice for the Sunderland Compact, which reflected current equality legislation. A wide range of local Compact signatories were invited or identified by the VCS community to develop a broad statement of principles, a draft language for the code, and to plan the actual consultation language and process.

Over the last year, the Sunderland Compact Implementation and Resources Group (CIRG), has been reviewing and considering the implications of the Equality Act 2010. This has led to a number of conversations and short papers at the CIRG on developing a Code of Practice for Equality, and consultation on the Code.

As part of the process we invited colleagues and partners from a broad set of stakeholders (in line with Compact principles 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and 5.5) to a series of three workshops facilitated jointly by Sunderland Partnership and the City Council. The workshops were held in a very positive atmosphere between the 19th June and the 16th July 2014.

The groups looked at the key equality issues local Compact organisations wanted to tackle together. They also considered key principles, ways of working or specific contributions that they wanted to share or to be reflected in the Code.

The draft code was also discussed at Inclusive Communities, the key partnership dealing with equality, to update them on the process and to take account of their thoughts.

Between each workshop developments were shared with those who had either attended or were part of the core group of stakeholders. Comments were requested on the work to date and feedback added in before the next meeting.

In addition to the above the actual language to be used, documentation and processes to be used in the consultation were also developed by the same group to ensure continuity and to maximise engagement.
Impact

Sunderland Partnership and key Compact signatories worked together to plan a process that made the following impacts:

- Identified key equality issues (with particular reference to Compact principle 5.4).
- Helped to develop new and refresh existing networks between organisations.
- Allowed the Compact to benefit from a wider scope of expertise.
- Produced a draft Code of Practice for Equality in a collaborative way.
- Engaged proactively with the Partnership’s Independent Advisory Groups and other equality groups in the city (principle 5.1 and 5.2).
- Established a solid base line/case study for how to conduct a consultation process from end to end.

It was agreed that the consultation would be over a Compact compliant period of twelve weeks following the meaningful engagement guidelines. Sunderland Partnership will distribute and advertise the consultation along with the Disability Independent Advisory Group, Sunderland BME Network, the LGBT Equality Forum, Compact signatories and the Council’s Area VCS Networks.

Where possible issues or concerns about the Code will be addressed at the end of the consultation process, or if felt critical enough, as they arise.

The aim of the process was to be transparent, understandable and inclusive. The partners involved are very keen to continue engaging positively with any individual, group, community or organisation that wishes to do so. This development process has been a positive, stimulating and creative process that has reinforced the underlying importance of partnership working, equality practice, the voluntary sector and the Compact to Sunderland’s continued transformation process.
Voluntary Norfolk: Voluntary Sector Engagement Project

Overview

Norfolk’s Voluntary Sector Engagement Project, funded by the Health and Wellbeing Board, continues the strategic integration of the voluntary sector started through the original Compact agreements and developed under Local Area Agreements.

It means that Health and Wellbeing Board discussions benefit from VCS experience and expertise (two of the Board’s three Priority Champions are VCS reps). It also means Board members have easy access to VCS expertise in and out of Board meetings through forums and networks with accountable structures. This adds up to better decisions being made, better relationships with commissioners, and means VCS organisations can contribute to integrated service planning without compromising their competitive position as service providers. The Project enables the Health and Wellbeing Board to deliver its aim of effective and transparent design and development of policies, programmes and public services. Specifically it means that:

- Board meetings benefit from the contributions of three voluntary sector representatives, elected by the sector to represent sector interests.
- Board members and their commissioning teams have access to specialist knowledge through VCS provider forums as well as Board related task and finish working groups.
- Multi-sector networks and forums are facilitated to promote a dialogue with the sector.

For VCOs, the Project means they are:

- Better informed about the strategic context in which they operate, and the way their own services contribute to strategic priorities.
- Better placed to contribute frontline knowledge to inform service planning and delivery.
- Better equipped to build effective relationships with commissioners and help ensure that social, environmental and economic value is understood and recognised.

The more effective relationships mean that:
There is better shared understanding of the role played by the VCS in delivering the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Board and associated partners.

There is strategic co-ordination of sector input into key areas of health and wellbeing service development and activity.

The sector is effectively represented in relevant health and wellbeing forums, networks and partnerships.

There are effective arrangements in place to draw on sector specialisms and perspectives at appropriate levels, for example from county/district-wide and strategic to local and operational.

**Impact**

The project has been especially influential in:

1. **Welfare Reform**

By spring 2013, VCS agencies had drawn the Voluntary Sector Engagement Project’s attention to the cumulative and disproportionate impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 on vulnerable people. As a result, the Project worked with them and Public Health colleagues to deliver a seminar (June 2013) for Board members and service commissioners. The report from this seminar was discussed fully by the whole Board who subsequently agreed to:

- Recognise inequality (rather than poverty) as the most significant factor in achieving health and wellbeing.
- Target interventions on vulnerable individuals rather than focusing only on geographic areas.
- Establish a programme of local community-led projects in areas of deprivation to tackle health and wellbeing issues.
- Adapt the presentation of JSNA data to reflect the impact of inequality.

2. **Mental health and learning disability issues**

The project worked with private sector agencies and commissioners for both disabilities and mental health, to identify cross-cutting themes for all provider organisations. These included the cost implications of changes to service delivery (such as transport cost) and commissioners’ ability to be flexible about these. The joint ‘Moving Forward Together Action Plan’ included embedding formal opportunities for the voluntary sector to feed into commissioning boards and improving other opportunities for developing commissioner/sector dialogue so that the voluntary sector is involved at the earliest opportunity and able to contribute to the design of programmes and services.
Overview

Children England and the TUC, in consultation with their memberships, have developed a ‘Declaration of Interdependence’. This builds a new relationship between the public and voluntary sectors that work with children, based on their shared public service ethos and skilled workforces.

‘Declaration of Interdependence’ is a document that aims to reunite public sector services, charities and voluntary groups in their shared vision and commitment to children, young people and families. It identifies price-driven competition and procurement as eroding the capacity and morale of their collective services and workforces, causing damage to services today, and risking even greater damage tomorrow.

The declaration begins by re-framing relationships between the public and voluntary sectors, by reasserting the unique and important values of public service and civic leadership. It also calls for reforms to current commissioning and contracting trends (at a time when the Cabinet Office is consulting on procurement reforms).

Children England and the TUC believe that their reforms could unlock a far more creative and collaborative pooling of charity and state resources for children than competitive contracting could ever allow. They are aiming to generate agreement across employers and funders to stem the incessant downwards pressure on the salaries, capacity and skills of their workforce and to end the ‘false economy’ of people being forced into casual working and zero-hours contracts, or being paid so poorly that their families require benefits to sustain themselves and their own children feature in our shameful child poverty rates.

The Declaration calls for longer term public spending and investment plans, and a spirit of social partnership, to build a reliable infrastructure for children, families and communities in the long term, rather than the short term shopping exercises that simply discard unsuccessful bidders and lose all the social capital and expertise that they have to contribute.
**Impact**

So far, 39 organisations have become signatories of the Declaration. These range from large, service providing charities such as Barnardo’s and Action for Children, to unions such as UNISON and Unite, to campaigners such as the National Coalition for Independent Action. Compact Voice has also recently become a signatory.

At a time when procurement practice can pit organisation against organisation and sector against sector, the Declaration has bound together an incredibly diverse group of organisations. It has shown that despite differences in approach or emphasis, the values and aims that unite us are far stronger.

The policy recommendations contained in the Declaration are deliberately challenging. Yet, each of the signatories has committed to working towards their aims. Given the sector leaders that are involved, this is a major step towards improving collaboration.

The Declaration has also been used by signatories to start conversations with local authorities about how they can work better together, pooling their skills and resources to achieve better outcomes for children. As a result, one local authority has already referenced the Declaration and included its recommendations in its Strategic Joint Commissioning Framework 2014-15.

You can read the Declaration of Interdependence at [www.childrenengland.org.uk/declaration-of-interdependence](http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/declaration-of-interdependence)
Transforming Families in Merton

Overview

Merton’s Transforming Families Programme focuses on the Phipps Bridge estate and brings together Merton Council, Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC), Circle Housing Merton Priory, South Merton Community Association and other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to engage residents. Over the last year, a range of events and interventions have enabled partners to map need, develop interventions and harness the social capital on the estate to support families.

The Department of Communities and Local Government’s ‘Troubled Families’ initiative is a national programme targeted at helping troubled families to turn their lives around. In Merton, the initiative is being managed primarily through a Transforming Families (TF) Team, including a targeted project in the Phipps Bridge Estate, which is one of the most deprived areas in the borough.

A Community Development Worker focusing on Phipps Bridge started in July 2013, and works for MVSC in conjunction with the Transforming Families Team.

The Phipps Bridge Project encourages healthy living, gang exit strategies, and help with education, training and employment for families. The work of the Community Development Worker has been to engage residents to identify needs, support referrals and build capacity and resilience within the community and reduce isolation.

The 2014 engagement mechanisms have included:

- Successful ‘We Love Phipps Bridge’ day, with a number of organisations represented, the community flat cleaned, and over 80 residents in attendance.
- June Programme, including ‘Phipps Bridge Matters’ week with local services such as Age UK and Sustainable Merton participating.
- Playday for local children.
- International Summer Fair at South Mitcham Community Centre (SMCC).
- An ‘I love PB’ assembly with the children at Benedict School.
- ‘Tea and cakes’ session with Benedict Primary School children attending SMCC.
- ‘Guerrilla’ knitting sessions decorating trees.
- Connected TF families with Public Health to support families with planning, budgeting and cooking their own meals.
- Community Chest launched to fund residents’ community action arising from engagement events.
- Utilising Asset Based Community Development approach.
- Junior group at Phipps Bridge Youth Centre.

**Impact**

The Community Development Worker has established appropriate networks between MVSC and the TF Team. They have also established local stakeholder networks such as South Mitcham Community Association, Merton Priory Homes, Friends of Phipps Bridge, Haslemere and Benedict Primary Schools, Mitcham Schools cluster, Wimbledon Guild, Phipps Bridge Youth Club and Leisure Services.

To date, ten families on the estate have been identified as meeting the criteria for the TF programme and all have completed the programme. The team is on track to meet the full year target of engaging with twelve families on the estate.

In addition to the individual casework, community development activity has been undertaken. Currently, over 20 young people are being provided with additional support by the Phipps Bridge Youth Club and at the Phipps Bridge gym, which focused on diverting these young people from potential involvement in gangs and other youth crime activity.

Merton’s TF programme is ranked ninth in London and is in the top 50 in the country for its ‘Troubled Families’ performance.

The biggest impact has been empowering residents to develop and lead projects, supported by the Community Chest and the Community Development Worker. We have identified a range of assets (skills) within the estate that residents are now starting to share, and are supporting each other. These include baby massage, nutrition, computer skills, fitness lessons and turning a community flat into a hub for support and advice.
Overview

JobCentre Plus (JCP) Woolwich worked in partnership with Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) and community hubs to proactively engage and support ex-gang members and victims of domestic violence into employment.

