

Islington Compact

A partnership agreement about how the statutory sector and third sector will work together



Developed by the Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium supported by Voluntary Action Islington and Islington Council

How to use the Compact

Islington's Compact is designed to support you in your work. It shows:

- What you can expect from partners
- What partners can expect from you
- How to work well together
- How to access support if you run into difficulties

Each chapter contains a set of undertakings that organisations agree to work towards if not already in place. Some undertakings are only for the statutory sector, some for the third sector. Most are joint undertakings meaning everyone will aim to achieve them, and often requiring organisations to work together more effectively.

Organisations 'sign up' to the Compact, showing their commitment to the undertakings.

Further information, guidance and support is available at www.vai.org.uk/compact or www.islington.gov.uk/compact



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Introduction

What is the Islington Compact?

The Islington Compact is an agreement setting out how local statutory sector bodies and the third sector will work together as partners to address the challenges facing the borough and improve the lives of everyone in Islington.

Our vision is one where the council, other statutory agencies and the third sector work together more effectively to improve the quality of life for local people.

The Compact looks to the future and the opportunities to deliver the priorities in Islington's Sustainable Community Strategy. These include:

- Improving people's employment prospects and the prosperity of the area.
- Improving educational attainment and learning.
- Tackling health inequalities and improving health.
- Improving safety and people's feelings of safety.
- Improving the quality of the environment and tackling climate change.
- Improving the quality of housing.
- Building stronger, sustainable communities.

We are committed to creating a community in which everyone has access to excellent services and is able to fulfil their potential. Our Compact will enable local organisations to meet the needs of all of Islington's communities more successfully.



Compact Aims

The statutory sector and the third sector already work closely together. The Compact aims to provide a more secure foundation on which to build stronger and more sustainable relationships. The aim is to:

- Strengthen understanding and relationships between partners by clarifying roles, and setting out shared values and principles.
- Make clear commitments (undertakings) about how we will work together to address local priorities.
- Build the capacity of the third sector to enable local people to take part in activities together, to deliver local services and to ensure that the voices of Islington's diverse communities influence local decision making.

Values and principles

Promote wellbeing and the public good

Partners will work together for the public good and to promote the wellbeing of Islington residents.

Islington is a borough of contrasts – economically, socially and culturally – with neighbourhoods that have some of the country’s worst deprivation alongside areas of considerable wealth. This divide is reflected in patterns of housing, employment, educational attainment, health, crime and the impacts of climate change.

All partners have a role to play in helping to achieve the objectives of Islington’s Sustainable Community Strategy: reducing poverty, improving opportunity for all and realising everyone’s potential.

Equality and respect for human rights

Partners are committed to promoting equality and respect for human rights in decision-making processes, consultations and service delivery.

This applies to all people irrespective of race, age, disability, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation. The diverse range of organisations involved in the Compact will work together to identify, understand and respond to the different needs and experiences of our community. This means ensuring that our policies do not discriminate and maximising benefits for all residents.

All partners will tackle discrimination and inequality and improve outcomes for all residents; including in arrangements covering employment, volunteering, funding, service delivery, information sharing and consultation. This means taking specific steps to ensure that appropriate resources are available to disadvantaged groups so that they can participate fully and effectively in shaping public life.

Partnership working

Partnerships work best when partners are committed to an agreed set of partnership behaviours. In Islington these include:

- trust and confidence
- mutual understanding and respect
- openness and transparency
- accountability and integrity
- leadership and common purpose
- listening and good communication

Interdependence and independence of sectors

The Compact acknowledges the interdependency of partners and that the contributions of all sectors are necessary to achieve our goals of enabling participation and engagement and delivering high quality services.

The complementary role played by partners enables different approaches to be tried, draws in additional resources and provides greater choice for service users.

At the same time each partner has a distinct role in representing and meeting the needs of the community and is accountable to its own range of stakeholders. All partners recognise and respect the independence of each sector including its right to pursue policies that others don’t agree with and to campaign within the law to advance its aims.

Partnership Roles

Islington Strategic Partnership (ISP) brings together the main statutory service providers in the borough including the council, the National Health Service (NHS), and police, along with representatives of the voluntary, community, faith and business sectors. The ISP aims to bring about sustainable improvements to the quality of life of local people and to create a community where people of all ages from very different backgrounds, have a chance to fulfil their potential.

The **Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium** has developed the Islington Compact. The Consortium includes representatives from Islington Council, NHS Islington, Metropolitan Police, Voluntary Action Islington, Islington Community Network, Islington Childcare Trust, Islington Faiths Forum and the Octopus Community Centres Network.



The **third sector** in Islington is large and diverse with over a thousand organisations and about 14% of jobs. Whilst the Compact covers all of these organisations, including large national and international charities, it focuses particularly on local Islington organisations.

The third sector helps to build engagement and social capital and contributes to cohesion. The community network helps to develop communication and trust between different communities; and supports volunteering, creating opportunities for thousands of residents to develop new skills and to improve the quality of life in their communities. Third sector organisations can have a good understanding and awareness of community needs and be well placed to reach and advocate on behalf of communities, particularly disadvantaged groups and communities of interest. As a result the local third sector has a valuable role to play in representing, consulting, involving, engaging with and being accountable to Islington residents.

Increasingly the third sector is an important partner in the drive to improve public services and reinvigorate local democracy. It plays a part in both shaping and delivering local public services. This involves identifying service needs resulting from gaps, designing solutions to meet needs, and delivering services. Third sector organisations have also developed a range of enterprise initiatives encompassing small trading activities undertaken by charitable organisations, the creation of trading subsidiaries and the development of social enterprises. Social enterprise in Islington is at the forefront of developing innovative solutions to social problems and helping to tackle disadvantage. If effectively supported there is scope for it to play a bigger role in the future.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Islington Compact undertake to:

- Work together to achieve the priorities in Islington's Sustainable Community Strategy
- Promote and raise awareness of the Compact amongst organisations in Islington
- Review and evaluate the operation of the Islington Compact annually.

