

# insight



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## Compact

working together better together

Welcome to the new quarterly newsletter about the Compact. This newsletter is produced by the key partners responsible for taking the Compact forward:

- The Commission for the Compact
- Compact Voice
- Compact Advocacy
- The Office of the Third Sector
- The Local Government Association (LGA)

The Compact is all about better partnership working and creating better outcomes for individuals and local communities. Established in 1998, the Compact is an agreement between Government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together.

*Photography credits*  
Edward Moss Photography,  
Help the Hospices, Steph Vickers

## New Arrivals at the Compact

The Compact has been given a massive boost with three senior level appointments this year - Sir Bert Massie CBE, the new Commissioner for the Compact, Simon Blake, the new Chair of Compact Voice which represents the views of the voluntary and community sector, and Richard Corden, the new Chief Executive of the Commission for the Compact.

These appointments come at an important time for the Compact, which marks its tenth anniversary this November.

"My immediate priorities are to raise awareness and understanding of the Compact and provide evidence of the benefits of following Compact principles," said Sir Bert.

"Our work at the Commission for the Compact must be based on evidence, undertaking research to see how voluntary and statutory relationships work at a local, regional and national level, and producing useful evidence-based cases which illustrate where and how the relationship works best or appears to be failing.

"This will enable me to take a view on how, on the one hand, partnership relationships are working, and, on the

other hand, it gives me evidence to challenge where necessary."

The announcement of the Commissioner's appointment in March was accompanied by the Government showing its commitment to the Compact, with Phil Hope MP, Minister for the Third Sector, pledging an increased investment to the Commission for the Compact of £6 million over the next three years, and nearly £1 million in funding for Compact Voice. Both Sir Bert and Simon Blake have welcomed the Government's continued investment in the partnership.

"Compact Voice looks forward to working closely with the new Commissioner to get the Compact implemented and ensure better outcomes for the people both sectors serve," said Simon Blake, who is Chief Executive of the sexual health charity Brook and a long time advocate of the Compact.

"The voluntary and community sector is keen to see its relationship with the Government improve: these are exciting times for the Compact and now is the time for action."

*Please turn to page 4 to read more about Sir Bert Massie CBE.*

## - National News -

### Compact Week 2008

This year's Compact Week takes place from Saturday 1 to 8 November 2008. The Compact Week sub-site on the Compact website will be up and running by mid August 2008 and it will include a diary of events and activities as well as useful guidance for Local Compacts.

The theme for this year's campaign is *Making the Compact a reality*.

If your area is organising an event or activity during Compact Week, then please get in touch with the communications team at the Commission for the Compact. They can help publicise your event or activity, and can also offer a limited supply of Compact merchandise. Tel: 0121 237 5905

### Exhibition Time

Compact Voice and Compact Advocacy will be exhibiting at Charityfair in London from 10-11 June 2008, while the Commission for the Compact will have a stand at this year's LGA Conference in Bournemouth from 1-3 July 2008.

### Diary Date

The ninth Compact Annual Meeting will take place in the East Room at Tate Modern on Tuesday 2 December 2008. For more information, please contact: Karen Capps  
Commission for the Compact.  
Tel: 0121 237 5900

### Essential Reading

See what's happening nationally and take a look at the Joint Compact Implement Plan for 2008-09, which is now available to download from the Compact website at:

[www.thecompact.org.uk](http://www.thecompact.org.uk)



# Compact Awards 2008

Nominations are now open for the Compact Awards 2008.

These awards, previously known as the Compact Commendations for Excellence, are organised by the Commission for the Compact in partnership with Compact Voice and the Office of the Third Sector.

Since they were introduced in 2003, over 80 Compact Commendations have been awarded to recognise excellent partnership working between the government and the voluntary and community sector.

"This year, we're changing the format and launching five new categories for the Compact Awards with some new nomination categories," said Sir Bert Massie, Commissioner for the Compact.

"But our objective remains the same - to demonstrate the Compact in action, and celebrate and recognise some of the excellent partnership working taking place between the government and the voluntary and community sector on a local, regional and national level."

