Compact Awards 2013

Shortlisted nominations

Judging panel:

Amanda Ariss, Equality and Diversity Forum
Simon Blake OBE, Compact Voice Chair
Neil Cleeveley, NAVCA
Kirsty LeGrice, Cabinet Office
Sarah Vibert, Epilepsy Society
This year, we are celebrating 15 years of the Compact. This milestone provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate the Compact’s many successes, and the positive impact the Compact continues to have on partnership working.

The theme of this year’s Compact Week is ‘the Power of Partnerships’; something that this year’s nominations really exemplify. The nominations received this year cover an impressively wide range of projects. We have had nominations from right across England – from the north east to the south west. The nominations showcase positive examples of partnership working involving Social Impact Bonds, Fire and Rescue Services, local police, projects based on Payment by Results, local community projects tackling anti-social behaviour – to name but a few of the excellent submissions received. We hope these examples, and the spirit of partnership working embodied within them, will be aspired to and replicated elsewhere.

We’re also pleased to see an increasing number of local partnerships that include local businesses and chambers of commerce – it’s clear that the VCS is becoming increasingly innovative in delivering services and engaging in local partnerships. This year we’ve also seen an increase in shortlisted nominations showcasing central government and voluntary sector relationships. The common thread between all of these effective partnerships is that they are underpinned by the principles of the Compact. In its 15th year, it is continuing to provide a basis for partnerships locally and nationally, and across all sectors.

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations. The good practice highlighted here is vital to improving outcomes for communities, and the Compact Voice team will be working to share them in the coming months. I look forward to raising a celebratory glass with those who have achieved so much.

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

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Overview

ADAB is a black and minority ethnic (BME) led community organisation that has developed a project in partnership with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service in Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. The project is called the Community Fire Prevention Network (CFPN).

The programme tackles community fire safety and includes a commitment to reducing the impact of fire on the lives of those in the community, through an education and awareness programme. The BME community were identified as being most vulnerable to the risk of fire, and as such required a targeted approach to effectively address this vulnerability. The CFPN aimed to deliver a comprehensive programme of education and support which would be appropriate to those using it and designed to reduce the impact of fire.

The BME community were identified as being the most at risk of fire, however, ownership of smoke alarms is lowest amongst these households. In addition, half of low income BME households have no insurance cover- so not only are they most at risk of fire, but the consequences of the fire are likely to be more damaging and longer term. The CFPN sees it as integral to its role to break this cycle, and they aim to do this through:

- Recruiting and training volunteers
- Creating educational materials including a DVD
- Providing a friendly and accessible focal point of contact between the local community and the Borough Fire & Rescue Service
- Promoting and raising fire safety awareness within the BME community
- Working in partnership with the Borough Fire & Rescue Service and their progress toward a Fire Safe Society
- Involving all sections of the community, focusing on participation from diverse groups
- Promoting social inclusion
- Promoting and raising fire safety awareness within small BME Businesses
Impact

By working together with GMFRS and having a solid base for this partnership through the Compact, the CFPN have developed a stronger, more confident community. This project has set a strong foundation for improved communication and relationships between the sectors - and most of all, has benefitted the marginalised and isolated BME community in Bury, Rochdale and Oldham.

Some of the areas collectively worked upon by ADAB and GMFRS:

- Developing effective partnerships
- Agreeing on shared principles and objectives
- Developing processes which encourage volunteers, community groups and the wider voluntary and community sector to get involved at every level
- Including all members of society in their approach, by setting up a community led steering group and a strategic group
- Developing a better understanding of each other’s organisations and structures, ways of working and priorities has been developed
- Striving to deliver better services by working together

In putting together this project, ADAB and GMFRS are not starting from scratch but building on relationships that have developed over many years. The partnership working involved is based on sector development and community benefit through collaborative delivery.

CFPN has also:

- Established a working group within the partnership
- Identified that the target audience are large and extended families, those who live in social housing and those with limited fluency in English
- Delivered fire safety awareness workshops in various languages
- Fitted smoke alarms in households
- Recruited volunteers
Safer Bristol’s commissioning of new Hate Crime Services

Overview

The process of developing new hate crime services in Bristol was inclusive, equalities-focused and led to new grant-funded services delivered by a partnership of VCS organisations.

The Safer Bristol Crime, Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (Bristol City Council) has recently completed the re-commissioning process for Hate Crime Services in Bristol. Services had previously been purchased separately by public bodies (the local authority, the constabulary) and were delivered by three voluntary and community sector organisations.

The following aspects of this commissioning process were successfully implemented using the commitments in the Bristol Compact:

- Good evidence base: A cross-sector, expert stakeholder group was convened to scope out the ‘needs analysis’, ensuring diverse stakeholders (including service users) were involved; this was followed by stakeholder meetings and desk-based research that took advantage of existing evidence.
- Emphasis on co-development and communication: Bristol’s Compact Liaison Officer was a member of the Commissioning Group, providing advice about process and engaging with voluntary and community sector providers.
- New focus on outcomes: a new outcomes framework was developed, taking advantage of the framework from another commissioning process.
- Pooled budgets from different public bodies
- Commissioners’ market analysis (and service user feedback) led to a proportionate competitive grants process.
- Comprehensive consultation involved diverse stakeholders (including hate crime victims). This included 12 weeks for consultation, different activities (such as a survey and events) and a ‘you said, we did’ report.

This commissioning process has led to a new voluntary sector collaborative partnership of four organisations delivering services – led by SARI (Stand Against Racism and Inequality) and including the Brandon Trust, Bristol Mind and LGBT Bristol. The organisations provide expertise in race and other hate crime, learning difficulties and disabilities, mental health and homophobia.
Impact

Nearly 1,600 incidents of hate crime were reported in Bristol last year - and many go unreported. This intelligently commissioned service is for victims of any type of hate crime - including racist, faith based, disablist, homophobic, transphobic, age-based or gender based. New services will champion the rights for communities in Bristol who have been disproportionately targeted by hate crime.

Impacts have included:

1) Diverse hate crime support
“This new service, delivered in partnership and grant funded by Bristol City Council, will make it easier for victims of hate crime to get the support that they need. Working together we can use the expertise of all the organisations involved to tackle hate crime and make Bristol a safer place to be.”
- Simon Cook, Assistant Mayor, Bristol City Council

Ultimately, the organisations involved hope to jointly be able to ensure that the quiet voices and victims of hate who haven’t traditionally reported, speak out and get something done about it. They will continue to involve victims as they did throughout the commissioning process.

2) VCS organisations
Services are grant-funded for three years (with possible two year extension), providing some stability for the organisations involved, and allowing efficient development of the service to accommodate other forms of discrimination. This commissioning process was inclusive and the organisations were involved in supporting service users to contribute. They were all pleased that the partnership proposal was recognised as the best service for these diverse victims.

3) Public funds
The proportionate grants process allowed for the efficient use of public funds, compared with full procurement. More of the total budget, therefore, was allocated to service delivery for hate crime victims.
Reducing health inequalities in Merton

Overview

Reducing Health Inequalities in Merton is a strong Compact commitment. All partners, whatever sector they represent, are working collaboratively to improve access to services and empower citizens to improve their own health.

There is a stark difference in life expectancy between the west and the more deprived east of the borough of Merton (9 years for men and 11 years for women). Their strong commitment to addressing these inequalities has led to the voluntary and community sector playing a critical role in shaping numerous projects, including:

- The Merton Health Diversity Project - which supports the health needs of local migrant communities, enabling them to access NHS services effectively. Outreach work in local voluntary, community and faith groups - and with specific services such as homeless charities - have been successfully run alongside cultural awareness programmes for health professionals.
- The Community Development and Health Course (an Open College Network accredited course to develop skills and knowledge about health and well-being) was developed with local community groups and is targeted at those whose voices are seldom heard. This approach is filtering through to the wider communities and has offered a stepping stone to further study, voluntary work and employment as well as a social network for people who may be at risk of isolation.
- A partnership with Sustainable Merton, a community-led initiative, has resulted in long derelict allotment land being cleared by volunteers and a range of community projects for those new to food-growing being developed.

Impact

The Merton Health Diversity project has had a huge impact, most notably:

- Over 100 new patients from the Polish and Tamil communities have been registered
- Around 200 “Stop Smoking” interventions have been delivered through 1:1 support in patients own languages, with a 70% success rate
- Around 350 participants have completed “Help Yourself to Health” workshops, also delivered in their own languages

The Community Development and Health Course recruited almost 50 vulnerable residents as participants, and a recent survey showed that 44% have taken up
voluntary work since starting the course and others have developed new links or involvement with community based groups and agencies.

