



VISIBLE

Quality for the Community Sector

MEMBERS' QUALITY
STANDARD
CHARITY
COMMISSION
ENDORSED

visible
COMMUNITIES™



VISIBLE Communities™ is a unique approach to promoting quality and best practice in the community sector.

VISIBLE Communities™ is based around a set of seven core principles that underpin strong sustainable community organisations.

VISIBLE Communities™ includes two tools – the **VISIBLE Accredited Standards** and the **preVISIBLE Review**.

A **VOICE** to represent issues of local concern

An **INDEPENDENT** and politically neutral organisation

A **SERVICE** provider for local people

An **INITIATOR** of projects to meet locally identified needs

A **BUILDER** of partnerships with other local organisations and groups

A strong **LOCAL** network of people and organisations

A way to **ENGAGE** local people to become active in their communities

The **VISIBLE Accredited Standards** are a set of operating principles for community centres and multi-purpose community organisations. Endorsed by the Charities Commission, **VISIBLE** accreditation is a nationally recognised way of improving your organisation's sustainability and gaining a competitive edge in funding applications.

The **preVISIBLE Review** is an online self-assessment tool for small to medium-sized community organisations. Drawn from key aspects of the **VISIBLE Accredited Standards**, it provides insight into the way your organisation works and suggests ways to improve.

The **VISIBLE Communities™** tools can be accessed online at www.visiblecommunities.org.uk, where registered users can take advantage of a wide range of support and guidance.

The support team is also on hand to provide advice and help you get the best out of your **VISIBLE** experience:

E: richard.bridge@communitymatters.org.uk
nadia.denton@communitymatters.org.uk

T: 020 7837 7887

W: www.visiblecommunities.org.uk

preVISIBLE

The *pre*VISIBLE Review is for small to medium-sized community organisations who are interested in improving the way they are run. By giving you the resources to build and analyse an online quality file, it encourages best practice and helps to ensure your organisation is legally compliant and fit for purpose.

Unique in being designed specifically for trustees and volunteers and not just for community sector professionals, the *pre*VISIBLE Review is an easy-to-use development tool which enables you to test the management systems and policies your organisation has in place via a series of online questions and requests to attach specific pieces of supporting evidence.

The *pre*VISIBLE Review is for:

- ▶ Democratically organised community groups of any size, and many other voluntary sector groups
- ▶ Community Associations, Charitable Trusts, Incorporated Charities, and Community Interest Companies
- ▶ Groups about to develop/review their governance and management arrangements to ensure they are up to date, legally compliant, and adhering to best practice
- ▶ Groups securing funding, applying for grants, or negotiating other forms of support

The *pre*VISIBLE Review can also be used by:

- ▶ Local Authorities, Councils for Voluntary Services and other support organisations as a diagnostic tool to help understand the development and capacity support needs of the groups they are working with
- ▶ Funders and Commissioners who wish to assure themselves that they are funding suitable, fit for purpose groups

Getting started with *pre*VISIBLE

Register online at www.visiblecommunities.org.uk

Registration is quick, easy and instant.

Set up your assessment

Use the guidance notes to complete the questions and attach your evidence to build an online quality file.



You can revisit, edit and update your quality file as your organisation develops. In addition to managing your own *pre*VISIBLE assessment, you can opt for an independent review and report. A review will give you a timelocked report, valid for 3 years, with which to demonstrate quality to funders and supporters.

The *pre*VISIBLE assessment can also be used towards completing the **VISIBLE** Accredited Standards; organisations progressing to accreditation will receive a discount of £350 off the standard price.

Online assessment:

FREE

Optional review and report:

£450 + VAT

VISIBLE

The **VISIBLE** Accredited Standards are for larger community organisations, those running premises and/or a wide range of activities and services. They encourage participation from staff, volunteers, board members and trustees, and are tailored to your organisation's exact requirements with the help of the **VISIBLE** support team.

VISIBLE accreditation will benefit any organisation that wants to achieve nationally recognised standards providing evidence of the breadth and quality of its work.

VISIBLE accreditation can be used to:

- › Produce a development framework
- › Identify and troubleshoot potential problems
- › Improve the management ability of staff and volunteers
- › Remain legally compliant
- › Give confidence to existing funders and regulators
- › Apply for additional resources and funding streams
- › Give confidence to members, users and other stakeholders
- › Frame Service Level Agreements
- › Become a community anchor
- › Improve local relations and communication internally and external

Getting started with **VISIBLE**

Register online at www.visiblecommunities.org.uk

Access the free demo workbook for information on the standard and to browse the full range of quality indicators

Set up your own workbook

When you're ready to set up your own **VISIBLE** workbook, read through the **VISIBLE** Accredited Standards and review the various indicators, some of which are core and others offering choices from which you can select those most relevant to your organisation. Guidance is provided to explain the indicators and suggest the types of evidence and work that will be required. Preparing for accreditation, in order to fit around your organisation's activities and allow time for consultation with staff and trustees etc, generally takes 9-12 months. The **VISIBLE** Standards team, along with the many resources on the website, are on hand to provide support.

When you are ready to accredit you can apply online or contact the **VISIBLE** Standards team. The accreditation process is designed to be constructive and positive, and includes a desk-based initial assessment of key documents and policies followed by a day long on-site visit to your organisation. Accreditation can be outright or conditional on further work. Either way, you will receive a verified assessor's report packed with helpful comments and guidance.

Online workbook:

£15 + VAT

FREE for Community Matters Members

Accreditation:

£1650 + VAT for non members

£1500 + VAT for Community Matters Members

£1400 +VAT for organisations from a Local Licensed Agent



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A strong **LOCAL** network of people and organisations

A way to **ENGAGE** local people to become active in their communities

VISIBLE Communities™, including the **VISIBLE** Accredited Standards and **VISIBLE** Review, has been developed by **Community Matters** as a way of establishing quality, and improved performance, amid the enormous diversity and scope of today's community work, based on the seven core principles underpinning strong and sustainable organisations.



CabinetOffice
Office of the **Third Sector**