‘Meeting the Challenge Together’

The Third Sector Strategy for Wakefield District 2013-2016

Sponsors

This strategy is owned by the Wakefield Together Partnership with sign off from the Local Services Board. Third Sector Strategy sponsors are;

Executive Summary

We live through challenging times. If there is one lesson to take from the current climate it is that we cannot tackle these challenges alone. The Wakefield Together Partnership is acutely aware that to retain the sense of pride, neighbourliness and collective spirit that defines our District we all need to work together to develop and sustain our communities. We need to build a genuine partnership to leverage the capacity of third sector organisations and harness civic activism and pride throughout the District. This is a strategy to make this happen.

Unemployment, poverty and inequality are the social ills we must urgently address. Our young people need a sense of hope and opportunity. Our older people need both care and support but also opportunities to remain active and engaged in civic life. We all have a part to play, from citizens and the smaller self-help groups through to established voluntary organisations and larger service delivery charities and social enterprises. The third sector is a key partner within the Wakefield Together Partnership and this strategy embeds its role throughout the strategies across the Partnership. The third sector plays a vital role in implementing priorities around reducing poverty and inequalities, promoting health and wellbeing, encouraging a sense of belonging and trust within our communities, creating a cleaner, greener and safer district, and a district that raises aspirations, provides access to opportunities and routes to employment.
To this end, we have set four strategic objectives for the Third Sector Strategy over the next three years;

1. To grow active citizens and voluntary action through effective third sector engagement within local communities.
2. To increase third sector opportunities to design and deliver public services
3. To promote the third sector so that it has opportunity to influence policy and decision making.
4. To develop effective infrastructure support for third sector throughout the District.

The Strategy lists in detail how we will go about achieving these aims with a substantive set of actions. The Strategy will be overseen by a Third Sector Strategy Group that reports directly into the Local Services Board.

The Third Sector Strategy lies at the heart of our vision for Wakefield and is a collaboration of the public, private and third sectors to fulfil this shared ambition.

1. Why has Wakefield Together developed a Third Sector Strategy?

The landscape for public services across Wakefield district is shifting rapidly. Budget pressures, rising demand and changing public expectations mean local public services are being asked to do more with less. The scale of the challenge means our public services cannot do this alone. Public servants must do more to leverage the capacity and resources of civil society to meet local needs and achieve better outcomes.

From pupil attainment to recovery rates from surgery and preventing graffiti, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests outcomes are improved when public services and civil society work hand in hand. Wakefield Together Partnership recognises that it will only achieve many of its objectives if it fully involves citizens, communities and the third sector. This means investing in successful efforts to build the capacity of citizens and local voluntary and community groups, to enable them to play leading roles in the development of their communities. It also means expanding learning and development opportunities within public services, so that professionals, practitioners and policy-makers are better equipped to engage with citizens and communities.

Wakefield District is home to many voluntary and community organisations that are changing the lives of individuals and communities. Our sector flourishes with citizens and communities bringing their own insights, time and energy to the most pressing needs across the District. But, our third sector shares the challenges of budget cuts and rising demand. This strategy is our plan to leverage the capacity of
those third sector organisations that are already making positive impacts in the District and to help mobilise a greater level of civic activism.

Our challenge is to build a co-productive relationship between our public agencies and the third sector in Wakefield; a genuine partnership to achieve common goals.

2. Definition

By the ‘Third Sector’ we mean;

Not for profit independent, voluntary and community groups or organisations formed by local people, or those with a local interest, to improve the quality of lives for themselves and/or fellow citizens across Wakefield District. These include registered charities; voluntary organisations; community groups; faith groups involved in social action; tenants groups, cooperatives and mutuals, community interest companies and social enterprises.

3. Principles

This strategy is underpinned by a core set of principles which defines our approach to supporting the third sector across Wakefield District;

1. We will make use of existing local assets – emphasising what the community has and building on it rather than what they lack and importing it.

