



## Joining the Common Values Partnership?

The initiative has been designed as an accreditation scheme with five levels of award. Levels one to three will be awarded on a self-certification basis. Companies reaching levels four and five on the self-grading assessment will receive a visit from the Common Values Partnership Audit Team to confirm the level achieved.

### Three steps to success - complete your own assessment

#### Step 01

The first stage is to complete a self-assessment form which can be downloaded from the website at [www.portsmouth.gov.uk/procurement](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/procurement). Alternatively, paper copies can be requested by calling the helpline on 023 92 68 82 35, or via email: [common.values@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:common.values@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

#### Step 02

Once completed the forms will provide an initial self-assessment grade. The forms, whether level one or five, must then be returned either electronically or as hard copies to Portsmouth City Council for approval. The forms will then be checked, authorised and the appropriate certificate awarded for levels one to three.

#### Step 03

If the self-assessment indicates a level four or five has been reached the Common Values Partnership Audit Team will arrange to visit the business to review the supporting documentation. The audit – by two or three members of the team – will take about half a day and once completed the appropriate certificate issued.



Helpline:  
**023 92 68 82 35**  
[www.portsmouth.gov.uk/procurement](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/procurement)



CVP Initiative  
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# Common Values Partnership

A Portsmouth City Council initiative



Raising local employment standards through good working practices and common values



# What is the Common Partnership initiative?

The Common Values Partnership is an original initiative developed by Portsmouth City Council to encourage local employers to work together with the council to achieve good working practices and set common values.

The key objective is to encourage an integrated society between employers and their employees, and the customers and communities that they both serve. The initiative has been designed to stimulate employer's awareness of the social, environmental and ethical aspects of employment, including:

- Developing new opportunities for trainees and apprenticeships
- Taking responsibility for the environment
- Good working practices when liaising with contractors and suppliers
- Good employment practices including employee training and development
- Working relationships within the community - employees, neighbours and city residents
- Raising awareness of equal opportunities and racial equality
- Encouraging a customer focussed approach

## Why has Portsmouth City Council created this initiative?

Every year Portsmouth City Council spends approximately £270 million on goods, services and salaries in the local area. Through the employment of over 8,000 local people and with 400 contracts a year, many of which are provided by local businesses, Portsmouth City Council is a major part of the local economy and is committed to serving and developing the local community and improving the environment.

As a public service provider the council employs core standards and values. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for the people of Portsmouth by working in partnership with those involved in the life of the city and by providing services that meet the needs and expectations of the city's residents. This initiative has been created to encourage existing and potential contractors and suppliers to pursue the same ideals.

## What are the benefits to my business?

Along with the obvious advantage of creating a better standard of employment and socially responsible business, the Common Values Partnership will offer important benefits to accredited businesses, including:

- Common Values Partnership certificates (levels one to five)
- Accreditation logo for use on letterheads and livery (levels four and five)
- Free notification of Portsmouth City Council contract opportunities
- Feedback from Portsmouth City Council on areas for business development
- Access to specialist business advisors



# Your questions answered

### How much will it cost me?

The actual accreditation process and award is free of charge. The initiative has been market tested with a number of local companies, all of which confirmed that implementation of the required practices provided a more efficient and effective way of working and therefore should reduce costs overall.

### How long does it take?

If the general principles are already in place it should take no more than two days to complete the forms and collect supporting documentation.

### Can any size business achieve accreditation?

The Common Values Partnership initiative is available to all businesses working with or wishing to work with Portsmouth City Council, from sole traders to multi-national corporations.

### How can I improve my accreditation level?

The Common Values Partnership team is on hand to help businesses progress to a higher level. If you would like assistance please call the helpline on: 023 92 68 82 35 or email: [common.values@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:common.values@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

The council also works with a number of other organisations and can provide introductions for businesses that are looking for ways to improve their performance.

### When can my business be re-assessed?

The aim of the initiative is to show progression in working practices over time. This will allow assessment for the next level to take place as soon as the company feels the standard required has been reached.

### How long does the accreditation last for?

Once a level five has been reached accreditation will be awarded for two years.

After this time the company will be re-audited to ensure continued high standards and on-going improvements.

### Is it mandatory?

No, the Common Values Partnership is not a mandatory initiative and will not affect contracts awarded by Portsmouth City Council.

### Will I get more work from Portsmouth City Council?

As a major benefit of the initiative, accredited companies will automatically be notified of all Portsmouth City Council tenders. Achieving accreditation should also make the company more desirable, not only to Portsmouth City Council but also to other contract providers.

Longer term, the council aims to harmonise the Common Values Partnership with tendering procedures. Although the accreditation system does not measure technical ability to fulfill a particular contract it does provide a thorough indication of the ethos of the company and in turn should reduce the tendering process.

“Portsmouth City Council is committed to providing assistance to help each company achieve its optimum level”