The work with Sustainable Merton has already supported children from a primary school in the east of the borough to manage their own food growing plot, whilst young people from a number of communities have grown their own food using sustainable techniques. Not only has this encouraged healthier eating, it has enabled young people to adopt lifestyle changes that enable them to aspire to more positive outcomes and a site previously marred by litter and anti-social behaviour is now a food growing hub for the local community.

This expertise and collaborative working with the voluntary sector culminates in Reducing Health Inequalities being the main theme for the Merton Partnership conference in Compact Week 2013. By further sharing their expertise, partners will be encouraged to find creative solutions that take advantage of the sector’s knowledge and experience in supporting life-changing projects.
Overview

RedbridgeCVS’s Mental Health Community Development Worker planned and delivered an outreach programme to over 1,000 individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities on the topic of dementia. The project was funded by NELC NHS (now Redbridge CCG), and planned and delivered in partnership with Redbridge Council’s Living Well Resource Centre and local community and faith groups.

The project was developed as a result of requests by local BME community organisations who wanted information about dementia. Many of these communities include first-generation settlers who are now facing this issue without a history of awareness of the term ‘dementia’ and how relevant treatment and support services can be accessed.

The workshops were delivered to over 1,000 individuals in their own community settings, and used carefully selected films (delivered in a range of different community languages), multi-media presentations and guided discussions to share information about the range of conditions covered by the term ‘dementia’. The programme was developed in partnership with the Living Well Resource Centre and local BME community organisations, and delivered in partnership with these community organisations and the Living Well Resource Centre.

The programme was delivered 20 times in 18 different settings (with each session tailored to meet the needs of those they were seeking to engage with). These included places of worship, community centres and public spaces, such as an NHS Polyclinic, where people felt comfortable to discuss these difficult issues. The engagement was delivered in a range of languages and to people ranging in age from 20 to 90 years old. The majority of those participating were over the age of 55. The groups visited were pleased to know that the project was endorsed by local NHS and Council bodies.

Impact

95% of participants reported that they found the programme useful and that they now felt empowered to support families and individuals in their communities who may be affected by dementia. 2% reported that they had concerns about themselves or a family member, and all felt better able to respond. Significant numbers
responded that they had found having written and oral information in their own mother-tongues to be new and particularly useful.

The partners involved are confident that the numbers of people presenting to GPs and other health professionals with concerns about dementia will rise as a result of this work. Several individuals have reported that they have already visited their GPs (or have gone back for a return visit, with greater clarity about the kinds of information and support that might be available) to seek support.

Almost every group that was visited subsequently requested further workshops on anxiety and depression, and partners are now preparing to deliver these in similar formats, building on the trust that now exists between the groups and the worker delivering the programme. These are also being planned and delivered in partnership with local public and voluntary sector agencies.

Many groups said they wanted to embed exercise and healthy diets into their community’s lives, and all were referred to the local Fit For Fun exercise project (which offers 20 weeks of fully funded exercise classes of their own choosing, e.g. yoga, aerobics etc., and support to help them to continue at no cost to the commissioner of the original project).
Bristol City Council’s Public Transport department has invested in Community Transport (CT) services for many years. An unsuccessful attempt to tender new services led to this comprehensive outcomes-based commissioning process. Due to separate grant arrangements and a lack of evidence, a full ‘needs analysis’ was required, upon which new services could be designed and implemented. The need to work with the voluntary and community sector was recognised by including Bristol’s Compact Liaison Officer as a member of the Commissioning Project Board.

The engagement aspects of the Bristol Compact were successfully implemented in the ‘analyse’ and ‘plan’ stages of the commissioning process as follows:

1) Engaging service users
Commissioners worked with providers to design and implement comprehensive surveys to better understand community needs for CT. These included surveys of:
   • 20,000 Bristol residents – 19% (3,843) responded
   • Voluntary sector organisations using CT services – 21% (120) responded
   • 14,200 individual CT service users – 16% (2,322) responded

2) Engaging providers
In order to re-establish trust and confidence, various activities undertaken were:
   • Open communication – regular updates sent to all providers
   • Meetings – regular commissioner-provider meetings and informal contact
   • Proactive and respectful decisions about the extension of current arrangements prior to the purchasing stage
   • Invitations to Scrutiny Commissions
   • Development of a Market Position Statement – describing current and potential CT service provision

3) Engaging other commissioners
Commissioners from Public Transport department expanded the scope of this process by engaging with commissioners from Health and Social Care, Children & Young People’s Services, Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group.
Impact

The engagement activities of these commissioners led to the following impacts:

1) Service users identified their own outcomes
The purpose of CT services, according to service users, is to maintain older and disabled peoples’ independence and to improve their overall wellbeing. The newly defined outcomes achieved by CT include:
   • Increase the ability to maintain independence and live longer in their homes
   • Increase ability to budget and choose to purchase good value and healthy food and other necessities
   • Reduce feelings of isolation
   • Improve well-being through increased choice of activities

2) Commissioners have increased knowledge of outcomes
Commissioners in this part of the local authority were more accustomed to procuring passenger journeys than they were to commissioning outcomes for people. A session between commissioners and providers, facilitated by Voscur (Bristol’s support and development organisation), helped commissioners understand outcomes and further develop an outcomes framework, working with VCS providers.

3) Improved relations between commissioners and providers
This process has led to a complete turnaround in relations and all are now working towards successful new services for Bristol. Improved relations have led to increased participation in the commissioning process by providers and their service users and, consequently, better design of services.

4) Intelligent commissioning
The results of the consultation on the draft commissioning strategy (12 weeks of consultation, various methods/events) were used to change and confirm the commissioning plans:
   • Competitive grants process (not full procurement)
   • Three-year arrangements
   • Light touch means testing
   • Focus on specific outcomes
Overview

The Transparency Team, based in the Cabinet Office, have worked to engage the voluntary and community sector as much as possible during the development of the 2013 National Action Plan. They have sought to achieve this through the creation of a Civil Society network, which includes voluntary organisations involved in the transparency agenda.

Open data is just one part of government’s wider vision of Open Government, and in the new draft 2013 National Action Plan, the Government wants to show how it is continuing to build on its commitment to open data to support wide reaching transformations. The government believes that increased transparency, supported by citizen participation, generates accountability. The Government wants transparency to enable individuals and organisations to understand the decisions being made and to see the flow of funding to different parts of the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The focus of the first National Action Plan published in 2011 will be maintained, and will include the aim to:

• Improve public services; and
• More effectively manage public resources.

In addition, this new plan will broaden to include:

• Increasing corporate accountability; and
• Implementing the highest standards of professional integrity throughout their administrations

Impact

The draft UK National Action Plan 2013 is the result of open government and open policy making in action. It has been developed through the active collaboration of experts in open data, transparency, participation and accountability, drawn from civil society and government departments.

Through regular meetings at the Open Data Institute and online collaboration, the draft action plan, and subsequent commitments, has been drafted with extensive participation from the voluntary and community sector. Notes from meetings and
working documents have been published along the way to ensure transparency and facilitate engagement.

During the development of this document, members of the UK Open Government Partnership Civil Society Network, which included NCVO and Compact Voice, identified a number of other priority areas where they would like the UK Government to consider making commitments.

The UK Government’s Transparency Team agreed to look at the suggestions and where possible, make commitments in the final version of this plan, which is scheduled to be published by 31 October 2013.
Overview

The London Homelessness Social Impact Bond (SIB) was developed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Greater London Authority in partnership with the London homelessness voluntary sector, and has been running since November 2012.

By using a Payment by Results (PbR) funding model, backed by Social Investment, it allows voluntary sector providers the freedom to innovate to deliver long term results for persistent rough sleepers with complex needs, beyond what has been possible before.

The London Homelessness SIB addresses the problem that despite a range of existing services, which in principle are available to help rough sleepers, there is a large group of these rough sleepers in London who were recognised as achieving poor outcomes over the long term.

The aim was to commission an additional service targeted at 830 rough sleepers - who between them accounted for almost half of all recorded rough sleeping contacts over the previous year, with many having been seen on the streets intermittently over several years.

The premise was that given the freedom to work in a flexible and tailored way with these individuals over three years, voluntary sector providers would be able to significantly reduce their rough sleeping, helping them to move into settled accommodation, increase employment, reduce A&E admissions, and help reconnect homeless foreign nationals to their home country.

DCLG’s homelessness team instigated this project and developed it in partnership with the Greater London Authority, with support from Social Finance. These partners then fully consulted with voluntary sector agencies to identify gaps in provision, design outcomes measures, and set outcomes payments. The organisations bidding to provide the services were helped to team up with social investors who were willing to provide funding and to take the lion’s share of the risk. This teaming up was set up through a ‘Dragon’s Den’ style event, which was organised as part of the procurement process.
The Greater London Authority has commissioned St Mungo’s and Thames Reach following an innovative use of the Competitive Dialogue procedure, which is normally used for much larger projects.

