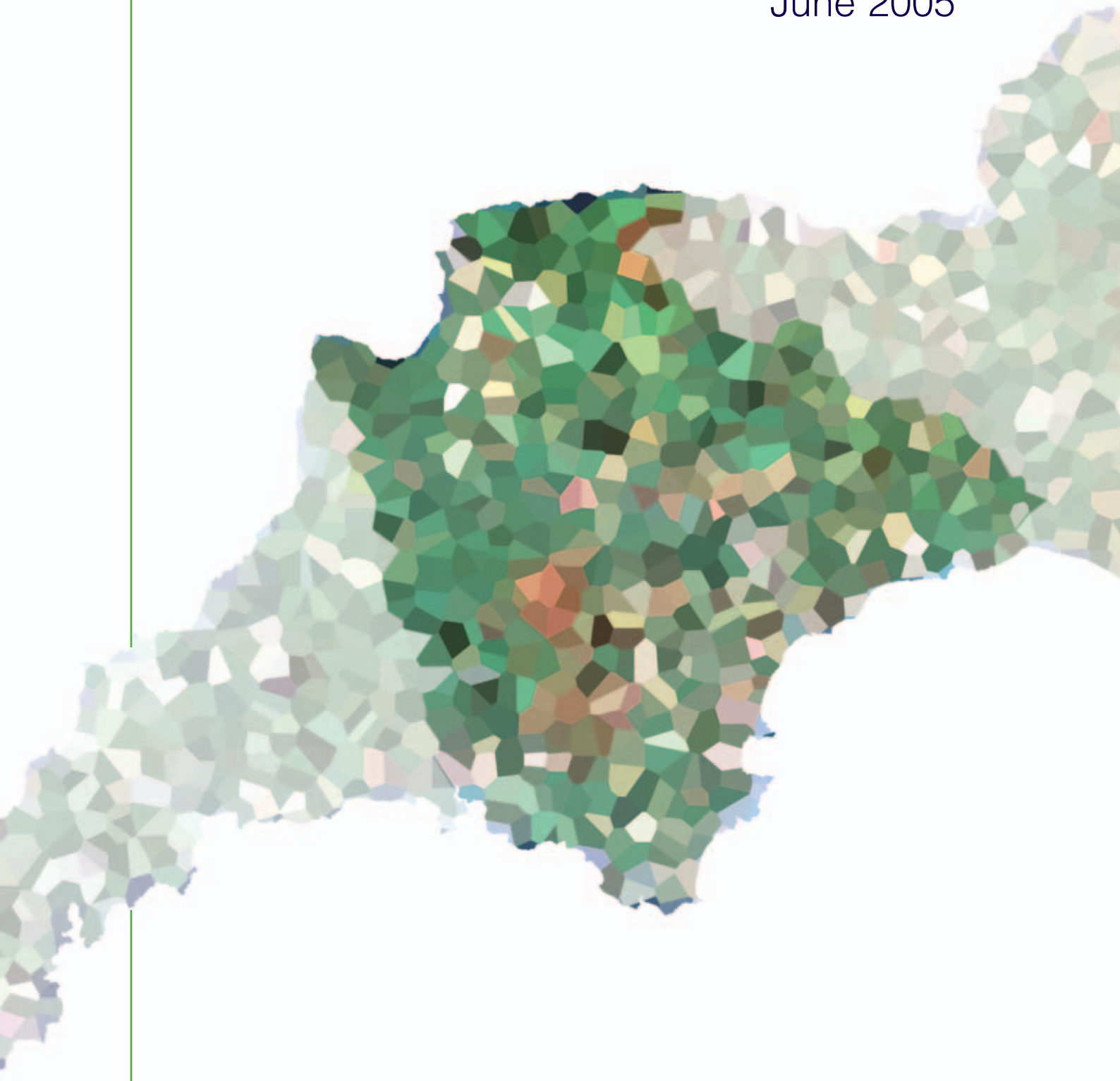


A Compact for Devon

June 2005






Foreword

This document is aimed at improving and developing the relationship between the voluntary & community sector and the statutory sector in Devon.