The nomination categories include:

- Local Compact of the Year
- Compact Award for Excellence at a Regional Level
- Compact Award for Excellence at a National Level
- Compact Champion of the Year
- The Commissioner's Award

The closing date for entries is Friday 29 August 2008 and the awards will be announced at an awards ceremony during Compact Week in early November 2008. To find out more and to enter online please visit:

[www.thecompact.org.uk/compactawards](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/compactawards)



## Celebrating Independence

Preparations are underway for Compact Voice's annual *Independence Day* campaign. The aim of this campaign is to recognise, support and strengthen the independence of voluntary and community organisations and encourage them to exercise their independence.

Although organisations may depend on a number of funders and will often work in partnerships, it is important that their independence is respected by government bodies and they retain the capacity for independent decision-making and action. Both Compact Voice and the Commission for the Compact have been conducting some important research on this subject. Compact Voice has been conducting focus groups with the third sector and producing an in-depth survey, while the Commission for the Compact has been managing a research study about the way government departments are approaching independence issues with the third sector. >>>

# Local Compacts Annual Conference



Over 100 delegates attended the first Local Compacts Annual Conference, which was held at the Fielder Centre in Hatfield on Monday 7 April 2008. The conference was organised by Local Compact Voice and sponsored by Hertfordshire Forward, the county's Local Strategic Partnership.

"The day centred around discussion and it was the perfect opportunity for Local Compact Voice members and their public body partners from local authorities and other Local Compact groups in England to share ideas and good practice," said Paul Barasi, Local Compact Voice Officer.



Speakers included:

- Nick Drew, Policy Adviser at the Commission for the Compact
- Sarah Flood, Policy Officer for the Sustainable Funding Project at NCVO
- Carl Allen, Chair of Local Compact Voice
- Belinda Pratten, Senior Policy Officer, and Oliver Henman, UK and International Campaigns Manager at NCVO
- Mark Waters, Participation for Change Programme Manager at the Participatory Budgeting Unit
- Ingela Andersson from the Compact Advocacy Programme
- Sally Cooke, Third Sector Policy Consultant at the Local Government Association (LGA)



## >>> Celebrating Independence

The highlight of the campaign will be an event in London on Friday 4 July 2008, where interim findings from the research will be explored and debated, and Local Compact Voice will circulate an issues and activities pack. Participants from both the third sector and the statutory sector will be present, and it is hoped that the event will act as a springboard for future efforts to get the Compact working to strengthen the sector's independence.

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If you have any news items for **insight** we'd love to hear from you.

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## - Local News -

### Leicester Signs Up

The Leicester Compact was launched on 24 January 2008 with over 40 representatives from the voluntary and public sectors witnessing its official signing by the main partners Leicester City Council and Voluntary Action Leicester.

### Compact Chat

You can now take part in several online discussion forums about the Compact. These forums have been created by Compact Voice and can be found at:

[www.compact.ning.com](http://www.compact.ning.com)

Local groups can join the Local Compact Voice online forum by emailing:  
[paul.barasi@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:paul.barasi@ncvo-vol.org.uk)

There is also a Friends of Local Compact Voice online forum for councils, primary care trusts and other public bodies at:

[www.friendslcv.ning.com](http://www.friendslcv.ning.com)

### New Compact DVD

The Wirral Compact has produced a dvd to help raise awareness of the Compact and the role of its Champions. Aimed at the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, the dvd contains interviews and shows Champions' training in action and the local authority talking about how it intends to make sure that all council staff become aware of the Compact.

Wirral Citizens' Advice Bureau will be incorporating the dvd into its induction for new workers and for updating existing staff.



**This month, insight talks to Sir Bert Massie CBE, the new Commissioner for the Compact**



## Getting the Compact off the Shelf

Sir Bert is known as a prominent disability rights campaigner. He has worked in the voluntary sector for almost 40 years and has served on a number of government advisory committees. He is a former chairman of the Disability Rights Commission and Chief Executive of RADAR, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation.

### **What attracted you to the role of Commissioner?**

"I thought it was important that the Compact was made to work and I was conscious that the Commission had a shaky existence in its first year. I thought that as the Commissioner there might be something I could do to strengthen both the Compact and the Commission."

