

Bridging the gap

Towards effective local regulation

Final programme

Fifth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees
16-17 October 2006, ICC, Birmingham

Key to conference session symbols

Where delegates are given the choice to attend one of a number of conference sessions within the programme, each of these sessions has been given a symbol to indicate the format the session will take and, therefore, what delegates can expect from it. The definitions of the session symbols are as follows.



Plenary sessions take place in Hall 1, with a maximum attendance of 500. They are informative sessions.



Mini plenary sessions are informative sessions taking place in smaller halls, with an attendance of 60-150, but in a more informal setting than the main plenary sessions. These usually incorporate an opportunity for questions and answers.



Facilitated exchange sessions take place in medium-sized halls, with a maximum attendance of 80. Independent facilitators direct these sessions, based on broadly defined topics, but discussion is largely delegate led. The sessions provide a forum for delegates to network and share views and experiences, whilst moving towards formulating best practice.



Presentation and discussion sessions take place in smaller halls, with a maximum attendance of 60. These sessions involve presentations on key topics, followed by facilitated discussion amongst delegates.



Workshops take place in smaller halls, with a maximum attendance of 60. These facilitated sessions take a practical approach to topics, giving delegates the chance to get hands on experience by working through case studies and/or more structured activities, such as role-play.



Q & A sessions take place in smaller halls, with a maximum attendance of 60. They provide an open house for delegates to put questions to the Standards Board for England. Representatives from legal and policy and guidance teams, and an investigations manager, are on the panel.



Mini debate sessions take place in medium-sized halls, with a maximum attendance of 150. Facilitated by a chair and panel of speakers, these sessions tackle some of the broader issues relating to ethical conduct.



Fringe events are optional and take place in medium-sized halls. These sessions are organised and run independently of the main conference programme by a range of bodies from the local government family, but cover topics of key interest to delegates.

Welcome to the Fifth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees

This is the largest gathering of members and officers concerned with the local government Code of Conduct and raising ethical standards.

The conference comes at a time of change, with a revised Code and local arrangements for receiving complaints on the horizon. And for many of you, local investigations and hearings are still in the process of being fully embedded within your authority's governance framework.

So as ever, in the current climate, there seem to be more unknowns facing standards committees and monitoring officers than certainties, plenty of challenges and no room for complacency. And that's what this conference is all about: Where do we need to be? Where are we now? And how do we get there?

This year's programme, therefore, is of practical relevance in helping you and your authority to bridge the gap between where you are now – in being able to deliver effectively on the revised standards framework – and where you need to be, whilst still providing plenty of opportunity for some valuable networking and sharing of experiences and solutions with other local practitioners.

I wish you a successful and productive conference. It will provide you with many of the tools you need to carry you forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sir Anthony Holland', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Sir Anthony Holland Chair
The Standards Board for England

Monday 16 October 2006

8.30 – 10.15

Registration

Light breakfast available.



9.15 – 10.00

Getting up to speed

Hall 10B

David Prince, Chief Executive, The Standards Board for England

An introductory welcome from the chief executive for those new to the Code of Conduct or conference. Attendance optional. All welcome.

An effective ethical environment: where are we going?

10.15 – 10.25

Welcome

Hall 1

Sir Anthony Holland, Chair, The Standards Board for England

10.25 – 10.40

Setting the standard

Hall 1

Phil Woolas MP, Minister for Local Government

The minister opens the conference by setting out his proposals for the future of the ethical framework.

10.40 – 10.55

Bridging the gap: towards strategic regulation

Hall 1

Patricia Hughes, Deputy Chair, The Standards Board for England

An update on the revised Code of Conduct, its implications and the timetable for implementation. And an overview of the Standards Board's plans for transformation into a strategic regulator.

10.55 – 11.25

What will an effective ethical environment look like?

Hall 1

Three key local government figures present their visions of the components of an effective ethical environment: from setting and leading the culture of an authority, to understanding the relationship between ethical standards and the performance of an authority.

Speakers: Frances Done, Managing Director – Local Government, Audit Commission

Barry Quirk, Chief Executive, London Borough of Lewisham and Immediate Past President, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers

Professor Gerry Stoker, Institute for Political and Economic Governance, University of Manchester

11.25 – 11.45

Question time

Hall 1

An opportunity to pose questions to the morning's speakers.

11.45 – 12.00
Comfort break



12.00 – 13.00

Various halls

SESSION 1 Implications of the revised Code and the future ethical environment

Delegates debate the implications of the revised Code of Conduct, the local filter for complaints and the future ethical environment. Independent facilitators from Wilson Sherriff direct the sessions.

Nine workshops, each with a maximum of 80 delegates.

Delegates will attend either:

- > A monitoring officer focused session
- > A standards committee focused session
- > A mixed attendance session

Delegates should refer to the reverse of their conference name badge to find out which session they are pre-allocated to attend and its location.

Refreshments available.

13.00 – 14.15
Lunch



Hall 3

Where are you now? Locating the gap

14.15 – 15.15

Standards committees: a national snapshot

Hall 1

BMG Research present findings from research carried out earlier this year into the make-up, capacity and experience of standards committees and monitoring officers. The research, commissioned by the Standards Board for England, provides a first national snapshot. Insights and comments on the research from three other speakers.

Chair: Elizabeth Hall, Board Member, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Stephen Clarke, Chair of Standards Committee, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Kirsty Cole, Assistant Chief Executive, Newark and Sherwood District Council and President, Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors
Dawn Hands, Research Director, BMG Research
Reverend Paul Lipscomb, Chair of Standards Committee, Slough Borough Council

15.15 – 15.45

Comfort break

Refreshments available.



15.45 – 16.45

Various halls



SESSION 2 How do you measure up?

Delegates discuss how their authority compares to the national picture of standards committees and monitoring officers presented in the plenary at 14.15. The main focus of this workshop is then for individuals to identify the strengths and weaknesses within their authorities, share best practice, and establish key milestones for improving and moving forward. Independent facilitators from Wilson Sherriff direct the sessions.

Ten workshops, each with a maximum of 80 delegates.

Delegates will attend either:

- > A monitoring officer focused session
- > A standards committee focused session
- > A mixed attendance session

Delegates should refer to the reverse of their conference name badge to find out which session they are pre-allocated to attend and its location.

16.45 – 17.00

Comfort break






Tools to make the transition

17.00 – 18.15

SESSION 3 Bridging the gap: knowledge, techniques and skills

Authorities have been able to carry out investigations, hold local hearings, reach determinations and decide on sanctions since the ethical framework was fully implemented in late 2004. And with the challenges of a revised Code of Conduct and a more locally focused system ahead, delegates need to be confident that they have the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to deliver on the ethical agenda to the standard required. In this part of the programme, sessions tackle a range of issues that are key to bridging these gaps.

Delegates should refer to the reverse of their conference name badge to find out which one of the following sessions they are to attend.