**Impact**

By involving the voluntary sector in the process of identifying the problem and scoping the solution, rather than just imposing a new PbR scheme, it was possible to enthuse the voluntary sector from the outset. Working closely with the London boroughs was also key to ensuring the new SIB service was able to complement to existing services, and was not seen as a threat to them. DCLG now have a smoothly running and successful SIB programme which has already achieved significant success.

Despite SIBs and a 100% PbR model being new to the homelessness voluntary sector – and being relatively complex - DCLG were successful in assisting all the main London homelessness voluntary sector providers to get involved in bidding for this new type of contract. They were excited about the opportunity to innovate to help meet individual’s needs, and to adapt their services according to what works, without the constraints of a service specification.

The SIB will run for three years and is being evaluated to establish savings to the public purse, and to capture the innovative practice it generates from working with vulnerable people with complex needs.

Although it is too early to measure outcomes on increased employment or reductions in A&E admissions, it is doing well on the outcomes that can already be measured.

Specifically after the first three quarters:

- 25% fewer cohort members were seen sleeping rough in the 3rd quarter than expected under previous trends.
- 116 people were in settled accommodation outside the hostel system
Merton: Community Plan Refresh

Overview

Merton’s community-led refresh of their Community Plan has involved an extensive engagement process and resulted in a unique community-led plan that showcases the role of the voluntary and community sector and volunteers in meeting shared objectives. The process of developing the plan strengthened partnership working locally, and has also resulted in an on-going commitment to shaping Merton’s future together.

A planning group led by an independent, community-based chair resulted in an extensive engagement process with voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, businesses, local partners and communities across the borough to develop Merton’s new Community Plan for 2013.

The planning group, with over 50% VCS membership, had overall responsibility for steering the content and design of Merton’s new Community Plan, as well as overseeing engagement, publication, and distribution. A budget of £15,000 was awarded to the planning group by the Merton Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership) to pursue this work. Organisations represented on the planning group contributed significant additional resource (including venues, equipment and 150+ hours of staff time) to ensure the engagement process was as comprehensive as possible.

Over 500 residents and 50 private, public and VCS organisations took part in the engagement process, which included online surveys, Facebook and Twitter dialogue, paper questionnaires, video interviews, and over 30 public meetings. To ensure consultation, engagement and co-production activity resulted in meaningful outcomes, the planning group embedded Compact Voice’s ‘8 Principles of Meaningful Consultation’ at the heart of its engagement framework. In addition, Merton’s Compact Board played a valuable ‘critical friend’ role throughout the process, receiving regular update reports from the planning group and providing guidance and support when needed.

The resulting plan showcases the valuable role of the VCS in the borough in meeting the needs of residents across key services areas (health, children, and environment) and the important part volunteering continues to play in contributing to positive outcomes for all Merton residents.
**Impact**

**Shared ownership** – project evaluation feedback has confirmed that the engagement process, led by the VCS, with a strong mandate from the Merton Partnership, encouraged VCS and community leaders to feel they had a real stake in the development of the plan.

**Working together, better together** - through intensive needs assessment work, as part of the engagement process, partners now have a better understanding of how they can work more effectively together (including pooling budgets) to meet the needs of shared client groups.

**A plan accessible to everyone** – the multi-format nature of the new Plan means Merton’s Community Plan is now accessible to a broader, more diverse audience. This includes younger residents who might not engage with traditional print media, as well as visually and physically-impaired readers who will benefit from the accessibility of an online version.

**On-going commitment** – Community Plan Update group, led by local residents and the community and voluntary sector will meet three times a year to update the online version of the plan with new stories and case studies, ensuring the plan continues to reflect the on-going contribution of communities across the borough.

**Getting more involved** – project evaluation feedback suggests that many of the residents and VCS organisations who took part in the engagement process have expressed a desire to get more involved in service development forums, and to further explore local volunteering opportunities.
Overview

The Government has major plans to transform the way offenders are rehabilitated, in order to make progress in driving down stubbornly high offender rates. The consultation process for Transforming Rehabilitation proposals and stakeholder engagement events undertaken by the Ministry of Justice has ensured that voluntary and community sector organisations are at the heart of the approach, influencing the design of the reforms and maximising the opportunity for medium and smaller organisations to participate in the provision of services for offenders.

At the beginning of 2013, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) consulted on proposals in the paper ‘Transforming Rehabilitation: a revolution in the way we manage offenders’ for reforming the delivery of offender services in the community to reduce reoffending rates. This consultation included facilitated events exclusively for the voluntary and community sector to clarify questions and shape their responses.

Guided by consultation responses and the commitment to maintaining fair and appropriate provision for all groups, the Government published ‘Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform’, which sets out a programme of reform and offers a step change to the way offenders are rehabilitated. The reforms include, among other things, opening up the market for delivering rehabilitative services to a much broader range of providers, so Government embraces the best of the voluntary and community and private sectors, as well as the public sector.

The paper sets out a commitment to ensure that Compact principles guide the competition process, service specifications and contractual terms and conditions. Detailed design workshops were run to discuss the programme with potential providers.

Using voluntary and community sector expertise, an Action Plan was developed with specific, costed recommendations required to develop the capability of the sector. A further series of workshops have been developed to help in calculating unit costs, measuring impact, negotiation skills and TUPE.

The voluntary and community sector were actively contacted and encouraged to register to be included in the contract process from the start, following the publication of the Prior Information Notice (PIN) in May.
Impact

MoJ received almost 600 consultation responses, with more organisations from the voluntary and community sector than any other. The ensuing strategy responded to the feedback, including:

- Increasing contracting service areas to 21 to maximise the range of providers that can be involved in delivery;
- Holding networking events to allow providers to form partnerships;
- Developing two industry standard contracts: one for lead organisations and one for supply chain partners which embed market stewardship principles, building on work already being done with VCSE organisations.

The Justice Data Lab was also launched to allow all organisations working with offenders to access central re-offending data to assist with evidence analysis.

399 of the 700 organisations registered with the PIN were from the voluntary and community sector. The Transforming Rehabilitation Programme incorporated the Compact principles into the Action Plan response. It also committed to producing an evidence base that can be used by the voluntary sector about what works and how their services may support partnerships with providing rehabilitation services.

Sir Stephen Bubb, Chief Executive of ACEVO has said:

“…much progress has been made in understanding the special circumstances of charities and social enterprises in bidding for contracts. Much has been learnt from the Work Programme about PbR and sector tendering. And credit to Chris Grayling and his MoJ officials for the time they have spent listening to our views and our input. It has been more than the traditional "consultation”; we have been involved in the design.”
Compact Engagement Award

NHS England – National Specialised Commissioning Team

Overview

The National Specialised Commissioning Team at NHS England worked jointly with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and Compact Voice to agree contracts with a range of VCS providers. The aim was to agree and enable the delivery of high quality and highly specialised services to patients with rare, complex conditions and diseases.

NHS England’s Specialised Commissioning is responsible for commissioning services for patients with either rare conditions, or those that need a specialised team working together at a centre. These services are generally provided in relatively few specialist centres.

When entering into new NHS commissioning arrangements in April 2013, NHS England became aware that contracts held with the VCS needed to be captured into the new commissioning arrangements. Sheela Upadhyaya from the National Specialist Commissioning Team had already worked extensively with relevant VCS organisations, and recognised the need to continue to engage with these organisations in order to support the highest quality service delivery for specialised services.

Contracts with a range of VCS providers had been in place previously, and Sheela helped to persuade NHS England (Specialised Commissioning) that it was essential to continue to have separate contracts for the VCS, as these relationships yielded many positive advantages – for example, feedback on improving service delivery and utilising funding more efficiently.

Following discussions with Tom Elkins at Compact Voice, it was recognised that incorporating the Compact principles into NHS England contracts with voluntary and community sector would help to address concerns, resolve local issues, build new relationships and further strengthen partnership working throughout NHS England.

The commissioning team, led by Sheela, undertook an extensive exercise to address and understand the concerns identified by the voluntary sector organisations they worked with. This process helped to clarify which Compact principles needed to be referenced in the contract documentation. Regular communication between all involved helped to shape the content of the contract, with Compact principles underpinning the agreement.
Six voluntary and community sector organisations now hold contracts with NHS England.

**Impact**

The development of separate contracts for commissioning services from the voluntary sector has already had a positive impact, including:

- A contract between NHS England and voluntary sector providers
- Stronger engagement and participation from all relevant voluntary sector organisations
- Appreciation by the voluntary sector of the efforts NHS England have undertaken to secure separate contracts
- Recognition by all involved of the value of this type of partnership working
- Trust between NHS England and voluntary sector providers
- Financial stability for the voluntary sector providers to continue providing services
- Joint ownership of services between commissioners and providers

*Nominated by Linda Partridge, Director of Programmes, WellChild*
Compact Engagement Award

Shropshire – Bridgnorth West and Tasley Partnership

Overview

Tasley Close comprises of 3 three-storey blocks of social housing situated on the outskirts of Bridgnorth, a market town in Shropshire with a population of 12,000.