Its development has been managed by a group of people (the Devon Hub), whose representation stretches across the diverse range of organisations (both voluntary & community and statutory) in the county. Added to this, individuals from organisations across the spectrum of the sectors took part in the consultation on the draft Compact for Devon in a variety of ways: at Voluntary Sector Forums, via postal / email questionnaires, at Local Strategic Partnership meetings, during internal organisation meetings, among others. Their comments were used to arrive at this current version for publication.

We see this and the Codes of Good Practice as living documents that will be used as the basis for continued partnership working between the two sectors.



Further clarification and information about any of the points in this Compact can be obtained from your local Champion. For the most up to date contact details, please visit www.dacvs.org.uk

For more information and to see the Compact Implementation Plan or current signatories, please visit dacvs.org.uk

An executive summary of this document is available as a separate leaflet.

If you would like a large print copy of this document please contact the Devon Hub Administrator at Exeter CVS on **01392 202057** or via email at compact@dacvs.org.uk

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Introduction

(Please note that there is a Glossary in Appendix 1 for any terms that are not understood)

1.1 National and Local Compacts

The National Compact is a framework for strong and effective relationships between the voluntary & community and statutory sectors. The purpose of the National Compact is to improve the way in which central government and local bodies listen and talk to each other in an attempt to increase understanding of each other's viewpoint and to harness shared effort rather than duplicating work. Local Compacts aim to do the same at a local level.

1.2 The Original Devon Compact

The original Devon Compact, the Working Together for Devon Partnership Agreement, was published in 1999, and 90 organisations signed up to it. This original Partnership Agreement was led by Devon County Council. After consultation in 2003, and with the advent of organisations such as Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) and Connexions, the 9 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's) in Devon agreed to manage and promote the Compact, each LSP appointing a voluntary & community sector representative and a statutory sector representative to lead work on development. It was agreed that five years on from the launch of the Partnership Agreement, the time was right to review and strengthen Devon's Compact.

1.3 Challenges for Devon

Devon is a rural county and particular efforts are often required to engage, involve, represent and understand the needs of those that live in very rural isolated communities.

The voluntary & community sector is constantly changing and comprises an extremely broad and diverse range of groups and organisations, from national and international charities employing large numbers of staff to small neighbourhood-based groups run entirely by volunteers. These groups relate to the statutory sector in very different ways. We aim to ensure that the Compact for Devon and its Codes of Good Practice provide a flexible enough framework to accommodate this diversity.

1.4 Devon Hub Process

The 18 representatives appointed by the Local Strategic Partnerships came together to form the Devon Hub and agreed to take on the role and title of Compact Champions, with a commitment to working on the Compact, promoting it in their agency and appropriate peer group, and demonstrating Compact working in action through the process. A list of the Compact Champions and their contact details can be found at www.dacvs.org.uk.

“ A recognition of the “maturity” of relationships is important. This document clearly identifies how relationships can be developed at higher levels ”

Compact Champions are now working to help ensure that the sectors they represent are motivated by the goal of ensuring that this agreement is implemented, both in letter and in spirit.

This document is the result of work undertaken by the Devon Hub. Champions worked in small groups of both statutory and voluntary & community representatives to agree the detailed content and produced a draft Compact for consultation between October and December 2004. The draft was made widely available to statutory and voluntary & community organisations. The responses were analysed by the Devon Hub and contributed to this document. Future work will include the development of detailed Codes of Good Practice covering the following areas: Equality/Diversity, Volunteering, Consultation, Funding, Partnership and Community Groups.

1.5 Status

The Compact for Devon is not a legally binding document or contract. It is a mutual agreement between those who agree to endorse its principles and commitments to action. Its authority derives entirely from the respect accorded to it by the partners and from the extent to which it influences future decision-making and developments. It is intended to be of both symbolic and practical significance. The Compact is not a static, one-off document. Rather it is part of a process of continuous improvement of relationships and partnership working between the voluntary & community and statutory sectors.

