

The Community Trigger. Where We Are Today

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Don't suffer in silence

About ASB Help

ASB Help is a charity, registered number 1152851, set up in 2013 to help and advise victims of anti-social behaviour. From the outset, ASB Help has focused on the implementation of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, with particular attention given to the Community Trigger (also called the ASB Case Review). Jennifer Herrera, Chief Executive Officer of ASB Help, sits on the Home Office's ASB Strategic Board and is a leading voice on the Community Trigger. ASB Help gives support and advice to victims of anti-social behaviour primarily through its website.

www.asbhelp.co.uk

ASB Help wishes to thank those who have shared their stories for the purpose of this report. We passionately believe that victims should not suffer in silence and welcome the opportunity to share some of their experiences within this report. ASB Help is committed to ensuring victims truly are put first when tackling anti-social behaviour.

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Executive Summary

The Crime Survey of England and Wales reports that 36%¹ of adults have experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour in the year to 31 March 2018, compared to 31% in the previous year. Anti-social behaviour therefore remains a significant problem in England and Wales and one that is getting worse. Funding cuts to the police, local authorities and registered providers of social housing are impacting how practitioners can effectively deal with anti-social behaviour. According to the 2015/16 Crime Survey for England and Wales, approximately 31% of anti-social behaviour incidents were reported to the police, local authority or housing association/private landlord². With 21,000 fewer police officers in 2018 compared to 2010³ and difficulties in getting through on the non-emergency 101 number⁴, there are fewer opportunities for people to express their concerns.

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 streamlined the existing tools and powers to deal with anti-social behaviour down to just six which were designed to be quicker to obtain and more flexible. In addition, the legislation also introduced the ASB Case Review, more commonly called a Community Trigger, enabling victims to hold their local agencies to account. If they meet a threshold (usually three reports of separate incidents within a six month period) victims can activate the Community Trigger (through the lead agency, usually police or council) and a multi-agency case review must be held to discuss the case and seek to resolve the anti-social behaviour.

We are a charity focused on victims of anti-social behaviour. As such we have focused our work on the Community Trigger since the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014) was passed. Our extensive work has found fundamental problems, covering every aspect of the process.

Key Findings

1. In 2016 we published 'Community Trigger: Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?'. We found that the Community Trigger was largely unknown and inaccessible to victims. Since then little has changed. The importance of this cannot be emphasised enough – local agencies could have excellent processes behind the scenes to run their case reviews but if they get the portal wrong (that is, the information displayed for victims and the manner in which they can activate it), then it risks all being for nothing.
2. The statutory guidance for frontline practitioners was updated in 2017 and ASB Help contributed to improving the Community Trigger section, but an opportunity was lost to promote the Community Trigger centrally because it was quietly launched on Sunday, 24th December 2017. A review of local authority and police websites show that the statutory guidance continues to be ignored in regard to its accessibility, clarity and content. Some do not publish their procedures, some only give one way to activate the Trigger and some add additional requirements not in the legislation that a victim has to meet before they can activate it. There are no penalties for this by central government and no one responsible for encouraging compliance.

¹ Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2018*, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingseptember2018>

² Thompson, R., Hunter, J., Tseloni, A., Tilley, N., and Tiwari, P. (2019) *Who experiences anti-social behaviour and in what context: headline findings from an 18-month project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council*. Nottingham: Nottingham Trent University

³ House of Commons Library (2018), *Police Service Strength, Briefing Paper Number 00634*, page 5

⁴ BBC (2018), *Thousands abandon 101 police calls over long waits* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-45050915>

3. The threshold which is locally defined continues to be confusing to victims and 44% of areas still use a two-tier threshold, which was originally used in the pilots but dropped in the legislation. The two-tier threshold required 3 incidents for an individual, or 5 households, essentially making it harder for a group of people suffering anti-social behaviour to get help. The ongoing usage of this 5-household requirement is not legal. Some also say the case must be closed to be able to use the Community Trigger which is also not legal. We believe that it would be so much easier to explain and promote the Community Trigger if there was a universal threshold.
4. In 2017 Dr Vicky Heap of Sheffield Hallam University and ASB Help were commissioned by a Community Safety Partnership in the South of England to undertake research into victims' experiences of the Community Trigger process. The results of this research were very concerning. Where the portal was accessible, with victims stating it was easy to activate, the Community Trigger itself failed to deliver for victims. Most said no improvement had been made or even that it had got worse. Anecdotal evidence from victims who contact ASB Help suggests this is occurring elsewhere too.
5. Over half of local authority areas have treated our request for data on the Community Trigger as a Freedom of Information request in spite of the legal requirement to publish it each year. ASB Help has gathered recent statistics on the number of Community Triggers and the results remain consistent with the exercise we undertook in 2016. It has been a tortuous process gathering the information and many still have not responded at the time of writing. Of those that have, 45% report a zero return with no Community Trigger activations for the whole of 2017/18.
6. ASB Help also works with practitioners to raise awareness of victims' needs and the Community Trigger. Practitioners share a range of concerns about the case review itself such as recommendations not being carried out and partners focusing on covering their backs rather than working together to problem-solve. Best practice examples are incredibly difficult to identify, but there are some which show how the Community Trigger can have a positive impact for victims and improve situations and systems.
7. There is no-one taking overall ownership of the Community Trigger or any aspect of anti-social behaviour from a victim perspective. The Home Office says it is down to local agencies and since the Localism Act 2011 they cannot intervene. Police and Crime Commissioners say they have no mandate to act for victims of anti-social behaviour, and funding for victims is ringfenced for victims of crime only. However, 100% of Police and Crime Plans include vulnerable victims as a priority. Many repeat victims of persistent anti-social behaviour could be classed as vulnerable.
8. Our research evidence and case work with victims demonstrates that victims are not put first. If local agencies are failing in their duty to protect victims then there is nowhere for victims to turn. The Community Trigger should act as a safety net for those victims who keep trying to get help but are suffering in silence. Instead the Community Trigger is unknown, inaccessible and not delivering results for long-suffering victims of repeat, persistent anti-social behaviour.

Key Recommendation

ASB Help believes that the Home Office must recognise the need to appoint an officer to take national responsibility for the Community Trigger. This officer would have the power to require local agencies to comply with legislation and would receive the annual required statistics on usage of the Community Trigger. Victims would also be able to contact this officer if they experience problems with the Community Trigger or have concerns about how the case review has been undertaken.

Used well, the Community Trigger has the potential to capture repeat anti-social behaviour early on and force local agencies to take action. This is likely to be extremely cost-effective in the long run because often situations of anti-social behaviour, if not taken seriously at the outset, can become so complex that many more resources need to be devoted to tackling them. Furthermore, what a victim perceives as anti-social behaviour could be domestic abuse or gang activity, both of which could be tackled earlier if the victim received the appropriate response they deserve rather than being left to suffer in silence.

