



**Dudley Health and Care Partnership**

Connecting communities and coordinating care to help citizens live longer, safer and healthier lives.

# **The Dudley Partners' Compact for a Strong and Vibrant Voluntary and Community Services Sector**

**The Dudley Borough Local Compact is**

**supported by:**

*Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board*

*Dudley Health and Care Partnership Board*

*Dudley Safe and Sound Board*

*Dudley Forging a Future Board*

*Dudley Council for Voluntary Service*

## **Foreword by the Chair of Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board**

I am pleased to agree this revised and refreshed Dudley Compact as it demonstrates how important I believe that a strong and active voluntary and community sector is to the vitality of the borough. The council is committed to working with the sector, as an essential and independent partner, in encouraging people to take part in our society, in creating new opportunities and in improving the lives of our communities. It is a challenging time for both the public and voluntary and community sectors, and indeed the private sector, and it is as important now as it ever has been that we make the relationship work.

There have been some notable successes since the first Dudley Compact was agreed almost a decade ago, but we could have also done better. I want to build on these successes in finding new and improved ways of working with voluntary and community organisations in Dudley, and by learning from when things have not gone quite so well. We are fortunate in having so many enthusiastic and committed people in the borough working or volunteering in voluntary and community organisations, so we have a great foundation on which to build.

## **Foreword by Chief Executive Officer of Dudley Council for the Voluntary Service**

While much has changed since we first worked on drawing up a compact agreement, many of the values and principles that were set out in that are still relevant. Indeed, it is even more important that we stick with them now given the challenges that both sectors are currently facing.

The voluntary and community sector knows that it cannot expect the levels of public sector funding it has received in the past. There is no doubt that we need to look at new ways of working and to generate opportunities for the sector to flourish within the borough. It is much easier to do this if we work together both within the voluntary and community sector and with our public sector partners.

The values and principles in the previous Compact have been tested in the past and, at times, not always complied with. It is vital therefore that we restate our commitment to this revised Compact and use it to govern the way we work together into the future. The Dudley Health and Care Partnership has committed in its Joint Forward Plan, to support the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector. Designed to underpin the principle of “Community First” is the suggestion that when opportunities arise for the deployment of resources by public sector bodies to deliver services, establish posts, carry out individual projects etc., commissioners consider how our voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector may be considered as the first option.

## **1. The Dudley Compact**

- 1.1 The Dudley Compact is an agreement between the local statutory organisations and the voluntary and community sectors in Dudley borough. It aims to define and strengthen relationships by establishing principles and commitments to which all parties to the Compact sign up.
- 1.2 This Compact document provides the basis for continuing to develop the relationship over the coming years. However, there is little point in having a written document unless its contents are put into practice. The principles and commitments set out in the Local Compact need to be met in all dealings between the sectors and an environment created that supports the positive and productive relationships required to deliver these.

## **2. Background to the Local Compact**

- 2.1 The Government first published a national Compact with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in 1998 and followed this up with guidelines for the drawing up of local Compacts with the expectation that every part of the country would be covered. Dudley borough's first Local Compact was published in 2002 and has been revised and updated periodically since then to reflect wider partner involvement and progress with implementation. The Coalition Government confirmed its commitment to the national Compact and issued a renewed Compact in December 2010. Dudley's document has now been reviewed based upon our experiences over the past few years and to reflect the changing organisational landscape.
- 2.2 Within the borough there is a tremendous diversity and energy among voluntary organisations and community groups, which are vital to promoting the quality of life for thousands of local people. Overall, there are good relationships, not only within the VCS, but also through the many different partnerships with public sector agencies and local businesses. There have been many successes in joint working, but also examples of where things may have been done better. A renewed commitment to the Compact way of working, through this refreshed Local Compact, should help to build on the successes while helping to avoid repeating mistakes of the past.
- 2.3 This refreshed Compact has been developed through joint work between the sectors. A Compact steering group, which reported to Dudley Health and Care Partnership Board via the Sustainable Communities Workstream was established to oversee the implementation and further development of the Compact, on behalf of the other main local partnership bodies.

### **3. Implementing the Local Compact**

- 3.1 Each of the public sector agencies has signed up to the Compact, and agreed to identify nominated Compact 'champions' to oversee the implementation of the Compact within its area of work. This champion will provide a coordinating point of contact for that service area.
- 3.2 The Compact is not just about commitments made by the local public sector organisations but also about ways of working for the borough's voluntary organisations and community groups. Umbrella organisations such as Dudley Council for Voluntary Service play a key role in working with, developing the capacity of, sharing good practice with, and providing representation for organisations and groups across the borough.
- 3.3 There will be regular reports on progress with implementing the Local Compact to Dudley Health and Care Partnership Board which will oversee the Compact on behalf of all local partnership bodies.

