



Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency

enabling voluntary action

The Compact – a partnership tool

What is the Compact?

National Compact

The National Compact was established in 1998 as a voluntary agreement between National government and voluntary and community sector bodies. It defines principles, roles and responsibilities for the different sectors that can be used to improve working relationships between them. Its overriding objective is to improve both the quality of services offered and outcomes for local people.

The National Compact is intended to aid partnerships between national government agencies and voluntary and community organisations and it is overseen by the Commission for the Compact and [Compact Voice](#).

Ten years after its introduction, the National Compact was reviewed and refreshed with a new version published in December 2009 (download top right). The key areas covered by the 2009 Compact were: *Involvement in Policy Development; Allocating resources; and Advancing equality.*

After the 2010 parliamentary elections, the new Government decided to review the Compact again and a new version was published in December 2010. The new version of the Compact contains the following sections:

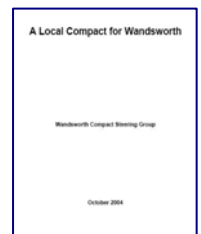
1. A strong, diverse and independent civil society
2. Effective and transparent design and development of policies, programmes and public services
3. Responsive and high-quality programmes and services
4. Clear arrangements for managing changes to programmes and services
5. An equal and fair society



Wandsworth Compact

All boroughs in England have developed a local version of the Compact to help partnership working between local public bodies (health, Council, police etc) and local voluntary and community organisations. The Wandsworth Compact was agreed in 2004 by a steering group composed of representatives from public and voluntary organisations. You can download the original Compact [here](#).

During 2010, WVSDA initiated a process to update the Wandsworth Compact. The process started out with a meeting of 20 representatives from Wandsworth's voluntary and community sector and local public bodies at the end of February 2010 to talk about how the



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Compact could become a more useful tool, why it hadn't worked in the past and what we could do together to make it more meaningful. Until August 2010 WVSDA consulted organisations across the borough to get feedback and obtain buy-in to the process. [Read the report and consultation draft here.](#)

During 2011, we will be trying to work out how the latest version of the National Compact impacts on our local process to bring the Wandsworth Compact up to date.

How does Compact affect the voluntary sector?

The Compact itself is only a document that spells out how public sector and voluntary sector groups could work better in partnership. It can only have an impact if the contents are clear, practical and useful and if the individuals that could make use of it choose to do so.

More than anything, a decision to apply Compact principles to processes such as funding allocation, commissioning, policy involvement and community engagement is an indication that the organisation in question is interested in making those processes as fair and clear as possible and that they choose to take into account the many considerations that apply when working with local groups. The local Compact for Wandsworth should be used as a guide for all working relationships between any Wandsworth voluntary or community group, and Wandsworth Borough Council or Wandsworth PCT.

Read More About it

[An introduction to the Compact](#) published by the Commission for the Compact (2009).

The [Concise Compact Guide](#) published by the Commission for the Compact explains when, how and why the Compact applies.

[How to use your Compact](#) : a section on Compact Voice website which gives advice on how to use the National and local Compact to best effect.

A [Commissioning Guidance](#) from the Commission for the Compact. Published in February 2009 as part of a series of implementation guides, it outlines how commissioning can be done in a way that makes the best possible use of the provisions in the Compact.

[What makes a successful local Compact?](#) Institute for Voluntary Action Research, 2008

[Application of Compact for BME groups.](#) Voice4Change website

Contact

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