

Third Sector Strategy

November 2008



defra

Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
Telephone 020 7238 6000
Website: www.defra.gov.uk

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Contents

Foreword	1
Foreword from Minister for the Third Sector	3
How we developed our Strategy	4
The Deal	5
Our Vision	7
Our Strategy	9
Achieving Together	9
1 Advocacy, voice, campaigning and informing policy development	9
2 Sustainable living, communities and places	11
3 Public services	13
4 Encouraging social enterprise and environmental entrepreneurship	15
5 Creating a framework for greater environmental leadership in the third sector	18
Renewing the way we work with the sector	20
6 Improving our listening to, and communications with, the third sector	20
7 Understanding the sector better	21
8 Joining up what we do	22
9 Better partnerships, building on existing mechanisms	23
10 Enabling our delivery bodies	24
11 Better commissioning practices and procedures	26
Monitoring and reviewing our Strategy	29
Our Actions	30
Annexes	
Annex 1 – The Eight Principles of Good Commissioning	43

Foreword

This strategy sets out how Defra will improve the way it works in partnership with the third sector to achieve the Department's overall mission of living within environmental means. Third sector organisations play a vital role in all areas of Defra's remit.

The sector helps protect our natural environment so that we and future generations may enjoy its diversity, and benefit from nature's essential services which sustain life and prosperity. The sector can help individuals and communities choose greener lifestyles, and help businesses to choose greener practices. These efforts can ensure our natural resources are used more wisely, and emissions of climate change gases are reduced, helping Britain move to a low-carbon economy. Third sector organisations can help communities begin to adapt to some of the unavoidable impacts of climate change, as well as helping to defend the public from environmental risks like flooding and animal diseases. The sector also plays a role in maintaining a healthy, sustainable and secure supply of food, and in promoting the welfare of people and animals alike. We also want to work better with the sector to influence mainstream policies and delivery mechanisms so that rural communities have more equitable access to services. Some of that influencing will be pro-active and some reactive as policies are developed and shared.

In view of all of this, it is clear that Defra would not be able to achieve its strategic objectives without this contribution.

Through the work of the Office of the Third Sector, Communities and Local Government, and other Government Departments, the Government is increasing the capacity of the sector and enhancing the sector's vital role in society – advocating needs, informing policy, delivering public services, empowering communities and enabling active citizenship.

Defra champions sustainable development across Government. It is one of our strategic objectives. This means taking a more joined-up approach which safeguards our environment at the same time as achieving social progress and economic prosperity. Protecting our environment for this generation and the next is an important challenge if we want to improve people's quality of life and ensure they have a secure and sustainable future. Research shows how protecting the environment and moving to low carbon Britain can create jobs and improve economic prosperity. The environment is also important for our health and wellbeing, even the way we feel about our communities. The environment is therefore an issue which should not be separate from the everyday activities undertaken by third sector organisations, or those they undertake with Government. Sometimes environmental issues are underplayed or under-represented. Our strategy will help to ensure that, as part of a joined-up approach to sustainable development, environmental sustainability is more widely mainstreamed in existing activities between Government and the third sector and within the sector itself.

We will work to identify more precisely the barriers, gaps and opportunities where the third sector could make a bigger contribution to these goals, and use this information to inform the way in which mainstream third sector programmes are run. We will build a better, shared understanding of the evidence about what actions work best.

Engaging with third sector organisations is not a 'one size fits all' process – it can be complex. From large international or national organisations, to small local organisations – the third sector's contribution is extensive and varied. We recognise that engaging effectively with NGOs and large national charities is different from engaging effectively with smaller third sector organisations, and those at a regional or community level. Third sector organisations have different levels of capacity and different motivations for engaging. Within the third sector, social enterprises have distinctive needs and characteristics from other third sector organisations. In addition, a relationship with one third sector organisation may quite rightly have many simultaneous dimensions – in advising us, delivering under contract to us, campaigning against us or working in collaboration with us – all of

which require clear expectations if the relationship is to thrive. We aim to take a step-by-step approach to improve our engagement – using different techniques to engage and in some cases helping to build capacity where needed.

This strategy does not attempt to cover every single interaction Defra has with third sector organisations. Instead, it sets out some of the key opportunities where Defra aims to work in partnership with the sector to achieve shared outcomes, and where Defra will improve the way it works so that our engagement with the sector is more effective.

We aim to enhance the contribution which the third sector can make in two main ways:

- 1) Achieving together – boosting the involvement of the sector in all areas of our work to achieve common objectives through:
 - a. Advocacy, voice, campaigning and informing policy development
 - b. Enabling sustainable living, communities and places
 - c. Delivering better outcomes through public services
 - d. Supporting the contribution from social enterprise
 - e. Encouraging environmental leadership within the third sector.
- 2) Renewing the way we work with the sector – we will also be improving the way we work internally as an organisation, to address six key issues which third sector stakeholders have helped us identify. This will ensure our way of working allows for better engagement of third sector organisations. This will simultaneously help improve the Department's overall effectiveness and performance as a result of this process – learning how to do things differently with and through the third sector.

We will want to work with third sector stakeholders to implement the commitments in this strategy – working out the detail and exploring options – as well as developing some specific measures to monitor progress. This strategy is a starting point for an ongoing dialogue – not an end to the process. We look forward to taking forward this agenda with you.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Benn'.

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Huw Irranca-Davies'.

Huw Irranca-Davies MP
Minister for the Natural and
Marine Environment, Wildlife and Rural Affairs,
and Defra's Third Sector Minister

Foreword from the Minister for the Third Sector

The need to live sustainably and to tackle climate change is one of the most urgent challenges for all of us. I am very pleased that in this strategy, Defra has recognised the role that the third sector can play to work with Government to meet this challenge. To achieve this, both Government and the third sector need to work together as productively as we can and focus on our shared objectives. This strategy clearly sets out the actions that Defra, with other stakeholders, will take to make that a reality.

The way that the strategy has been developed is a demonstration of true partnership working. Defra has worked hard to engage a diverse range of third sector organisations to identify the opportunities to achieve positive change. In particular, I commend their work to involve smaller organisations in that process.

I am particularly pleased at the recognition of the role of social enterprise in delivering Defra's strategic goals. Whether it is a furniture recycling project in Essex or a biodiversity project in Cornwall, the potential for social enterprise is enormous. Our environmental Social Enterprise Ambassadors will be working with Defra to improve understanding of social enterprise, and to promote market opportunities to entrepreneurs.

I am also pleased that the strategy acknowledges the tremendous contributions that volunteers can make through a new partnership programme of environmental volunteering.

This strategy sets out a clear framework for the growing partnership between Defra and the third sector, and I look forward to working with Defra to deliver its objectives.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Brennan". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kevin Brennan
Minister for the Third Sector
Office of the Third Sector

How we developed our Strategy

Defra has aimed to take a participative approach to working with third sector stakeholders, staff and delivery bodies in preparing this strategy. More than 30 third sector stakeholders from environmental and non-environmental organisations attended Ministerial discussions in November 2007 and January 2008. We published a consultation document in November 2007 and received over 100 responses by February 2008. To deepen and broaden the consultation, we also invited proposals from third sector stakeholders to prepare think-pieces on particular consultation themes, and to involve wider third sector organisations in doing so. We supported and received seven think-piece documents.

During the summer in 2008, we held three strategy development workshops. One for Defra staff which involved at least one representative from every Directorate in the organisation. This generated a rich source of information and ideas for the Strategy. We held a workshop with representatives from 18 of Defra's delivery bodies to explore ways we could work together. We then held a workshop with around 34 representatives from third sector organisations, to generate ideas for the Strategy.

Throughout the process, we have been assisted by the Defra Compact Group and Social Enterprise Forum, whose meetings have provided helpful comments as our strategy has developed.

We tested our draft framework strategy with stakeholders through meetings and two telephone conferences, as well as consulting colleagues within other Government Departments and in the regional Government Offices.



The Deal

This Strategy sets out the deal between Defra and the third sector. It shows how we will provide opportunities for the sector to enhance its contribution to our objectives where we share the same goals. It also shows how we will support third sector organisations in making this contribution.

Our ask of the sector:

Help achieve shared outcomes which contribute to delivery of our Strategic Objectives through:

- Informing our policy, providing independent or expert advice, and advocating needs
- Working collaboratively with Defra to champion common causes with other bodies at international, national, regional or local level – to influence decisions and make change happen
- Delivering effective services directly or on behalf of our delivery bodies
- Mobilising individuals and communities to choose greener living and protect the environment
- Adopting a way of working which further embeds the Compact principles within the sector and enhances the sector's own ability to engage effectively through:
 - being open to opportunities for more collective or collaborative activity with other third sector organisations where appropriate, rather than competition;
 - communicating a clearer understanding about an organisation's particular mandate and representativeness when engaging in policy development;
 - developing clearer expectations about the reach of Defra's policy remit and the need to engage other Departments where Defra is not the sole responsible department;
 - strengthening the ability to prepare a robust business case and evidence base when inviting Defra to support proposals.