	Case review – lessons learnt so far	Hall 1
	A robust filter	Hall 5
	Conducting an effective investigation	Hall 11B
	Holding an effective hearing	Hall 11A
	Investigations – work through	Hall 8B
	Hearings – work through	Hall 8A
	The revised Code – declaring interests	Hall 9
	Investigations – in-house or out-house?	Hall 10B
	General open house Q & A	Hall 10A

Please refer to pages 11 to 16 for details of speakers and an outline of each session.

18.15

Close of day one

18.30 – 19.30

Fringe events (optional)

The following five fringe events are taking place.

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|
| ▶▶ | Achieving excellence in local filtering: monitoring officers' perspectives
Hosted by the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS) | Hall 10A |
| ▶▶ | Independent members gaining a voice
Hosted by the Association for Independent Members of Standards Committees (AIMSce) | Hall 7 |
| ▶▶ | The ethical governance toolkit – how does your authority measure up?
Hosted by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) | Hall 11B |
| ▶▶ | The future of local community governance and standards
Hosted by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) | Hall 6 |
| ▶▶ | Leadership and governance and the Lyons Inquiry proposals
Hosted by the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) | Hall 11A |

19.30 – 20.00

Drinks reception



Hall 3

20.00 – late

Conference dinner

Free seating. Dress code is smart or smart-casual.
Cash bar available.



Hall 3

Live music from the Al Gurr Quartet, featuring Sarah Coleman on vocals.

Tuesday 17 October 2006

8.00 – 9.00

Refreshments

Tea and coffee available.

Delegates attending for today only need to register at the Enquiries desk.



9.00 – 10.15

SESSION 4 Bridging the gap: knowledge, techniques and skills

Authorities have been able to carry out investigations, hold local hearings, reach determinations and decide on sanctions since the ethical framework was fully implemented in late 2004. And with the challenges of a revised Code of Conduct and a more locally focused system ahead, delegates need to be confident that they have the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to deliver on the ethical agenda to the standard required. In this part of the programme, sessions tackle a range of issues that are key to bridging these gaps.

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Case review – lessons learnt so far

Hall 1



A robust filter

Hall 5



Conducting an effective investigation

Hall 11B



Holding an effective hearing

Hall 11A



Investigations – work through

Hall 8B



Hearings – work through

Hall 8A



The revised Code – declaring interests

Hall 9



Investigations – in-house or out-house?

Hall 10B



General open house Q & A

Hall 10A

Please refer to pages 11 to 16 for details of speakers and an outline of each session.

10.15 – 10.45

Comfort break

Refreshments available.



10.45 – 11.45

**When politics becomes personal:
is local level governance the panacea?**

Hall 1

Three opinion-formers contribute their differing views on this topical issue. Delegates are invited to pose questions to the panel.

Chair: Roger Taylor, Board Member, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive, Peterborough City Council
Michael Burton, Editor, *The Municipal Journal*
Sir Peter Soulsby MP (Labour)

11.45 – 12.00

Comfort break

12.00 – 13.15

**SESSION 5 Bridging the gap: awareness,
development, wider debate**

Authorities need to be confident that good conduct is both engrained within the culture of their authority from the top down and exists as a foundation, underpinning the partnerships that they build with other authorities in the area and with the local community. Sessions in this part of the programme, therefore, focus on bridging the gap between simply fulfilling the statutory obligations of carrying out investigations and hearings and moving towards taking a more holistic approach to integrating ethical standards into the corporate governance framework.

Delegates should refer to the reverse of their conference name badge to find out which one of the following sessions they are to attend.



Corporate governance – integrating the ethical agenda

Hall 1



Freedom of expression – drawing the line

Hall 5



An inclusive approach to towns and parishes

Hall 8A



Towns and parishes – when things go wrong

Hall 11B



Training the trainer

Hall 8B



Working proactively – the role of standards committees

Hall 11A



Standards committees – raising your profile

Hall 10B



Issues of independence

Hall 9



Monitoring officer open house Q & A

Hall 10A

Please refer to pages 11 to 16 for details of speakers and an outline of each session.

13.15 – 14.30

Lunch



Hall 3

14.30 – 15.45

SESSION 6 Bridging the gap: awareness, development, wider debate

Authorities need to be confident that good conduct is both engrained within the culture of their authority from the top down and exists as a foundation, underpinning the partnerships that they build with other authorities in the area and with the local community. Sessions in this part of the programme, therefore, focus on bridging the gap between simply fulfilling the statutory obligations of carrying out investigations and hearings and moving towards taking a more holistic approach to integrating ethical standards into the corporate governance framework.

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Corporate governance – integrating the ethical agenda

Hall 1



Freedom of expression – drawing the line

Hall 5



An inclusive approach to towns and parishes

Hall 8A



Towns and parishes – when things go wrong

Hall 11B



Training the trainer

Hall 8B



Working proactively – the role of standards committees

Hall 11A



Standards committees – raising your profile

Hall 10B



Issues of independence

Hall 9



Standards committee open house Q & A

Hall 10A

Please refer to pages 11 to 16 for details of speakers and an outline of each session.

15.45 – 16.00

Comfort break

16.00 – 16.20

Time to reflect

Hall 1

Sir Anthony Holland, Chair, The Standards Board for England

16.20 – 16.30

Moving forward

Hall 1

David Prince, Chief Executive, The Standards Board for England

A reflection on the highlights of the past two days and a look ahead to taking the ethical agenda forward.

16.30

Close

Refreshments available.



Sessions speakers/locations

SESSIONS 1 and 2

Various halls

Implications of the revised Code and the future ethical environment and How do you measure up?

Monday 16 October, 12.00 to 13.00 and 15.45 to 16.45

These independently facilitated sessions provide a forum for delegates to network and share views and experience, whilst moving towards formulating best practice. For further information on session 1, see page 3 of the programme, and for session 2, see page 4.

Facilitators: Supplied by Wilson Sherriff

SESSIONS 3 and 4

Bridging the gap: knowledge, techniques and skills

Monday 16 October, 17.00 to 18.15

Tuesday 17 October, 9.00 to 10.15



Case review – lessons learnt so far

Hall 1

Drawing on four years' experience, this session considers the learning from significant cases, tribunals, local hearings and circumstances where an ethical standards officer has made the decision not to refer a matter for determination. [Useful for all delegates.](#)

Chair: Paul Gott, Board Member, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Lisa Klein, Head of Investigations, The Standards Board for England
Claire Lefort, Principal Legal Adviser, The Standards Board for England



A robust filter

Hall 5

From 2008, standards committees will be receiving complaints and deciding if they should be investigated and, if so, whether that investigation should either be carried out locally, or nationally by the Standards Board for England. Delegates consider the practicalities of a local filter: Could joint arrangements work? How? What types of cases should be investigated at a national level? [This session is primarily aimed at standards committee members during session 3 and at monitoring officers during session 4.](#)

Speakers: Quentin Baker, Monitoring Officer, Cheltenham Borough Council
Steve Kingston, Ethical Standards Officer, The Standards Board for England
Lucy Morris, Acting Head of Referrals, The Standards Board for England
Richard Stephens, Chair of Standards Committee, Tewkesbury Borough Council

