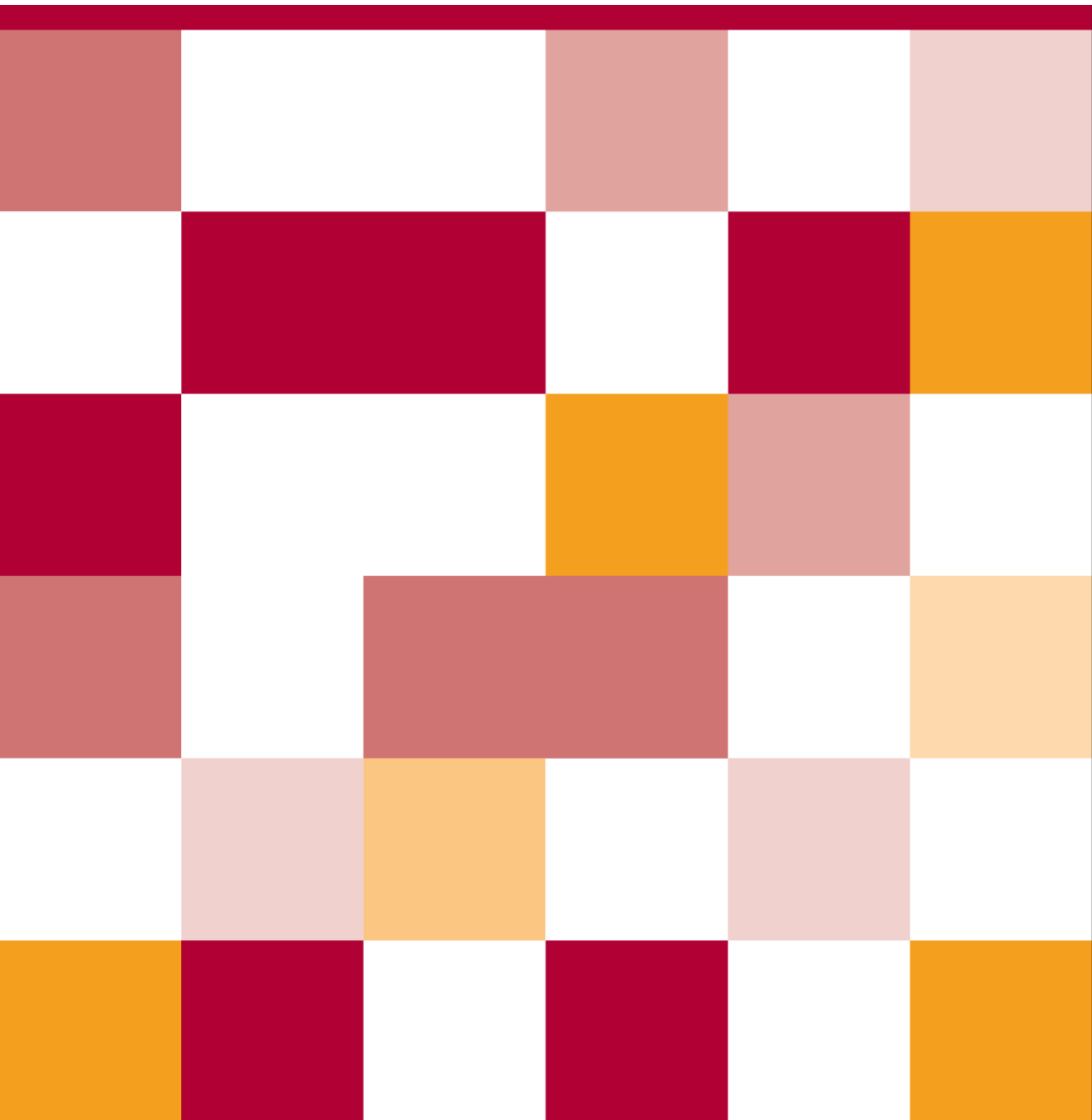




Office of the Third Sector Business Plan 2009–10

July 2009



Foreword by the Minister for the Third Sector



I am pleased to present the Office of the Third Sector Business Plan for 2009-10.

