

The ASB PLEDGE

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have a debilitating impact upon a person's health and well-being and a devastating effect on the wider community also. Being scared inside your own home or even too frightened to leave your own front door is something that should not happen. However, unfortunately it does. ASB Help receive enquiries from ASB victims on a daily basis, struggling to know where to turn to, where to report matters to and seek advice as to what they can do about their situation.

Luckily, there are a lot of effective non legal and legal tools out there to address ASB and these are used by organisations such as Local Authorities, Police, and housing providers up and down the country. Nevertheless, there are times when cases slip through the net and victims continue to suffer from ASB. It is in these circumstances whereby the Community Trigger/ASB Case Review proves to be an invaluable tool. Introduced into legislation by the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014, the Community Trigger set out to provide victims with a voice and function as a safety net ensuring that the partner agencies work collaboratively together to determine the most appropriate solution.

The Community Trigger is also known as the ASB Case Review. Whilst both can be used interchangeably, this document will refer to the Community Trigger for consistency.

As straightforward as this may sound, there is an enormous disparity across England and Wales in the administration and delivery of the Community Trigger process, with various additional caveats being added to the threshold and in some areas a lack of an appeals process. In response to this inconsistency, ASB Help launched the PLEDGE which seeks to encourage all agencies involved in the Community Trigger process to embed best practice into their policy and procedures and help us in our mission to ensure that the community trigger is not a postcode lottery and that any victim of persistent ASB (when the threshold is met), regardless of where they live, are truly given a voice and partners work together and problem solve to secure a satisfactory resolution.

When signing up to take the PLEDGE, ASB Help commit to providing support and advice at each stage of the process, which involves the following steps: -

- 1. An agency completes the questionnaire/checklist and submits this to ASB Help alongside with their current community trigger policies and procedures.
- 2. ASB Help will review this as well as the current information online about the community trigger within your area.
- 3. ASB Help will arrange a (virtual) meeting with the organisation to discuss our findings and recommendations to ensure policies and procedures as well as the online material meets best practice and is accessible to all victims.
- 4. ASB Help will provide a template policy and procedure, standard documents to administer the community trigger, example terms of reference and chair's pack (as detailed in the Community Trigger framework Pledge Pack). Additionally, we will help design any other template documents that may be required for your area.



- 5. ASB Help will be available for consultation throughout the Pledge process.
- 6. ASB Help will attend a Community Trigger Panel Hearing and provide feedback alongside any recommendations.

When all the above is complete and your policy and procedures meet best practice, we will provide our ASB Help PLEDGE logo which can be used to promote your commitment to victims of anti-social behaviour and the community trigger process.



The ASB Help PLEDGE Questionnaire/Checklist

Please can you complete the following self-assessment form in relation to your Community Trigger policy and procedures and return to kanderson@asbhelp.co.uk. The information you provide on this form and in conjunction with the conversation had via the initial PLEDGE meeting will help us to draft a recommendations report for you to follow up with in order to meet the PLEDGE requirements.

There is some overlap between the sections, but we have tried to avoid asking the same question twice.

PLEDGE	Checklist	Evidence/Comments
Promote Awareness	☐ Is information about the community trigger, what it is, how to activate it and the procedures advertised on your website and all of the relevant bodies in your area?	
	☐ Are your community trigger policy and procedures published on your website?	
	☐ Is the community trigger advertised in any public buildings e.g., libraries, police stations?	
	☐ Does your organisation maximise opportunities to promote the community trigger e.g. do you advertise the trigger cyclically in newsletters, leaflets or any correspondence including email footers?	
	☐ Do your case officers make victims aware of their right to activate the community trigger? If so at what point?	