We recommend the adoption of the following Community Trigger Charter for all local agencies.

COMMUNITY TRIGGER CHARTER

To ensure the Community Trigger is an effective way of empowering victims of repeat, persistent anti-social behaviour and see its potential to make a difference for victims and communities unlocked, we want to suggest the following Community Trigger Charter. If this Charter was adopted by all local agencies, we believe the Community Trigger will operate more effectively. It will function in the spirit of the original premise of putting victims first and empower them to hold local agencies to account.

1. There must be central ownership of the Community Trigger with power to force local agencies to improve their practices as well as gather and collate annual statistics.
2. Every local Community Trigger must be easy to activate as established in the statutory guidance with a range of activation methods and preferably a named contact.
3. The Community Trigger must be effectively publicised and promoted both nationally and locally so that victims know it exists with each local agency displaying information, not just the lead agency.
4. The case review must have victim representation, either with the victims themselves presenting their story to the panel or by having a professional there specifically to represent their viewpoint.
5. Every local Community Trigger must adopt a standardised threshold with the removal of the 'five households' requirement.
6. All case reviews must be chaired by someone independent of the professionals involved in the case who has the freedom and authority to challenge their actions.
7. Local agencies must actively recommend the Community Trigger to victims.
8. All victims must be able to raise complaints to a named officer in central government if they are dissatisfied with the way their local Community Trigger has been handled.
9. The Community Trigger must be simplified to remove confusion over the double name and clarify its purpose with regard to victim satisfaction and the case not needing to be closed to meet the threshold.
10. Police and Crime Commissioners must have a mandate requiring them to be involved in Community Trigger appeals and to regularly review the process.

Introduction

In September 2016, ASB Help published a report entitled ‘*The Community Trigger. Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*’ looking at how this power introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 was operating in practice. Two and a half years later it feels appropriate to assess where we are today, bringing in the voices of victims who have contacted us more recently as well as developments in this area.

Let us begin with an important reminder of why the Community Trigger was introduced as set out by the Home Office in its 2012 White Paper ‘Putting Victims First’:

We want to empower victims and communities. Too often people in a local area are desperate to have the behaviour that’s blighting their neighbourhood dealt with, they just don’t know how to get the authorities to take action. Elected Police and Crime Commissioners and neighbourhood beat meetings will help, but we will support local communities by introducing a new Community Trigger to compel agencies to respond to persistent anti-social behaviour.⁵

Our 2016 report identified the following issues:

1. there is great confusion over how to use the Community Trigger;
2. there has been limited publicity of the Community Trigger meaning that many victims who would be entitled to activate it are unaware of its existence;
3. statutory guidance to make the Community Trigger accessible to all victims has been frequently ignored; and
4. data on its usage is very difficult to obtain and effectively compare⁶.

This report seeks to assess where we are today with the Community Trigger and identifies further issues that have come to light in the last two and a half years. The 2016 report focused on the accessibility and promotion of the Community Trigger. This report seeks to develop this further to look at the threshold, the case review itself and legislative confusion.

It also draws on updated statistics on usage of the Community Trigger, qualitative research undertaken in the South of England and the process of updating the statutory guidance which occurred in 2017. We want to suggest that it is a matter of national urgency to get the Community Trigger fit for purpose, that it should be a priority area for anti-social behaviour policy and practice, which will require national ownership of both the Trigger itself and the vision of putting victims first.

⁵ Home Office (2012), *Putting Victims First. More Effective Responses to Anti-Social Behaviour*, page 3

⁶ ASB Help (2016), *The Community Trigger. Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*, page 4

The Data

ASB Help has recently undertaken the tortuous process of gathering up-to-date statistics on the level of Community Trigger activations across England and Wales. Consistent with this exercise in 2016, over half of local authority areas have treated this as a Freedom of Information request in spite of it being information legally required as set out in the 2014 Act.

Also consistent with 2016, nearly half of all areas are reporting a zero return, that is to say not a single Community Trigger activation in the 2017/18 financial year (see Appendix A for the data). This means the modal average of Triggers is also zero.

This might suggest that whole swathes of the country have not had a single anti-social behaviour issue which needs reviewing. The stories of victims strongly indicate that this is not the case. Rather, victims are not aware of the Community Trigger and therefore cannot activate it or have given up entirely on getting any help with the problems they are experiencing.

For example, one victim told us:

“It took me 28 months to finally get rid of my antisocial neighbour just before Christmas. The stress and sleep deprivation he caused wrecked my mental and physical health. It was easier for the authorities to just ignore me than do something about him.”

Another had this to say:

“I have stopped reporting anti-social behaviour to the police. It has been going on for such a long time now and very little if anything at all has been done. There is lots of alcohol and drug taking on my street by many.”

Even Victim Support has failed to advise victims that they would be eligible for the Community Trigger. Supportline, a helpline that receives calls and emails from victims, and Crimestoppers, were unaware of the Community Trigger until ASB Help informed them of it. One victim told us this about how their local Victim Support office had responded to the Community Trigger:

“During 12 months of contacts (2015/16) they never mentioned the existence of the Community Trigger scheme. Once I learnt of the scheme through your website, I queried the reason for the lack of disclosure. Victim Support claims that at the time they were not advocating its use because they were still uncertain of the procedure involved and its merits.”

From the 193 local authority areas that have responded to our request, there has been a total of 509 Community Triggers activated with 287 of those not meeting the threshold. This means that 56% of Triggers did not meet the threshold suggesting confusion about the threshold concept and a lot of frustrated victims who took the time to complete the Community Trigger application form only to be told they had not met the threshold.

217 case reviews were held of which 153 led to recommendations. Therefore 71% of reviews resulted in recommendations, suggesting the benefit of undertaking the review. We do not know how many Community Triggers resulted in respite for the victim and an end to the anti-social behaviour they were experiencing. As such we cannot assess how effective they actually are in meeting their purpose because this is not currently measured.

The average number of Community Triggers activated per year is just 2.6 for each local authority area (2.2 if you remove the extreme outlier of Bristol with 72 Triggers) with an average of 1.1 case reviews held. With such small numbers there is little opportunity for areas to improve and develop their process. With no sharing of best practice or national narrative about it, there is a real concern as to the quality of the whole process.

Statutory Guidance Updated

The statutory guidance to the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act was updated in 2017. Whilst this was primarily driven by issues with Public Spaces Protection Orders in relation to homelessness, ASB Help embraced this opportunity to make suggestions to improve the statutory guidance in relation to Community Triggers, starting with the obvious step of clarifying its two names!

All of ASB Help's suggested changes were approved (see Appendix B for the detail of this) and ASB Help spent much of 2017 campaigning for the Home Office to use the launch of the updated statutory guidance as a chance to promote the Community Trigger and encourage its wider usage.