**Conducting an effective investigation****Hall 11B**

Examination of the essential components of an effective investigation – from understanding the technical elements of the investigative process, to exploring key competencies, including timeliness and proportionality. Following the presentation, delegates are encouraged to share their experiences, with the aim of moving towards best practice. [Particularly useful for monitoring officers new to the investigative process and for those wanting a refresher.](#)

Speakers: Jennifer Rogers, Ethical Standards Officer, The Standards Board for England
David Taylor, Monitoring Officer, Easington District Council

**Holding an effective hearing****Hall 11A**

This presentation explores the essential components of holding a fair and effective hearing – from understanding the framework that local hearings operate within, to exploring key principles of implementation, such as best practice for pre-hearing preparation, and identifying common pitfalls to avoid. Delegates have the opportunity to contribute their experiences. [Particularly useful for standards committee members new to the hearing process and for those wanting a refresher.](#)

Speakers: Natalie Birtle, Principal Legal Adviser, The Standards Board for England
Charles Kerry, Monitoring Officer, Chester City Council

**Investigations – work through****Hall 8B**

Delegates work through a case study, based on several problematic/topical areas of the Code of Conduct, applying the Code to reach a decision on a matter under investigation. This session also touches on key competencies of the investigative process and enables delegates to consider best practice approaches to some of the most frequently encountered difficulties in areas such as decision-making and report drafting. [Particularly useful for monitoring officers who want to develop their skills in this area.](#)

Speakers: Sara Goodwin, Former Monitoring Officer, Bassetlaw District Council
Belinda Shaw, Investigations Manager, The Standards Board for England

**Hearings – work through****Hall 8A**

Delegates work through a case study, based on issues that can affect the fairness and proportionality of a hearing and subsequent sanction, applying the Code to reach a decision on a matter under consideration at a fictional tribunal. This session also touches on some technical areas of the hearing process and encourages delegates to consider what constitutes a proportionate sanction. [Particularly useful for all those involved in the hearings process and who want to develop their skills in this area.](#)

Speakers: Nicole Jackson, Monitoring Officer, Leeds City Council
Storm Westmaas, Principal Legal Adviser, The Standards Board for England



The revised Code – declaring interests

Hall 9

The definition of interests that must be declared is one of the most fundamental revisions proposed to the Code of Conduct. Using worked examples, this session considers the anticipated requirements, particularly in relation to planning and licensing. [A useful session for new monitoring officers and those wanting an in-depth refresher.](#)

Speakers: Chris Boothman, Head of Legal Services, The Standards Board for England
Anne Rehill, Advice and Guidance Manager, The Standards Board for England



Investigations – in-house or out-house?

Hall 10B

Authorities can conduct an investigation in one of three ways: by carrying it out themselves; by outsourcing the function; or by developing reciprocal arrangements with other authorities in their area. Several authorities share their experiences. What difficulties did they encounter? What advice would they give others? During this session, delegates consider the benefits and risks of each approach and discuss the circumstances within which each option may be most appropriate. [This session is primarily aimed at monitoring officers.](#)

Speakers: Jeanette Bateman, Investigations Manager, The Standards Board for England
Sue Kembrey, Monitoring Officer, Telford and Wrekin Borough Council
Alan Muir, Monitoring Officer, West Dorset District Council
Bob Posner, Former Monitoring Officer, London Borough of Bexley



General open house Q & A

Hall 10A

Open house for delegates to put questions relating to any topic to representatives from the Standards Board for England.

Chair: Richard Owen, Investigator, The Standards Board for England
Speakers: James Elliott, Investigations Manager, The Standards Board for England
Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance, The Standards Board for England
Freda Sharkey, Principal Legal Adviser, The Standards Board for England

SESSIONS 5 and 6

Bridging the gap: awareness, development, wider debate

Tuesday 17 October, 12.00 to 13.15 and 14.30 to 15.45



Corporate governance – integrating the ethical agenda

Hall 1

This presentation explores the role of the ethical agenda as a crucial part of the wider governance framework of an authority. The joint Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) working group shares its understanding of effective corporate governance. [Useful for all delegates.](#)

Chair: David Prince, Chief Executive, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Mirza Ahmad, Monitoring Officer, Birmingham City Council, and Lead Officer (Ethical Governance), Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS)

Janie Barrett, Chief Executive, Warwick District Council, and Chair, SOLACE Professional Matters Panel

Steve Freer, Chief Executive, CIPFA



Freedom of expression – drawing the line

Hall 5

Where is the line to be drawn between freedom of expression and causing offence to others? This session invites delegates to consider the views presented by a panel of key local government figures and then debate this fundamental issue and its implications for the Code of Conduct. [Useful for all delegates.](#)

Chair: Patricia Hughes, Deputy Chair, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Barbara Cohen, Vice Chair, Discrimination Law Association

Professor Keith Ewing, King's College London

Shaun Lowthorpe, Public Affairs Correspondent, *Eastern Daily Press*



An inclusive approach to towns and parishes

Hall 8A

Brief presentations highlight a range of strategies that can be implemented to better engage with town and parish councils and raise the profile of these councils within a local community. Amongst the issues explored will be: providing proactive training and support arrangements, mentoring schemes, and model agreements between standards committees and county associations. Delegates are encouraged to develop a list of best practice approaches they can employ within their local area. [Particularly useful for anyone who works with town and parish councils.](#)

Chair: Alex Kroon, Policy Adviser, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Peter Lacey, County Secretary, Somerset Association of Local Councils

Vivienne Pay, Monitoring Officer, Mendip District Council

**Towns and parishes – when things go wrong****Hall 11B**

Town and parish councils are increasingly important as the first tier of local government, but they can be vulnerable to infighting and conflict. Presentations from authorities, who have dealt with town or parish councils that have experienced problems, provide an insight into the difficulties that can occur and methods of tackling these issues effectively. What are the appropriate roles for standards committees, monitoring officers and the Standards Board for England in these situations? This session encourages delegates to explore the alternatives for handling circumstances where town or parish council relations have broken down. [Particularly useful for anyone who may work with town and parish councils that are experiencing problems and require support.](#)

Chair: Jennifer Rogers, Ethical Standards Officer, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Hilary Butler, Parish Clerk, Mid Suffolk
Mary Mitson-Woods, Former Chief Executive, Suffolk Association of Local Councils
Ian Rickard, Monitoring Officer, Mid Suffolk District Council

**Training the trainer****Hall 8B**

Everyone agrees that good training is vital, but how best to provide it? This session, run by an independent training company, Training Circle Ltd, offers practical advice on planning and running training sessions for members. [Particularly useful for anyone who is responsible for training others.](#)

Chair: Dr Gary Hickey, Research and Practice Manager, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Anne Hickey, Senior Training Facilitator, Training Circle Ltd
Kathy Morrison, Training Director, Training Circle Ltd

**Working proactively – the role of standards committees****Hall 11A**

Standards committees have a far wider role than simply dealing with casework. In this session, two standards committees share their extended work programmes and explain what kinds of additional responsibilities they have taken on and how these work in practice. Delegates work together to explore some of the more proactive roles they play, including sharing good practice examples of how they promote and support high standards of conduct within their authorities. [A useful session for new standards committee members and those wanting a refresher.](#)