All over the country, and particularly in these turbulent economic times people are relying on third sector organisations for the provision of vital services, and to give people a voice and opportunities for participation in their community. We know that strong communities are characterised by a thriving third sector and so we will continue to take steps to support the environment for organisations to develop and achieve their aims.

We are now one year into the implementation of our strategy as set out in the final report of the third sector review.¹ Great progress has been made with our key programmes up and running. For example we have already made over 7,000 small grants to community groups through Grassroots Grants and 875,000 volunteering opportunities for young people have been commissioned through the youth volunteering body v.

We are committed to making further progress on implementing the third sector review and the following plan sets out our key activities and milestones over the next year to support our aims.

In February 2009 we also committed to take further measures to support the third sector through the recession.² For example, Real Help for Communities: Targeted Support Fund will provide grant funding to small and medium providers of essential services in local areas most at risk of increased deprivation as a result of the recession. Real Help for Communities: Modernisation Fund will ensure the sector can emerge from the recession even more resilient and efficient. These funds alongside more help for people to take up volunteering opportunities and more support for people wanting to access support and training to start new social enterprises will be delivered in full in 2009-10, providing targeted help where and when it is needed most.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

¹ The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report. HM Treasury/Cabinet Office July 2007.

² Real Help for Communities: Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises. HM Government February 2007.

Introduction

The Cabinet Office Business Plan sets out how the Department delivers on its aim to make government work better. As part of this the Cabinet Office has 6 Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs).

The Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in Cabinet Office delivers one of these DSOs - DSO 3b - *Enable a thriving third sector*. The OTS is also responsible for the delivery of part of the Government's Public Service Agreement to build more cohesive, empowered and active communities (see page 18 for further details).

The strategy for government working in partnership with the third sector is set out in 'The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report' published in July 2007 and covering the years 2008-2011 (the third sector review).

In February 2009, the Government published 'Real Help for Communities: Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises' setting out a further package of support for the third sector through the economic downturn. The commitments in Real Help for Communities will be fully implemented in 2009-10. Budget 2009 also announced further support for the sector and in 2009-10 the OTS will deliver the Hardship Fund in partnership with the Community Development Foundation. This fund will deliver grant support to organisations delivering front line services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society.

The OTS delivers on its commitments by:

- driving cross-Government action to improve partnership working and ensuring better terms of engagement between Government and the third sector;
- investing in programmes to support the sector's development and promotion
- ensuring a good policy and regulatory environment for the sector;
- developing a strong evidence base and analysis to better inform work of the government and third sector; and,
- supporting the Minister for the Third Sector, in Parliamentary and policy related business providing briefing and advice and answering correspondence

Implementation of the third sector review in 2008-09 - key achievements

2008-09 marked the first year of the implementation of the third sector review, and the beginning of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (2007CSR) period.

In our business plan for 2008-09 we set out a series of key milestones for delivery and we have made significant progress:

Enabling voice and campaigning

- we established the **Third Sector Advisory Body**, chaired by Baroness Jill Pitkeathly to provide expert advice to the Cabinet Office on the implementation of the Department's third sector priorities.
- we extended our **strategic partners** funding until 2011, enabling them to continue to be an effective voice for the sector into government and demonstrating our commitment to long-term cooperation between government and the sector. The strategic partners have been integral in developing policy in a number of areas including supporting the sector through the downturn and in developing our work on Social Return on Investment (SROI).
- we published new research into how best to consult with the third sector, alongside a practical handbook to help public servants open up **consultation with the sector**. Since the November 2008 publication over 2000 copies of the research or toolkit have been downloaded from the Cabinet Office website.
- following consultation we have responded to the potential impact of the recession on third sector organisations with up to £42.5 million of new measures to support the sector and to ensure that we come out stronger and more resilient - **Real Help for Communities**.

Strengthening communities

- 96 areas chose to prioritise one or both of the two third sector indicators (part of the way Local Authorities are measured on performance) in their **Local Area Agreements**. The OTS also conducted the biggest **National Survey of Third Sector Organisations** to provide a rich evidence base on how government is supporting the sector locally which will support the driving up of performance. Over 49,000 third sector organisations responded to our survey. 58% of those who had direct dealings with local government bodies said that they had had a positive or very positive effect on their success.
- we established the **Grassroots Grants** programme, to invest up to £130 million in small grants and endowments for local funders. The programme has already made over 7,000 small grants to the sector.