ASB Help sat on the Home Office ASB Advisory Board who were involved in the updating of the statutory guidance and who were told they would be advised of the date to launch the updated guidance. Instead, it was launched on Christmas Eve 2017, a Sunday ⁷. I am not sure a less appropriate date could have been selected.

A press release accompanied it but made no mention of Community Triggers, only Public Spaces Protection Orders. ASB Help believes this was a huge opportunity missed. It also speaks volumes for the priority the Home Office places on victims of ASB, in spite of the rhetoric in the statutory guidance itself of putting victims first.

We have been pleased recently to see some debates on anti-social behaviour in Parliament, one led by Emma Hardy ⁸, MP for Hull and East Riding in October 2018 and more recently a lengthier debate led by Diana Johnson, MP for Hull North ⁹. There is recognition that anti-social behaviour is a real-life issue for people in England and Wales and one that is not being effectively dealt with.

Government responses to Parliamentary questions and debates on anti-social behaviour focus on the recently updated statutory guidance and the flexibility of the tools and powers. However, one of the main issues underlying this is the fact that the statutory guidance is being freely ignored with no consequences for this, hence it being completely ineffectual in putting victims first.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-on-the-use-of-the-anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-policing-act-2014>

⁸ Westminster Hall debate, Antisocial Behaviour: Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire, 9 Oct 2018 <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/whall/?id=2018-10-09b.23.3&s=anti+social+behaviour#g32.1>

⁹ House of Commons Education Committee, Antisocial Behaviour, 7 February 2019 <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2019-02-07b.474.3&s=anti+social+behaviour>

Statutory Guidance Ignored

In ‘*The Community Trigger: Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*’ we spoke at length about the issues with promotion and accessibility of the Community Trigger. Nothing has changed in the past two and a half years with victims continuing to contact us to tell us that they are attempting to activate a Community Trigger and the agencies do not know what they are talking about.

“A true but sad episode was when I rang my local council to instigate the Community Trigger. The person who answered the telephone had no idea what I was talking about. They admitted that they had never heard about Community Trigger and informed me that they would just google it. I was calling the number given on the local council website for setting the Community Trigger in motion.”

“Very few know of the Community Trigger. The majority of professionals that have been involved in my case were unaware of it, and I had to explain it to them, this includes police contact 101.”

We had our own experience of these issues in Autumn 2018. With a sample of twelve local authorities who had previously reported the highest number of Community Triggers, we called the number shown on the webpage about the Community Trigger. To our astonishment, we encountered switchboards who did not know what it was, or even relevant departments who were unable to assist us.

The Community Trigger should be easy to activate. We were kept on hold to switchboard for twenty minutes only to reach someone who did not know what it was about and said they would get someone to call us back. No one ever did. This is extremely alarming especially taking into account the fact that it has been designed for victims of repeat anti-social behaviour, desperately wanting to get a response.

When we look at the statistics of the Triggers activated, we have to applaud the tenacity of victims who have managed to get through to that stage! We suspect there are many more victims who give up along the way or never knew it existed in the first place.

A local authority area could have excellent processes behind the scenes to effectively manage a case review but if their portal is bad, it’s all a waste of time because victims will never know it exists, that they can use it, or feel able to access it. You may think we exaggerate but see Box 1 for a current example from Hampshire where the police force is the lead agency.

We have long maintained that updating the statutory guidance was not going to be effective if no one was going to take responsibility for ensuring local areas were following it. Any concerns raised with the Home Office fall on deaf ears because they say they cannot intervene in local practices since the Localism Act 2011 was introduced. This goes to the absolute heart of the issues facing victims of anti-social behaviour. Who is taking ownership of the problem?

Box 1: Community Trigger Example ¹⁰

Anti-social behaviour Community Trigger

The community trigger empowers repeat victims of anti-social behaviour to ask for a review of the actions partner agencies have taken to resolve their concerns. To be eligible, you need to:

- have experienced three incidents as an individual in the last six months
- be five individuals in the local community who have separately reported similar incidents, where you all feel dissatisfied with the action taken and all agree that they want to raise the community trigger

Each of the incidents need to have been reported within one month of them taking place and you must apply for community trigger within six months of the latest incident. The victim can be a business, individual or a community group.

How to use the Community Trigger

In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, we are the first point of call for initial contact from a victim or representative wanting to use the community trigger. To do so, call us on 101. If eligible and the case is not subject to an active investigation, a review will be undertaken by the partner agencies.

This is all the online information available on the Community Trigger on the website of the lead agency, Hampshire Police. Some of the issues ASB Help has identified with this are:

1. The information is sparse without any details of when victims can expect to hear back from the process and how quickly the case review will be held in spite of the legal requirement to publish this.
2. There is a two-tier threshold which is not contained in the legislation. The five individuals in a local community condition should be removed.
3. The information says that it is only eligible if 'the case is not subject to an active investigation'. This is contrary to the legislation and an additional barrier to victims getting help.
4. The only way someone can activate the Community Trigger is by calling the 101 number. This has a charge attached to it and in practice can be difficult to get through on. For people who are trying to report an issue with a neighbour, it may be particularly difficult to do this on the telephone. For people who have already been using the 101 number to report the individual incidents of anti-social behaviour, they are unlikely to have confidence that this time it will make a difference.
5. In practice victims have told us that on calling 101, the call taker does not know what they are referring to when they ask for a Community Trigger.
6. Most of the council websites in that local area do not have any information about the Community Trigger and nor does the Police and Crime Commissioner.

¹⁰ <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/sf/asb-community-trigger/>

Ownership of Putting Victims First

We have spoken to a number of practitioners who have really fought to get justice for a victim of anti-social behaviour whether in the police, council or social housing provider. Often it seems as if they have had to fight against the very institutions they are partnering with to get lasting, effective results for a victim. They are the ones who care, who see the damage anti-social behaviour is inflicting on a particular person and believe it is not right and have some authority to stop it.

However, too many people with the ability to act keep victims at arm's length perhaps because of the demands placed on officers' time. Victims speak of feeling like the problem person when they report incidents of anti-social behaviour and continue to be fobbed off or passed between agencies, something the Community Trigger was supposed to stop.

One council officer in Liverpool Council calls every victim who has activated the Community Trigger to talk through the process and manage their expectations. She then follows up with them in writing and stays in contact with them throughout the process. This is a simple and effective way to put victims first.

"Talking to them stops the frustration. Sometimes people just want to be listened to." she says.

Contrast a practitioner like this with one who makes no contact until after the case review (which the victim was not invited to contribute to) and only then to draft a simple, standardised letter telling them that 'all procedures were followed'.

