

For more information, contact:

Whilst these are the basic principles of the Compact, more detailed codes of practice are being jointly developed. These include codes on consultation and involvement, funding and procurement, volunteering, community groups, and equality and diversity.

Commitment

The Worcestershire Compact commits statutory sector partners to:

- Recognise the independence of the VCS
- Work towards greater transparency and equity in the allocation of funding to the VCS
- Support the VCS to access external funding opportunities
- Keep the VCS informed of policy and procedures that may affect them
- Be as open and transparent in decision-making as possible
- Rationalise VCS representation on management committees wherever possible.

The Worcestershire Compact commits VCS partners to:

- Maintain and promote high standards of governance, accountability and conduct
- Develop quality standards where appropriate
- Ensure that responses to the statutory sector are informed and the result of wide consultation
- Actively involve beneficiaries, employees and volunteers in developing activities and services.

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A full version of Worcestershire's Compact is available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/voluntary

49556 03/09



The Worcestershire Compact Summary





What is a Compact?

Worcestershire's Compact is an agreement between any statutory body and voluntary and community organisation that want to work together.

What is a statutory body?

A statutory body is any organisation that is required by law to offer a service, for example Worcestershire County Council or any of the six district councils in the county, Primary Care Trusts, West Mercia Police or Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

What is a voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisation?

A VCS organisation can be anything from a formally constituted group that employs paid staff, to small informal groups that come together over a single issue. However, they usually share a common aim, which is to provide assistance, whether through advice, information or services, to a local community.

Why do we need a Compact in Worcestershire?

Worcestershire's Compact recognises the important role that the VCS plays in the way that services are delivered in local communities. In particular, they often provide services at a very local level, and are able to reach people and communities that other organisations don't reach.

The voluntary sector also has the ability to mobilise significant numbers of volunteers and plays an important role in speaking up for people who aren't able to speak up for themselves.

How will it change things?

Worcestershire's Compact will provide a very clear framework for the way that statutory and VCS organisations work together to provide services and should mean that Worcestershire residents receive better services that are provided in a way that is right for them.

It will also ensure respect and equality between the different organisations.

How is the Worcestershire Partnership involved?

The Worcestershire Partnership brings together local government, public services, the VCS and businesses to improve life in Worcestershire. All member organisations of the partnership are committed to adopting the Compact within their own organisations.

The Compact will also contribute to the vision of the Worcestershire Partnership, which is to work towards a county with safe, cohesive, healthy and inclusive communities, a strong and diverse economy and a valued and cherished environment.

The Compact has been developed by the Worcestershire Compact Steering Group, a task group of the Worcestershire Partnership, in consultation with both the statutory sector and VCS organisations.

A good example of how the statutory sector might work with the voluntary and community sector to deliver a service is the Age Concern foot care scheme.

This scheme was funded by the previous South Worcestershire PCT, which identified a need to provide foot care for older people suffering from arthritis or diabetes or who simply cannot bend down to reach their feet. Age Concern now provides a foot care scheme delivered by eight volunteers based in six clinics.

Principles of Worcestershire's Compact

- Working in partnership
- Appreciation for the diversity of VCS groups
- Mutual respect for partner organisations
- Recognition of the importance of an independent VCS
- Equal contribution to the delivery of services
- Best use of funding
- Consultation with residents
- Commitment to the Compact.