	Don't suffer in silence
	 Are relevant staff (including the complaints department & call handlers) aware of the following: - The community trigger and the process for activation The community trigger and the difference between the trigger and a service complaint
	Does your organisation promote the community trigger on social media platforms?
	☐ Are councillors aware of the Community Trigger and that they (or anyone else) can raise it on the victim's behalf?
	Are you consistent in your terminology using either Community Trigger or ASB Case Review and not both?
Legislation and Statutory	☐ Is there a specified point of contact that all applications are directed to without delay?
guidance	☐ Are <u>all</u> community trigger applications disseminated to all of the relevant bodies (not just those that you consider meet the threshold)?
	☐ Is there a process in place to deal with a community trigger application where there is uncertainty or debate between the relevant bodies as to whether the threshold is met?
	☐ Do you take a harm centred approach and consider the persistence, harm/potential harm and the adequacy of the response from agencies to assess whether an application meets the threshold?



	Does your threshold refer to the reporting of 3 incidents within a 6-month period?	
	What do you consider as a qualifying complaint? (An incident reported within how many days of it occurring?)	
c	Do you have any other ways in which an applicant may meet the community trigger threshold e.g., 5 households report 1 incident, 1 Hate crime for example?	
b	Do you have any additional caveats? For example, does the case have to be closed, does 1 of the incidents need to have occurred in the last 4 weeks etc. If so, please provide details	
	Do you use an independent chair? If so, please provide details?	
	Are the YOT automatically invited to a community trigger which relates to a person under the age of 18?	
	Do you have an appeals process and if so on what grounds can the applicant appeal?	
□ !:	s your appeal a desktop review or a panel hearing?	
	f an applicant appeals, are they informed of the outcome and the ecommendations that have been made?	
	Does your organisation comply with the reporting requirement as per s104 (9) of the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014?	



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	☐ Did you liaise with your PCC/Mayor when you last reviewed your community trigger process?
	☐ Did you include any housing providers in the last review of your community trigger process?
	☐ Are there clear provisions around how often the Community Trigger process and policy and procedures are reviewed and by whom?
	☐ How are the CCG involved in your Community Trigger process?
Easily Accessible	 ☐ How are the CCG involved in your Community Trigger process? ☐ Is the community trigger application process accessible to all including those with disabilities? ☐ Are any documents relating to the Community Trigger available in different languages? ☐ Is the process clearly explained to the public with timescales? ☐ Is the Community Trigger easy to activate and made accessible to the public by having more than one method to do this? For example: - Phone number (If a generic phone number is provided are all staff aware of what the CT is and how to activate it/procedures?) ☐ Email address ☐ Downloadable form ☐ Postal address
	Electronic form



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	☐ Is there a Specific Point of Contact (SPOC) for Community Trigger enquiries?
	Are you clear on how activations by third parties are managed? What is the process?
Delivery &	☐ Is the applicant informed when their community trigger application has been received and by whom?
Continuous Improvement	□ When completing a standard case review as part of your case management do you discuss the Community Trigger in relation to each individual case and make the victim aware of it as an option (if appropriate)?
	☐ Is a decision letter issued to the applicant? If so, does it clearly state what the applicant can do if their application does not meet the threshold? Or where the threshold is met, information as to what happens next?
	☐ Is the applicant provided with timescales in relation to the next stages throughout the process?
	☐ Is the applicant provided with a point of contact for their application?
	☐ Do you consider the case as a whole and not just the three incidents listed on the application?
	☐ Do you consider incidents that have occurred between the application being made and the panel hearing taking place?



☐ Is a victim risk assessment completed to ensure that any risk can be managed appropriately? If so at what point in the community trigger process is this completed and is it reviewed as and when further incidents occur?
☐ Is a risk assessment also carried out in relation to the perpetrator too, if so at what stage in the process does this occur?
☐ Are the views of the applicant adequately represented through attendance, written representations or attendance of an advocate?
☐ Do you ensure that the review panel is representative of the main agencies involved in each individual case? Including those who may need to be involved as well as those that are already are?
☐ Does your Community Trigger panel/review hearing include people of an appropriate level to make decisions and allocate resources?
☐ Is there information sharing arrangements in place to ensure that information can be shared across the representatives without difficulty or delay?
☐ Are pre reads circulated in advance of the panel hearing/review to ensure all attendees know the case. If so, what are the timescales for these to be circulated?
☐ Is the chair of the panel hearing/review independent from those officers involved in the actual case?