Woolwich Common and Riverside wards fall within the Borough of Greenwich, ranked 27th of 326 Districts against Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Woolwich is also culturally diverse and has the highest percentage of non-white ethnic residents in the Borough, with 192 languages spoken.

The four members of the Partnership Team at Woolwich Jobcentre, plus their former manager, worked to actively engage with community organisations – notably CACT – in order to reach and intensively engage with ex-gang members and victims of domestic violence on a one to one basis.

Through their partnership with Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT), and CACT’s ground breaking and innovative programmes which harness the power of football to engage socially excluded groups, the JCP Partnership Team is able to encourage and support disadvantaged customers to improve their lives through work.

Impact

This work has had a large impact on local communities in Woolwich, as a result of the engagement at the heart of this nomination.

They engaged with:

- Voluntary and community sector organisations and other partners, where a long standing relationship has been established, with a new emphasis on gangs and domestic violence;

- Customers having multiple barriers to work - through working with CACT on a daily basis the JCP team engages and works intensively with small caseloads;

- Employers, to secure job opportunities;
- Other JCP staff, sharing the team’s specialist knowledge by delivering training, in order to extend the reach and impact of their approach; and

- Other stakeholders and influencers, championing and raising awareness of the requirements of these customer groups in the context of Social Justice at high profile events, in order to inform and influence strategic partners and policy makers.

This community partnership approach has resulted in a high level of intermediate and job outcomes, and wider social benefits.
Daffodil Advocacy Project

Overview

The Daffodil Advocacy Project provides independent advocacy support to up to thirteen people with a learning disability. They are supported to work as volunteers in the role of quality checkers of local services provided for people with a learning disability.

This year they will work to quality check over ten local service providers ranging from residential homes, supported living schemes, day opportunities and respite homes through engagement with service users. The project provides an excellent example of partnership working with the Local Authority, health services and local service providers to enable vulnerable people to have a voice and improve their services.

The Quality Checking (Redbridge) project is two-fold; it creates volunteering opportunities for people with a learning disability, who are often excluded from paid work and/or volunteering. It also supports such individuals to become a peer-to-peer support group engaging with service users to improve people’s health, care and well-being. The project has recruited and trained a support group of up to thirteen people with learning disabilities, calling themselves Experienced Voices, to work as volunteer quality checkers developing their skills and knowledge to:

- Visit a wide range of ten service providers, nine last year, including those with complex needs, residential and supported living to quality check the service.
- Consult with service users to find out their thoughts/experience of the service and quality of the service.
- Write easy read reports on their findings and present these to the service providers, service users and commissioners with a timescale for improvement.
- Work in partnership with commissioners, service providers and decision makers to feedback their findings and bring about change and/or highlight good practice.
- Share information with service users and service providers about other relevant local services.
- Facilitate meetings with service providers supporting service users where there are specific issues.
• Carry out further visits to check whether recommendations in reports have been acted upon.
• Present the views of those they have engaged with to local decision making forums to influence change, improve the quality of life and minimise the risk of social exclusion.

Impact

The project was run as a pilot in 2013/14 and was so successful that it received further funding from the London Borough of Redbridge. Findings from the pilot show that the majority of service providers supported the project and welcomed the visit as a positive tool to improve their own service delivery.

Engagement with service users and feedback received showed they felt able to speak more openly to their peers than they would to an inspector/council officer and felt this was a more effective way of communicating their needs.

Meetings with service users during the visits are always carried out with the service users’ needs being of paramount importance. A variety of tools are employed to facilitate meaningful engagement according to individual needs.

The project has become an “extra pair of eyes” for vulnerable people, working with the Learning Disability Commissioners to share information. Any specific issues and concerns are highlighted to commissioners, for them to address through their own monitoring visits. Volunteers have received training on safeguarding and any concerns or signs of abuse have been reported to the Safeguarding Adults Team. Through meaningful engagement with service users, the volunteers have reported an increase in their own knowledge and awareness. They have gained new skills including report writing, information gathering, representation, independent travelling skills and increased confidence in networking and interacting with the public sector, health authority, service users and service providers to change and improve service delivery.

Pictured: Experienced Voices - some of the volunteers who have been trained as quality checkers for the Daffodils Advocacy “Quality Checking” project
Marches Social Inclusion Mini Group

Overview

Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA), Shropshire Providers Consortium (SPC), Telford & Wrekin CVS, and Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service (HVOSS) have worked together to secure voluntary sector engagement with the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The partners formed the Marches Social Inclusion Mini Group, and developed a comprehensive programme of engagement activity, targeted at 4,109 voluntary organisations in the Marches.

With the anticipated introduction of new EU Funding, joint work between the voluntary sector and LEPs became vitally important. Voluntary sector involvement in the development of the Marches LEP’s European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy for 2014-2020 became a priority, particularly in relation to the social inclusion theme. The challenge of designing an engagement mechanism to cover the entire Marches area, with a population of more than 660,000 people, 27,095 businesses, 4,109 registered voluntary organisations and an estimated 290,737 formal volunteers was recognised and met. Robust voluntary sector engagement required the bringing together of VCS leaders from across three local authority areas: Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire.

A partnership has been established between VCSA, SPC, Telford & Wrekin CVS, and HVOSS. Working together, these organisations have established a body that works with the Marches LEP.

This new Social Inclusion partnership is also supported by Shropshire Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council. A Social Inclusion Mini Group steers work and a Social Inclusion Stakeholder Group allows engagement with voluntary organisations and public sector partners across the Marches.

Activities included:

- More than fifteen ‘mini group’ meetings bringing leads across the Marches together
- Six stakeholder engagement events.
- Two research projects.
- Development of a Marches VCS evidence base.
• Publication of a Marches Social Inclusion evidence base.
• Completion of ESIF Strategy and supporting documentation.
• Regular newsletter and e-communications.
• Publication of all work on easily accessible webpages - http://vcsvoice.org/what-we-do/eu-funding-2/.

Impact

Organisations that had never before worked together due to administrative boundaries and distance (the Marches area covers 2,300 square miles and is one of the largest LEPs geographically) are now working together with the LEP.

• Monthly meetings have achieved more than the intended results and built robust relationships between areas.
• Regular stakeholder events/workshops have secured engagement of over 140 individual organisations.
• The Marches LEP’s ESIF strategy and other documents are built on VCS knowledge and are reflective of local need.
• Stakeholder events have facilitated networking across the Marches and the hope is that those new connections can be supported further to allow joint bidding and delivery.
• Networks have been utilised to reach approximately 1,000 voluntary sector organisations, including those unable to become more actively involved.
• Research carried out has informed work with the LEP but has also been used for other purposes, including external bid making.
• The Voluntary Sector and Social Inclusion work has a Champion on the LEP Board, supported by an operational Lead Office.
• Engagement has been designed to ensure that the Marches are able to develop a relationship with the Big Lottery and secure match funding/support.
• Working together, the Social Inclusion Mini Group has applied for the Big Lottery’s Building Better Opportunities Fund (Partnership Development Fund).
• The engagement activity carried out has enabled the group to build a robust future plan including training in managing EU funds; building new partnerships to secure new opportunities; and of course undertaking more engagement work!
Overview

The design and pre-procurement engagement around the Community Rights and Neighbourhood Planning strategy and programme for 2015-16 has been a detailed process. It has allowed structured engagement with interested civil society organisations at a number of stages towards the advertisement of the contract.

The Department for Communities and Local Government helps create great places to live and work. Using the Localism Act 2011, DCLG have created new powers for local people and communities to shape what happens in their area.

DCLG’s objectives are to increase the numbers of communities that are genuinely more in control of their physical, social and economic environments: from decision making to delivery. It also wants to establish a different way of working with providers of public services where interaction, engagement and ownership around the prioritisation, design and delivery of services is accepted as the norm.

The £50 million support package which delivers the department’s work on community rights, including neighbourhood planning, comes to an end in March 2015. The department has an allocated budget for 2015-16 and is keen that in developing and tendering a contract (or contracts) for programmes in 2015-16, that it:

a) Builds on the knowledge that the department and their delivery partners had built up over the last three years;

b) Takes into account views from communities and community organisations who have direct knowledge of how the department’s current support has played out on the ground; and

c) Undertakes their policy deliberations in an open and transparent manner.

This approach has seen the creation of a genuinely reiterative process which has shaped the final offer. The approach included engagement with the department’s Communities Partnership Board, a number of specific discussion groups to test proposals, and two pre-procurement suppliers’ events.
Impact

The approach the project took has had a direct impact on the shaping of the community rights and neighbourhood planning programme for the forthcoming year. Specifically, feedback from civil society organisations included that:

- Not all communities have the same access to the opportunities presented by the rights and related policies, and the department should do more to target specific communities.
- The department’s strategy needs to fit with other elements of the wider programme – especially Neighbourhood Planning.
- There are already a lot of networks around, and creating more would create confusion.

These reflected and supported more informal sources of feedback and led directly to the programme for 2015-16:

- Having a clearer focus on communities who found it harder to access and use the community rights, including targeted support for communities taking their first steps towards use of the community rights.
- Aligning the community rights and neighbourhood planning programmes more closely and building in contract lots which cut across all elements of the programme to mitigate any potential duplication.
- Creating greater clarity on what was meant by a “network” and how all parts of the programme could benefit.

Additionally this iterative process, which has included two pre-procurement supplier events, has shaped the department’s decision-making on the style and number of lots it is offering and has enabled potential suppliers to ask questions ahead of the procurement. The department is optimistic this engagement will lead to quality bids once the contract is advertised. Partners involved in the process have commended the department on this approach:

“Locality commends DCLG’s efforts as part of their 2015-16 process to consult meaningfully with the sector and with suppliers before the procurement process starts. This has shown exceptional effort to improve understanding both of the impact and delivery of the community rights support programme.”

- Locality

“We appreciated the open and participative approach to discussing this. DCLG continue to the lead the way in engaging with civil society organisations.”

- Plunkett Foundation
Newcastle Voluntary Sector Liaison Group

Overview

This nomination is submitted jointly by the Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS) and Newcastle City Council (NCC). The nomination is for the Voluntary Sector Liaison Group (VSLG) which includes within its remit oversight of the New Newcastle Compact.

The terms of reference of the VSLG reflect New Newcastle Compact principles and commitments. Agenda items reflect the five themes identified within the Compact as being of most relevance to Newcastle:

1. Allocating resources efficiently;
2. Promoting equality, community cohesion and social inclusion;
3. Consulting and involving the VCS, service users and governance bodies;
4. Promoting and supporting volunteering;
5. Managing changes to services.

The VSLG ensures there is systematic and regular dialogue between partners. This enables current and sometimes difficult issues to be discussed. The focus of VSLG is voluntary and community action and the process (alternate chairs / venue and open agenda) aims to involve everyone at an equal level but at the same time give access to key decision makers.

Membership includes six Newcastle City Council members and six voluntary and community sector members. Inspired by the New Newcastle Compact, one of the Locality Directors of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is now also an integral part of the group.