### **Why do you think you were chosen?**

"I suspect they wanted somebody who was fairly credible in the voluntary sector. Well, I'd worked in third sector organisations for 40 years. Even when I went to work in the government sector I was still a trustee of major charities, so there could be no question about my commitment. But if the Compact is going to work it's about local and central government as well as the third sector. I think I can claim knowledge of both sides. I'm presuming here, but I also think they wanted someone who was going to be bold."

### **What do you think are the pressing issues facing you in your new role?**

"I'm not here to make changes for change's sake. There are big questions

about whether we can really deliver within the current structures and they might need to be revised.

"In these early months I will be asking myself what the Compact should look like. Does it need changing, should it be statutory? How do we make it something that really guides and inspires people's actions rather than a dusty document that sits on a shelf?"

"We need to address these issues and draw conclusions so that instead of navel gazing we can actually get on and do the job."

### **What barriers do you think you (and the Commission) might face during your time as Commissioner?**

"Local and national Compacts will need support and we have a very small team with which to do it. So I think there will be pressure on the Commission's staff and myself to be in too many places simultaneously. We've got a small team of people trying to get out some big messages.

"I have to remind myself that Christ only had 12 disciples and they did quite a good selling job for Christianity! We have to get through to people for whom the Compact isn't a priority. It must not be priority number 14 on a list of 13."

### **What would you say to the cynics who think that the Compact doesn't work and can't really change anything?**

"When you join a gym, if you don't go, you don't really get any benefit out of

it. If you do go, you get to know other members, you get fitter and the whole thing becomes worth the money you're paying. The Compact is a bit like that. If you don't actively participate in it, it just becomes a useless piece of paper. It's not a car that drives itself; it's a set of ideas that only have life through people and organisations.

"What the Commission can do is change the way in which people see the Compact. If it is seen as a bureaucratic tool it will fail, and it will deserve to. If it is seen as something which enables the different sectors to work together to do collectively what no-one could do as well individually, then you end up with provision for the people of this country which is better than anything the sectors could do single-handedly. The Compact is a way of achieving this provision. It's a toolkit to help you do the job you want to do. What we need to do now is give it a shot in the arm to make it even more valid."

### **What would you like your legacy to the Compact to be?**

"Hopefully, in three years' time, when my spell as Commissioner comes to an end, we will have a stronger Compact, a much stronger Commission and recognition that what this is really all about is a means of creating a better society for everybody."

# What shapes an effective consultation?

Effective consultation promotes discussion, the sharing of knowledge and experience, adds extra value and leads to better planning and delivery of services. We've asked two people from different organisations what they think shapes an effective consultation.

## Neil Cleeveley

Director of Information and Policy  
National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)  
[www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)

“ Too often a public consultation exercise leaves citizens with the feeling that decisions ‘have already been taken’. At best a ‘rubber stamping’ exercise and at worst precisely the sort of behaviour that provokes cynicism and alienation about the political process.

Consultation needs to be comprehensive and participative, so that all local citizens and community groups have the opportunity to contribute. It should embrace the Compact principles and resultant decisions should be widely available and fed back to all those involved.

Consultations need to be interesting and relevant to local people. It is vital that the hardest to reach communities of identity and communities of interest as well as citizens in the most deprived neighbourhoods are given an opportunity to have their say.

Good consultation will create trust between public agencies and citizens: building social capital and making it easier to engage people in future. ”



## Kevin Ashby

Senior Policy Advisor  
Big Lottery Fund  
[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

“ Consultation is one of the key ways I gather information. It is not the same as participation (where the power to set questions and take decisions is shared). It is not a kind of opinion poll, or a pretence of listening. It is seeking considered views on matters where those views are expected to make a difference.

A good consultation is clear about what is up for grabs and the over-riding contexts for the final decision. It is in time for views to affect that decision. It takes place within a broader process of continuous engagement between the consulter and its stakeholders. It reaches new voices and perspectives, and its processes, timescales and resources allow reasoned views to be articulated.