Speakers: Pauline Dixon, Chair of Standards Committee, South Gloucestershire District Council
Anne Rehill, Advice and Guidance Manager, The Standards Board for England
Margaret Taylor, Monitoring Officer, Kingston upon Hull City Council

**Standards committees – raising your profile****Hall 10B**

In order to operate effectively, standards committees need to promote their role both within their authorities and to their local communities – but how? In this session, delegates are encouraged to identify and evaluate strategies for raising their profile. And, in light of the proposed local filter for allegations from 2008, delegates can take this opportunity to consider how they may publicise the new process to the public. [A useful session for all standards committee members.](#)

Chair: Professor Judy Simons, Board Member, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: John Bridgeman, Chair of Standards Committee, Warwickshire County Council
 Ian Davison, Monitoring Officer, Horsham District Council
 Louise Oughton, Senior Manager for Communications, Dacorum Borough Council

**Issues of independence****Hall 9**

The role of the independent member is, undoubtedly, crucial to the effective operation of the ethical agenda. This session considers that role, the skills and competencies independent members need, how they can best be recruited, the support and training they require and their relationship with the authority and its elected members. Delegates are invited to contribute any key issues of concern with regard to these topics and share possible solutions and best practice. [This session is primarily aimed at independent members, and those involved in their recruitment and selection.](#)

Chair: Matthew Richards, Investigations Manager, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: Kirsty Cole, Assistant Chief Executive, Newark and Sherwood District Council and President, Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors
 Sylvia Fox, Chair of Standards Committee, Poole Borough Council
 Tim Martin, Monitoring Officer, Poole Borough Council

**Monitoring officer/Standards committee open house Q & A****Hall 10A**

Open house for delegates to put questions relating to any topic to representatives from the Standards Board for England. [This session is primarily aimed at monitoring officers during session 5 and at standards committee members during session 6.](#)

Chair: Richard Owen, Investigator, The Standards Board for England

Speakers: James Elliott, Investigations Manager, The Standards Board for England
 Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance, The Standards Board for England
 Freda Sharkey, Principal Legal Adviser, The Standards Board for England

Speakers biographies

Mirza Ahmad is the chief legal officer and monitoring officer at Birmingham City Council, chair of the Bar Association for Local Government and the Public Service, and the lead officer on ethical governance issues for the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS). He is also a member of the General Council of the Bar for England and Wales. Mirza was called to the Bar in 1984. In 2000, he became the first local government manager to obtain a '3 star – excellent rating' under the government's Best Value regime, and in 2005 he was named as one of the 'Top 5 Lawyers in Local Government' by the *Local Government Chronicle*. Mirza is a contributing author of Butterworths' Tolley's *Knights Guide to Best Value and Public Procurement* and a member of the editorial board for Butterworths' *Local Government Direct* website.

Quentin Baker is assistant director and monitoring officer at Cheltenham Borough Council. A qualified solicitor, Quentin has worked in local government for the past 11 years. Prior to taking up his current position in 2005, he held a variety of posts within county, unitary and district authorities. He has a particular interest in joint working arrangements between authorities and has been involved in a number of such initiatives.

Janie Barrett is the chief executive of Warwick District Council. A qualified solicitor, she has worked for several local authorities and in the private sector. She was appointed to her current post in 1996 and successfully led the authority to be ranked 'excellent' in the 2004 comprehensive performance assessment process. Janie is chair of the SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) professional matters panel and sits on its executive. She has represented SOLACE for ten years on various national working parties, advising on the legislation, Code of Conduct, and guidance relating to the ethical framework. She is a member of the SOLACE/CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) working party on corporate governance and represents SOLACE at annual liaison meetings with the Ombudsman and the Standards Board for England.

Jeanette Bateman is an investigations manager at the Standards Board for England, managing a team of investigators and assisting an ethical standards officer. Prior to this, she worked as an investigator for the Standards Board during its initial year of operation. Jeanette previously worked for the London Borough of Greenwich for 18 years, initially in the Internal Audit section, conducting system, probity, and value for money audits. She then moved on to the corporate anti-fraud team where she was responsible for the investigation of allegations involving the misuse of the authority's funds or assets. She is a member of the Association for Accounting Technicians.

Gillian Beasley is the chief executive of Peterborough City Council. Gillian commenced her career in local government in 1983 as a trainee solicitor. She went on to work as a lawyer in a number of local authorities including Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. In 1997, she became director of law and administration for Peterborough City Council, and in 2000 became the director of environmental and legal services. Gillian has been chief executive for three years, and has worked on major projects including the regeneration and redevelopment of the city. In the early 1990s, Gillian helped develop guidance for the *Children Act 1989*, and she has also worked for a number of national bodies in the areas of health, social care and children.

Natalie Birtle is a principal legal adviser at the Standards Board for England. She qualified as a solicitor in 1998 and upon qualification began work as a legal officer at the London Borough of Southwark, specialising in property litigation and judicial review work. Natalie left Southwark in April 2000 to join the Commercial Litigation department at the London Borough of Camden, where she worked until joining the Standards Board in September 2002. She qualified as a solicitor advocate in 2002 allowing her rights of audience to all higher courts. Natalie was seconded as an ethical standards officer from June 2004 to May 2005 and was responsible for holding bay cases.

Chris Boothman is the head of legal services at the Standards Board for England, with overall responsibility for the provision of legal advice and related legal services to the Board, chief executive, and senior management team. Chris qualified as a solicitor in 1982. He has held posts at the London Borough of Camden, the Greater London Council, the London Strategic Policy Unit and the London Borough of Hackney. He also spent ten years as legal director of the Commission for Racial Equality. Chris is a former council member of the Law Society and has served on the management committees of a number of voluntary sector organisations.

John Bridgeman CBE is the independent chair of Warwickshire County Council's standards committee and Warwickshire Police Authority. He is also chair of the Direct Marketing Authority, the Horseracing Regulatory Authority, CCS Enforcement Services, the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership, and of *howtocomplain.com* Ltd. John was the managing director of British Alcan Aluminium plc, and he served for six years on the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, followed by five years as director general of the Office of Fair Trading. A former high sheriff of Oxfordshire, John is visiting professor in management at the Universities of Keele in Staffordshire and Surrey at Guildford, and has a private consultancy practice specialising in consumer affairs, competition policy, business strategy and corporate governance.

Michael Burton is editor and editorial director of *The MJ (Municipal Journal)* and a director of its parent company, The Hemming Group Ltd, publishers and event organisers. Its other public sector publications include *Municipal Year Book*, *Surveyor* and *RDA News*. Michael trained as a journalist on local papers before specialising in local government and is a regular commentator on local and national radio. He has also been an external examiner in public administration for Cardiff University's journalism school.

Hilary Butler is the clerk to Mellis Parish Council, as well as four other local parish councils, and has also been the acting parish clerk to a fifth. Hilary first became involved in local government, at parish level, ten years ago when she was co-opted to Mellis Parish Council. She went on to serve as a councillor for four years, two of which were as chair. She has a background in sales accounts and customer service.