The group meets four times a year to discuss issues of joint interest such as policy, funding, national legislation, as well as the on-going relationship between NCC and Newcastle VCS and Newcastle Compact issues. VSLG is NCC’s formal consultative mechanism for discussing strategic issues that impact on Newcastle VCS.

VSLG also champions and oversees the New Newcastle Compact, and ensures it remains fit for purpose and is embedded in the work partners do together for the benefit of the people and communities within Newcastle.
Impact

- The terms of reference of the VSLG are informed by Compact principles, as are all VSLG agenda items. The aim is to enable the sharing of information and for partners to be able to respond, at the earliest possible stage, in shaping and responding to challenges and also to new opportunities. For example, VSLG discussions on challenges presented by asset transfer, the opportunities presented by social value and European Structural Investment Programme (ESIP).

- Members of VSLG often formulate joint partnership responses to central government consultations – for example, the Local Sustainability Fund consultation.

- In September 2012, the VSLG embarked on a partnership approach to reviewing and completely rewriting Newcastle’s Compact. VSLG established a time limited, cross-sector Compact Working Group to review the Newcastle Compact. This included representatives of CCGs. The co-design approach to developing the New Compact has informed a deeper level of understanding of respective statutory contexts, agendas and differences in terminology.

- VSLG coordinated the consultation on the New Newcastle Compact and used this as an opportunity to raise Compact awareness.

- Representatives of the VSLG are engaged in on-going dialogue with other potential Compact public sector partners – e.g. the Police and Crime Commissioner and Parish Councils.

- An update on the New Newcastle Compact is now a standard VSLG agenda item and members of the group advise on how best to continue to raise the profile of the Compact.
Research carried out in 2012 indicated that more could be done to help HMRC’s most vulnerable customers. In response HMRC formed a working group with TaxAid, Tax Help for Older People, Gingerbread, Citizens Advice and Age UK to discuss how they could improve their services.

The project team consulted extensively and worked in partnership with some key VCS stakeholders to design, develop and deliver a new service for customers who needed extra help, which was launched nationally in June 2014.

Working with the key stakeholder group, HMRC designed an alternative to the current enquiry/call centre model, based on customers’ needs and characteristics. This was piloted in the North East for seven months in 2013.

Alongside this, HMRC launched a formal consultation running from 14 March to 24 May 2013. HMRC responded to every organisation, local authority and MP commenting on the proposals, and offered them the chance to speak with Derek Tilstone, the project lead. Throughout the summer, Derek and the project team carried out an extensive programme of engagement, exchanging information and views with local and national groups as diverse as the DeafVibe Café in Stoke and the Welsh Language Commissioner. HMRC were concerned that not enough of the target customers would respond to the formal consultation, so to hear their views of a wider group first hand. A series of UK-wide customer workshops was also held.

HMRC also consulted its most valuable resource - its staff - who were able to highlight the needs of customers in their communities.

VCS partners can now hand clients directly into an enhanced service, staffed by advisers extensively trained to deal with vulnerable customers. Advisers spend as long as it takes to resolve the customer’s issue, arranging face to face appointments where necessary, which can take place in a number of accessible venues or even in the customer’s home. Crucially HMRC can also refer clients, who need independent advice or support, or whose relationship with HMRC has broken down, to the VCS who work with them to conclusion.
Impact

HMRC launched the service nationally in June 2014. Their stakeholder manager continues to engage with the VCS through a dedicated mailbox and monthly working group, constantly refining the design and working together to overcome glitches.

The impact on HMRC’s customers has been significant. To date over 30,000 customers have benefited, with nearly 6,000 of these having had face to face appointments.

HMRC’s evaluation has highlighted some amazing customer experiences. People who have been through extremely difficult personal circumstances such as bereavement or relationship breakdowns have finally felt that HMRC is on their side and willing to help them.

One of HMRC’s stakeholders said:

‘The way HMRC engaged a core group of VCS partners in this project has been a model of effective partnership working and engagement. Throughout the process HMRC colleagues demonstrated that they genuinely value contributions made by the VCS, recognising our expertise and input as core to achieving their vision of a better service for customers needing enhanced support.’

- Caroline Davey, Director of Policy, Advice & Communications at Gingerbread

And a story of one of HMRC’s customers:

A customer called regarding several outstanding tax returns, describing herself as being at the end of her rope with despair. The adviser worked through each one with her and arranged multiple call-backs. The adviser received a letter from the customer saying ‘her kindness, understanding and empathy were genuine – her approach professional and reassuring. When she said she would phone she did and never dropped the baton until the case was finally concluded’.

Pictured right: Some of the pilot delivery staff involved in the project (the front-line advisers who help HMRC’s customers), celebrating the success of the pilot.
Brighton and Hove City Council: Third Sector, Communities and Equalities Team

Overview

Brighton and Hove City Council’s Third Sector, Communities and Equalities Team has been nominated by Brighton and Hove Community Works. Brighton and Hove City Council’s Communities and Third Sector Policy 2014-2017 is a key policy for the city, and demonstrates the City Council’s commitment to developing a sustainable and effective third sector and strong community activity. It provides leadership and a coherent citywide approach to bring together other agencies in achieving this goal.

During 2013/4, the City Council worked with Community Works and other partners to create this new and significant corporate policy. The policy aims to ensure that the city has an increasingly efficient and more effective third sector; one that is ready and able to bid for and deliver public services, that enables citizens and communities to have a strong voice in decision making about public services and supports community resilience and well-being through independent citizen and community activity. The council’s culture and systems enable a collaborative and productive relationship with the third sector, making the best use of its flexibility, creativity and added value.

The Policy brings alive the Compact principles and has turned them into delivery commitments for our local setting, for all partners to contribute towards. While Brighton and Hove has a long history of a thriving third sector, strong cross sector collaboration and sign ups to our local Compact (which was last refreshed in 2009/10), the pressure on the local authority and its changing role has sharpened the focus of what is needed from the third sector.

This Policy sets out what the Council is doing, in partnership with the third sector, in order for the journey towards modernisation to be a shared one, and to ensure the third sector’s future sustainability. The Compact principles underpin its development and implementation. It commits to investment in infrastructure support, community engagement and community development and co-production, collaboration and facilitation of partnership working.

Impact

The impact of the Policy is multi-layered:
• Trust and relationships have been strengthened because third sector groups can see that the Council regards the third sector as having a major role in the city’s success; economically, environmentally, culturally and socially.

• A new partnership (EQUIP – Equalities and Inclusion Partnership) is in place to develop and improve joint working relationships.

• A Commissioning Prospectus programme has been established, with a £3 million+ investment in third sector organisations, which have created and delivered services that are meeting the needs of local citizens. This commissioning approach is more suitable than contracting or grants, and prioritises social value and partnerships.

• Third sector services are delivering on Council Corporate Plan and Brighton & Hove Connected (LSP) Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, for example ensuring children and young people have the best start in life and vulnerable adults are supported to live healthy independent lives.

• £1.8m has been invested in infrastructure support over 3 years, to build the capacity of third sector organisations and of communities to develop groups and services that meet their needs and to have a strong voice in influencing local decision-making. This is providing much needed support to the city’s 2,300 groups – see photo of Sector Star Awards below as one of the services provided by Community Works.

Priority groups are targeted for support including BME, disability, LGBT, faith and groups in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For example, 25 LGBT groups have formed a peer support network, bidding together for funds and providing mutual learning and development.
Merton Adult Education and St. Mark’s Family Centre

Overview

Merton Adult Education (MAE) and St Mark’s Family Centre formed a partnership to develop a user-led centre serving the needs of residents in a deprived area of Mitcham. This is one of many successful projects developed in line with MAE’s commitment to bridging the inequality gap between the east and the west of the borough.

MAE is part of Merton Council and is responsible for delivering the adult education function. Widening participation amongst those furthest removed from education and bridging the economic disadvantage gap between the east and west of the borough is a key priority for MAE.

This work has centred on building effective partnerships in order to gain access to excluded communities. In maximising the expertise of the voluntary and community sector, Merton council successfully works with over 40 community partners to make a real difference to the lives of individuals facing many barriers.

MAE, in partnership with St Mark’s Family Centre, has provided free courses to members of the community who would not have usually accessed these. St Mark’s Family Centre is located in a deprived part of Merton and used by many families who are in need. By putting on courses that are reactive to what the community wants in their local centre, at times that they can attend, barriers to accessing these services are removed. MAE uses its funding to pay for all costs, including room hire and childcare, as well as covering the teaching staff and resources.

Courses include health and well-being, family learning, community integration, and those focusing on improving employability. All courses are very well attended.

Impact

Some learners have progressed through all levels of Health and Social Care qualifications, and have now gone into employment in that field. A number of learners have secured employment as a direct result of their participation in one of our courses, whilst others have progressed onto additional courses.
A learner who started her studies with family learning courses (art, cooking, Indian stories) built her confidence enough to gain a teaching qualification with MAE, along with IT qualifications, which she now uses by returning to St Mark’s to teach IT to over-50s.

In 2004/05, ethnic minority students accounted for just 17% of the student base. Following implementation of the widening participation strategy, 45% of learners on qualification courses and 34% on non-qualification courses are from ethnic minority groups. 47% of students on qualification courses and 35% on non-qualification courses live in disadvantaged wards.

MAE has successfully delivered an employability project based in Mitcham Jobcentre, delivering coaching and training interventions for clients in receipt of benefits. Since January 2014, we have worked with 128 clients, resulting in 25 coming off benefits, three progressing onto a course and five undertaking work experience.

On the Skills Funding Agency Choices website, progression into employment is good as a result of partners involved aligning the vocational courses to the needs of employers, and compares favourably to our neighbours.

The partnership has allowed St Mark’s to bid for funding from other organisations. This will lead to the provision of additional courses which will allow learners to gain vocational qualifications.

Pictured: The Mayor of Merton, Cllr Agatha Akyigyina (centre), at the MAE Achievement Awards
Overview

JobCentre Plus (JCP) Lewisham worked with Community Teachsport, a not for profit community interest company. Together they aimed to provide opportunities through sport for young people to secure careers in the health and fitness industry.

Lewisham is a multi-cultural area populated by a range of diverse communities, neighbourhoods and localities, with over 130 languages spoken. Overall, employment levels in Lewisham are relatively buoyant. Children and young people make up 25 per cent of the population and the average age of the population is young compared to other London boroughs.

Lewisham JCP uses Flexible Funding to jointly fund the project with Lewisham Council, which also provides playing field facilities. The project is delivered in partnership with the Territorial Army (TA), local employers in the fitness industry, and professional sports clubs such as Kent County Cricket Club. The project uses sport as a means of engaging young people in positive activity that helps them to secure employment, and benefits the local community. Local JCP staff have developed an excellent relationship with the project, and participated in project activities themselves such as TA fitness testing.

Lewisham JCP’s partnership with Community Teachsport enables cohorts of young people to access a programme which combines coaching qualifications, employability skills, job matching, work experience opportunities, and first aid training, with motivational sessions delivered by Army reserve personnel.

Impact

The impact of this initiative has been on the lives and employment prospects of the young people concerned, and on the wider community.