The **statutory sector** is made up of a variety of public agencies with regulatory responsibilities and funding from central government and local council tax to deliver services. The sector includes the local authority, police, fire service and the NHS. By working with the third sector, the statutory sector can help to improve community relations, engage better with hard to reach groups, and strengthen the voice and activity of the third sector. A collaborative approach to service delivery and commissioning processes creates opportunities to improve outcomes for local communities and service users.

The relationship between the sectors is a significant determinant of the third sector's ability to grow and develop. The Islington Compact provides the framework for strengthening this relationship and establishes undertakings about how partnership work will be approached in eight areas of common interest: equality, diversity and cohesion; community involvement; volunteering; infrastructure support; funding and commissioning; premises; information sharing; and Compact awareness and problem solving.



Equality, Diversity and Cohesion

Introduction

Islington is an area of great contrast with some of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods and huge polarisation between rich and poor. This economic divide is the critical issue facing the borough and is reflected in the patterns of housing, employment, educational attainment, health, life expectancy, and crime.

Third sector organisations formed and run by excluded communities can help to enhance the response to their needs and to engage and empower members of these communities to contribute to civil and public activity.

This chapter sets out how the statutory sector and third sector will work together to improve the outcomes for all, by ensuring that there is equality of opportunity and access to services for vulnerable individuals and communities represented within the six "equality strands" such as black and minority ethnic communities (including asylum seekers and refugees), disabled people, older and younger people, women, faith communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Shared principles

- **Respect and value diversity.** This means valuing the differences between people and the ways in which those differences can contribute to a richer, more creative and productive society.
- **Promoting an inclusive society that is developed by treating people with dignity and respect, and promoting good relationships between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles.**
- **Acknowledge that disadvantage and discrimination inhibit life chances and being open when discussing the impact.** This is a crucial step to improving understanding and developing an environment where people have an equal opportunity to succeed. Efforts to tackle disadvantage should seek to address the social, economic and environmental causes.
- **Tackle inequality by understanding different needs, experiences and challenges faced by different sections of the community.** This is important in our roles as service providers, advocates, employers, and as trustees and decision-makers.
- **Recognise that individuals may belong to more than one equality strand** and therefore have multiple identities. To effectively meet the needs of the individual, appropriate measures should be put in place to enable individuals to express their own assessment of need and the support necessary for them to reach their full potential.

Compact undertakings

– to ensure we meet our responsibilities to promote equality

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Adopt and implement the provisions of the Equality and Cohesion Charter for Islington, developed by the Islington Strategic Partnership.
- Keep up to date with and act in accordance with relevant anti-discrimination, equalities and human rights legislation. This includes seeking out and implementing best practice.
- Use data and evidence to identify, understand and respond to the different needs and experiences of our community to ensure that we have a clear basis for targeting our efforts at communities that have the greatest need.
- Share information about the needs of Islington's diverse communities.
- Monitor the impact of policies, procedures and practices and take steps to eliminate or reduce actual or potential negative impacts to maximise benefits for all sections of our community. This applies in employment, volunteering, advocacy and service provision. It applies to all people who experience discrimination including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), children and young people, disabled people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people, older people, people of a particular religion or belief, refugees and migrants and women.

Statutory sector partners will

- Support the third sector by sharing knowledge and expertise in implementing and monitoring equalities legislation.
- Ensure that effective equality impact assessments are carried out when developing strategies, policies and programmes.

Third sector partners will

- Ensure that their organisation or group is accessible to and representative of the communities that it serves.
- Ensure the equalities duties are observed when in receipt of public funding.

Equality, Diversity and Cohesion

Compact undertakings

– to support disadvantaged groups and communities

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Work in partnership to ensure the delivery of high quality, accessible and relevant services.
- Work to develop inclusive consultation, involvement, engagement and partnership.

Statutory sector partners will

- Recognise the knowledge, experience and expertise that third sector organisations can bring to understanding the needs of disadvantaged groups and communities.
- Use infrastructure support to help build the capacity of third sector organisations to improve the mechanisms they use to engage disadvantaged communities in influencing and decision making processes.

Third sector partners will

- Contribute to the development of local policy and the design and planning of services by providing knowledge of the needs of disadvantaged communities, and by identifying gaps in service provision.
- Facilitate research and analysis that will help to identify what works to meet the needs of Islington's communities.

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Equality and Cohesion Charter for Islington

- We recognise, respect and value Islington's diverse community.
- We shall promote good relationships between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles.
- We are committed to creating a borough where individuals are free from poverty, ignorance and conformity and are empowered to take responsibility and make a positive contribution.
- We are committed to identifying, understanding and responding to the different needs and experiences of our community, and in particular those of vulnerable individuals and communities represented within the "equality strands", such as black and minority ethnic communities, asylum seekers and refugees, disabled people, older and young people, women, faith communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- We acknowledge that individuals belong to more than one "group" and may have multiple identities and we shall take this into account in our work.
- We shall work in partnership to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and access and people are free to live the way they choose, provided that there is no detriment to others or to the wider society.
- We are committed to tackling discrimination and inequality in all the service areas for which we are responsible, including in our role as employers.
- We are committed to targeting our efforts to secure equitable outcomes when implementing our part of Islington's Sustainable Community Strategy.



Community Involvement

Introduction

This chapter focuses on strengthening our ability to work together to engage and support local people to take part in shaping services, decision-making about resource allocation, and in implementing changes.

Support for involvement creates opportunities for local individuals to use their skills, energy and experience, to engage in civic, social and environmental action, and improve the quality of life in their communities.