The Police and Crime Commissioners, originally heralded by the government to be a key player in the Community Trigger, have a great opportunity to step into this gap and provide leadership for the effective and appropriate use of the Community Trigger. 100% of the PCCs have care for the vulnerable as a specific objective in their Police and Crime Plan with 37% also specifically naming victims of anti-social behaviour as a priority.

Yet in practice they do not get involved at best, or at worst they have this to say:

"As a result of my research it has been established that the Community Trigger is a process Mr Scott does not have any responsibility for and consequently there is nothing more that Mr Scott as the Police and Crime Commissioner can do to assist you" (Kent PCC's office after victim contacted him with his concerns about the Trigger).

Whilst we recognise that since the Localism Act 2011 central government does not have the remit to force local agencies to act in a certain way, we believe there is a national responsibility to all victims, wherever they may live, to ensure an adequate level of consistency when it comes to repeat victims of anti-social behaviour. If no one takes responsibility at a strategic level, victims are left with no recourse when local agencies fail to comply with national legislation.

For a safety net to be effective, and in keeping with the government's original aim of putting victims first, there needs to be a clear, consistent approach to ensure each local Community Trigger is published, accessible and properly undertaken.

This is essentially a question of ownership. The Community Trigger is designed to catch people falling through the cracks between different agencies. For the case review to be robust and effective every partner needs to work together, share information openly and most importantly share the responsibility for ensuring everything possible has been done to stop the anti-social behaviour and support the victim.

ASB Help believes that the Home Office must recognise the need to appoint an officer to take national responsibility for the Community Trigger. This officer should have the power to require local agencies to comply with legislation and should gather and collate the annual required statistics on usage of the Community Trigger. Victims should also be able to contact this officer if they experience problems with the Community Trigger or have concerns about how the case review has been undertaken.

The Police and Crime Commissioners are also a logical choice for taking ownership given that they were originally expected to be involved in helping empower victims and communities¹¹ and are elected on the basis of supporting all victims, especially vulnerable victims. Taking responsibility for the Community Trigger and ensuring it is being properly publicised, made accessible and a robust case review undertaken should be part of their mandate.

This lack of national consistency can be applied more widely to encompass all aspects of anti-social behaviour. There are no standards for ASB officers and therefore no consistency in terms of how an ASB officer might treat a victim and approach a situation. Victims would benefit hugely from national standards for ASB officers governing their induction, training and continual professional development, perhaps the subject for another report.

Victims of anti-social behaviour are not included in the Victim's Code because that only covers victims of crime. This is also the case with much of the funding to support victims provided by the Ministry of Justice to Police and Crime Commissioners which is ring-fenced and can only be used for victims of crime, not anti-social behaviour. Yet a victim of repeat, persistent anti-social behaviour could benefit hugely from tailored support, particularly emotional support and techniques on how to cope with the impact of the anti-social behaviour on their well-being, health, sleep and employment.

Used well, the Community Trigger has the potential to capture repeat anti-social behaviour early on and force local agencies to take action. This is likely to be extremely cost-effective in the long run because often situations of anti-social behaviour, if not taken seriously at the outset, can become so complex that many more resources need to be devoted to tackling them. We also know that unchecked, anti-social behaviour can sometimes lead to far more serious behaviour, such as serious violence or gang activity. Early intervention is highlighted as a key way of preventing these issues from escalating. The Community Trigger can offer an opportunity not just to support victims but also identify vulnerable perpetrators, whose behaviour could be stemmed by earlier intervention.

It is also worth highlighting that what a victim perceives as anti-social behaviour (such as domestic arguing or high volumes of visitors to a property) could be symptomatic of other issues, such as domestic abuse or gang activity, both of which could be tackled earlier if the victim received the appropriate response they deserve rather than being left to suffer in silence.

¹¹ Home Office (2012), *Putting Victims First. More Effective Responses to Anti-Social Behaviour*, page 3

The Case Review Meeting

Our 2016 report focused on the way in which a victim might access the Community Trigger and the level of its usage across England and Wales. Since then ASB Help has sought to understand more about the case review itself from local authorities, police forces and registered social landlords. This has occurred in part through our role as a member of what was the Home Office ASB Advisory Group but also through targeted contact with local agencies.

In ‘*Community Trigger: Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*’¹² we highlighted London Borough of Waltham Forest’s portal as good practice in terms of clearly explaining the Community Trigger and making it easily accessible, with a Victim’s Champion as the contact. However, we have learned of a case review in that borough where neither the victim nor the partner who activated the Trigger on their behalf received a written response after the case review. As a process it has not worked for anyone. This highlights the importance of both a good portal which explains to potential victims how the Community Trigger works and makes it easy to access and good case review procedures to get results.

The feedback we have received from victims and practitioners has raised a number of concerns. It has been difficult to find many practitioners who embrace the process and, crucially, have seen results for victims of anti-social behaviour. The victims who make contact with us are usually expressing their frustration at the process and the obstacles they have encountered. Concerns include:

- partners more focused on covering their backs than an open discussion;
- partners refusing to share confidential information;
- recommendations made are not then acted upon with no legal recourse to insist upon it;
- some victims who activate the Trigger are usually just not happy with the decision taken by the local agency rather than actually being ignored by agencies (perhaps because they want the perpetrator evicted rather than just the anti-social behaviour stopped); and
- some victims bring minor complaints to the case review which are not really appropriate for a high-level multi-agency review.

A range of victims have written to ASB Help about their experience of the Community Trigger which illustrate some of these issues:

“In short, an acceptable response to a Community Trigger appears to be: provide the complainant with a list of all the things we COULD do but ultimately won’t due to funding and training issues, then just have them contact the police, who may possibly attend if they aren’t busy. In my opinion, the Community Trigger really isn’t worth doing!”

“Now that I have used the Community Trigger I think it is an absolutely useless provision. It is too easy for the police and council to stitch things up and close ranks.”

“We would describe our experience of the Community Trigger as akin to allowing a student to mark their own exam papers.”

“The chair of the meeting was the inspector in charge of the case. I was totally gaslighted and they found that they had all acted appropriately and done all they could. I stood no chance. Now the inspector gets to read the minutes and choose what does and does not get included.”

¹² ASB Help (2016), *Community Trigger. Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*, page 11

A council officer recently informed us of a Community Trigger case review held in September 2018 where there was then delay and a lack of willingness on the part of the landlord to take action. The victim passed away in January 2019. The stress of the anti-social behaviour had seriously affected her health and is felt by the local council to have been a contributing factor to her death. There must be some penalties to non-compliance to recommendations from the Community Trigger to really bring empowerment to victims.

From our perspective to have a victim or victim representative present at the case review seems to be the exception rather than the rule and the practice of an entirely independent chair is also not routine. Both of these are crucial to an objective, victim-focused process. It would be excellent to see a democratically elected representative form part of the case review, either a Councillor or someone from the Police and Crime Commissioner's office, to feed into the review.

