

East Sussex Compact Annual Review Report 2009 - 2010

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BACKGROUND

The Compact is an agreement between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector that aims to improve the relationship between the sectors for mutual advantage. It is a living document setting out values, principles and commitments for how best to work together to achieve more for our communities. Although the Compact is not legally binding and is built on trust and mutual goodwill, its authority is derived from its endorsement by signatories from each sector.

The aims of the East Sussex Compact are to:

- Agree principles and an effective framework for partnership working;
- Improve working relationships in order to provide more effective and co-ordinated services to communities;
- Improve consultation, communication, collaboration, trust and respect; and
- Assist partner agencies in meeting common strategic aims.

The principles are:

- Recognising Diversity and Promoting Equality;
- Effective Community Engagement;
- Mutual Respect and Respecting Independence; and
- Investment and Public Accountability.

The East Sussex Compact is also a way of working in partnership that aims to bring a position of shared understanding in the way we work together more effectively to achieve common goals, to develop and deliver services and to build strong, cohesive and self determining communities.

The six Codes of Practice that have been developed are:

- Funding and Procurement;
- Consultation and Community Engagement;
- Partnerships;
- Volunteering;
- Community Groups; and
- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Groups.

VISION

Our Compact Vision:

Compact principles will be adopted as part of the accepted everyday culture within public and voluntary & community sector signatories to the East Sussex Compact.

COMPACT STEERING GROUP

A cross sector steering group (See Appendix 1 for steering group members) leads on achieving the vision. Membership to the steering group is open to any signatory organisation or Champion.

To achieve this, the steering group works to a five year strategy (2007 – 2012 Implementation Strategy), it contains a number of targets and actions designed to ensure that the Compact is underpinned by clear and consistent practice across both sectors.

Each year the steering group develops an Annual Action Plan that sets out the targets and actions that will assist in achieving those mentioned in the five year strategy.

To ensure that the implementation of the Compact is going ahead as planned and is sensitive to the changing environments that both sectors operate in, an Annual Review process takes place.

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

The review provides a robust and engaging process for reviewing the Compact that includes annual achievements and the views of all signatories. The process has been developed by the steering group, and agreed by signatories.

The process is itself reviewed annually by the steering group based on feedback by signatories; this ensures that the review collects sufficient facts and information to determine whether the Annual Action Plan and Implementation Strategy are being achieved. The review also allows the steering Group to predict and see any emerging trends in the implementing and embedding of the Compact.

The review of the Compact aims to:

- Build awareness
- Report on events and activities to-date
- Give evidence of successes and good practice
- Give evidence of any bad practice

The review process began on 10 August 2009 with a survey distributed to the signatory organisations to complete and return by 26 October 2009. The survey asked organisations to comment on two specific documents, the East Sussex Compact Information Folder and the '2009 Action Plan'. The survey also asked organisations to state if they would like to contribute to carrying out the Action Plan and for any examples of Compact working (either good or bad).

ANNUAL REVIEW 2009

During 2009 the steering group, Compact Signatories and Champions have all worked to strengthen Compact working and this review sets out the areas that improvements have taken place against the nine targets listed in the Annual Action Plan.

Target 1

Compact Codes of Practice inform the development of all public sector and voluntary & community sector (VCS) strategies and activities related to the topics covered in the 'Communities in Control' White Paper.

Outcome

It is recognised that public sector and voluntary and community sector strategies that contain a commitment to the Compact and relevant Compact principles aids in the development of meaningful partnership working.

Achievements

- i) East Sussex County Council's Corporate Consultation Strategy contains and promotes Compact Principles on Consultation and Engagement.
- ii) East Sussex County Council's Corporate Funding Strategy contains and promotes Compact Principles on Funding and Procurement.
- iii) East Sussex County Council's Volunteering Policy contains and promotes Compact Code of Practice on Volunteering.
- iv) The East Sussex Volunteering Project has adopted the Compact principles, with a specific focus on the Code of Practice on Volunteering.
- v) Wealden District Council's Community Grants programme has a stated commitment to operate in line with the Compact principles.
- vi) Hastings Voluntary Action's governing documents amended to include a commitment to Compact principles.
- vii) East Sussex Strategic Partnership's governing documents amended to include a commitment to adhere to Compact principles.
- viii) East Sussex County Council Community Partnership Finance programme operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Funding and Procurement.
- ix) East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT's and Hastings & Rother PCT's Small Grants Programme operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Funding & Procurement.
- x) Eastbourne Borough Council's Grant Programme operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Funding & Procurement.
- xi) East Sussex County Council's Procurement Strategy 2007 – 2010 (Corporate Resources Department) refers to the Compact principles.
- xii) East Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older people and Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carer's Services have a stated commitment to adhering to the Compact principles.
- xiii) Hastings & Rother PCT state their commitment to Compact principles in their 'Communications and Patient and Public Involvement Strategy'.
- xiv) Eastbourne Strategic Partnership (ESP) have a stated aim to adopt Compact principles in all areas of ESP work