Our offer to the sector:

- More influence on how Defra works through a new Advisory Board and also more opportunities to co-design policies or programmes at an early stage
- More effective engagement with Defra – through an approach based on consistency, fairness and value for money, which recognises and values the time given and full costs incurred by third sector organisations when engaging with Defra – from attending a meeting to inform policy, to delivering a contract or grant programme
- Improved understanding within Defra about the types of organisations within the sector, their varying capacity to respond and the different ways which could be offered to engage these different types of organisation
- Improved understanding within Defra about the distinctiveness of social enterprises within the sector and the importance of intelligent commissioning and business support for this part of the sector to thrive
- Reduced burdens through more joined-up consultation and engagement
- Adopting a way of working which further embeds the Compact principles within Defra
- Clearer relationships with third sector organisations which recognise strategic and delivery roles, which help maintain and respect the independence of the sector, and which respond to the sometimes dual nature of these relationships – such as in lobbying Defra and delivering on our behalf.

Our Vision

What we will have achieved together:

Our five year vision is that Defra and the third sector will have together:

- Enhanced the protection and wellbeing of our natural environment – safeguarding our precious wildlife, landscapes, ecosystem services and the welfare of our animals. Third sector organisations will have expanded their role in directly managing the land or marine areas for net environmental benefit, or indirectly by advising and assisting those who do.
- Mobilised individuals and communities in adopting greener lifestyles, protecting the environment, and reducing their own emissions as part of the cross-government Act On CO₂ campaign. Third sector organisations, including social enterprises, will have expanded in the environment sector, providing goods and services which have accelerated the move to low carbon Britain.
- Helped communities, businesses and organisations become more resilient by adapting to the unavoidable impacts of climate change, and have defended people from environmental risks and their social and economic impacts. We will have together improved the way we plan for and recover from emergencies like floods and animal disease outbreaks, as well as longer-term climate impacts – building on the expertise of the sector and the vital contribution of its volunteers.
- Improved the security and sustainability of food supply in the UK – environmentally, socially and economically. We will have done so by working together to engage, encourage and enable action at every stage in the food chain.
- Strengthened rural communities, having further mainstreamed rural needs into cross-government policy and local service provision, improved access to services, fairness and opportunity for all in rural areas – and have further recognised the important contribution of rural self-help solutions.
- Strengthened environmental leadership within the third sector, with environmental outcomes being joined-up with social and economic ones, and third sector organisations leading by example in mainstreaming the principles of sustainable development into all that they do.



How we will have achieved it:

Defra and the third sector will have together achieved this through developing more effective two-way relationships with third sector organisations, based on respect, trust, dialogue and a better mutual understanding about the nature of the sector, its independence, and the specific barriers and opportunities for its contribution.

Our overall objectives are to:

- Improve jointly our understanding of the evidence about why we must act, the key actions which make most difference, and the lessons of past activities
- Improve our understanding of the barriers, gaps and opportunities related specifically to third sector involvement in achieving Defra's Strategic Objectives
- Mainstream all of the above into existing third sector programmes – within the sector and between Government and the sector
- Facilitate better links between environmental goals and the wider social and economic goals and motivations of third sector organisations, individuals and communities
- Improve the way the Department understands and works with the sector – from consultation to procurement – and thereby improve the effectiveness of our engagement with the third sector, and our reputation for doing so
- Improve our collective understanding about the ladder of engagement with third sector organisations, and making the right choices about when to inform, consult, proactively engage or co-design jointly with third sector stakeholders.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

1. Advocacy, voice, campaigning and informing policy development

Overview:

We will work with third sector organisations as advocates and experts, to take account of the needs of the environment and of citizens, consumers, producers or communities who can help protect our environment but who may also be vulnerable to the impacts of environmental changes. We will work in partnership with third sector organisations to identify and advocate the needs of rural communities and ensure these are addressed by mainstream policy and service delivery. We will work collaboratively with the third sector to



better understand and together make the case for change which helps us live within our environmental means, whilst respecting the independence of the sector.

Objectives:

- To develop a more consistent approach across policy areas in Defra, when involving third sector organisations in advocacy and policy development, learning from activities where it works best.
- To develop a better understanding in Defra, about the policy areas where co-design and early proactive engagement with the sector should be the norm, and those policy areas where informing and consulting third sector organisations are more appropriate.
- To deepen and diversify our engagement where there are currently gaps, and to work better through intermediaries to engage smaller or harder to reach voices.
- To build on existing collaboration, by sharing insights and evidence more and to work together to influence others and bring about the changes needed to live within our environmental means, whilst maintaining and respecting the independence of the sector.

What will success look like?

- Policy is informed by a richer set of information covering smaller and harder to reach voices and balanced with the voices of larger third sector stakeholders.
- Defra and third sector organisations collaborate even more effectively to make the case for change where there are shared goals.
- The advocacy, policy development and campaigning relationships between Defra and third sector stakeholders are enhanced and based on mutual understanding, and practices which maintain and respect the independence of the sector.
- In consultation and policy development, there is a clearer understanding in Defra and among third sector stakeholders about how to manage engagement effectively when there are strong single issues or positions versus broader or more strategic perspectives.

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action:

Defra and third sector collaboration on greener living policy

Defra's framework for pro-environmental behaviours pulls together a growing evidence base on public understanding and behaviour change, an environmental segmentation model and an assessment of the implications for policy, marketing and communications. These are based on a set of headline behaviour goals linked to the main consumption impacts arising from homes, shopping and travel. Since the framework is intended to be of benefit to a wide range of organisations including the third sector, we asked Green Alliance to help us work with stakeholders to review a long list of behaviours and refine it down to a short set of "headline" goals. This was managed through a series of stakeholder workshops convened and facilitated by Green Alliance during Autumn 2006. A final report presented their recommendations for the headline goals together with policy recommendations that were designed to help with the delivery of those goals.

The final set of headline goals, described in the published framework (January 2008), is based very closely on the Green Alliance recommendations. The involvement of a wide constituency of third sector bodies in the original workshops and in subsequent stakeholder events has helped to ensure that Defra's work on behaviour change meets the needs of many of our potential users and has a stronger degree of buy-in than would otherwise be possible. Looking forward we are hoping to work further with the third sector in a programme of action-based research, in implementing programmes and projects through the new third sector greener living fund and in providing accessible, evidence-based advice and support.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/evidence/social/behaviour/index.htm>

Defra and third sector collaboration on marine policy

The Marine and Freshwater Biodiversity Division in Defra works closely with anti-whaling third sector organisations and, in particular, collaborates with Defra's work and cooperation within the International Whaling Commission. The anti-whaling third sector organisations liaise with Defra throughout the year and co-operate with them on issues such as International Whaling Commission recruitment, lobbying and co-ordinating protests against whaling nations. Defra enjoys a productive liaison with the Wildlife and Countryside Link through the establishment of the Consultative Forum on Whaling, which provides a useful and effective advisory body. Prior to the annual International Whaling Conference third sector organisations meet with Defra and Ministers to discuss their objectives and discuss joint tactics for the meeting. The best example of how Defra and third sector organisations co-operate is by co-opting two third sector organisations onto the UK delegation for the meeting. The NGOs offer advice (including technical expertise) and assistance to the delegation. Nevertheless, the third sector organisations are able to maintain a high degree of independence, including continuing to lobby the UK and other Governments, and produce papers that do not necessarily reflect the views of the UK Government.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

2. Sustainable living, communities and places

Overview:

Working as trusted intermediaries, third sector organisations can and do have a vital role to play in **mobilising individuals** as citizens, consumers and volunteers to take action which helps protect our environment. Third sector organisations can also help engage, enable, encourage and exemplify **collective action** in households, communities of place and communities of interest to develop local innovative solutions to environmental issues and gaps in rural services. Third sector organisations can also **empower individuals and communities** in the debate about the issues, raise awareness, and by doing so create the political space necessary for further national or international measures. Working



together, in specific **places**, third sector organisations and other public or statutory agencies can also re-inforce their shared goals and join-up their activities and help places live within their own environmental means. This is an important part of achieving wider social and economic well-being and securing a genuinely sustainable future. Government Offices in the Regions are working with stakeholders from all sectors to help inform, join-up and implement central Government policy. We will be working with GOs to explore further how our third sector strategy informs regional and local activities where these contribute to Defra's objectives. We will also work with Communities and Local Government, the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills, the Department for Energy and Climate Change, and the Office of the Third Sector in taking forward these aspects of our strategy through a joined-up approach.

Objectives:

- To provide a clear, evidence-based framework for third sector organisations, to innovate and scale-up actions which help individuals, as active citizens and consumers, choose greener behaviours which reduce their carbon emissions and protect the natural environment.
- To promote environmental volunteering and recognise the role of unpaid volunteers in Defra affairs.
- To help facilitate collective action, community empowerment, informal learning and community solutions which protect the natural environment, and create sustainable and resilient communities – in urban and rural areas.
- To facilitate strong placed-based partnerships between third sector organisations and statutory organisations, which work together to improve environmental outcomes, strengthen rural communities and make the best use of regional and local plans for doing so.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

What will success look like?

- Third sector organisations have a clearer understanding of the evidence base and tools for action in protecting the natural environment, adapting to climate change and the activities which would make most difference.
- There is a significant reduction in environmental pressures resulting from the widespread mobilisation of individuals and communities, enabling actions which have the greatest impact.
- The scale of environmental volunteering increases.
- Local places accelerate their progress towards achieving better outcomes on the environment, sustainable development and strong rural communities, as a result of more joined-up policy nationally and more local joined-up action between third sector organisations, local authorities, parish and town councils and relevant statutory agencies in Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and integrated regional strategies.