In 2011, the Close was suffering from a range of anti-social behaviour issues, ranging from minor neighbour disputes through to drug dealing and arson.

The Bridgnorth West and Tasley Partnership was set up to agree a range of actions to reduce these issues, and to try to make the close a more pleasant and attractive place to live. The partnership consists of membership from local residents, Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing, other Social Landlords with property in the area, Shropshire Council, Bridgnorth Town Council, Tasley Parish Council, West Mercia Police and Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service.

A community-led programme of measures has since been implemented, ranging from a bespoke local lettings policy, improvements to the housing blocks including their renaming by residents, construction of a new car park area, bin store and most successfully the establishment of a community garden. These have transformed the area as a place to live and the model of community engagement has been employed elsewhere as a model of best practice.

Impact

Overall the impact of the project has been the transformation of a social housing estate into an attractive, friendly place to live. It has formed a cohesive community where people want to live, stay and get more and more involved in the management and future development of their community.

The project has employed a wide range of innovative consultation and engagement exercises ranging from community clean up days, a series of drop in events on the estate, an art competition with the local primary school, a hyper-local website and the formation of a gardening committee to design, deliver and maintain new garden areas. This has culminated in the garden’s entry into both the 2012 and 2013 Bridgnorth in Bloom competitions where special recognition was received from the Royal Horticultural Society.

Critically, the engagement and consultation activities undertaken have resulted in improvements to service and policy design and delivery across the agencies involved in the partnership - including social landlords, the police, the fire service and both
Shropshire, Bridgnorth Town and Tasley Parish Councils. The framework to bind this service redesign and continued improvement is the local lettings policy. The work was part of a Focussed Local Learning Project for Shropshire Council that helped pilot new ways of working to be employed across the authority.

The most tangible example of how the community has benefited from these engagement processes is the success of the gardening committee. The committee initiated and undertook the regeneration of the gardens around the close and now play a lead role in their on-going management and maintenance.
Bristol Compact – Voscur/Bristol Compact project to improve commissioning

Overview

After lots of feedback from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and commissioners in Bristol, a partnership initiative has helped to increase understanding and identify solutions to commissioning. This ground-breaking work is changing local commissioning so that VCS organisations have a greater chance of winning public service contracts.

Bristol VCS organisations and commissioners had expressed concerns about commissioning processes over the last few years. Voscur, Bristol Compact and Bristol City Council (BCC) have worked together to address those concerns.

A one-day event was organised so that people could raise concerns about commissioning and work together to find solutions. 70 people from the VCS, Clinical Commissioning Group, Police and Crime Commissioner’s office and BCC commissioners attended. The event focused firstly on issues and concerns, and identified several key themes: process; quality; marketisation vs mission; TUPE; expertise and information; consortia and collaboration; risk; and joint strategic shaping of services. All of the above attendees then worked together to devise a detailed action plan to address issues.

Jackie Boyce from Rethink Mental Illness in Bristol said:

“From my perspective, it was wonderful to have the chance to meet or get re-acquainted with other VCS managers and leaders and hear how similar we all are in the issues that challenge us. I felt like I hit the jackpot by finding myself sitting at a table with some of the commissioners and decision makers in my sector.

The day opened with the positive statement, “we’re going to be one step closer to each other” and well before the end of the day I believed it. The day was facilitated beautifully and the momentum kept going from one solution focussed activity to the next. I can’t say enough how much I appreciated the determination to ensure that there were commissioners in every working group and that the day ended with a plan for better joint working and a much clearer understanding of the challenges on both sides of the commissioning table.”
Impact

The event has significantly helped to build trust and a sense of common purpose. Lots of behind the scenes work by Voscur, Bristol Compact and BCC has taken place to implement the ambitious action plan. The following developments will have a positive impact and bring improvements to commissioning processes:

1) Commissioning Intentions website
A new BCC website is about to be launched, giving regular updates on their commissioning intentions. Knowing what’s on the horizon will enable VCS organisations to make plans and develop new partnerships to respond to opportunities.

2) TUPE guidance
Standard guidance has been produced for BCC commissioners. This will be very helpful, because if local VCS organisations know what commissioners are advised to do, then they can work more effectively with employees to support their effective transfer so skills are not lost.

3) Collaboration guidance
Two guidance notes about collaboration have been produced to cover grant and procurement processes. These will be useful for commissioners: so they know how to articulate their expectations of the market, and for VCS organisations and providers: so they know how best to respond to commissioners’ requirements.

4) Social Value Policy
There has been some positive work on a new Social Value Policy for Bristol over the last few months. Voscur convened a roundtable involving VCS representatives and commissioners, and another event is planned to create definitions of social value and design ways to demonstrate it. This will help commissioners to understand how to ask providers about social value and for providers to be able to describe it, so that it can be understood by all and can help providers win contracts.
Manchester – ‘Safer Streets’

Overview

Safer Streets deliver street outreach twice weekly to individuals and communities that are affected by sex work, anti-social behaviour and child sexual exploitation. The outreach is planned, timetabled and delivered collaboratively by Survivors Manchester, The Men’s Room and Mancunian Way.

Safer Streets is a co-design project that aims to improve community safety for all; regardless of social standing, vulnerability or individual actions. The project came together through discussions and recognition that all three agencies were potentially working with the same cohorts. Amalgamating three smaller projects into a larger, more holistic project has reduced costs, improved the support delivered, widened the target area and brought more leverage and influence when working with statutory services.

All three partners involved in Safer Streets bring skill-sets and expertise in their particular field while committing to achieving a collective goal. Safer Streets is not just delivered collaboratively, it works alongside and is supported by a wide range of other VCS organisations, Private Business and Statutory Services. These include the Village Business Association, Young Peoples Support Foundation, Crime and Disorder Team, Greater Manchester Police, and Urban Village Medical Centre. Safer Streets also feed into the City Council’s Prostitution Strategy, Sexual Health Strategy and CSE Strategy.

Safer Streets proactively plan street patrols in anti-social behaviour hotspots in the evenings to engage with the people they find there. Individuals are often known to workers, which provides an opportunity to engage, promote and reiterate opportunities to access specific help and support that may be needed urgently. Workers can also provide more general advice about services that can help them in the longer term and signpost to pathways that address underlying issues.

Safer Streets is also about wider community safety and taking responsibility to report potential hazards, including people’s behaviour and actions, or reporting dangerous pavements.
Impact

Safer Streets outreach gives both immediate and long-term impact. The partnership responds to the particular issues for a specific area and links in to additional agencies when needed. Providing a single access point for many social issues allows Safer Streets to address areas such as personal safety, access to condoms, (sexual) health screenings, rough sleeping and child protection.

Safer Streets also has longer term impact for individuals. With three specialist agencies delivering the project, each with links to other VCS organisations, they are able to pick up one-to-one cases immediately, or make introductions to other support. This way of working can open up clearer pathways for individuals to begin a journey of change in their lives.

In August 2013, Safer Streets discovered two boys (aged 12 and 15) attempting to sell sex. This alarming situation was discovered because Safer Streets patrol on foot and use local knowledge to visit appropriate locations. Now a focus for the Police, Safer Streets managed to intervene with the boys at an early age. This intervention could be a positive turning point in their lives.

We are a visible presence in areas known for male sex working, child sexual exploitation and anti-social behaviour. This has had a positive effect on both the individuals they work with, and sends a reassuring message to the wider community.

Safer Streets have never come across an issue they couldn’t offer support or advice on, and their partnering support agency network is extensive. Safer Streets’ staff carry their offices in backpacks, containing all the information they need.
Overview

The London Fire Brigade (Merton) has used Compact principles to develop a unique scheme that extends the role of frontline fire brigade staff to become advisors on smoking cessation and to refer vulnerable residents into alcohol and drugs support. In particular, they have worked with the Council’s Public Health team to design the training programme for staff, and with the CVS to identify residents at the highest risk.

Through their Home Fire Safety visits, London Fire Brigade (LFB) recognised that those at the highest risk were often the most vulnerable people within the community and this included people who smoked and, in certain circumstances, had dependency issues relating to drug and/or alcohol misuse.

Through discussions at the Compact Board, a multi-agency partnership approach to reducing home fires was developed. This led to 120 frontline LFB staff being trained as Level 1 Smoking Advisors by Public Health colleagues. This was extremely successful and was expanded to encompass alcohol and drug awareness training and has been further extended to identify signs of domestic violence.

