

# Sustaining diversity through collaborative tendering:

a HACT housing and support project

## **Collaborate 1: HACT's Supporting People collaborative tendering project**

The policy and funding environment in which support services are delivered to vulnerable people is changing. The new government has stated that it wishes to see voluntary groups play an increasing role in the delivery of services for vulnerable people. And it is likely to further devolve policy and funding decisions to local level.

The focus on community-based action as a way of delivering the vision of The Big Society, comes at a time when community-based voluntary organisations face threats from both severe cuts in public expenditure and trends in commissioning and procurement practice which jeopardise their ability to respond and – in some cases – to survive. Increasingly, contracts have been bundled up and redistributed to a relatively small number of large providers.

HACT's Collaborate 1 project set out to test whether smaller providers could maintain a place in the Supporting People market by developing collaborative approaches to tendering. It was funded by Communities and Local Government (CLG), and delivered in partnership with Sitra and the National Housing Federation (NHF) during 2008/9. It resulted in a practice-based Collaborate Resource Kit published in 2009 and republished in 2010 due to its popularity.

Collaborate 1 showed that collaborative tendering can be a way for smaller organisations to survive and even thrive, but for this to happen requires:

- capacity within organisations to put time into the process of collaboration, and to see it as a strategic priority;
- availability of suitable partners;
- commissioning teams adopting an “intelligent commissioning” approach and being in charge of the procurement process, with procurement teams playing a technical support role.

The findings of this report are thus of profound relevance to the way in which the new thinking on meeting the needs of vulnerable people plays out in reality. It identifies actions to support the continuance of a diverse range of service options for vulnerable people needing housing related support.

## The pilot groups

### SUFFOLK

A successful consortium bid for county-wide floating support contracts and a central access and referral function funded through decommissioning of existing services.

*Ipswich Housing Action Group, Anglia Care Trust, EPIC Trust, Family Welfare Association, Orwell Housing Association, Together*

### REDBRIDGE

A partnership to deliver a newly-funded borough-wide floating support service between a large lead agency and a small community-based subcontractor.

*Refugee And Migrant Forum of East London, Family Mosaic*

### DURHAM

Three small homelessness agencies working as an alliance of subcontractors on partnership bids with two lead agencies, tendering for a newly-funded county-wide floating support service.

*SHAID, DASH, Moving On*

### ROTHERHAM

A group of local providers of young people's services setting up a separate company – Independent Local Solutions – to bid for a range of contracts including the recommissioning of all existing SP services.

*Rotherham Mind, Chantry YMCA, GROW, Rush House, Voluntary Action Rotherham, Rotherham Women's Refuge, Yorkshire Trust*

### SOUTHEND

A consortium bid for a borough-wide floating support service funded through decommissioning.

*Southend YMCA, Homeless Action Resource Project, Southend Area Voluntary Services, Southend District Mental Health Association (Southend Mind), South Essex Homes*

## Collaborate 1 - an overview

Collaborate 1 was one of three complementary projects funded by CLG aimed at encouraging commissioning practices that acknowledge the value of a diverse market. Its specific focus was on resourcing, developing and testing a selection of multi-agency approaches to tendering and joint working.

Applications for the programme were invited in July 2007. Five successful pilot projects were selected to reflect a range of different approaches and settings. HACT provided them with:

- practical help and facilitation, working through some of the issues involved in developing collaborative models;
- a grant of up to £15,000 to be used to build the capacity of some of the smaller pilot group members, as well as covering some of the costs of legal and other expert advice.

Most of the small/medium-sized organisations taking part were doing so because they were concerned that competitive tendering posed a threat to their ability to remain in the Supporting People (SP) market – either immediately or in the longer term. For some, SP was such a large proportion of their income that losing it would destroy their viability. For nearly all the rest, losing SP funding would mean a substantial reduction in their core business. For them, this was a high stakes exercise.

Of the smaller organisations taking part, three lost the portion of their SP funding being put out to tender, three retained broadly the same level of funding, four gained new business, and five were prevented from bidding by the way the procurement process was structured.

The strategies adopted by the pilot groups fell into two broad categories:

- a group of small and medium-sized organisations bidding as part of a consortium;
- one or more smaller organisations entering into a sub-contracting relationship with a much larger organisation.