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action

Every Action Counts – Supporting Community Action

Defra is supporting 'Every Action Counts', a consortium of 29 third sector organisations, with £4m over three years. Every Action Counts provides advice and support to third sector organisations which are looking to reduce their impact on the environment, tackle climate change and improve their local area. The Every Action Counts programme has supported a significant investment in training for frontline community workers, activists and individual community champions on sustainable development and the links between issues of environmental and social justice. The Federation for Community Development Learning have trained over 600 trainers, community workers and activists in the use of newly developed resources designed to support their day-to-day work helping communities to identify and take action on issues that concern them. A sustainable development unit has been developed for the National Open College Network and a sustainable development community work skills manual has been produced.

Over 800 Community Champions have been trained and provided with resources to help them support local community organisations in their area or to take their own independent action. Trained Champions have engaged with a wide range of local groups ranging from Scouts to sports clubs, and faith groups to climate action networks. Some have developed their own projects such as working with their local authority to adapt the Every Action Counts themes to provide local residents with information on sustainability.

The programme has identified a range of good practice and inspirational stories from communities who are taking action to save energy, travel wisely, save resources, shop ethically or care for their area. Over 100 case studies have been developed by Capacity Global including video case studies. Capacity Global have also developed One Planet Culture, a project to promote, and provide access to, a range of media such as books, films and events to stimulate discussion and action on the Every Action Counts themes.

www.everyactioncounts.org.uk

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

3. Public services

Overview:

Defra will help facilitate an increased and more effective contribution of third sector organisations in providing a range of important services to the public which contribute to Defra's Strategic Objectives. Sometimes these services are delivered on behalf of Defra but the majority are services delivered on behalf of Defra's Executive Agencies, NDPBs, delivery partners or local government. Third sector organisations can provide value for money services which can reach some customer groups more effectively than the Government. The third sector also plays an important role in helping to understand local needs and priorities and inform the development and evaluation of services. There is potential to increase the role that the third sector play in providing public services which protect the environment. We also work in partnership with third sector organisations who provide services which support the welfare of animals and the wellbeing of the members of the public in the event of flooding, animal disease outbreaks or rural stress. Third sector organisations also provide innovative public services in rural areas as an alternative to, or component of, mainstream rural service provision. Defra's role is to support organisations which advocate the needs of rural areas so they can be addressed more effectively in mainstream service provision. We also support organisations like the *Commission for Rural Communities* which can highlight good practice examples of third sector service provision in rural areas.

Objectives:

Work with Defra's delivery bodies and the third sector to:

- Increase opportunities for third sector organisations in delivering public services which help individuals, communities and public sector organisations to manage and use natural resources more efficiently, defend the public from environmental risks and protect the natural environment.
- Recognise and support the role of third sector organisations who provide services to the public to promote the welfare of animals and the wellbeing of the public in planning and recovering from the impacts of flooding, animal disease and rural stress.
- Continue to support advocates who highlight public service issues in rural areas, so that mainstream service providers address these needs more effectively.

What will success look like?

- There is greater and more effective provision and take-up of services provided by third sector organisations which help the public reduce waste, use natural resources more efficiently and protect or enhance the natural environment. This also contributes to meeting the Government's overall carbon reduction targets.
- The role of the third sector in providing services which protect the welfare of animals, the resilience of communities and the wellbeing of the public in recovering from the impacts of environmental emergencies is supported and valued
- Service providers have a greater understanding of the public service needs of rural areas and the part which third sector organisations can play in meeting these needs within mainstream service delivery.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action:

Defra supports ENCAMS for cleaner and greener public services

ENCAMS is one of Defra's delivery partners, and is a third sector organisation in its own right. It is also the charity behind the Keep Britain Tidy campaign. ENCAMS' remit is to improve local environmental quality (such as litter, detritus, water courses, dog fouling and fly-tipping) and related behaviour (graffiti, abandoned vehicles, fly-posting etc). ENCAMS runs advertising campaigns to change the behaviour of the public and works with managers of land to improve their services and strategic approach.

ENCAMS runs around four campaigns a year in England under the Keep Britain Tidy banner, focussing on specific areas of litter and local environmental quality issues that are presenting themselves as an issue. As an example the campaigns run in 2007/08 included: smoking related litter, fast food and a campaign to get people litter picking called the Big Tidy Up. Defra supports ENCAMS – ENCAMS provides advice and expertise which helps public services provided by local authorities and schools to deliver cleaner, greener outcomes. ENCAMS runs a number of programmes to help improve the quality of where we live.

Eco-Schools

An international programme run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and managed in England by ENCAMS. This programme works with schools to improve all aspects of the environment through a whole school approach and looks at issues surrounding: reducing, reusing and recycling waste; controlling litter and improving the school grounds; reducing energy and water use; promoting healthier lifestyles; addressing road safety and traffic congestion; appreciating the importance of biodiversity; and considering how decisions impact on local and global communities. Over 10,000 schools in England (almost 50%) are now part of this programme.

Beaches

ENCAMS manages the Blue Flag award for beaches and marinas in England on behalf of FEE and this year awarded 82 Blue Flags to the English coastline. Blue Flag is an international award scheme which acts as a guarantee to visitors that a beach they are visiting is one of the best in the world. The organisation also offers an award called Quality Coast Award which recognises the good management and cleanliness of beaches which may not be able to apply for the Blue Flag because they are not a resort beach or because of water quality.

Cleaner Safer Greener Network

This network is subscribed to by local authorities, registered social landlords and other land managers who have a responsibility for improving local environmental quality and related antisocial behaviour. The network allows members to share best practice, offers the opportunity to influence and respond to Government policy, participate in regional meetings, receive advice and guidance, and attendance at a national conference. There are approximately 140 members of this network. ENCAMS runs over 100 training courses a year to help upskill local authorities and other land managers on a range of topics from practical courses on removing graffiti to more strategic training courses on Local Environmental Management. ENCAMS employs a team of surveyors throughout the country to monitor the state of the local environment (Local Environmental Quality Survey of England) across a variety of land uses, on behalf of Defra. These results are used to identify specific issues of concern and help prioritise ours and Government's

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

work. ENCAMS runs a number of regional and national events to share best practice, inform audiences of new Government policy and offer strategic thinking on various programmes and services offered by ENCAMS.

ENCAMS has a membership of over 120 organisations that work with and support the work of the organisation. A team of directors throughout England offer bespoke consultancy support to land managers with a responsibility for improving local environmental quality. This includes selling ENCAMS programmes, market research and tailored monitoring of their area. Market research is at the heart of ENCAMS work and is used to inform all campaigns, understand new client audiences, and measure effectiveness. Bespoke market research is also offered to clients. ENCAMS works with a variety of audiences to improve local environments including the public to help change their behaviour, schools to instill environmental messages from an early age and managers of land to help upskill, provide advice and share best practice.

4. Encouraging social enterprise and environmental entrepreneurship

Overview:

Social enterprises are defined as businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. This means organisations that trade goods and services and use the majority of their profits for social and environmental goals. Social enterprises are able to contribute to a range of Defra's Strategic Objectives. We will develop a better understanding of the potential growth markets for social enterprise in contributing to our Objectives, and explore the ways in which Defra can work with the sector, other Government Departments and the private sector to accelerate the expansion of social enterprises and entrepreneurship in those sectors. Social enterprises have distinctive needs and characteristics as part of the third sector. We will work with social enterprises to improve our understanding the particular barriers and opportunities for social enterprises to thrive in Defra-related markets.



Objectives:

- Work with the sector to improve understanding and the evidence base about the environmental contribution which can be made by social enterprises with primarily social or economic objectives.
- Explore the potential for the expansion of social enterprises in new environmental markets related to homes, SMEs and other potential customers.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

What will success look like?

- A clearer framework for action is developed between Defra and the third sector about the opportunities for social enterprises in contributing to Defra's objectives, and the key interventions which would make most difference to the capacity and effectiveness of the social enterprises in these sectors.

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action:

Defra and its new Social Enterprise Strategic Partnership will be working together to highlight the contribution which social enterprises, like those below, can make to shared goals:

Bulky Matters – WRAP and REconomy CIC support means tendering success

Furniture Matters is one of the first organisations to receive support through the WRAP-REconomy Third Sector Capacity Building Programme. Through this support, Furniture Matters, based in Lancashire, will employ an Interim Manager to enable the Projects Delivery Manager to concentrate on expanding their municipal bulky waste service, "Bulky Matters", to neighbouring authorities.

Furniture Matters' "Bulky Matters" project has previously been identified as being innovative by both Defra and the Audit Commission. The organisation has developed a modular approach to service delivery and this is what makes it replicable in different Local Authorities with differing needs. This flexibility allows Local Authorities to tailor the Bulky Matters service to suit their priorities.

The outcome of the REconomy Community Interest Company (CIC) support work will be that Furniture Matters will secure at least three further contracts with local authorities helping ensure the growth and long term sustainability of the organisation, while also increasing local reuse, diverting waste and preventing carbon emissions.

REconomy CIC's support for the work of Furniture Matters is enabling the development of a high profile and high impact service that can be replicated throughout the UK. This work offers a blueprint for other enterprising re-users across the UK to develop and demonstrates to local authorities the benefits of working with third sector partners to dramatically reduce the bulky waste that they send to landfill.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

Proper Job – helps people with greener living in Dartmoor National Park

Proper Job is a re-use, recycling, composting and food co-operative based in Chagford, a small town in the Dartmoor National Park. It provides four inter-connected activities: recycling, organic food production, training and a shop/cafe. It has an elected Management Committee, seven part-time workers and seven volunteers with a turnover of approximately £150K. It has an established UK reputation for knowledge and expertise about recycling issues. It also hosts Devon Community Composting Network and Devon Community Recycling Network, with plans to host the Devon Low Carbon Network.