It has provided a route way to gaining new skills, qualifications, and local employment. Eight of the first cohort of fifteen have already found employment; young people have applied to join the army reserve; and others have secured first aid and coaching qualifications (which is also of benefit to the local community).
The project has brought further community benefits, for example, the transformation of a run down, unused facility into a well-used local venue for sporting and leisure activities.

The impact has been achieved at minimum cost through use of match funding, and a strong ethos of partnership working, and practical contributions in kind from a range of partner organisations.

JCP Lewisham has now embarked on a second round of the project. They have reviewed its effectiveness, and are now running a similar programme, but with links to health based organisations, and aimed at a wider age group, long term unemployed and those with disabilities. They hope this refresh will enable continued success in meeting appropriate job targets.
Overview

This was a national partnership project in which the Home Office, Clinks and Social Firms UK invited local social enterprises to submit case studies reflecting their experiences of developing real work and training opportunities for offenders. The project engaged successfully with voluntary and statutory partners and resulted in the publication of 20 selected case studies from across England and Wales, and an influential overview report that captured learning about the valuable role of social enterprises in supporting rehabilitation.

In 2013, the Home Office invited Clinks (the national umbrella body for VCSE organisations working with offenders) and Social Firms UK (the UK membership and support organisation for the Work Integration Social Enterprise (WISE) sector) to work in partnership to capture and share learning about the emergent role of local social enterprises in developing real, sustainable employment and training opportunities for offenders.

The project was co-designed by all three partners. Through the networks of Clinks and Social Firms UK, social enterprises across England and Wales were invited to submit brief applications for funding to produce a case study about their work, its challenges and successes. Over 80 submissions were received and assessed by a partnership panel, and 20 were then invited to complete a full case study. The national partners also convened a successful all-day event at which over 50 social enterprises and statutory partners from the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and National Offender Management Service came together and used the Open Space method to generate answers to the question “Providing employment and training opportunities for offenders: How can we grow sustainable social enterprises to support this work?”

The learning from the case studies, informed by the Open Space event, was summarised in an overview report, which was published together with the series of 20 case studies in January 2014. These have been widely disseminated through the Home Office, Clinks and Social Firms UK websites. The findings were shared at Inclusion’s national Welfare to Work Convention in July 2013.
Impact

Low qualifications and lack of employment are recognised within the Government’s strategy for Transforming Rehabilitation as a key social issue related to re-offending. Some local areas have already developed social enterprises as one way to overcome barriers around the employability of ex-offenders. However, when the project started there was very little that brought together learning or examples of effective practice to assist others in doing this.

The project therefore provided an important opportunity for local social enterprises to share their experiences with a national audience. Their experiences of developing sustainable initiatives capable of providing real work and training opportunities for offenders were shared, some of which were led by ex-offenders themselves. Using the extensive networks and websites of the Home Office, Clinks and Social Firms UK, the case studies are now reaching a significant audience of both statutory and VCSE partners, nationally and locally.

The results provide a body of work that will significantly contribute to cross-Government policy thinking about how to embed and support social enterprises working with offenders. They also provide a valuable resource for newly established social enterprises, for those planning to establish social enterprises, for police, prisons and probation providers, for Police and Crime Commissioners, and for local Integrated Offender Management (IOM) partnerships.

The project itself was an excellent example of national Compact working by the three main partners, and is also continuing to inform and support positive partnerships at the local level in order to maximise the opportunities for lasting offender rehabilitation.

See the full series at: www.clinks.org/resources-case-studies/providing-employment-and-training-opportunities-offenders.
Voscur and Bristol Compact

Overview

Voscur and Bristol Compact are nominated for their joint work in using the Compact to advocate on behalf of Bristol VCS organisations. This work has achieved substantial changes in both operations and policy in the city. Voscur hosts the Bristol Compact Liaison Officer on behalf of the Bristol Compact Partners. Representatives of Bristol VCS organisations often request advice about influencing public sector processes. Voscur/Bristol Compact offers direct advice and also advocates on behalf of organisations to achieve changes to processes so that, ultimately, VCS organisations are treated fairly. The Bristol Compact is commonly used to effect those positive changes. Examples include:

- **Neighbourhood Conflict Resolution services commissioning** – the duration of the current contract was reaching its end, and commissioners initiated a confusing discussion about ending funding and re-commissioning new services. Voscur took advice from Bristol Compact and who helped them question the process, so that commissioners adhered to Bristol City Council’s (BCC) Decommissioning Policy* and Enabling Commissioning Framework.

- **Decommissioning Policy** – during last year’s three year budget planning process at BCC, many reductions were proposed. Voscur and Bristol Compact facilitated VCS organisations’ input into the budget consultation, particularly looking at their equalities impact. As the budget was being implemented, organisations reported inconsistency in the ‘decommissioning’ process. Voscur/Bristol Compact raised this issue and requested that the formal Decommissioning Policy be used to ensure good practice, such as more than three months’ notice*, service user engagement* and impact discussions*.

- **Home Care services commissioning** – in changing these services, commissioners proposed to make fewer new contracts. VCS organisations raised concerns about being excluded from bigger contracts. Voscur/Bristol Compact facilitated a collective response to the consultation and advocated specifically for the commissioning plan to include fairness in the form of collaboration models that were appropriate to the Bristol provider market*.
Impact

As the advocacy work is in response to very specific issues, the results have also been very specific. VCS organisations are able to get advice and advocacy from Voscur/Bristol Compact, which they have found helpful. It means that organisations can be informed about correct processes, commitments in the Compact and are supported in challenging the council. In some cases, when organisations are fearful of negative consequences of making challenges, Voscur/Bristol Compact act on their behalf. These are great services to the local voluntary sector. Some examples of the impact include:

- **Neighbourhood Conflict Resolution services commissioning** – the intervention resulted in a new project board that is running a comprehensive, open and transparent commissioning process*. The process is proportionate* and we are well represented, with Voscur’s Compact Liaison Officer being a member of the board. Jules Cox, Service Manager of Bristol Mediation said “After we had been served with a termination of contract by the local authority, I made contact with Mark Hubbard of Voscur for support and advice. Mark had expertise and knowledge about the relevant procedures and supported us in writing a suitable response. This led to the local authority changing the way they were looking to commission future services and developed a transparent and open process in line and with advice and input from Voscur. Without Mark’s/Voscur’s support and guidance, I do not want to think what position Bristol Mediation would now be in - so can only give my heartfelt thanks for all of the support and guidance which led to such a positive way forward. We are currently in the process of tendering but as this is now an open and transparent process, with realistic timeframes, we now feel in a lot stronger position. Many, many thanks!”

- **Decommissioning Policy** – many budget proposals changed as a result of Voscur/Bristol Compact facilitation of the sector’s input. After the letter on behalf of the sector, BCC restated its commitment to fair decommissioning* and instructed all officers to comply with the policy.

- **Home Care services commissioning** – as a result of representations, commissioners produced a ‘you said, we did’ consultation response*, revised commissioning plan*, were more open about acceptable forms of collaboration and increased the time frame – to allow collaborations to form.

In addition to these specific changes, other impact will be seen in the future work of the public sector officers and VCS organisations that were involved.

* Commitments in Bristol Compact.
Overview

A Sutton Compact review of the capacity building needs of the voluntary sector in Sutton led to a programme of additional support and funding for the sector - and a new four year Infrastructure Support and Capacity Building Fund.

A Compact task and finish group was established in April 2013. The group was made up of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, plus officers and commissioners from across the London Borough of Sutton. The group met four times to develop a Capacity Building Framework (Building Capacity in Sutton’s Voluntary Sector Framework and Action Plan: November 2013). The Framework was then subject to consultation with the wider voluntary sector, including discussions at the Voluntary Sector Forum and online, which demonstrated significant support for the Framework.

As a result, London Borough of Sutton funded a range of new, joint activities to support the voluntary sector to respond to the changing operating environment and challenges facing the VCS. These included:

- A programme of marketing support, with a one day training course and bespoke support for five organisations to develop and implement their marketing strategies.
- A project to support the VCS to identify back-office savings and more cost-effective procurement (both for individual organisations and across the sector).
- An initiative between the voluntary sector and the council’s Economic Regeneration Unit (Opportunity Sutton) to increase joint working between the business and voluntary sector, linking this to the local Community Fund.

In addition, a new Transformation Fund was introduced for 2014/15 (£130,000) and 2015/16 (£70,000) to enable VCS organisations to build capacity and pilot new ways of working and generating income.

The Compact Capacity Building Framework has also been used to underpin a new four year Infrastructure Support and Capacity Building Fund. Following
consultation with the voluntary sector over the summer, this will be commissioned from October 2014.

Impact

A jointly agreed Capacity Building Framework was developed, which evaluated needs for the sector and provided an evidence base for the way forward. It included an action plan (with targets and timescales) which is monitored at each meeting of the Compact Steering Group.

- An additional programme of support provided for the voluntary sector: 13 people trained to develop a marketing strategy and five VCS organisations were supported to develop and implement a bespoke marketing strategy; initial back-office savings of £1500.
- A successful crowd-funding exercise for local VCS organisations: a Trustee development programme was implemented and a new local giving model created.
- A new Transformation Fund in 2014/15 benefiting 13 VCOs (£130,000) to pilot new approaches to ensuring the sustainability of their organisations e.g. increased digital delivery, new membership schemes, business planning and fundraising strategies, quality standards, and developing new models of service delivery. A further round of Transformation Funding for 2015/16 (£70,000).
- A jointly agreed Infrastructure Support & Capacity Building Fund to operate for four years from April 2015 to support the sector.

The Framework has also supported the development of a voluntary sector hub with London Borough of Sutton agreeing to transfer a significant local building to Sutton CVS and Volunteer Centre Sutton to use as a base for volunteering and voluntary action. This has led to a joint Heritage Lottery Fund bid (September 2014) to restore the building and make it fit for purpose.

Pictured: Cllr Simon Wales (left) working with SCVS (Susanna Bennett) and Volunteer Centre Sutton (Chris Parker) to develop The Grove as a voluntary sector hub.
Overview

This nomination is for Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)’s market development activities under its Modernising Mental Health commissioning process. This work specifically responded to the provider market and resulted in VCS organisations winning contracts.

Jean Smith MBE of the Nilaari Agency, who nominated Bristol CCG, said: “[The market development activities] were particularly helpful for our organisation and we appreciated the support available – we’d like to see this in all commissioning processes. Smaller VCS organisations like ours have sometimes struggled to be involved in commissioning processes. We are often excluded and feel that commissioners need to do more to make it easier for us to be involved. We are nominating Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group for doing exactly that.”

Bristol CCG specifically worked to support smaller, specialist VCS organisations in the Modernising Mental Health commissioning process. It commissioned The Care Forum and Voscur (VCS support agencies) to work with smaller local organisations that may not easily have had access to the range of specialist skills that would support their participation in this commissioning process.

Feedback from bidders taking part in previous NHS procurement processes had suggested that commissioners should generally be more supportive to potential providers, and smaller local organisations in particular. It was good that the CCG heard this and responded well.