This Compact has been adopted and recognised by:

- Statutory agencies
- Voluntary & community sector infrastructure bodies on behalf of their members and other small voluntary & community sector groups
- Larger charities wishing to adopt the Compact in their own right
- All voluntary & community organisations which have or seek to have a funding agreement with their statutory partners

For information about how to sign up to the Compact for Devon and to find out where the list of signatories is held, please see Appendix 4.

“It’s good to see the use of the word “Champions” – an excellent concept”



2

Aims of the Compact/the Business Case for a Compact for Devon

2.1 Mutual Benefits

In September 2002 the Government published the Treasury cross-cutting report entitled “The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery” containing 42 recommendations concerning the removal of 3 main barriers to the effectiveness of the Voluntary and Community Sector, namely:

- Weak partnership frameworks.
- The capacity of the sector.
- Funding arrangements.

The Government sees that the cornerstone of taking these issues forward is creating robust “compacts” between the Voluntary Sector and statutory bodies.

In order to address these matters effectively, the compact needs to promote a new relationship between the sectors.

The task of delivering services to society and communities is vast and cannot be met by either sector alone. The statutory and voluntary and community sectors are therefore inextricably linked. Quite apart from recent Government moves to further intertwine their service provision, they both come from the same socially motivated position of trying to enhance the life and livelihoods of local communities..

The statutory sector needs the voluntary & community sector. Voluntary & community groups can represent and serve the needs of very small and specialist communities of geography or interest. The ability to work in flexible and cost effective ways is invaluable to the larger organisations. The financial and ‘in kind’ resources attracted by the voluntary & community sector are very large; often there are funding sources specific to this sector.

The voluntary & community sector needs the statutory sector. The primary services which the statutory sector provides are the basic ‘safety net’ for the majority of our population, and form the structure around which many voluntary & community sector services are built. The statutory sector has a formal responsibility for community leadership, much of this comes from an electoral mandate. Hence the statutory sector has power and influence unavailable to smaller groups, and it can advocate more effectively for the local area as a whole. In addition there are certain tax raising and funding sources, which are specific to this sector.

Apart from this clear Business Case for a Compact, there is also a statutory requirement.

“ The Voluntary and Community and Statutory sectors are inextricably linked. It is beholden upon leaders within both sectors to ensure that the spirit and implementation of the Compact is actively promoted and encouraged throughout all organisations ”



2.2 Statutory Requirement

From April 2005 the 8 District, City and Borough Councils, the County Council, the 6 Primary Care Trusts, the 2 Acute Hospital Trusts and the Devon Partnership NHS Trust are required by Government to be active signatories to a Compact Agreement with the voluntary & community sector.

This is part of a phased programme, where government-funded agencies are required to have in place Compact arrangements with the voluntary & community sector.

2.3 The Business Advantages of having a Compact.

a. For Voluntary and Community Organisations a Compact:

- Enhances the role that voluntary & community organisations play in the local community, and thus extends their influence
- Opens the way for voluntary & community organisations to engage with statutory bodies to deliver services as full partners
- Educates statutory bodies so that voluntary & community organisations are genuinely valued for what they do
- Regularises and harmonises relationships across all departments within statutory partners' organisations
- Creates an environment within which voluntary and community organisations can engage in active strategic planning with the statutory sector
- Gives guidance about good practice which helps the voluntary & community sector understand their own rights and responsibilities
- Gives consistency to the relationship, and protects against arbitrary change, due to ignorance, restructuring or change of personnel in the statutory sector
- Sets out an agreed framework between organisations from the two sectors, independent of individual situations, removing personal difficulties between the sectors

“Clear, unambiguous and acceptable”

b. For Statutory Organisations a Compact:

- Allows statutory organisations to make more productive relationships with voluntary & community organisations, which helps to achieve their aim of ensuring greater public involvement and meeting community needs
- Provides better assurance of a business-like, and quality assured, method of working. This is essential when allocating any public funding
- Provides a basis for the review of funding and consultation systems and provides a means of making these systems more effective
- Allows better access to the crucial human and financial resources which are only to be found in the voluntary & community sector
- Creates an environment within which the statutory sector can engage in active strategic planning with voluntary & community organisations
- The quality of Compact arrangements will form part of the next round of the national Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- Fulfils the government's requirement for partnership agreements, which applied to all agencies from April 2005
- Ensures greater accountability in delivery and financial spend

3

A Compact Way of Working

3.1 Shared Values

The status, responsibilities, resources and operational functions of statutory and voluntary & community organisations are not equal. Despite their differences, and acknowledging the differences, partners will nevertheless treat each other as equals.