### **4. What is the voluntary and community sector?**

- 4.1 Various different terms have been used to describe the sector, such as the 'third sector' and 'civil society'. These have some differing definitions or emphases which can lead to some confusion. For Dudley's Local Compact, we will continue to use the term 'voluntary and community sector' (VCS).
- 4.2 The VCS should be seen as covering a broad spectrum stretching from large national charities to the smallest informal community groups. It can cover campaigning organisations, housing associations, faith-based groups, ethnic minority community groups, sports or arts groups, environmental organisations and a great variety of others.
- 4.3 'Voluntary organisations' are usually seen to be concerned mainly with the provision of not-for-profit services, and most are charitable in nature. Voluntary committees govern them, while their activities tend to be carried out by paid and/or volunteer workers.
- 4.4 'Community groups' tend to be membership organisations, bringing together people who have a common concern, cause, interest or belief. They are usually less structured, with members running the group's activities as volunteers, making up the management committee, and often being the group's primary users.
- 4.5 Acknowledging the variety of different voluntary organisations and community

groups is important because it has implications, for example, for:

- how much and what kind of support may be needed;
- types and amounts of funding;
- inclusion in consultation processes; and
- whether, and what kind of, services may be provided.

4.6 The important principle for the Compact is that there is an inclusive approach so that different organisations and groups can be included wherever appropriate and beneficial to do so.

## **5. Why are voluntary and community groups valued?**

5.1 Voluntary and community activity is felt to be crucial to the vitality of the borough. Voluntary and community organisations, in encouraging, supporting and organising this activity, may play a variety of valuable roles including:

- providing opportunities for volunteering;
- providing people with the opportunity to influence issues which affect their lives;
- acting as advocates for particular communities, either geographic or of shared interests or characteristics;
- providing excellent community links, particularly with those who might be seen as 'hard to reach';
- providing effective services to local people;
- creating employment;
- innovating and testing new ideas;
- supporting change in local communities; and
- advancing equality and fostering good relations between communities.

## **6. The value of volunteering**

6.1 Volunteering is at the heart of the sector and what it can achieve. Volunteering has been described as 'an important expression of citizenship and essential to democracy. It is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.' Volunteers become involved in a variety of ways including:

- helping to provide a service within an organisation on an unpaid basis;

- helping to run a voluntary or community organisation as a trustee, board or committee member;
- serving as a non-executive member of a public body or participating in civic governance;
- involvement in consultation processes or campaigning; and
- gaining experience and skills useful for seeking paid employment.

6.2 There are four principles fundamental to volunteering:

- choice - volunteering must be an individual's free choice;
- diversity - volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background;
- reciprocity - although unpaid, volunteers should expect to gain benefits in return such as a sense of achievement, useful skills and experience, contacts, sociability and fun;
- recognition - volunteers contribute considerable energy, time, skills and experience, and this contribution needs to be explicitly recognised.

## **7. Overall principles and commitments**

7.1 The local public sector organisations are committed to supporting an independent and diverse VCS, which promotes innovation, encourages volunteering and strengthens the voice of users and local people in the delivery of services. The public sector organisations also recognise the contribution the VCS makes to civic life, social justice and tackling health inequalities. It is also recognised the role that the VCS plays in promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Borough by attracting substantial external resources to create jobs, improve services, and provide opportunities for learning, leisure, cultural and other activities.

7.2 Local voluntary and community organisations are aware of the importance of working closely with local public sector organisations if they are to achieve their aims. As well as being an important source of funding and other support to the VCS, public sector organisations provide a focus for community leadership, and are responsible for planning and delivering many services in which voluntary and community organisations have a vital interest. It is recognised by all parties that there is much that can be achieved only by continuing close co-operation.

7.3 The Local Compact is a formal acknowledgement of these shared objectives and interests, while respecting the differences in accountability, history and process. It aims to maximise the respective strengths and to develop the best possible services and opportunities for the people of the Borough.

7.4 The following principles and commitments will direct the two sectors. Given the wide range of different types, sizes and capacities of VCOs, it is recognised that, while these principles and commitments are important to all organisations, compliance with them will need to be proportionate and appropriate to the nature of the organisation.

