P U Z Z L D

#peacebypiece

THE PUZZLD EVIDENCE STANDARD

Version 1.0

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Not yet in effect, pending legal review

An organisation for a fairer, more democratic world

Founded in the United Kingdom

PART I
PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Article 1. Purpose

Puzzld publishes nothing as a finding unless it has passed this standard. The standard is public, fixed in advance, and applied the same way to every issue, whoever the result favours.

An opinion is not evidence. Puzzld records what people have lived through, tests it, grades it, and responds only to what holds up. This document sets out how.

Puzzld has one purpose: to prove where ordinary people are being failed, and to fix it. It works through two sections.

(a) **Puzzld Evidence** gathers and tests first-hand accounts, publishes findings, and holds institutions to account.

(b) **Puzzld Inventions** builds what is missing, where a finding shows that the failure is the absence of something that should exist.

Evidence always comes first. Nothing is built, and no institution is challenged, without a finding that has passed this standard.

Article 2. What Counts as Evidence

An item counts as evidence only if it passes all three tests.

(1) **First-hand.** The person experienced it or directly witnessed it, or the item is an original document.

(2) **Specific.** It names a date, a place and the organisation responsible.

(3) **Checkable.** It can be supported by a document, an independent account or an official record.

Puzzld accepts four kinds of evidence: personal testimony, original documents (letters, emails, decisions, reference numbers), official records and data, and responses to Freedom of Information requests.

The following are never used as evidence.

(a) Hearsay: anything the person was told rather than saw. It may be followed up as a lead.

(b) Generalisations about a group of people. A claim about a group requires data, never anecdote.

(c) Opinions, impressions and feelings about other people.

(d) Any submission that targets people for who they are, contrary to the Puzzld Charter of Rights.

PART II
METHOD

Article 3. The Process

Every Puzzld investigation follows the same eight stages, in order.

(1) **Set the question.** The question must be narrow and answerable: who is affected, by which body, in which place, in relation to which right.

(2) **Review what exists.** Official statistics, published research, parliamentary reports and past disclosures are read first. Puzzld collects only where there is a gap.

(3) **Collect.** Testimony is gathered through the structured submission form. Documents are requested. Freedom of Information requests are filed with the bodies concerned.

(4) **Test each source.** Every account and document is examined against the questions in the next section.

(5) **Grade.** Each item receives a grade from A to D.

(6) **Analyse.** Patterns are identified, contrary evidence is sought, and the limits of the sample are recorded.

(7) **Publish.** Findings are published with the method, the grades and the limits. Any body named is offered a right of reply.

(8) **Respond.** The finding decides the response. Where an institution is failing, Puzzld takes the finding to those with the power to change it. Where something needed does not exist, Puzzld Inventions builds it.

Article 4. Testing a Source

No account is accepted on trust. Six questions are asked of every item.

(1) **Proximity.** Did the person experience or see it, or were they told?

(2) **Timing.** How soon after the event was it recorded?

(3) **Motive.** Does the source gain from the account being believed?

(4) **Consistency.** Does the account hold together, and does it stay the same when the person is asked again?

(5) **Corroboration.** Does an independent source, with no connection to the first, support it?

(6) **Documentation.** Is there a record made at the time?

Two accounts count as independent only if neither person could have learned the details from the other.

Article 5. Evidence Grades

Every item is graded, and the grade is published beside any finding that relies on it.

Grade	What it means	How it may be used
A	Documented. Supported by an original record such as a letter, decision notice or official response.	May support a published finding on its own.
B	Corroborated. Several independent first-hand accounts show the same pattern.	May support a published finding, stated as a pattern with the number of accounts.
C	Single credible account. First-hand and specific, not yet corroborated.	May be quoted as one person's account. May not support a general finding.
D	Unverified. Fails one or more of the three tests.	Logged internally. Never published.

No finding about a public body or a named organisation is published on Grade C evidence alone.

Article 6. Analysis and Limits

Puzzld reports what it found, not more.

(a) **Count, do not project.** Findings state the number of accounts received. People who submit are not a representative sample, so Puzzld never converts submissions into a percentage of the population.

(b) **Seek contrary evidence.** Before any finding is published, the researcher records what evidence would disprove it and whether any was found.

(c) **Record who is missing.** Every report states which groups or areas are absent from the evidence.

(d) **Separate fact from cause.** Showing that something happened is not the same as showing why. Claims about cause require their own evidence.

(e) **Second review.** No finding is published until a second person, who did not collect the evidence, has checked it against this standard.

PART III
PUBLICATION AND RESPONSE

Article 7. Publication, Right of Reply and Corrections

Every published finding shows its workings. Each report includes the question asked, the method used, the number and grade of items relied on, and the limits of the evidence.

(a) **Right of reply.** Any organisation named in a finding is sent the finding before publication and given a set period to respond. The response, or the absence of one, is published with the finding.

(b) **Individuals.** Private individuals are not named. Officials are named only in relation to their public role and only on Grade A evidence.

(c) **Corrections.** Errors are corrected publicly, with the date and the nature of the change shown on the report.

