



The Hertfordshire Compact Forum Newsletter no. 1 August 2018

The **Hertfordshire Compact** is a voluntary agreement between statutory organisations and the voluntary and community sector about how different groups will work together to benefit residents.

Introducing the new Hertfordshire Compact Forum

- The new Forum will provide opportunities for cross sector dialogue; to discuss ideas and share success stories of the Compact way of working and is open to all.
- The first Forum held on June 14th, 2018 was introduced by [Ruth Harrington, Hertfordshire County Council](#) and [Jacquie Hime, North Herts CVS](#) and attended by about 40 people from Hertfordshire based Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, Hertfordshire County Council and North Hertfordshire, Stevenage and Watford District Councils.
- The Forum will happen twice a year, January and June, facilitated by Connect Hertfordshire

The Compact Forum Report - June 2018

Topic 1 – Networks and Forums

[Kate Belinis CDA Herts](#) and [Maddy Thomson Connect Hertfordshire](#) presented mapping of Hertfordshire Networks and Forums and opened a discussion on the benefits of knowing about or being in networks, VCS representation opportunities and general issues, risks and gaps.

Key points

1) The potential of technology for sharing ideas, opportunities and information.
This could be:

- a) A directory of Hertfordshire Networks and Forums
- b) A way to facilitate trading of services across organisations
- c) The use of Facebook pages to engage across themes and types of group
- d) Use of online forums and webinars

2) The challenge of linking the insight of local forums and networks to strategic policies and groups, more likely county wide; to collaborate without detracting from local impact.

3) Networks and Forums tend to ebb and flow and new things emerge. It is sensible to review how far a network is serving its purpose and be open to merge with another network or stop altogether.

4) How new people and groups find out about existing networks and forums.

5) A potential gap in Hertfordshire around a network related to Housing and / or Homelessness.

New - Older Peoples Network

Susan Jessop from Connect Hertfordshire and Deborah Paniagua, CEO Age UK Hertfordshire introduced the emerging 'Older Peoples Network'. A group have been collaborating over the potential of a network and what it would do. Those interested in knowing what they are doing and would like to get involved should contact Susan Jessop: susan.jessop@connecthertfordshire.org



Topic 2 – Consultation

The second discussion followed a presentation by Nathalie Calonnec, Senior Policy Officer, Corporate Policy Team, Hertfordshire County Council. Nathalie outlined why the council consults and how they go about it.

The Forum discussion centred around the question 'As partners, what can we do to improve the processes and outcomes of consultations for residents and service users?'

Key Points

- 1) The need to be realistic about expected outcomes of any consultation.
- 2) Knowing how to access published outcomes.
- 3) Consultation fatigue and use of other options such as focus groups.
- 4) Consider how open consultations are, how they are publicised, targeting particular organisations and if this creates bias and how to encourage diversity.
- 5) The use of technology and the potential of social media.
- 6) The potential role of the Compact Forum in shaping future consultation involving the VCS.
- 7) How consultation methods work against diverse engagement. E.g. time of day of meetings, not using a mixed variety of consultation methods.
- 8) Potential use of larger organisations, Networks and Forums, to disseminate consultations and outcomes to achieve a wider reach e.g. those that represent minorities, younger people or those with poor literacy skills.

In respect of Hertfordshire County Council, Nathalie stressed the opportunity to feedback at any point. Her contact details are:

Nathalie.Calonnec@hertfordshire.gov.uk

All consultations are publicised on the Hertfordshire County Council website. It is possible to set up alerts to be notified of any consultations concerning specific issues or groups. All outcomes of consultations are available in the same way. If you would like to set up alerts click here:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHERTSCC/subscriber/new>

Forum Suggestions for Future Topics:

- Communication & Information
- Working in Partnership
- Developing the Compact
- Assistive and other innovative technology
- Co-Production
- Social Value
- Request for Good Practice Stories of Compact working

Request for Compact Case Studies

To refresh the Compact material in 2018 examples of how groups and organisations are working well in the spirit of the Compact across sectors are invited to get in touch with Maddy Thomson: Maddy.Thomson@connecthertforshire.org

Taking Action

It is for all those who participate in the Forum to consider how the discussion could influence the work they do and how they work with other organisations.

Connect Hertfordshire Steering Group will consider Compact Forum outcomes and take any action under its remit. For example, Connect Hertfordshire plan to complete the network and forum mapping and make this available.

Annual Compact Survey

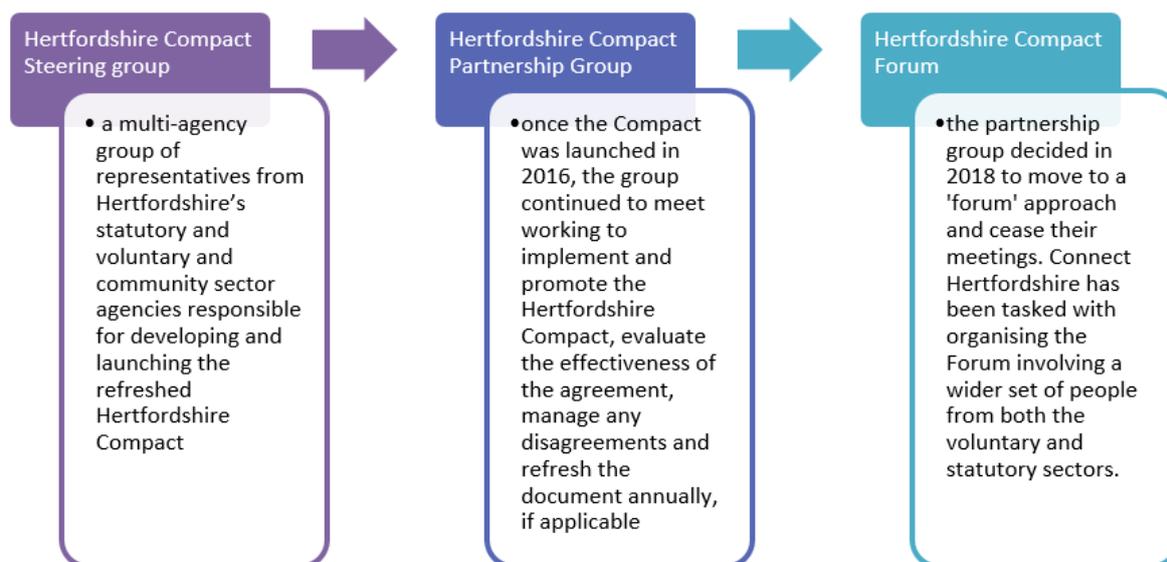
The annual survey will be circulated in September and be open until mid-November. Please let us have your feedback. Results will be presented at the January 2019 Compact Forum.

The Hertfordshire Compact - Where are we now?

There are currently 44 signatories to the Hertfordshire Compact; 30 VCS organisations, 13 statutory organisations and one Community Interest Company. Since July 2016 there has been one formal dispute and one informal dispute, both now resolved.

Your organisation is invited to sign up too - www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/hertfordshire-compact.aspx

Hertfordshire Compact - the refresh, relaunch and development timeline:



Governance arrangements

Now we have moved to a forum approach the arrangements we have for ensuring the Compact remains a meaningful agreement will continue and these are available on the Compact webpage <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/hertfordshire-compact.aspx>

A document detailing the governance arrangements will be shared widely later this year including the Herts Voluntary Sector CEO Network steering group who are next meeting in September.

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