Stephen Clarke is the independent chair of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council's standards committee, of which he has been a member for five years. Steve has spent his working life in the private sector and this is his first role in the public sector; he has worked in the computer and IT industry for over 30 years and is a director of Fujitsu Services, an international IT services organisation.

Barbara Cohen is vice chair of the Discrimination Law Association. She is also an independent consultant working in the field of discrimination law in the UK and in Central and Eastern Europe. Her work has included development and enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation and training public officials, lawyers and NGOs on the implementation of EC directives and national equality laws. From 1995 to 2002, Barbara was the head of legal policy at the Commission for Racial Equality and played a lead role for the Commission in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. Previously, Barbara had been a principal solicitor for a London local authority, and she has also worked as a legal aid solicitor and a legal officer at the National Council for Civil Liberties (now Liberty). In 2001, Barbara received the Liberty/JUSTICE lifetime achievement human rights award.

Kirsty Cole is assistant chief executive and monitoring officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council, and president of the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS). She has previously been employed at South Kesteven District Council and in private practice. Together with colleagues from the East Midlands branch of ACSeS, she was instrumental in publishing a parish council toolkit – a revised version of which was published earlier this year. Kirsty is currently a member of an external stakeholder practitioner group looking at issues relating to the Code of Conduct review, and of the CIPFA/SOLACE working party commissioned to develop a revised framework for good governance in local government. She is a regular speaker and trainer both regionally and nationally on a variety of topics, most notably relating to ethics and probity.

Ian Davison is council secretary and solicitor to Horsham District Council, and the council's monitoring officer. He has held several posts at Horsham starting with that of principal solicitor, then chief solicitor and head of legal services before reaching his current position two years ago. Before that he was articled at the Greater London Council and, upon admission in 1981, specialised in environmental law and major infrastructure projects. Ian is a consultant and contributor to several local government related titles published by Butterworths, has lectured for the LGG (Local Government Group) and is listed in the Legal 500 (top in-house lawyers).

Pauline Dixon is the independent chair of the standards committee for South Gloucestershire District Council. She became chair in 2001 and, in the absence of any hearings for the first three years, sought to enable the committee to provide value to the council and its community through a proactive programme of work. A portfolio worker, Pauline also divides her time between being a civil servant, a freelance management consultant and an organic livestock farmer. She has wide experience of jobs at the centre of government and currently specialises in leadership development, working part-time for the National School of Government. Pauline is also an independent assessor for the NHS Appointments Commission.

Frances Done is managing director – local government at the Audit Commission, which she joined in 2003. Frances was previously chief executive of Manchester 2002, the organising committee of the Commonwealth Games, and chief executive and treasurer at Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. Prior to this, Frances was senior manager of the Public Sector department at KPMG, where she had originally trained as a chartered accountant. Between 1975 and 1988, Frances was an elected member of Manchester City Council. She stepped down and retired from political activity in 1988 after serving as chair of the finance committee for four years.

James Elliott is an investigations manager at the Standards Board for England and supervises a team of investigators that support the work of an ethical standards officer. He has 18 years' experience in local government in London including seven years as a senior manager. James has also worked as a management lecturer and trainer. From 1995 to 2001 he was a member of the Police Complaints Authority.

Professor Keith Ewing has been professor of public law at King's College London since 1989, having previously held teaching positions at the Universities of Edinburgh and Cambridge. He is co-author of the leading textbook *Constitutional and Administrative Law*, and is the author or co-author of a number of books on civil liberties and human rights, including *Freedom under Thatcher*. He is currently working on a new book on civil liberties under the Blair governments since 1997. His other key areas of interests include corruption, the funding of political parties and the rights of trade unions, on which he has written extensively. In addition to his academic positions, Keith is president of the Institute of Employment Rights, a trade union funded think tank.

Sylvia Fox is chair of the standards committee at Poole Borough Council. She was elected chair of the committee in 2003 having been appointed as a member in August 1999. Sylvia has had a distinguished career in the police force. She joined Dorset police in 1969 and completed her service having achieved the rank of chief inspector. Sylvia is also president for the Southern England region of Soroptimist International, a worldwide organisation for women in management and professions.

Steve Freer is chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). Prior to this, Steve held senior finance positions at Birmingham City Council and at Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire County Councils, and has also worked as a management consultant. Steve was a member of the working party that developed the CIPFA/SOLACE framework, which sets the standard for corporate governance in local government. He has also served as the co-secretary of the independent commission that has developed the new Good Governance Standard for Public Services. Steve is a board member of the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Local Government Leadership Centre. He is also a non-executive member of the board, and chair, of the audit committee of the National Audit Office.

Sara Goodwin is the former head of law and scrutiny services, and former monitoring officer, for Bassetlaw District Council, and a member of the 2006 Annual Assembly steering committee. Following her postgraduate study, Sara spent two years as a lecturer in law at Leeds Metropolitan University. She went on to become a trainee solicitor in local government and has since spent 12 years in the sector, having qualified as a solicitor in 1994.

Paul Gott is a board member of the Standards Board for England. He is a qualified barrister and was appointed as junior counsel to the Crown in 1999 and to the Treasury Counsel "A" Panel in 2005. Paul practises in commercial and employment law, with employment law specialisations in the areas of strike action, discrimination, and equal pay, on which he regularly advises government departments and private clients. Commercial law specialisations include civil fraud, banking, and accountants' negligence. He is a member of Fountain Court Chambers.

Elizabeth Hall is a board member of the Standards Board for England. She has worked for the past ten years in the Financial Services Authority, mainly on consumer protection, complaints, and financial capability. Elizabeth was appointed to London TravelWatch last year, and is a member of the Queen Mary University of London research ethics committee. She is also a member of the Court of the St Katharine's Foundation in Tower Hamlets, and a secondary school governor. Elizabeth has several lay responsibilities in the Church of England, including chair of the Tower Hamlets Synod and an examining chaplain for the Stepney area.

Dawn Hands is research director for BMG Research and also sits on the agency's board. She has been a senior practitioner of social and economic research for nearly 20 years. Dawn, with her team, works extensively on behalf of central and local government clients. They have recently undertaken projects on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government to inform the four-year evaluation of the National Procurement Agenda, and research to inform the Lyons Inquiry into the future role and remit of local government. Dawn and her team also have more than 100 other local government organisations amongst their clients.

Anne Hickey is senior training facilitator for Training Circle Ltd where she has worked for 12 years delivering IT training. For the past two years she has been senior training facilitator for the company's portfolio of 'train the trainer' courses, which are accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management. Anne originally qualified as a teacher, and with an interest in computing, she moved to work as a computing trainer and lecturer. She has delivered both bespoke software and IT courses to advanced level to many local and national companies including the Open University, NHS, Barclaycard and Anglian Water.

Dr Gary Hickey is the research and practice manager at the Standards Board for England. He is responsible for commissioning and managing external research, undertaking in-house research and monitoring standards committee and local authority performance. Gary also works on joint projects with organisations such as the Improvement and Development Agency and the Audit Commission. Prior to this, Gary worked as a researcher at King's College London and Birmingham City Council Social Services department.