The Community Trigger was designed to prevent tragedies such as Bijan Ebrahimi, who was murdered in 2013 and had his complaints of anti-social behaviour ignored, or Fiona Pilkington, who killed herself and her adult daughter in 2007 after her reports of anti-social behaviour were ignored. At every stage of the Community Trigger process we would recommend that local agencies consider whether their practices identify the most vulnerable victims and provide an independent, thorough review of their case with appropriate support for the victim.

Despite the substantial amount of negative experiences we have uncovered there is evidence of good practice which is highlighted in the following four case studies.

Box 2: Community Trigger makes a Difference

One council has found the Community Trigger process very helpful. In most Community Trigger case reviews it was found that all partners were doing everything they could to resolve a problem but for one couple, the Community Trigger made all the difference.

The council received the Community Trigger request from a non-white couple in a predominantly white neighbourhood. They were receiving racist abuse from their neighbours but the housing association, of which they were tenants, had classed it as an unresolved neighbour dispute and no action was taken. The victim had CCTV but the housing association had not taken time to look at the evidence nor alert the police to a potential hate incident.

As a result of the Community Trigger multi-agency case review, local partners were able to make strong recommendations to the housing association that they address the concerns of the victim and deal swiftly with the anti-social behaviour. As a result steps were taken by the housing provider. Without the Community Trigger, the victims would most likely have continued to suffer. However the housing association then took the necessary steps and the perpetrators were removed from the property and the victim was very grateful.

Box 3: Birmingham Community Safety Partnership Community Trigger procedures

Here is an example of a clear process seeking to put victims first by prioritising good communication with the victim and having an independent chair of the case review.

“The current process is managed and administered through Birmingham Community Safety Partnership - BCSP which has a dedicated website/contact line that records all requests from customers/third parties. Initially all requests are reviewed by ourselves to firstly determine that the Community Trigger threshold has been met and that the enquiry can be progressed accordingly.

We are clear to the customer that our processes don't necessarily implement another investigation, but seeks to challenge if agencies have conducted their investigations effectively and seeks to prevent any tragic consequences when in the past agencies have failed to respond correctly and in a timely fashion.

All customers that request a Community Trigger are responded to in person (usually within 24hrs) regardless of whether their requests are accepted or not and are advised of any decision in writing. A detailed discussion will take place around the reasons why a Community Trigger request has not been accepted and appropriate referrals to other agencies including registered providers/private landlords and other support services will be explained.

If a Community Trigger is accepted a number of processes are activated and a panel meeting convened with appropriate professionals called to discuss details of case (sometimes these meetings can take in place within the Safer Communities Group) and requires all professionals to pull together any work/investigation around the person/location and to present their processes/outcomes to date.

There is detailed discussion with those involved in the initial investigation, enabling an informed decision at the end of the meeting by an independent chair, again any decision will be conveyed to the customer in writing.

By carrying out the above processes, it provides an opportunity for an independent review, and not another investigation. However regardless of whether customer meets the Community Trigger threshold they will always receive an explanation through some various form of communication (usually written).”

Box 4: Trigger brings Positive Results

A tenant of a housing association complained to her local council that despite making numerous reports to her landlord about noise nuisance from a neighbour, nothing had been done. She said that her requests for updates from the landlord were ignored.

On investigation it was found that the problem neighbour had moved out of the property to live with a new partner. This meant that her son was now living alone at the property and was having regular, rowdy parties with his student friends.

The housing association reported that they were having trouble getting evidence on which they could act. They had also been unable to speak to the named tenant to discuss the complaints with her.

The victim contacted the council to activate the Community Trigger. The threshold was met and the review meeting was attended by representatives of the housing association, the council, the police and Victim Support.

As the different partners met to discuss the case, it became apparent that the housing association lacked the confidence and knowledge to deal with the issues. The housing association had been so focused on the anti-social behaviour that it had overlooked the potential subletting issue.

The Community Trigger panel advised the housing association to issue a 'notice to quit' as the named tenant was believed to be living elsewhere. They also offered advice on how to monitor noise.

The housing association followed the Community Trigger panel's recommendation and wrote to the named tenant who, fearful of losing her own home, moved back to the property. The noisy parties stopped immediately and there was complete respite for the victim.

The Community Trigger process was a success and brought respite for the victim. It also brought positive results for the housing association and its capacity to deal with issues of anti-social behaviour too. The council has offered ongoing support to the housing association which is really beneficial to both parties.

Box 5: How the Community Trigger should work

A Property Management Company had purchased all but 3 of 18 flats in a block, which remained in private ownership. It was renting the 15 flats out via websites as short term party lets and as a result they were attracting hen and stag parties, which were causing noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour almost every weekend, with disruption throughout the night.

The residents activated the Community Trigger and the threshold was met. On the panel were council and police representatives including officers from the legal and planning departments of the council.

The panel reviewed the information provided by the residents alongside partner agency records and listened to the accounts and evidence from officers whom have had direct dealings with the case. It was apparent that many different departments and agencies had been working in isolation in an attempt to resolve the problems associated with the use of the flats as short term lets.

The panel recognised the frustration residents may feel in the time taken to date to resolve the issues but were mindful agencies do not control the timescales where due process has to be followed.

After the meeting, a letter was sent to the complainants explaining in detail what had been discussed and what options were being pursued, one of which was an enforcement notice by the council's planning services.

No appeal was lodged by the Property Management Company against the enforcement notice and it had also come to the notice of the mortgage provider that they were in breach of the terms of the mortgage agreement, which had been to loan money for the purchase of the flats for residential use only, and that continued use of the properties for commercial gain would result in the mortgage being called in.

With immediate effect the Property Management Company changed the terms of rental to a minimum 28 day rental period which resulted in an end to the complaints.

One of the victims contacted ASB Help separately expressing their satisfaction with the process especially the speed and efficiency:

We submitted our community trigger request – 29th January 2018

We received an email acknowledging and confirming that our case meets the local threshold – 30th January 2018

Panel of local authority and police officials meet – 15th February 2018

We received a letter confirming the panel's decision on next steps – 27th February 2018

Research Evidence

In 2017 ASB Help worked with Dr Vicky Heap of Sheffield Hallam University to interview victims who had activated the Community Trigger in a city in the South of England. The research was commissioned by the local Community Safety Partnership to better understand victims' experiences of the Community Trigger process. The interviews were harrowing and the results disturbing.

