



# *Delivering Vision 2030*

## **The Gateshead Compact 2010-13**

Valuing and supporting the  
voluntary and community sector in Gateshead

*Our shared commitments*



**GATESHEAD  
STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIP**

# Delivering Vision 2030

## The Gateshead Compact 2010-13

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### DIFFERENT FORMATS

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# Foreword

Welcome to the second Gateshead Compact, outlining how all the partners in the Gateshead Strategic Partnership will work together to ensure a productive and successful relationship with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Gateshead.

Gateshead has always had an active voluntary and community sector, with groups and organisations of all sizes making an invaluable contribution to the borough's many communities. Vision 2030 is one of the few Sustainable Community Strategies in the country to place such an emphasis on the sector, and the role of volunteering, in helping to build the Gateshead we all want to see in 2030.

The community and voluntary sector has an important part to play in shaping and delivering the Governments' Big Society agenda, and Gateshead is well equipped to meet this challenge.

The role of the sector continues to change, with an increasing emphasis on the role of the sector in service delivery, and ever greater dependence on partnership and close working between public, private and 'third' sector. In recognition of these changes it is more important than ever that we work together with the same trust, respect, consensus and creativity that we have always shown in Gateshead.

This new Compact aims to reflect these changes – setting out a new basis for partnership over the next three years.

We look forward to working with you all on the implementation of this Compact.



Councillor Mick Henry  
Chair of the Gateshead  
Strategic Partnership



Jeff Gray  
Chair, Gateshead Voluntary  
Organisations Council

# Why do we need a Compact?

## What is a Compact?

A Compact is an agreement between public sector agencies and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to work together to agreed standards and shared objectives. It formalises a set of shared commitments which recognise the value and role of the voluntary and community sector, and outlines an agenda for action to make these commitments a reality.

Following the principles of the first national Compact in 1998, local Compacts have typically sought to outline a series of protocols and undertakings and ways of working which manage the relationship between public sector bodies and the VCS. Such Compacts have been entirely voluntary and designed to demonstrate a shared commitment to joint working, and a process by which any issues can be raised and resolved.

The national Compact was revised and relaunched in 2009.

## The Gateshead Compact

Gateshead's first Compact was published in 2002. It set out a range of undertakings expected from each sector and provided a mechanism for closer working between the public sector and the community and voluntary sector. The original Compact also provided a number of Codes of Practice necessary to support this complex working relationship.

This first Compact developed as a series of agreements between individual statutory organisations and the VCS, and was not envisaged as a Gateshead wide, partnership based approach.

## The need for a new Compact

Whilst the original Compact was a useful starting point for understanding how organisations work together, things have moved on significantly since its adoption.

In 2007, the GSP launched its Sustainable Community Strategy, Vision 2030, which set out Six Big Ideas to improve Gateshead. The 'Gateshead Volunteers' Big Idea sets out objectives to support a thriving VCS and to promote the role of volunteering, recognising the major contribution the VCS makes to creating safe, sustainable communities in Gateshead.

The Gateshead Agreement - Gateshead's Local Area Agreement - is the three year delivery plan to achieve the aims of Vision 2030. The Agreement has identified two strategic targets to improve, support, and develop the community and voluntary sector. One of these is to create a thriving VCS (NI7), and the other is to increase the number of volunteers in Gateshead (NI6). Both of these objectives have been the subject of recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews by Gateshead Council, and their recommendations have been reflected in the Compact.

The policy context and value attached to the role of the VCS has therefore changed significantly since the first Compact was produced.

This new Compact reflects these changes. It outlines the vision and key principles underpinning a Compact, and the role of organisations in delivery.

# The Gateshead Compact

## - purpose, objectives and principles

### Purpose of the Compact

The GSP is committed through its Sustainable Community Strategy, Vision 2030, and Local Area Agreement to support, promote, and work in partnership with the community and voluntary sector to maintain the long-term health of the sector.

The function of this Compact is to set out the shared principles and actions which members of the GSP will take to create a thriving voluntary and community sector in Gateshead.

It differs from the previous Compact in that:

- It applies to all members of the Gateshead Strategic Partnership, and is based on a series of objectives which are shared by all partners;
- It is focused on four key shared commitments and a proactive approach to the delivery of these commitments, and therefore moves away from the 'codes of practice' approach of the previous Compact; and
- It is based around partnership working to deliver Vision 2030.

