The Gold Standard Programme
one year on: peer reviews and the local challenges

The National Practitioner Support Service
Your hosts...

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Today’s Workshop

• Who we are
• What we do
• The Gold Standard Programme
  – Overview of the programme
  – Take up of the programme
  – Local authority experiences
  – Wigan’s experience
  – Discussion: Your thoughts / experiences
  – Good practice
The NPSS Team

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East Midlands and the East
FREE Resources & Support from NPSS

- Support local authorities to use the toolkits (electronically and by phone)
- Targeted support for peer review groupings to use the Diagnostic Peer Review tools (this may be electronic, by telephone or in person, depending on the context)
- Provide local authorities with more generic support to enhance current housing options service across the ten ‘local challenges’, encourage local authorities to offer an early intervention & prevention service and assist them to become ‘Gold Standard ready’
- Targeted support for local authorities to enhance front line service delivery (this may be electronic, by telephone or in person, depending on the context)
- Support local authorities through the ten steps and the Gold Standard Process
NPSS Ethos

• There are no failed applications for Gold Standard

• All carrot, no stick – voluntary and optional

• Focus on ‘Continuous Improvement’

• We will support local authorities to develop their approaches so that they are more effective and efficient
The Gold Standard Challenge

• The challenge is a local authority, peer led review scheme designed to help LA’s deliver more efficient and cost effective homeless prevention service

• The Challenge follows a 10 step continuous improvement approach that starts with a pledge for LA’s aspiring to ‘strive for continuous improvement’

• Culminates in an application for the gold standard challenge
The 10 Challenges

1. SLA
2. NEETS
3. NSNO
4. PRS
5. Preventing Repossessions
6. Strategy
7. 16/17
8. B&B
The 10 Steps

✓ **Step 1** - Pledge to “strive for continuous improvement”  319
✓ **Step 2** - FREE one year Shelter Legal membership  307
✓ **Step 3** - FREE legal training to all local authorities  299
✓ **Step 4** - FREE bespoke Gold Standard training to all local authorities  111
✓ **Step 5** - FREE ‘Value for Money’ cost efficiency assessment tool Coming soon
✓ **Step 6** - FREE statistical compiler  151
✓ **Step 7** - FREE access to verified good practice / free toolkits  103
✓ **Step 8** - FREE Diagnostic Peer Review Toolkit  37
✓ **Step 9** - FREE comprehensive benchmarking toolkit Coming soon
✓ **Step 10** - If you decide – Apply for the Gold Standard Challenge  2
How are we doing?

Step 1 - Pledge to “strive for continuous improvement
Over 97% of all councils

Step 2 - FREE one year Shelter Legal membership

Step 3 - FREE legal training to all local authorities
A total of 4,068 delegates
A. Developing Homelessness Strategies, Protocols and Procedures
B. Delivering an effective housing advice, prevention and options service with an outcomes focus
C. Pathways: Developing housing pathways with key partners and client groups that include appropriate accommodation and support
D. Achieving continuous improvement in front line housing services
E. Effective Partnership Working – overcoming barriers and building relationships
F. Developing the skills to engage with your partners in your local homelessness sector (internal and external)
G. Tackling Rough Sleeping
H. Reducing the use of B&Bs as emergency accommodation for families and young people
I. Develop a private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord
J. Youth Pathway: Developing a pathway for young people in housing need (16-25 year olds)
Step 4
Gold Standard Training

Since September 2014:

• Training provided to 306 delegates
• From 111 Local Authorities

Feedback:

• “I really liked the practical advice and information. The course reinforced why the work we are doing is important”
• “Really helpful to receive up to date information”
• “Opportunity to reflect on internal policies and identify areas for improvement”
• “Very useful content”
• “Very interesting and engaging course”
Progress and developments on the 10 Steps

Step 5 - FREE ‘Value for Money’ cost efficiency assessment tool
Developed in association with the University of York
Currently being tested

Step 6 - FREE statistical compiler
Downloaded by 151 councils

Feedback:
“Immensely useful in doing our Homelessness Review”
“Having the stats all in one place makes writing reports / strategies easier “
“Particularly liked that we could cut and paste the graphs”
Progress and developments on the 10 Steps

Step 7 - FREE access to verified good practice / free toolkits

Good Practice downloads:
• Operational Good Practice Examples: 568 downloads by 86 authorities
• Private Rented Sector Toolkit: 157 downloads by 39 authorities
• Youth Homelessness Toolkit: 105 downloads by 35 authorities
• Homelessness Strategy Toolkit: 187 downloads by 46 authorities
We encourage LAs to work in groups of 3 or more to undertake peer reviews using the toolkit. This approach offers a healthy challenge & draws in experience, expertise and support from different areas.

Local authorities can use the DPR toolkit internally to review their own services or with another authority, prior to considering a wider peer review or applying for Gold Standard.