Composting of green waste and other recyclables, organic vegetable growing and training are run through The Resource Centre at a permanent site on the outskirts of Chagford open to the public six days a week. The site is divided up into types of recyclables and office space. One area is devoted to green waste i.e. composting and sales of compost. The remainder is devoted to other recyclables e.g. metals, wood, ceramic (bricks rubble etc), cardboard, plastic bubble wrap and polythene, batteries, mobile phones, cartridges etc and re-use items such as books, clothes, textiles, building materials, salvage, timber, bric-a-brac, bicycles and furniture. It has a turnover of approximately £21K.

The fourth activity is The Courtyard, a café and shop in the town centre, seating about 30 customers with a £130K turnover, which was set up in 1996 to provide Chagford with local, organic or fair traded goods. A new shop has recently been opened at the reuse, recycle, compost site stocking environmentally friendly products including bio-degradable nappies, detergents, cosmetics and sanitary wear amongst a whole lot of other things. See www.proper-job.org

5. Creating a framework for greater environmental leadership in the third sector

Overview:

Leading by example is an important part of encouraging action from others and building credibility. Defra is leading by example to improve its own sustainability and environmental performance through our *DASL* (Defra as Sustainability Leader) programme, supported by Ministers and our Management Board. Many third sector organisations, like those in the private and public sectors, now want to demonstrate their own commitment to corporate social responsibility, including their environmental performance. There are some excellent examples of good practice in the third sector, where organisations are putting the principles of sustainable development into practice within their own policies, programmes and procedures. Many are also demonstrating leadership with their members on environmental sustainability. Defra will work with *OTS*, third sector organisations and others to help disseminate this good practice more widely and mainstream these issues into existing sector support programmes, thereby creating a supportive framework for greater environmental leadership from within the sector.



Objectives:

- To act as a catalyst to help bring together existing activities, tools and good practice on embedding sustainable development within the organisation, including improving environmental performance, and to mainstream these within existing sector support programmes.

What will success look like?

- Mainstream sector support programmes cover sustainable development and environmental performance, as part of improving the capacity and infrastructure of the sector as a whole.
- More third sector organisations lead by example on sustainable development, environmental sustainability and climate change through actions which embed these objectives throughout their organisations and their way of working.

Our Strategy – Achieving Together

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action:

Every Action Counts – environmental leadership and organisational change in the third sector

Defra is supporting Every Action Counts, a consortium of 29 third sector organisations, with £4m over three years. Every Action Counts provides advice and support to third sector organisations which are looking to reduce their impact on the environment, tackle climate change and improve their local area.

The Every Action Counts programme has provided a range of support and information to help national and local voluntary sector organisations to improve their environmental performance.

Each of the 29 national partner organisations has developed their own Sustainable Development Action Plan outlining how they will take steps to save energy, travel wisely, save resources, shop ethically and care for their local area. They have also taken steps to promote good practice and the resources available through the programme to their members at a local and regional level.

Every Action Counts provides a range of resources for voluntary organisations of all sizes including a community pack containing action planning tools, and publications providing information on good environmental practice in offices and community buildings. A website provides a large selection of supporting information including fact sheets, toolkits, guides and web links produced and supported by Bassac. Programme partners BTCV have trained a cohort of over 800 Community Champions to provide face-to-face support for local community groups who want to take action. Over 2000 groups have registered on the Every Action Counts website and over 180 organisations have signed the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change.

The programme partners worked with Defra and the Office of the Third Sector to develop the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change. The Declaration is a statement of intent for third sector organisations which explicitly links the need to tackle climate change with the need for social and environmental justice. Signatories pledge to work with central and local government and others to advocate for, and support environmental and social justice policies that will assist the UK to reach or exceed national targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Over 2000 community organisations have registered on the Every Action Count website and over 180 third sector organisations have signed the Declaration on Climate Change.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

6. Improving our listening to, and communications with, the third sector

Overview:

Third sector organisations provide expertise and advice based on their own activities and networks. We will improve the way we listen to and communicate with third sector organisations. We will work with and through intermediaries and umbrella organisations to better engage smaller groups and those at regional and local level.



Objectives:

- Increase opportunities for more effective two-way dialogue and co-design in policy development and implementation.
- Enhance the quality and culture of partnership working across the Department, between Defra and third sector stakeholders, building relationships and mutual trust.
- Improve our third sector stakeholder engagement to become more strategic and consistent.
- Ensure that smaller, BME and hard to reach third sector groups have a voice in policy development and implementation, making best use of using existing mechanisms where possible.

What will success look like?

- Third sector organisations have clear feedback about the results of consultation with the sector and the way this has informed decisions or actions. Third sector organisations feel their views have been taken on board, and that their views and experience have contributed to policy development.
- Third sector organisations feel they have made a difference and that they have a sense of ownership in policy making.
- Third sector organisations feel that mutual trust has developed/improved, and feel valued.
- Third sector organisations are able to fully understand and accurately communicate to others technical policy changes or proposals put forward by Defra.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

7. Understanding the sector better

Overview:

The third sector is very diverse, with large and small organisations driven by a wide variety of aims and objectives which may not always coincide with Defra's. We will improve our own understanding of the sector, the different types of third sector organisations, each with different levels of capacity and the variety of approaches we should adopt to engage them effectively.

Objectives:

- Improve understanding in Defra about the distinctive characteristics and diverse nature of the third sector and the different approaches which can be used to engage.
- Improve understanding about the independence of third sector organisations and the practical application of this to our third sector relationships.
- Improve clarity within Defra about the distinction between the strategic and delivery roles of third sector organisations.

What will success look like?

- There is a greater level of awareness and insight within Defra about the diversity of the third sector and the best ways of engaging different parts of the sector.
- There is a clearer understanding and clearer set of expectations in both Defra and the sector about who third sector stakeholders legitimately represent.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

8. Joining-up what we do

Overview:

The work of many third sector organisations can and does support a range of Defra's Strategic Objectives and there are also links to the objectives of other Government Departments. We will help to improve understanding within the Defra and within third sector stakeholders about how to identify and value delivery of multiple outcomes (environmental, social and economic). We will help third sector organisations to identify and scale up their environmental outcomes as part of wider social or economic activities – and as part of a joined-up approach to sustainable development.

Objectives:

- Work with third sector partners to help understand and facilitate links between Defra policy priorities and those owned by other Government Departments.
- Join up communications across Defra's different third sector stakeholder groups, that each relate to different Defra policy areas, in order to add value to the delivery of Defra's top priorities.

What will success look like?

- There are clearer shared expectations in Defra and third sector stakeholders about the ability of individual officials to understand or influence the whole of the Department's policy agenda, and the need for the engagement of other Departments where Defra is not the sole responsible Department for a policy.
- The wide range of Defra's existing third sector stakeholder groups contribute to the delivery of our PSA on the natural environment, and our strategic objectives, as a result of the tools and information which they have been able to access through these channels.
- Third sector organisations and Defra policy leads are more able to identify, capture and value the contribution which third sector organisations can make to social and economic goals as part of helping to address Defra's Public Service Agreement on the natural environment, and our strategic objectives.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

9. Better partnerships, building on existing mechanisms

Overview:

We will work with third sector organisations to develop better partnerships, with clearer expectations on both sides, mutual trust and which maintain and respect the independence of the sector. We will be clearer about either the strategic or delivery purpose of these partnerships and reflect this in the appropriate governance and reporting requirements. We will be better able to manage relationships which simultaneously have multiple dimensions – contractual, campaigning, advisory and delivery. We will work with and through third sector intermediaries to engage others and build on existing mechanisms rather than duplicate them.

Objectives:

- Build on the Defra Compact Group and Defra Social Enterprise Forum, to establish more strategic partnerships with senior Defra representation
- Improve the consistency and effectiveness of third sector stakeholder engagement procedures across the Department and make the most of existing ongoing relationships with key third sector stakeholders
- Adopt a clearer distinction between strategic relationships and delivery relationships

What will success look like?

- More effective partnerships for delivery and those for strategic roles, with governance and funding arrangements which fit these roles.
- Defra and the sector facilitate partnerships which have clearer roles and expectations, and where appropriate, third sector organisations are more responsive to working together rather than competing with one another.
- Third sector organisations have greater capacity to prepare effective business cases, business plans and evaluation activity when inviting Defra to support proposals.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

10. Enabling our delivery bodies

Overview:

Defra works with and through a wide range of organisations in order to help achieve our shared objectives. They include executive agencies of Defra, non-departmental public bodies, public corporations and public or private sector organisations which Defra funds to deliver specific programmes. Many of these organisations are independent from Defra in the way they are constituted and the way they are run. Some, like our executive agencies, are bound by the commitments in the Compact agreement, others are not. We aim to work in partnership with all our delivery bodies to help raise awareness of the *Compact* principles. We will help share information and good practice across these organisations so that they are also able to mainstream these principles in the way they work. We will help build their capacity so we can together improve our collective engagement of the third sector, and do so in a more consistent way.