**The consortium approach** requires a huge amount of work from the organisations involved against a tight timetable, as well as a financial investment to pay for expert advice in putting together the tender. It is a very high-risk option. Each partner has only one chance at success; they are gambling that the consortium will be able to pull off a difficult task and that their fellow members' input will be of a similar high quality and as committed as their own.

**Subcontracting strategies** also involve risks. First, a small organisation may not be able to attract a partner, particularly where a lead agency may be able to choose its partner(s) from a number of smaller providers whose services are being decommissioned. Second, not all large organisations will enter into a sub-contracting relationship in a spirit of genuine partnership; there is anecdotal evidence of large organisations looking for trophy partners to window dress their bids. Third, having found a suitable partner, there is no guarantee it will win the tender. Finally, even if the partnership bid succeeds, the smaller partner will be dependent on another organisation for part of its core business.

**Collaboration is not a magic formula for preserving the current diversity of Supporting People suppliers.**

The number of providers currently in the market is simply too big to fit into the number of available contracts once a process of aggregation is under way and new entrants have taken a slice of the action. Even where a collaborative bid is put together, there is no guarantee that it will win the tendering process. Indeed if there is more than one collaborative bid in the competition, it is inevitable that one will lose.

**Many good organisations will continue to be driven out of the market**, and some will close as a result. There will, inevitably, be a degree of collateral damage to the local voluntary sector and to the communities served by those organisations.

Three things can help limit this process:

- driving up standards of commissioning and – in particular – procurement;
- adopting a “Full Value” approach to appraising the business case for subjecting a contract to full competitive tendering;
- action by Government (local and national), regulators and third tier organisations to ensure that sub-contracting forms a key part of future commissioning strategies, and that good practice in supply chain management is promoted and – where necessary – enforced.

**Collaboration can provide ways by which some smaller organisations can remain in the market.**

The organisations most likely to succeed are those that have done their business planning and worked out a competitive and collaborative strategy that plays to their strengths.

# Insights on consortia

Three pilot groups decided to set up consortia: in Southend, Suffolk and Rotherham. One was successful. Another failed to get through to the final interview stage. The third was effectively precluded from bidding by the procurement strategy adopted by their SP authority.

Successful consortia require good personal relationships, trust, determination, commitment, goodwill, enthusiasm and strong leadership.

Consortium bidding adds to the complexity and cost of tendering. It generates a lot of work – in particular for the lead agency – and it costs a lot. All three of the pilot projects spent more than the maximum HACT budget of £15,000 on consultants and other external advice, and contributed the balance from their own resources or from money raised elsewhere. None felt they had the capacity or expertise to develop a consortium bid entirely from their own resources.

Organisations need to acknowledge explicitly where leadership lies within the consortium. This may not necessarily be with the largest partner; in both the Suffolk and Southend examples, relatively small local agencies made the initial running and attracted larger partners into the consortium.

In addition, the burden of the lead agency role needs to be recognised by the other members of the consortium and to be reflected in the consortium agreement. Steps should be taken to minimise and share the risks lead agencies face, particularly if they are not the largest partner. Even with these risks minimised, the lead agency role can be daunting.

In forming a consortium, timing is critical. Discussions need to start long before you get

to the tendering process. On the other hand, however, it's difficult to determine the composition of the consortium before the tender requirements are revealed.

In Southend, for example, the intention to develop a holistic floating support service had been flagged up at a relatively early stage. However, the contract size could not be determined until all the appeals by existing providers whose services were scheduled to be decommissioned in order to fund the new service had been resolved; this created a long period of uncertainty in which detailed planning was severely hampered.

Once the size of the contract is known, getting the size and membership of the consortium right is essential. The choice of partners partly reflects decisions about who can work with whom, and which combinations will appeal to Supporting People. It's also critical in ensuring that the share of the contract is big enough to justify each member's involvement.

Organisations need to be clear about their bottom line: what is the absolute minimum it needs to get from the contract and how any income above each organisation's basic requirements is to be divided? It's also essential for ground rules, common values, quality standards and baselines to be addressed at this early stage. You have to get the right people around the table at the earliest opportunity: consortia are only as strong as their weakest member.

The next stage is to develop a delivery model that comes across as a coherent operational unit rather than a patchwork of individual member's services. They also have to write a high quality bid that is

joined-up and consistent, that can compete with those submitted by organisations with in-house specialist bidding teams.