By working across sectors and with local people we can increase and improve opportunities for participation, disseminate the results of consultation effectively, and ensure a well-informed evidence base for strategy and policy development.

Effective community involvement is characterised by:

- A range of techniques including consultation and user-participation.
- Understanding the costs of ensuring accessibility for participants and supporting long term involvement.
- Openness to organisational and cultural change.
- Willingness to share power between statutory and third sector organisations.
- Development of trust and respect among all those involved.

Roles

Statutory sector partners have legal obligations and undertake a range of engagement activities, often in partnership with the third sector.

Local third sector organisations are often well placed to reach and represent communities, particularly disadvantaged groups and communities of interest, empower people to campaign for change, support a diverse range of input into consultations, events and local decision making, and generally provide insight into local needs. National third sector organisations who work locally also have a key role in encouraging and supporting community involvement.

Third sector infrastructure organisations and networks are well placed to communicate the views and insights of local people to statutory sector decision makers and to disseminate relevant research findings and information about local community participation exercises.

The Islington Community Network has an important role in bringing together the borough's local networks, ensuring that people from all networks can have a voice and that there is representation from the third sector on local partnerships and feedback to networks about the action that partners have agreed.

Shared principles

- **Inclusiveness:** Maximising the opportunity to engage and participate.
- **Clarity:** Involvement activities should have clear aims.
- **Dialogue:** Community engagement is part of a dialogue between residents and service providers and dialogue between and within sectors is essential to deliver the best outcomes.
- **Planning and sustaining:** All sectors are committed to planning and sustaining community involvement that maximises ongoing quality and effectiveness, and avoids duplication.



Community Involvement

Compact undertakings

– supporting and sustaining successful community involvement

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Work across sectors and with stakeholders whenever possible to encourage the active participation of all Islington residents and groups in community activities, consultations and in shaping local services.
- Work together to identify and remove barriers that might stop people becoming involved in the local community.
- Plan and co-ordinate consultation and involvement exercises across different organisations and with stakeholders whenever possible in order to make the best use of resources.
- Plan exercises that will reach all of the intended audience to secure results that are representative of the groups concerned.
- Plan consultations so:
 - they are undertaken at an early stage in the development of proposals
 - it is clear when they are to take place
 - they avoid the major holiday periods
- Whenever possible allow at least eight weeks for consultations that involve a large number of stakeholders and significant changes to policy or service provision.
- Publicise upcoming consultations and community involvement activities.
- Communicate the purpose of each exercise and the scope for change. Be clear about how inputs from the community will be considered and reviewed, and how they will inform decisions.
- Be clear about confidentiality and about what will be done with the information. Keep views confidential if requested to do so (within Freedom of Information regulations).
- Evaluate consultation and involvement activities. Provide feedback, publicise the results and take account of the findings in future exercises. Publicise local examples of how community participation has affected change.
- Support the Islington Community Network in its role of enabling the third sector to be represented and to participate in partnership activity.
- Work together to build skills in user-involvement and public participation.

Statutory sector partners will

- Acknowledge that participating in or organising involvement and consultation exercises, and representing the third sector in partnerships and networks, have resource implications and is time spent away from active service delivery. Consider how any re-imbursement or support could be provided.
- Invite the third sector to provide information about the needs of borough residents, particularly needs that could be met through commissioned services.
- Consult, involve and engage the third sector on issues that are likely to affect it, particularly at the policy development stage. Identify implications for the third sector as a result of local, regional and national developments.

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Third sector partners will

- Build user involvement into the planning cycle. Ensure that insight and knowledge of service users is integral to planning. Consult stakeholders whenever possible.
- Demonstrate what groups, individuals or causes the organisation represents and how these have informed the organisation's policies and positions.
- Be proactive in providing information and encouragement to service users so they can become engaged in the community and make a positive contribution to consultation and involvement exercises.
- Publicise particular participation opportunities and encourage participation using membership and infrastructure.
- Ensure that people from all sections of Islington's diverse community can take part in representing the third sector in partnerships. Ensure a transparent process is in place for making decisions about representation, and that mechanisms to feed in views and feedback about agreed actions are clear and understood.
- When the statutory sector is proposing or developing a policy that will significantly affect users of a third sector organisation, ensure that input about the policy is provided to the statutory sector either directly or through Islington's community networks or infrastructure organisations.



Volunteering

Introduction

All signatories to this Compact recognise the invaluable role and contribution played by the thousands of people in the borough who freely give time, energy and expertise to benefit others.

Volunteering in all of its forms is the hallmark of a healthy functioning and caring local civil society. It is also a key investment that strengthens social and community networks, develops levels of civic engagement and makes an important contribution to the local economy and the development and delivery of services.

In an increasingly polarised and diverse borough, volunteering offers a way for people to engage with each other, improve understanding and develop social cohesion at a local level.

Volunteers also have a role to play in shaping the policies and strategies that determine the services that are delivered in Islington, both by the statutory and third sectors and as trustees of third sector organisations.

Finally, volunteering allows individuals to develop new skills and experiences which can significantly improve the quality of their lives and employment prospects.

This chapter sets out how the statutory sector and third sector will work together to promote and support volunteering in Islington and the principles and undertakings that will guide this.

Shared principles

- **Choice:** Volunteering must be a choice free from any form of coercion or compulsion.
- **Diversity:** Volunteering must be open to everyone and to all abilities.
- **Reciprocity:** Volunteers should not be out of pocket and should receive travel and subsistence expenses as well as training.
- **Recognition:** The contribution and value of the work of volunteers should be recognised publicly.



