

CASE STUDY

WPA Demonstrating the Gold Standard in Action

Constructing the Gold Standard Case Study

February 2026



Summary

The Welsh Procurement Alliance is proud to provide sixteen high quality, fully compliant frameworks and four Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS') which can be used by all public sector bodies, to procure works for the construction, refurbishment and maintenance of social housing, schools and public buildings.

WPA is proud to be recognised as a centre of excellence for public sector procurement. Recently, WPA along with its regional counterparts and London Head Office, LHCPG gained Gold Standard status, due to their commitment to excellence.

Not only is WPA one of only six framework providers out of more than 2000 in the UK, to receive this prestigious evaluation, but moreover we pride ourselves on our longstanding commitment to early engagement and collaboration, bringing specialist suppliers and public sector bodies together to guide framework development and ensure the best possible outcomes for our local, Welsh communities.

This approach is most recently evidenced in our newly launched Framework: New Homes For Wales (H2W) which fully embodies the aims of Constructing Excellence's Gold Standard Verification. This is demonstrated through the framework in varying approaches; from WPA's facilitation of collaboration between the public sector, suppliers, their support for local SMEs and supply chains. The award and planning processes of the upcoming projects are efficient, transparent and cost effective, reflecting the needs of all clients and suppliers involved, as well as improving and supporting the socio-economic and net zero goals important to the local Welsh communities.

The New Homes For Wales Framework provides undeniable benefits to all involved throughout the supply chain and entirety of the projects, from start to finish. One of the many benefits of this newly launched framework, is its dedication to the implementation of real-life social value, which is ultimately the end goal for all the projects. Implementing social value in its many different forms embodies WPA's commitment to positive social value outcomes, ensuring there are positive outcomes to all residents and their local communities, throughout each project.

Social Value is a key component of Constructing Excellence Gold Standard Verification, underpinning areas such as collaborative working, sustainability, innovation, and leadership to ensure public sector frameworks deliver transparent, long-term community benefits alongside operational excellence.

Throughout the span of this framework's upcoming projects; clients, suppliers and SMEs on local supply chains are supported through WPA's "Added Value Services." All of these are provided free of charge and reflects our not-for-profit status, along with our ethos – "improving lives and places through quality procurement solutions."



Participants

- **Framework Provider:** The Welsh Procurement Alliance (WPA)
- **Client:** Public Sector
- **Industry Specialists:** Steve Cranston – Project Lead on Tai Ar Y Cyd, Constructing Excellence Wales CEO, Cat Griffiths-Williams
- The WPA Team, including Carys Williams, WPA’s Regional Procurement Manager

Challenges

- To create a framework which best supports the public sector, whilst garnering strong relationships and ensuring these are long lasting.
- To place buyers and suppliers together and provide many opportunities for collaboration, widen supply chain opportunity and cohesion
- To create a framework with fully viable and compliant procurement routes, along with transparent pricing and technical support.
- To ensure all project outcomes of the framework implement social value, where the local Welsh community’s benefit, and which can be measured and evidenced.
- To ensure the highest standards are upheld throughout the procurement and creation of framework, to ensure all clients are supported and their needs reflected fully in the process.
- To ensure the Framework Alliance Contract (FAC-1) is implemented, combining the structure of a robust and fully compliant framework agreement with the collaborative principles of an alliance, allowing for the alliance of parties to work in partnership together, completing joint risk management activities to ensure a positive outcome for all parties in which the local Welsh communities can then benefit from.
- To support local SMEs within supply chains and suppliers appointed to the framework.
- To ensure collaborative practices are aligned with the Gold Standard and are being applied in real-time, with a focus on transparency, ongoing engagement, risk sharing, and relationship-based delivery.
- Facilitate shared commitment to cross-sector collaboration to help address Wales’ housing challenges and improve lives and communities.
- WPA needs to demonstrate Gold Standard benefits to social housing in Wales, through their frameworks.
- Aiding and supporting those affected by the Housing Crisis 2025.



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DEMONSTRATING GOLD STANDARD IN ACTION

WPA Launch event for the New Homes for Wales Framework





Solutions

- WPA will incorporate early supplier involvement into the framework processes, along with market engagement and shared learning opportunities, to have better information on best practices and lessons learned, which will in turn reduce varying risk factors.
- Direct awards and early engagement with clients allows for early supply chain involvement which is good because it allows for better cost certainty and designing out risks.
- Quicker mobilisations, reduced time scales, better outcomes for residents and the local community.
- Through social value goals and sustainability initiatives, we will ensure the projects procured through this framework will always improve lives and places.
- Embedding a rigorous five stage framework process to ensure the highest quality framework; thorough pre-tender engagement, robust public tender, evaluation and award, call off projects and community benefit outcome.
- The New Homes for Wales Framework has been created with key strategic social value objectives in mind such as; homelessness, fuel & food poverty, feeling safe & secure, training and improving the local environment.
- The framework has been designed to be flexible and is future-proofed against the changes within the sector to ensure it remains relevant during its four-year duration.
- With the challenges of achieving A-rated dwellings and beyond, local authorities and housing associations need a robust, compliant and efficient option to deliver the work required, which this new framework caters for.
- WPA's provision of Added Value Services to all Appointed Companies and Clients using this framework will foster collaboration, partnership and future alliances. The "Added Value Services" offering includes procurement support, client support, technical support, call-off service, marketing and promotion, and the Community Benefit Fund with Community Foundation Wales, along with HACT, our social value partner.
- Ensuring the Invitation to Tender (ITT) documents clearly articulate social value objectives. These objectives set specific expectations for appointed companies to deliver social value for their clients through their contracts, ensure end goals are met.
- Engagement with our partnership with HACT, to deliver our social value strategy and draw on their expertise and experience in the sector to guide and support us as we innovate and transform social value in the public procurement sector.
- Each project undertaken is unique and can present unforeseen challenges from a technical perspective. Having an experienced technical team well versed in handling complex operations is a valuable asset that simply cannot be underestimated.



