

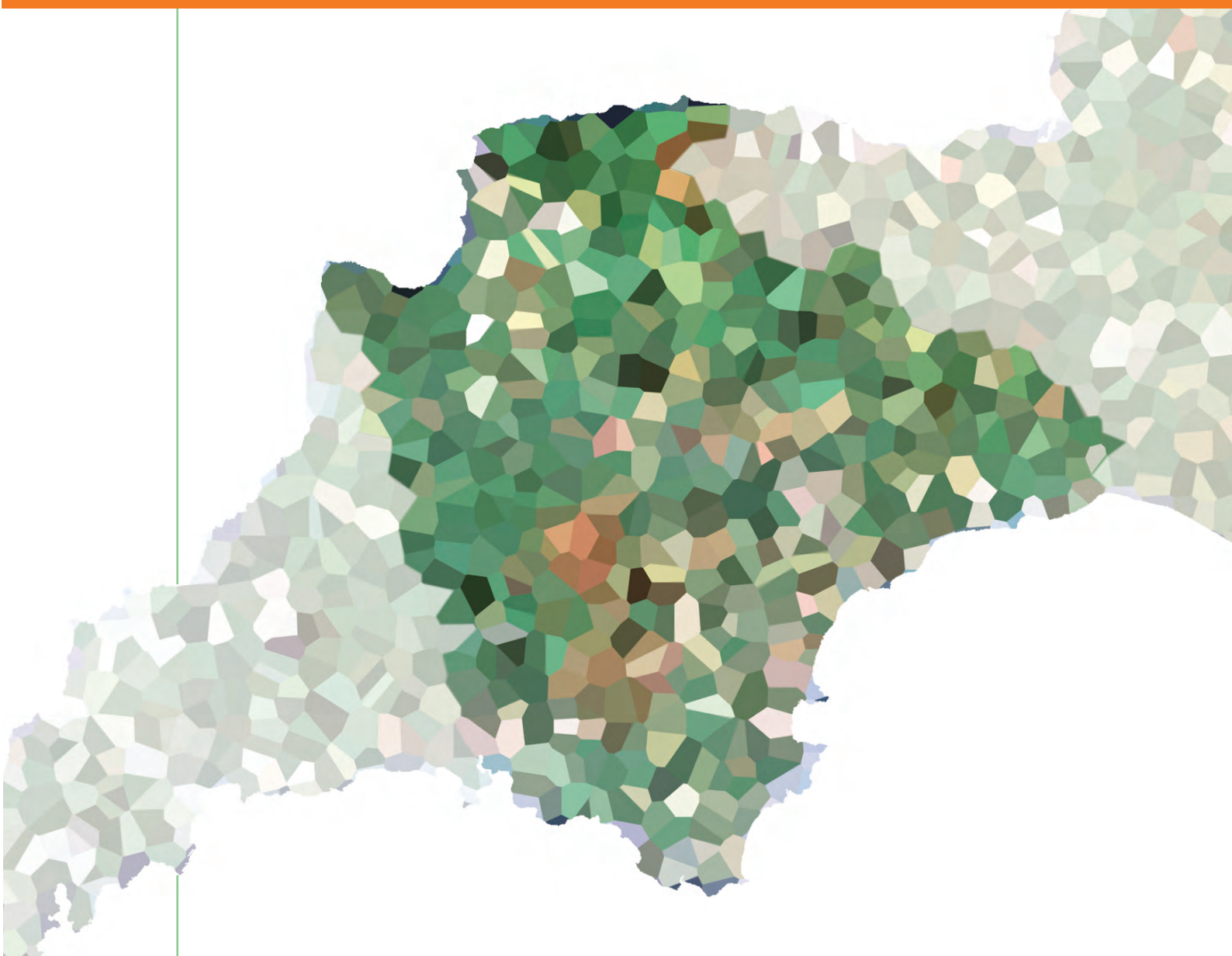


A Compact for Devon

Equality and Diversity

Code of Good Practice

November 2006



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A selection of quotes taken from working group members is included throughout this document.



Compact for Devon

The Compact is the agreement between the Statutory Sector (including Devon County Council, District Councils, Primary Care Trusts, now the Devon Primary Care Trust, other Healthcare Trusts, Connexions, Police, etc.) and the Voluntary and Community Sector, to improve and develop their relationship for the benefit of each other and the communities they serve. It was revised in 2005. For further details contact www.dacvs.org.uk.

The Compact sets out:

- A shared vision and principles.
- Actions from both sides.
- The Statutory Sectors' commitment to respect the independence of the Voluntary and Community Sector, and
- Systems to help make sure that the agreement works.