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Compact undertakings

– to increase the amount and range of volunteering in Islington and to ensure that an effective infrastructure is able to support this.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Increase access to volunteering from all sections of the community.
- Support volunteers who have additional needs.
- Improve and develop flexible volunteering and involvement opportunities.
- Ensure that the impact on volunteering of policies and procedures are taken into account.
- Encourage and support staff to volunteer locally.
- Promote volunteering in the borough.
- Gather and publish data on levels of local volunteering.
- Increase staff awareness of the contribution and role of volunteers in the borough.
- Advertise volunteering opportunities through Voluntary Action Islington.

Statutory sector partners will

- Support the existence and development of a specialist local volunteering infrastructure through funding and other means.



Volunteering

Compact undertakings

– to improve the quality of the volunteering experience for volunteers and to ensure that their contribution is valued.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat volunteers with the same respect as paid staff.• Ensure equal opportunity policies are applied to volunteers as well as staff.• Pay expenses to volunteers to ensure that they are not out of pocket.• Support access to free Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authority (ISA) checks for volunteers working with children and vulnerable clients.• Provide volunteers with clear descriptions of their roles.• Offer proper induction, training and supervision and resources to work effectively.• Record the work undertaken.• Ensure health and safety standards are applied. Insurance policies should be extended to include volunteers. |
|--|---|

Statutory sector partners will

- Publicly recognise the contribution played by volunteers in the life of the borough.

Third sector partners will

- Encourage volunteers to participate in the organisation's wider decision making processes.



Infrastructure Support

Introduction

All signatories to the Islington Compact recognise the importance of improving the quality and sustainability of third sector infrastructure in order to develop and sustain a third sector that reflects the borough's diverse communities and is well placed to engage with local people and contribute to the planning and delivery of local services.

Infrastructure comprises the facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that support, develop, co-ordinate, represent and promote front-line organisations to enable them to deliver their objectives more effectively.

An Infrastructure Development Strategy for the third sector has been agreed by Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium and endorsed by the Islington Strategic Partnership. In addition there are proposals to improve the accommodation available to local organisations (addressed in the premises chapter). Developing the infrastructure of Islington's third sector is intended to support:

- Strong and well-supported local organisations that are in a position to provide high quality services and to make a significant contribution to well-functioning and cohesive communities.
- Engagement and partnership work between third sector organisations and statutory partners on a wide range of activities which promote wellbeing in Islington.

- More Islington residents contributing to the life of their communities through involvement with local organisations.
- More funding raised from sources outside Islington by local organisations being used to benefit Islington residents.
- More effective management and quality assurance in the third sector, including better communication and cooperation between organisations, more efficient use of resources and greater cost-effectiveness overall.
- More entrepreneurial and more sustainable local organisations.
- Greater commitment within local organisations to promoting environmental sustainability and tackling climate change.

As organisations evolve their support needs will change. Partners appreciate the diversity of the third sector in Islington and will seek to provide a range of appropriate infrastructure support. Services offered to local groups by other third sector organisations in the borough such as fundraising, strategic and business planning, quality assurance, training and recruiting volunteers, are valued components of infrastructure support.

This section sets out how the statutory sector and the third sector will work together to develop the infrastructure of the third sector in Islington.

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Compact undertakings

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Implement, review and update the infrastructure development strategy for the third sector in Islington.
- Provide capacity building support for local organisations to develop and deliver activities and services and engage in commissioning processes.
- Develop opportunities for sharing infrastructure support such as training, staff secondment, premises and other resources.
- Work together to secure funding and other resources from outside the borough to benefit the local community.
- Provide relevant information and resources to promote enterprise development and help third sector organisations to diversify their income streams.
- Make available support for small organisations that are run mainly by volunteers and which are not involved in larger scale service delivery including through small grants schemes.
- Establish more effective ways of measuring the success of infrastructure development initiatives.
- Develop infrastructure in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Statutory sector partners will

- Support investment in third sector infrastructure through the provision of appropriate strategic and development funding. This includes resources for third sector organisations which provide support services to other local groups.
- Give three months notice when reducing or withdrawing funding for infrastructure and where possible negotiate transitional funding that will help organisations affected to achieve a sustainable operating position.

Third sector partners will

- Ensure that appropriate quality assurance systems are in place to achieve best practice and equality of opportunity in activities, employment, information governance, involvement of volunteers and service provision.
- Recruit, train and support people from all of Islington's communities to be actively involved in local organisations and promote high standards of governance, accountability and conduct.
- Consider the potential for closer working relationships between organisations including, where appropriate, formal partnerships and mergers.
- Ensure compliance with legal requirements including submission of annual returns to the Charity Commission.
- Enable more effective engagement with communities of interest by encouraging the development of networks and other representative organisations.
- Ensure that organisations receiving funding to provide infrastructure support have clear and effective arrangements in place for supporting and building the capacity of other local groups.

Funding and Commissioning

Introduction

This section sets out the principles underpinning the approach that the council and statutory partners to the Compact will take to the funding relationship with the third sector.

The council and other statutory partners recognise that for many third sector organisations, their funding is an important element in sustaining capacity to meet existing and emerging needs in the borough. This funding can enable third sector organisations to attract additional funding from non-statutory sources and can support volunteer effort.

Statutory sector partners will use a range of different funding arrangements and will determine the methods of funding to be used within the available resources. They will only fund organisations that provide value for money, are well managed and are responsive to the needs of service users and the communities that they serve.

Accordingly, the funding relationship encompasses a range of ways in which the statutory sector provides funding to the third sector but in each case the funding will be aligned to specific objectives and priorities.

Funding arrangements

A mixed economy of funding will be used with the methods of funding being determined and clearly identified by the relevant statutory sector partner for the purpose and type of activity concerned but it will take one of the following forms.