Support provided over the period May-November 2013 included:

- Survey of VCS organisations’ support needs
- Briefings on service models and procurement processes
- Networking event on finding collaboration partners
- Support surgeries for PQQ (pre-qualification questionnaire) stage
- Briefing events on working in a consortium
- Grants issued for specific support in bid-writing
- TUPE workshop
- Service transition workshops
**Impact**

Voscur coordinated an evaluation of this support, so that the Bristol CCG could learn and then support the provider market in future commissioning processes. The following summarises Nilaari Agency’s thoughts on the successes and learning from this market development support.

**Things that went well**

- The briefing and information sessions were very useful, well attended and Nilaari Agency appreciated the opportunities to discuss questions/concerns with commissioners.
- A PQQ was only required for lead bidders – which made the process easier for smaller organisations by creating less bureaucracy.
- Networking events provided good contact with other potential collaborators leading to discussions about forming partnerships.
- Encouraging collaborations early in the process helped provide clarity and time to respond.

**Things that could have been better**

- Information sharing for non-lead bidders – could have been improved with more useful information about other potential partners.
- Earlier planning and communication of the support activities would have been useful to establish what was going to be offered earlier.
- The e-procurement system could have been more user-friendly.

In all, many VCS organisations took advantage of the support offered and the Nilaari Agency felt that the offer of small grants for consultation assistance and the consultancy slots offered through Voscur were really helpful.

Ultimately, the proof of the impact of this work was the success of Bristol VCS organisations in winning contracts to deliver Modernising Mental Health services. 11 VCS organisations – including Nilaari Agency, Somali Resource Centre, Windmill Hill City Farm, Stand Against Racism and Inequality – are part of collaborations that hold Modernising Mental Health service contracts with Bristol CCG.
The Work Redbridge Partnership is led by the London Borough of Redbridge and includes over 30 organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors, including Volunteer Centre Redbridge (based at RedbridgeCVS). From its initiation Work Redbridge has sought to include Volunteer Centre Redbridge and this has raised the profile of volunteering locally and made other partners and jobseekers aware of the importance of volunteering in improving individuals’ employability.

Work Redbridge delivers a range of outreach activities at libraries and community centres which are designed to encourage jobseekers to access advice and guidance. Volunteer Centre Redbridge (VCR) works alongside Work Redbridge advisors at outreach sessions twice a week and the projects cross-refer clients as appropriate to afford them the best chance of improving their employability.

The two projects are now collaborating on a unique project called ‘Making it Count’, which has been created to support people who are volunteering in local voluntary/public sector organisations and to improve their chances of finding paid work. The project focuses on making their contribution as volunteers count in their search for work and offers skills workshops (career planning, CV/application form techniques, interview skills) co-delivered by Work Redbridge and VCR.

The project then matches jobseekers with volunteer mentors from the local business community to help them embed and enhance these skills. This links the voluntary and private sectors locally, improving understanding between the two. It draws on the strong relationship Work Redbridge has developed with local businesses and offers an opportunity for corporate social engagement through volunteering.
Impact

The work has:

Given VCR an excellent opportunity to engage with jobseekers and encourage them into appropriate and high quality volunteering opportunities. This improves their skills and confidence, helps overcome isolation and lack of motivation and allows their skills to be put to good use by local not-for-profit organisations;

- Raised the level of understanding within the Work Redbridge team of advisors and partner agencies, who now know more about the work of VCR and the important role played volunteering in developing skills and experience for jobseekers (including understanding the differences between volunteer placements and work-experience schemes/internships);

- Improved the skills of VCR staff, so that they are able to advise volunteers on how best to use experiences gained while volunteering to maximise their chances of getting a paid job. VCR has used these skills to support volunteers in our own organisation. Five of the six individuals given this support have now got jobs. The model of support developed is also being scaled up to run the “Making it Count” project, outlined above, which adds volunteer-mentors from local businesses to further enhance the value of volunteering for those actively wanting to gain paid employment.

- Given local businesses a low-cost opportunity to support local not-for-profit organisations and increase the employability of local people.
Redbridge First Response Service

Overview

Redbridge First Response Service (ReFRS) is a unique multi-agency partnership model. It is designed to reduce dependency and promote effective, co-ordinated, preventative services from an early stage for people who have different needs.

The service leads to shared outcomes and benefits across sectors and for service users. It was developed through consultation and on-going engagement with partners and service users. It is a stronger partnership because ReFRS has vibrant voluntary sector input, which contributes to the prevention and early intervention agenda; over half of ReFRS partners are from the voluntary sector. ReFRS is a good example of efficient use of voluntary sector resources. ReFRS is an innovative, inspiring and an effective solution to ‘crisis management’ within health and social care services.

The objectives are to support early intervention and prevention by providing good information and advice to promote people’s wellbeing at an early stage. In the long term it reduces unnecessary dependency on statutory services and reduces cost associated with long term hospital/care home admission.

ReFRS has demonstrated that it has the potential to improve the quality of life of service users at an early stage, by enabling them to access support in order to lead a fulfilling and independent life in the community.

ReFRS is seamless, co-ordinated and promotes joined up working between the voluntary, health and statutory sector. A whole system approach supports the work of the thriving voluntary sector by using community resources more effectively.

ReFRS identifies and connects service users to local/community support that is most appropriate for their needs. The onus is placed upon the partner to contact and offer support to the service user. There are 45 partners organisations (including the Fire Brigade, Police, Age UK, Carers Support Service, Benefits team, Leisure), who offer a variety of support, such as interventions focusing on falls prevention, carers support, and for victims of domestic abuse. ReFRS then ensures that outcomes for the service user are achieved within a specific time frame.
A distinct feature of ReFRS is the ‘Warning Signs’ Tool Kit which is presented during the Multi Agency Training and Networking Events. This ensures that partners are trained to identify significant area(s) of support needed to personalise support and raise awareness of services available through ReFRS.

**Impact**

In just six months, ReFRS has significantly improved and impact people’s lives. Partners involved, particularly GPs, have benefited from this arrangement as they were able to access community support with clear outcomes in a coordinated manner. 53% of referrals were made by GPs who previously had no pathway to refer their patients for low level prevention/community support. This has enabled ReFRS to identify service users who were previously not known to services or were hard to reach. 100% of GPs stated that were easily able to refer and better connect their patients for a wide range of social care and community support by using ReFRS.

“I’m very pleased, as this is an excellent example of joint health and social care work. Please apply for an award!” (GP)

“The current provision of services available through ReFRS is very good. I’m very happy about this new service. Very professional, quick and helpful. Patient feedback has been excellent”. (GP)

100% of service users stated that it was easier for organisations to contact them directly.

93% of service users rated ReFRS as Excellent or Good.

“I would have been lost without ReFRS, I don’t know where I would have gone.” (Service user)

ReFRS has provided an innovative solution that works cohesively across the sectors. Our partnership embeds a vision to make Redbridge a better place to live, in particular for those who have needs that require support. Redbridge are delighted to secure the service permanently within the department of Adult Social Services.

Pictured: Multi-agency training session
Newcastle Open Doors Consortium

Overview

The Open Doors Consortium (ODC) is commissioned to provide independent advice and support to voluntary management bodies considering asset transfer. Specifically, ODC advises on the asset transfer of community centres owned by Newcastle City Council. The ODC’s contribution has significantly and positively exceeded the specification for this work.

The New Newcastle Compact recognises that the best outcomes for the people and communities within Newcastle can only be achieved by positive and collaborative working relationships and partnerships within, and between, the sectors. This recognition is enshrined in the Newcastle City Council’s commissioning of the Open Doors Consortium and within the work undertaken and partnerships developed by ODC in relation to the challenges and also opportunities presented by asset transfer.

Newcastle City Council recognised, early in the process of the potential asset transfer of community centres, the need for voluntary and community groups to be able to access quality independent support. Via a procurement process, ODC was commissioned initially to provide voluntary and community groups with ‘pre(pre-feasibility’ support for asset transfer. The specification for this work was actively shaped by the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Due to the positive impact of the work, the contract has been further extended to allow ODC to further support groups with asset transfer.

ODC is headed up by the Ouseburn Trust and includes Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS), Locality, Boxx Consultants and Sustainable Enterprise Strategies - i.e. four voluntary organisations and a private sector partner. These organisations have a diverse but complimentary range of experience and skills. ODC members also have knowledge of and access to other support agencies, including funders. This flexible delivery model has allowed ODC to provide a single point of contact for voluntary and community groups whilst pulling in experience, skills and knowledge as required.

Impact

- ODC has supported communities to understand what asset transfer means and identify their strengths and liabilities in relation to this. ODC has enabled and empowered them to make informed decisions about the
future of their community centre and how, if asset transfer is an appropriate option, to take this forward. Independence has been vital to this. Ongoing support includes facilitating peer support & exploring new partnerships to deliver efficiencies – e.g. groups coming together to explore commissioning of statutory testing.

- ODC developed an innovative ‘diagnostic tool’ which helped organisations identify areas of strength and improvement.

- ODC, in partnership with Newcastle City Council, co-designed the second stage of Newcastle City Council’s process for considering the appropriateness of asset transfer of community centres. Informed by Compact principles, both partners worked together to explore a fair and flexible process. As advised by ODC, the Council amended its planned timescales.

- The process was not prescriptive about the format of information required to support an asset transfer. ODC supported one group with the innovative submission to Newcastle City Council of the relevant information on a DVD.

- The lead organisation within ODC has secured funding from ‘Awards for All’ for a digital story telling project which will focus on change in community buildings.

- Asset transfer of community buildings is a fairly new and challenging issue for Newcastle City Council. The ODC approach to working in partnership with the VCS on this has been extremely valuable. The council, the groups managing community buildings and also Newcastle’s communities have greatly benefited from ODC support and active shaping of the asset transfer process.
Overview

In response to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, Sutton Compact Steering Group produced a Developmental Assets Framework. The framework was jointly agreed by local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and London Borough of Sutton. This will now underpin all future local authority commissioning activity.

In November 2012, Sutton Compact Steering Group created a sub group to develop a jointly agreed approach to measuring social value. The sub group reviewed a number of models and agreed to take forward a developmental assets approach already successfully used by the MAPS mentoring project (Volunteer Centre Sutton) and some other local organisations. This approach comes from the Search Institute, is underpinned with significant research and focuses on 40 assets that young people need to succeed.

Workshops were held with a number of VCS organisations and London Borough of Sutton commissioners, which proved that this approach was applicable to a wide range of individuals, organisations and services e.g. it was successfully piloted by small organisations like Shopmobility.

Further Compact sub group meetings then developed a set of community assets based on further research e.g. models used by One Planet Living and the Big Lottery. The community assets complement the individual assets, provide a way of assessing the social value of commissioned services at community level and enable the contribution of voluntary organisations to be fully recognised.

The individual and community assets have been combined in one agreed framework, and training on how to use this provided for 160 commissioners and VCS organisations, delivered by an external training organisation in partnership with the Volunteer Centre Sutton. Sutton CVS has also provided additional monitoring and evaluation training for voluntary organisations to support the process.