All parties to this Compact believe in the need to:

- Work together openly and honestly, recognising that in the development and delivery of public services, statutory and voluntary & community services have distinct but complementary roles
- Understand the diversity of voluntary & community organisations, and value the contribution that they make to the well-being and prosperity of people in Devon
- Recognise that voluntary & community organisations are independent organisations, set up for a specific purpose and accountable to their stakeholders. They have the right to campaign within the law, irrespective of their funding sources, in order to promote the interests of their users
- Recognise that the financial, political, technical and legal constraints are different, but no less difficult, for each sector

“It is very good to see the intended values laid out so clearly and expressed so unambiguously.”

- Recognise the importance of promoting equal opportunities for everyone, no matter what their race, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or economic status
- Be committed to the constructive resolution of conflict between organisations at all levels
- Recognise that partnership working brings an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute towards achieving shared objectives
- Recognise that the contributions of the statutory and voluntary & community sectors are equally important in improving the quality of life in Devon
- Recognise that consultation is a two-way process leading to policies which are realistic and more representative of people's needs and wishes
- Recognise the value of volunteering in improving social cohesion and contributing to building social capital and enterprise within Devon's diverse communities

3.2 Joint Undertakings

3.2 a. Together we will:

- Work in partnership to common aims and objectives in order to achieve greater benefits than would otherwise be possible
- Display transparency, hold ourselves readily accountable to our partners and show willingness to respond to their needs as well as our own
- Improve people's understanding that public services, statutory agencies and the voluntary & community sector have different but complementary roles and responsibilities
- Make joint applications for external resources for the benefit of people in Devon
- Develop appropriate Equality Codes of Practice which we will all respect and implement
- Develop information systems and information sharing arrangements which will help us to work more effectively
- Establish monitoring systems for the Compact
- Identify the training, support and outreach work that is necessary to ensure informed and effective participation by all concerned
- Secure adequate resources to implement agreed actions, including the necessary resources for training, support and outreach work
- Develop and deploy appropriate channels to ensure accountability
- Adhere to the jointly produced Codes of Good Practice on Equality/Diversity, Volunteering, Consultation, Funding, Partnership and Community Groups and others as they are developed
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Compact and its Codes of Good Practice and review it regularly

“ Remember the Heineken Effect i.e. the Voluntary and Community sector reaches the parts that others can't ”

3.2 b. The Statutory Sector will:

- Support and recognise the independence of the voluntary & community sector, including their right to campaign, and to comment on / challenge statutory agencies' policies and practices
- Work to improve the sustainability of good quality voluntary & community sector organisations
- Recognise the value of the work of the voluntary & community sector in service provision, responding to local needs, securing funding which is not available to other sectors, and supporting Devon's rural communities
- Recognise the vibrancy, flexibility and creativity of the voluntary & community sector and its ability to provide innovative solutions to local problems
- Recognise the value of volunteering in improving social cohesion and contributing to building social capital within Devon's diverse communities
- Recognise and value voluntary & community organisations which are working with quality assurance systems and are committed to developing effective and efficient service provision
- Provide nominated officers for the Devon Hub for the work being done on the Compact and related Codes of Good Practice

3.2 c. The Voluntary and Community Sector will:

- Take account of the responsibilities of statutory agencies and their duty to work within democratically or otherwise established priorities and within their available resources
- Encourage the participation of their sector in consultations by the statutory sector and be responsible for representing their particular 'constituencies'
- Seek to ensure that service users, volunteers and their own members are informed and involved in consultation and participation exercises
- Develop and implement effective, high quality policies and practices appropriate to the work of the voluntary and community sector
- Develop quality assurance systems, whenever the nature and scale of their operation makes this appropriate
- Widen opportunities for voluntary activity and give volunteers the opportunity to have their skills accredited where appropriate
- Pursue diverse funding opportunities in developing strategies for sustainability, or seek to ensure that projects are sustainable, with the minimum reliance on any single funding stream (including public funding by the statutory sector)
- Provide nominated officers through infrastructure bodies for the Devon Hub for the work being done on the Compact and related Codes of Good Practice

