



# HRA self-assessment checklists

Masterclass developed and delivered by  
The National Practitioner Support Service

Supporting you to prevent homelessness

# In this session...

- Introductions
- The Gold Standard programme
- HRA Checklists
- Submitting a self assessment
- Certification
- Group discussion

# Introductions

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# The Gold Standard Programme

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# The Gold Standard programme

We are very proud of the success of the Gold Standard Programme and the engagement from over 220 authorities across the country, we do however recognise that the Gold Standard, in its current format has not been amended to reflect the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

After discussing this with MHCLG and given the timeframe for implementation of the new Act, NPSS made the decision to replace the current programme with our new self-assessment checklists for local authorities.

# The Gold Standard programme

## Lessons learned....positives and good practice

- It is important to be able to recognise good practice
- Highlights and evidences corporate commitment of the LA
- Local Authorities preference is for a structured recognition scheme



# The Gold Standard programme

## Lessons learned....improvements

- Applications could be streamlined
- Remove unnecessary repetition within applications
- Assessments by 3 x sub panel members can be difficult to resource and lengthy
- Local Authorities would prefer an “open and transparent application” process which allows for future planning



# Over to you...



What do you currently have in place to ensure that your service is fit for purpose?



# Self Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act



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# Self Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act Checklists

- Aligned to the HRA requirements
- Takes in to account The Code of Guidance as well as The Homelessness (Review Procedure etc.) Regulations 2018
- Based on an on-line self assessment through a validation and certificate process
- NPSS advice and guidance linked to a bespoke CIP
- Supported by CIH and Crisis



# Self Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act Checklists

- SA1: Corporate Commitment
- SA2: Working in partnership
- SA3: Do you have an HRA compliant service?
- SA4: Rough sleeping
- SA5: Having effective pathways
- SA6: Accessing the private rented sector
- SA7: Mortgage arrears and debt advice
- SA8: Homeless Strategy
- SA9: Youth homelessness provision
- SA10: Not using B&B for families



# Completing your self assessment.....

## Register

NPSS Checklist Tool

NAME

E-MAIL

PASSWORD

RE-ENTER PASSWORD

JOB TITLE

REGION

 

Register

Already a member? [Login](#)

- Simple, online application process
- Local Authorities will be able to create an account online
- All checklists available online at any stage to all Local Authorities
- Will be ready at the end of July

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# Completing your self assessment.....

## Login

NPSS Checklist Tool

E-MAIL

peanut@butter.com

PASSWORD

Log in

Not a member yet? [Register](#)

- Log in using an email address and password
- Ability to download the checklist prior to completing on line
- Track the progress of your self assessment
- Multiple people can log in from the same LA to the one LA account

# Completing your self assessment.....

NPSS Checklist Tool Log out

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**CORPORATE COMMITMENT**

**Corporate commitment 1** 24/06/2018  
by John Smithsson Local Social Activities Manager  
Total points earned: 50% Submitted  
8 of 11 Tasks Remaining Download certificate

**Corporate commitment 2...** 20/06/2018  
by John Smithsson Local Social Activities Manager  
Total points earned: 50% Not validated  
4 of 11 Tasks Remaining

**Corporate commitment 3...** 20/06/2018  
by John Smithsson Local Social Activities Manager  
Total points earned: 50% Verified  
4 of 11 Tasks Remaining

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**CORPORATE COMMITMENT VOL2**

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**CORPORATE COMMITMENT ON SELECTIVE CENTERS**

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**FINISHED TASK**

## Corporate Commitment

Last saved 11:23 02/07/2018 [Print out](#) Submit

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### Strategic level sign up and awareness ^

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1. The local authority has a current and lawful homelessness strategy which:

- Has been informed by a review of homelessness
- Has been consulted on
- Has a clear action plan with SMART targets and ownership that are updated on a regular basis (at least annually)
- Is up to date [Edit](#)
- Has been published
- Has a life of no more than 5 years
- Has a clear review mechanism
- Has been reviewed in the last 18 months and takes full account of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Incorporates the s.213B duty to refer and an early identification and intervention approach into the

# Self Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act

*Examples of self assessment checklist questions*



# Example of a self assessment..

## SA1: Corporate commitment

### Briefing sessions or literature have been produced which:

- Explain the local response to homelessness
- Highlight the importance of preventing homelessness
- Set out the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Set out the expectations of partners in delivering the HRA 2017
- Are suitable for wider departments and voluntary sector partners



### There have been briefing sessions in the last 12 months which:

- Set out to elected members the local response to homelessness, the importance of preventing homelessness and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017



# Example of a self assessment..

## SA3: Prevention Focused Housing Options Service Which Is Compliant With The HRA 2017

When bringing the prevention or relief duty to an end through any offer of an assured short hold tenancy in the private rented sector, where the household is likely to be in priority need, the local authority:

- Ensures that suitability checks are carried out including those set out in Article 3 of the existing Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012

The service has a clearly written set of procedures/staff guide to support operational service delivery which include:

- Deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate

And

- Have been reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with the Homelessness Reduction Act



# Example of a self assessment..

## SA5: Pathways

Pathways in place for all groups that LAs have duty to provide or secure the provision of advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness:

- People leaving hospital
- People suffering from a mental illness or impairment
- People released from prison or youth detention centres
- Care leavers
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Former members of the regular armed forces
- Any other group that the authority identify as being at particular risk of homelessness
- Pathway for rough sleepers



# Example of a self assessment..

## SA6: Accessing the PRS

Where the authority supports customers to access or sustain accommodation in the private rented sector:

- Income and expenditure of all customers is analysed as part of the assessment, in order to determine how much rent the household can afford to pay.
- This assessment informs the locations where the applicant and local authority are searching for properties and these are included in the personalised housing plan.
- As part of the suitability assessment, before the LA offers any PRS property they assess affordability and are satisfied that the tenant can afford the rent
- The assessment is compliant with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996
- LA must be satisfied that the applicant can afford the rent without being deprived of basic essentials such as food, clothing, heating, transport and other essentials specific to their circumstances
- Advice is provided in relation to income maximisation
- Advice is provided to support customers to prioritise and manage debts

*N.B. These services may be provided in-house or via referral*

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# Example of a self assessment..

## SA8: Prevention Focused Homelessness Strategy And Action Plan

In the review of homelessness and writing of the Homelessness Strategy, the local authority:

- Consulted internal partners
- Consulted external partners
- Consulted staff
- Consulted customers

The Homelessness Strategy action plan:

- Identifies financial resources for each action

which may include:

- Existing resources
- MHCLG Preventing Homelessness Grant
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Match funding opportunities
- Co-location of services
- Shared resources



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# Example of a self assessment..

## SA9: Youth Homelessness

The local authority has a joint protocol in place between Children's Services and Housing which:

- Accurately reflects the 2018 statutory guidance for 16/17 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Makes it clear that Childrens' Services take the lead and that the duties under s.20 of the Childrens' Act 1989 to provide accommodation and support take precedence over Housing duties under Housing Act 1996 (Part VII)
- Is up to date
- Highlights safeguarding as a key consideration
- Sets out how the Children's Services and Housing Department takes a joint approach to homelessness prevention and housing options for young people
- Covers how housing duties to provide interim accommodation, assess and take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness are carried out whilst awaiting the outcome of a Child in Need assessment



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# Example of a self assessment..

## SA10: Not using B&B for families

There is a comprehensive customer assessment in place, which:

- ❑ focuses on delivering proactive advice and support to all customers
- ❑ includes customers able to remain in their existing accommodation if appropriate or planned moves
- ❑ early identification and work with customers who may be at risk of homelessness before prevention duty is owed e.g checking validity of s.21 notices, protocols with social landlords, prisons, hospitals, JCP etc. including Duty to Refer
- ❑ accepting duty to prevent, completion & regular review of assessments & personalised housing plans
- ❑ extensive prevention options available to all customers



The allocations policy allows for the monitoring of lets of social housing to:

- ❑ maximise homelessness prevention and relief opportunities

*and*

- ❑ ensure appropriate preference is given to those in temporary accommodation

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# Validating through SAHRA

- Documents in support of self assessment can be uploaded via SAHRA
- Applications will be validated by NPSS
- Allows you to benchmark your service over time and can also be used as a desktop framework



# Over to you...



What wider services would be useful to see included in the self assessment checklists?

*e.g. allocations and housing register?*



# SAHRA Certification

- Each self assessment will be recognised by issuing a certificate
- Will be able to be downloaded and printed directly from SAHRA
- Each self assessment completed will produce a continuous improvement plan



# NPSS Support...

- If through the process self assessments highlight gaps in the service, NPSS can provide wider support & guidance
- Ability to share with Local Authorities key documents, protocols, pathways etc to improve their service – Good Practice
- Bespoke comments and a CIP provided for each checklist
- Each checklist assessed against a RAG rated system demonstrating current performance and areas for improvement – reflects the peer review framework



# Good practice guides..

- A good practice guide will be published focusing on key elements of the HRA
- Will be available online and bespoke queries will be shared by NPSS



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# Keep in touch

We are here to help...



- [support@npsservice.org.uk](mailto:support@npsservice.org.uk)
- 01962 851 747
- [www.npsservice.org.uk](http://www.npsservice.org.uk)
- @NPSService