Objectives:

- To work with our relevant executive agencies, NDPBs and delivery partners to together improve our collective understanding and awareness about how to improve engagement of third sector organisations – for example as our delivery partners, service providers, suppliers, expert advisers, advocates and independent intermediaries.
- To develop a more consistent approach across the Defra Network in the way organisations engage third sector organisations.
- To better understand Defra delivery body relationships with particular Third Sector organisations and identify opportunities for more collaborative working across the Defra Network with these organisations to promote increased efficiency and effectiveness.

What will success look like?

- Defra's delivery bodies raise the profile of the way they work with the third sector and enhance their engagement of the sector in a way that is recognised and rewarded by Defra.
- There is a clearer understanding across delivery bodies and third sector stakeholders about the *Compact* principles and the practical application of these to the way the delivery bodies work.
- Defra and its delivery bodies co-ordinate engagement of the third sector in a coherent and consistent way, with more collaborative engagement where relationships with particular third sector organisations overlap.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action

Defra and WRAP help establish REconomy Community Interest Company

Defra, through its delivery body WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme), was instrumental in establishing REconomy CIC. A Community Interest Company is a new form of company which is a social enterprise. REconomy CIC includes a commitment to a new third sector reuse and recycling capacity building programme contained in the 2007 Waste Strategy. Defra secured additional funding to implement the commitment and worked alongside WRAP and REconomy CIC to shape the new programme.

REconomy CIC is made up of four networks, which all have an equal share:

- Community Recycling Network UK (CRN UK);
- Furniture Reuse Network (FRN);
- Community Composting Network (CCN); and
- London Community Recycling Network (LCRN).

WRAP entered into a consultation process with REconomy CIC to agree shared objectives and goals. Challenging targets for outcomes – including an increase in tonnages of goods diverted from landfill, carbon savings and job placements created – along with proportionate monitoring requirements were also agreed.

REconomy CIC's principal objective is to:

'Provide development support, guidance and information to Third Sector Waste Management Organisations and to represent their interests in the further development of this sector.'

The support provided by the WRAP Third Sector Programme with REconomy CIC has five strands:

- organisational development and capacity building;
- training and networking;
- investment for growth;
- market development; and
- direct funding for wider project opportunities.

The programme is intended to enable organisations to sustain and develop local, regional and national community waste management activities. This will in turn:

- increase reuse as well as recycling;
- reduce the total amount of waste produced;
- reduce carbon emissions;
- provide low cost products (e.g. reused furniture) to alleviate poverty; and
- provide work and training opportunities to excluded communities.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Steve Creed, Director of Business Growth at WRAP, says: “We knew that working in partnership with REconomy CIC represented a new challenge to WRAP. Early on we became aware of the Government’s Compact and it proved to be a good framework and model for best practice for the third sector programme. Time will tell how effective this process has been, but the foundations for an effective new approach to waste management solutions and for the inclusion of communities and the voluntary sector and the development of social enterprises are in place.”

Matthew Thomson, Managing Director of REconomy CIC and Chief Executive of LCRN, says: “REconomy CIC needed the sort of strong track record of delivery and achievement of hard targets that WRAP has achieved. Building on this experience, REconomy CIC can bring a high level of commitment, voluntary action and innovative ways of working to achieve new and alternative solutions to waste management issues.”

By ensuring that policy makers at all levels of government are aware of the needs of and opportunities presented by third sector waste management organisations, REconomy CIC helps to ensure that community based groups have a favourable environment in which to operate and that any new policies and regulations treat these groups fairly.

11. Better commissioning practices and procedures

Overview:

Defra has a more limited commissioning role for public services when compared with some other Government departments. The majority of services related to Defra’s outcomes are commissioned by our delivery bodies or local authorities. In taking forward the ‘Enabling our delivery bodies’ section of this Strategy, we will help encourage these commissioning organisations to take into account the Government’s *eight principles of good commissioning*, (see Annex 1) and the *Compact* principles, in the way their own grants and contracts are run. Where Defra does commission directly, we will further enhance our practices and procedures as part of our commitment to *sustainable procurement*. Sustainable procurement is about maximising the environmental and social outcomes which can be derived through procurement of any goods or services – whilst minimising the negative impacts. This includes capturing the wider benefits and value of third sector involvement. Where applicable, we will use the advice and specialist knowledge of third sector organisations to help understand the needs of service users at the early stages of the commissioning cycle, and to seek feedback on the commissioning process.

Many of Defra’s major suppliers are commercial organisations and we will continue to work with our existing suppliers to raise awareness of the benefits of third sector organisations in their own supply chains. We aim to improve our understanding of Defra’s existing third sector supplier base, and improve the range of opportunities for third sector organisations to deliver contracts in the future. We also aim to improve the way we manage contracts and grant programmes to ensure compliancy with the eight commissioning principles and the Compact principles. We aim to develop a consistent application of these principles to grant and contract management across the organisation.

Defra’s own work on commissioning and procurement sits in the context of wider work being done by the Office of the Third Sector and the Office of Government Commerce – who lead on third sector policy and sustainable procurement respectively.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Objectives:

- Improve our understanding of the goods and services that third sector organisations currently supply to Defra, and the future potential for a third sector supplier base.
- Improve the consistent application of the Government's *eight principles of good commissioning* and Compact principles in Defra's grant funding and procurement processes.
- Explore new ways of ensuring third sector organisations are able to fully respond to procurement opportunities and standard procurement procedures.
- Explore ways of taking into account the value of third sector providers in the procurement process.
- Encourage and enable commissioners at national, regional or local level who help deliver Defra policy priorities, including Defra's biggest suppliers, to include third sector organisations in their own procurement processes and supply chains.
- Where possible, support capacity building or market development initiatives with potential third sector providers/suppliers related to Defra policies.

What will success look like?

- The number and value of third sector organisations who supply to Defra increases as result of better information about the potential third sector supplier base and disseminating information about tender opportunities.
- Other suppliers and commissioning organisations that deliver services on Defra's behalf, have grant and contract procedures which fully embed the Commissioning and Compact principles.
- Defra's own commissioning procedures consistently and fully embed the Government's eight principles of good commissioning and the Compact principles as part of achieving sustainable procurement, with grant procedures which are outcome focused and enable full cost recovery, offer part-payment in advance, have proportionate monitoring/reporting and clarity of purpose for 'shopping', 'investing' or 'giving'.

Our Strategy – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Defra in partnership, partnerships in action

Raising awareness of third sector organisations across Defra's suppliers

The UK Government Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP) highlighted that Government wants to move towards government supply chains and public services that are increasingly low carbon, low waste and water efficient, which respect biodiversity and deliver our wider sustainable development goals. Defra has publicly committed to be an exemplar on sustainable procurement by performing at Level 5 of the Sustainable Procurement Task Force Flexible Framework. In delivering our ambition, and recognising our suppliers' importance in this, Defra has set up and now coordinates a supplier engagement programme (with awards) which consists of various events, such as workshops, conferences, meetings and fora, and brings together suppliers with Defra policy makers and procurers. This has been welcomed and embraced by our suppliers and has received a lot of attention from other parts of Government.

The events aim to raise awareness of sustainability issues within the supply chain and highlight how they can help us deliver on our sustainability commitments. Following the 2nd annual conference, Defra held a more in-depth set of sustainable procurement workshops – interactive sessions that reinforced messages around the Flexible Framework, the prioritisation methodology, timber procurement policy, resource efficiency, carbon emissions and energy use, and emerging social issues (included equality and diversity and third sector).

The event comprised six differently themed workshops which took place six times during the day so that all of the suppliers had the opportunity to attend each one. One of these sessions focused on social issues and in particular, promoting diverse supply chains. It opened with presentations on the third sector and diversity, inviting suppliers' views on the wider innovative, social and environmental benefits they might capture through engagement with third sector organisations. Suppliers were encouraged to align themselves with Defra's diversity policies and sustainability issues and to be able to demonstrate they had proactive diversity policies and plans which were monitored to support their approach.

Suppliers were positive in their response on increasing diversity in the supply chain. There was widespread support amongst participants for joint Defra/supplier action plans on further information and how to incorporate these issues into contracting/tendering processes.

Monitoring and Reviewing our strategy

Defra's Third Sector Minister is the lead Minister for this Strategy and the Senior Responsible Owner is the Director-level Third Sector Champion. The new Third Sector Advisory Board will have a role in overseeing the overall implementation of the strategy through annual monitoring reports.

The implementation of this strategy will also be monitored through other existing reporting mechanisms within Defra. These include the regular Management Board reports on our reputational Strategic Objective which covers stakeholder engagement. Many actions in this strategy are also part of Defra's set of Board Programmes or Group Programmes – and so will be monitored by the existing Programme Boards in these policy areas.

New measures will also be developed to help monitor progress. Defra's work on stakeholder intelligence will provide a more focused set of satisfaction measures, many of which will be relevant for third sector stakeholders. We also intend to work with Defra's Third Sector Advisory Board to identify a set of headline success measures for this strategy.

A statement of progress on implementing this strategy will be made at the proposed annual third sector stakeholder forum event to be held each November.

We intend to review this strategy after three years but also to refresh it annually to take account of any significant changes to the policy landscape or in view of information from monitoring implementation.