Partnerships can have an edge in geographical coverage, local delivery and specialist focus on hard-to-reach client groups, but they still need to prove themselves. It is not enough to assume, or even to argue, that local partnerships are self-evidently better. It has to be evidenced in terms of their ability to deliver, and surpass, the requirements within the service specification. They will need, therefore, to understand how bids will be assessed.

It is early days, and different consortium approaches are being tested. There are no models that can be taken off the shelf and adapted, nor are there people who can be drafted in to help groups considering forming consortia – except for consultants.

For these reasons, organisations need to think very carefully before opting for this route. They need to undertake a risk assessment beforehand, asking themselves:

- is there a realistic prospect of success? The Southend lead agency suggests developing a scoresheet based on Supporting People's requirements, and treating any score of less than 8 out of 10 as a sign that the project shouldn't go ahead;
- do all of the potential partners have a realistic assessment of the time and money they will need to commit to the process; and
- do they have the capacity, the commitment and the necessary determination?

## Consortia - at a glance

There are seven key issues facing consortia:

- 1. Establishing who's in the consortium:** it is difficult to decide how many organisations - and which ones - can realistically take part until the full details of the tender is revealed: consequently, timing is often an issue;
- 2. Forming a credible partnership:** a successful consortium must have robust agreements and governance structures that convince commissioners it has thought through how it will deal with possible problems;
- 3. Developing a coherent delivery model:** the consortium has to come across as an integrated operation rather than a patchwork of services provided by individual organisations;
- 4. Writing a high quality bid:** it has to be joined-up, consistent and well-written, and able to compete with bids submitted by organisations with in-house specialist bid-writing teams;
- 5. Bidding generates a lot of work:** and it costs a lot of money. The three pilot groups each spent more than £15,000 on their bids. None felt they had the capacity or expertise to develop a consortium bid entirely from within their own resources;
- 6. The role of the lead agency is critical:** this needs to be recognised by other members of the consortium and reflected in the consortium agreement. Even if the risks are minimised, the role of the lead agency can still be daunting;
- 7. It's a high-risk option:** each partner has only one chance of success, and depends on their fellow consortium members being able to match their commitment and quality of service provision.

# Insights on subcontracting

The two Collaborate pilot groups which chose to seek a subcontracting relationship with a large provider illustrate different approaches.

- The Redbridge pilot was a simple one-to-one relationship between contractor and subcontractor; however, the partnership was put together after the contract had been awarded. This made the process easier, by removing the time pressure that would have arisen from trying to put it together during the tendering phase;
- The Durham pilot was an alliance of three small providers that adopted a strategy of developing collaborative tenders with several different lead bidders for the same contract in order to maximise its chances of success.

Both approaches succeeded. The Redbridge pilot has resulted in a working partnership that is delivering specialist services to a hard-to-reach group. Both of the bids with which the Durham pilot group was associated reached the final short list, and one – with Stonham as the lead agency – won the contract.

In both cases, the pilots were bidding for new services. As a result, small partners didn't have existing projects at stake, and both parties were able to withdraw from the process if necessary. It is possible that relationships might have been more fraught if the stakes were higher.

**The key factor in making each project a success was the quality of the relationship between the lead people from each side.** More than one participant defined this quality as openness and trust, coupled with professionalism. Lead staff from the large agencies embraced the spirit of collaborative working, and were enthusiastic about developing the project in a spirit of partnership:

*“You need to recognise all the horrible things that can go wrong and have a quality relationship that allows you to talk them through.”*

Establishing compatibility requires the key people on each side to meet and work together, so they can develop a sense of how the other person works. This requires an investment of time on both sides that is not always easy to make.

**There need to be benefits for each party.** In particular, the large organisation needs to be able to see how the smaller partners' participation will strengthen the service/their bid. The Durham pilot group invested time into identifying ways in which they could add specific value to their partners' bids, in each section of the tender document, using the scoring framework as a guide.

All small agencies need to be able to articulate clearly the distinctive value they can contribute to whichever tendering strategy they choose. Not every small organisation, however, will be able to make a convincing case for the special dimension that they will bring to a collaborative bid.

**The larger organisations in the pilot projects saw sub-contracting as a model for future collaborations.** They also viewed collaborative bids as an increasingly likely requirement in the future:

*“There's scarcely a tender these days that doesn't emphasise the need for partnership.”*

This was certainly true of the two pilots. In Redbridge, the contract had been awarded on the understanding that a suitable specialist subcontractor would be appointed. In Durham, the SP team had been clear that they were looking for bids that could demonstrate reach and local connectedness. Most bidders viewed this as a clear signal that partnership was expected.