Following further piloting, for example with Meals on Wheels Service, the 72 developmental assets are now being integrated into the London Borough of Sutton commissioning framework.
Impact

- The production of a jointly agreed developmental assets framework to be used to assess social value throughout all London Borough of Sutton commissioning processes. It gives commissioners an opportunity to map any service against a single framework, which for example measure the social value of ‘bin collections’ to be measured against the social value of ‘provision for looked after children’.

- VCS involvement in developing the framework and the training programme is enabling the sector to more effectively demonstrate its social value/impact. It also enables the VCS to understand the importance of demonstrating social value/impact in order to become successful delivery partners of the council or to access other sources of funding.

- Commissioners are becoming more aware of the added social value VCS organisations can bring, and now have a way of assessing this throughout the commissioning process. It encourages commissioners to co-design services, outcomes and social value from the outset of any commissioning process.

- The framework has already been introduced into a number of commissioning areas e.g. Strategic Partner Programme, Meals on Wheels, Communications Contract, Beddington locality work.

- There is considerable national interest in the approach (including from the Commissioning Academy) which means that both the learning about the development process through the local Compact and the framework is being shared more widely as an example of good practice.

- This approach allows conversations between residents, VCS organisations and the public sector around who is responsible for building assets. This is critical in a time of reducing resources as everyone’s contribution is recognised.
Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) has worked with the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in an innovative way over the last year, to translate his commitment to the refreshed Compact for Leeds into practical action. The overall impact has been increased influence for the sector in the criminal justice system.

VAL seized the opportunity provided by the introduction of PCCs. With £5000 funding from the Home Office, (administered by NAVCA and Clinks) a Safer Future Communities network was launched in June 2012. Its first big event was a hustings for PCC candidates, chaired by the Bishop of Leeds, in October 2012.

Following the election VAL approached the successful candidate, Mark Burns-Williamson. He speedily agreed to sign the refreshed Compact for Leeds, and to fund the development of a Third Sector Advisory Group that reflected a wide range of sector interests from across West Yorkshire.

The sector was allocated a place on the new Partnership Executive Group set up by the PCC; and the new Advisory Group (with VAL’s support) organised an event to report back on its work to the wider sector. Key areas for delivery of crime reduction were identified – reflecting the sector’s work with victims and offenders. In late 2013 an opportunity arose to take this work further. There was a need for innovation through partnership engagement in the context of cuts. In consequence, at the end of January 2014, VAL Deputy Chief Officer David Smith relocated from VAL’s head offices to the Office of the PCC in Wakefield – initially for a six month trial period. In April, the arrangement was extended to the end of December. What has emerged is an innovative model of partnership working with the third sector which is different from the “network” approach which is commonly used with local Councils.

Impact

A robust structure for sector engagement, extending from Leeds across West Yorkshire has been established, with a Third Sector Advisory Group, supported by a full time third sector adviser, and an annual conference to ensure
accountability to the wider sector. The sector’s influence within Community Safety Partnerships in some of the largest metropolitan Councils in England has been significantly enhanced.

The refreshed Police and Crime Plan has been heavily influenced by the sector and is peppered with references to its current and potential future role in making communities safer. The approach taken to commissioning has maximised opportunities for the sector, especially through robust equality impact assessments.

A £1million annual grants programme for community groups has been launched, and its third round had a focus on equality and diversity. The sector has taken a leading role in the development of thinking about services designed to meet outcomes, and the PCC is on record that the sector is very well placed to play a bigger role in delivery.

The future of PCCs is uncertain. But the sector will be able to look back on this period of change in the criminal justice system as one when it seized an opportunity to move relationships forward.

Policing by consent requires a strategic alliance with the sector. Individual third sector organisations do brilliant work, but strategic work has been a gap. In West Yorkshire that has changed.

The work has been recognised nationally by Clinks and publicised on their website: http://www.clinks.org/community/blog-posts/thoughts-pcc%E2%80%99s-third-sector-adviser
Overview

Watford Compact has placed itself within the broader context of Corporate Social Responsibility, allowing us to include partners from the private sector and to focus on improving outcomes for the local community.

Watford Compact underwent a thorough review in 2013-14. The review was based on an existing strong partnership between Watford Borough Council and the local CVS, hosted by Watford & Three Rivers Trust.

The previous Compact had been last reviewed in 2010 and the current review was initiated by the Watford Together forum, which comprises representatives of key statutory and voluntary organisations.

We wanted to create a new agreement to give impetus and structure for a new phase of partnership working. Discussion soon identified three main aims to:

1. Place the Compact within the broader context of Corporate Social Responsibility (e.g. to see Compact as one manifestation of good corporate governance);
2. Broaden the Compact to provide a platform for partnership working between the public, voluntary and private sectors; and
3. Focus on improving outcomes for the community as a whole rather than simply the signatories of the document.

Impact

It is early days, but the new Watford Compact has now been adopted by Watford Borough Council, Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce, and Watford & Three Rivers Trust (formerly Watford CVS).

The Compact has also been endorsed by the One Watford local strategic partnership.

These three lead signatories have also agreed to collaborate to support a new Community Fund for Watford. The Fund was launched at a quiz night in February 2013 which raised £1,500. We have received a further £1,200 in
donations and we are soliciting regular donations from businesses and local residents.

Around 50 local businesses are engaged with the “W3RT Connect” programme and all are actively considering adopting the Watford Compact as part of their CSR work.

The Compact will also provide a platform for the 2014 Dragon’s Apprentice Challenge, through which local school students link with local business mentors to raise money for local charities. Two previous programmes have so far raised nearly £50,000 for Watford’s charities.
Overview

Lola Barrett has been driving the work of the Merton Compact for the last ten years as a CEO of Grenfell Housing and Training, Chair of both Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC) and Merton Unity Network (a BME voice and support organisation), and an active voluntary sector representative. She is one of the most established and recognisable leaders in the voluntary sector in Merton.

Lola Barrett has been the Chief Executive of Grenfell Housing and Training for over 20 years. Grenfell is an organisation that works with vulnerable people in south west London, providing housing and training, and supporting them through periods of crisis to help them make the transition to independence.

Lola is also known for her work to ensure the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) voluntary sector in Merton is developed and recognised for the contribution it makes to these communities. She has been Chair of Merton Unity Network for the last ten years, and is at the heart of work currently being conducted to strengthen the voice of BME communities in Merton.

In 2013, as a result of Lola’s leadership, Grenfell took over a disused building in Mitcham which was turned into a hub for voluntary and community groups. It also acts as a focal point for working with the Job Centre, to support young people facing disadvantage in the labour market.

Lola has been involved in the Merton Compact since its inception in 2004 and sits on the Compact Board. She is one of the most active voluntary sector representatives in the borough, sitting on a range of partnership structures as well as holding down her full time CEO role.

Trained and practising as a lawyer until she made the career choice to move to the voluntary sector over 25 years ago, she has committed her career to the sector and its role in partnership working.
Impact

Lola has been involved in the Merton Compact since the idea was launched in 2003, and she is committed and driven to ensuring the Merton Compact underpins real partnership work. She is widely respected and her positive relationships with key stakeholders ensure that challenges are addressed without the need to enact the Compact dispute procedure.

As Chief Executive of Grenfell Housing and Training, Chair of MVSC and Chair of Merton Unity Network, Lola has the status and gravitas in Merton that leads to real influence. She has been able to promote Compact principles in the many forums and partnership structures where she represents the voluntary sector. This has been extremely valuable when it comes to ensuring the borough’s diverse communities are aware of the Compact and its relevance.

Lola sits on the following partnership structures and has ensured the Compact is embedded in them all: Compact Board, Economic Well-Being Group, Health and Social Care Integration Committee, Joint Consultative Committee (LB Merton), and the Merton Partnership Executive Board.

Lola is immensely professional in all she does, with a calm and strategic approach to ensuring Merton gets the best out of partnership working. She is an enabler and facilitator of partnership working.

As a trustee of NAVCA, Lola has also promoted the Compact nationally and represents the positive partnership environment in Merton.

Lola is committed to improving the lives of disadvantaged communities in Merton and uses the Compact as a tool to ensure frontline work with residents has real impact.
Mark Hubbard, Bristol Compact Liaison Officer

Overview

Mark Hubbard is nominated for his work in influencing commissioning and procurement policy and practice at Bristol City Council (BCC) in his role as Compact Liaison Officer. Mark is well respected by both commissioners and VCS organisations – for five years, Mark has helped to forge constructive, improved relationships.

Carol Metters MBE, from Missing Link, nominated Mark. She said: “[Mark’s work] really sets the scene for how we should all be working well together for the benefit of our service users and the people of Bristol. For my organisation, we received advice about negotiating with the commissioners and this really helped us develop our response – with complete success!”

Mark has worked to influence the policy and practice of BCC, specifically through:

1. **Influencing strategy.** Mark was the only non-council member of the Enabling Commissioning Board, which created a framework and toolkit for commissioners to standardise commissioning practice across the council. Mark encouraged the inclusion of Compact principles in the toolkit by working continuously with commissioners – sometimes persuading, sometimes arguing, sometimes lobbying – but successfully getting Compact principles adopted. The framework includes new TUPE guidance and collaboration guidance, which clarify the council’s approach and define standard practice. Mark also co-wrote a decommissioning policy, and has influenced the practice and knowledge of many individual commissioners.

2. **Specific commissioning boards.** Mark has encouraged good practice in commissioning/procurement through membership of various commissioning boards. Examples include domestic abuse and violence support services, Community Transport, Preventing Homelessness, and Hate Crime. In all, Mark uses the Compact, helpfulness and a common sense approach to identify issues - often preventing things becoming problematic down the line.

3. **Building understanding.** Joint council and Compact events co-ordinated by Mark have brought together commissioners and VCS providers to work
in partnership to improve commissioning. These events focused on better understanding of different perspectives and experiences, and working together to remove barriers to inclusion.

4. **Encouraging partnership working.** An example of this work is the co-development of BCC’s response to the Community Right to Challenge.

Mark convened workshops with commissioners and providers to develop the process for implementing this community right (from the Localism Act) within Bristol. BCC’s Social Value Policy is also being co-developed in this way.

**Impact**

Impacts include:

1. **Influencing Strategy.** The use of the commissioning framework has helped the council deliver better outcomes for the city as well as better value for money. It has challenged commissioners’ working practices and led to the development of better relationships with providers. It has resulted in well-designed commissioning processes where providers do not have to waste time grappling with (and challenging) the process. As a result, bids submitted have been more appropriate and higher quality.

   “Mark is quite unique in having experience and knowledge of commissioning processes across many council departments and so is often able to signpost commissioners towards examples of good council practice that they are unaware of.” – Carol Metters MBE, Missing Link

2. **Specific commissioning boards.** For example, the domestic abuse and violence support services commissioning process used a proportionate approach of four competitive grants and two contracts. It also required the payment of the Living Wage, which relates directly to the Compact principle for an equal and fair society.