The key findings were:

- Activating or attempting to activate the Community Trigger was not effective at stopping the long-term anti-social behaviour being experienced, and in some cases the anti-social behaviour incidents became worse. In a few cases, participants were unsure if the Community Trigger had stopped the anti-social behaviour or not because they were not informed what action had been taken.
- After finding it simple to activate the Community Trigger, participants were critical of the case review process. This was due to a lack of feedback about the case's progress, whether a review was being held or what actions arose from the review. There were delays of months in some cases, with participants feeling like they had to chase the responsible authorities for information, which generated uncertainty about what was happening and why.
- Participants were genuinely dissatisfied with the Community Trigger process. Many thought they would be invited to the case review meeting and were not, and expressed a strong desire to attend. The Community Trigger did not meet their expectations as the anti-social behaviour had not been stopped. Furthermore, participants felt they were not taken seriously, that they were let down and that the process was a waste of time.
- The participants did not feel empowered by the legislation. Many were unhappy with the contact they had had with the relevant authorities (throughout their case), with suggestions of rudeness and not being listened to by officers, which led to a lack of trust.¹³

It is worth reproducing some quotes from victims interviewed for this research.

"I mean when you read about it, it seems like a brilliant thing and you think finally I might actually get face-to-face with the police that are dealing with anti-social behaviour, with the council person that's dealing with anti-social behaviour and other parties that they have at these meetings, you'll actually get to voice your opinion.... I was so mortified that they'd gone ahead and done the Community Trigger [case review] without me and didn't tell me and I've had no information on it. I've had no response, no letters, no nothing".¹⁴

"The fact is, I am the one that has raised the Community Trigger and it shouldn't be me .. that is chasing up on this. It should be them coming to me to say they've seen an improvement, you know, we have done this. So it shouldn't be me chasing them after raising one."¹⁵ (page 6, participant 4)

This is the only detailed qualitative research we are aware of on the Community Trigger and it provides important academic support to the statements we have made about the Community Trigger since its introduction in 2014 and to the feedback we receive from victims.

¹³ Heap, V and Herrera, J (2018) *Investigating the Community Trigger in Action: A Report for [REDACTED] Community Safety Partnership*. Sheffield: Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, page 2

¹⁴ Heap, V and Herrera, J (2018) *Investigating the Community Trigger in Action: A Report for [REDACTED] Community Safety Partnership*. Sheffield: Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, participant 7 pages 7 and 8

¹⁵ Heap, V and Herrera, J (2018) *Investigating the Community Trigger in Action: A Report for [REDACTED] Community Safety Partnership*. Sheffield: Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, participant 4 page 6

Threshold and Legislative Confusion

It is worth a final word on the general confusion over the legislation of the Community Trigger. ASB Help analysed the threshold that each local area is using for their Community Trigger activations (Box 6) and they show a concerning pattern.

In the Community Trigger pilots and original plans, a two tier threshold was suggested as follows:

- three or more complaints from an individual about the same problem, where no action has been taken by relevant agencies, or
- five individuals complaining about the same problem where no action has been taken by relevant agencies.

However, in the legislation for the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, this was dropped. The whole concept of a threshold is confusing to the victim and so simplifying it to three incidents, whether by an individual or affecting different households, helps make it a little simpler.

Our research shows that a staggering 44% of areas use the two tier 3 individuals/5 households threshold in spite of it not being legal. There are also instances (for example London Borough of Islington¹⁶, Hampshire Police¹⁷) that state that a Community Trigger can only be used if a victim's case has been closed. This is simply not true.

The original premise was that it could be used by victims who were not getting a satisfactory response to push local agencies to act, and indeed it has been successfully used in these situations. We would suggest that more often than not the case will still be open (after all, each incident must have been reported within the past six months) but the response is proving inadequate.

To add this additional requirement, totally contrary to the legislation, is to further dissuade a victim from accessing what is rightfully available to them and keep them disempowered. A centrally appointed Community Trigger Officer with the power to challenge this at the local level is absolutely imperative.

"The said it didn't meet the criteria, it wasn't deemed significant enough and therefore it wouldn't be triggered." Victim, South of England research

Originally the pilot Community Triggers required victims to be dissatisfied with actions taken by local agencies. This was removed in the legislation, technically permitting anyone to activate a Community Trigger after three incidents, even if action has been taken. This would seem to be a legal anomaly that should be corrected, returning to the original premise of empowering victims of persistent, repeat ASB who feel they cannot get the authorities to take action, not just a useful exercise to review their case!

16 <https://www.islington.gov.uk/community-safety/anti-social-behaviour/community-trigger>

17 <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/sf/asb-community-trigger/>

Box 6: Threshold Confusion

Based on information displayed on local authority and police websites, the Community Trigger thresholds are as follows:

Threshold	No. areas	Totals	Percentage
1. Legislated minimum 3 times 3 individual; 3 group	133 19	152	45.5% (and 53% including hate)
2. As set in pilot 3 individual; 5 group	102	102	31.5% (and 44% including hate)
3. Inclusion of just one for hate 3 individual; 1 hate 3 individual; 1 hate; 3 group 3 individual; 1 hate; 5 group	16 9 46	71	21%
4. Just one report in 6 months	4		1%
5. Unclear threshold	5		1%
	334	334	100%

(No information for 10 local authority areas.)

98% of thresholds fall into the first three main categories. We believe that it would be so much easier to explain and promote the Community Trigger if there was a universal threshold. Each area has been given free rein to choose but in practice the vast majority have elected to follow the statutory minimum of 3 reports in 6 months.

Conclusion

We firmly believe that the Community Trigger has the potential to make a difference for victims of anti-social behaviour. It would also encourage early intervention by agencies which can help challenge and tackle perpetrator behaviour before it turns to serious crime. The effects for a victim of ongoing, persistent, distressing anti-social behaviour cannot be understated as our qualitative research in the South of England clearly illustrated.

The main issues identified from our work, highlighted more fully in the Executive Summary, address every aspect of the Community Trigger process.

1. The Community Trigger is largely unknown and inaccessible to victims.
2. An opportunity was lost to promote the Community Trigger when the statutory guidance was updated. This statutory guidance continues to be ignored in regard to its accessibility, clarity and content.
3. The threshold is a confusing concept and is not being used properly. We believe a universal threshold should have been adopted which would make it much easier to explain and promote.
4. Qualitative evidence and feedback from victims suggest the case review itself is failing to deliver for victims.
5. 45% of local authority areas report a zero return with no Community Trigger activations for the 2017/18 financial year and many treat our request for these statistics as a freedom of information request in spite of the legal requirement that they are published.
6. Best practice examples are difficult to identify with practitioners sharing a range of concerns about how the case review is undertaken.
7. There is no-one taking overall ownership of the Community Trigger or any aspect of anti-social behaviour from a victim perspective.
8. Victims are not put first and this important safety net is failing them.

The Community Trigger needs leadership from within central government to ensure it is fit for purpose and unlock its potential. We believe adoption of our Community Trigger Charter as set out in the Executive Summary would enable the Community Trigger to become effective and operate more in the spirit of the original premise of putting victims first and empowering them to hold local agencies to account.