The toolkit can also be used to support on-going bite size reviews of specific elements of the service, for example supporting periodic case file reviews, and other quality assurance monitoring initiatives.
Step 8 - FREE Diagnostic Peer Review Toolkit

180 local authorities are actively engaged in a cluster group

30 cluster groups across all nine regions

37 local authorities have undertaken a peer review

That’s 11% of all councils in England
Quotes from staff and partners about services being reviewed

“Our Service Director is really passionate about what we do; she sends us a copy of her diary every Monday so we know where she is and how to contact her if we need to”

“Council gives good quality advice, backed up in writing”

“The Housing Options Team are so creative when looking at resolutions for people who are homeless” (Children’s Services)

“Supportive, fully involved and responsive line managers”
Wigan’s experience

Key recommendations
• Homelessness strategy / homelessness review
• Understanding / awareness - homelessness trends / issues
• Corporate priority
• Partnership working
• Peer review process – on site / off site
Wigan’s experience

Good practice

• Cluster groups – who / how to select
• Planning
• Communication
• Relationships
Positive outcomes

• Learning / good practice
• Continuous improvement plan – link to homelessness action plan
• Raise awareness
• Effective use of resources
“By acting on the excellent recommendations arising from the diagnostic peer review, we anticipate the Council will save money, delivering an increasingly effective and efficient, customer focused Housing Service.”

“The process isn't rocket science, the commitment to delivering the review was minimal and the results are disproportionately valuable in the context of the time invested”
Feedback on the process

“We found the Gold Standard process to be incredibly rewarding. It helped us to hold a mirror up to our own service; reaffirming the things that we do really well while giving us some real insight into how to move on to the next stage of development.”

“It’s given us some really quick wins to deliver immediate improvements to housing options and homelessness services which has made us more effective and more efficient. We’ll be using this as part of our annual service reviews and business planning in the future.”
Discussion Topic

• Has your local authority already undertaken a Diagnostic Peer Review? Do you have any feedback to share?

• Is your local authority planning to undertake a Diagnostic Peer Review?

• If so, what does your authority need to consider to become ‘Gold Standard’ ready?
Good practice:
Some National Examples

- **Cherwell**: Size adaptable temporary accommodation
- **Dudley**: Zero rate B&B for 16/17 in two years
- **Hart**: Rent Bond Scheme
- **Mendip**: Joint Training Housing Benefit
- **Solihull**: Partnership Working
- **South Somerset**: Web accessibility
Good practice: Some National Examples

- **Stockport**: Good overall temporary accommodation model (incl volunteers in TA)
- **Tameside**: Hospital discharge policy
- **Test Valley**: 96% RDS loan recover rate
- **West Berkshire**: DHP within Housing Services
- **Wigan**: Housing Support Access Point (HSAP) process
- **Winchester**: Triage service for all
Recommendations:
Some Local Examples

- **Example A:** consider how to access the private rented sector
- **Example B:** consider how to engage stakeholders more effectively
- **Example C:** consider how to implement an effective NSNO model
- **Example D:** lack of resilience in the front line service
- **Example E:** ensure all customers receive advice in writing
Lessons Learned & Common themes

• Homelessness Strategy
  - flows throughout the DPR process

• Website
  - beneficial to have some control over content

• Reception and interview room facilities
  - well equipped, confidential facilities available
  - customers benefit from an enabling environment

• Customer interview observation
  - Experienced, helpful, knowledgeable staff
  - Customer journey
Lessons Learned & Common themes

• **Housing Options & Pt VII Case Files**
  - Use as a tool to highlight issues, quality control and spot checks

• **Staff**
  - Positive about prevention and continuous improvement

• **Managers**
  - Committed to delivering prevention focussed services
  - Positive about the DPR process and Gold Standard Programme

• **Partners**
  - Close, well thought of, relationships with housing options teams

• **Visits**
  - Excellent and varied accommodation provision
Feedback

• Real opportunity to share learning & good practice
• Build on existing relationships and develop new ones

“The service will definitely improve and the relationships we have forged between our peer authority officers will provide enormous added value to all 3 local authority Housing Services. We are already sharing what works between ourselves and we've decided in future to look at benchmarking between us.”
Progress and developments on the 10 Steps

Step 9 - FREE comprehensive benchmarking toolkit

Coming soon

Step 10 - If you decide – Apply for the Gold Standard Challenge

- 34 applications by 10 local authorities
- 2 local authorities have been awarded bronze status

Most common challenges applied for:

- Challenge 10: B&B 11 applications
- Challenge 4: NSNO 8 applications
- Challenge 3: Options for all 7 applications

Another 51 applications expected in the next 3 months
Questions?

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www.practitionersupport.org

Tweet us: @NPSService using #goldstandard