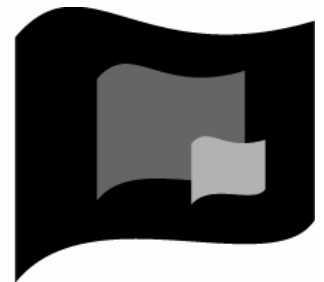


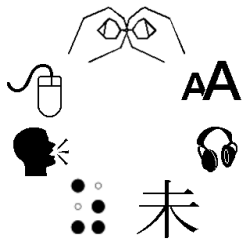
Compact
working together better together

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Herefordshire Partnership, working collaboratively for improved services and support for the community of Herefordshire

**THE HEREFORDSHIRE
partnership**





If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please contact Karen Stanton from the Herefordshire Council Community Regeneration Team on 01432 383038 or email: kstanton@herefordshire.gov.uk

Purpose of the Compact

Third sector¹ (i.e. voluntary, community and not for profit organisations) and the public sector bodies in Herefordshire share a fundamental aim to serve and represent the interests of local people and communities. The purpose of the Compact is to set out the shared principles and commitments to action that will underpin our relationship as we work to achieve that aim. It is intended as a framework that will guide the work we do together.

Status of the Compact

This document is a mutual agreement between those who decide to endorse its principles and commitments to action. Its authority derives entirely from the respect accorded to it by the partners and from the extent to which it influences future decision making and developments. It is intended to be of both practical and symbolic significance.

Context for the Compact

There is a long tradition in Herefordshire of joint working between the statutory and voluntary and community sectors. We now wish to formalise and strengthen this work by the formation of a strong and healthy relationship founded in best practice between the public and third sectors. In particular, we wish to make sure that **trust, openness, fairness and consistency** characterise the relationships. This overall approach should enable the partners to contribute positively in maintaining and improving the quality of life for individuals and communities in Herefordshire.

This is especially important given the pace of change taking place in the role and functions of Local Government, the National Health Service and of other public sector services, and the opportunities and impact this has for local people and for the work of the third sector.

Voluntary, community and not for profit organisations, whether they are small local community groups and self-help associations or much larger national and international voluntary organisations or social enterprises, contribute significantly to the benefit of the community. They often assist the public sector in the achievement of major programmes of work directed at social, environmental, cultural and economic development, whilst still retaining their primary responsibility to their users, volunteers and members.

¹ Third Sector

There are a number of terms in common use such as: third sector, voluntary and community sector, charity, not for profit, social enterprise, which reflects the diversity of the sector. These organisations vary in size, income, activity and the way in which they are constituted, and will identify with some terms more than others. They can range from small local volunteer led community groups to large national well known organisations with turnovers over £100m. We have tried to word our Local Compact so that it captures them all, as they all have an important contribution to make.

It is generally considered that three sectors make up the economy: Private/commercial; State/public; Charity/voluntary/community etc. Hence the term 'third sector'

Shared Principles

- We believe that an independent and diverse Third Sector plays a crucial part in the lives of people and communities in Herefordshire.
- We believe that voluntary action is a valuable component of democratic society that makes a vital contribution to the well-being of people and communities in Herefordshire.
- We acknowledge that, in the development and delivery of public policy and services in Herefordshire, the public sector and the third sector have distinct but complementary roles and we believe that we will achieve more for the people and communities of Herefordshire by working together.
- We recognise that working in partnership provides the best opportunity to identify and agree common aims and the contribution that each partner is able to make in accordance with their capacity and without compromising their own purposes and objectives.
- We acknowledge that public sector bodies and the third sector have different forms of accountability and are answerable to a different range of stakeholders but that common to both is the need for **integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.**
- We recognise and support the independence of voluntary, community and not for profit organisations in Herefordshire. This includes their right to campaign within the law in order to advance their aims, to comment on public sector policy, to challenge that policy irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist and to determine and manage their own affairs.
- We recognise that the third sector contributes significantly to the economy of Herefordshire and adds real value to local public sector funding.
- We acknowledge the importance of promoting equality of opportunity for all people regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or geographic location.

Commitment to Action

We will develop and promote joint strategies reflecting local circumstances and needs to address common concerns such as social inclusion, community safety, health improvement, economic wellbeing, rural isolation and environmental issues.

We will achieve practical ways to support the maintenance and development of the infrastructure of the voluntary and community sector and actively encourage volunteering countywide.

The Compact will be reviewed annually to address its effectiveness, by the Local Compact Working Group, on behalf of the Herefordshire Partnership.

We will develop **Codes of Good Practice** for working together in line with national guidelines. Currently there are guidelines on the following;

- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
- Community Groups
- Consultation and Policy Appraisal
- Funding and Procurement
- Volunteering

We are also committed to improving services and any other matters that will provide effective and open working relationships. In practical terms the development and implementation of the codes will lead to a number of changes:

- Consultation will be timely and allow adequate time for responses. Both easily accessible information and varied consultation methods will be used together with financial support to enable more people to participate
- Written materials should be clear and available through a variety of formats and languages
- Funding arrangements will be simple and proportionate, ensuring that processes are as simple as possible and in proportion to the amount of money involved

- Consistency and co-ordination – funders and purchasers should join-up or standardise parts of the funding or procurement process to minimise burdens on organisations and ensure focus on delivery. For instance, there is a funding and Procurement Code for Health and Social Care already in place in Herefordshire the implementation of which will continue under current arrangements and agreements. The best practice from this code will form the basis of the wider Funding and Procurement Code, to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.
- Volunteering must be open to everyone. We will work to enable more people to become involved in varied forms of voluntary activity and offer them the necessary support. We will also champion undertakings aimed at influencing behaviour to tackle barriers to volunteering.

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Mike Ashton, Chief Executive
Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire & Worcestershire

Lynda Wilcox, Chief Executive
Herefordshire Association of Local Councils

Neil Pringle, Chief Executive
Herefordshire Council

Richard Betterton, Chair
Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium

Tamar Thompson, Acting Chief Executive
Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

Sharon Gray, Area Director
**Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire, Worcestershire and
Shropshire**

Richard Quallington, Nominated Representative
Voluntary Sector Assembly

Mark Turner, Chief Superintendent
West Mercia Constabulary

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This document has been produced and printed by the Herefordshire Partnership Local Compact Working Group. It is based on the Health and Social Care Compact for Herefordshire that was signed on 31 March 2004.

If you would like further information about the Compact, please contact Karen Stanton from the Herefordshire Council Community Regeneration Team on 01432 383038 or email kstanton@herefordshire.gov.uk

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