2. We recognise that everyone has something to contribute and will harness this capacity.

3. We are committed to making a difference to the District but take the long view - there are no quick fixes if change is to be lasting.

4. We will ensure that support is accessible for local communities and third sector organisations at neighbourhood, parish and district level.

5. We embrace diversity and recognise solutions are needed which respond to local circumstances, rather than taking a ‘one size fits all’ approach.
6. We are committed to collaboration with the third sector, recognising that an indicator of a healthy third sector is one that challenges and advocates for the needs of citizens and local people.

4. Where are we now?

4.1 The local context

Wakefield District faces the challenge of rising numbers of residents out of work and significant levels of deprivation within some of our neighbourhoods. The effects of the Welfare Reform Act (2012) will hit hard in the most deprived communities with many more households being pushed to the edge. Poverty pervades parts of the District with an alarming 21% of young people living in poverty. The District’s population is getting older and is predicted to have grown by over 50% by 2031, representing close to 100,000 people. An ageing population inevitably brings increased demand for health and well-being services. Health inequalities across the District need to be tackled and we need to raise the skill levels and career aspirations of our citizens and create quality jobs for local people.

At the same time, public agencies across Wakefield face considerable savings over the coming years. Wakefield Council has responded with the intention to be a ‘Catalyst Council’ through which it aims to develop new models for delivering services, including service transfer to local communities. There is the emergence of public service spin outs in the fields of health and education, with public sector workers creating independent social enterprises and charities for what were once public services.

Through the Wakefield Together Partnership, the District has moved towards an area working model based on seven areas across the district in which key public agencies have agreed to coordinate their efforts and resources. Area working is aimed at addressing inequalities in outcomes for people living within different parts of the district and it is envisaged will result in joint commissioning of services at a local level.

4.2 The Third Sector in Wakefield

Wakefield is home to a well-established third sector that serves local communities across the District. There are 567 registered third sector organisations in Wakefield District, with an annual income of £78m1. In addition, there are an estimated 742 unregistered groups2, whose income is unknown. The sector ranges from the smallest self-help and campaigning groups to large service delivery organisations and national

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1 Third Sector Organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber (Involve Yorkshire & Humber 2011)
2 Below the Radar? Unregistered organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber (Involve Yorkshire & Humber 2011)
charities. In total, about 2,800 people work for the sector in the District[^3]. The range of activities and services carried out by the sector is diverse. 30% of groups deliver leisure activities, including sport and recreation; 22% carry out community development and mutual aid; 25% work in the field of education and lifelong learning and 20% within health and wellbeing. 45% of groups in Wakefield receive a grant from a local statutory agency and 19% hold public contracts[^4].

However, Wakefield District also has the lowest number of both registered and unregistered groups across the five districts of West Yorkshire with low levels of average organisational income. Third sector organisations face challenges in meeting the growing needs of local citizens and communities and are supported by infrastructure organisations that themselves are underdeveloped and facing their own challenges. Positive developments have begun with the development of Wakefield District Wellbeing Consortium and there is the need to develop models of co-commissioning throughout the Partnership. Significantly, there are limited levels of strategic third sector engagement with public sector decision-making and a lack of opportunities for the sector, small and large, to share and collaborate for the benefit of Wakefield’s communities.

The private sector in Wakefield is a core partner in developing jobs and growth. Third sector links with the private sector have traditionally been weak but are gradually improving with initiatives such as the Wellbeing Consortium. There remains considerable potential to harness third sector collaboration with the private sector to address the challenges faced by Wakefield District.

### 4.3 Challenges

The environment facing local communities, third sector organisations and the public sector across Wakefield District indicates a number of key challenges;

1. To ensure that third sector organisations, small and large, receive the support they need to grow to meet the rising needs of local citizens and communities.
2. To increase the opportunities for the third sector to design and deliver local services, involving communities and third sector organisations in all stages of the commissioning cycle.
3. To harness the capacities, skills and energies of local people and to grow community based action which prevents and responds to local need.
4. To foster a strategic relationship between the third sector and public agencies which promotes collaboration and joint working in the delivery of key public sector strategies and objectives.