   “These outcomes are typical of Mark’s involvement and largely as a result of his tenacity and effectiveness.” - Carol Metters MBE, Missing Link

3. **Building Understanding.** The joint events led to improved relationships and understanding, as well as an action plan to make changes so that commissioning processes are more accessible to VCS organisations. “This also helps us strengthen our ability to compete for contracts.” Carol Metters MBE, Missing Link

4. **Partnership Working.** This policy work has meant that there is a clear process for VCS organisations to make challenges (to provide services) and it is placed sensibly in the context of the council’s commissioning process. Clarity about social value – a Bristol Compact commitment – will also help provider organisations win more contracts.
Overview

The Compact team at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are nominated for leading on, embedding and promoting the Compact across DWP. This has included their work creating the DWP New Year awards where DWP demonstrated excellent, innovative leadership. This has highlighted exceptional good practice within DWP, which has promoted the principles of the Compact in partnership work with the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

The awards were created to highlight the Compact and the good partnerships with the voluntary sector happening across DWP. The NAO report into government’s implementation of the Compact suggested that departments were not doing enough to highlight this.

After attending Compact Voice’s awards ceremony in 2014, DWP initiated the creation of an internal Compact awards, which produced an incredible response of 31 nominations. The winners were invited to come to a workshop to share their examples of good practice in partnership working with the VCS.

All staff that attended were given the opportunity to share their case studies with each other, and volunteers were given an opportunity to speak about their project on video. The videos have been attached to the project on the internal website.

Kelly Ventress from Compact Voice was invited to the DWP workshop to coach staff on the principles of the Compact, as they were not widely known. After this session, the winners then debated a few key questions – ‘what opportunities do we have in DWP to further demonstrate the principles of the Compact?’ and ‘what do we need to do to encourage and enable DWP staff to demonstrate the principles of the Compact in their work?’.

The workshop and Awards ceremony held in March 2014, at Caxton House, London. The awards were opened by Mike Driver, Finance Director General and presented by Permanent Secretary Robert Deveraux.

Compact Voice stated “it was hugely encouraging to see the Department for Work and Pensions taking steps to raise awareness of the benefits of the Compact”.

64
Impact

The impact of this work has been significant to the DWP. The department previously did not promote the Compact internally. DWP’s Internal Audit has now signed off this recommendation, as DWP has improved the visibility of the Compact through championing its benefits and through the excellent leadership of the team.

The winning partnerships of the DWP internal Compact Awards were recognised as follows:

- **Winner - Equality:** JCP Harlesden, to address specific barriers to work faced by Black and Minority Ethnic and disadvantaged communities.
- **Winner – Engagement:** JCP Woolwich, for working in partnership with Charlton Athletic Community Trust to proactively engage and support ex-Gang members and victims of domestic violence into employment.
- **Joint Winner – Impact:** National Employer Service Team with the Tinder Foundation to deliver ‘Digital Champions’ – a voluntary work experience scheme that impacts on the lives of 18 – 24 year olds.
- **Winner – Innovation:** JCP Sheerness, working with First Service to provide - through cookery - life skills and routes into careers in hospitality and catering for unemployed adults in deprived areas.
- **Winner – Leadership:** National Partnership Team for establishing, leading and enabling CSO/Partnership networks to support customers in the introduction of Personal Independence Payments.
- **Winner - Partnerships:** JCP Black Country & Black Country Talent Match, with the four Black Country Councils for Voluntary Services to secure Big Lottery funding and develop and deliver a new programme of support for 18 to 24 year olds not in employment, education or training.
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner

Overview

Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)’s Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Charter is its commitment to a greater understanding between partners who are often of unequal size, sophistication and influence. It strengthens collaboration, whilst respecting each other’s mutual rights as independent bodies. It also encourages the sharing of information of those they represent; opening the channels of communication amongst sectors across the Avon and Somerset area.

The charter acknowledges that all partners need to work effectively together to serve the local community to the best of their ability. By providing a framework for both public and voluntary and community (VCS) sectors to follow, it contributes to greater understanding between partners who are often of unequal size, sophistication and influence. It strengthens collaboration, whilst respecting organisations’ mutual rights as independent bodies. It also encourages the sharing of information of those they represent, thereby opening the channels of communication between sectors across the Avon and Somerset area.

Avon and Somerset PCC’s commitment to the VCSE Sector:

- The Avon and Somerset PCC has different levels and forms of accountability and is answerable to a range of stakeholders; however always aims to be open, transparent and objective in decision making, taking into account the needs of the community the PCC serves and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the right way to the right places.
- The PCC commits to acting with honesty and integrity and endeavours to foster trust and confidence in the service provided.
- The PCC will always ensure services are fit for purpose whilst valuing diversity and encouraging innovative and responsive ideas and trying new solutions to resolve problems.
- The PCC will break down/remove barriers which inhibit the ability to try something new, or just get in the way of sensible decisions being made. One example is payments made in advance of expenditure.
• The PCC recognises the VCS’s independence and encourages the VCS to constructively challenge policy and procedures irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist.
• The PCC respects and embraces the requirements within the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, and will ensure that consideration is given to the economic, social and environmental improvements a potentially procured service can make to the communities served.

Impact

The charter has been approved by the regional VCS umbrella organisations and their considerations have been taken on board. As commissioning is new to the PCC, its biggest impact has been on the commissioning team who regularly refer back to the charter for its ‘best practice’ guidelines.

Since its implementation, the charter has been shaping the way the PCC is commissioning its funds. There have been a number of changes as a result of the charter that have improved working relationships with the VCS sector in Avon and Somerset.

For example:

• The outlined consultation period of no less than 12 weeks is implemented in commissioning plans.
• Services where funding is going to be cut or changed are notified as far in advance as is possible.
• Wide publicity of upcoming funding opportunities through a range of methods.
• Capacity building supplier workshops for providers are now scheduled for each round of commissioning, to break down the barriers of commissioning and encourage consortia bids.
• Social Value weighting is applied at application sifting stage.
• Social Value KPI’s are written into technical specifications.
Overview

A Framework has been developed with partners to support effective working relationships between the public and voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Essex. It builds on the work of the Compact, but aims to go further in setting out a number of actions that will help achieve a shared aim of strong and resilient communities supported by a thriving VCS.

The Framework represents a new approach for public sector partners in their relationship with the voluntary and community sector. Public sector partners are asked formally to sign up to the Framework through their own organisational governance mechanisms. In signing up to the Framework, public bodies will also re-affirm their commitment to the Essex Compact.

The Framework supports effective working relationships between the public sector and the VCS. The VCS in Essex is large and extremely diverse with an estimated 10,000 VCS organisations. Equally the public service landscape in Essex is highly complex. There is one County Council, twelve District Councils, two Unitary Authorities, five Clinical Commissioning Groups, Police and Fire Services and nearly 300 Parish Councils.

The Essex Association of Councils for Voluntary Service, the Essex VCS Alliance and the Essex Compact Steering Group are signed up to the Framework as representatives of the diverse voluntary and community sector, although individual community organisations are welcome to formally commit to the Framework.

This Framework builds on the Compact but does not replace it. Public sector partners adopting this Strategic Framework are also expected to adopt the Essex Compact and local Compacts across Essex, and require their contractors to do so where appropriate.

Impact

The project has significantly raised the profile of the Compact in Essex. It has instigated a strengthening of the steering group in terms of membership and links to other strategic partnerships working across Essex so that it now feeds
into the Essex Partnership, the Essex Chief Executives Association, Essex Voluntary Sector Alliance to name a few.

It has led to greater engagement from partners who were not previously signed up to the Essex Compact. As a direct result of this project the Essex Police and Crime Commissioner is now signed up to the Essex Compact and sits on the Essex Compact Steering Group. Local NHS organisations, whose membership had dwindled during the re-organisation of NHS services are now more re-engaged and keen to work together.

The Essex Compact Steering Group, who are voted on by Essex Compact Champions each year, will take a role of monitoring the adherence to the Framework for the part of Statutory Authorities going forward thus giving Compact more ‘teeth’ in Essex.
Local Compact Partnership Award

Voluntary Sector Liaison Group: Newcastle New Compact

Overview

This nomination was submitted jointly by the Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS) and Newcastle City Council (NCC), as further evidence of Newcastle’s partnership approach. The nomination is for the Voluntary Sector Liaison Group (VSLG)’s partnership approach to developing the New Newcastle Compact. The New Compact was agreed in May 2014.

VSLG is a high-level strategic group consisting of six Newcastle City Council members and six voluntary and community sector (VCS) members. It is supported by two officers; one from NCC and the Chief Executive of NCVS. Inspired by the New Newcastle Compact, one of the Locality Directors of a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is now also part of the group. The Chair and venue for the VSLG alternates between NCC (Deputy Leader) and the VCS - the agenda is jointly agreed. The group meets four times a year to discuss issues of joint interest and is NCC’s formal consultative mechanism for discussing strategic issues that impact on the VCS in Newcastle. VSLG oversees the New Newcastle Compact, ensuring it remains fit for purpose and is embedded in the work partners do together - for the benefit of the people and communities within Newcastle.

In September 2012, the VSLG embarked on a partnership approach to reviewing and completely rewriting Newcastle’s Compact. The VSLG established a small, time limited, cross-sector working group to review the Compact and make recommendations – a representative from the CCGs was included. After extensive, challenging dialogue and negotiation, the New Newcastle Compact was agreed May 2014.

It is a ‘new’ Compact because it is the first Newcastle Compact to refer to the relationship between the VCS and a broader range of public sector partners. Development of the New Compact has informed the development of a deeper level of understanding of respective statutory context, agendas and difference in terminology.

Impact

- The Newcastle North & East Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Newcastle West CCG have co-designed - and joined NCC and the VCS -
in signing up to the New Newcastle Compact. The process of co-design has led to a deeper understanding being developed between respective partners.

- Awareness of the Compact was enhanced via VSLG’s coordinated consultation, using NCC’s Let’s Talk website, NCVS website and via liaison and face to face discussion with key strategic partners.
- VSLG was successful in securing agreement of the New Newcastle Compact by the Newcastle Wellbeing for Life Board. This Board is the statutory platform for partnership working to improve wellbeing and health for all those who live, work or learn in the city - recognition at this strategic level will help partners to raise the profile of the New Newcastle Compact and to encourage other public sector partners to sign up.
- Representatives of VSLG have commenced dialogue with other potential public sector Compact partners - for example, the Police and Crime Commissioner. This dialogue is focused on developing a deeper understanding of the New Newcastle Compact and upon exploring key areas of relevance to partners.
- Guided by Compact Voice guidance, VSLG has invited Newcastle’s six Parish Councils to sign up to the Compact: one has already accepted with the others expected to follow.
- NCC Cooperative Communities Service staff with ward(s) responsibility, as requested by VSLG, are raising awareness of the New Newcastle Compact with elected members and local community organisations.

Pictured: Celebrating Volunteers Week in Newcastle, June 2014
Peterborough Plus is the first citywide Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partnership in Peterborough. The partnership is working with the local authority - through the Compact - to deliver local services through local groups.