Achieving Together	30
1 Advocacy, voice, campaigning and informing policy development	31
2 Sustainable living, communities and places.	34
Mobilising individuals and communities	34
Volunteering	34
Places	35
3 Public services	36
4 Encouraging social enterprise and environmental entrepreneurship	37
5 Creating a framework for greater environmental leadership in the third sector	38
Renewing the way we work with the sector	39
6 Improving our listening to, and communications with, the third sector	39
7 Understanding the sector better	39
8 Joining-up what we do	40
9 Better partnerships, building on existing mechanisms	40
10 Enabling our delivery bodies	41
11 Better commissioning practices and procedures	42

Our Actions – Achieving Together

1. Advocacy, voice, campaigning and informing policy development

Immediate actions:

- 1.1 Set up a strategic forum on *environmental behaviour change* involving third sector organisations as well as public and private sector organisations.
- 1.2 As part of our stakeholder engagement, we will work with third sector representatives through a stakeholder group and other means, to help decide how best to implement the provisions in the *Climate Change Bill* for producing a national risk assessment related to climate impacts, a national climate change adaptation programme and in requiring bodies to report how they are adapting to climate change.
- 1.3 The *Adapting to Climate Change Programme* will establish a Partnership Board which will bring together key stakeholders, including those from the third sector. This group will both advise on the development of the cross-Government Programme, and be active participants in it.
- 1.4 Set up a Partnership Board for our *Strong Rural Communities Programme* involving third sector stakeholders, including representation from the Regional Rural Affairs Forums.
- 1.5 Following the publication of Defra's discussion document, "Ensuring the UK's Food Security in a Changing World", we will continue to engage third sector organisations through two planned workshops, regular meetings with consumer organisations and regional meetings to inform the Government's announcement in December about its initial conclusions on food security.
- 1.6 Establish an "Advocacy and Voice" partnership group of the new Defra *Third Sector Advisory Board*, to consider ways of using existing networks to improve engagement with smaller and harder to reach groups on Defra affairs.
- 1.7 Involve third sector organisations in a new National Ecosystem Assessment to be undertaken between 2008 and 2010, to share insights and evidence about the current and future state of our natural ecosystems.
- 1.8 As part of updated guidance on consultation, develop a code of practice which gives a more consistent approach towards meeting the expenses or overheads of third sector organisations participating in Defra advisory or stakeholder groups.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 1.9 Help enable the *National Flood Forum* to work with and through third sector organisations to provide advocacy and voice on the issue of flood risk. Work closely with the Forum to encourage property owners to take action which improves their resilience to flooding.
- 1.10 Work with a wide range of organisations, including those from the third sector, to take forward the Government's *Future Water Strategy*. By 2030 this will improve the quality of our water environment, mitigate flood risks, ensure the sustainable use of water resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt the water industry to climate change.
- 1.11 Continue to involve third sector organisations in the Waste Stakeholder Group to advise the Government on the delivery of the *Waste Strategy for England* and developing future policy.
- 1.12 Involve representatives from the third sector in the informal consultation process being carried out in the run-up to Defra's strategic review of packaging policy. This engagement in workshops and other events will continue as the strategy gets implemented after October 2008.
- 1.13 Continue to develop our revisions to the Waste Carrier Registration System in full consultation with the third sector to ensure that any necessary changes are effectively managed and communicated.

Our Actions – Achieving Together

- 1.14 Continue to support *ENCAMS*, one of Defra's third sector delivery partners, to advise Government and campaign independently to improve and protect the quality of the local environment.
- 1.15 Involve third sector organisations in shaping the successor to the *Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)* target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010; both by informing the UK Government's view, and by contributing to discussions at and leading up to the CBD's Conference of the Parties in 2010, at which a successor target is expected to be agreed.
- 1.16 Involve third sector organisations in the new delivery framework for the *England Biodiversity Strategy*, to be launched with Ministers and Natural England in November 2008. This will lead to a more integrated approach towards enhancing sites, habitats and species, and the ecosystem services on which we depend.
- 1.17 Work with our third sector partners to finalise, publish and implement "Farming For A Changing Future" – a public statement about how Government will continue to work in partnership with the agricultural sector to deliver a shared long term vision for farming in England. This will form the basis for future partnership working for a thriving farming and food sector which improves its net environmental impact.
- 1.18 Continue to involve the third sector stakeholders in gathering and evaluating evidence on the environmental impact of losing set-aside land, in developing mitigation and implementation options and in formulating policy and delivery measures on environmental management systems for farming.
- 1.19 Continue to engage third sector organisations through the Rural Climate Change Forum, the Government's high level advisory group on agriculture, forestry, land management and climate change issues to enable the agricultural sector to fulfil its potential to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 1.20 Support the "*Farming Futures*" project, in partnership with relevant third sector stakeholders, to raise awareness of climate change among farmers and land managers, and disseminate specific advice to them about what they can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support mitigation efforts, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 1.21 Involve third sector organisations in developing a Vision for a Sustainable Food System as part of Defra's Food Chain Programme. The Vision will provide clarity and sharper prioritisation on addressing the challenges within the system for food sector businesses, NGOs, the third sector and others. It will be developed through a deliberative programme of engagement (workshops, consultations etc) with internal and external stakeholders and consumers, including third sector organisations, in order to capture all angles of the food chain. The first phase of workshops will be in November 2008 followed by a more extensive, wider phase of engagement in Spring next year.
- 1.22 We will continue to work with third sector organisations on developing, delivering and monitoring environmental objectives through current agri-environment schemes and the RDPE (Rural Development Programme for England) stakeholder groups.



Our Actions – Achieving Together

- 1.23 Involve third sector organisations in work to explore the future reforms of Pillar 2 of the Common Agriculture Policy for introduction in 2013, in order to inform the Government's position for negotiating with the EU.
- 1.24 Continue to support the *Regional Rural Affairs Forums* which include third sector organisations, to advocate the voice of rural people and link these more closely with the *Commission for Rural Communities (CRC)* and *Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)*.
- 1.25 Encourage the Commission for Rural Communities to continue involving third sector organisations in its rural advocacy work.
- 1.26 Continue to support and facilitate the national *Rural Community Halls Network* in order to help inform relevant policies or programmes across Government and with those who fund community buildings.
- 1.27 Involve third sector organisations through consultation, a project board and other means, to deliver the Department's approach to streamlining environmental permitting systems, delivering our *Fairer and Better Environmental Enforcement Project* which will reform the architecture of environmental enforcement, and to inform the way the Department implements the EU's Environmental Liability Directive which requires polluters to put right any environmental damage.
- 1.28 Enable third sector organisations, or other interested parties, to use a new "right to request action" as part of the *Environmental Liability Directive*, whereby interested bodies could draw the attention of regulators to instances of environmental damage or risk of damage and request that the regulator acts.
- 1.29 Involve third sector organisations such as animal welfare charities, in the development of regulations and codes of practice covering dangerous dogs, circus animals, greyhound racing and the welfare of dogs, cats, equines and primates, as part of implementing the *Animal Health Act*.
- 1.30 Continue to work with and through third sector organisations to help engage harder to reach groups, such as those advocating the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, over issues that may affect them under the Animal Health Act and animal welfare during transport.
- 1.31 Involve third sector organisations through the Marine and Fisheries Stakeholders Forum and a new Ministerial Task Force, to help decide the Government's priorities for the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy by 2012.
- 1.32 Involve third sector stakeholders in the development and implementation of the *Marine Bill*, Marine Policy Statement and Marine Strategy Framework Directive, with workshops to help inform the UK's position on what 'good environmental status' means for our marine environment.
- 1.33 Involve third sector organisations in identifying Marine Conservation Zones, a consultative forum to devise policies for whale conservation, and in short-term projects to help promote marine stewardship funded through the Fisheries Challenge Fund.
- 1.34 Continue to involve third sector organisations in the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership, its working groups and workshops, to highlight the impact of climate change in the marine environment to key decision makers.
- 1.35 Continue to involve participation from voluntary groups of commoners (i.e. those entitled to graze animals on common land) in plans to implement the Commons Act 2006. This includes inviting selected commoners' associations to attend focus groups (discussing emerging policy thinking) and providing funding to ensure that those most remote from London are not excluded because of the costs of travel.

2. Sustainable living, communities and places

Immediate actions:

Mobilising individuals and communities:

- 2.1 Following a recent initiative by Fiona Reynolds from the National Trust and Ian Cheshire from B&Q, on how Government, business and the third sector can work together more effectively to inspire individual action on climate change and the environment, we will support a national partnership of third sector and business organisations in co-ordinating and preparing a campaign to mobilise individuals on key greener living actions such as energy efficiency and food.
- 2.2 Launch Defra's new *third sector fund for greener living* to work through a range of third sector delivery partners which can enable individuals who are most ready and willing to act, to choose greener behaviours.
- 2.3 Under Defra's *Food Chain Programme* and the *Influencing Consumer Behaviour* project, we will develop advice and information for consumers on what they can do to reduce the impacts of the food they buy and eat. Mainly working through existing initiatives we aim to promote behaviour change by working with third sector organisations to help disseminate information and advice to consumers.
- 2.4 Work with the *Energy Saving Trust* to implement their *Communities Strategy* which will work with third sector organisations to help households reduce carbon emissions through offering practical advice and support on waste, water, travel and energy in the home.
- 2.5 Support and evaluate a programme of action-based research, involving some third sector organisations, about innovative ways of encouraging individuals to choose greener behaviours.
- 2.6 Work with *ACRE* and *NALC* to prepare information which helps local communities and parish and town councils to prepare and adapt to the local impacts of climate change.
- 2.7 Working with and through the *UK Climate Impacts Programme* (UKCIP), we will look at options for involving third sector organisations in the roll-out of the new UKCIP climate impact scenarios to help raise awareness in this sector about the projected changes in the UK's climate.
- 2.8 Work with third sector organisations to understand the carbon impact of food and to develop appropriate messages and actions for consumers.
- 2.9 Explore with *ACRE* and *NALC* a rural community empowerment project which will help rural areas to contribute to the objectives set out in the Government's '*Communities in Control*' white paper.
- 2.10 Work with CLG, agencies and the third sector to explore the scope for better co-ordinated support for community groups managing local greenspaces – including advice, help with accessing funding and assistance in establishing and running community volunteer programmes – and the opportunities for a one-stop-shop.

