

Jargon Buster!

Words, terms or phrases used within the work of the Third Sector Assembly

Accountability	Being held properly responsible for a project/provision of a service and having a responsibility to explain the actions taken to funders, users and any relevant regulatory bodies.
Accreditation	Obtaining official recognition/validation that the services and/or training being undertaken by an organisation meet required standards.
Added Value	The additional value created through the combined contribution of joint working.
Advocacy	Speaking or acting in support of, or on behalf of, another person(s) in accordance with their wishes. It helps people speak out for what they want or need, and encourages them to tell others about how they feel and what is important to them.
Audit	Examining new policies, strategies, guidance and procedures introduced by an agency or organisation to assess their impact upon others and the community at large.
Best Practice	A superior method or innovative practice that contributes to the improved performance of an organisation, usually recognised as 'best' by other peer organisations.
Best Value	A statutory responsibility for local authorities to achieve continuous improvement in services through combinations of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. All of an authority's services must be reviewed by challenging how and why they are provided, comparing them with the performance of other authorities, consulting with stakeholders, and testing their competitiveness against external providers.
Campaign	To try to influence decision-makers to introduce specific policies and programmes or to try to change existing ones.
Commissioning	The cycle of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and then securing an appropriate service.
Community Organisations	Informal local community and self-help groups, which are often made up entirely of volunteers. Any paid staff are likely to be part-time. They are independent, often without regular income or funding.
Compact	A framework, which will help guide and develop relationships between the voluntary and community sector and statutory agencies. It recognises that statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector have similar roles in developing and delivering policy and services, and that statutory agencies have a complementary role in promoting voluntary and community activity in all areas of life.

Compact Development Group	The group, comprised of representatives of both the voluntary and community sector and the statutory agencies, responsible for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effect and contents of the Compact and its Codes of Good Practice.
Consortia (Consortium)	An association of organisations, formed for a particular purpose. Often one organisation within the consortium will act as the lead, or accountable body, on behalf of other members of the consortium for the purpose of funding agreements.
Consultation	The process of seeking and listening to views on a particular subject. This includes asking for information/advice on future proposals and testing the impact of decisions already taken.
Consultation Fatigue	Over-using the same stakeholder group or geographical area for consultation on different issues, to the point that the group ceases to give fulsome feedback.
Core Costs	The costs involved in maintaining the essential operations of an organisation, such as running its office base and its central management functions.
Data Protection Act	The Act defines a legal basis for the handling and storage of information in the United Kingdom relating to living people, and is the main piece of legislation that governs the protection of personal data. Visit www.opsi.gov.uk for in-depth information.
Diversity	The varieties and differences within voluntary organisations, community groups and local communities, for example, people from different ethnic, social and economic backgrounds.
Duty to Inform, Consult and Involve (also known as the Duty to Involve)	The <i>Duty to Involve</i> requires statutory authorities to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve representatives of local persons (defined as including local voluntary and community organisations) in the exercise of any of their functions, by providing information, consulting and involving in other ways, those affected by, or interested in, a particular function.
Equal Opportunities	Promoting available opportunities to all individuals; from whichever gender, race, religion or other minority grouping; and enabling them to play an active part in society, and in the activities conducted by organisations/agencies.
Freedom of Information Act	The Act is the implementation of information legislation in the United Kingdom, with the exception of Scottish bodies, which are covered by a separate act. Visit www.opsi.gov.uk for in-depth information.
Full Cost Recovery	The process by which voluntary and community organisations delivering public services are expected to be able to cover all their costs (including a proportion of core costs).
Funding Agreement	An umbrella term that encompasses the various types of agreements that can be in place between voluntary and community, and statutory, organisations, such as a grant, service level agreement, partnership agreement or contract.

Good Practice	Effective or innovative practice that contributes to the improved performance of an organisation, usually recognised as good practice by other peer organisations.
Invitation to Tender (ITT)	A procedure to generate offers from different bidders who are looking to be awarded a contract to supply a service. This is often preceded by a prequalification questionnaire (PQQ).
Local Area Agreement (LAA)	An agreement between central government and local authorities and their partners setting out local improvement targets to improve services, performance and the quality of life in a place. They help to deliver the vision and priorities set out in the area's Sustainable Community Strategy.
Local Strategic Partnerships	Local partnerships that seek to involve organisations in setting out a vision for their locality and to improve the delivery of local services through better planning and partnership working. They include representatives from public, business, voluntary and community sectors. They oversee the development and implementation of a Sustainable Community Strategy for the area, a Local Area Agreement and local consultation.
Local Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Organisations	These are sometimes known as Local Development Agencies, umbrella or intermediary organisations and include Councils for Voluntary Service, Rural Community Councils and Volunteer Development Agencies. They provide a range of infrastructure functions and services, including information, advice and guidance, development support, co-ordination, representation and promotion to local voluntary organisations and community groups.
Mediation	A process of intermediaries helping two parties to a disagreement/ dispute to achieve a resolution of their differences and a consensus on a mutually-agreed way forward.
Milestone	A key task or activity often associated with a date that it will be completed by, eg the appointment of the project worker by November. Milestones are often used to measure the progress of an activity.
Monitoring and Evaluation	A process, involving both formal/informal procedures, to regularly take stock of (and report on) trends and activity within a project or service, to review progress, identify outcomes and assess the value of a project or service. This process helps an organisation decide whether it is achieving what it wants to and if it needs to do anything differently in the future.
Outcome	The changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from what the project or organisation makes, offers or provides.
Partnership	When organisations work together to achieve a shared and clear set of objectives. There is a clear understanding of the contribution of each organisation, which takes into account their differences, and there is equal respect for the role and experience of all partners. A successful partnership depends on sharing information and decision-making.
Performance Indicators	Measures that have been identified to assess the manner or quality of an organisation's work in performing an agreed project/programme of activities.