Consultation can thus set realistic expectations, make policy more likely to achieve its aims, and help connect citizens, civic organisations and state institutions in a mutual endeavour for public good. ”



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#### Compact Guidelines - Consultation

The Compact Consultation and Policy Appraisal Code promotes effective consultation, enabling the voluntary and community sector to be part of the development and implementation of government policies. It sets out how consultation can be conducted in a positive way, recommending, wherever possible, a 12 week consultation timescale.

#### For more info about the Consultation and Policy Appraisal Code, please contact:

Ruth Etkind, Policy Adviser at the Commission for the Compact

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To download a copy of the Compact Consultation and Policy Appraisal Code, please visit:

[www.thecompact.org.uk/publications](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/publications)



“There is a huge energy around our Compact. And we must not let it drop.”

## Close up on Wolverhampton Compact

**A double winner at last year's Compact Commendations for Excellence, Wolverhampton is a great place to find out how the Compact works in practice.**

With a Gold Commendation in the Compact Way of Working category and Councillor Elias Mattu amongst the winners of the Compact Champion award, the city offers a dynamic template for how to make the Compact a reality rather than just a box of codes on a shelf.

Four years on from Wolverhampton Compact Partnership starting work on the city's Compact, the launch of its final four codes in April is both a testament to the joint efforts of its statutory, voluntary and community sectors and the beginning of the next phase of its life.

But it hasn't all been plain sailing. The Compact was launched in 2005 but implementation didn't begin in earnest until early 2006, when two Compact Development Officers came into post.

“We've had a big push in the past two years to take what the Compact Partnership agreed it would do and really take the Compact forward,” says Saffi Price, Compact Development Officer with Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council.

“We've concentrated on getting documentation in place, getting organisations up to speed and signed up to the Compact,” elaborates her Wolverhampton City Council counterpart Martha Cummings.

This approach is paying dividends. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is playing a greater role in the Compact, which Martha feels helps give it credibility. And the Compact's Monitoring and Implementation Group is made up of senior staff from 13 statutory and VCS organisations that help drive it forward. Plus there are the Compact Champions, who promote awareness and understanding of the Compact within their own organisations.

One of the positives in Wolverhampton is that the city has a history of the sectors working well together. But a major barrier is that the voluntary and community sector has not always believed that the Compact can make a difference to it.

“The way to break through this barrier is to gather and publicise evidence that proves the Compact does work,” asserts Saffi. “That it's not just a glossy document. And more and more in Wolverhampton we can prove it makes a difference.”

One key piece of evidence for showing how well the statutory and VCS sectors can work together is the partnership of Saffi and Martha.

“I think we show how the sectors can work together. We help each other and pool resources,” says Martha.

“Having a foot in both camps has really worked for us. People in the VCS may not want to talk to someone in the statutory sector, and vice versa. They may feel more comfortable talking to their own representative.”

But the Wolverhampton Compact is not resting on its laurels. Saffi and Martha recognise that raising awareness of the Compact, particularly amongst smaller voluntary sector groups is a key task, along with embedding its principles into statutory organisations' working practices.

“There is a huge energy around our Compact,” states Saffi. “And we must not let it drop.”

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Top, left to right: Compact Development Officers, Saffi Price and Martha Cummings.

## Research Work Underway

Email: [ruth.etkind@thecompact.org.uk](mailto:ruth.etkind@thecompact.org.uk)

In April, the Commission for the Compact commissioned two new pieces of research, one exploring what makes a successful Local Compact and the other, undertaken in partnership with Help the Hospices, looking into the funding of palliative care through charitable hospices.

### Local Compacts Research

Local Compacts are agreements between local government, local public bodies and the local voluntary and community sector, and 99 per cent of local authority areas are now covered by a Local Compact.

However, there are varying degrees of success and this research has been commissioned to identify the key factors behind successful Local Compacts and positive local partnership relationships.

A report highlighting the findings will be published in late July 2008. Good practice implementation guidance will be developed and produced for Local Compacts, together with regional workshops later in the summer.