The Compact is to be supported by six codes of good practice covering:

- Funding and Procurement
- Volunteering
- Equality and Diversity
- Consultation and Involvement
- Community Groups
- Partnership

The Funding and Procurement Code, the Volunteering Code and the Equality and Diversity Code were published in November 2006. The other three Codes are planned for 2007. The Compact is informed by the Codes of Practice and together form Devon's agreed approach to Partnership working. None of the documents should be taken in isolation.

Local Compacts have been agreed in most areas to cover relations between local councils, other local public bodies and the voluntary and community sector. The Compact for Devon and this Code of Practice are informed by the national Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England, (Home Office, 1998), a national code of good practice and numerous Codes from other places. For more information go to www.thecompact.org.uk or www.homeoffice.gov.uk. The Volunteering Code is also informed by the Working Together for Devon Code of Practice on Volunteering and Community Action.

The Compact for Devon and its Codes of Good Practice have been developed by the Devon Compact Hub, whose representation stretches across the diverse range of organisations (both voluntary & community and statutory) in the County. Individuals from organisations across the spectrum of the sectors took part in the consultation on the draft documents in a variety of ways including:

- Working groups
- Voluntary sector forums
- Postal/email questionnaires
- Local Strategic Partnership meetings
- Internal organisation meetings

Implementation of the Compact and its Codes of Practice is the responsibility of each organisation. The Compact Hub sees the Compact and its codes as living documents that will be used as the basis of continued partnership working between the two sectors.

The Devon Compact Hub is responsible for carrying out regular monitoring and an annual review of the Compact for Devon and its Codes of Good Practice. For a list of Compact Champions and their contact details please go to www.dacvs.org.uk or telephone 01392 202057.

Rurality

The Compact for Devon recognises the issue of rurality and the impact that this has on providing services in rural areas.

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Introduction

The Compact for Devon is a framework for strong and effective relationships between the voluntary & community and statutory sectors. The Equality and Diversity Code of Practice seeks to recognise and value the diversity that exists in society generally and in Devon in particular.

The Code aims to inform the Compact for Devon in recognising the importance of promoting Equal Opportunities for everyone. Legislation, where it exists, should be seen as the minimum standard of practice but the signatories to this Code of Practice wish to go further and aim specifically to promote the inclusion of groups and individuals that in the past were under-represented or excluded. This is for the benefit of both individuals who make up those groups and the communities in which they live.

By complying with this Code of Practice organisations will be enabled to be more representative of their communities and to have access to a wider pool of talent and energy. Valuing and achieving diversity is synonymous with good practice and essential to ensure a workforce and volunteer force which reflects the diversity of the community it serves.

Many organisations will have policies which go further than this Code. The Compact is for a very broad range of organisations from very small voluntary sector organisations to large statutory agencies and is therefore a baseline. As with all the Codes of Practice it is designed to be developed through time.

Organisations are asked to consider how this policy needs to be implemented appropriately in their own organisation. The appendix contains guidance and information to help.

The partners using the Compact are committed to:

- recognising that everyone is different and has different needs in terms of their race, ethnic or national background, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief;
- recognising the importance of equality and diversity and human rights to a prosperous and cohesive society;
- developing effective methods so all groups and individuals can get involved in their community and in wider society
- supporting marginalised groups and individuals;
- celebrating people's differences in our communities.

2 Equality and Diversity

Devon has a diverse range of communities with many unmet needs within them. Commitment to apply the principles of equality of opportunity is a central part of a fair and democratic society. Issues of equality and diversity take many forms. The Code provides sources of information and good practice to involve people who can experience disadvantage including:

- People from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
- People whose first language is not English
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Religious and Faith Groups
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people
- People who are economically disadvantaged
- People with mental health needs
- Disabled people
- People who care for a friend or relative
- Children and Young people
- Older People
- Women
- Gypsies and Travellers
- People who are rurally and socially isolated
- Single Parents
- Prisoners or ex-offenders
- People with a learning disability

Please note this list is not definitive and may be revised.

People may belong to more than one disadvantaged group and therefore be subject to multiple disadvantage. People may also be disadvantaged whilst not belonging to a recognised group. The Equality and Diversity Code of Practice aims to draw attention to some of the disadvantages that people may face.

“Diversity is about appreciating the needs of individuals rather than pre-defined groups”

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By supporting this Code:

3.1 Both the Voluntary & Community Sector and the Statutory Sector together will:

PROMOTE INCLUSION BY:

- including equality and diversity as a key requirement in the development of new policy and show evidence of this by:
 - access to, and active promotion of, services
 - appropriate training of staff and volunteers
 - encouraging and supporting participation by disadvantaged groups in service development and review
- monitoring the usage of their services by all groups / agencies;
- introducing specific conditions in funding agreements and business plans and appropriate monitoring measures in line with legislative and good practice requirements (See Funding and Procurement Code of Good Practice);
- developing action plans, as necessary, to increase equality of access to services;
- promoting fair selection, recruitment and management practices for employees and volunteers and monitor the success of these;
- complying with up-to-date legislation and recognised Good Practice to ensure that services are provided and accessed fairly;
- giving full attention to the needs of individuals and groups who have been subject to discrimination in the past;
- celebrating equality and diversity;
- ensuring that this Code applies to the employees, volunteers, members, trustees and visitors of each organisation;
- considering using an Equality Impact Analysis as a way of demonstrating inclusivity.

SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP BY:

- considering equality and diversity issues in partnership working;

- promoting equality and diversity in all day-to-day activities;
- sharing training resources / expertise where appropriate on equality and diversity;
- seeking advice and expertise from other organisations.

SUPPORT COMMUNICATION BY:

- supporting local action, dialogue and understanding between different organisations and communities;
- actively supporting inclusive communities;
- including material (e.g. dates/events of significance) which will develop equality policy and practice within existing communications (especially newsletters).

3.2 The statutory sector will also undertake to:

- ensure that any ongoing review of policies, planning and procedures includes evidence, such as application of an impact assessment, to ensure that no particular group is disadvantaged by existing policies;
- review the organisations' published Equality and Diversity Policy as required;
- consider how statutory organisations can support VCS organisations in equality and diversity practice, e.g. access to training, sharing of policies and other good practice.

3.3 The voluntary and community sector will also undertake to:

- ensure that any ongoing review of policies, planning and procedures includes evidence to ensure that no particular group is disadvantaged by existing policies;
- develop, implement and regularly review the organisations' Equality and Diversity Policy, as appropriate;
- maximise communication in an effective manner, as appropriate to the size of the organisation.

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Policies and Legislation

This Code links to existing laws and ways of working and should be used in conjunction other guidance available for the promotion of equality and diversity. (See appendix for further information and sources of support.)

Each organisation will need to have its own policies and procedures regarding equality and diversity that complies with legislation relevant to the organisation, including European legislation where appropriate.

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Taking the Code forward

To sign up to the Compact for Devon and its Codes of Good Practice please go to www.dacvs.org.uk or ask for a signatory form from compact@dacvs.org.uk or 01392 202057.

“Diversity is about enabling everyone to reach their potential”



Appendix

Information and Sources of Support

Relevant Legislation (not an exhaustive list)

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Human Rights Act 1998

Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Disability

Living Options Devon (LOD)

info@livingoptions.org or 01392 459222, fax 01392 423427

Devon Disability Forum – a network of VCS organisations working in the fields of physical and sensory disability. Contact via LOD

Disability Rights Commission (DRC) www.drc-gb.org tel: 08457 622 633

For a definition of disability you can link direct to the Disability Discrimination Act www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm

RNID www.rnid.org.uk

RNID Information Line (Freephone), tel 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

RNIB www.rnib.org.uk RNIB Helpline 0845 766 9999

Carers

Carers UK www.carersuk.org tel: 0808 808 7777

Carers in Devon www.devon.gov.uk/index/socialcare/carers.htm

tel: 01392 382331

Voluntary Sector

National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/

tel: 0800 2 798 798

National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)

www.nacvs.org.uk tel: 0114 278 6636

Volunteering

Volunteering England www.volunteering.org.uk tel: 0845 305 6979

Details of local volunteering infrastructure (support) organisations can be found in the volunteering Code of Practice.

“ *Diversity is about recognising and embracing difference* ”

Employment

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) www.acas.org.uk
tel: 08457 474 747

Race and Ethnicity

Commission for Racial Equality www.cre.gov.uk tel: 020 7939 0000

Devon Race Equality Council (DREC) www.devonrec.org tel: 01392 422566

Equal Opportunities

Equal Opportunities Commission www.eoc.org.uk tel: 0161 838 8312

Health and Human Rights

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/EqualityAndHumanRights

Young People

NCVYS www.ncvys.org.uk tel: 020 7253 1010

Children

National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO)

www.ncvcco.org tel: 020 7833 3319

Older People

Age Positive www.agepositive.gov.uk

Age Concern www.ageconcern.org.uk Helpline Freephone 0800 00 99 66

NHS

Promoting Equality and human rights in the NHS – A guide for non-executive directors of NHS Boards

Department of Health, 2005

You can make a difference – Improving Primary Care Services for Disabled People, A Good Practice Guide for Primary Care Service Providers

NHS and Disability Rights Commission, 2004

A Consultation with under-represented and 'hard to reach' groups about what the core developmental standards meant to them

Healthcare Commission, 2005

Social Inclusion

Open Hearts, Open Minds - A Social Inclusion Self Assessment Tool available from Exeter Community Initiatives www.eci.org.uk tel: 01392 205800

info@eci.org.uk.

Most Statutory organisations in Devon have equality officers, as do most national voluntary organisations and some local ones.

Acknowledgements

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This Code of Practice can be made available in alternative formats.

Please contact: compact@dacvs.org.uk or 01392 202057 for further information



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