Key Learning Points

- Collaborative planning with local SMEs and residents delivers better outcomes.
- Embedding social value at every stage maximises community engagement.
- Regional framework support is essential for effective risk and delivery management.
- Gold Standard principles foster trust, transparency, and tangible results.
- Fast, compliant procurement enables timely response to social and environmental needs.

Implementing the Gold Standard

Recommendation	How was it applied?	Impact
R.6 & R.23: Framework Management and Relationship Management	<p>The Welsh Procurement Alliance (WPA) applied robust framework and relationship management through the design and delivery of sixteen fully compliant frameworks and four DPS solutions, accessible to all public sector bodies in Wales. Early engagement and continuous collaboration were embedded into framework development, bringing together public sector clients, industry specialists, suppliers, and local SMEs to shape procurement routes that reflect real client needs.</p> <p>The New Homes for Wales (H2W) Framework exemplifies this approach, with WPA facilitating ongoing engagement throughout the framework lifecycle. Relationship management is further strengthened through regional framework support, dedicated procurement managers, and WPA’s “Added Value Services,” which include procurement, technical, and client support at no cost.</p>	<p>This proactive framework and relationship management approach has resulted in stronger, longer-lasting partnerships across the supply chain. Trust, transparency, and shared objectives have improved delivery outcomes, reduced friction during project mobilisation, and ensured frameworks remain flexible, future-proofed, and responsive to sector challenges such as housing demand, sustainability targets, and net zero goals. Ultimately, this has led to better outcomes for residents and Welsh communities.</p>
R.7 & 13: ESI and Supply Chain Collaboration	<p>WPA embedded Early Supplier Involvement (ESI) through structured pre-tender engagement, market consultation, and direct award mechanisms where appropriate. Buyers and suppliers were brought together early to inform design, pricing, risk mitigation, and programme planning. The framework actively supports local SMEs and supply chains, widening access to opportunities and fostering collaborative planning.</p> <p>Supply chain collaboration is further supported through shared learning opportunities, technical guidance, and engagement with residents and local stakeholders, ensuring solutions are practical, innovative, and community-focused.</p>	<p>Early engagement has led to improved cost certainty, risks being designed out at an early stage, and quicker mobilisation of projects. Supply chain cohesion has increased, enabling smoother delivery, reduced time scales, and higher-quality outcomes. Local SMEs have benefited from greater participation, strengthening local economies and ensuring that investment remains within Welsh communities.</p>

Implementing the Gold Standard

Recommendation	How was it applied?	Impact
R.16 & R.19: Evidence-Based Benchmarks and Transparent Pricing	<p>WPA ensured that procurement routes within the New Homes for Wales Framework are fully compliant, evidence-based, and transparent. A rigorous five-stage framework process was embedded, covering pre-tender engagement, public tender, evaluation, award, call-off, and measurable community benefit outcomes.</p> <p>Transparent pricing mechanisms and technical support allow clients to benchmark costs effectively, while direct awards and early supply chain involvement support realistic pricing aligned with market conditions. Clear ITT documentation articulates expectations around pricing, performance, and social value delivery.</p>	<p>This approach has delivered increased confidence for clients, improved affordability, and reduced financial risk. Transparent and evidence-based pricing has enabled informed decision-making, better value for money, and consistent benchmarking across projects. Clients benefit from faster, compliant procurement routes that maintain high standards while responding efficiently to urgent housing and environmental needs.</p>
R.17 Joint Risk Management	<p>Joint risk management was embedded through collaborative planning, early supplier involvement, and the use of experienced technical teams capable of managing complex and unforeseen challenges. WPA facilitated shared learning, early risk identification, and collective problem-solving across clients, suppliers, and SMEs.</p> <p>Regional framework support ensures risks are actively managed throughout project delivery, while early engagement and direct awards help reduce uncertainty around cost, programme, and technical delivery.</p>	<p>Shared ownership of risk has resulted in fewer delays, improved programme certainty, and more resilient project outcomes. Risks are mitigated earlier, disputes are reduced, and all parties work towards mutually beneficial solutions. This collaborative risk approach ultimately improves delivery performance and ensures positive outcomes for residents and local communities.</p>

Implementing the Gold Standard

Recommendation	How was it applied?	Impact
R.4 & R.17: Framework Alliance Contracts	<p>WPA ensured the implementation of the Framework Alliance Contract (FAC-1), combining the robustness of a fully compliant framework agreement with the collaborative principles of an alliance. FAC-1 enables all parties to work in partnership, supporting joint decision-making, shared objectives, and collective risk management.</p> <p>The alliance structure aligns with Constructing Excellence Gold Standard principles, embedding transparency, trust, and relationship-based delivery throughout the framework lifecycle.</p>	<p>The use of FAC-1 has strengthened collaboration across the supply chain, encouraged shared responsibility, and fostered a culture of partnership rather than transactional delivery. This has led to better coordinated projects, improved performance, and sustainable, long-term benefits for social housing delivery in Wales — directly supporting communities affected by the housing crisis and improving lives and places.</p>



About the Gold Standard

‘Constructing the Gold Standard’ describes an integrated and collaborative approach to the procurement, contracting and management of frameworks and framework alliances. The government have undertaken to implement all its recommendations.

The Constructing Excellence verification scheme is an objective system for recognising and supporting those public sector framework providers and clients who adopt Gold Standard frameworks, framework contracts and action plans.

References

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