For more information, please contact:  
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### Hospices Research



Palliative care is an extremely important service, and much of it is delivered by independent charitable hospices who have significant expertise in this area. They are largely funded by local community fundraising but in many cases they also receive funding from government via Primary Care Trusts.

The Commission for the Compact believes that if the Compact is implemented properly throughout the sector, it will help build positive local relationships between hospices and Primary Care Trusts, resulting in better care services.

Together with Help the Hospices, the Commission for the Compact has commissioned a piece of research into the funding of palliative care to identify good practice and find out why bad practice occurs. The research will take the form of a series of case studies looking at different local relationships between Primary Care Trusts and charitable hospices, and implementation of the Compact. The findings will be published in September 2008, and they will be used to help improve implementation of the Compact in this sector.

For more information, please contact:  
Ruth Etkind, Policy Adviser  
Commission for the Compact  
Tel: 0121 237 5912

## A new National Indicator for an environment for a thriving third sector

The new set of 198 National Indicators, which form the basis of the Comprehensive Area Assessment for local government, includes a specific indicator concerning the third sector.

The National Indicators cover all the national priority outcomes which local authorities are responsible for delivering. National Indicator 7 (NI7) covers *An environment for a thriving third sector* and it measures how third sector organisations rate the impact of local statutory bodies on their success.

The first perception survey targeting third sector organisations will take place in autumn 2008. In addition, it will look at local partnership arrangements, funding opportunities and influence on decision-making.

In March, the Office of the Third Sector published a briefing note to provide Local Strategic Partnerships with more information and guidance on the NI7 indicator.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)





## Q&A with Wirral Compact

### How did you go about getting people to become Compact Champions?

“Paul Barasi from Compact Voice attended an awareness event organised to breathe life back into Wirral’s Compact during last year’s Compact Week. He told people about the role of a Champion, which started the ball rolling. At that event we had 22 people come forward to be Champions. We decided to hold an awareness event, offering free training, a certificate and a Wirral Compact Champion badge.”

### Who decided that training was needed?

“Once the champions had been recruited they felt they needed further training to enable them to fulfil their role. They felt training would help clarify what is expected of them, show the best ways of communicating the Compact and the benefits of embedding the Compact within their organisations. The Champions also realised that they would like to develop a support group to share good practice and experiences.”

### How was the training designed?

“The training package was bought in from Surrey Compact.”

### What made you use the trainers?

“Ian Mackenzie Associates were recommended by Paul Barasi from Compact Voice. Along with Surrey Compact they were awarded one of last year’s Compact Commendations for Excellence.”

### How long did the training take?

“One full day. Further training will be made up of smaller sessions now we know what is needed.”

### Was it expensive?

“It may seem expensive at first glance. But it proved to be value for money given the quality of the training, materials used and the follow up from the training provider. Training, certificates, badges, venue, catering etc in total cost £1,800. The session was for 50 people and works out at £36 per person, which is well worth the investment.”

### What did the champions get out of the training?

“Their questions were answered and they got the opportunity to meet with other Compact Champions. It gave them confidence to fulfil their role and meet with the Compact Working Group who are happy to support them. Many Champions said that they felt more comfortable with their role. They also felt they had more understanding of the Compact and how it will work in their organisation.”

### How do you think the training will benefit the Wirral Compact?

“It will provide support to the Champions in their role. The training means that we are raising awareness in the hope the Compact will be used more and more intuitively without people having to think whether it has been complied with.”

### For more information please contact:

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## Top Tips

**Compact**  
voice

### On getting the best out of your Compact Champions

Paul Barasi. Local Compact Voice Officer

Champions are vital to successful implementation because they make the Local Compact known and used within their organisation. Champions need a short and light role description focused on promoting good practice and a Compact way of working together with partners.

#### The winning formula is:

**Training + follow up + support = maximising the proportion of Champions making a impact**

Training should conclude with each champion picking their own three activities to help towards making their Compact known and used.

Areas with many champions (60+) have all benefited from a Compact worker giving support. Another 200 champions were recruited at events during the last year in areas without Compact workers. The challenge in these areas is either to fund a worker or facilitate support another way.