- **Contracts with third sector providers** established through restricted or fully competitive procurement procedures where third sector providers bid for work alongside providers from other sectors.
- **Grants in the form of funding agreements** with third sector organisations in relation to functions which the third sector is uniquely or particularly well equipped to address. Such grants will be established through a process of selection from bids generated from third sector organisations.
- **Infrastructure Grants** – to meet the core costs of strategically important local organisations that add value to the locality or support others to do so. These will be used to develop community infrastructure and meet defined needs.
- **Small Grants** which support one-off projects or activities.

Compact undertakings

– commissioning

Commissioning is a process of assessing the needs of local people and designing and procuring appropriate services to meet defined objectives. It sets out what services are needed and how they will be developed and funded.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Understand local needs for services so that what is commissioned is focused on outcomes that will make a difference to service users.
- Develop a common understanding about measuring value for money including measurement of outcomes and effectiveness. This includes taking account of the value of local knowledge and relationships in specifications and in comparisons between providers.
- Maintain up to date information about which organisations are likely to be able to supply particular services and at the beginning of every procurement process to identify the possibility for local organisations, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, to deliver contracts or parts of contracts either independently, as part of a consortium or as a sub contractor.
- Ensure that the most appropriate service provider is chosen, by balancing the need for efficiency with longer-term market development.
- Evaluate services and make use of evidence about what makes a difference to service users when designing and changing service provision.
- Support capacity building to enable more local organisations to meet the conditions required by pre-qualification questionnaires, take part in tendering processes and deliver services.
- Act in accordance with relevant codes of conduct and be transparent by declaring interests that could reasonably be considered to influence their role in determining the use of resources, commissioning or procurement decisions.
- Ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account at all stages of commissioning. This includes taking account of environmental impacts in specifications and in comparisons between providers.

Funding and Commissioning

Statutory sector partners will

- Provide an open and transparent approach to commissioning in which a range of service providers are able to participate including a commitment to:
 - Making all relevant strategies and service plans available to the third sector and undertaking appropriate consultation as they are being developed.
 - Notifying the third sector of funding for specific initiatives from central Government.
 - Publishing commissioning intentions that set out key times for consultation, budget setting, contract monitoring and decision making.
 - Ensuring that information and advice is available about the tendering process and services to be procured, making use of local third sector information systems.
- Commit to greater consistency and co-ordination in their approach to commissioning and whenever possible joining-up and standardising procurement, funding and monitoring procedures to minimise burdens on other organisations.
- Provide as much time as is practicable, given any external constraints, for organisations to prepare pre-qualification questionnaires and tender documentation and to have a clear timetable for decision making after documentation has been received.
- Commit to simplicity and proportionality in processes relative to the amounts involved including in respect of monitoring requirements.
- Allow time for planning, decision making and action including giving at least three months notice to a third sector organisation prior to

de-commissioning and offering advice and support throughout the process.

- Provide a clear brief on desired outcomes, constraints and expectations.

In developing this approach to commissioning, statutory sector partners will:

- Be clear about desired outcomes and the characteristics of the services that are needed to secure them.
- Identify those outcomes which providers in the third sector could be best placed to deliver.
- Involve and consult third sector organisations in service planning and in identifying service needs, drawing on their knowledge of the needs of their members and service users.
- Engage third sector organisations in designing commissioning processes that encourage a diverse range of suppliers.
- Recognise that third sector organisations will base proposals for delivering services and activities on full cost recovery i.e. the cost inclusive of the relevant proportion of overhead costs
- Encourage a market in which a variety of delivery organisations, including those that are based locally, have the opportunity and incentive to deliver services.
- Assess the impact of commissioning practices on the size and diversity of local suppliers, and the consequent prospects for meeting emerging needs and securing improved value for money.

Third sector partners will

- Participate in the commissioning cycle in accordance with an agreed framework.
- Share with statutory partners information relating to the needs of borough residents, particularly needs that could be met through commissioned services.
- Co-operate with other organisations in helping to assess borough needs and in communicating those needs to partners.
- Participate in relevant consultation processes.
- Submit high-quality, fully costed bids that address commissioners' service objectives.
- Provide monitoring information including relevant information and explanations about costs.
- Whenever possible give at least three months notice if any services are to be withdrawn.

Compact undertakings

– for accessible and accountable funding arrangements

To encourage innovation and fairness in funding the third sector it is important that funding arrangements are transparent, accessible and accountable.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Make available information about funding opportunities.
- Publish and implement arrangements for handling conflicts of interest.

Statutory sector partners will

- Publish information about funding that is available for particular purposes in advance and to make this widely available.
- Notify organisations about the reasons for decisions about funding and to provide feedback on request to applicants about the reasons why their proposal for funding was successful or unsuccessful and how future proposals could be strengthened.
- Provide clear, proportionate and appropriate funding agreements or contracts with an explanation of legal terms used, when applicable. Provide these in a timely manner.
- Provide information about monitoring and reporting requirements in advance, ensuring that these are proportionate to the funding provided and that a reasonable time is given for provision of information and data.

Funding and Commissioning

Third sector partners will

- Fulfil legal and financial obligations including production of accounts, health and safety, insurance and compliance with employment legislation and good practice.
- Provide monitoring information against agreed performance objectives, and reports that evaluate the impact of funding particular services and activities.
- Ensure that quality assurance systems are in place.
- Make appropriate arrangements for users of services and activities to provide feedback and to make proposals about future provision.
- Acknowledge funding by statutory sector partners publicly.

Compact undertakings – for sustainable funding arrangements

An important commitment in the Sustainable Community Strategy is to move towards more sustainable funding of third sector organisations.

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Collaborate to maximise the opportunities for funding services and activities to benefit Islington's communities.
- Have regular meetings to review and monitor funding arrangements with a named person from the funder and the organisation in receipt of funding.
- Consider how funding arrangements can be diversified without incurring excessive monitoring and reporting burdens.