Working with Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC), the LFB were put in touch with voluntary organisations working with vulnerable and high risk groups, and referral routes into the LFB were developed.

LFB staff have enhanced their personal skills and knowledge, and enjoy being part of an innovative reintegration programme. Voluntary organisations have welcomed this innovative approach, and most importantly, the risk of home fires is being substantially reduced.

Through its involvement with the Compact, LFB is an integral partner in Merton working with others to achieve the best possible outcomes for all residents.

Impact

By using a Compact way of working, Merton has developed a partnership approach to reducing the risks for their most vulnerable residents. Merton have uniquely used frontline LFB staff to act as a referral into specialist support services and have engaged with the voluntary sector to identify those at highest risk. This programme of training and development for front line staff in LFB is, as far as they know, unique to Merton.
Since April, over 500 home fire safety visits have been delivered to some of the most vulnerable people within the community, identified with the support of the voluntary sector. Through these visits, officers have delivered information on quitting smoking, alcohol and drug advisory services and signposted to domestic violence support groups. It is projected that by the end of the financial year 2013/14, a further 600 visits will be delivered across the borough.

For the first time, through this unique partnership, LFB are playing an important role in the reintegration of some of Merton’s most vulnerable residents. As unexpected referrers, fire officers are able to have greater impact on the lives of these residents, who may otherwise be reticent toward other public sector bodies and community groups.

LFB are now developing a continuation system to support cascade training for new staff and community volunteers, ensuring the resilience of the scheme. Working with the voluntary sector has led to LFB reaching a far wider group of individuals and communities, across ethnicities and socio-economically disadvantaged groups, which they had often previously struggled to engage with.
Overview

The Policy and Representation Partnership was set up in 2009, after receiving four years of funding to help the voluntary and community sector influence public policy. The Partnership, facilitated by VONNE, set out to create a ‘Festival of Ideas’ around policy. It created the space and opportunity for people from grass roots voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, the public and private sectors and funders to come together to explore ideas - and influence policy-makers on issues that matter deeply to communities in the North East.

It was felt that whilst it was essential for the VCS to support people with their immediate problems, there was also a vital role to play in shaping policies that affect the most vulnerable. The Policy and Representation Partnership connected those with a detailed knowledge and real intelligence of how practice impacts on the lives of the vulnerable, with those charged with developing policies.

To support this, the Partnership held 15 Policy Forum events attended by over 400 people, which covered a wide range of topics and attracted some high profile speakers. The Partnership also delivered training and masterclasses to 210 people who wanted to gain more of an in-depth knowledge of successful methods to use to take their campaigns to the next level.

22 VCS organisations were commissioned to carry out research and consultations on 25 different policy areas pertinent to the sector. Their findings were then shared with statutory sector policy makers. As well as improving practice, additional resources have also been brought into the sector. The guide for commissioners working with the VCS around Health has been used by a CVS to secure £30,000 funding. £95,000 has been secured to continue to develop a Criminal Justice network for the sector in the North East, and an additional £300,000 has been secured to sustain the Integrated Family Support Workers in prisons, and over £1 million of capacity building funding was reserved after the Partnership made representation through VONNE.

Impact

The impact of the Partnership has been outstanding. It has increased the knowledge and skills of 25 policy themes, as well as providing opportunities to influence policy and practice.
In a survey, 84% of respondents felt that they were well informed about policy development in the North East, and 75% of people felt the Partnership had given them the mechanisms to influence policy.

763 VCS organisations were engaged in policy discussions with 57 briefing papers produced around them. Additionally:

- VCS organisations continue to work with Newcastle Clinical Commissioning Groups to take forward their recommendations about working with the VCS
- Newcastle CAB and Newcastle Council have developed new ways of working with the development of a ‘Corporate Debt Strategy’, to support those unable to pay their council tax
- The ‘value of volunteering’ project worked with Job Centre Plus to improve the information claimants were given and to build relationships with local volunteer centres
- Four schools are working with Children North East ‘poverty proofing the school day’ with an additional 23 schools registered. This will significantly improve the lives of young people in the North East.
- A toolkit has been created on how to influence decision makers, packed with advice, resources and strategies.
- VONNE and Clinks have developed a partnership to further develop a criminal justice network for the VCS in the North East. This will be used to share good practice with commissioners and decision makers locally and nationally.

The project encouraged partnership working in line with Compact principles and meaningful engagement guidelines; it has helped to safeguard the voluntary sector’s independence and has improved working relationships.
Overview

In 2012 Essex Compact survey its Compact Champions. These champions reported that they wanted to undertake some training in implementing the Compact, but that the main barrier to attending training events was that they found it difficult to get away from their usual place of work.

Essex Compact Steering group developed an Essex Compact e-Learning programme to meet this need.

The Compact e-Learning tool is currently being rolled out across Essex, supported by the Steering Group and with dedicated resource allocated from Essex County Council.

The tool has been structured to provide a clear introduction and summary of the Compact to a wide range of audiences, particularly to organisations and individuals who are new to the Compact. Some of the content was based on previously developed materials, for example, the article “Essex Compact – what’s it all about?” (S. Banks, Essex County Council - circa 2008).

Those already familiar with the Compact also have a chance to re-affirm their knowledge and understanding. For example, the e-learning tool is structured in a way that guides the learner on a variety of key Compact principles, such as whether you are being Compact compliant, or what to do if things are not working. This is something that even a seasoned Compact advocate can benefit from revising.

The following topics in the e-learning tool are covered:

- Introduction
- What is a Compact and why should I sign up?
- Essex Compact Champions
- Essex Compact case study
- Help and Support

Access to the e-learning tool is available to all organisations that have signed up to the Essex Compact, as well as elected members from each district council.
Impact

After completing the Essex Compact e-learning course, participants will:

- Understand what the Compact is
- Identify its relevance to their organisation or work,
- understand the benefits of signing up to the Compact,
- understand the relationship between different levels of Compact working in Essex, determine what signing up to the Compact means,
- identify where to go for additional support
- …and receive a certificate

There has already been considerable interest in the package. It was the subject of a case study published by Compact Voice and Essex County Council used it as part of its induction for new and existing elected members after the last elections.

By signing up to use the e-learning tool, organisations will automatically receive access to Essex County Council’s e-learning zone. Here groups will be able to access an additional range of online e-learning courses.

Success will be measured by collecting a mixture of statistical data i.e. numbers of people accessing the tool online, and quantitative through soft feedback about the quality and value of the product.

The development of the e-learning project brought the Essex Compact Steering Group together to develop something that had a real tangible output and has built strength and confidence in developing further work together in the future.
Overview

Merton Means Business is an inspired partnership between Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC) and Merton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise (MCCE), which brings local businesses and the local community together. Two strong voices – one for the voluntary and community sector and the other for the business sector – working in harmony to improve general wellbeing in Merton.

MVSC and MCCE recognise their similar roles: providing quality infrastructure services to strengthen and sustain membership; supporting channels to provide a cohesive voice and influence change to benefit the wider community. The collaborative approach has led to many successful joint projects ranging from Greening Business to sharing training, e.g. embracing new technologies. Three years ago the Chamber became the first nationally to join a Compact Board.

The Office for Civil Society’s Transforming Local Infrastructure funding presented an exciting opportunity to bring the sectors in Merton even closer together, and their innovative approach was rewarded with funds to employ a Business Engagement Manager, based at MCCE but working on behalf of the wider community.

The product of this relationship is branded Merton Means Business, and provides a platform for local business and voluntary organisations to discuss and identify local projects and opportunities for collaborative working.

The Engagement Manager taps into the 600 members and 4000 relationships of MCCE, encouraging involvement in the community and matching them with one or more of the 700+ voluntary organisations supported by MVSC, providing a powerful network committed to supporting the whole community.

Impact

In just 12 months Merton Means Business has produced some astounding results:

- Over £40,000 of private sector support for the local community
- A website to raise awareness of local need and, in particular, the east/west divide in Merton
- A channel to celebrate and reward the fantastic support from local businesses at www.mertonmeansbusiness.co.uk
- Over 100 businesses engaged to support local causes including volunteering, pro bono work, cash donations and sponsorship
• Many groups attracting new Trustees with a diverse range of skills and expertise
• An increasing number of groups buying goods and services from small, local businesses (accountancy and legal, catering, PR and marketing, etc.)
• A simple means for businesses to find out more about their community and identify appropriate opportunities to get involved
• A powerful network comprising the voluntary and community sector and the private sector
• Tremendous support for new initiatives such as Merton Community Fund
• Recognition regionally and nationally as a model of good practice (e.g. to lead workshops at NAVCA conference, to address London business at CCLA bank, articles in the national press including Huffington Post)

The Merton Compact is at the heart of this strong partnership approach – in a short period of time, partners in Merton have managed to get two sectors working closely together and have built relationships based on a mutual desire to make Merton a better place for everyone. Merton are particularly delighted that at a time when resources are extremely tight, they have managed to secure funding to continue the post of Business Engagement Manager.
Sunderland Partnership has developed an innovative regional sharing network where members reduce costs by swapping resources (either as a giveaway or loan). Sunderland Partnership has worked collaboratively with Sunderland City Council, Sunderland schools, Sunderland University, Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland and privately owned company WARPit on the project.