Paul Hoey is the head of policy and guidance at the Standards Board for England. He previously worked for the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, negotiating on its behalf with the United Nations and a range of European agencies, largely on issues relating to the environment and sustainability. He went on to develop new model local authority constitutions before being seconded to help with the formation of the Standards Board for England. Paul joined the Standards Board permanently in 2001.

Sir Anthony Holland is the chair of the Standards Board for England. Admitted with honours as a solicitor to the Supreme Court in 1962, Sir Anthony's career has taken in many noteworthy positions including president of the Law Society from 1990 to 1991, chairman of the executive board of JUSTICE from 1996 to 1999, and member of the council of the Howard League for Penal Reform from 1992 to 2002. He was a first instance chairman of the Securities and Futures Authority from 1993 to 2001 and principal ombudsman to the Personal Investment Authority Ombudsman Bureau from 1997 to 2000. He has sat on the Criminal Injuries Compensation Panel and was chair of the Northern Ireland Parades Commission from 2000 to 2005. He is currently the independent complaints commissioner for the Financial Services Authority.

Patricia Hughes CBE is the deputy chair of the Standards Board for England. Awarded the CBE in 2001 for services to local government, Patricia worked as a secondary school teacher before qualifying as a solicitor in 1978. She was chief executive of the London Borough of Sutton from 1990 to 2001, deputy chief executive and borough solicitor to the London Borough of Islington from 1987 to 1990, and a member of the board of the National Disability Council from 1998 to 2000. Patricia has most recently acted as interim chief executive for two local authorities and has worked in Audit Commission corporate governance inspection and corporate assessment teams.

Nicole Jackson is director of legal and democratic services, and monitoring officer, at Leeds City Council. She has spent her entire legal career in local government – after qualifying as a solicitor at Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council she worked at Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Kirklees Metropolitan Council before starting at Leeds in 1990. In her current role she manages a total of 360 staff, is a member of the council's corporate management team and is responsible for ethical and corporate governance. She is also a part-time lawyer chair of the Midland Residential Property Tribunal.

Sue Kembrey is head of legal and democratic services at Telford and Wrekin Borough Council. She is the council's monitoring officer, and monitoring officer for Shropshire and Wrekin Combined Fire Authority, as well as having monitoring responsibilities for 26 parishes within the area. Before working at Telford and Wrekin, Sue was head of legal services at Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and has also worked in other large metropolitan authorities, including Wolverhampton City Council.

Charles Kerry is solicitor to the council and monitoring officer for Chester City Council. Charles did his training contract at Nottinghamshire County Council. His first admitted post was at Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council where he spent five years before moving to Chester City Council in 1986 as senior assistant solicitor. He became head of legal services at Chester in 1994, and solicitor to the council and monitoring officer in 2001, leading a team of 20.

Steve Kingston is an ethical standards officer at the Standards Board for England. He has over 25 years' experience in local government, including work for three district councils and one unitary authority. He has also been involved in partnership work with town and parish councils. Previous work with public protection services involved overseeing investigations into corporate fraud, breaches of environmental protection laws, practices intended to deceive the consumer, and a range of other unlawful activities.

Lisa Klein is the head of the investigations department at the Standards Board for England, where she has worked since late 2001. She previously worked as a legal consultant for one of the London boroughs, and served for many years as an assistant general counsel and litigation attorney for the US Federal Election Commission in Washington. In 1997, Lisa was selected for the Atlantic Fellowship in Public Policy (a programme sponsored by the British government). During her fellowship, Lisa was associated with King's College School of Law and worked with the Committee on Standards in Public Life through the investigatory phase of its inquiry into British political party funding.

Alex Kroon is a policy adviser at the Standards Board for England. His work involves giving advice and guidance to key stakeholders on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct and procedures of the Standards Board, and assisting in the production of statutory and non-statutory guidance. Alex has also worked in the Standards Board's Referrals Unit assessing new complaints to see if they should be investigated. Prior to the Standards Board he worked for the Boundary Committee for England as a review leader, with responsibility for carrying out reviews of local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Peter Lacey is county secretary for the Somerset Association of Local Councils. Peter was first elected to his parish council in the mid-1970s and went on to serve as chair for a number of years. After leaving the accountancy profession in 1990, he was appointed county secretary. At that time, the job was linked with being director of the community council for Somerset, but was divided in 2001. He is also chair of the county officers' professional development group and one of the authors of *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in England and Wales*.

Claire Lefort is a principal legal adviser at the Standards Board for England and a qualified solicitor. Her work at the Standards Board involves representing the ethical standards officers in hearings and advising them on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct, as well as assisting in the production of statutory and non-statutory guidance. Claire has the Law Society's Diploma in Local Government Law. She was previously borough solicitor and monitoring officer of a local authority in Essex, with responsibility for the legal and local land charges unit.

Reverend Paul Lipscomb is the independent chair of the standards committee at Slough Borough Council. For over 40 years, Paul worked in a range of different private companies. From 1995 to 1996 he was chair of Corgi Classics Ltd and prior to that was the group finance and production director at J W Spear and Sons. Paul was ordained a permanent deacon in 1999 and in 2002 became chair of the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission.

Shaun Lowthorpe is public affairs correspondent for the *Eastern Daily Press* newspaper, based in Norwich. His role includes reporting local government issues from district to county council level, regional assemblies, regional development agencies, and the Department for Communities and Local Government. As well as news, he also writes analytical features on local government policy issues, and has covered Adjudication Panel hearings for the newspaper.

Tim Martin is head of legal and democratic services and monitoring officer for Poole Borough Council in Dorset. He started his career as a solicitor in private practice on Tyneside, and has subsequently worked for a number of local authorities in different parts of the country. He has been a monitoring officer for the last 12 years.

Mary Mitson-Woods is the former chief executive of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, where she spent almost ten years. The association has retained her services as legal adviser while her successor gains experience in this specialist field. Mary was proactive in forming a support group with monitoring officers in Suffolk, 18 months before the Code of Conduct was enacted.

Lucy Morris is the acting head of referrals at the Standards Board for England. Her work involves running the Referrals Unit, which has responsibility for filtering all new allegations received by the Standards Board. Lucy has delegated authority from the Board to decide whether or not new allegations should be referred for investigation. She previously worked for another regulatory body.

Kathy Morrison is training director of Training Circle Ltd, a 'train the trainer' consultancy, which she founded in 1993. Kathy has more than 15 years' experience in delivering management training within public and private sectors. Over the past six years, she has concentrated on designing and delivering a portfolio of 'train the trainer' courses, which are accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management. Training Circle's clients include the BBC, NHS, Royal Bank of Scotland and many other blue chip companies from diverse sectors worldwide. She won a National Training Award in 2003, which was awarded for outstanding commitment to learning.

Alan Muir is legal services manager and monitoring officer for West Dorset District Council. Alan started his local government career with the London Borough of Wandsworth as a trainee solicitor, qualifying in 1976. He moved to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as a senior solicitor in 1979, and in 1988 joined the London Borough of Croydon as a principal solicitor. In 1992, Alan became deputy district solicitor at West Dorset District Council until 1999 when he became legal services manager, leading a small team of lawyers and continuing to specialise in planning law. In 2001, Alan was also appointed monitoring officer with responsibility for 48 district councillors and 130 parish councils, including five town councils.