The 2500th grant awarded through the Grassroots Grants programme was made in January 2009. £2,175 was awarded to mother and child support service Maternity Buddy in Lincolnshire.

Maternity Buddy was set up by Lincoln University student Leanne Moreland to help support pregnant women with anything from learning English, to accessing public services or simply making friends. It proved so successful that in just a year, 21 volunteers have helped over 150 families.

The grant will enable Maternity Buddy to expand the range of services it provides, reaching more people in need.

- 38 projects are being taken forward through the £30 million **Community Assets Fund**, allowing local authority owned buildings in every region to be developed and transferred into third sector ownership and management. Around two-thirds of the Community Assets projects are located in the 20% most deprived areas nationally.

The £30 million Community Assets programme funded by the OTS and delivered by the Big Lottery Fund, confirmed the first grant to be £337,000 funding for the Pelton Fell Community Resource Centre in Chester-le-Street in November 2008.

Under the scheme, the centre will be refurbished, extended and transferred into the hands of the community. The Pelton Fell Community Group will manage the community centre which will bring a new lease of life to the area enabling them to take a brave step forward into the world of social enterprise including cultivating new community interests, a community café sports bar and multi-use games area to deliver the priorities identified by local residents.

The grant funds part of a £937,000 partnership between Chester-le-Street District Council and Pelton Fell Community Group. Over 3,000 people from Pelton Fell and neighbouring areas plus around 30 community organisations will benefit from the grant.

- from April 2008 a transitional rate of **Gift Aid** was ensured to protect the income of charities, worth around £300 million. Through our funding of the Institute of Fundraising we enabled a Gift Aid mentoring forum and over 300 charities attended tax effective giving workshops. Our funding of work to promote **giving** in schools engaged 400 secondary schools and over 1500 primary schools.

- we addressed the most significant barriers to **volunteering** by publishing guidance on criminal records bureau checks and volunteering whilst on benefits. The Government's Volunteering Champion Baroness Neuberger has published detailed reviews of volunteering in health, criminal justice and volunteering in the civil service.
- we supported **youth volunteering** with investment in the youth volunteering charity **v**, delivering a range of campaigns and projects including **vinvolved**, the largest youth volunteering scheme which began in April 2008 and **vtalent year** - a new full-time volunteering programme. **v** has commissioned 875,000 volunteering opportunities and raised £36 million from the private sector, matched pound for pound by government.

Transforming public services

- Adventure Capital Fund Management took over the management of the Government's **Futurebuilders Fund** in April 2008; and the loan and grant fund opened up to organisations working in all areas of public service delivery. In 2008, Futurebuilders Fund investees won 90 public service contracts.
- the **Innovation Exchange**, supported by the OTS announced funding for fourteen third sector projects to work on issues of independent living and excluded young people.
- Anne McGuire was announced as a new adviser to Cabinet Office on **third sector innovation**. Anne will investigate the role the third sector can play in empowering citizens to steer the delivery of more personalised public services
- we successfully rolled out our **National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning** with training offered to 3,000 commissioners.
- we appointed a consortium led by SROI Network to develop new guidance, training and infrastructure for **Social Return on Investment (SROI)** to enable third sector organisations to articulate the social value they create to investors, public service commissioners and other customers

Encouraging social enterprises

- we have led the way in promoting and supporting the **social enterprise** model with our 30 Social Enterprise Ambassadors and our most successful Social Enterprise Day with 934 social enterprise events held. Social enterprise was included for the first time in the business studies GCSE syllabus from September 2008.
- we began funding social enterprise **action research** projects by the Department of Health (DH), the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to provide evidence on the contribution of social enterprise to achieving

departmental policy goals.