Peterborough Plus came together after recognising that working together as a sector was the only way they could sustain the important work that local voluntary organisations do.

The current climate of austerity had begun to bring about competition between organisations, duplication of efforts and a reduction in sustainability options for many groups that had developed an enormous amount of knowledge and skills in their sector, specifically around the needs of communities and individuals living in Peterborough.

Working with the local authority in Peterborough through a refresh of their Compact, partners secured a commitment from the authority to work with Peterborough Plus to design service solutions which meet the needs of Peterborough. They did this through co-producing specifications which deliver value for money and effectively targeted services, whilst allocating resources which protect and sustain the local VCSE sector by commissioning services through the partnership.

Peterborough City Council has allocated funding of £50,000, the highest contribution of a local authority to a VCSE partnership in the UK, to ensure Peterborough Plus is able work across the diverse and broad range of over 500 VCSE organisations in Peterborough. With the local authority, the partnership will ensure that the sector is ‘commission ready’ with all groups: large, small, existing and emerging, given the resources and training to develop and safeguard standards and quality in the provision of their services through the consortium.

Due to the climate of austerity and resulting changes in funding the voluntary sector through commissioning contracts rather than grants, the VCSE sector in
Peterborough had become quite fragmented, unstable, often competitive and lacking in trust. National organisations were coming to Peterborough to win contracts for services originally delivered by local, long-standing VCSE groups - often increasing the scope of their usual activity at the expense of local groups who did not have the resources and ability to bid for large tenders. This often resulted in the closure of small, effective groups - losing their historical knowledge, wide ranging contacts and gateways to some of the most vulnerable and excluded groups in Peterborough.

PCVS asked its 500 member groups who would be interested in forming a partnership of local VCSE providers to bid for services offered through the local authority and other statutory agencies and funders.

The partnership agreed a vision of helping individuals – the service users, who will benefit ultimately from the services on offer through the consortium members. Through improving the quality of life of these individuals, the consortium will also have a significant impact on disadvantaged communities of both place and interest. Additionally, the consortium will support its members to build their capacity and increase their effectiveness.

In January 2015, the government is introducing ‘Innovative Partnerships’ across the UK. We believe that the work that the VCSE and Peterborough City Council have achieved through the principles of Compact will result in Peterborough Plus being the first ‘VCSE Innovative Partnership’ with a local authority in the country.
Quaker Social Action: Futureproof

Overview

Funded by Haringey Council’s ‘One Borough One Future’ innovation fund, and delivered by Quaker Social Action (QSA), Futureproof is a financial education project working intensively in Haringey over two years. Underpinned by QSA’s pioneering approach to preventative financial education, the project aims to address the practical and emotional impact of living on a low income, enabling families and households to take control of their financial situation, thereby building greater financial confidence and resilience.

Futureproof was awarded funding after a rigorous and open council-led selection involving local stakeholders. It began in April 2013. The project was awarded two years’ funding, and is externally evaluated by the Office for Public Management (OPM).

QSA’s direct delivery offers an adaptable course of accessible, interactive workshops, engaging participants on budgeting, saving, credit and debt, but also addressing the social/emotional aspects of poverty – consumerism, communication, conflict, stigma and shame. We work within a range of partners/contexts, but our widest reach is through statutory partners such as children’s centres and primary schools, with positive parenting around money at its core. Drawing on this, our facilitator training capacity builds front-line practitioners to deliver or adapt the course themselves.

A partnership with Haringey Adult Learning Service (HALS) resulted in four organisations funded to run Futureproof independently, with a tender now live. Statutory partners include practitioners within Homes for Haringey, the Young Adults Service and the NHS, whilst voluntary partners include mental health, family support and community advice services commissioned by the public sector. Our annual financial summit aims to raise financial inclusion up the local agenda, with political buy-in from elected members, as well as key statutory leads including health, housing and employment.

The project demonstrates Compact principles of openness in procurement. Whilst respecting our operational independence, external monitoring has emphasised reflection on innovation. Through cross-sector partnerships, we test and disseminate what works in pursuit of the shared objective of addressing inequality, thereby shifting towards more responsive service delivery and design across partners.
Impact

Haringey is socio-economically polarised, and direct delivery concentrates on deprived areas such as Tottenham. By late September 2014, the project reached 294 residents with 361 child dependents. Haringey’s Compact emphasises engagement with BME groups - 51% of clients are BME, whilst 83% are female and 57% economically inactive.

Service design is client-responsive and its impact has depth. For example, 76% of respondents were worried about debts - but afterwards, 98% felt more in control of their money, and 91% were better off financially, with 16% being £25 or more better off each week. Delivering in situ within 33 partner organisations ensures efficient use of premises and cements partnerships, especially within statutory children’s services, for whom parental engagement and family wellbeing constitute core objectives. Equally, the project complements other funded interventions – such as migrant support, alcohol recovery, sexual health outreach – with demonstrable impact for often vulnerable clients.

Our 80 trained facilitators within sixteen voluntary/community and seven statutory organisations have reached a further 688 residents with 164 child dependents. Statutory practitioners now have a toolkit to respond to clients’ financial challenges, which contributes, for example, to sustaining family cohesion (Haringey Families First) and managing complex drug and mental health conditions (NHS Dual Diagnosis Network).

This range of contexts demonstrates that financial stress is cross-cutting, and impact can only be catalysed through cross-sector multidisciplinary partnerships. Our annual summit facilitates this from above. The 2014 summit resulted in our partnership with HALS, more strategic alignment with public health, and exploratory working with Homes for Haringey and the Tottenham Regeneration.
Surrey County Council and Surrey Compact

Overview

The challenge was to create a new grant process for Surrey County Council (SCC) and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to enable organisations to bid effectively without taking an overly bureaucratic approach.

In order to ensure the new process met the needs of all stakeholders, the council’s approach actively engaged with the Surrey Compact and the VCS community to co-design a new and better way to award grants in Surrey.

The existing process was seen as ambiguous, allowing inconsistencies in both how applications were made and the way expenditure was approved. The VCS highlighted that the decision process lacked transparency. It was also an opportune time to review the grants process to ensure it followed the same transparency ethos as the procurement processes.

SCC put forward a proposal to Surrey Compact to work together to engage the VCS in co-designing a new process. Surrey Compact’s involvement was key to ensuring a positive approach and endorsement of the co-design.

The consultation process was as follows:

- SCC met with a representative group of 12 VCS organisations on a one-to-one basis to understand their concerns and share ideas to improve the process.
- SCC then created a draft process which was shared with Surrey Compact, VCS representative, and Surrey Council staff. This was a co-design process, to actively encourage involvement and to continually improve the process a number of times throughout drafting.
- A final draft was shared for wider consultation with the whole VCS on the Surrey Says consultation website.
- And finally, Elected Member approval was secured.

In addition to the co-design of the new process, SCC has used the engagement exercise to build stronger relationships and a greater understanding of the support needed in the VCS to build their capacity. As a result, SCC has used the feedback to develop workshops for VCS
organisations on “Demystifying the Bidding Process”. Five have been delivered and were very well received, with more sessions planned.

**Impact**

This approach challenged some of the perceptions both within SCC and within the VCS community, creating more effective relationships and a better understanding of each other.

There has been an extremely positive impact on the relationships between SCC and the VCS. The level of openness during the engagement allowed both partners to be comfortable that the new process will be easily implemented and ultimately support improved outcomes. Commissioners within SCC were impressed by the level of engagement and the quality of feedback, both positive and negative. This indicated the existence of true partnerships, built on relationships based on trust and commitment from all sides.

Some of the key benefits are:

- Raising VCS confidence to bid for contracts as well as grants
- Clear, simple process which promotes consistency of approach across SCC
- Clarity on the difference between grants and contracts
- Understanding the benefits of grants and the benefits of contracts
- Appropriate processes relevant to the value of the grant
- Training on submitting better bids for grants and contracts
- Clear timescales

“Surrey Compact signatories found working closely with Surrey County Council officers built confidence in the process. Result: an excellent document.”

- Barbara Musgrave, Independent Chair, Surrey Compact

Early involvement and engagement in partnership with Surrey Compact and VCS organisations generates shared understanding of the issues, and ensures that solutions will be achieved more effectively.

Being open and honest can sometimes be challenging; but in the end it is the best way to achieve proper partnership solutions.
St. Albans Museum and Galleries Trust

Overview

The St Albans Museums and Galleries Trust (the Trust) has partnered with St Albans City & District Council (SADC) and the University of Hertfordshire (UH) to create a new Museum and Gallery at the heart of the city of St Albans, in the iconic Town Hall.

Together, the Trust, SADC and UH have joined together on a once in a lifetime opportunity to create the new Museum and Gallery. A project structure has been created to deliver the many activities which will culminate in a cultural heritage resource of excellence in Hertfordshire.

These activities include;

- Fundraising
- Community Engagement
- Collections & Interpretations
- Business Planning
- Building Design Development

Each of these is represented by groups which include Trustees and other volunteers, Councillors, SADC officers and staff, UH Arts staff, and local business advisors. Each group has a Project Sponsor and Manager. These groups all report to a Programme Board which oversees the programme meeting monthly, including considering the progress, risks, highlighting reports from individual projects and any key decisions required to be escalated up from Project Group level.

Impact

The impact so far has been to;

- Successfully apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding the new Museum and Gallery project
- Enhance the Trust’s fundraising capabilities and create a database of contacts funded by a Catalyst funding grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund
- Create a working partnership across three groups with different challenges consisting of diverse cultures and personalities
- Establish a Fundraising Development Group consisting of Trustees, SADC officers, a Councillor, and other volunteers
- Launch Community Engagement and Fundraising campaigns
- Launch a Business Community funding campaign by engaging direct and via St Albans Chamber of Commerce
- Engage and inspire local interest groups by including them in a separate Advisory Board as a “critical friend”
- Utilise the pop-up shops culture by hosting “quick and dirty” exhibitions
- Create and implement project Governance Structure and Project Groups
- Leverage on the diverse experience available across the groups
- Create long-lasting legacies e.g. inaugural annual photo competition
- Recruit new volunteers
About Compact Voice

Compact Voice works to ensure that strong, effective partnerships are at the heart of all relationships between the voluntary sector and government - locally and nationally.

We support the use of the Compact through influencing, sharing positive examples and providing expertise to ensure that communities benefit from the most effective and diverse public services.

We provide training, support, advice, and information about better working in partnership to both sectors nationally and locally, represent the voluntary and community sector’s interests to government, and champion the principles of the Compact.

Compact Voice would like to thank the 2014 judging panel:

- Simon Blake OBE, Chair of Compact Voice
- Jennifer Finn, ACEVO
- Ryan Letheren, Cabinet Office
- Sarah Vibert, Epilepsy Society
- Karl Wilding, NCVO

Please note that the nominations contained in this booklet are presented in the format they were submitted, so terminology may vary.

Compact Voice
Society Building
8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL

Email: compact@compactvoice.org.uk
Website: www.compactvoice.org.uk
Twitter: @compactvoice