Louise Oughton is senior communications manager at Dacorum Borough Council. Louise has worked in local government communications for 17 years. She started out at Hertfordshire County Council before moving on to the London Borough of Hackney and from there to North Hertfordshire District Council. Her career has seen her take on many challenges including dealing with PR around failing schools, child abuse cases, and most recently the Buncefield oil depot disaster.

Richard Owen is an investigator at the Standards Board for England. He has over 25 years' experience in local government, including periods at Birmingham City Council, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council. He worked for over ten years as an investigator for the Local Government Ombudsman, where he was involved in the investigation of complaints of maladministration. Richard was one of the first investigators to be appointed to the Standards Board for England, in 2002. He is also a priest in the Church of England, serving in a non-stipendiary capacity.

Vivienne Pay is solicitor and monitoring officer for Mendip District Council. She qualified as a solicitor in 1982 and worked in private practice for 13 years. Following this, Vivienne was a senior lecturer at the University of the West of England, based in the Built Environment faculty, and lecturing in planning, housing and local government law. In 2004, she was appointed to her current position at Mendip District Council.

Bob Posner is the former director of law and administration, and former monitoring officer, for the London Borough of Bexley. A barrister, he has practiced law in both the UK and Australia and has a Masters in Business Administration. Bob's local government career started as a lawyer with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in 1986 and spans over 20 years of legal work and management in local government. His current role encompasses the management of a range of services including legal, democratic, licensing, elections, registrars, emergency planning, facilities management, customer services and libraries.

David Prince is the chief executive of the Standards Board for England. Before that, he was managing director of strategy and resources at the Audit Commission. David has over 20 years' experience in local government, with past appointments including chief executive of Leicestershire County Council, and director of finance and administration, and clerk of the Police Authority, at Cambridgeshire County Council. He was also District Audit's first chief executive when it became an arm's-length agency in 1994.

Barry Quirk CBE is chief executive of the London Borough of Lewisham and the immediate past president of SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers). He has worked in local government for 27 years, including experience in five London authorities as an officer and, in the mid-1980s, a sixth as an elected politician. Barry's professional background is in education, corporate policy and service delivery. He has a PhD in social and political geography and is a visiting fellow in social policy and politics at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Barry was awarded a CBE in 2001 for services to local government in London, and in 2004 was appointed as the national efficiency champion for local government. In 2002, Barry was appointed as non-executive director to the board of HM Revenues and Customs.

Anne Rehill is the advice and guidance manager at the Standards Board for England. She leads a team of policy advisers in developing guidance on, and answering queries about, the Code of Conduct, and providing help and support to authorities to prepare them for the introduction of the revised system for dealing with allegations. She worked in local government for 12 years prior to joining the Standards Board, initially as a town planner in the London Borough of Harrow and Harlow District Council, where she was seconded to a corporate team to work on local government review. She later worked as a corporate policy officer in the London Borough of Enfield. Prior to joining the Standards Board, Anne was a senior policy officer for the London Borough of Redbridge.

Matthew Richards is an investigations manager at the Standards Board for England. Supporting the work of an ethical standards officer, he manages a team of investigators who carry out investigations into allegations that members may have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. Before joining the Standards Board, Matthew worked in local government for 17 years and he has been head of democratic services, and a corporate complaints officer, at a London borough.

Ian Rickard is the monitoring officer for Mid Suffolk District Council. He has been a solicitor since 1976. His career since qualification has been split between Cheshire County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council, covering a wide spectrum of local government. He held posts with the former Law Society local government group and is now county convener for Suffolk for the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS). Ian is one of the founders of the Suffolk monitoring officer group.

Jennifer Rogers is an ethical standards officer at the Standards Board for England. Before that, she was a member of the Police Complaints Authority, where she reviewed investigations into complaints of police misconduct and supervised investigations. She was a commissioner for the Mental Health Act Commission for ten years, dealing with complaints and promoting good practice. She also chaired the Commission's national standing committee on complaints, and was a lay member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal.

Freda Sharkey is a principal legal adviser at the Standards Board for England and a qualified solicitor. Her work at the Standards Board involves representing the ethical standards officers in hearings and advising them on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct, assisting in the production of statutory and non-statutory guidance, and advising on policy matters. Freda holds a diploma in public administration and has previously worked as a solicitor for several local authorities. She was also a solicitor in the government legal service at the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Prior to qualifying as a solicitor, Freda worked as a policy officer in local government.

Belinda Shaw is an investigations manager at the Standards Board for England. She is responsible for the work of a team of investigators, who investigate allegations of misconduct. She qualified as a solicitor in 1990 after training in private and public practice, and has 13 years' experience of local authority legal work in two London boroughs. She was head of legal services for social services and education at the London Borough of Ealing. Belinda was also acting head of the authority's Special Educational Needs Service, before joining the Standards Board in 2002.

Wilson Sherriff is a facilitation consultancy who specialise in working with a wide range of organisations in the public sector. Directors Simon Wilson and Carol Sherriff are certified professional facilitators and members of the International Association of Facilitators.

Professor Judy Simons is a board member of the Standards Board for England. She is professor of English and pro vice chancellor at De Montfort University, where she has responsibility for quality and standards, and chairs the University's human research ethics committee. Judy is a board member of the Higher Education Academy and chair of Council. She is also on the strategic committee for leadership, governance and management at the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Judy has chaired a number of national academic bodies, including the Council of University Deans of Arts and Humanities. She has published widely on literary studies and is a fellow of both the Royal Society of Arts and the English Association.

Sir Peter Soulsby is the MP for Leicester South. During his 20 years as councillor for Leicester City Council he spent 17 years as council leader. Peter spearheaded the Leicester City Challenge project from 1994 to 1998, bringing over £400 million of jobs and regeneration to the city – including the land for the Walkers Stadium. He was formerly the head of regions for the British Lung Foundation and deputy chair of British Waterways. Peter was knighted in 1999 for services to the City of Leicester.

Richard Stephens is the independent chair of Tewkesbury Borough Council's standards committee. He has also spent nine years as a member of the Gloucestershire Board of the Prince's Youth Business Trust with responsibility for co-ordinating business advisers, and five years as chair of his local NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) fundraising committee. Prior to his retirement, Richard worked for BP in a variety of different roles, and left to set up his own business, Control Limited.

Professor Gerry Stoker is professor of political science in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Manchester, where he is also co-director of the Institute for Political and Economic Governance. Gerry's main research interests are in governance, democratic politics, local and regional governance, urban politics, public participation and public service reform. He has authored or edited over 20 books and published over 70 refereed articles or chapters in books. Gerry was also the founding chair of the New Local Government Network, and remains involved as a trustee. He has provided advice to various parts of UK government and is also an expert adviser to the Council of Europe on local government and participation issues.