**Collaborative working of this sort is still uncharted territory.** Collaborate was the first partnership-based project for the lead staff involved from both Family Mosaic and Stonham, the two large Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners in the pilot projects. Neither had model agreements they could draw on. The process was therefore largely about pragmatism, with both sides feeling their way towards a workable model:

*“You find out about it by doing it – give it time.”*

If subcontracting is to become a common arrangement, model documents would speed up the process of agreeing the basics, and enable more of the available time to be spent on the specifics of the project. Both projects adopted an organic approach to developing a contractual framework. They got the key elements of the agreement, like price, number of staff and principles of delivery, clear up front and filled in the details later on. In Redbridge this took the form of a Heads of Agreement letter. In Durham, it was a Partnership Agreement and confidentiality agreement. Trust was crucial to this way of developing the relationship:

*“Where there’s goodwill, there’s no problem.”*

**For smaller organisations, the sub-contracting route was much lower cost, both in terms of money and time than the consortium route.** In particular, there was a much lower degree of reliance on the input of external consultants, with the responsibility for putting together the tender documentation resting with the larger lead organisation. Under this model, smaller organisations benefited from the larger partner’s tendering capacity and credibility. Even this model, however, requires a substantial investment of time.

**A key question for the future** is whether other large RSLs can be persuaded that sub-contracting is a desirable model. This depends on action from commissioners to ensure future invitations to tender require bids to include an element of sub-contracting. It also requires the development of good practice guidance and a set of standard documents that can be used as a basis for discussion between organisations that are considering collaboration. The NHF should play a lead role in developing the latter.

## Subcontracting - at a glance

Three issues underpinned the success of these subcontracting strategies:

- 1. the value provided by the smaller organisation:** smaller partners need to be able to show that they can add identifiable value to the lead agency’s bid. Not all small organisations will be able to do this successfully, particularly if a lead agency can choose from a number of smaller providers;
- 2. the role of Supporting People teams:** in both places, SP teams created a climate of expectation that a successful service would involve partnership with organisations who could contribute a local/expert dimension. Both SP teams also pursued a flexible, supportive approach to the tendering process;
- 3. the role of large organisations:** the attitude of key people within them is critical. Not only do they have to see the value of collaboration with smaller agencies, but to behave in ways that make a successful collaboration possible. This means being prepared to invest time in developing the relationship, and working in a spirit of equality despite the partners’ disparity in size and power.

# Promoting effective partnership

## Subcontracting

Given the difficulties of putting together a successful consortium bid, subcontracting is likely to be the main form of collaboration in the future for smaller organisations. However, for it to provide a successful way of preserving the diversity of the sector, there needs to be a supply of large organisations prepared to enter into subcontracting relationships, and to maintain them in a constructive way in the long term.

Larger providers have been given a massive competitive advantage by the creation of Supporting People. How they make use of their position will be a major factor in determining whether efforts to preserve diversity will succeed.

For this model to work, the prime contractor needs to be prepared to follow the approach adopted by the larger partners in the Collaborate pilot projects. They have to be willing to invest time to develop the relationship and to treat it as one of equals. The large organisation also needs to be prepared to recognise that, for reasons of survival, smaller organisations may need to be part of more than one bid.

Not all large organisations will see the merits of this approach, but this is where representative bodies such as the National Housing Federation can play a role. They should promote the business case for collaboration and support the development of standard models and good practice - as happened with FLAP before the creation of Supporting People.

Ultimately, however, commissioners set the terms of trade. They need to ensure that – other than in exceptional circumstances – future invitations

to tender specify that a sizeable portion of the contract should be delivered through one or more subcontractors, require prime contractors to demonstrate good practice in supply chain management, and to build this requirement into the contract documentation and subsequent contract monitoring processes.

## Consortia

Larger organisations can also help to preserve diversity by facilitating the development of consortium bids. DISC in Lancashire, for example, took the role of lead agency, providing the tendering expertise and capacity for a consortium containing a range of smaller partners.

A common feature of most SP markets is the existence of at least one local branch of Mind, the YMCA and/or Mencap. We believe that there may be a role for such national membership organisations in providing support to their members (and their partners) in putting together consortia and tenders without themselves being part of the bidding process. Essentially, this is the role HACT played in Collaborate 1. Clearly this would need to be funded, and there may be role for Capacitybuilders here.

