



Gold Standard

An award scheme to recognise and reward excellent tenant and resident associations in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

It takes all of us



“The Gold Standard Award is an important part of what we’re trying to do – to build community spirit so that people feel connected to each other and to us. We want to know what matters to people.”

*The Leader of the Council,
Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell*

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is proud to champion the Gold Standard Award. The Council sought the views of over 350 local tenant and resident associations in order to develop criteria for the Gold Standard Award that would be fair, appropriate and useful. We would like to thank the representatives and associations who volunteered their time and expertise to assist us.

This award recognises tenant and resident associations that:

- are reaching high standards in representing their local community
- have robust governance and management arrangements that demonstrate best practice and are 'fit for purpose' to the association's size, purpose and aims
- are committed to seeking out residents' views
- have strong procedures in place to ensure those views are heard.

We are pleased to offer the following benefits to associations who achieve the award:

- a one-off grant of £500. This grant may be spent however the association feels would be most beneficial

- recognition at an annual 'Gold Standard' event with the Mayor. This event is also an opportunity to meet Councillors, other tenant and resident associations and other key partners
- encouragement of Councillors to attend your Annual General Meeting
- a logo is available to be used on association letter heads or newsletters and a certificate to display
- inclusion as a 'key partner' in consultations on selected strategic developments or in informal requests for feedback
- opportunities to join borough-wide strategic bodies.

This booklet gives full information about the criteria that must be met to achieve the Gold Standard Award. There are a small number of minimum criteria in regards to an association's constitution, membership, meetings and communication.

If there is no active local association in your area, we can work with you to support residents to start their own association and achieve the Gold Standard. Please contact the Community Engagement Team via the details in the back of this booklet for more information.

We look forward to your application.

A Gold Standard Association

A Gold Standard tenant or resident association is one which has reached a high standard in representing its local community. It is an association that has robust management, is committed to seeking out a wide range of residents' needs and views and has put in place procedures to ensure that those views are heard.

An excellent association will have met the Standard's criteria, provided evidence that they have good financial and management arrangements in place and demonstrated that they are inclusive to all residents. You can learn more about the Gold Standard Award (and several of the associations who have achieved it) by watching a short film, available online: visit **www.youtube.com/kensingtonandchelsea** and click on 'Tenants and Residents Associations'.





“We considered our association to be a strong and effective residents association but when we saw the requirements of the Gold Standard we realised we lacked some important elements of a well-established organisation, like a modern constitution. The pursuit of the Gold Standard encouraged us to put a properly documented structure in place and that, in turn, has helped to better represent our members.”

*The Sydney Street and District Residents' Association
Gold Standard Award winner*

Applying for the award

Applications for the award can be made at any time. There is no deadline and applications are processed on a rolling basis as soon as they are received. It usually takes several weeks for us to process your application. We then either make the award or contact you with questions or a request for more evidence. You will be eligible for benefits as soon as you receive the award and a certificate will be issued. Alternatively, associations can choose to take part in an award ceremony at an annual event and have a certificate awarded there.

Applicants are asked to fill in an application form and provide documentary evidence that they have met the standard's criteria, as detailed within this booklet. Application forms may be requested from the Community Engagement Team or downloaded from **www.rbkc.gov.uk/goldstandard**.

In order to receive the award, the Council requires tenant and resident associations to:

- a) provide evidence that they have reached the required standards in full
- b) have a bank or building society account and produce an annual statement of accounts.

If an association has legal status (e.g. as a charity or a not-for-profit company) it may be asked to provide additional information to demonstrate that it is fulfilling the relevant legal requirements.

The Council reserves the right to remove the award and withdraw benefits from any association that is proven to no longer meet the Gold Standard.

Please note that this award is for tenant and resident associations and amenity societies only and cannot be awarded to any community groups or similar organisations.

Part one of the standard covers the main areas of the constitution that must be demonstrated. Parts two, three and four cover detailed requirements around membership, meetings, communication and consultation.



2. Membership

The Council recognises that some associations cover very small areas. However, in order to speak with authority, an association needs to show it is representative and welcoming to all the residents who live in the area they cover, regardless of size.

To ensure that smaller excellent associations are not excluded from the scheme, we have applied a measure of active membership rather than a measure of minimum membership. Gold Standard associations should be able to demonstrate:

- a) A good understanding of the area and who is living in the geographical area which they cover.
- b) An open membership. All addresses in the geographical area should be eligible to join. Residents should only be excluded from membership if they have brought the association into disrepute and the matter is dealt with through the association rules.
- c) A committee of at least five residents.
- d) A proportion of active members in relation to size and type of association. Active members are those who have provided contact details, attend meetings or events, or get involved in other ways such as responding to consultations.

Potential membership means the total amount of homes in an association's defined geographical area. Our expectations of associations who wish to meet the Gold Standard are as follows:

Potential membership	Active membership
Small associations with less than 20 households	Smaller active associations will be assessed individually on how well they meet the criteria in general including active membership.
20 to 99 households	12 active members or 25 percent whichever is higher
100 to 499 households	25 active members or 20 percent whichever is higher
500 to 999 households	100 active members or 15 percent whichever is higher
Large associations or Amenity Associations with 1000 plus members	200 active members or 5 percent whichever is higher

We expect to see a membership register updated annually.

3. Meetings

A Gold Standard association will:

- a) hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- b) hold at least three committee meetings a year
- c) ensure that all general meetings are well advertised and that every eligible household receives an invitation
- d) hold meetings in a suitable venue and at a time that helps encourage maximum possible attendance
- e) structure meetings in a way that allows resident participation and allows all views, except ones that are offensive, to be heard
- f) ensure that every meeting has an agenda and that minutes are taken and made available
- g) have a procedure to give feedback to members who are unable to attend
- h) provide details of how members are notified about meetings, and when and how members may obtain minutes from meetings.

4. Communication and consultation

Best practice shows that in order to speak with authority, an association needs to demonstrate that they have consulted with their members and are speaking collectively. A Gold Standard association should:

- a) Have a named person or persons that the Council can contact for consultation. This is to be updated every year (or sooner if there is a change).
- b) Communicate regularly with members about opportunities to be consulted on local issues.
- c) Provide all members with a copy of the constitution, contact details for committee members, details of any planned meetings and how to include an item on an agenda.



“We were really pleased when we received our Gold Standard Award, as it was an appreciation of the whole team. Some of our committee have received other awards but this time it was given to all of us, which made it special and something we could celebrate together.

As a residents association we volunteer a lot of time, and although when we do trips and activities people are appreciative, the award was recognition of our work and a big thank you from Kensington and Chelsea. We used the money towards our running costs as we try to spend all fund raising on future events and activities.”

St Quintin Park Residents' Association, Gold Standard Award winner

If you have any queries, would like to apply, require more copies of the Gold Standard Award or would like support starting a tenant or resident association, please contact:

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RBKC Community Engagement Team

Tel: **020 7598 4633**

Email: **communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk**

Web: **www.rbkc.gov.uk/goldstandard**

Facebook: **www.facebook.com/communityengagement**

You can also watch a film about the Gold Standard Award here:

www.youtube.com/kensingtonandchelsea