PQASSO	Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations – a self-assessment Quality Standards tool for achieving, and being able to demonstrate, certain defined standards.
Prequalifying Questionnaire (PQQ)	A part of the contracting process that assesses the suitability of a potential supplier. A PQQ typically evaluates an organisation in terms of knowledge and experience, capability and capacity, and organisational and financial standing. An organisation that successfully passes the PQQ process will then be eligible to respond to an Invitation to Tender.
Procurement	Procurement is the specific aspect of the commissioning cycle that focuses on the process of buying services, from initial advertising through to appropriate contract arrangements.
Review and Evaluate	A process, involving both formal and informal procedures, to regularly take stock of (and report on) trends and activity within a consultation exercise; to review progress, identify outcomes and assess the value of the exercise. This process helps an organisation decide whether it needs to do anything differently in the future.
Risk Management	Systematic assessment of the threats or vulnerabilities that may affect any aspect of an organisation’s business, including the likelihood of occurrence, potential severity of impact and mitigation measures needed.
Service Users	The people who benefit from or use a service. They may also be called customers, clients, consumers, beneficiaries or recipients.
Social Capital	Social capital is the underpinning and core fabric of social communities. It is the people, their capacity levels, institutions, cultural cohesion, education, information, skills, and knowledge.
Social Exclusion	The failure of society to provide certain people with those rights normally available to its members, such as employment, health care, education, etc.
Social Inclusion	An approach designed to embrace all members of the community, including disadvantaged groups.
Stakeholders	People and organisations that have an interest in, or are affected by, the delivery of a service or services.
Statutory Authority/ Agency (the Statutory Sector)	Organisations created through Acts of Parliament whose functions are set by the law. Local authorities, including parish and town councils, are democratically elected and must answer to the voters and central government. They have legal responsibilities for the social well-being, economic development, environment and health of the people they serve. Health, police, and fire and rescue authorities are not directly elected and answer to the Secretary of State.
Sustainability	The ability to keep delivering services. This requires secure funding in order to allow effective management and planning.
Sustainable Community Strategy	A document setting out the shared vision and priorities for a local area, which describes how people who live and work there want it to change over time. Local authorities have a duty to prepare the strategy in order that it can promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas. Their preparation requires

close partnership working and community involvement; they are usually produced by the Local Strategic Partnership.

Target	A specific number of beneficiaries or specific events or activities required as part of a funding agreement, e.g. 100 people trained.
Third Sector	See Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) below.
Trustees	The group of people responsible for the control and management of a charity, which includes members of a charitable association's management committee and directors of charitable companies. Trustees have specific statutory duties, set out in the Charities Act 1993.
Undertaking	An agreement, commitment or promise by either a statutory agency or a voluntary and community organisation to act in a specified manner.
Users	The people who benefit from or use a service. They may also be called customers, clients, consumers, beneficiaries or recipients.
Value for Money	The National Audit Office assesses value for money as the reporting on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• economy: minimising the cost of resources used or required – spending less• efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them – spending well• effectiveness: the relationship between the intended and actual results of public spending – spending wisely.
Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)	<p>The voluntary and community sector comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community organisations – organisations active on a local or community level, usually small, modestly-funded and largely dependent on voluntary, rather than paid, effort• voluntary organisations – larger, professionally-staffed organisations <p>Hence the phrase 'voluntary and community sector' (VCS) to encompass the full range. However, the term is increasingly encompassing social enterprise, co-operatives, social firms etc. The term Third Sector is now also being used to refer to this diverse range of organisations.</p>
Voluntary Organisations	These are formally-structured, independent, not-for-profit organisations managed by voluntary management committees or boards of trustees. They may have paid employees, volunteers and be registered charities and/or charitable companies. They may undertake activities, provide services, offer support and/or campaign for change.
Volunteer Development Agency	A specialist voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisation (or function) that promotes volunteering and local volunteering opportunities. The agency recruits and supports volunteers, and helps to build the capacity of other volunteer-involving organisations to recruit and manage volunteers.
Volunteering	The commitment of time and energy by individuals for the benefit of society, the community or the environment. Volunteering is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain; yet it is also a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also benefits (for

example, a sense of worthwhile achievement, gaining or using skills, experience, contacts, meeting other people and friends, and involvement in the organisation).