An alternative approach would be to develop bodies that can provide both the tendering capacity and a vehicle for managing the contract if the bid is successful. This would mirror the third sector consortium 3SC, but would need to be capable of working at a local level and with the size of contract that SP commissioning bodies are likely to be tendering; Independent Local Solutions in Rotherham may provide a model here.

## Driving up standards of commissioning and procurement

The Audit Commission report *Hearts and Minds* coined the phrase “intelligent commissioning”. The approach it describes must lie at the heart of any attempt to promote collaboration as a way of sustaining diversity. Without it, the prospects for successful collaborative bids are bleak.

**Commissioning.** We found that, on the whole, most SP commissioners at least had aspirations to practice “intelligent commissioning”; some were a lot closer to achieving it than others. There is a clear role for government and the Audit Commission in ensuring that good practice is captured, built on, promoted and expected.

Collaborate identified a number of lessons for good commissioning practice that could create the necessary conditions for successful collaboration:

- adopting a flexible approach to procurement: a recognition that, as one SP lead officer put it, “*everything has to be commissioned, but not everything has to be procured*”;
- basing decisions to go down the full competitive tendering route on a “*Full Value*” assessment of the business case (see page 10);
- ensuring Supporting People’s approach to commissioning links with the strategies of other key commissioners in the area;
- creating a climate of expectation that collaborative approaches will be viewed favourably;
- considering specifying that a proportion of the contract must be delivered through one or more subcontracts and developing a panel of recommended subcontractors;
- creating commissioning processes that enable good collaborative bids to be constructed, by:
  - › thinking carefully about the impact of the size of contract lots;
  - › cutting out any unnecessary workload in producing pre-qualification documentation;

- › being clear about how the tender should be constructed and keeping it simple;
- › allowing enough time in the commissioning process for collaborative partnerships to be formed, and bids to be constructed;
- › developing scoring frameworks that look for evidence of the ability to develop and leverage local “rootedness” as a pervasive source of added value throughout the tender, rather than having one specific question under which localness is scored;
- › ensuring that the commissioning team remains in control of the process, with the corporate procurement team acting in a consultancy role, and double-checking advice from corporate procurement teams where it could have the effect of disadvantaging smaller providers;
- › following up the award of contracts with a “fair trade” approach to contract and supply chain management.

**Procurement.** The picture here was very different. In the cases where good commissioning practice had been achieved, it tended to be in spite of – rather than because of – the involvement of corporate procurement teams. These teams were frequently seen as an obstacle to developing diversity-friendly tendering processes:

- There was little evidence that good practice commissioning guidelines issued by various government departments have penetrated to corporate procurement teams. Indeed, there was a worrying amount of evidence of inflexibility, wrong advice and sheer bad practice. This is an area where a major improvement in standards is urgently required;
- This is important because, however diversity-friendly the commissioning process may be, it can be completely undermined by poor procurement practices.

## The Full Value approach

In deciding whether to go down the full competitive tendering route for SP services, commissioners should weigh up not only the costs to the authority but also the expected cost and impact for the local voluntary sector, in particular:

- how much the tendering exercise will cost the local authority;
- how much it will cost the local voluntary sector. We found that it cost well over £15,000 to put together a consortium bid, and that organisations which put in individual bids had to spend well over £10,000; given that almost all bids will be coming from voluntary organisations, these are funds which could otherwise have been spent on charitable objectives. If a number of organisations are likely to be bidding, the amount of money being diverted away from front line services could be very large;
- what the impact will be on local networks, and particularly on services funded by other commissioners if key local providers are destabilised by losing a substantial part of their core business;
- what savings it might be possible to achieve by negotiation.

These should all be balanced against the savings that might be achieved by going out to tender. These might not be as large as anticipated – the 2009 Select Committee report on Supporting People found that in one authority the average saving generated by tendering contracts was 1%, whereas savings achieved through negotiation were 4%.

## In conclusion

Collaboration is not a magic formula for preserving the current diversity of Supporting People suppliers. First, because even where a collaborative bid is put together, there is no guarantee it will win the tendering process. Secondly, it is rarely feasible to develop a collaborative vehicle that can accommodate all the small providers whose core services are under threat.