Supporting the environment for a healthy third sector

- we established a new national **Third Sector Research Centre** at Birmingham University with over £10 million funding from the OTS, Economic and Social Research Council and the Barrow Cadbury Trust. We launched the Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy to support high quality research in this area.
- we announced the creation of a new **skills body: Skills - Third Sector** to improve the way the skills system meets the needs of the third sector.
- we have continued to demonstrate our commitment to **sustainable funding** for the sector. We have established a baseline of 65.7% for the percentage of direct grants from government departments that are for three years or more, so year on year improvements can be measured.
- we have continued to implement the **Charities Act 2006** and the new statutory definition of charity came into force on 1 April 2008. An estimated one in five (33,000) registered charities are expected to benefit from a reduced regulatory burden under changes that took effect from 1 April 2009.
- **Capacitybuilders** launched a new series of three-year grant programmes, investing in more effective and sustainable support services for frontline organisations. This includes 73 grants under the Improving Reach programme, specifically designed to improve access to support for groups that deal with marginalised communities.
- Sir Bert Massie was appointed as the new **Commissioner for the Compact** and has led a wide-ranging debate on the Compact powers. The Compact Debate generated responses collectively representing the views of over 60,000 regional and local third sector groups from across the country.

Delivery of the OTS priorities in 2009-10

Measures in the Real Help Now for Communities Action Plan are integrated throughout the following detail on the OTS programme. In April, May and June we held a series of regional roadshows to provide a practical understanding of how to access this support.

Enabling voice and campaigning	
Key activities	Key milestones
Investing in strategic third sector partners to provide voice in third sector policy making	Investment is ongoing through 2009-10 to 2011. As set out in the OTS response to the Third Sector Advisory Body Healthcheck, we will be reviewing the strategic partners programme as part of our preparations for the next Spending Review.
Establishing a new fund to promote innovative third sector campaigning	The OTS will provide funding for a new action research programme in 2009-10 to support third sector campaigning activity. This programme is being delivered by Capacitybuilders.
Working with the Third Sector Advisory Body , providing expert policy advice for the OTS and the Minister for the Third Sector	The Third Sector Advisory Body meets every two months, inputting into a wide range of OTS policy and programme issues.

Strengthening communities	
Key activities	Key milestones for 2009-10
<p>Continue to provide small grants to community organisations and build sustainability into local grant making through endowment funds to local foundations – through the £130 million Grassroots Grants programme</p>	<p>We will invest a further £26 million in small grants and will match donations up to £20 million to local funders in the Grassroots Grants scheme.</p> <p>Part of the network of local funders in the Grassroots Grants programme is delivering the Real Help for Communities: Targeted Support Fund. This fund will provide grant funding to small/medium providers of key services in local areas most at risk of increased deprivation as a result of the recession. Grant schemes opened in April 2009 with funding to be allocated over summer 2009.</p> <p>The tender for the evaluation of the Targeted Support Fund was issued in July 2009 with the deadline for responses on the 14th August 2009.</p> <p>Budget 2009 announced further support for the sector through the £16.7 million Hardship Fund. This fund will be delivered by the Community Development Foundation and will provide grant support to third sector organisations delivering front line services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society. The fund opened for applications in July 2009.</p>
<p>Provide investment to develop assets being transferred into community ownership through the £30 million Community Assets Fund.</p>	<p>In 2009-10, 38 Community Assets projects will be fully underway, with significant refurbishments undertaken.</p> <p>The evaluation of the programme is ongoing with evidence gathering events from projects being held in spring 2009 and early 2010.</p>
<p>Provide a mix of loan and grant investment for community anchor organisations, as well as a range of support and development grants to help them develop more enterprising approaches to their long-term sustainability.</p>	<p>With the Department for Communities and Local Government we are establishing the £70 million Communitybuilders fund with funding available for the third sector in late summer 2009.</p> <p>The Adventure Capital Fund has been selected to deliver the Communitybuilders Fund.</p>

Continue to invest in programmes to build further a culture of **volunteering and giving**. We aim to deliver an overall increase in the percentage of people volunteering on a regular basis.

We will deliver **new volunteering schemes** from April 2009. An intergenerational volunteering programme - Generations Together will fund 12 projects from summer 2009 for young and older people to engage with each other on equal terms. The Access to Volunteering Fund to reduce barriers to volunteering for people with disabilities is out to tender with a delivery partner to be appointed in autumn 2009. Capacitybuilders will take forward a £3 million programme to support training for volunteer managers, being delivered in three inter-connected strands.

Baroness Neuberger, the Government's Volunteering Champion has undertaken a review of volunteering in the civil service, published in July 2009.