Appendix A

Community Trigger data from agencies

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
ENGLAND					
NORTH EAST					
County Durham					
Darlington					
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Middlesborough	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Northumberland	2	1	1	1	April 17-March 18
Redcar and Cleveland	4	0	4	4	April 17-March 18
Stockton-on-Tees					
Tyne and Wear:					
Gateshead					
Newcastle Upon Tyne	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Tyneside					
South Tyneside	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Sunderland	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
NORTH WEST					
Blackburn with Darwen	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Blackpool					
Cheshire East	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Cheshire West and Chester					
Halton					
Warrington	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Cumbria					
Allerdale	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Barrow-in-Furness	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Carlisle					
Copeland	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Eden					
South Lakeland	2	2	0	0	April 17-March 18
Greater Manchester					
Bolton	17	13	4	4	April 17-March 18
Bury	4	4	0	0	April 17-March 18
Manchester					
Oldham					
Rochdale					
Salford					
Stockport	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Tameside	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Trafford	1	0	1	0	20/04/17-19/10/18
Wigan					

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Lancashire					
Burnley	1	0	1	0	April 17-March 18
Chorley	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Fylde	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Hyndburn	4	0	0	0	2017-2018
Lancaster					
Pendle	3	3	N/A	N/A	April 17-March 18
Preston	6	N/A	0	0	Jan 2017 to Date
Ribble Valley					
Rossendale	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Ribble	2	0	2	2	April 17-March 18
West Lancashire	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
Wyre	5	0	4	4	April 17-March 18
Merseyside					
Knowsley	6	1	6	1	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Liverpool	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Sefton					
St. Helens	0	0	0	0	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Wirral	2	1	1	0	April 17-March 18
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER					
East Riding of Yorkshire	2	2	2	2	Oct 2017-Oct 2018
Kingston Upon Hull	0	0	0	0	2017-2018
North East Lincolnshire					
North Lincolnshire					
York					
North Yorkshire					
Craven					
Hambleton					
Harrogate					
Richmondshire					
Ryedale					
Scarborough	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Selby	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
South Yorkshire					
Barnsley					
Doncaster					
Rotherham					
Sheffield	14	2	11	11	April 17-March 18
West Yorkshire					
Bradford	2	1	1	0	April 17-March 18
Calderdale	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Kirklees	3	3	0	2	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Leeds	7	3	4	4	Jan 2017-Dec 2018
Wakefield	10	10	10	N/A	Feb 2017-Oct 2018

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
EAST MIDLANDS					
Derby	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Leicester					
Nottingham	15	3	12	0	April 17-March 18
Rutland					
Derbyshire					
Amber Valley					
Bolsover	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Chesterfield					
Derbyshire Dales					
Erewash					
High Peak					
North East Derbyshire					
South Derbyshire	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Leicestershire					
Blaby					
Charnwood					
Harborough	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	April 17-March 18
Hinckley and Bosworth					
Melton					
North West Leicestershire					
Oadby and Wigston					
Lincolnshire					
Boston	3	2	1	1	April 17-March 18
East Lindsey	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Lincoln	3	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Kesteven	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Holland	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Kesteven	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
West Lindsey	2	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Northamptonshire					
Corby	0	0	0	0	Oct 2017-Sept 2018
Daventry	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
East Northamptonshire	0	0	0	0	April 16-Dec 18
Kettering					
Northampton	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Northamptonshire					
Wellingborough					
Nottinghamshire					
Ashfield	3	0	3	3	April 17-March 18
Bassetlaw	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Broxtowe	1	0	1	1	
Gedling					
Mansfield					
Newark and Sherwood					

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Rushcliffe					
WEST MIDLANDS					
Herefordshire	2	2	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Shropshire	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Stoke-on-Trent	4	4	4	1	Jan 17-Jan 18
Telford and Wrekin					
Staffordshire					
Cannock Chase	2	2	2	2	Jan 17-Jan 18
East Staffordshire	2	1	1	4	Jan 17-Jan 18
Lichfield					
Newcastle-under-Lyme	4	2	4	4	Jan 17-Jan 18
South Staffordshire	0	0	0	0	Jan 17-Jan 18
Stafford	1	1	1	1	Jan 17-Jan 18
Staffordshire Moorlands	2	2	2	2	Jan 17-Jan 18
Tamworth	1	0	1	1	Jan 17-Jan 18
Warwickshire					
North Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	April 17-May 18
Nuneaton and Bedworth	3	0	0	3	Jan17-Dec 18
Rugby					
Stratford-on-Avon					
Warwick	0	0	0	0	Oct 17-Sept 18
West Midlands					
Birmingham	33	24	0	0	2017-2018
Bromsgrove and Redditch	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Coventry					
Dudley	6	6	0	0	April 17-March 18
Sandwell	6	6	0	0	Feb 17-Dec 18
Solihull					
Walsall					
Wolverhampton	5	5	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Worcestershire					
Malvern Hills	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Worcestershire					
Worcester					
Wychavon					
EAST					
Bedford					
Central Bedfordshire	2	0	2	2	April 17-March 18
Luton	1	N/A	1	0	Jan 18- date
Peterborough					
Southend-on-Sea					
Thurrock	4	3	2	N/A	June 17-March 18
Cambridgeshire					
Cambridge					
East Cambridgeshire	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Fenland	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Huntingdonshire					
South Cambridgeshire					
Essex					
Basildon					
Braintree	7	0	7	4	April 17-March 18
Brentwood					
Castle Point	5	4	1	1	Oct 14-Dec 18
Chelmsford	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Colchester	1	1	0	0	Oct 17-Oct 18
Epping Forest	10	6	4	4	Jan 17-Dec 18
Harlow	6	6	0	0	Oct 17-April 18
Maldon	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
Rochford					
Tendring					
Uttlesford	2	2	2	1	Jan 17-Dec 18
Hertfordshire					
Broxbourne					
Dacorum					
East Hertfordshire	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Hertsmere					
North Hertfordshire					
St Albans					
Stevenage	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Three Rivers	1	1	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Watford	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Welwyn Hatfield					
Norfolk					
Breckland					
Broadland	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Great Yarmouth	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Norfolk	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Norwich	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Norfolk	1	0	1	0	April 17-March 18
Suffolk	1	0	1	0	April 17-March 18
Babergh					
East Suffolk	4	3	1	1	Oct 14 – Dec 18
Forest Heath	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Ipswich					
Mid Suffolk					
St. Edmundsbury	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
LONDON					
Inner London					
Camden					