In 2010, Compact signatory Sunderland City Council underwent a restructure that led to the closure of buildings across the city. This meant that large quantities of furniture and equipment became redundant. Rather than send these to landfill, the council signed up to the then recently created web-based WARPit reuse scheme, which resulted in over £45,000 of cost savings in just nine months.

The Sunderland Partnership helped to widen the network of organisations that made up the WARPit network to include over 300 schools, the local NHS trust, Sunderland University and Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland (VCAS).

Most importantly, and in the spirit of Compact, the voluntary and community sector is allowed free access to the website, allowing Compact members to claim surplus resources from their corporate counterparts in a legal, efficient and controlled manner.

WARPit not only allows for equipment to be exchanged but other resources can be loaned and shared with the confidence of sound legal agreements and terms and conditions. This means that the costs of expensive equipment like staging and audio visual equipment can be shared by all partners, releasing resources for direct service provision.

WARPit is now operating city-wide and includes offices, schools and voluntary organisations. All staff have access to the online system and are actively encouraged to use it for all their procurement needs. VCAS hosts a portal and administers WARPit for the voluntary sector, though individual charities can register separately if required.
Impact

Sunderland Partnership, in its lead role in the Compact Implementation Group, understood the wider social value of WARPit and the need to work with its voluntary sector partners around delivery.

The application of Compact principle 2.1 was important to the design of the service and its rollout, as was the need to ensure the opportunities for social impact and the resulting community empowerment under principle 2.2. WARPit is more than a transactional tool, as its use creates a positive impact on dignity, self-image and sense of wellbeing for those taking part. Experience has shown that in communities when people make connections they feel safer and happier, creating further opportunities and learning.

We believe that WARPit prompts gateway behaviour for more sharing activities in and out of the workplace, by being an easy non-committal way to donate - as well as providing clear environmental benefits.

WARPit has been a lever to use the Compact locally, leading to improved networks and new collaborations which have built new relationships. This innovative model of collaborative consumption has also allowed (in line with principle 3.2 of the Compact) a way for resources to be made available to voluntary organisations at a time of scarcity. Over 450 partners have been able to work together, and the message is still being spread. The voluntary and community sector continues to enthusiastically take up support of this free tool.

On a practical level, the impact for partners has been avoiding thousands of pounds of expenditure (over £250K), whilst also saving carbon (102,318KG) and waste (37,771KG).
Overview

The Strategic Commissioning and Procurement Service at Bristol City Council (BCC) has incorporated many aspects of the Bristol Compact into its work. The department’s service function helps standardise commissioning practice and supports the involvement of voluntary and community sector (VCS) providers.

The Strategic Commissioning and Procurement Service (SCPS) plays an important role in commissioning in the city. All BCC commissioners take advice from and use the services and tools produced by SCPS. Many aspects of the department’s work are integrated with Bristol Compact principles as follows:

Enabling Commissioning Framework (commissioner toolkit)
- Consultations (for 12 weeks, with various methods) is a standard action in the ‘Plan’ stage for all commissioning processes that involve the voluntary and community sector
- Guidance on market analysis and designing lots/smaller contracts in response to the market’s potential

TUPE Guidance
- Development of guidance on TUPE to help standardise commissioning practice

Co-development
SCPS has led on the co-development of Bristol’s responses to new policies, including the Right to Challenge and Social Value. The department has worked to involve voluntary and community sector stakeholders from the early stages (with, for example, roundtable events) so that BCC policies are informed and appropriate for Bristol’s voluntary sector.

Market facilitation
SCPS supports and helps commissioners engage earlier and more meaningfully with the provider market. Examples include guidance on collaboration and working with Voscur to facilitate VCS-led partnerships in Big Lottery programmes.

Openness
SCPS has led on the publishing of a new BCC Commissioning Intentions website. This will help the VCS providers choose, plan and respond to future commissioning opportunities. The department has incorporated many aspects of the Bristol
Compact into its work. The department’s service function helps standardise commissioning practice and supports the involvement of VCS providers.

**Impact**

All of the SCPS activities shown above have contributed to improved relationships and have helped commissioners work better with their provider markets. The work on the Enabling Commissioning Framework has helped the VCS to avoid many difficult discussions with commissioners. Combined with the market analysis guidance and designing contracts into lots, this means that smaller VCS organisations are not automatically excluded from commissioning processes.

Combined with extensive market facilitation at an early stage, this ensures that VCS organisations are part of the commissioning process and are considered as valuable assets to the city in terms of service delivery. The TUPE guidance will help the VCS to understand and implement TUPE better and more consistently. This is an area that has always been fraught with difficulties for both commissioners and VCS organisations, and it is hoped that the guidance will go some way to mitigate the areas of difficulty. The co-development activities have enabled VCS organisations to have a voice in the development of several policies, which in turn, helps to ensure that the VCS understand them and are able to work to assist BCC to fulfil them.

The wide variety of activities that the SCPS undertakes illustrates that they have a commitment to dialogue and improvement in their relationship with the VCS and the Compact. This is evidenced by the Bristol Compact being integral to a commissioning/VCS event held in early 2013. The resulting action plan has led to several aspects of the Compact being built into the work plan of this team.
Rev. Andrew Wakefield is a community leader whose tireless work continues to embrace and exhibit a range of Compact principles. This nomination relates particularly to his commitment to the Merton Compact, culminating in the development of the Community Plan in 2013, a published summary of partnership working relevant to our diverse communities.

Rev. Andrew Wakefield has lived and worked in Merton for 30 years, the last 22 as a local vicar and a specialist advisor on business and the economy in South London for the Church of England. He is a strong advocate of the importance of partnership working regardless of which sector people represent.

As Chair of the Merton Chamber of Commerce, he has overseen its growth as a representative body for business and an award winning business support agency. In this capacity he was also a founding member of the Merton Strategic Partnership and made the case for resourcing community engagement with the voluntary and community sector.

Andrew’s leadership has undoubtedly led to the strong local working relationships between the private and voluntary sectors in Merton, a collaboration resulting in the delivery of a range of joint programmes for the benefit of the wider community which attracted external funding.

Three years ago, the Chamber became the first nationally to sign up to the Compact which has led to further innovative partnership working delivering positive outcomes for communities.

Andrew has been directly involved in initiatives ranging from inter faith work and services for homeless people to job creation and apprenticeships. He has chaired a number of groups and in the current year he has assisted with the development of Merton Means Business, a unique partnership between the Chamber and MVSC, and the establishment of a new Community Fund for small groups.
Impact

Andrew chaired the refresh of Merton’s Community Plan, leading a cross-sector reference group in an innovative and new way. He prioritised community involvement throughout its development, embraced digital channels, demonstrated a strong understanding of the diverse communities in the area and highlighted the stories of those people and organisations that form the lifeblood of the local community.

Numerous local groups and residents were interviewed, with staff volunteering their time to conduct interviews, including police officers who interviewed with their iPads. The Plan will be formally launched on 11 October 2013 at the high profile Wimbledon Bookfest, where attendees will include VCS and faith groups, members of the multi-agency Merton Partnership, businesses and local residents.

Under the auspices of the Merton Compact, Andrew has brought together various sectors on a shared mission - telling Merton’s story in a way that is relevant and accessible. This work is further evidence of the impact of owning Compact principles. It demonstrates the reach of the Merton Compact, their innovative approach to partnership working, builds on their reputation for excellence and illustrates how they achieve the best outcomes for local people and share their stories.

Andrew’s commitment to the Chamber’s close collaboration with MVSC has led to local business being linked to the heart of life in Merton. The Merton Means Business initiative is being recognised regionally and nationally as a best practice model – again highlighting the strength of the Merton Compact.

Working Together really is Better Together and few embrace this mantra as much as Andrew – a true community leader.
Overview

The Sunderland Partnership’s External Funding Working Group has until recently been a sub-group of the local Compact Implementation Group (CIG).

The External Funding Working Group (EFWG) seeks to ensure that the City of Sunderland and its communities benefit from external funding opportunities by working collectively and collaboratively.

The EFWG makes use of funding programmes that are of benefit to communities in Sunderland by ensuring that partners are linked together for bids. It does this by publicising opportunities and facilitating a Compact compliant approach to bids for the city.