(d) **Withdrawal.** A finding that no longer meets this standard is withdrawn, and the withdrawal is recorded.

Article 8. Responding to a Finding

A finding is not the end of the work. Every published finding ends in a recorded decision on how Puzzld will respond. There are two responses, and a finding may call for both.

The finding shows	The response	Carried out by
An institution is breaking its own rules, the law or a person's rights.	Hold the institution to account.	Puzzld Evidence
People are being failed because something they need does not exist or cannot be obtained.	Build what is missing.	Puzzld Inventions

A product is never a substitute for accountability. Where an institution is at fault, it is held to account whether or not a product is also built.

Section 8.01. Holding an Institution to Account

Puzzld takes the finding through the following routes, in order, moving to the next only when the one before has failed.

(1) **The body responsible.** The finding is sent with a request for a written response and a remedy.

(2) **The regulator or ombudsman.** A formal complaint or submission is made to the body with oversight.

(3) **Parliament and government.** Written evidence is submitted to relevant inquiries and consultations, and the finding is sent to the MPs whose constituents are affected.

(4) **The press.** The finding and its evidence are offered to journalists.

(5) **Legal referral.** Where the evidence suggests a breach of law, those affected are referred to organisations able to advise and act.

(6) **Protest.** Where every other route has failed, Puzzld organises lawful, peaceful protest, with the published evidence as its basis.

Each step taken, and each response received, is recorded on the public page for that finding.

Section 8.02. Building What is Missing

Puzzld Inventions builds a product only when all four conditions are met.

(1) **A published finding shows the need.** The need rests on Grade A or Grade B evidence.

(2) **The failure is an absence.** Something people need does not exist, or is out of their reach.

(3) **Nothing adequate is already available.** Puzzld checks what exists, and at what price, before building anything.

(4) **Puzzld can build it safely.** The product can be made to a standard that protects the people who will use it.

When a product is built, the evidence governs the work.

(a) **The accounts are the design brief.** Requirements are taken from what contributors described and are recorded against the finding.

(b) **Those affected test it.** The product is tried, with consent, by people who gave accounts, before any release.

(c) **The result is measured.** Puzzld publishes whether the product solved the problem the finding described.

Section 8.03. Keeping Evidence Independent of Products

An organisation that proves a problem and also supplies the answer must show that the first is not serving the second. These rules are fixed.

(a) Every finding is published, whether or not a product follows from it.

(b) No finding is altered, delayed or withheld to suit a product.

(c) The second reviewer of a finding has no part in any product that arises from it.

(d) Where a product was begun before the evidence was gathered, Puzzld says so, and gathers the evidence under this standard before making any claim of need.

(e) The price of every product, and the use of any proceeds, is published. Nobody is paid by reference to profit. Pay is set under Article 42 of the Constitution.

PART IV
SAFEGUARDS

Article 9. Consent, Privacy and Data Protection

Nobody's account is used without their informed consent, and nobody is identified without their agreement.

(a) **Consent.** Each person is told how their account will be used before they submit, and may withdraw it at any time before publication.

(b) **Anonymity.** Accounts are published without names or identifying details by default. Puzzld knows who submitted, so that accounts can be verified, but does not disclose it.

(c) **Sensitive information.** Accounts often include details of health, religion, ethnicity or other protected matters. These are collected only where necessary, stored securely, and seen only by those verifying the account.

(d) **Retention.** Personal details are deleted once they are no longer needed for verification.

(e) **Safeguarding.** Where a submission indicates that a person is at risk of harm, they are directed to appropriate support.

Before this standard takes effect, three matters require professional legal review.

- ☐ Data protection: lawful basis for handling special category data under UK GDPR, the privacy notice, and registration with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- ☐ Defamation: the review process for any finding that names an organisation or an official.
- ☐ Product safety and liability: the requirements that apply to any product Puzzld sells or distributes.

SCHEDULE
THE SUBMISSION FORM

The form asks what happened to the person, not what they think. Each question maps to a test in this standard.

No.	Question	Why it is asked
1	Which issue does this concern? (chosen from a list)	Assigns the account to an open investigation.
2	Did this happen to you, did you witness it, or were you told about it?	Separates first-hand evidence from hearsay. Accounts marked "told about it" become leads only.
3	What happened? Describe only what you experienced or saw.	The account itself.
4	When did it happen? (date, or month and year)	Makes the account specific and allows it to be matched to records.
5	Where did it happen? (town or borough)	Allows patterns to be found by area.
6	Which organisation was responsible? (council, employer, landlord, NHS body, police, school, other, none)	Identifies who must answer, or shows that no body is responsible.
7	Did you complain or appeal? What response did you receive?	Shows whether existing routes were tried and failed.
8	Do you have anything that shows what happened? (letter, email, photograph, reference number)	Supports a Grade A rating.
9	How has this affected you?	Records the consequence.
10	What would have prevented this, or what would have helped?	Informs the response. Where something is missing, the answers become the design brief.
11	May we contact you to verify this account?	Required for any grade above D.
12	Do you consent to this account being used, without your name, in published research and in the design of any response?	Required before any use.