[^3]: Third Sector Organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber (Involve Yorkshire & Humber 2011)
[^4]: National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises (Cabinet Office/OCS 2010 results)
4.4 Opportunities

The Third Sector plays a critical role in the successful implementation of a range of plans and strategies across the Wakefield Together Partnership. The diagram below provides an overview of the third sector input across the key priorities for Wakefield District and national requirements upon public sector agencies;
Looking at each of the priorities in turn, the third sector has a substantial contribution to make;

Community (Community Strategy; Community Engagement Strategy)

- Supporting community involvement in local decision-making
- Promoting active citizenship
- Ensuring citizen needs determine the design and delivery of local services
- Developing services and activities which reduce crime, improve health, reduce unemployment, raise skills and aspirations and improve local neighbourhoods

Poverty (Poverty and Prosperity Commission)

- Ensuring that services reach the most marginalised citizens and communities
- Providing training, development and work opportunities for young people and adults
- Growing social enterprise in deprived communities

Neighbourhoods (Neighbourhoods Strategy; Area Working)

- Supporting community involvement in local decision-making
- Promoting community self help and asset based approaches to address inequalities and community needs
- Nurturing local leadership and community capacity
- Promoting volunteering opportunities across Wakefield District
- Supporting the transfer of services and assets to local communities

Health (JSNA, Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Health Inequalities Plan, Healthwatch)

- Reducing health inequalities through community based services which facilitate access and better outcomes

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**Tackling root causes: White Rose Credit Union**

The stress of personal debts and the lack of savings is a major cause of stress and associated problems for families and individuals across the District. The White Rose Credit Union is a lifeline for many people who are unable to access banking facilities and/or trapped in the vicious cycle of expensive, doorstep loans. The Credit Union has 5000 members across Wakefield District providing access to low cost borrowing, encourages people to save and provides critical advice on personal budgeting. The Union is owned and controlled by its members and strengthens the local economy with a turnover of £11 million.
• Promoting awareness of healthier living amongst local communities
• Enabling positive mental and physical health through social and community activities, services and networks
• Co-producing health and wellbeing services for young people, adults and older people

Children and Young People (Children & Young People Plan, Child Poverty Strategy)
• Enabling children and young people’s participation
• Developing the independence, skills, education and employment opportunities for young people
• Providing advice, support and information for young people
• Initiating preventative approaches for children and young people at risk

Funding & Relationships (Wakefield Compact, Funding Framework, Asset Transfer Policy)
• Supporting local people to take ownership and to manage buildings and services
• Developing the skills and capacities of local people
• Supporting the development and growth of community based projects and services
• Facilitating equal opportunities within local communities through access, use and ownership of communities assets and facilities

Cohesion (Shared Future: The Community Cohesion Framework)
• Encouraging citizens across Wakefield District to feel a sense of belonging
• Building trust between residents through projects and activities which build understanding and respect
• Promoting neighbourliness and people caring and looking out for one another
• Services and projects which support the integration of new communities

Commissioning (Strategic Commissioning Framework; Family Services: Commissioning for Transformation; Adult Market Position Statement)
• Pioneering approaches to harness the knowledge, skills and assets of local communities
• Developing community based providers that offer more than just a service but also a source of employment, support, pride and wellbeing for local communities (social value)
Enabling Third Sector Delivery: Wakefield District Wellbeing Consortium

Many third sector organisations are too small to tender for ‘whole service’ or ‘whole District’ tenders. The Consortium is an innovative response, offering support to organisations wishing to bid collectively for service delivery opportunities. The Consortium is a relatively new organisation but has quickly built a strong reputation, attracted a membership of 53 organisations and has secured contracts worth a financial value of £1.7 million for its members.