In 2011, The EFWG recognised that in line with the Government’s localism agenda, a shift was occurring in regard to community funding initiatives. Funding was increasingly being offered to local groups directly, rather than through their local authority. This meant that new programmes within communities could fail to join up with existing projects delivering similar services. Competing bids were being drafted and the opportunity to add value by working collaboratively was being lost. The EFWG therefore established a protocol for the engagement and participation of partners to collaborate on relevant funding opportunities in line with the Sunderland Compact.

The EFWG consists of representatives from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) signatories of the Sunderland Compact, the Council and other citywide organisations, reflecting their strategic role, experience and knowledge of external funding.

The Group’s chair and vice chair are agreed by the Compact Implementation Group annually, following an invitation to all Compact members to nominate themselves to be part of the Group for the following year. The Council’s Financial Resources service coordinates the EFWG, and they support it to review opportunities, coordinate responses to appropriate funding opportunities and analyse the city’s relative take up of funds.
Impact

The EFWG has highlighted, via its leadership role, the positive contribution of the Compact locally. It is an example of what the Compact can do by attracting funding into the City – an achievement that has been showcased via a Compact Voice case study. It shows how the Compact can add to a positive environment for partnership working by leading a joint approach in competitive situations.

The EFWG’s work has led to the improvement of a number of processes and relationships. This has included improved circulation of bidding or tender calls to Compact signatories and beyond. Additionally, the understanding and project management of bids has been improved via centrally organised meetings to discuss interest in opportunities. Bids have also been submitted by the lead agent on time and in the best possible condition, reducing risk to all parties.

The EFWG has showcased a competitive advantage demonstrating an effective partnership approach for Sunderland by securing a Big Lottery grant totalling nearly £1m. It also ensures that best practice is shared and services are better coordinated, improving efficiency and effectiveness which leads to better quality of services.

The EFWG is a practical and successful example of how the principles of the Compact have been embedded into the work of partners across Sunderland, generating new relationships and opportunities. The success of the EFWG and protocol arrangements has led to a merger with the Compact Implementation Group, allowing operations and financial strategy to be brought together in one meeting, saving time and improving effectiveness.
Essex – Compact Steering Group

Overview

Essex Compact Steering Group has gone from strength to strength demonstrating the ‘power of partnerships’. As a result of direct work engaging with Essex Compact Champions, in 2012 the Essex Compact Steering Group set itself a number of challenging tasks. These included:

- A Compact Peer Review
- Developing an e-Learning package
- Supporting Compact Champions to raise awareness and improve implementation

Each year, the Essex Compact Steering Group surveys its Champions to find out what their experiences of Compact working were over the past year, and what support they might need in the forthcoming year. The Essex Compact Steering Group then take the results of this survey back to Champions at the Essex Compact Forum, an annual meeting to review progress and to ‘elect’ the steering group for the forthcoming year. The Essex Compact Steering Group took feedback from Champions very seriously, and developed the following projects:

**Compact Peer Review**: Building on previous work to develop an Implementation Toolkit, as part of the East of England Compact Network, Essex Compact Champions put forward the idea of developing a Peer Review process which would bring Compact Champions together and would promote good practice and implementation of Compact principles.

**e-Learning**: Essex Compact Champions reported that securing time away from their ‘day jobs’ is difficult for most Compact Champions, and so any events or activities planned need to make best use of the little time that Champions had available. To facilitate joint learning between Champions, and help them to promote Compact principles within their organisations, the Steering Group developed an e-Learning package.

**Support for Champions**: The Essex Compact Challenge was developed as a means by which Compact Champions could be assisted to promote and implement Compact principles. During Compact Week 2012, every Champion was challenged to do at least one thing that would promote or implement Compact principles.
Impact

Compact Peer Review
This idea was picked up by Compact Voice and the Peer Review Framework was developed as a result. The peer review framework is currently being trialled in Essex by Braintree and Thurrock Compact groups. The Essex Compact Steering Group are actively looking for a partner to work with.

Support for Champions
Essex Compact Champions reached over 5,000 people, and beneficiaries of the activity reported that they now know more about how the Compact benefits them and what to do if they think something isn’t ‘Compact compliant’.

e-Learning
This e-Learning package is available this year for free to all organisations signed up to the Essex Compact. It has already been rolled out to all District and Borough Councils in Essex. It was recently used as part of the induction process for new and existing elected members following a recent election. Feedback so far is that it is a useful tool for both existing Champions to refresh their knowledge, and it also provides people who are fresh to the Compact with a good basic overview.

Perhaps as importantly was the co-operative way that the Essex Compact Steering Group worked on these projects. This meant that they became more than ‘just a committee’ and became a group of people who got used to working together, building on ideas and making things happen.
Local Compact Partnership Award

Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action (GAVCA) and Cheltenham Borough Council

Overview

Cheltenham Borough Council commissioned GAVCA to support it to develop its goal of effective participation of the VCS in the commissioning process.

The development and support of effective partnership working structures has been key to this piece of work. Since the end of Local Area Agreements, many previously developed structures for VCS involvement in multi-sector partnerships across Gloucestershire ceased.

In Cheltenham, there has been a real commitment to continue multi-sector partnership working, with an increased investment in support to facilitate the Council’s partnership with the VCS.

A new ‘fit for purpose’ partnership structure has been developed. This is based on a model originally proposed by VCS representatives, and takes into account the whole commissioning process.

Part of GAVCA’s work is to ensure that there is accountable VCS representation involved in the new local partnership structure. A new part of the structure has been the development of task and finish groups. These groups are designed to focus on the practicalities of delivery rather than being entirely strategic, they can therefore enable practitioners to be involved. Voluntary organisations play an active part, and GAVCA ensures that the VCS is aware of opportunities for organisations to get involved.

A round table meeting between Cheltenham Borough Council and VCS representatives has been developed, and is a forum to discuss new and emerging issues for the town, and how the voluntary sector and Cheltenham Borough Council can work better together.
Impact

The support given to enable the VCS to play an active part in commissioning processes has achieved the following impact:

- A new model for the delivery of leisure and culture services in Cheltenham has been developed. This involved voluntary organisations in identifying the vision and objectives for the service. Now a new charitable trust is in the process of being created.

- Cheltenham Borough Council has picked up on a GAVCA initiative looking at the Social Value Act. The Council is now actively exploring how to implement social value within their commissioning process, and is involving the VCS in these discussions. It also invited other district councils and the county council to join them in the initial stages of understanding what the Social Value Act means for them.

- The new partnership structure is now in place, and has strong VCS representation. Support is given to VCS representatives by GAVCA to enable them to carry out their role effectively. Two partnerships are now chaired by VCS Representatives. The VCS also has a place on the Public Art Panel, which is currently developing its approach to community based public art.

- The VCS is represented on the Cheltenham Development Task Force – a multi-sector group looking at major developments in the town. The skills and knowledge of the VCS has helped the task force to engage with and gather the views of the local community.

- There is now a dedicated ‘consultations’ page on the council website, developed following suggestions from VCS representatives that it would make it easier for the public and voluntary organisations if they knew they could go to one place for all consultation related information.
Overview

The reduction in public sector resources has put many partnerships under strain, with many organisations choosing to focus on delivery of their own services. This is not the ‘Merton Way’. Merton have committed to even more partnership working as they recognise the best way to maintain services and improve outcomes for their diverse communities is by fulfilling the Merton Compact pledge of ‘Working Together: Better Together’.

Merton believe that their response to the challenge of increasing demand at a time of reducing resources sets a benchmark for how Compact working can both improve services and reduce cost. Merton has a strong track record in partnership working between the voluntary and community sector (VCS), public bodies – and increasingly, the business community. By following Compact principles, partners in Merton have built up trusting relationships that allow partners to share ideas and problems.

Merton work to consistently demonstrate support for partnership working. This can be seen in their refreshed Community Plan, developed jointly by partners with extensive engagement with local communities and overseen by an independent chair. It is also aimed to demonstrate Merton Council’s commitment to maintaining and expanding its range of voluntary sector grants programmes, recognising and valuing the independence and innovation of the local VCS.

Merton has more partnership initiatives than ever before, and the VCS in Merton is core to both shaping and delivering them. The VCS has also led the way in engaging with businesses, recognising the vast potential of businesses to support local communities.

Partners in Merton have also developed new ways of working that deliver additional value, such as training fire fighters to deliver smoking cessation advice and sign-posting to support services for those with substance misuse problems.