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
City of London	1	1	1	1	April 17-March 18
Hackney					
Hammersmith and Fulham					
Haringey					
Islington					
Kensington and Chelsea					
Lambeth	5	2	3	3	April 17-March 18
Lewisham					
Newham					
Southwark	7	0	7	7	April 17-March 18
Tower Hamlets	10	8	2	2	April 17-March 18
Wandsworth					
Westminster	20	5	15	14	April 17-March 18
Outer London					
Barking and Dagenham	3	0	3	3	April 17-March 18
Barnet	0	0	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Bexley	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Brent					
Bromley					
Croydon					
Ealing					
Enfield					
Greenwich					
Harrow					
Havering					
Hillingdon					
Hounslow	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Kingston Upon Thames	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Merton	0	0	0	0	Jan 17-Jan 18
Redbridge	12	4	0	0	April 17-March 18
Richmond upon Thames					
Sutton					
Waltham Forest					
SOUTH EAST					
Bracknell Forest	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Brighton and Hove	18	18	9	3	Oct 14-April 18
Isle of Wight					
Medway	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Milton Keynes	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Portsmouth	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Reading	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Slough					
Southampton	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
West Berkshire	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Windsor and Maidenhead	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Wokingham	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
Buckinghamshire					
Aylesbury Vale	2	0	2	0	Jan-Dec 2017
Chiltern	0	0	0	0	Sept 17-Sept 18
South Bucks	0	0	0	0	Oct 17- Oct 18
Wycombe					
East Sussex					
Eastbourne					
Hastings	0	0	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Lewes	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Rother	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Wealden					
Hampshire					
Basingstoke and Deane					
East Hampshire	9	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Eastleigh					
Fareham					
Gosport					
Hart					
Havant					
New Forest	2	0	2	2	April 17-March 18
Rushmoor					
Test Valley					
Winchester	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Kent					
Ashford					
Canterbury					
Dartford					
Dover	2	1	1	1	April 17-March 18
Gravesham	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Maidstone	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Sevenoaks	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Shepway					
Swale	18	16	4	2	April 17-March 18
Thanet	7	6	1	1	April 17-March 18
Tonbridge and Malling	5	5	0	0	April 17-March 18
Tunbridge Wells	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Oxfordshire					
Cherwell	2	0	2	1	Jan 17-Dec 18
Oxford	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
South Oxfordshire	3	3	3	3	April 17-March 18
Vale of White Horse	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
West Oxfordshire	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Surrey					
Elmbridge	1	1	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Epsom and Ewell					
Guildford					
Mole Valley	0	0	0	0	2014-March 18
Reigate and Banstead					
Runnymede	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Spelthorne					
Surrey Heath	2	2	2	2	April 17-March 18
Tandridge					
Waverley	2	2	2	2	April 17-March 18
Woking	1	1	N/A	N/A	April 17-March 18
West Sussex					
Adur and Worthing					
Arun	2	2	2	0	April 17-March 18
Chichester					
Crawley	0	0	0	0	April 16-March 17
Horsham					
Mid Sussex	0	0	0	0	Jan-Dec 2018
SOUTH WEST					
Bath and North East Somerset					
Bournemouth	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Bristol	72	46	15	16	Jan 17-Dec 18
Cornwall	2	1	2	1	April 17-March 18
Isles of Scilly					
North Somerset					
Plymouth	0	0	0	0	Jan 17-Dec 18
Poole	2	2	2	1	April 17-March 18
South Gloucestershire	18	14	12	4	April 17-March 18
Swindon					
Torbay	1	0	1	1	Jan 17-Dec 18
Wiltshire	4	4	0	0	April 17-March 18
Devon					
East Devon					
Exeter	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
Mid Devon	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Devon	1	0	1	1	April 17-March 18
South Hams	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Teignbridge	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Torridge					
West Devon	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Dorset	2	0	2	0	April 17-March 18
Christchurch					
East Dorset	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
North Dorset	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Purbeck	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
West Dorset	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18

Local Authority Area	Details of statutory Trigger data				
	No. r'cd	Not met Threshold	No. case reviews	No. with recs	Reporting period
Weymouth and Portland	2	0	2	1	April 17-March 18
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Cheltenham					
Cotswold	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Forest of Dean	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Gloucester	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Stroud					
Tewkesbury					
Somerset	1	0	1	0	April 17-March 18
Mendip					
Sedgemoor					
South Somerset					
Taunton Deane					
West Somerset					
WALES					
Isle of Anglesey					
Gwynedd					
Conwy					
Denbighshire	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jan-Dec 18
Flintshire	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jan-Dec 18
Wrexham	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Powys	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
Ceredigion					
Pembrokeshire	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Carmarthenshire					
Swansea	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Neath Port Talbot	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Bridgend					
The Vale of Glamorgan					
Cardiff					
Rhondda Cynon Taf	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Merthyr Tydfil	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Caerphilly	1	1	0	0	April 17-March 18
Blaenau Gwent	0	0	0	0	April 17-March 18
Torfaen	2	1	0	0	2014 -Dec 18
Monmouthshire					
Newport	2	0	2	0	Jan 17 to date

Appendix B

Suggestions for the Statutory Guidance

These were the suggestions ASB Help made to the Home Office when the statutory guidance was being updated. They were all accepted and incorporated into the updated statutory guidance.

Title – given that the legislation does not even use the term Community Trigger, it is surely worth clarifying in the title:

1.1 Community Trigger (also called ASB Case Review, the term used in the legislation)

Page 3, under ‘Details’, the 3rd bullet point talks of the aim being to deal with some of the most persistent, complex cases of ASB. I think this is misleading and should be removed. Surely it is for victims who feel they are being ignored by agencies, so not necessarily complex cases. Later the guidance talks about another aim being to encourage vulnerable victims to report ASB (page 6).

Suggested replacement:

The review encourages a problem-solving approach to ensure all angles of a particular case are covered to resolve the issues whilst ensuring that a victim gets all the support necessary.

Page 6, last sentence – I think that if a victim has reached the point of having to activate the Community Trigger, he or she should be entitled to this same **“additional practical and emotional support”** suggested for vulnerable victims.

Page 9, the ‘putting victims first’ box, you could add to this to spell it out a bit:

For example, they may not have online access to be able to complete an online form. Conversely if the issue is with a next-door neighbour, they may feel uncomfortable activating the Community Trigger over the telephone for fear of being overheard.

Under the subtitle ‘case review’ I would also suggest adding a paragraph that says:

Where most of the agency representatives have been involved in a particular case, consideration should be given to inviting someone independent onto the panel, for example from a neighbouring police unit or different Council department, to gain an outside perspective on the case and what action has been taken.

And a further paragraph, or ‘putting victims first’ box that says:

It is good practice to have someone on the case review panel who is specifically representing the victim such as a volunteer from ‘Victim Support’ or other organisation providing support for victims in the local area. The victim could also be invited to the panel to represent their own case which may help all members of the panel fully appreciate the level of harm being caused by the anti-social behaviour.

asbhelp.co.uk

ASB Help
March 2019