### What are we trying to achieve?

Our objectives are to achieve the outcomes identified in Vision 2030 under the Gateshead Volunteers Big Idea:

- To ensure that the values of the sector thrive in Gateshead;
- Strong VCS organisations delivering services in vibrant, sustainable communities; and
- A commitment to volunteering.

The third sector in Gateshead is extremely diverse, and is made up of a wide range of organisations in terms of size, structures and function.

The National Survey of Third Sector Organisations survey carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Office of the Third Sector in 2008 indicated that 20% of registered charities in Gateshead, which responded, felt that local statutory bodies had a very positive or positive influence in their success. This compares to a national figure of 16%. The total population of third sector organisations in Gateshead surveyed was 472 with 199 responding.

The role of the Compact is to:

- Improve trust, communication and joint working between the VCS and all partners
- Improve outcomes for local people through partnership
- Support the delivery of Vision 2030

## Shared principles

The following shared principles underpin the Compact:

- **The role of the VCS in delivering Vision 2030:** All partners recognise that a strong, active and healthy VCS is a vital component in building strong communities and enabling people to reach their potential. The particular role of the VCS is in:
  - empowering individuals and groups, particularly those at risk of exclusion.
  - Strengthening communities, drawing together people from different sections of society, and helping to deliver objectives on community cohesion and resilience.
  - Encouraging and promoting volunteering and civic participation to improve sustainability and promote an active and healthy Gateshead.
  - Transforming public services, through delivery, design, innovation and campaigning.
- **Partnership:** Partnership between all GSP partners and the VCS is essential in achieving our shared objectives. Trust, respect and honesty are key ingredients for successful partnership working;
- **Independence:** Voluntary and community sector organisations remain entitled to campaign, within the law, to advance their aims, to manage their own affairs and to highlight issues which are important to them;
- **Accountability:** The GSP and the VCS are answerable to different people in different ways, but the need to act with objectivity, transparency, accountability and integrity is common to all; and
- **Equality:** The GSP and the voluntary and community sector working together will promote equality for all people, and tackle discrimination on the basis of race, age, disability, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

# Implementing the Compact – our shared commitments

We have identified the following four action areas as the key commitments for the Compact:

## **Community development, involvement and consultation**

A shared commitment to the value of community development, the role of agencies in involving people in decisions that affect them and a commitment to implementing the Community Development Strategy.

## **Recognising, valuing and supporting volunteering**

A shared commitment to valuing the role of volunteers; removing barriers to volunteering; supporting the take up of opportunities; and, ensuring an effective infrastructure is in place to support volunteering.

## **Long term planning, clarity and consistency in commissioning, procurement and funding agreements**

A shared commitment to working together to improve how the commissioning and procurement process works, the simplification of funding agreements; and, improved contract management.

## **Promoting equality and diversity**

A shared commitment to ensuring that all organisations promote fairness and equality of opportunity and that discrimination is tackled by all organisations at all levels.

The following pages outline our shared commitments in more detail. These will be developed into action plans to deliver the Compact.

*A shared commitment to...*

## **Community development, involvement and consultation**

### What do we mean?

Community development is a two way process between local communities and organisations that provide services within communities. It is focused on addressing local needs, as articulated by local communities, and works to give local people a stronger voice in decisions that affect them, and the ability to identify their own solutions to problems.

Gateshead has adopted the term 'community development' as its overall approach to:

- Engaging and empowering communities and individuals to be involved in decisions that affect their lives; and
- Developing and strengthening communities.

The GSP adopted Gateshead's first Community Development Strategy in December 2008. The Strategy outlines the following vision for community development:

***"Local people are able to challenge, influence and shape decisions that affect their lives and contribute to active and sustainable communities"***

It also identified five outcomes for the next three years:

- Consultation, engagement and capacity building seeks to involve all sections of the community and meet the diverse needs of all residents.
- Local people are empowered and confident that they can influence, shape and have an impact on new policies and service developments from an early stage.
- Local people, community organisations, employers and employees who are confident and have the skills to involve and develop communities.
- Communities that are active in identifying needs and opportunities for change and are committed to developing solutions and improving their local area.

- Community development work is co-ordinated across Gateshead with partners sharing skills, knowledge and resources ensuring value for money for local people.