Where tough decisions have been required, partners in Merton have worked together. When Adult Social Care grants were refocused around prevention, the VCS in Merton were involved in developing the overall strategy, as well as throughout the process of shifting resources.
Impact

The Merton Compact has provided a fantastic framework for working together - a few highlights include:

- Merton Council won the prestigious Municipal Journal ‘Best Achieving Council’ Award, with strong partnership working a key factor. Merton was the only area that included a voluntary sector representative presenting to the judging panel.
- Ofsted rated work with the VCS in Merton “Outstanding” – a national first.
- The Police Borough Commander developed an innovative youth engagement/diversion initiative in partnership with the voluntary and private sectors. The project is delivered by volunteers (including police officers volunteering in their own time).
- A ground-breaking initiative linking the VCS, Public Health and Fire Service has resulted in 120 fire officers (since May 2013) gaining accreditation to deliver smoking cessation advice. This has been extended to include referral into specialist support services (alcohol and/or drug dependency) and domestic violence.
- In just one year, the Business Engagement Manager (based at the Chamber of Commerce) has engaged over 100 businesses to support local causes - including volunteering, pro bono work, cash donations (£40,000) and sponsorship.
- Merton’s commitment to attracting new, sustainable funding for smaller community groups has led to the development of a Community Fund. Staff working in all sectors are encouraged to donate £1 a month and/or fundraise, and within just 6 months, Merton are in a position to invite applications.

Partnership working is part of the culture in Merton, and its impact clearly reaps benefits for the wider community.
Overview

The North East Local Compact Network was set up in 2012 to provide a voice for Compact champions from across the North East Region. Members of the Network are from local authorities, other statutory sector organisations and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) from across the North East region. In the short time that the Network has been in existence, it has added greatly to the sharing of local knowledge and has had an increase in commitment by local partners to the role of local Compacts.

Compact Voice brought together both statutory sector and VCS representatives from different local authority areas across the North East into the Network, which also has input from the Office for Civil Society and DCLG. This mix of membership is important because it provides a range of different perspectives and embodies the spirit of the Compact - working together in partnership.

The Network is both physical and virtual, with regular quarterly meetings enabling members to come together and discuss burning issues. There are also email updates in between meetings to provide support and intelligence sharing. Armed with information about what other areas are doing with their local Compacts, Network members have been able to contact other areas in the North East outside of the Network meetings, which has enabled them to seek peer support around Compact working.

The Network enables areas to showcase their local Compact work, discuss successes, identify areas for improvement and encourage the “art of the possible”. It also allows discussion about policy changes that might impact on Compact working in the future, to provide a “heads up” on how Compacts may need to respond.

The Network is responsive to the needs of members and provides a support mechanism for areas that are refreshing or renewing their Compact. Since its inception, partnership working between Network members has increased significantly, and there is visibly better commitment to ensuring that other local partners are more aware of local Compacts.
Impact

The Network has enabled the sharing of different perspectives on the importance of local Compacts, and how to best implement a Compact way of working. The Network has also encouraged the exchange of best practice - such as the use of Compact champions, using e-learning programmes on the Compact, and the provision of case studies, which has prompted other areas to review how they use their local Compact.

When Compact Voice carried out its Annual Local Compact Survey in 2012, the Network was still in its infancy, and only five of the twelve North East local authority areas responded to the Survey. However, with renewed commitment to local Compacts - which the Network has engendered - there was a 100% response from all twelve local authority areas in 2013.

The Network has reinvigorated the importance of having a living local Compact (especially given public sector infrastructure changes) that is discussed within Network meetings. As a result, over half of the North East local authority areas have already refreshed their local Compact (or have decided to refresh in the near future). Local areas in the North East are looking to refresh their local Compacts to take into account policy changes such as the Localism Act and Social Value Act, or to include new signatories such as Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police and Crime Commissioners. The Network has enabled areas to identify best practice in engaging with new partners and to work together as a partnership, with the support of Compact Voice, where common barriers to engagement are identified.

The Network represents a good example of partnership working and commitment to maximise the impact of local Compacts across the North East region.
Overview

Redbridge First Response Service (ReFRS) is a unique, innovative, multi-agency partnership model in Redbridge. ReFRS has a strong voluntary sector presence and was developed through consultation and on-going engagement with partners and service users.

The need identified across voluntary sector partners and front line teams was to support service users in the London Borough of Redbridge in a holistic and coordinated way.

ReFRS is a move away from a ‘crisis management’ approach in health and social care to a preventative approach. This approach compliments and supports the work of the thriving voluntary sector in Redbridge.

ReFRS is the first of its kind within the London Boroughs. It bridges the gap between the sectors to ensure that each service user has easy access to an array of identified, low-level preventative services within their own home. Services are effectively and efficiently coordinated to provide responsive outcomes within a specific time frame in the best interests of the service user.

Once a referral is made via ReFRS, the loop is only closed once the outcome(s) is/are achieved for the service user. The ReFRS checklist offers 22 identified preventative support sections in one form. Sections include drug/alcohol support, employment support, domestic abuse and various other sections.

A distinct feature of ReFRS is the ‘warning signs’ toolkit. The toolkit ensures that front line workers from any sector are trained to personalise support by identifying the areas where it is needed in order to enable service users to live independently for as long as possible. The toolkit also ensures that referrals are made effectively to the relevant and specialist agency for the appropriate support required. This toolkit has been contributed to and agreed by all of the main providing partners.

The second stage of ReFRS aims to work closely with GPs who could ‘prescribe’ any one of the services on the checklist to complement the well-being and health of the service user. An example of this would be if a patient required support with weight management and healthy living – project partner RedbridgeCVS would identify a community group suitable for this need.
Impact

Although ReFRS is relatively new, it has already shown its impact. There has been:

- An improved quality of life for service users by increasing safety, independence, well-being and choice.

- Better partnership working relationships for the 23 existing partners, and access to 581 voluntary sector providers via RedbridgeCVS.

- Reduced duplication of referrals from individual partners as ReFRS coordinates a seamless process from beginning to end.

- Developing the skills and knowledge of front line workers through the Multi-Agency Training Events and the ReFRS toolkit which is used to make assessments.

- Commissioners can design with residents what services could be developed further via the information found from the outcomes of ReFRS.

The following is just a small sample of what is offered via ReFRS:

- The Fire Service now offers to check fire alarms/risks which ensure that service users can detect a fire or prevent a fire in the home before it is too late.

- Age UK offers Falls Prevention advice. This has a direct impact on supporting the service user to remain safely at home for as long as possible. Falls are amongst the most common reasons for long term hospital admission among elderly patients.

- The Police offer crime prevention advice and Victim Support offer support to victims of crime.
Sutton – London Borough of Sutton Compact Group

Overview

The new Sutton Compact was launched in February 2013. There was a wide array of collaborative work supporting its development, and a number of partnership projects between the public and voluntary and community sector (VCS) have resulted from the process.

A Compact has been in place in Sutton since 2003, which has underpinned strong and positive working relationships between the public sector and the VCS. A Compact steering group has met regularly since that time. It was initially chaired by the leader of the council, and then by the lead councillor for finance, assets and the voluntary sector (currently Cllr Simon Wales). The partners involved feel this demonstrates the strong commitment of the London Borough of Sutton to partnership working with the VCS.

Early in 2012, it was agreed by the Compact steering group to refresh the local Compact in response to the publication of the new national Compact in 2010. Early drafts were produced by the local authority and Sutton Centre for the Voluntary Sector (SCVS) and agreed by the steering group. This was followed by extensive consultation with the VCS and within the London Borough of Sutton.

The new Compact was signed at the Community Leadership Awards in February 2013 by London Borough of Sutton, local voluntary organisations, the Metropolitan Police, Fire Service and the Clinical Commissioning Group. This is a clear public commitment by local stakeholders to further develop the strong and effective partnerships, built on mutual trust and confidence, between the sectors that enables partners to work together to support local residents.

As part of the process, the steering group was enhanced to include representatives of all the main commissioning directorates within London Borough of Sutton, and VCS representation was widened. The new local Compact and revised steering group has enabled the development of a number of key projects which will benefit not just the public and voluntary sectors, but the wider local community.

Impact

The new local Compact has had an impact in several ways. The actual process of discussing and agreeing the new Compact has had a positive effect on clarifying and enhancing the positive working relationships across all sectors, and has been an important joint commitment to working together.
In addition, a number of joint projects have developed as a result of the new Compact:

- A joint project between London Borough of Sutton and the voluntary sector to develop a local framework to measure social value in the local commissioning process. A joint working group met several times to create the framework prior to its approval by the local authority.

- A joint project and working group between LBS and the voluntary sector, to look at the capacity building needs of the voluntary sector and agree a framework for meeting these needs – now the subject of consultation with the voluntary sector.

- A new transformation fund for the voluntary sector to enable organisations to pilot innovative ways of working to equip them to better deal with the challenges of the next few years.

- A commitment from London Borough of Sutton to make a building available to the voluntary sector to develop as a hub, along with some financial support for the process.

- Extensive feedback from the VCS through the Compact, which has led to improvements in the local commissioning process and the e-tender portal used locally.
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.