Target 2

Staff, trustee, and volunteer Induction programmes across both sectors include the Compact.

Outcome

New staff employed or volunteering in partner organisations fully understand the Compact and its relation to their role.

Achievements

- i) The main message for Compact working in 2009 has been to recognise that the capacity of organisations to implement and embed Compact principles will vary. So rather than asking an organisation to learn every line of all six Codes of Practice they are encouraged to focus on the code(s) of practice that are most relevant to their organisation.
- ii) Throughout the year both steering group and Compact Champions have provided an informal advice and information service to signatory staff, trustees and volunteers. This service has assisted signatories in understanding and developing specific relationships as they relate to Codes of Practice and principles.

The service has dealt with issues and concerns covering, consultation, funding relationships, and partnership working. In all cases the steering group and Champions have been able to make sure that both parties discuss the issue and/or concern clearly following the guidance note on Understanding the Resolution of Disagreements Process.
- iii) The steering group produced a Compact Information Folder that has been distributed to over 250 public sector and voluntary & community sector representatives. Respondents to the survey either agreed, or strongly agreed that the Compact Information Folder would help organisations to understand how they can work towards implementing and embedding the Compact.
- iv) To assist signatory organisations the steering group produced a short introductory power point presentation on the Compact to be use in-house as an induction tool on Compact working. The presentation has now been used by a number of signatories as an in-house aid.

Target 3

Develop and deliver a range of training opportunities on Compact working.

Outcome

Increased understanding and knowledge of Compact working across both sectors.

Achievements

- i) Presentations have been made to specific teams/partnerships/project groups to assist them in implementing the Codes of Practice most relevant to their activities. These presentations have used the Codes of Practice Checklists to help focus peoples thinking and practical understanding of Compact working.
- ii) The development of a county-wide cross sector training programme on grant funding & commissioning was based on the Commission for the Compact guidance on Commissioning and Procurement Law , as well as the East Sussex Compact Code of Practice on Funding & Procurement.
- iii) The SpeakUp Forum and the CVS Partnership jointly developed Borough and District training sessions for both sectors on Compact working. Each session introduced the Compact principles and used the Checklists for the Codes of Practice on Partnerships, Consultation and Community Engagement, and Funding & Procurement to help delegates to understand what Compact working looks in real life. Delegates commented very positively about the Checklists, with many saying that they will use the checklist when developing activities and services to make sure their current practices are Compact compliant.
- iv) The SpeakUp Forum and the CVS Partnership jointly delivered an Introduction to the East Sussex Compact event for BME organisations, the event focused on the Code of Practice for Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Groups. The event used the Checklist as a tool to determine whether BME organisations felt that commitments for each sector were being followed. Delegates who took part in this event are now to be included in future plans to develop and implement the Codes of Practice.

Target 4

Enhance and improve the role of Compact Champions

Outcome

All signatories have an active Champion able to advise colleagues.

Achievements

- i) The steering group undertook a refresh of signatories that involved each one officially naming an individual as their main Champion (signatories were also encouraged to have more than one Champion).
- ii) The steering group produced guidance on being a Champion that was circulated to existing and new Champions. The guidance intends to clarify the role and offers support from the steering group.
- iii) Champions are actively informing colleagues on how the Compact can influence their work and demonstrating this by focusing on the Codes that are relevant to the person's organisational role. For instance a Champion who works for an infrastructure organisation and provides group support would focus on understanding the Community Groups Code and the BME Community Groups Code.
- iv) A mapping of Champions is underway that will ensure there is a good geographical, sector, and thematic spread across the County.
- v) In developing guidance and support for Champions the steering group consulted with and met with a number of representatives from signatory organisations. Organisations were asked what commitment and time they would allow officers to make if they were to become a Champion. The findings showed that if Champions focused on the Code(s) of Practice most relevant to their roles and responsibilities within their organisation then the Chief Officers would see no problem in officers taking on the Champion title.