In 2009-10 we will also be using the legacy of the Olympics to boost volunteering by creating a volunteering gateway and funding development workers to support volunteer involving organisations to play their part in the legacy.


From April 2009, the Department of Work and Pensions are supporting a volunteer brokerage scheme for unemployed people, creating up to 40,000 volunteering opportunities.

We will continue to invest in **v** and to match private sector donations.

With our funding a further 450 charities will benefit from tax effective giving training and we will work in more schools to promote a culture of **giving**.

The **Giving and Philanthropy Ambassador**, Dame Stephanie Shirley, appointed in May 2009, is leading work to champion innovative and effective forms of giving, and to make recommendations to Government about how to encourage and facilitate giving. Her work will also inform a Giving and Philanthropy Summit to be held later in 2009.

Transforming public services	
Key activities	Key milestones for 2009-10
Further the third sector's involvement in the delivery of public services, including through an extension of the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning to increase awareness of the third sector by public sector commissioners and to increase third sector involvement through the commissioning cycle.	<p>In 2009-10 the OTS is supporting a new Ministerial Cabinet Committee considering the blockages faced by third sector organisations to securing and delivering specific public service contracts and agree actions for the removal of these blockages. The Cabinet Committee will be supported by an advisory group of third sector representatives and Government officials.</p> <p>The second phase of the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning will be delivered through 2009-10 and 2010-11 with a programme manager in place from July 2009.</p>
Investing in the Futurebuilders Fund to provide grants and loans to build capacity in organisations delivering public services	<p>We will help the Futurebuilders Fund to support their investees to win 130 public service delivery contracts by the end of 2009.</p> <p>Futurebuilders is also delivering part of the Real Help for Communities: Modernisation Fund with loan finance available from April 2009. This element of the Fund is being matched with funding from Barclays Commercial Bank</p>
Investing in the Innovation Exchange to bring together third sector innovators and commissioners to foster third sector innovation in public service delivery.	With the Innovation Exchange, we will bring together learning from the first programmes to be funded in independent living and excluded young people in autumn 2009 and the evaluation of the programme will be delivered in March 2010.
Supporting the adviser on third sector innovation to the role the third sector can play in empowering citizens to steer the delivery of more personalised public services	During 2009-10 the adviser on third sector innovation will investigate and publish reports on the role of the third sector in health and social care, education and criminal justice.
Investing in a consortium led by SROI Network to develop new guidance, training and infrastructure for Social Return on Investment (SROI) to enable third sector	A guide to Social Return on Investment (SROI) was launched in May 2009. The guide has been published as part of a project on measuring social value being taken forward over 2008-2011.



organisations to articulate the social value they create to investors, public service commissioners and other customers.

Three tailored guides will be published for commissioners and investors and an introduction to SROI.

A training programme, based on the SROI guide, will be rolled out in autumn 2009.

A conference on measuring social value for commissioners, investors and third sector organisations is going to be held in December 2009.

Encouraging social enterprise	
Key activities	Key milestones
Continuing to support the Social Enterprise Ambassadors and other programmes to promote the value of social enterprise to a wide audience	<p>Following the publication of new market research in September 2008 on current levels of understanding and awareness of social enterprise, the OTS is supporting the sector to develop a clear workable way for social enterprises to explain what they offer. This will enable social enterprises to market themselves more successfully which the sector aims to launch on Social Enterprise Day (to be held on the 19th November 2009).</p> <p>The Community Interest Company (CIC) Regulator is reviewing this legal form for social enterprise from spring 2009.</p> <p>In May 2009, the Government launched the Future Jobs Fund aiming to create 150,000 jobs. It is hoped that social enterprises will create 10% of those jobs. The first jobs will begin in October 2009.</p>
Providing investment through the Regional Development Agencies to improve business support for social enterprises	Funding for the social enterprise business support improvement project is ongoing through the 2007CSR years. This investment is being evaluated, with an initial report being published in summer 2009.
Establishing the risk capital fund for social enterprise and other social investment programmes to ensure social enterprises and other third sector organisations are able to access appropriate finance	<p>The new social enterprise risk capital fund will open for investments in summer 2009.</p> <p>We have provided funding for a new programme of financial awareness and investment readiness support for social enterprises to be delivered in collaboration with the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA). This support will be delivered from the summer 2009.</p> <p>NESTA are also undertaking a review of incentives for investment in social enterprise, starting in spring 2009.</p> <p>We will consult on the development of a Social Investment Wholesale Bank over summer 2009.</p>