Statutory sector partners will

- Whenever possible, make three year funding commitments for core functions and for roles and service provision that require long term planning and that meet continuing needs.
- Have clear arrangements for payment and wherever possible to make payments quarterly in advance when there is a clear track record of delivery by the organisation concerned or on the basis of agreed conditions about performance.
- Recognise that final payments may be used to cover redundancy and closure costs if a project or activity will no longer be continuing.
- Put in place clear arrangements for liaison between the provider and recipient of funding.

Visit www.vai.org.uk/compact or www.islington.gov.uk/compact for further information available to support Compact implementation

Third sector partners will

- Adapt services and activities to meet changing needs and changes in the local population.
- Continually seek ways in which services and activities can be delivered on a more cost effective basis, whilst maintaining and improving quality.
- Consider joint funding proposals and consortia arrangements when this could deliver a more effective service.



Premises

Introduction

The third sector comprises a wide range of types and sizes of organisations each of which has different requirements for accommodation. This section covers:

- Premises owned by the statutory sector but occupied by a third sector organisation as offices or for service delivery.
- Third sector owned premises which are available for use by other groups.
- Community facilities, gardens, playgrounds and centres, including centres associated with social housing developments.

The use of premises is a particularly important part of the infrastructure supporting and strengthening the third sector as a whole in Islington. There are significant barriers for third sector organisations in accessing fit for purpose accommodation notably:

- Information about the properties that are available.
- Affordability given that the cost of purchasing or renting premises on the open market is beyond the means of many third sector organisations.
- The condition of some of the buildings currently available for community use.
- The capacity to manage the responsibilities of running buildings.

Shared principles

- **Maximising benefit:** The premises must be fully used to achieve maximum benefit for the local community and for statutory sector partners and third sector organisations concerned.
- **Good asset management:** Recognising that the owners and leaseholders of premises have duties to protect and care for these assets, including environmental sustainability and energy efficiency, and to ensure that they are financially viable.



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Compact undertakings

– to maximise community use and benefit

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Work together towards a better shared understanding about how premises can most effectively be used to meet the needs of the local community.
- Maintain, develop and promote the community premises information service on the Voluntary Action Islington website that contains information about properties available for community use in Islington.
- Encourage the use of cross subsidies from income generating activities (e.g. commercial room lettings) to create benefit for third sector organisations, particularly those with limited income, occupying part of the same property (e.g. free room lettings).
- Encourage maximum use of community buildings, such as community centres on social housing estates, and promote the availability of facilities to people from all of Islington's communities.
- Whenever possible maximise the use and accessibility of existing community facilities and consider investing in these before developing new provision.

Statutory sector partners will

- In respect of property owned by statutory agencies and used by the third sector, develop rental arrangements that balance fiduciary responsibilities with the third sector's need for affordable accommodation.
- Consider using local third sector community centres for meetings and conferences when these are not taking place in local statutory sector accommodation.
- Seek to avoid any loss of community facilities without replacement or compensation or improvement to another facility, and where possible will seek to build appropriate provision of improved or new community premises into development schemes.
- Continue, within available resources, to provide discretionary rate relief to registered charities that are eligible for mandatory relief in accordance with a transparent statement of priorities. This includes discretionary rate relief on the levy that applies in a Business Improvement District. (Applied to Islington Council).

Third sector partners will

- Encourage maximum use of community buildings, particularly by socially excluded and newly formed groups.

Premises

Compact undertakings

– to improve the management and maintenance of community buildings

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Develop a repair and maintenance programme that promotes investment in premises to improve their condition, accessibility and sustainability.
- Ensure clear agreements are in place that clarify the responsibilities of owners and occupiers and ensure the timely and efficient implementation of these agreements.
- Consult all relevant stakeholders about proposed changes to buildings, their use and the arrangements for managing them.
- Develop and maintain a simple 'what to do and how to do it' package to provide advice and guidance on the responsibilities for groups occupying or running premises in terms of facilities management; building management; environmental impact and sustainability, compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and health and safety requirements.
- Share and develop good practice in environmental responsibility and energy efficiency.

Statutory sector partners will

- Establish leases for each of the properties that it owns and that are occupied by the third sector to clarify responsibilities for management and maintenance and facilitate organisations to access external funding.

Third sector partners will

- Fulfil, including in terms of the provisions of any lease, responsibilities for reasonable running and upkeep of buildings and make available a sufficient proportion of overall resources to meet these responsibilities.



Information Sharing

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is how we can work together to make it more straightforward to share information between sectors and organisations.

Sharing information makes joint working possible. Bringing together and reviewing relevant information from different agencies can be very helpful to partners in designing and delivering services that meet local needs and aspirations.

Sharing information is also a legal requirement for some agencies, and requires all sectors to understand and follow their legal duties, for example data protection, and to be clear about any potential intellectual property rights (i.e. the right of an organisation to protect the use of its ideas and information).

In addition information needs to be kept up to date which means staff need to be specifically tasked to do this.

Types of information:

Information about third sector organisations such as contact details, and services can be shared freely, but improved mechanisms are needed.

Information, knowledge and insights about Islington's communities that is found out through social research, community engagement and the day-to-day work of third sector organisations can also be shared freely.

Other **information in the public domain, such as minutes of meetings** should be shared and in the case of statutory agencies can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Information about individuals, such as their name, address, state of health and employment status can only be shared in accordance with the law; in particular the Data Protection Act 1998, and following the guidance of the 'Islington Strategic Partnership information sharing protocol.'

Shared principles

- **Informed consent:** Information should be gathered and shared with informed consent from those organisations or individuals that gave it.
- **Clear and easy to follow** guidance should be provided about sharing information that adheres to statutory requirements and provisions.