Target 5

Develop and review compliance mechanisms for Compact signatories from both sectors

Outcome

Increased understanding across sectors on compliance of Compact codes and principles.

Achievements

- i) The steering group produced guidance on how to use the Code of Practice Checklists. The guidance was used to frame discussions with partnerships/networks/organisations who agreed to test out the Checklists (see Target 6 for more information).

- ii) Feedback from Champions and signatory organisations indicates that there is a need to develop a 'kitemark' for organisations to use on documents and promotional material. The steering group will be launching a local Compact 'kitemark' in early 2010.
- iii) The steering group produced guidance on how signatories should approach any issues or concerns on Compact working. The guidance is an aid to the resolution of disagreements flowchart (Page 8 of the Compact).

Target 6

Establish Code of Practice sub groups

Outcome

Ensures Codes are being implemented and scrutinised by sector representatives and signatories.

Achievements

- i) The Code of Practice Checklists developed by the steering group were assigned to a range of partnerships/networks/project groups. Each were asked to review their activities in relation to the Checklist they received, and feedback to the steering group on how well they complied. The results of each review are now informing the steering group of areas that require further development; this will be used to inform the 2010 Action Plan and training.

Volunteering

East Sussex Volunteering Project

Funding & Procurement

Statutory Sectors Funding Group

CVS Partnership / CVS Funding

Advice Officers

Community Groups

CVS Partnership

BME Groups

SpeakUp/TAO

Equality Officers at East Sussex County Council

Consultation & Community

Engagement and Partnerships

SpeakUp

LSP Chairs & Co-ordinators

CVS Partnership Group

- iii) The partnerships/networks/forums that took part in the trials for the Code of Practice Checklists have taken on the role of leading on the relevant code, with a number of the partnerships/networks/forums being cross sector.

Where the partnerships/networks/forums is sector specific, the steering group has identified a structure within each sector to take on the sub group role. An example being the Code of Practice for Funding & Procurement is shared between the East Sussex Public Sector Funders Group and the CVS Partnership (CVS Funding Advice Officers).

Their individual work on implementing and embedding the Code is brought to the East Sussex ChangeUp Consortium, where it is discussed, reviewed, and opportunities for joint working/development are identified.

- iii) The January 2010 meeting of the East Sussex Strategic Partnership will receive the Compact Annual Review and be asked to comment on the implementation and embedding of the Compact principles across sectors.

Target 7

Develop communication methods for improving Compact proofing & branding

Outcome

Compact becomes more accessible and understood by both sectors.

Sectors are able to focus on aspects of Compact most relevant to their activities/services.

Achievements

- i) The steering group undertook a refresh of all Compact signatories, to re-establish their commitment to Compact working and identify the organisations main Compact Champion. These main Champions are supported by the steering group and are encouraged to attend the steering group meetings. In 2010 the steering group will hold local Champion events that will provide opportunities for Champions to share experiences. The refresh was led by the steering group but promoted and facilitated by the representatives from each sector.
The SpeakUp Forum (the strategic VCS network in East Sussex) and the Voluntary and Community Services team at ESCC.
- ii) The refresh provided an opportunity for the steering group to promote the idea that organisations only need to focus on the Codes that were relevant to them; learning the entire document all at once was not required. This approach was well received and produced a high response rate to the refresh. It was also noted that signatories seemed to be more willing to name an organisational Champion, with the named Champion keen to be involved.
- iii) The guidance made available for each Code of Practice Checklist and the Checklists themselves have proved to be an invaluable tool for encouraging discussion on Compact working. Signatories are now using the Checklists to communicate relevant codes internally amongst colleagues. Wealden District Council are planning to use the Funding & Procurement Checklist to inform an internal discussion on Grant Funding, East Sussex County Council used the same Checklist to inform the development of the Grant Funding & Commissioning Project.

- iv) The SpeakUp Forum has created a Compact page on the Ask Casper website. The page promotes Compact working and has contact details for Champions who are based within the local infrastructure support organisations. The intention is to develop this into an on-line 'ask the Champion' facility.