### What do we want to achieve?

The commitments in this Compact will support the delivery of the Gateshead Community Development Strategy, and reinforce the way in which all organisations within the Gateshead Strategic Partnership implement their duty to involve and consult Gateshead residents on issues that affect them.

### Our action plan

We will:

- Jointly implement the community development strategy, taking responsibility for our actions and being accountable for progress;
- Ensure two-way dialogue between organisations and communities both at an early stage in the development of new policies or initiatives and in the delivery of strategies and action plans;
- Improve the way we inform, consult and engage local people to raise the quality of involvement and support community development;
- Drive up the standards and quality of our community development work across all organisations through quality training and development and a Gateshead standard; and
- Develop and implement new ways to support community engagement in local communities, including allocation of funding; local management and ownership of assets and neighbourhood agreements.

The implementation of these commitments will be managed through the Community Development Strategy Implementation Group, led by Gateshead Community Network.

*A shared commitment to...*

## **Recognising, valuing and supporting volunteering**

### What do we mean?

Volunteering is an important indicator of civil society and essential to a vibrant 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. In practical terms, volunteering is an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals, groups) other than, or in addition to close relatives.

### What do we want to achieve?

The value of volunteering is recognised in Vision 2030 as a vital element in realising the ambitions of the Gateshead Strategic Partnership.

We want to transform volunteering in Gateshead and establish Gateshead as the volunteering capital of the UK. Our key priorities are to:

- Increase the supply of volunteers by encouraging more people to volunteer and promoting and celebrating volunteering across Gateshead;
- Increase the quality, choice and range of volunteering opportunities available; and
- Provide the right framework for managing, promoting and developing volunteering.

### Our action plan

We will:

- Increase the supply of volunteers by supporting the development of employee volunteering schemes in all statutory agencies;
- Ensure that effective infrastructure is in place to support people who want to volunteer, and organisations in need of volunteers;
- Tackle and remove any remaining barriers to volunteering including impact on benefits; perceptions; available support;
- Continuously improve the quality of volunteering opportunities by focusing on quality standards, training, and promotion of good practice; and
- Work together to market volunteering opportunities, celebrate volunteers and promote volunteering in all Gateshead's communities.

The implementation of these commitments will be delivered through a new Gateshead Volunteering Strategy managed through the Gateshead Volunteers Group led by Gateshead Council and Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council.

*A shared commitment to...*

## **Long-term planning, clarity and consistency in commissioning, procurement and funding agreements**

What do we mean?

### **Commissioning**

Commissioning is the process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet needs. It describes a cycle of events which involves needs analysis; assessment of delivery options; delivering a solution and the monitoring and review of progress.

VCS organisations can play a vital role at all stages of the commissioning process leading to better outcomes and value for money. VCS organisations are also increasingly playing a key role in the delivery of services, particularly at a time of change for public sector organisations.

### **Procurement**

Procurement is that part of the commissioning cycle which deals with the process of buying services from advert to contract.

Procurement processes can often be complex for VCS organisations that may not have the same level of expertise or capacity as public or private sector deliverers.

### **Funding agreements**

Funding agreements are increasingly complex, and VCS organisations often have varied and complex funding agreements with multiple funders, which can result in an overemphasis on process not outcomes.

What do we want to achieve?

- To transform the nature of the funding relationships in Gateshead by providing more opportunities for the VCS to become involved in the commissioning process;
- To increase the potential for the VCS to deliver more services and win more contracts – often referred to as ‘developing the market’ – including the promotion of greater collaboration and networks across the sector;

- To create and strengthen a more sustainable VCS by clarifying the support services available and the development of a ‘Gateshead Offer’ of clear support roles;
- To demystify and streamline the procurement process; and
- To simplify and streamline existing payment, monitoring and audit procedures to enable both commissioners and providers to focus on outcomes, not process.

Our action plan

### **Commissioning**

We will:

Establish a three year Gateshead Strategic Partnership Commissioning Framework for 2011-14 as the mechanism by which we will manage our commissioning processes. This framework will:

- Outline the commitment of GSP partners to the role of the VCS in service delivery.
- Clarify and streamline commissioning procedures wherever possible.
- Involve VCS organisations in assessing strategic needs and potential solutions.
- Provide additional capacity and skills of the VCS to engage with the commissioning process, and to drive up the quality of VCS proposals.