Visit www.vai.org.uk/compact or www.islington.gov.uk/compact for further information available to support Compact implementation

Compact undertakings

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Comply with legal requirements and organisational protocols in relation to collection, storage, sharing and disposal of information, including Islington Strategic Partnership's Information Sharing Protocol.
- Provide information and advice about the law and information-sharing procedures and protocols.
- Raise awareness of how to share information between organisations and how to address barriers to information sharing.
- Take steps to make reasonable adjustment to provide information in an accessible format.
- Facilitate access to information such as research about the local area, results from community consultation and involvement, and relevant reports.
- Work together to produce and maintain information about third sector organisations in Islington, their contact details, client groups and services offered.
- Work towards all sectors using the same standard classifications on application and monitoring forms, for example when that data relates to the six equalities strands.
- Respect the confidentiality of sensitive information that is collected about other organisations and some service users. Only insist that this is shared where there are legal obligations to do so.

Statutory sector partners will

- Provide clear and straightforward guidance to commissioned third sector agencies about information-sharing obligations and constraints including procedures if the service is decommissioned or a different agency is procured to deliver the service.
- Acknowledge that knowledge developed by third sector organisations is an important asset of the organisation and in some cases will be their intellectual property.
- Make use of local research and intelligence produced by the third sector to enhance understanding of local communities and the needs of service users. Consider this information when developing policy and when reviewing commissioning priorities.

Third sector partners will

- Develop capacity to collect, store, share and dispose of information effectively and lawfully.
- If services are decommissioned, or another agency is procured to deliver the service, to meet statutory obligations about information sharing (for example transfer of undertakings in relation to employees).
- Maintain information obtained from research undertaken and make this available to others as appropriate.
- When sharing information, be clear whether it results from directly consulting stakeholders or is based on accumulated knowledge and experience of working with groups concerned.

Compact Awareness and Problem Solving

Introduction

We want the Compact to work and build strong relationships between local statutory and third sectors in order to improve the quality of life of people living in Islington. In order to achieve this it is important that volunteers, trustees, paid staff, managers and decision takers in all sectors are aware of the Compact.

It is also important that there are clear ways to raise concerns and issues when people think that partners have not adhered to the undertakings in the Compact and that there are mechanisms in place to resolve problems at an early stage.

Compact undertakings

– to raise awareness of Islington Compact

Joint undertakings

All partners to the Compact agree to:

- Promote the Islington Compact amongst staff, volunteers, managers, trustees and management committee members and local councillors by regularly featuring the principles and undertakings in communications such as newsletters and websites.
- Ensure that inductions for new staff/volunteers include reference to the Compact.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from Voluntary Action Islington (VAI), Islington Council or other agencies as relevant/appropriate.
- Keep abreast of latest developments by using the resources made available.
- Provide staff with either in house or external training opportunities to ensure that there is awareness of Compact principles and undertakings and an understanding about how these should be translated into practice.
- Ensure that when developing new practices or procedures that they are Compact compliant.
- Ensure that plans and policy developments embed Compact principles and undertakings.
- Ensure that grants contracts and funding level agreements are in line with the Compact.
- All partners to the Compact agree to the designation of a number of Compact Champions drawn from the range of organisations in the borough. Champions will promote Compact principles, and provide information and guidance to others.

How to resolve problems

This section explains how partners to Islington's Compact can raise issues and concerns when they think their partner(s) have not adhered to agreed principles and undertakings in the Compact.

Organisations should not use the procedure below if their concern:

- is a complaint about treatment by an individual employee or representative;
- is a complaint about goods or services received.

In either case, in the first instance such concerns should be dealt with by the relevant organisation's formal complaints procedure and codes of conduct.

It is also important to note that the Compact does not take the place of specific legal, contractual and funding arrangements made between parties which will be covered by appropriate legal frameworks.



Compact Awareness and Problem Solving

If you wish to raise a concern or issue

If a partner organisation from the statutory or third sector believes that a partner with whom it is working has not adhered to the agreed principles and undertakings in the Compact it should follow the three step procedure.

Step one

Seek support and advice

Statutory and third sector organisations can seek advice and support about the practical implications of the Compact principles and undertakings. With the aim of supporting them to resolve any issues this advice is available from:

- Voluntary Action Islington.
- Islington Council's Environment and Regeneration Department.
- Support agencies listed at www.vai.org.uk/compact.



Step two

Face to face discussion and mediation

All parties should meet to try to resolve the problem. Partners should respect each other's right to raise concerns, give time to hear them and respond promptly and positively. If it is not possible to resolve issues promptly they could be referred to more senior people in the relevant organisations or, if agreed by both parties, to an external mediator.

When problems are resolved at this stage the parties will agree a joint statement on the resolution. Any wider issues identified can be recorded and forwarded to the Islington Compact Co-ordinator for consideration as the Compact is developed in the future.

Visit www.vai.org.uk/compact or www.islington.gov.uk/compact for further information available to support Compact implementation

Step three

Referral to the Change Up and Compact Consortium

If it is still not proving possible to resolve a substantial disagreement between the parties it can be referred to the Change Up and Compact Consortium. This should be done by contacting the Islington Compact Co-ordinator and putting the issues in writing.

The Islington Compact Co-ordinator will liaise with managers in the council and Voluntary Action Islington to appoint a member or members of the Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium or, if agreed by both parties to the dispute, a third party acting for the Change Up and Compact Consortium to resolve the disagreement.

The person, or people, appointed by the Change Up and Compact Consortium will carry out the following tasks:

- Identify the key issues of the disagreement between the partners.
- Consider which of the Compact principles and undertakings have not been adhered to and any reasons put forward about why this is the case.

- Make recommendations about how the disagreement can be resolved and how the Compact principles and undertakings can be adhered to in the future.
- Put decisions and recommendations in writing to all parties as promptly as feasible.
- Report on how the dispute was resolved to the Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium.

The Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium recognise that whatever the reasons for a dispute, it is important that the partnership identifies the key issues underlying the dispute to prevent them from recurring. If appropriate the Change Up and Compact Consortium will report on the dispute, how it was handled and resolved, lessons for the future and any wider issues identified in its annual review of the Compact.



A Glossary of terms used in the Islington Compact

Asset Management	A process used in order to get best value for money from land and buildings.
Capacity Building	The development of an organisation's core skills and capabilities, such as leadership, management, finance and fundraising, programmes and evaluation, in order to build the organisation's effectiveness and sustainability.
Civic Engagement	Can take many forms – volunteering, active membership of a group or association, and/or working with others in the community to solve issues.
Civil Society	Civil society refers to collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. Made up of a wide variety of organisations such as registered charities, non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.
Commissioning	Assessing needs and priorities and then designing and obtaining appropriate services.
Communities of Interest	Groups of people who share an identity or those who share an experience.
Community Buildings	Buildings that are owned by statutory authorities or charities and are used by members of the community.
Compact Champions	Individuals who promote the undertakings of the local Compact within their organisation.
Consultation	The process of asking for views and opinions.
Contract	An agreement between two or more organisations that is written and enforced by law.
Disadvantaged Communities	Communities or individuals who do not find services straightforward to access. Can be due to language or cultural barriers.
Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR)	An award that the council can make to a not-for-profit organisation to cover part or all of its rates bill.
Diversity	The differences in values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, sexuality, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people. This term refers to differences between people and is used to highlight individual need.
Equalities	A short hand term to refer to all work addressing issues of discrimination and disadvantage, particularly as it relates to race, disability, gender, sexuality, religion or belief and age.
Equality	The vision of a society (or aspect of society) where all individuals have fair and equal chance to develop their full potential in all aspects of life and where barriers of discrimination and oppression have been removed.
Fiduciary Duty	Duties associated with the responsibility of holding in trust assets and public money.
Full-Cost Recovery	Where an organisation charges the funder the full costs involved in delivering a project, activity or service. This would include associated overhead costs.
Infrastructure Development Strategy	A plan for increasing the capacity, resources and profile of the third sector in Islington.
Infrastructure Organisations	Organisations that give support to other third sector organisations for example by offering advice about funding, setting up voluntary groups, information and representation. Also known as umbrella bodies or second tier organisations.
Infrastructure Support	Infrastructure comprises the facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that enable organisations to deliver their objectives more effectively.

Islington Change Up and Compact Consortium	A group consisting of third sector, council and other statutory sector representatives that develops partnership working in Islington with a focus on the Compact and Change Up programme.
Islington Change Up Strategy and Action Plan	The local part of a national programme of capacity building for third sector organisations.
Islington Community Network (ICN)	A forum for voluntary, community and faith (third sector) networks in Islington. One of the key aims of the ICN is to represent the community on the Islington Strategic Partnerships Board, Executive and Thematic Partnerships. Representatives are elected from the networks.
Islington Strategic Partnership (ISP)	Brings together the main statutory service providers in the borough with representatives from the third sector and the business sectors in order to work together to improve outcomes for local residents. The Partnership is made up of a Board, an Executive and thematic partnerships.
Islington Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	Sets out the long term vision for Islington and how borough wide priorities will be achieved.
Local Third Sector Organisations	Defined as within the borders of the London Borough of Islington for the purpose of this document. Includes voluntary, community and faith based organisations some of which are registered charities; social enterprises, housing associations, and co-operatives.
Mediation	A way of solving disagreements where an unbiased third party (the mediator) helps people who disagree to find an acceptable solution.
Outcomes	Changes brought about by the activities of an organisation or partnership.
Overhead Costs	The general costs of running an organisation, such as rent, maintenance, water and electricity.
Polarisation	Extremes of wealth and poverty such as those that exist in Islington.
Procurement	When an organisation buys goods and services.
Proportionality	In regard to monitoring requirements: taking a common sense approach to prevent a disproportionately large (or small) amount of monitoring.
Quality Assurance System	Quality is about learning what an organisation is doing well and striving to do it better. It also means discovering what you need to change to make sure you meet your users' needs. A quality assurance system is a formal management system used to strengthen an organisation. It is intended to raise standards of work and ensure a consistent approach to service delivery.
Representative Organisations	Organisations which seek to represent the values, needs and opinions of a particular group or community.
Social Enterprise	A business with primarily social objectives that reinvests its profits for community gain.
Stakeholders	People who have an interest in an organisation, its activities and its achievements.
Third sector	Organisations set up for charitable, social, community or environmental benefit, rather than for profit and which are independent of statutory bodies.
Transparency	Making all relevant information available to those with an interest, and to the wider public.
Undertakings	Commitments that Compact partners agree to implement.
Voluntary Action Islington	Islington's lead organisation promoting active participation by residents and providing support to organisations that benefit the local community. Previously known as Islington Voluntary Action Council (IVAC).

Partners to the Compact

Islington Strategic Partnership endorsed the new Compact in September 2009. It has representatives from the following public, business and third sector agencies:

- Islington Council
- NHS Islington
- Metropolitan Police
- Islington Community Network
- Social Housing
- Further and Higher Education
- Private Sector
- Fire Service
- Job Centre Plus

Change Up and Compact Consortium

The Compact is inspired by the many good examples of local partnership working, and the contributions of third and statutory sector partners were vital to the process. The consortium led on the consultation and development and has an important part to play in overseeing the implementation of the Compact. It monitors progress and makes recommendations to partners regarding Compact compliance.

If you would like this information in translation or an alternative format please visit **www.vai.org.uk/compact** or **www.islington.gov.uk/compact**

Requests will be responded to on an individual basis.

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