Volunteering

- 2.11 Develop an environmental volunteering campaign to enhance biodiversity by working with a range of NGO's (*BTCV, RSPB, Marine Conservation Society, the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and the National Trust*) and delivery bodies such as the *Forestry Commission* and *Natural England*, under the umbrella of the *Department of Health's 'Change 4 Life'* initiative for healthy active lifestyles. We will explore links with the local performance indicator on volunteering (NI 6).

Our Actions – Achieving Together

- 2.12 As part of Defra's Wellbeing and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy, use Defra's intranet and annual volunteering fair, to encourage staff as individuals and teams, to participate in environmental and community volunteering opportunities, and provide information to staff about existing national volunteering schemes and databases which hold these opportunities.
- 2.13 Promote green volunteering more generally through a new direct.gov search facility linked to *do-it.org* the national volunteering database, and explore ways of linking this to Defra NDPBs and delivery partners.

Places:

- 2.14 Follow up the launch, in October 2008, of six zero waste places, including cities, towns and rural communities, to become exemplars of good environmental practice on all waste – including exemplary partnership working between local authorities and the third sector on waste.
- 2.15 Set up a Places partnership group of Defra's new *Third Sector Advisory Board*, to explore ways of aligning the delivery of Defra-related local authority performance indicators with the efforts of local third sector organisations and their contribution to other relevant local performance indicators.
- 2.16 Hold a workshop to explore existing good practice and the potential for new ways of joining-up third sector organisations with the efforts of *Natural England*, the *Environment Agency*, *RDAs*, *Government Offices* and local authorities, to secure environmental and rural outcomes at local and regional levels.
- 2.17 Work with relevant national umbrella bodies for community anchor organisation to support a locality based action-learning project, which finds effective ways of joining-up the efforts of local third sector organisations with those of regional environmental agencies, Government Offices and wider Local Strategic Partnership members, to achieve environmental targets in Local Area Agreements.
- 2.18 Continue to support the nine independent Regional Climate Change Partnerships which exist in each English region, and are made up of local stakeholders, ranging from the Regional Development Agencies through to small local charities.

Ongoing and longer term actions:

- 2.19 Explore with the *Decc* and the Climate Change Best Practice Programme Advisory Panel, the potential for a thematic project about how best local authorities and third sector organisations can work in partnership and join up activity to achieve local outcomes for adapting to climate change and protecting the environment and also the links with the third sector related local performance indicators (NI 6 and 7.)
- 2.20 Work with *DIUS* and third sector stakeholders to embed sustainable development and environmental materials into future activities which promote adult informal learning.
- 2.21 As part of Defra's Wellbeing and CSR Strategy, explore mechanisms which enable Defra's third sector partners to promote, broker and fill their environmental and community volunteering opportunities with Defra staff.
- 2.22 Continue to support *ENCAMS*, a third sector delivery partner, to engage neighbourhoods in local environmental quality activities such as the current Big Tidy Up initiative, and schools through the Eco-Schools programme.
- 2.23 We will work with a wide range of organisations, including those from the third sector, in taking forward "*Fisheries 2027 – a long term vision for sustainable fisheries*" which will incorporate the contribution of fishing activity to coastal communities.

Our Actions – Achieving Together

- 2.24 Continue to help third sector organisations improve the quality of life in communities affected by aggregate extraction through projects supported by the *Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund*.
- 2.25 Continue to support the *Rural Communities Action Network* through our strategic grant of £10m over three years to undertake a range of influencing activities at the local and regional level which benefit rural areas in tackling climate change, enhancing the countryside and environment, improving access to services, affordable rural housing, employment and skills. This will also support ACRE and the Rural Community Councils to influence local decision-making and community planning through the work of Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements.
- 2.26 Work with Farming and Countryside Education and other third sector stakeholders as part of the Think Food and Farming Education Working Group, to build on the benefits of the “Year of Food and Farming” initiative, and continue to change children’s relationship with food and give them direct experience of where food comes from, how to cook it, what life is like in the countryside and the importance of environmental issues.

3. Public services

Immediate actions:

- 3.1 Work with *Futurebuilders* to promote their services, loans and grant investments to those in the environment sector wanting to win contracts to provide environmental services to public sector authorities and those spending public money.
- 3.2 Promote the new *Office of the Third Sector* guidance on delivering public services through partnerships and consortia.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 3.3 Continue to support *Wrap* and the *REconomy* Community Interest Company (CIC) in a programme worth £4m over three years to increase the capacity and effectiveness of third sector organisations providing services in the waste and recycling sector.
- 3.4 Continue to support *ENCAMS*, a third sector delivery partner, in advising local authorities about ways to improve the delivery of local environmental quality services.
- 3.5 Through Defra’s better regulation and simplification plan, help remove barriers of burdens on service delivery by third sector organisations.
- 3.6 Explore with *OTS* and stakeholders, sources of funding which could enable the Third Sector Research Centre to evaluate the evidence base about the contribution which third sector service providers can make to one or more of Defra’s strategic objectives.
- 3.7 Defra will liaise with the Farming Help Partnership over the work they do to help create opportunities for new entrants to the farming industry, for example, through provision of increased affordable housing.

Our Actions – Achieving Together

4. Encouraging social enterprise and environmental entrepreneurship

Immediate actions:

- 4.1 Launch Defra's new social enterprise strategic partnership and begin implementing the agreed work plan.
- 4.2 Ensure that knowledge and expertise about the distinctive needs of social enterprises is represented on Defra's new *Third Sector Advisory Board*.
- 4.3 Work with *OTS*, *Decc* and Defra's Social Enterprise Strategic Partnership to commission research which will identify and expand the contribution which social enterprises can make in environmental markets.
- 4.4 Work with *OTS* and Defra's social enterprise partners, to help social enterprises identify, report and enhance their environmental outcomes by applying a set of environmental measures as part of the project to develop Social Return on Investment methodology.
- 4.5 Explore the potential to build links between Defra and one or more of the national *Social Enterprise Ambassadors*, to improve understanding about the distinctive needs and characteristics of social enterprises, and the potential for social enterprises to contribute specifically to Defra's objectives in Defra's delivery landscape.
- 4.6 Promote the new *Office of the Third Sector* guidance on delivering public services through partnerships and consortia.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 4.7 Continue to support the role of the *Commission for Rural Communities* and *Rural Community Councils* in disseminating and mainstreaming good practice about social enterprise solutions which meet rural needs.

5. Creating a framework for greater environmental leadership in the third sector

Immediate actions:

- 5.1 Establish a joint Defra, *Decc* and *OTS* Ministerial task group involving relevant third sector stakeholders, to exchange information about current initiatives and to provide recommendations about the best ways of mainstreaming sustainable development, climate change and the environment into existing third sector support programmes.
- 5.2 Defra and the *OTS* will jointly commission a piece of work to:
 - a) explore and then recommend to the sector the appropriate measuring, monitoring, accreditation and reporting mechanisms for continuously improving organisational environmental performance
 - b) explore and then recommend to Government the appropriate environmental standards/requirements for inclusion in major Government grant agreements or contracts with the third sector.
- 5.3 Working with *OTS* and third sector infrastructure organisations, Defra will jointly commission a study to explore the need for a centre of expertise on sustainable development, environmental sustainability and climate change, which would help mainstream these issues within national third sector support activities.
- 5.4 Work jointly with the *Every Action Counts* Consortium to arrange a celebration event and learning event at the end of the three-year Defra funded *Every Action Counts* initiative.
- 5.5 Building on the legacy of *Every Action Counts* and wider initiatives such as '*Accounting for Sustainability*', work with *OTS* and *Capacitybuilders* to disseminate tools and materials to third sector organisations which help them embed sustainable development and demonstrate environmental leadership.
- 5.6 Defra and *OTS* will jointly commission a feasibility study into a peer-led 'environment ambassadors' leadership programme for Chief Executives and Directors of third sector organisations, as part of mainstream professional development.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 5.7 Work with *Decc*, *CLG*, *OTS* and *Capacitybuilders* to further promote the *third sector climate change declaration* and advice to third sector organisations in implementing it.