### **Procurement**

We will:

- Remove barriers to participation by ensuring that the VCS has an understanding of the contract and tender process.
- Look to join up and standardise processes and procedures, and to build up the capacity of the VCS to respond to opportunities.
- Work together to ensure the VCS has the capacity, systems and structures in place to manage projects effectively and accountably.

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## Funding agreements

We will:

- Move towards three year funding agreements with the VCS where budgets allow.
- Establish single funding agreements wherever possible.
- Forward fund wherever possible.
- Focus on outcomes and the delivery of Vision 2030 and the Gateshead Agreement.

- Jointly agree clear plans for organisational development and long term sustainability including funding sources.
- Work to establish a single relationship manager for each organisation.
- Maximise leverage of other resources from other funders.

The implementation of these commitments will be overseen by a Commissioning, Procurement and Funding Group.

*A shared commitment to...*

## **Promoting equality and tackling disadvantage**

### What do we mean?

Central to our ambitions for Gateshead in Vision 2030 is that all residents in Gateshead have the opportunities and support they need to fulfil their potential, and inequalities are addressed to narrow the gap in outcomes. Statutory organisations, working with the VCS, have a vital role to play in achieving these objectives, and are in many cases better placed to respond to these challenges in communities.

Laws and duties are in place to protect people from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability and gender reassignment. All organisations therefore have a role to play in ensuring that their policies and activities tackle discrimination.

However, we want to go further, and ensure that we work together to tackle disadvantage in all its forms, as we work to create a more equal Gateshead.

### What do we want to achieve?

The Compact seeks to embed a culture of partnership working and shared commitments to promoting equalities and tackling disadvantage which addresses the requirements of the forthcoming Equality Act.

We want to ensure that organisations from the statutory and VCS work together to tackle discrimination and address the key equalities themes, but we also want to ensure that our plans and activities promote fairness and community cohesion, that we take the views of all communities into account in our activities, and that we commit to the highest standards of engagement in our decision making.

### Our action plan

- Work in partnership to ensure that policies and strategies address equality issues
- Recognise and take action on practices, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination in any form;
- Seek views from as wide a range and varied a representation of individuals and groups as possible, with a clear focus on rarely heard groups and in line with the principles of the Community Development Strategy;
- Ensure that information, publicity and documents are up to date and can be made available in formats appropriate for all sections of Gateshead's communities;
- Ensure staff and volunteers have adequate equalities training and take steps to ensure effective practice;
- Operate effective and transparent equal opportunities monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure all organisations are treated fairly and with respect in all their interactions with the GSP partners; and
- Commit to work together to address inequality and disadvantage in Gateshead through action on child and family poverty.

The implementation of these commitments will be overseen by Gateshead Volunteer Steering Group.

# Delivering the Compact

Successful implementation of the Compact will rely on two main mechanisms:

- A monitoring, review and reporting structure
- An ongoing commitment to working together closely, changing cultures and working differently

## Monitoring, review and reporting

- The implementation of the Compact will be overseen by the Gateshead Volunteer Steering Group, Chaired by the Director of GVOC or nominated representative. This Group will receive reports from the Community Development Strategy Implementation Group, the Commissioning Group, and the Volunteering Sub Group.
- The action plans attached to each shared commitment will provide the basis for monitoring and evaluation, with named lead officers, contacts and timescales
- The Compact will contribute towards the achievement of targets in the Gateshead Agreement – with a particular focus on NI6 (Regular volunteering) and NI7 (Environment for a thriving third sector), as well as contributions towards other key priorities for the GSP, including NI4 – ability to influence decision making. They will also contribute to objectives for individual partners such as the PCT's World Class Commissioning approach. Additional targets will be identified as detailed action plans are developed for each commitment.
- Progress will be reported to the GSP on a six monthly basis.
- An annual review and refresh will be undertaken in March of each year to assess outcomes, and working practices.

## Cultural change and ways of working

The Compact is a guide to achieving a way of working across partners, but is reliant upon the commitment of all parties to work collectively and to share the commitments it contains. The Compact Steering Group will therefore oversee an ongoing programme of partnership activity which will:

- Share best practice, learning and innovation.
- Benchmark how well partnerships work.
- Resolve any potential conflicts or disputes.
- Provide mechanisms for sharing, peer review and mutual support in delivery across sectors.
- Ensure that the Compact is adopted by all agencies.
- Contribute to Compact evaluation and review.





For a copy of the Compact or any further information please contact:

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