“ This is not a static one off document but rather part of a process of continuous improvement of relationships and partnership working ”

Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 Introduction

The Devon Hub comprises both statutory and voluntary & community sector membership representing local and countywide strategic partnerships. It is committed to the principles of Compact working and, to ensure its effectiveness, the Devon Hub, in partnership with the Local Strategic Partnerships, will monitor and regularly review:

- Progression of the Compact Implementation Plan
- The effectiveness of the Compact and its Codes of Good Practice
- Evidence of take up and dissemination within wider partner organisations
- Adherence to the Compact
- The frequency of, and the reasons for, the use of complaints and disagreement resolution procedures
- Effectiveness and reliability of monitoring

4.2 Monitoring & Feedback

Monitoring will be based on ongoing formal feedback, which will be collated centrally. Regular anonymised summaries of this feedback will be forwarded to inform the work of all Local Strategic Partnerships.

The outcome of monitoring feedback at a county and local level will:

- Lead to the review of elements of the Compact and its Codes of Good Practice
- Raise awareness of inconsistent application of the Compact between local areas
- Raise awareness of common localised issues
- Lead to advice to contributors who may need to have recourse to the disagreement resolution procedure

4.3 Annual Review

The effectiveness of the Compact for Devon will be reviewed annually. This review will be based upon the summary of feedback throughout the year and an annual survey issued to monitoring contributors, the wider voluntary & community sector and statutory organisations and departments engaging in partnership working.

The information obtained will be supplemented by representational feedback from local Voluntary Sector Forums, the Devon Forum and statutory representatives on the Devon Hub.

A report of the findings of the annual review and the resulting action plan will be published and made available through the Compact website.

The annual review will be followed by an opportunity to re-commit and endorse the Compact for Devon and any recommendations made.

“Partners will need to display commitment to transparency and to avoiding vested interests”

5

Effective Commitment

Although Compacts are not legally binding contracts, there is an expectation that agencies will act in the spirit of “a Compact way of working”. After the first wave of local Compacts was written, feedback (both locally and nationally) was that they “lacked teeth” – there seemed to be no clear way of ensuring the commitments and undertakings they expressed were actually carried out in reality.

The Monitoring and Evaluation section above seeks to provide a framework and an ongoing process for checking out that the Compact for Devon is doing what it has set out to do and for implementing improvements.

For situations where an agency feels the spirit of the Compact has been contravened, the following Disagreement Resolution Procedure exists.

6

Mediation of Disagreements

6.1 Introduction

The Compact sets out a general framework to resolve the relationship between local statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector. The Compact for Devon is not a legal contract but a mutual agreement between the signatories to agree a set of principles and working practices.

If a disagreement does arise, and it is believed that a partner is not acting in a Compact compliant way, then there are steps that can be followed which might be helpful in seeking resolution.

6.2 Disagreement Mediation Procedure

The Disagreement Mediation Procedure is intended as a framework to use when working to resolve a disagreement that has resulted between two or more parties who are:

- Compact for Devon signatories
- in disagreement over issues covered by the Compact for Devon.

The full Disagreement Mediation Procedure can be viewed at www.dacvs.org.uk

Help to use the procedure is available via the Compact Development Worker – compact@dacvs.org.uk

“Conflicts of interest will arise and these will have to be addressed openly with each other”



7

Taking the Compact Forward

The Compact is a framework document and a starting point – not a conclusion. The 9 Local Strategic Partnerships in Devon are committed to working together to develop its application and effectiveness. A large part of the process will entail the development of Codes of Good Practice in the areas of Equality/Diversity, Volunteering, Consultation, Funding, Partnership and Community Groups.

All partners to the Compact are committed to using and promoting the Compact.

