

the Cumbria Compact

This Compact sets out how statutory and third sector organisations in Cumbria want to work together to improve services for local people. Its value comes from the commitment of organisations that sign up to work in partnership to deliver better services. This Cumbria Compact builds on the good work done by existing Compacts in Cumbria, in particular the North Cumbria Health Compact.

The Third Sector

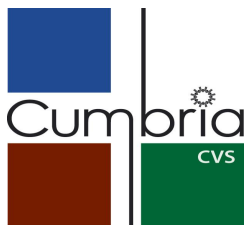
In this document, the term 'third sector' includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutual societies. Faith organisations that are involved in community work are also considered part of the third sector. The sector includes groups that are managed and run entirely by volunteers, and organisations that employ paid staff.

The Statutory Sector

This generally means organisations created through acts of parliament. The law sets out what they do. The first statutory sector organisations to adopt the Cumbria Compact are:

- Cumbria County Council
- NHS Cumbria
- Cumbria Partnership NHS Trust
- University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust
- North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust

These organisations will encourage other statutory organisations in Cumbria to adopt the Compact.



Cumbria Partnership
NHS Trust



University Hospitals
of Morecambe Bay
NHS Trust



Shared Principles and Commitments

These are shared principles we have agreed. We have included key commitments for each of these principles. We will develop Codes of Practice with more detailed commitments on the topics listed in the section "Working Together in the Future".

Joint Working

Developing and improving services together in an equal partnership builds stronger relationships, cross-border learning and services that are more likely to meet people's needs.

- Partners will work to create a shared strategic vision for the delivery of services.
- When work is undertaken jointly, the risks of that work will be shared *fairly* between organisations. This means the majority of the risk will be taken by the organisation best able to bear it. These risks could include financial risk and the risks associated with non-delivery of the service.

Communication

Clear communication is essential to both effective partnership working and the delivery of high quality services.

- Information will be produced in clear language, and in appropriate formats (for example, in large print or on audio tape) as appropriate.
- Partners agree to share information and respect its confidentiality where appropriate.

Mutual respect

Strong and lasting relationships are built on honesty, openness and trust. Each sector has its own set of responsibilities and duties, and within this, each organisation is different and brings different knowledge and resources to the network. These resources include the commitment and contribution of volunteers. This diversity is a strength, and partners will respect and value it.

- Partners will acknowledge each other's contribution.
- Partners will work to develop a better understanding of the core aims, activities and responsibilities of other partners.

Independence

An independent and varied third sector is essential to the well-being of communities in Cumbria. It plays an important role in creating strong communities and building social capital. One of the third sector's main roles is to campaign and challenge policy.

- Campaigning and advocacy work carried out within the law will not affect any funding relationships that exist.

Planning, Consultation and Representation

The third sector can be one route to user and community views. If organisations are to be able to accurately reflect these views they need time to consult with those they represent.

- Partners will work together to draw up strategic plans.
- A minimum consultation period of 12 weeks will be given when a major service change is proposed, in line with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation.

Funding and Responsibilities

Individual organisations are responsible for their actions and the services they provide.

Where a statutory sector organisation funds a third sector organisation, the statutory sector organisation has a duty to ensure that this public money is spent appropriately.

Many third sector groups are small organisations with limited reserves, and they can have serious cash flow problems when funding is delayed or paid in arrears.

- Funding will be paid in advance of spend (or in line with any specific contractual arrangements as may be agreed).
- Where monitoring requirements can be determined locally, these will be in proportion to the funding and the level of risk associated with the project.
- Partners support the principle of full cost recovery, and will work towards achieving this in practice.

Equality and Diversity

Partners have a duty to promote equality and diversity.

- Organisations will seek to ensure fair access to their services, employment opportunities and volunteer positions.

Quality Services

Organisations have different but complementary roles. All partners want to provide the highest quality services for their users.

- Organisations will take the views of service users and carers into account when planning services, and undertake appropriate monitoring and evaluation of services.
- Organisations will work towards appropriate quality standards.

Working within the Compact

If an organisation cannot do something that is set out in this Compact they will explain why, and how they plan to comply with this Compact in the future.

- Organisations will promote and raise awareness of the Compact.
- Organisations will ensure their staff, volunteers and members are aware of the Compact through appropriate publicity and training.

Solving Disagreements

Even in the best relationships, partners will disagree from time to time. Developing solutions acceptable to both parties can improve understanding and help build stronger relationships. It is important that there is an effective way to solve disagreements about using this Compact. By committing to this Compact, organisations are agreeing to try and solve disagreements in a constructive manner.

Disagreements will first be dealt with by approaching the organisation/sector concerned. Specific dispute resolution procedures will be included within some contracts. If necessary, the formal complaints procedure of the organisation concerned should be used.

If disagreements cannot be resolved in this way they should be reported to the Compact Group (see below), who will consider how to take the issue forward. This could include contacting the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) Local Compact Advocacy Service, or other forms of mediation.

Working together in the future

The Cumbria Compact Steering Group oversees the development of the Compact. This group aims to:

- Undertake an annual review of the Compact. This will include celebrating the success of the Compact and reviewing recorded breaches/disagreements.
- Ensure Codes of Practice are developed and adopted. These Codes cover topics including:
 - Funding and Procurement
 - Planning and Consultation
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Volunteers
- Work to involve other partners in the Compact

Useful contacts

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