

# COMPACT AT WORK



## Redbridge: Making the spirit of the Compact leap from the pages

The Redbridge Compact 2011-2014 does far more than list shared principles.

It sells the Compact based on what it can do for partners and describes what good Compact working looks like in a way that makes sense in the real world.

### Impact

It is often said of local Compacts that the contents of the actual document are significantly less important than the commitment and actions of signatories in embedding and implementing it.

However, in the case of the Redbridge Compact 2011-2014, the document, and the process around creating and implementing it have both led to genuine improvements.

The first thing that strikes the reader when viewing the Redbridge Compact is that it goes well beyond soberly stating principles and listing signatories.

The document aspires to help a lay reader (with no prior knowledge of the Compact) appreciate the importance of effective relations between the voluntary and community sector and statutory sector partners - and what both gain from their commitment to the Compact.

A selection of examples illustrate how the Compact way of working has already benefitted Redbridge in real and tangible ways.

The overall look and feel of the document - with principles pulled out of

explanatory text in a sleek and colourfully designed document – helps to engage the reader and convey that the Compact is a living, practical document.

By transparently stating what measures will be taken to implement the Compact and how partners will be held to account for breaches early in the document, the reader gets an appreciation of how partners will be held to account for their commitments to the Compact.

Indeed, the document also makes explicit reference to the “parallels between Compact principles and public law” ensuring that internal accountability mechanisms are given a wider grounding.

But above all, the Redbridge Compact 2011-2014, and the process of creating it, has helped to galvanise support for the Compact and a willingness to set tough targets for implementation.

This culminated in Compact Voice being asked to help the Compact Champions Steering Group (CCSG) to redraft a three-year action plan that contains challenging and measurable targets.

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**Theme:**  
Funding  
Arrangements

**Compact name:**  
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### Compact Principles

1: Partnership working

### Tags

- Engagement
- Evaluation
- Implementation
- Local Compacts
- Members
- Working groups

...Continued

## Summary

The strength of Redbridge's third Compact (2003, 2008, 2011) and the process of consultation and renewal is due in part to the structures which exist around partnership working. The CCSG is made up of senior figures from signatory organisations in the public sector, the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and the Faith Forum representing the voluntary and community sector.

This is essentially a working group, who meet quarterly and undertake tasks such as reporting breaches and issues on the horizon for cross sector relations. The CCSG reports to the Public and Voluntary Sectors' Partnership (PaVSP) which is made up of councillors and representatives of the VCS (which are elected by the CVS Network). This structure ensures a healthy balance between practical implementation and oversight.

In October 2010 the PaVSP started looking at the Compact. It did this by delegating a councillor and VCS representative to look at potential alterations of the existing document.

Simultaneously, CCSG members began to consult within their own organisations and memberships and feed information back to the PaVSP. A draft document was produced

and the CCSG began to meet monthly (instead of quarterly) to review findings and tweak the document with the help of a consultant taken on by the CVS. A twelve week consultation was launched which included:

- Two well attended consultation events for the VCS
- One consultation event for the statutory sector in which the case was made for commitment by presenting case studies showing how all the good work they already do is Compact-compliant. This was very well received and eventually formed part of the Compact.
- A questionnaire

The PaVSP held a special meeting to make final adjustments before sending the Compact for Cabinet sign-off on 1st November 2011. The Compact was launched at the CVS's AGM in Compact Week (November 8th).

This process was well balanced between practical implementation and control. The revised document clearly took on board comments from those who criticised the draft. It has been substantially thinned out and cannot now be considered 'text' heavy.

## Quote

"A small group of us from both sides of the partnership put in a good deal of drafting "leg work" to get the Compact into its revised, and I think much improved, form. It was good to work together and a benefit for me was a better understanding of how different constraints bear upon our different public sector partners. Hopefully there was an 'understanding transfer' in the opposite direction too!"

- John Garlick, Age UK, Redbridge and PaVSP member.

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## Relevant Compact Principles

1: Partnership Working

## Related links

- [Redbridge Compact pages](#)