• Supporting the integration and coordination of local public services

Safety (Community Safety Plan)

• Provision of services for people experiencing drugs and alcohol problems
• Provision of services for people experiencing domestic violence
• Providing support, advice and information to offenders, ex-offenders and those at risk of offending
• Community based projects to build stronger, safer communities

Employment (Jobs & Growth Plan)

• Providing access to skills, education and training opportunities for young people and adults
• Providing routes and opportunities for employment
• Developing and growing social enterprises which provide employment and social benefits within Wakefield communities

Strategic Aims

Over the next three years, Wakefield Together Partnership commits itself to the achievement of four strategic objectives for the third sector in Wakefield District

1. To grow active citizens and voluntary action through effective third sector engagement within local communities.
2. To increase third sector opportunities to design and deliver public services
3. To promote the third sector so that it has opportunity to influence policy and decision making.
4. To develop effective infrastructure support for third sector throughout the District.
Our Commitments & Approach

Aim: To grow active citizens and voluntary action through effective third sector engagement within local communities.

We will systematically involve citizens in local decision making processes

Actions:

- Provide structured opportunities for citizens to inform and influence the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services which impact on their quality of life and well-being.
- Encourage all public agencies to develop and implement the principles and practices of coproduction with local citizens and communities within their day-day operations
- Development of a comprehensive menu of learning opportunities for active citizenship within local communities
- Harness and extend the existing network of community champions to act as the brokers between public services and communities across Wakefield District.

We will develop a strategy to increase volunteering across Wakefield District

Actions:

- Identify communities where there are few volunteers and target support appropriately
- Recognise volunteers as ‘gold dust’ not usual suspects and reward through training, celebrations and awards
- Promote employee volunteering initiatives with a focus on supporting community projects
- Develop a strategic volunteering forum

We will support and develop community self help as part of our coordinated infrastructure offer

Actions:

- Long-term ‘coaching’ from experienced residents for activists and groups who are just starting out

We will incentivise and reward volunteering and community self help

Actions

- Explore different approaches to provide incentives and reward volunteering, learning from the experiences of others across the Country.
• Explore and develop the scope to grow a network of local time banks across Wakefield District and consider opportunities to provide rewards for volunteers

Aim: To increase third sector opportunities to design and deliver public services

We will involve citizens, communities and third sector organisations throughout the commissioning cycle.

Actions:

• Mapping of current third sector involvement in commissioning and action to tackle identified barriers
• Provide structured opportunities for third sector organisations to feed in local intelligence to help shape public agencies understanding of need, gaps in service and the quality of services
• Joint learning and dialogue opportunities for commissioners and third sector organisations to work collaboratively
• Regular networking opportunities to build positive relationships between public sector and third sector organisations
• An emphasis in commissioning towards longer-term outcomes which incentivise partnership approaches and better outcomes
• Embed Social Value into commissioning and procurement frameworks, meeting responsibilities under the public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

We will seek to strengthen the capacity of the third sector to tender and deliver public sector contracts.

Actions:

• Provision of learning opportunities for third sector organisations to develop skills for tendering
• Develop opportunities for enhancing third sector partnerships with the private sector, including maximising corporate social responsibility opportunities.

We will explore opportunities to transfer assets, facilities and services to third sector organisations

Actions:
• Map the potential for asset and service transfer to local communities and third sector organisations and provide practical support to facilitate transfers

We will retain elements of grant funding as part of our portfolio of commissioning options

Actions:

• To develop a funding framework which details the strategy for the use of grant funding as part of a wider portfolio to support the third sector

• We will explore new methods of finance, including social impact bonds and payment by results

Aim: To promote the third sector so that it has opportunity to influence policy and decision making.