The Compact will be implemented, reviewed and monitored by the Devon Hub (in partnership with the LSP's). It will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary. To see the Compact Implementation Plan visit www.dacvs.org.uk

“ Good if lots of action and minimum of meetings ”

Appendix 1: Glossary

Accountability

Means by which individuals and organisations report their actions to others in order to ensure they are abiding by the criteria to which they have agreed to work.

Champion

An individual, nominated by the LSP to which their organisation belongs, whose task is to promote the Compact cause within the LSP and be a communication channel between the LSP and the Devon Hub.

see also Local Strategic Partnership; Devon Hub

Consultation

Actively providing opportunities for everyone interested in, or affected by, proposals to develop new services or change existing ones to have their say - and encouraging them to do so.

Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)

A local charitable organisation whose purpose is to support and help develop voluntary and community action in its area.

Devon

In this Compact "Devon" refers to the Local Authority area of Devon, as opposed to the geographical definition. The Compact for Devon is liaising with Plymouth and Torbay, which are both unitary authorities, working on their own Compacts.

Devon Forum

The Devon voluntary sector forum (Devon Forum) was established during 2004 to improve networking, collaboration and joint working between voluntary & community sector infrastructure bodies (generalist and specialist, urban and rural).

Devon Hub

The group, comprising statutory and voluntary & community sector champions from each LSP, which has come together initially to review and develop the Compact for Devon and its associated Codes of Good Practice. It is hoped that the work to promote, review and continually develop the Compact for Devon will ultimately become the responsibility of the LSP's. The Devon Hub will remain in existence to bring together representatives from the 9 LSP's to carry out other relevant pieces of work.

District

A Local Authority area of Devon, of which there are eight - North Devon, East Devon, Mid Devon, Exeter, Teignbridge, South Hams, Torridge, and West Devon.

Effective Commitment

Provisions for ensuring that all parties to an agreement fulfil their obligations to the others.

Evaluation

Periodically reviewing a project or role to measure its actual performance against what was planned, taking into account quality, user satisfaction etc.

*“Codes of Practice are going to be crucial.
Ensuring participation in their development / agreement is vital”*

Infrastructure

The physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, co-ordinate, represent and promote front line organisations thus enabling them to deliver their missions more effectively.

Local Compact

A Compact, modelled on the national Compact, designed and agreed to by statutory and voluntary & community sector organisations that work in partnership in a particular geographical area .

Local Council

The locally-elected body responsible for government in a county, district or town. Executive departments in local councils provide services and amenities to people in their area, which they either supply themselves, or buy from the private, voluntary & community sectors.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Representatives from major statutory, voluntary & community and business organisations in a district who meet to discuss and plan how their various activities should complement each other. There is a Local Strategic Partnership for each of the 8 districts of Devon and one for Devon-wide organisations called the Devon Strategic Partnership.

see also District

Monitoring

An ongoing process of checking that an organisation or project is performing as it should.

National Compact

A government initiative to describe and clarify the agreement between statutory and voluntary & community sectors on how they work together.

Not for profit organisations

Organisations that do not have charitable status but which operate primarily for a social purpose, rather than to make a profit.

Partner

A party to an agreement with one or more others.

Partnership

The act of working in co-operation to achieve common goals and objectives, promoting a culture of harmony, trust and synergy – sharing responsibilities, costs, risks and rewards.

Primary Care Trust (PCT)

A local statutory organisation with wide responsibility for the delivery of health services through GP surgeries, clinics and centres. Devon has six, the geographical boundaries of which cross over those of District councils.

“ To go forward positively, the voluntary organisations will need to be convinced of its usefulness in future by the difference it makes ”

Quality standards

A set of statements about the quality of a service that can be verified and measured as part of monitoring and evaluation processes.

Sector

All organisations within a particular part of the economy - as in Private Sector, Statutory Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector etc.

Stakeholder

Person or group that has an interest in, and is potentially able to influence, the work of an organisation or the delivery of a service.