7.5 Our values: behaviours in action and when not in action

Our values are our guiding beliefs, they define our behaviours and how we work together.

| <b>Value</b>      | <b>Values in Action</b>   | <b>Values not in action</b>   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| <b>Integrity</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are open and honest when communicating with others</li> <li>• We are helpful</li> <li>• We take responsibility and follow through on our actions and commitments</li> <li>• We are dependable</li> <li>• We take time to invest in relationships</li> </ul>   | <i>Dishonesty, unwilling to share information, unhelpful, unreliable, not following through on actions and commitments.</i>   |
| <b>Respectful</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are kind, courteous and supportive</li> <li>• We value people</li> <li>• We actively listen to others and respect differences of opinions</li> <li>• We care about people's feelings</li> <li>• We recognise others for their skills, knowledge and experiences</li> <li>• We seek to develop mature relationships based on mutual trust and respect</li> </ul> | <i>Unkind, unsupportive and discourteous.</i><br><br><i>Not valuing others.</i><br><br><i>Uncaring.</i><br><br><i>Not listening to others.</i><br><i>Unwilling to recognise other peoples skills, knowledge, experiences and opinions.</i>  |
| <b>Curious</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We ask questions</li> <li>• We model inquisitiveness</li> <li>• We actively seek to understand how services work on the ground for the people of Dudley borough</li> <li>• We actively seek to understand each other, our roles, challenges and pressures</li> <li>• We have continuous dialogue to better understand each other</li> </ul>                        | <i>Being uncurious.</i><br><i>Not knowing what is happening on the ground.</i><br><i>Not engaging with people.</i><br><i>Statutory and NHS partners going along with what they have always done and not considering the voluntary sector first when commissioning new community services.</i><br><i>VCS not sharing information and actively promoting what they do and can do.</i> |



|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Collaboration</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We problem solve together</li> <li>• We seek solutions that deliver the maximum benefit for the people of Dudley borough</li> <li>• We recognise and value the complementary contributions we can make</li> <li>• We embrace learning together</li> <li>• We recognise that our actions have consequences for each other and our local system</li> <li>• We share assets and resources to avoid duplication.</li> <li>• We believe in relational rather than transactional relationships</li> </ul> | <p><i>Working in isolation.</i></p> <p><i>Not sharing and learning together.</i></p> <p><i>Duplicating services.</i></p> <p><i>Avoid problem-solving.</i></p> <p><i>Delivering community services in-house and not utilising the voluntary sector</i></p> |
| <b>Innovation</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are willing to challenge to status quo</li> <li>• We are willing to take risks and experiment in order to innovate</li> <li>• We explore our creative potential together</li> </ul>  | <p><i>Risk averse.</i></p> <p><i>Uncreative.</i></p> <p><i>Unwilling to challenge each other.</i></p>   |

7.6 Joint undertakings:

- develop common aims and objectives for the two sectors to work on jointly;
- acknowledge that mistakes and misunderstandings do occur and work together to try to resolve issues raised;
- maintain good communications and dialogue with each other and hold regular joint events;
- recognise distinct but complementary roles in the development and delivery of public policy and services;
- demonstrate mutual respect, integrity, openness and trust in working together;
- act together to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups and communities.

7.7 Public sector undertakings:

- “community first” – when opportunities arise for the deployment of resources by public sector bodies to deliver services, establish posts, carry out individual projects, consider how our VCS may be placed to be the first option
- acknowledge the VCS as an equal partner; maintain the highest standards of conduct in public life and fulfil statutory obligations in dealing with the sector

- recognize that a well-developed, independent and diverse VCS is fundamental to the social and economic well-being of the borough;
- respect the fact that voluntary and community organisations are entitled to exercise their role as advocates and campaigners in order to advance their aims, regardless of any relationship, financial or otherwise which may exist;
- acknowledge that there is a wide diversity of groups, interests and views within the VCS and it will not necessarily speak with one voice;
- recognise the VCS already plays a significant role as a provider of services in the borough and that other services could be provided most effectively by or in partnership with the VCS;
- recognise the public sector has a significant role, particularly as a provider of resources, in supporting the VCS and recognise the added value which such support can bring;
- develop and work within a strategic framework that provides consistent and continuing support for the VCS;
- develop a better understanding amongst public sector board/elected members and officers of the nature and role of the VCS;
- coordinate the policies of and service delivery and investment by the public sector, in line with agreed joint strategies, to support the successful development of the sector.