We will provide opportunities to support the third sector to improve the quality and effectiveness of its representation

Actions:

• Commission an assessment of the economic and social value of third sector to Wakefield District

• Strengthen the voice and profile of the third sector through Wakefield Assembly and the development of a communications strategy

We will ensure third sector representation within Wakefield Together Partnership Structures

Actions:

• Ensure third sector representation within each of the Wakefield Together Partnership Boards (Children & Young People’s Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Housing, Welfare & Benefits Group, Carbon Reduction & Sustainability Group, Wakefield First and the Intelligence and Co-ordination Group) and within area working structures

• To facilitate a two way dialogue between the Local Services board and the Third Sector Strategy Group

We will strengthen relationships between public sector decision makers and third sector representatives

Actions:

• Promote joint learning opportunities for third sector representatives and public sector decision-makers
To facilitate learning opportunities for elected members to experience and understand the role and value of third sector organisations

Fully implement the Wakefield Compact

**Aim:** To develop effective infrastructure support for third sector organisations throughout Wakefield District.

*We will provide a single point of contact for third sector organisations to access support*

**Actions:**

- Support a new infrastructure model through the Transforming Local Infrastructure Programme which creates a single point of contact, providing a more flexible and responsive offer to groups
- Scoping of a ‘fiscal umbrella’ to making savings on shared back office functions for third sector organisations
- We will target efforts to grow strong, sustainable community anchor organisations which provide a crucial focus and support for local neighbourhoods and the community sector
- Support opportunities for collaboration and networking across the third sector
- Produce and implement a strategy to grow social enterprise and community business across Wakefield District

*We will coordinate the resources and inputs of public sector agencies, private sector partners and third sector infrastructure organisations to achieve greatest impact for local organisations*

**Actions:**

- Developing and implement a strategy to coordinate the public and voluntary sector support for third sector organisations at both a local and district level
- Mapping available office and activity space for third sector organisations; support co-location of groups; and expand community use of under-utilised public buildings

*We will maintain an element of grant funding for third sector organisations*

**Actions:**

- The Third Sector Funding Framework will promote grant funding based on an outcomes focussed framework
- Coordinate the small grants schemes across Wakefield Together for small community groups
What success will look like

1. Third sector organisations and citizens are embedded in the commissioning cycle
2. Better local services that improve the health and wellbeing of local people
3. Balanced commissioning arrangements with more services being delivered by third sector organisations
4. Stronger, more positive relationships between public sector and third sector organisations
5. Third sector organisations have a greater influence on policy development and decision-making
6. Third sector is able to demonstrate its economic and social value
7. A single point of contact for third sector organisations to access development support and advice
8. Opportunities for collaboration and networking across the third sector
9. Coordination of public sector agencies and third sector infrastructure organisations to achieve greatest impact for third sector organisations
10. Growth in the number of active citizens and voluntary action across the District

Implementation and monitoring

A Third Sector Strategy Group has been established to take this strategy forward within the Wakefield Together Partnership. The next stage is consultation with the Third Sector. The draft will be revised for approval at the Local Services Board and is intended to be implemented from 2013.

Much of the action plan is for initiation in 2013-14 and once this is underway a further scan is needed of action into the future. An annual refresh will assist. The Third Sector Strategy Group will be responsible for the implementation of the Action Plan, ensuring the outcomes are meet. The group will be responsible for allocating resources to the action plan. An annual monitoring report should be received by the Local Services Board and made accessible to the Third Sector.

Platforms for enterprise and innovation: Community Centres

Wakefield District is home to a strong network of community centres. In particular, the District boasts a number of centres which are independently run (Havercroft & Ryhill, Kinsley & Fitzwilliam, St George’s, St Swithun’s and St Mary’s), providing a range of services from adult education and training through to early years provision, community transport, activities and luncheon clubs for older people, health and wellbeing services and support for families and individuals in need. These centres provide a vital hub within local areas and act as platforms for community based enterprise and innovation tackling local need.
## Third Sector Strategy: Action Plan

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