

# One Oldham stronger together

The Oldham Compact May 2009



## What is One Oldham Stronger Together – The Oldham Compact?

One Oldham Stronger Together is an agreement entered into freely and voluntarily between local statutory bodies and the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector.

It states the shared principles, values and commitments that will be the foundation for a strong relationship between the two sectors. By working together we will seek to provide the best possible services for the people of Oldham.

## What has inspired One Oldham Stronger Together?

It is inspired by the belief that we achieve far more when we are working together.

The voluntary community and faith sector values its independence. The organisations that make up the statutory sector have their own distinctive cultures. However it is only by working together that we can improve the quality of life of people in Oldham.

In this Compact, we express our commitment to work in partnership.

## Our vision

We believe that an agreement between the sectors in Oldham will lead to:

- All partners working toward the same shared principles
- More effective relationships
- A commitment to inclusive working practices
- A recognition that all partners have an equally valuable role to play in improving the quality of life of people in Oldham
- A source of help with any problems in our working relationships



## Who are the partners?

All of them are members of our local strategic partnership (LSP), Oldham Partnership.

This brings together organisations from the three main sectors of service delivery in Oldham – the statutory sector, the private sector, and the voluntary, community and faith sector – to make important decisions and to work together to improve the quality of life of local people.

One Oldham Stronger Together is an agreement between two of those sectors - the statutory and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

The statutory sector includes all those statutory bodies who are members of the Oldham Partnership. Among these are Oldham Council, NHS Oldham, Greater Manchester Police and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

The voluntary, community and faith sector, sometimes referred to as the third sector, is also a significant member of the Oldham Partnership. It includes all those groups and organisations, large and small, which are not part of the statutory or business sectors: which are, that is, independent of the state and non-profit making. This sector can also include social and community enterprises.

In Oldham this important, diverse and wide-ranging sector is brought together and represented through the Voluntary, Community and Faith Partnership (VCFP) and the Children and Young People's HUB, whose joint responsibility it is to be the voice of the whole sector and to take a lead in ensuring that One Oldham Stronger Together makes a difference.





## The shared principles

People and organisations that sign up to the Compact agree to the following statements:

- We will respect each other's rights and responsibilities.
- We will value the contribution we each can make to the wellbeing of the people of Oldham and we will work together to enhance and improve that contribution.
- We will seek to improve coordination and cooperation between all service providers in order to benefit the people of Oldham.
- We will improve communication between the statutory and voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- We will encourage a culture of openness and mutual accountability between the two sectors

They have also agreed to carry out the following actions:

- We will provide an agreed framework for the involvement of the voluntary, community and faith sector in service design and delivery, and in the decision-making processes that affect the people of Oldham.
- We will actively seek to understand and meet the needs, values and characteristics of Oldham's different communities and will work together to build bridges and challenge those who practice discrimination.
- We will appoint a Compact Champion - a lead person whose responsibility it is to make sure that what has been agreed is carried out and is effective.
- We will implement the codes of practice. These will seek to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all groups, communities and individuals in Oldham. The codes will also provide guidance as to how we can work together in practical and effective ways.



## The codes of practice

The codes of practice are identified areas where One Oldham Stronger Together will have a positive impact on the relationship between the statutory and voluntary community and faith sectors.

Three codes are currently being prepared for One Oldham Stronger Together.

These relate to the following important areas:

- The engagement and involvement of local groups, communities and individuals
- The funding and sustainability of valuable, localised work
- The promotion of volunteering

We are committed to discussing, agreeing and implementing these codes by the end of 2009. Further codes will then be introduced.

## Making it work

The Oldham Partnership Executive, which includes representatives of both the statutory and voluntary, community and faith sectors, has overall responsibility for the success of One Oldham Stronger Together. It has appointed a working group to ensure that it has a real and practical impact.

In addition, the Compact will become a standing item on the agenda of the Oldham Partnership Steering Group, so that its progress is regularly monitored.

Partnership working is not always easy and things can go wrong. If problems or issues arise which cannot be resolved between partners, the Oldham Partnership Executive will establish a fair and equitable mediation process. Should there be difficulty resolving a disagreement locally, partners will be entitled to have recourse to the national Compact Mediation Scheme.

However, One Oldham Stronger Together – the Oldham Compact arises from a shared desire to work in partnership because of the undoubted benefits this can have. It creates an agreement to work together in a positive way. It provides a foundation on which we can build together to achieve our common objective, a better Oldham: 'Oldham – a place where everyone is proud to belong.'

The starting point is our shared commitment and agreement. Please show your commitment by signing the pledge on the next page.



## One Oldham Stronger Together The Oldham Compact

One Oldham Stronger Together – the Oldham Compact is an agreement between local statutory bodies and the voluntary, community and faith sector.

### The shared principles of The Oldham Compact:

- We will respect each other's rights and responsibilities
- We will value the contribution we can make to the well-being of the people of Oldham and we will work together to enhance and improve that contribution
- We will seek to improve communication between the statutory and the voluntary, community and faith sectors
- We will encourage a culture of openness and mutual accountability
- We will provide an agreed framework for the involvement of the voluntary, community and faith sector in the service design and delivery, and in the decision making processes that affect the people of Oldham
- We will review the Compact regularly and update it when necessary
- We will resolve problems in a constructive and open way
- We will actively seek to understand and meet the needs, values and characteristics of Oldham's different communities and will work together to build bridges and challenge those who practice discrimination
- We will appoint a Compact Champion - a lead person whose responsibility it is to make sure that what has been agreed is carried out and is effective
- We will implement the codes of practice. These will seek to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all groups, communities and individuals in Oldham. The codes will also provide guidance as to how we can work together in practical and effective ways

## Our Commitment

We agree to adopt the principles of:

One Oldham Stronger Together – the Oldham Compact in all of our work with our partners.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of (organisation) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_



If you would like more information about the Oldham Compact or to find out which organisations have signed up to it, please contact:

**Voluntary Action Oldham: 0161 633 6222**

Ce2@vaoldham.org.uk or

**Oldham Partnership: 0161 770 5256**

info@oldhampartnership.org.uk

Alternatively, you can visit the Oldham Compact webpages at

[www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/oldham-compact](http://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/oldham-compact) or

<http://vaoldham.org.uk/VCFP/TheCompact>

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