<p>Working with Government Departments to undertake action research on areas for social enterprise delivery of public policy outcomes</p>	<p>In 2009-10 we will complete three of the social enterprise action research projects currently underway informing future policy development. These are the projects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the social return on investment of social enterprises working in mainstream health (DH) ■ supporting the sustainability of community development finance institutions (BIS) ■ expanding the role of social enterprises in reducing re-offending (NOMS) <p>In May 2009 at a cross-Government social enterprise summit we launched a new round of bidding for action research projects. We will announce which projects are going forward in autumn 2009.</p>
<p>Providing £0.5 million investment in the School for Social Entrepreneurs doubling the number of social entrepreneurs who are able to access support and training to start new social enterprises.</p>	<p>The funding for the School for Social Entrepreneurs is provided from April 2009.</p> <p>Three new schools will be open in autumn 2009.</p>

Supporting the environment for a thriving third sector

Key activities

Proportionate regulation - continuing to implement the provisions of the Charities Act 2006 and other measures

Key milestones for 2009-10

From April 2009 we are conducting research into the licensing regime for public charitable collections.

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), a new legal structure designed specifically for charities will be in place in spring 2010.

Other provisions of the **Charities Act 2006** to be implemented in 2009-10 include de-regulatory threshold changes (April 2009) and exempt charities provisions (autumn 2009 with a second tranche to follow in 2010)

We are working with the National Audit Office and HM Treasury, publishing guidance on **proportionate monitoring** in June 2009.

We also published information on **sector pension schemes** in June 2009.

We are also working with the Law Commission to prepare a **Consolidation Bill**, which we expect to publish in draft for consultation in late summer 2009.

Sustainable funding - ensuring implementation of more sustainable agreements with the third sector

By the end of 2009 we will collate and publish data for:

- the percentage of grants to the sector from central government that are for three years or more, measuring progress from the baseline;
- the number of first-time contracts from departments to third sector organisations for three years or more; and,
- grants and contracts from non-departmental public bodies and local authorities

In June 2009 we launched a new **funding information web service - Funding Central** for third sector organisations to access information on grants, loans and contacting opportunities.

<p>Sector support - provide over £85 million of investment through Capacitybuilders to improve infrastructure support to the third sector</p>	<p>Capacitybuilders will continue delivery of its three year grants programme.</p> <p>From April 2009 Capacitybuilders will deliver a new programme of investment in regional voice. Capacitybuilders will announce grant recipients for the second phase of its capital grants programme to develop third sector resource centres. Capacitybuilders will launch an Improving Support website in autumn 2009 to enable third sector organisations access on-line best practice guidance and tools</p> <p>An independent evaluation of the overall investments in third sector support services will show the outcomes achieved so far.</p> <p>Capacitybuilders are also delivering part of the Real Help for Communities: Modernisation Fund to support organisations to become more resilient and efficient in the recession. Diagnostic support for organisations is available and Capacitybuilders are delivering significant support through £1,000 bursary awards. Over 1,000 front line groups have now been offered £1,000 bursaries. Over autumn 2009, these groups will be able to apply for further funding of up to £10,000 to take concrete steps needed to make collaboration or merger happen.</p>
<p>Work with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to implement a third sector skills strategy</p>	<p>Jane Slowey is taking over as the chair of the new independent cross sector skills body for the third sector - Skills - Third Sector in July 2009.</p>
<p>Building the evidence on the nature and work of the third sector</p>	<p>The new national Third Sector Research Centre will publish a series of research reports, including a systematic review of existing evidence in the third sector.</p> <p>The third sector research centre will also develop an interactive website to enable access to third sector research.</p>
<p>Supporting the Local Authorities prioritising the third sector indicators in their Local Area</p>	<p>We have published in-depth analysis of the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations to give Local Authorities the tools to drive change in their areas.</p>