Target 8

Robust annual monitoring & reviewing for the implementation and embedding of Compact working

Outcome

Both sectors are able to identify areas for improvement and clearly understand their roles in the ongoing development of Compact working.

Achievements

- i) Compact Champions were encouraged and supported in gathering live issues and successes throughout the year. There was a slight increase on the number received, this was as a result of the new guidance on the Resolution of Disagreements and the new Checklists. Both documents assisted Champions in developing a better understanding of Compact working.
- ii) The steering group carried out an Annual Survey on Compact working that was used to inform the Annual Review.
- iii) The annual review provides evidence that the Compact Action Plan 2008-09 went ahead as planned, and that it was sensitive to the changing environments in which the voluntary and community and public sectors operate, highlighted the achievements and issues from the past year, and assists the Compact steering group in drafting the Compact Action Plan 2009-10.
- iv) The success of the annual monitoring & reviewing for the implementation and embedding of Compact working is entirely dependent on officers from both sectors taking an active role in promoting and supporting Compact working.
- v) The focus on sectors taking a positive and non-confrontational approach to dealing with issues and concerns has meant that officers from both sectors are more willing to contribute to the monitoring and reviewing process.
- vi) The entire monitoring & review process involves over 150 individuals from both sectors. Individuals range from Chief Executives and Trustees, to frontline service delivery officer and volunteers.

Target 9

Future considerations 2010 - 2011

- i) Develop a Sussex Compact kitemark that will be available for activities/services that are compliant with the Compact Principles and relevant Codes.

The work to develop the Compact kitemark will be facilitated by ESCC Communications team in partnership with VCS representatives, it is envisaged that the extra benefit of this work will be a better understanding of how each sector approaches communication with the wider community.

- ii) Undertake a full review of the existing Codes of Practice in relation to present and future cross sector developments (Local, Regional and National) during 2009-2010.

The idea of reviewing the existing Codes came independently via public sector equality & diversity officers and VCOs supporting disabled people. The public sector officers were involved in testing the Code of Practice Checklist for BME voluntary and community organisations, while the VCOs supporting disabled people were involved in the SpeakUp Forum.

2009 - 2010 Highlights

What the signatories said:

- A voluntary and community organisation (VCO) approached the local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) with a Compact concern. The CVS discussed the concern and facilitated a discussion between the VCO and the statutory organisation involved. The support that the CVS provided meant that the VCO did not feel alone, and the Compact document was seen as an anchor to be able to be relied upon and to help tease out the real concerns. Without a Compact in place the whole concern would have been much harder as there would be no agreed bench mark to measure good practice. The statutory sector benefited by being able to talk to a third party. The overall effect was a calming down of the concern which resulted with a fairer outcome.
- A query was recently raised around the definitions of consultation and whether a department within the County Council was adhering to the guidelines covering consultation. The query was discussed and has resulted in work being planned for 2010 to further develop and clarify guidance on consultation and community engagement.
- SpeakUp members and other VCOs have found that some of the main problems they experience in relations with the public sector are:
 - advance payments ("Funding and procurement")
 - 12 week consultation ("Consultation & community engagement")
- Eastbourne Local Strategic Partnership in using the Code of Practice Checklist for Partnerships felt that it would be interesting to ask other partners by way of a survey to rank question on the checklist from 1 to 10 whether they feel the LSP is meeting the criteria laid out.

East Sussex County Compact Steering Group 2009 – 2010

Jill Ferguson/Steve Manwaring	Deputy Director / Director	Hastings Voluntary Action
Steve Hare	Director	Age Concern East Sussex
Joy Collins/Jocelyn Tilbrook	Neighbourhood Manager	Hastings Borough Council
Seema Kapila	Policy and Development Officer	South Downs CVS
Gary Walsh	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	East Sussex and Fire Rescue Service
Alison Maconochie	Services Manager	Eastbourne Association for Voluntary Services
Roy Masters	Community Services Officer	Eastbourne Borough Council
Paul Rideout	Voluntary and Community Services Co-ordinator	East Sussex County Council
Richard Watson/Anita Counsel	Health Improvement Manager Head of Commissioning for Health Improvement & Partnerships	Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust
Reg McLaughlin	Director	East Sussex Disability Association
Robin Smith/Tony Wakefield	Chief Superintendent / Inspector	Sussex Police