Statutory

Organisations that provide public services as a result of legislation. These include local authorities, NHS Trusts and the police, together with independent agencies such as the Learning and Skills Council, Connexions and the Probation Service.

see also Voluntary

Voluntary & Community

Organisations or groups that exist voluntarily to address a need they see in the community; they are not obliged to exist by statute. Does not necessarily mean that the organisation involves volunteers. For the purposes of this document, the term "voluntary & community" is used to refer to the wide and diverse range of voluntary organisations, community groups and not for profit organisations that exist in Devon.

see also Statutory; Not for profit organisations

Working Together for Devon Partnership Agreement

The title of the original 1999 Devon Compact. Working Together for Devon was the name of the working group that designed it.

“This seems to provide a reasonable approach to what could be a very bureaucratic and a potentially unsuccessful process”

Appendix 2: Champions' Contact Details

The most up to date information is available by visiting www.dacvs.org.uk

Please note that you can also contact the Devon Hub Administrator on 01392 202057 or via email at compact@dacvs.org.uk

Appendix 3: Mediation Services

Please go to www.thecompact.org.uk

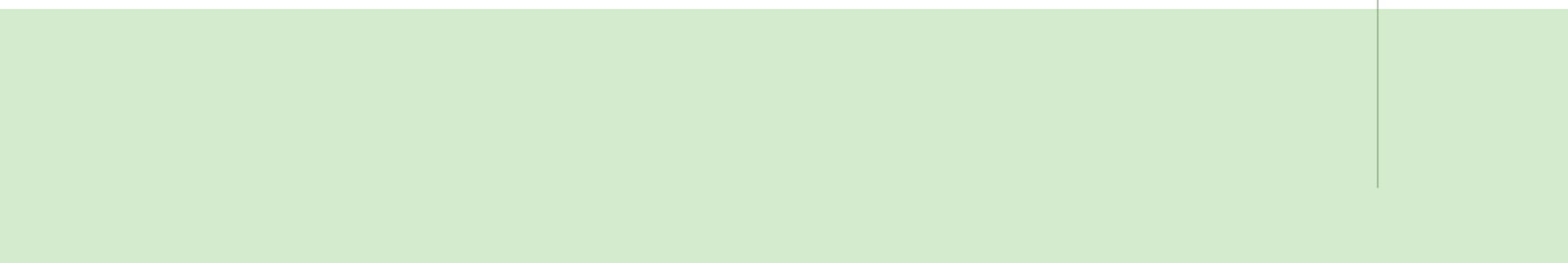
Appendix 4: Signing up to the Compact for Devon

If your organisation wishes to become a signatory to the Compact for Devon, a form is available at the end of this document for you to complete. (If you would prefer to complete the form online, please download the form at www.dacvs.org.uk. It is best to save the form as a document on your computer and fill it in. Please print out your completed form, sign it and send it to the address at the end of the form).

It is recommended that the person signing the form on behalf of your organisation is the Chair or its Chief Officer, with the approval of the relevant governing body.

On receipt of the completed form your organisation's name will be added to the list of signatories. The most up to date version of the Compact for Devon and a list of signatories, is available on the Compact pages of the DACVS website www.dacvs.org.uk.

“Another welcome appearance of rigour in the process! So many initiatives are bold, and even visionary, but fail to build in processes to see if they're followed through to success or instructive failure. Full marks!”



Compact for Devon Registration Form

If your organisation agrees with the principles and intentions of this document and has decided to become a signatory to the Compact for Devon, please complete and return this form. On receipt of your signed form your organisation will be added to the official signatory list.

Organisation name: _____

Type of organisation (please tick as appropriate):

Voluntary Organisation Community Group Statutory Body

Other (please describe): _____

Outline of the main activities of your organisation: _____

This organisation agrees with the principles and intentions of the Compact for Devon and wishes to become a signatory.

If you are signing the Compact on behalf of other organisations (e.g. your members) as well as your own, please say how many: _____

Signed: _____ Print: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

Contact name and address for Compact issues: _____

Telephone number: _____ Email address: _____

Please tell us if there is any other way in which your organisation would like to contribute to the Compact for Devon.

Please return your completed form to:

Devon Hub, c/o Exeter CVS, Wat Tyler House, King William Street, Exeter EX4 6PD

The Devon Hub is committed to complying with the Data Protection Act.