<p>Agreements with practical help that will ensure successful outcomes</p>	<p>Further analysis will be published in autumn 2009.</p> <p>The first reports of the new Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) which will examine how Local Authorities are progressing against their priorities will be published in autumn 2009. New CAA guidance is supporting CAA regional leads to develop understanding of the range of third sector roles in areas and how the sector contributes to high quality decision making, effective delivery and better outcomes.</p> <p>We will grow our Community of Practice for local areas with the third sector indicators and develop a recession focused programme of work.</p>
<p>Working with the private sector</p>	<p>In March 2009 we launched the Building Stronger Communities Taskforce to look at innovative and practical ways businesses and the third sector can work together through the recession. The taskforce, led by Dame Julia Cleverdon published its report in July 2009.</p>
<p>Partnership working - providing support for the Commission for the Compact to promote relationships between the sector and all levels of Government</p>	<p>In 2009-10 we will renew the Compact. The Commission for the Compact is consulting on the refreshed Compact over summer 2009 and the final version of the revised national Compact will be launched during Compact Week (Monday 2 to Sunday 8 November 2009).</p> <p>The Compact Annual Review will be held in February 2010.</p>

Measuring success

As set out on page 3 the OTS is responsible for the delivery of part of **Public Service Agreement 21** '*Build More Cohesive, Empowered and Active Communities*' which measures '*a thriving third sector*' as one of 6 indicators

This is measured by an index of:

- the percentage of people who engage in formal volunteering on a regular basis; and,
- the number of full-time equivalent staff employed within the sector.

These indicators are mirrored in the **Cabinet Office Departmental Strategic Objectives**:

To enable a thriving third sector - measured by:


- the percentage of people who engage in formal volunteering on a regular basis;
- the number of full-time equivalent staff employed within the sector;
- the percentage of three year funding agreements across Government; and,
- the quality of the local environment for a thriving third sector.

The OTS also sponsors two of the indicators in the **Local Performance Framework** by which all Local Authorities are assessed. These are:

- Indicator 6 - measuring participation in formal volunteering on a regular basis; and,
- Indicator 7 - measuring the local environment for a thriving third sector.

The OTS also commissions evaluations of its key programmes to build understanding of the impact of our investments at the grassroots level. This includes evaluations of Futurebuilders funding, ChangeUp, the Community Assets Fund, Grassroots Grants, the Innovation Exchange and our investment in business support for social enterprise. Our work on volunteering, through the Government's Champion Baroness Neuberger, independent research conducted by v and evidence provided through the Citizenship Survey means that we are continuing to build a rich picture on the motivations for and benefits of volunteering, along with the opportunities for greater participation. Our action research programme and other work are identifying the opportunities for further social enterprise growth.

The OTS is also working to build the evidence more generally on the nature and work of the third sector and its relationship with Government. This is being achieved through our funding of the National Third Sector Research Centre at Birmingham University, the Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy and our delivery of the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations, the largest of its kind. The National Survey was completed by 49,000 organisations and provides detailed information on the range of issues which third sector organisations consider to affect their success.



Our programme of work on Social Return on Investment will develop new guidance, training and infrastructure to enable third sector organisations to measure and articulate their own social value to investors, public service commissioners and other customers.

OTS commitment to sustainable development

Sustainable development is an intrinsic part of the overall aim of OTS, to enable the third sector to thrive, growing in its contribution to Britain's society, economy and environment. Ultimately, the third sector will thrive only if it is socially, environmentally and financially sustainable. The third sector plays a critical role in increasing understanding and action on sustainable development at an individual and community level and in increasing support for action by government.

In recognition of this, in 2009-10 OTS is taking further action to embed sustainable development in its policies and programmes. OTS is asking all its strategic partners to consider how they can support the long term environmental sustainability of their organisation, their members or networks.

In 2009-10 a new task group will look at ways to embed commitment and action on climate change and sustainability, both throughout the third sector and in Government programmes for the third sector. This group will be jointly chaired by ministers from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department of Energy and Climate Change, and OTS, with third sector stakeholders.

The OTS commitment to equality in its policy delivery is set out in the Cabinet Office Single Equality Scheme.

The OTS will undertake Equality Impact Assessments on key new policies coming into force in 2009-10 and has published an Equality Impact Assessment on the Real Help for Communities Modernisation Fund and Targeted Support Fund.