#### 7.8 VCS undertakings:

- maintain high standards of governance and conduct, and develop quality standards appropriate to the organisation;
- promote effective working relationships with the public sector, and across the VCS;
- involve volunteers, users and stakeholders, where appropriate and possible, in the development of activities and services;
- put in place policies for promoting good working practices and equality in employment, involvement of volunteers, service provision and other appropriate areas;
- develop a better understanding of the way the public sector works;
- bring issues to the attention of public agencies when things are not going well.

### **8. Principles and commitments for communication and consultation**

#### 8.1 Public sector undertakings:

- develop greater transparency by making data and information about roles, responsibilities, functions and services more accessible;
- provide regular opportunities and routes for dialogue and named contact

- people within each organisation;
- ensure that consultation exercises include groups or organisations which have an interest in, or who will be most affected by the issues involved;
- use consultation processes which are clear, open and accessible and use methods which take account of the diverse nature of the VCS;
- provide adequate information about the issues in a form that is meaningful to groups, easy to understand and in accessible formats;
- give early notice of consultations and allow a minimum of 12 weeks, wherever possible, for a response to be made and explain why if a shorter time period is given;
- give feedback from consultation exercises, including reasons why resultant decisions were made.

#### VCS undertakings:

- promote and respond to public agency consultations where appropriate;
- ensure that members, trustees, supporters, volunteers and service users where appropriate are informed and consulted about the policy positions that their organisation intends to take;
- provide suitably robust evidence when responding to consultation including appropriate information about the source and range of people and communities represented;
- recognise that responsibility for decision-making on matters of public sector policies and practices ultimately rests with the respective agencies.

## **9. Principles and commitments for commissioning, funding and resources**

### 9.1 Joint undertakings:

- recognise the value that the VCS provides in delivering services within the borough and work jointly in developing opportunities for and the capacity of local VCOs to deliver public services;
- work co-operatively on external funding regimes with the aim of improving the accessibility of these funding sources, particularly for disadvantaged groups.

### 9.2 Public sector undertakings:

- maintain the principle of "community first"
- recognise its importance as funders and providers of other resources to the VCS;
- aim to provide stability to the core resourcing of the VCS to enable groups to plan ahead and to generate additional funding and resources;
- publish clear policy objectives with respect to commissioning and

funding;

- involve the VCS at an early stage in commissioning processes;
- develop other ways of resourcing the VCS such as support in kind, premises and leases, equipment, staff time and training;
- ensure there are well-managed, transparent and proportionate application and tendering processes;
- implement good funding policies and practices, in conjunction with the VCS, and in line with the Dudley code of practice on funding;
- assess the impact on a VCS organisation and its service users before deciding to reduce significantly or end funding, including:
  - engaging with the organisation involved as early as possible on the future of the organisation, its services, users or customers and the local communities
  - making provision for the organisation or wider community to put forward options on how to reshape the service or to mitigate the loss of the service.
- give at least 3 months notice of any reduction or ending of funding;
- in any situation where the public sector organisation is faced with implementing budget reductions, seek to avoid passing on disproportionate cuts to the VCS .

VCS undertakings:

- pursue good practice in the administration and use of public funds, appropriate to the scale of the funding and the organisation;
- maintain high standards of governance and conduct, and meet appropriate reporting and accountability obligations to funders and users, including giving funders early notice of significant changes in circumstances;
- plan for the end of funding to reduce where possible potential negative impact on the organisation and service users or beneficiaries.

## **10. Principles and commitments for implementation and review of the Compact**

### **10.1 Joint undertakings:**

- maintain an action plan and timetable for implementation of the Compact;
- draw up new or revise existing codes of practice in relation to specific areas of the Compact, where this is felt to be appropriate;
- review and report on the implementation of the Compact;
- develop procedures to deal with any disputes between the sectors in relation to the implementation of the Compact.
- Establish a Compact Oversight Group and nominate Compact Champions.

## 11.0 Compact Champions

### 11.1 The role of Compact Champions in Dudley

In order to ensure that the Compact is understood and implemented fully and consistently, we want to develop a network of Compact Champions across the voluntary, community and public sectors to promote and encourage a Compact way of working. Being a Champion does not involve extra work, but it may sometimes involve additional reading and time in advising others.