There is no doubt that many good organisations will be driven out of the market. Some of these will close as a result. There will, inevitably, be collateral damage to the local voluntary sector and to the communities served by those organisations. Commissioners should therefore think very carefully before deciding to tender a contract and ensure the process they opt for does not add further disadvantages faced by small organisations. They should not assume that simply stating a preference for bids that can show evidence of partnership will be enough to preserve diversity – it will not.

The difficulty of developing a successful consortium bid means that subcontracting is likely to be the main collaborative route through which smaller providers remain in the market. Government, regulators and third tier bodies need to take the lead in ensuring that subcontracting forms a key part of future commissioning strategies, and that good practice in supply chain management is promoted and – where necessary – enforced.

Given the right circumstances, collaboration can provide a means for some smaller organisations to remain in the market. The organisations most likely to succeed are those that have done their business planning and worked out a competitive and collaborative strategy that plays to their strengths. They will have cultivated a proactive relationship with commissioners, as well as identified and developed the distinctive value they can bring to a partnership.

## Recommendations (cont'd)

- 6** Government should continue to target specific resources on capacity-building within the Supporting People market. The focus of this should be on enabling smaller organisations to build their ability to take part in collaborative approaches such as consortia and – in particular – to act as empowered subcontractors.
- 7** Future initiatives aimed at building the capacity of voluntary and community organisations that use financial turnover as gatekeeping criterion should exclude rents and service charges when assessing turnover to avoid discriminating against small organisations running accommodation-based services.
- 8** CLG and Capacitybuilders should discuss the most effective way of delivering capacity-building help within the Supporting People sector. This should include the possibility of engaging national membership organisations such as YMCA, Mind and Mencap (which cover a large proportion of Supporting People commissioning areas) as hosts for consortium support services.
- 9** Commissioning authorities should adopt a case-by-case approach to retendering of services, rather than a blanket policy of “everything must be tendered”. Proposals for full-scale competitive tendering exercises should be subject to a “Full Value” business case analysis that not only takes into account anticipated savings and the transaction costs to the authority, but also the expected impact on local voluntary and community networks.
- 10** CLG and the Local Government Association (LGA) should take a lead in helping Supporting People commissioners to share the learning they have gained from the first major rounds of competitive tendering on how to manage the procurement process flexibly, and produce consolidated guidance. It should also use this process actively to promote use of the NCVO/NAVCA publication: *“Pathways Through The Maze – A Guide To Procurement Law”*.
- 11** CLG should engage in a conversation with the Office for Civil Society, the Audit Commission and the LGA to identify an action plan for driving up standards of procurement of support services.
- 12** The Office of Government Commerce should issue clear guidance to local authorities’ legal, finance and procurement departments as well as Supporting People commissioners, setting out how they can reconcile their duty to act within EU Procurement Regulations and UK public law with procurement practices which are third sector and SME-friendly.
- 13** The government, and specifically CLG, should take all possible measures to ensure local authorities retain their Supporting People teams and Commissioning Bodies as recommended in the Select Committee Report.

## Recommendations

- 1** The National Housing Federation should promote the business case for subcontracting, and take the lead in developing standard models and good practice guidance on the management of sub-contracting relationships through a similar initiative to the FLAP programme.
- 2** The NHF should work with NCVO, NAVCA, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) and the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning to develop training for large third sector organisations on good practice in managing relationships with sub-contractors.
- 3** Where major contracts are being let, Supporting People commissioning teams should include a requirement to deliver a minimum proportion of each contract through subcontractors unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so.
- 4** Government should promote this approach energetically, and ensure it is included in the wider guidance for local authority legal and procurement teams on diversity-friendly procurement.
- 5** The National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning should include modules on the management of subcontracting relationships – both for prime contractors and subcontractors – in its training for third sector organisations, and on the promotion of diversity-friendly subcontracting practices, its training for finance, procurement and commissioning professionals.

*(continued inside)*

To find out further information about the Collaborate project - and its successor project, Collaborate 2 - please visit [www.hact.org.uk](http://www.hact.org.uk).

You can also download the HACT *Collaborate Resource Kit* online, or order a hard copy from us at:

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Collaborate was funded by



SUSTAINING DIVERSITY THROUGH  
COLLABORATIVE TENDERING:  
A HACT HOUSING AND SUPPORT PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
ISBN: 978-0-9561369-0-9  
PUBLISHED: JULY 2010