Our Actions – Renewing the way we work with the sector

6. Improving our listening to, and communications with, the third sector

Immediate actions:

- 6.1 Hold an annual third sector forum event chaired by Defra's Third Sector Minister.
- 6.2 Introduce quantitative and qualitative surveys to get a better understanding about how to improve satisfaction amongst Defra's key third sector stakeholders and to help continuously improve our relationship with the sector.
- 6.3 Explore how electronic consultation could help improve consultation with third sector stakeholders.
- 6.4 Within the Advocacy partnership group of the new Defra *Third Sector Advisory Board*, explore ways in which existing networks, intermediaries and channels could be used to further advocate the needs or views of smaller or harder to reach groups in Defra affairs.
- 6.5 Prepare and disseminate within Defra new guidance to staff about better consultation and engagement with third sector organisations, incorporating new guidance from the *Office of the Third Sector* and the new Code of Practice on consultation from BERR.
- 6.6 Identify a number of staff in each main policy group to act as third sector contact points and publish details, along with Defra's general enquiry helpline number and third sector email mailbox, on Defra's third sector webpage.
- 6.7 Include more signposting links on Defra's third sector webpages

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 6.8 Explore the potential for establishing a regular email bulletin to third sector stakeholders who self-register via the Defra website, with a joint Defra and third sector editorial board.

7. Understanding the sector better

Immediate actions:

- 7.1 Establish a network of third sector staff champions across the Department to help improve awareness and engagement with the third sector in their own programmes and policy areas.
- 7.2 Hold a masterclass workshop for Defra staff (involving some third sector stakeholders) which help staff develop an approach which gets the most out of their meetings and engagement with third sector stakeholders. Build staff confidence and skills on this.
- 7.3 Review Defra's internal Stakeholder Database to improve the quality of information about third sector stakeholders and thereby improve meaningful dialogue and avoid duplication.
- 7.4 Embed the Compact principles into the new Defra Policy Cycle guidance for Defra staff.
- 7.5 Complete a mapping and analysis project of rural stakeholders, including third sector stakeholders, and prepare an engagement strategy for key stakeholders.
- 7.6 Apply the *Commission for the Compact's* recent report on independence and raise awareness within the Department about ways of protecting campaigning independence whilst supporting third sector organisations in delivery.
- 7.7 Appoint a secondee from the third sector to work in Defra's third sector team.

Our Actions – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 7.8 Encourage staff to visit third sector groups or organisations involved in the development or front-line delivery of their policies to gain a better, customer or stakeholder focused understanding.
- 7.9 Encourage secondments and visits to and from third sector organisations.
- 7.10 Undertake a feasibility study on setting up third sector stakeholder account managers.
- 7.11 Undertake a journey-mapping study to understand the point of view and experience of third sector organisations when accessing Defra grants or contracts and involvement in policy development.
- 7.12 Undertake a strategic high level mapping and segmentation exercise for Defra's third sector stakeholders, to better understand the diversity of the sector and how third sector stakeholders engage with the department. Develop a clearer understanding about the role of different third sector advocacy organisations and networks, and ensure the voice of smaller third sector organisations are heard in policy development.

8. Joining-up what we do

Immediate actions:

- 8.1 Work with a range of third sector stakeholders to develop practical guidance on how Defra policy leads and third sector organisations should assess and value the delivery of multiple outcomes (social, economic and environmental) linking primary outcomes related to Defra's priorities, with secondary or tertiary outcomes related to other Government policy goals.
- 8.2 Disseminate information about Defra's initiatives and tools related to our top priorities through all our main third sector networks/groups to increase wider awareness and take-up e.g. promoting action to protect our natural environment through food and farming third sector groups.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 8.3 Work with new Defra *Third Sector Advisory Board* to help join-up agendas with other Government Departments, identifying key opportunities, synergies and conflicts from a third sector point of view.

9. Better partnerships, building on existing mechanisms

Immediate actions:

- 9.1 Establish a new Defra *Third Sector Advisory Board* with attendance from Defra's Third Sector Minister and Management Board representatives, to succeed Defra's Compact Group. The first meeting of the Board would be Spring 2009.
- 9.2 Jointly agree and support a Board work programme to take forward corporate actions on advocacy, policy development, building Defra's capability and communications, to increase the Board's profile in Defra and the sector.
- 9.3 Launch Defra's Social Enterprise Strategic Partnership and support a strategic work programme to enhance understanding within the department about the contribution which social enterprises can make.

Our Actions – Renewing the way we work with the sector

- 9.4 As part of Defra's Wellbeing and CSR Strategy, raise the profile and involvement of staff with Payroll Giving, and establish Defra staff as socially responsible employees by:
 - a) Researching and tracking staff charitable donations through payroll giving and other sources i.e. direct debits etc
 - b) Increasing publicity of the payroll giving scheme with an emphasis on the benefits to the chosen charity i.e. tax efficiencies
 - c) Seeking to raise the profile of Defra's payroll giving activities through involvement in the CAF Payroll Giving Mark
- 9.5 Highlight the third sector delivery partners and strategic partners which Defra already works with and network these organisations together more in order to share experience.
- 9.6 Develop practical guidance for Defra policy leads about support for third sector engagement, including a code of practice for paying expenses, to improve consistency across the organisation.
- 9.7 Establish better referral links with our third sector stakeholders, to capacity building programmes offered by the Office of the Third Sector.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 9.8 Promote internally the new *Office of the Third Sector* guidance on consortia building, and provide opportunities for third sector organisations to take responsibility for developing their own collective arrangements or partnerships for engaging with Defra.

10. Enabling our delivery bodies

Immediate actions:

- 10.1 We will work with our delivery bodies to establish a staff network of senior Third Sector Champions across the relevant Defra Network organisations who have significant interaction with the third sector.
- 10.2 We will work with our Executive Agencies and wider delivery bodies to encourage each organisation with significant third sector interactions to prepare and publish electronically their own tailored third sector policy statement during National Compact week in November 2009, or highlight their existing third sector policy or strategy should this be available. The brief policy statements would be related to each organisation's particular outcomes and delivery objectives. It would set out the nature of the organisation's interactions and different relationships with third sector organisations, and the main implications the Compact principles have for the way the organisation works.
- 10.3 We will arrange a series of practical workshops for the Defra Network on key third sector issues (e.g. good practice in grants and contracts, consultation process etc) to help share good practice and improve practical engagement with the sector.
- 10.4 We will include third sector engagement as an item for a future Defra Network Chief Executives conference.
- 10.5 We will consult third sector organisations on the options for the delivery landscape review on low carbon advice services, and develop a checklist which can help assess the impacts on the third sector of future changes in delivery bodies or their responsibilities.

Our Actions – Renewing the way we work with the sector

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 10.6 Explore ways of bringing together third sector champions from delivery bodies and key third sector stakeholders, to exchange views and ideas.
- 10.7 We will encourage *RDAs* in their delivery of the *Rural Development Programme for England* to identify and disseminate good practice in their approach, systems and procedures for working with third sector stakeholders and beneficiaries/customers – in the context of the principles set out in the national '*Compact*' about working with the sector.
- 10.8 We will invite the third sector champions from relevant organisations in the Defra Network to join Core Defra's new *Third Sector Advisory Board*, to discuss common issues.
- 10.9 We will explore ways of improving and sharing third sector stakeholder intelligence across the Defra Network, within data protection regulations and existing channels, to improve meaningful engagement with the sector and avoid duplication.

11. Better commissioning practices and procedures

Immediate actions:

- 11.1 Update our financial systems to provide more detailed information about third sector organisations who receive grants or contracts from Defra.
- 11.2 As part of Defra's staff training programme on sustainable procurement, highlight the value of third sector delivery and encourage procurers to consider a more diverse supplier base.
- 11.3 Update procurement guidance to staff and highlight the implications and opportunities for working with third sector suppliers.
- 11.4 Hold a joint Defra/third sector workshop to explore opportunities for third sector involvement and a better understanding of the sector's potential supplier base to Defra. Identify ways in which Defra's standard procurement procedures could ensure they enable third sector organisations to tender for contracts whilst meeting procurement rules.
- 11.5 We will include criteria about diverse supply chains involving the third sector in our criteria for Defra's annual Supplier Award for Sustainability.
- 11.6 Promote internally the new Office of the Third Sector guidance on delivering public services through partnerships and consortia.

Ongoing and Longer term actions:

- 11.7 Hold a workshop with members of Defra's Collaborative Procurement Network to explore the opportunities and implications for the third sector of procurement activity across Defra's delivery bodies.
- 11.8 We will explore ways of advertising tender opportunities in a way more accessible to potential third sector suppliers, for example using websites or existing government portals.
- 11.9 We will explore ways of mapping potential third sector suppliers relevant to the goods and services Defra procures.
- 11.10 As part of Defra's supplier engagement strategy, continue to work with the suppliers of Defra's biggest contracts to highlight opportunities for diverse supply chains which include third sector organisations.

Annex 1 – The Eight Principles of Good Commissioning

- Understanding the needs of users and other communities by ensuring that, alongside other consultees, you engage with the third sector organisations, as advocates, to access their specialist knowledge;
- Consulting potential provider organisations, including those from the third sector and local experts, well in advance of commissioning new services, working with them to set priority outcomes for that service;
- Putting outcomes for users at the heart of the strategic planning process;
- Mapping the fullest practical range of providers with a view to understanding the contribution they could make to delivering those outcomes;
- Considering investing in the capacity of the provider base, particularly those working with hard-to-reach groups;
- Ensuring contracting processes are transparent and fair, facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including considering sub-contracting and consortia building, where appropriate;
- Ensuring long-term contracts and risk sharing, wherever appropriate, as ways of achieving efficiency and effectiveness; and
- Seeking feedback from service users, communities and providers in order to review the effectiveness of the commissioning process in meeting local needs.

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Notes

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