It is primarily about encouraging a way of working within your organisation, sector or service that helps to make your work more effective and add value. The Compact Champions will:

1. have a good understanding of the Compact and its principles
2. promote partnership working and good communication between the public sector and voluntary and community sectors
3. identify, share and encourage good practice in implementing the Compact
4. be an advisor to others on implementing the Compact and keep organisations up-to-date with Compact developments
5. be the point of contact for your sector when concerns about breaches of the Compact arise
6. link to the Compact Oversight Group by keeping the group informed of issues and attending an annual meeting.

### 11.2 Compact Champions are needed from all sectors.

Why become a Compact Champion?

Being a Compact Champion will give you a unique insight into how the voluntary, community and public sectors work together. It will help you to acquire a number of professional development skills, including influencing and negotiating, which the Compact implementation group will advise and support you with.

What will we need from you?

We are looking for Compact Champions who are trustees or staff of funded groups or public sector organisations, and who have experience of delivering the principles of the Compact. You will need to be a proactive, enthusiastic and committed to implementation of the Compact. Fulfilling the role should not take up much time, but we would like Champions to sign up to the role for a minimum of one year.

### 11.3 Dudley Compact Champions

| Organisation                       | Champion           | Contact Email  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Dudley CVS                         | Kate Green         | <a href="mailto:kategreen@dudleycvcs.org.uk">kategreen@dudleycvcs.org.uk</a>             |
| Dudley MBC Adult Social Care       | Joanne Basterfield | <a href="mailto:Joanne.basterfield@dudley.gov.uk">Joanne.basterfield@dudley.gov.uk</a>   |
| Dudley MBC Children's Services     | Shain Akhtar       | <a href="mailto:Shain.akhtar@dudley.gov.uk">Shain.akhtar@dudley.gov.uk</a>               |
| Dudley MBC Public Health           | Jody Pritchard     | <a href="mailto:Joanna.pritchard@dudley.gov.uk">Joanna.pritchard@dudley.gov.uk</a>       |
| Black Country Healthcare NHS Trust | Lisa Murray        | <a href="mailto:lisa.murray7@nhs.net">lisa.murray7@nhs.net</a>                           |
| Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust  | Karen Hanson       | <a href="mailto:Karen.hanson2@nhs.net">Karen.hanson2@nhs.net</a>                         |
| Integrated Care Board              | Sarah Knight       | <a href="mailto:Sarah.knight3@nhs.net">Sarah.knight3@nhs.net</a>                         |
| West Midlands Police               | Sarah Long         | <a href="mailto:sarah.long@westmidlands.police.uk">sarah.long@westmidlands.police.uk</a> |

### 11.4 Compact Oversight Group

The Compact Oversight Group is responsible for collating examples of best practice from the Compact Champions and disseminating this via their respective organisations. On the rare occasion that a Compact Champion is unable to resolve an issue internally, the breach will be considered by the group with an agreed course of action recommended.

If matters cannot be resolved by the Oversight Group escalation is via the Dudley Health and Care Partnership.

Membership:

| Organisation                       | Rep                     | Contact Email  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Independent Chair                  | Sally Cornfield         | <a href="mailto:sally.cornfield@nhs.net">sally.cornfield@nhs.net</a>   |
| Integrated Care Board              | Neill Bucktin           | <a href="mailto:sally.cornfield@nhs.net">sally.cornfield@nhs.net</a>   |
| Dudley CVS                         | Andy Gray<br>Kate Green | <a href="mailto:andygray@dudleycvcs.org.uk">andygray@dudleycvcs.org.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:kategreen@dudleycvcs.org.uk">kategreen@dudleycvcs.org.uk</a> |
| CHADD                              | Anna Walsh              | <a href="mailto:anna.walsh@chadd.org.uk">anna.walsh@chadd.org.uk</a>   |
| Black Country Foodbank             | Jen Coleman             | <a href="mailto:jen.coleman@blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk">jen.coleman@blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk</a>   |
| Dudley MBC                         | Marie Spittle           | <a href="mailto:marie.spittle@dudley.gov.uk">marie.spittle@dudley.gov.uk</a>   |
| Black Country Healthcare NHS Trust | Laura Brooks            | <a href="mailto:laura.brookes1@nhs.net">laura.brookes1@nhs.net</a>   |
| West Midlands Police               | Sarah Long              | <a href="mailto:sarah.long@westmidlands.police.uk">sarah.long@westmidlands.police.uk</a>   |

## Appendix 1 – Process for Raising a Suspected Compact Breach

