

A Compact on partnership working between the States of Guernsey and the Island's voluntary and charitable sector

September 2014



For Charities ♦ About Charities
in the Bailiwick of Guernsey
www.charity.org.gg

1. Shared Vision

This Compact sets out an agreement between the States of Guernsey and the Association of Guernsey Charities (AGC), on behalf of the voluntary and charitable sector – often known collectively as ‘the Third Sector’.

Through this Compact the States and the AGC set out a shared vision to work together effectively to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of the people of Guernsey.

2. Background

Guernsey has always benefited from a vibrant, diverse and committed Third Sector, reflecting a strong cultural ethos of community participation. Despite this, it has only been comparatively recently that the States has engaged effectively with the Third Sector and vice versa.

Both the States and the Third Sector acknowledge and value that there is greater strength in working together, whether in designing the development of new services or in the provision of existing services. In particular, the States Social Policy Plan (see [Billet d’Etat VI, March 2013](#)), recognises that the Third Sector is a key enabler in meeting the Plan’s general objective of providing “*a social environment and culture where there is active and engaged citizenship*”.

This Compact is intended to cement this important relationship by setting out the expectations and responsibilities for each party.

3. Commitments

The States

The States commit to:

- **Foster and encourage the development of the Third Sector**
- **Work constructively with voluntary and charitable sector organisations**

The best outcomes for Islanders may not result from services provided exclusively by the States and, therefore, the States will give consideration to services being provided in whole or in part by Third Sector agencies.

The States will also consider the most appropriate ways to assist the Third Sector, examples of which may include the provision of relevant information, financial assistance, the use of States-owned land and premises, etc., all subject to best value and policy considerations.

- **Provide clear, concise and up-to-date information on its services**

Every effort will be made by the States to publish relevant, concise and up-to-date information for the benefit of service users. The States will encourage and respond to all feedback on such information that is received from Third Sector organisations.

- **Involve the Third Sector in the review of existing services and the development of new services**

Where appropriate, States Departments will consider how best to involve Third Sector organisations in the review of existing services or the development of new services. States Departments will also be committed to the removal of specific barriers that might prevent an organisation from fully contributing to such projects.

Where the States is proposing to undertake a major change in strategy or policy, it reserves the right to ask Third Sector organisations with similar aims and objectives to work together to prepare responses or to participate in engagement activities. It will seek to liaise with Third Sector representative bodies, joint working groups and other Third Sector stakeholders to enable it in this aim.

Where information or opinions are sought, timely feedback will be provided on views expressed by Third Sector organisations.

- **Use commissioning and procurement processes that are proportionate to the size and capability of respondent Third Sector organisations**

To deliver best value in commissioning and procuring services, the States will use processes that do not place barriers to the size and capability of Third Sector organisations to respond to them.

- **Use simple and clear agreements to establish working arrangements**

It is acknowledged that Third Sector organisations do not necessarily work in the same way as the States or commercial businesses. However, where a Third Sector organisation is receiving money or other resources via the States, it will be requirement that a Service Level Agreement, or another similar contractual arrangement, be in place, allowing it to demonstrate that it can meet the service outcomes and the necessary financial, service quality and other reporting standards. Such agreements will be made as simple and clear as possible, and seek to avoid the inclusion of unnecessary obligations and bureaucracy.

- **Respect the Third Sector's right to express opinions**

The States will respect the right of the Third Sector organisations to comment on, challenge and seek to influence States' policies, regardless of any contractual or other arrangements that may be in place.

- **Provide the Third Sector with a single point of contact to resolve any difficulties they may experience**

The States will involve the voluntary and charitable sector in all relevant aspects of its work as appropriate. Where issues arise and a Third Sector organisation:

- finds information not forthcoming from a Department or Committee;
- wants to have input to a piece of work being undertaken by the States but has not been consulted; or
- has a grievance that has not been satisfactorily addressed by a Department;

this should be reported to the Head of Government Strategy and Business at the Policy Council, who will take the necessary action to resolve matters at officer level. In the unlikely event that this is unsuccessful he will bring it to the attention of the Chairman of the Social Policy Group, for him/her to address.

The Third Sector

Third Sector organisations commit to:

- **Provide information that is clear, concise and easy-to-find**

Third Sector organisations will publicise their aims, and information on services that they provide, in a clear, concise and easy-to-find manner, and keep them up-to-date.

- **Work co-operatively with the States**

Third Sector organisations will be responsive to requests for opinion or information requested by States Departments. In doing so, they will ensure that, as far as possible, the opinions offered are representative of their membership or supporters, and include details of who is being represented and in what capacity.

- **Demonstrate proper governance and risk management**

Third Sector organisations will operate in as open and transparent manner as possible. They recognise that monitoring, both internal and external, is an aspect of good management practice. They acknowledge no effective dialogue can begin with a Third Sector organisation if the States is not convinced about its governance or its ability to manage risks. They will, therefore, ensure that governance and risk management arrangements attuned to their size and objectives are put in place, and can be clearly and easily demonstrated.

- **Acknowledge the role and support of the States**

Third Sector organisations will have due regard to the legal and financial framework within which the States operates. As appropriate, they will acknowledge publicly where they are receiving financial or other assistance from the States.

- **Recognise accountability to the taxpayer**

Although Third Sector organisations are accountable to their members, where they engaged by the States to perform a specific function or to provide particular services, they recognise that they are also accountable to the Guernsey taxpayer. This will be enshrined in a Service Level Agreement or similar contractual arrangement setting out the service outcomes and the financial, service quality and other reporting standards to be met.

A Third Sector organisation will not seek to take on work for the States if it is not confident that it can deliver it in an appropriate and sustainable manner.

- **Work with other voluntary and charitable sector organisations**

In the interests of ensuring the best outcomes for the people of Guernsey, individual Third Sector organisations recognise that it is helpful to work co-operatively with other organisations that share similar aims and objectives, both operationally and in responding to requests from the States for information and opinions.

This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed in September 2015.

Signatories:

Jonathan P Le Tocq
Chief Minister
States of Guernsey

Peter Rose
Chairman
The Association of Guernsey Charities

24th September 2014