David Taylor is the monitoring officer of Easington District Council. David entered local government as an articled clerk with Tyne and Wear County Council in 1976, qualifying as a solicitor in April 1978. In 1985, he was invited to move into private practice with Crutes law firm, where he became a partner in 1987. He continued to concentrate on local government related work and, in 2002, the firm's public sector work led to an opportunity to become Easington District Council's monitoring officer, combining that role with his position as partner at Crutes. David is a member of the Law Society and the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors.

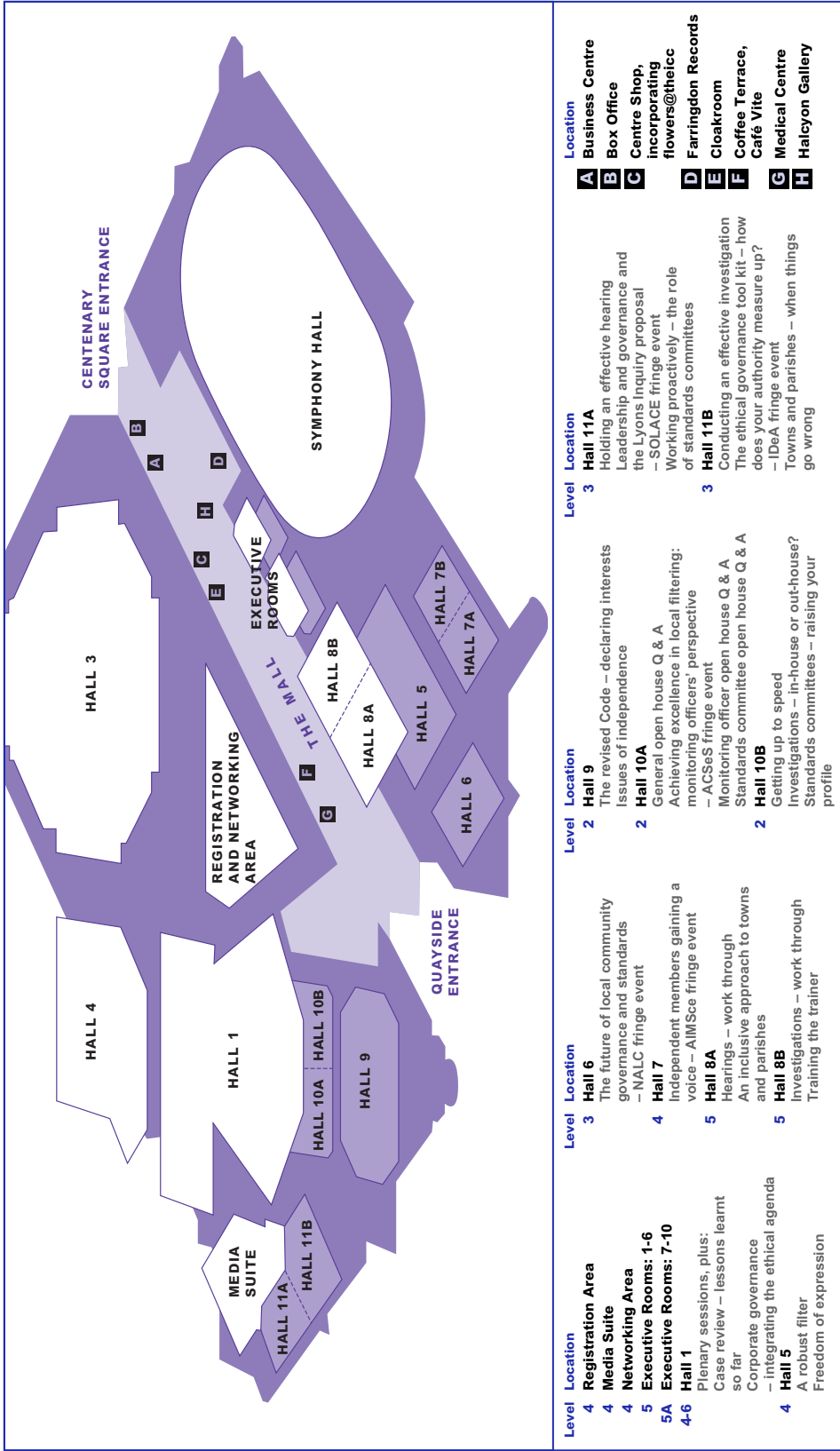
Margaret Taylor is the director of corporate governance and monitoring officer for Kingston upon Hull City Council. Margaret is a member of the council's corporate strategy team and a lawyer by profession. She has supported the work of the council's standards committee since its inception, and the council undertook a very early pilot of the Ethical Governance Audit. Margaret has a background in both the private and public sector, and has a proven track record in driving and supporting improvement work, and providing leadership to successfully deliver projects. Her areas of responsibility have won a number of national awards.

Roger Taylor is a board member of the Standards Board for England. He was chief executive of Manchester City Council from 1984 to 1988 and chief executive of Birmingham City Council from 1988 to 1994. Following this, he joined public sector management consultants Newchurch and Company and then established Pinnacle Consulting as a subsidiary of the Pinnacle Public Service Group. He is a qualified solicitor and an honorary fellow of the Institute of Local Government Studies.

Storm Westmaas is a principal legal adviser at the Standards Board for England. After successfully qualifying as a barrister-at-law, he worked at the Bar and also held positions at the Brent Community Law Centre and the London Borough of Camden, as a senior housing lawyer. Most recently, Storm has worked as an attorney in the West Indies, concentrating mainly on civil law. His client base included oil companies, hotels, and government agencies; he practiced mainly as a litigator in administrative, employment, contract, and commercial matters in Guyana and the Eastern Caribbean.

Phil Woolas MP is the minister for local government and community cohesion at the Department for Communities and Local Government. Previously, Phil was deputy leader of the House of Commons, and has held roles including government whip and parliamentary private secretary at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. He has been member of parliament for Oldham East and Saddleworth since May 1997. Before entering Parliament, he was head of communications at the GMB trade union and a television producer for the BBC and ITN.

Map of ICC



Key to lanyard colours

All delegates are given a conference name badge at registration. Name badges are used with coloured lanyards (cords), which identify the delegate's role or position. The categories delegates may choose between are:

WHITE

Monitoring officers

RED

Speakers

DARK GREEN

Standards committee members

PURPLE

Conference steering committee members

YELLOW

Independent members

JADE GREEN

The Standards Board for England board members

ORANGE

Chief executives

BLUE

Others
(delegates who do not fit into any of the categories above)

BLACK

Council leaders

Handouts and other conference literature

All session handouts and many other items of conference literature, including presentations and speeches, will be available electronically through the conference website – www.annualassembly.co.uk – soon after the conference closes.

Questions and further information

If you have any general conference-related enquiries whilst at the conference, please visit the Enquiries desk, which is located in the registration area.

A separate information desk, within the main registration and networking area, will be staffed by representatives from the Standards Board for England, to respond to questions and listen to any feedback. So please feel free to drop by.

Sixth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees 15-16 October 2007, ICC, Birmingham

All delegates attending this year's conference will automatically receive booking information for next year's Sixth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees, once it becomes available.