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□ Does the chair have a good understanding of the tools and powers (non-legal and legal) to ensure that all actions are considered when developing the action plan?	
☐ Is there a clear agenda for the panel hearing/meeting?	
☐ Is the action plan clear on what is expected, by whom and by when?	
□ Does the community trigger panel hearing/review, seek to actively problem solve the case, rather than simply check that procedure has been followed?	
☐ Do your policy and procedures detail as to how the action plan will be monitored and include an escalation process if it is not adhered to?	
☐ Is the victim provided with a copy of the action plan (redacted to ensure there are no data protection breaches)?	
☐ Are all letters sent to the applicant clear and easy to understand?	
☐ Is there a vexatious, persistent or unreasonable complainants' policy that helps to manage applicants who are making unreasonable applications?	
Do you always meet your timescales detailed in your policy and procedures, if not what are the main reasons for delay?	
☐ Is there a central record of trigger applications held to assist with the data reporting requirement in the legislation? (as detailed in the legislation and stat guidance section)	



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	☐ Do you consider if there is any learning to come from a hearing/review used to improve future service delivery and are these conveyed to the applicant?	
	☐ Do you review your policy and procedures cyclically or in the event of statutory guidance changes?	
	 Are new staff trained on the Community Trigger and the process to ensure that they identify appropriate cases for the community trigger process and promote the tool accordingly 	
Get talking	☐ If there is doubt as to whether the threshold is met/incidents are qualifying complaints, does the SPOC make contact with the victim to discuss the ASB? Is this done via the phone, in person or in writing/email?	
	☐ Do you invite all the relevant partners to the panel hearing/review meeting (including those who may need to be involved as opposed to are involved)?	
	☐ Do you encounter any issues with a particular agency attending the trigger, if so, can you provide details?	
	☐ Does every organisation present at a panel hearing/case review contribute towards the discussion in relation to the action plan?	
	☐ Do you identify a key lead agency (or agencies) overall?	



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	☐ For all the partners that are not signed up to your Information Sharing Protocol, do they sign individual confidentiality agreements? Can you provide a copy?	
	☐ How do you generate an environment of true partnership working?	
	☐ Is a communication plan agreed with the applicant?	
Empowerment	☐ How, when and by whom is the victim updated throughout the process? Are they advised about every step and advised of any delays if they occur?	
	☐ Do you give the victim the choice to attend the initial part of the meeting or offer them an opportunity to submit something in writing or have an advocate attend on their behalf?	
	☐ Is it made clear to the victim as to what they should cover within their allocated time at the Community Trigger panel hearing/within victim impact statement or by their advocate? If so, what do you advise?	
	☐ Are the victims asked what their expectations and is this featured in the discussion at a panel hearing when formulating an action plan?	
	☐ Do you ask for feedback after you close a community trigger case? If so, how is this completed and what is asked?	
	☐ If you do ask for feedback, do you take any constructive criticism on board to improve service delivery?	





ASB HELP BEST PRACTICE COMMUNITY TRIGGER POLICY AND PROCEDURES TEMPLATE

(REVISED 2022)



1. Introduction

The Community Trigger, also known as the ASB case review, is a statutory provision introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It is a safety net for victims of persistent anti-social behaviour to request a review of their case in order to determine if further action can be taken to resolve the ongoing ASB. The Community Trigger is not about apportioning blame but is to focus is on problem solving the case utilising the expertise of partner agencies.

To activate the Community Trigger, the victim must meet a threshold. The threshold test is detailed at section 5 of this document.

The Community Trigger confers responsibilities on relevant bodies including the local authority, police, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and registered providers of housing to manage and participate in the community trigger process.

The INSERT NAME OF COUNCIL/POLICE FORCE is the administrator of the community trigger in this area.

This Community Trigger Policy is conversant with the Statutory Guidance for Frontline Professionals, and future amendments, as outlined in "Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Anti-Social Behaviour Powers (Home Office)".

2. Anti-Social Behaviour Defined

For the purpose of the Community Trigger, the anti-social behaviour must be persistent in nature and this behaviour is defined as "conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person" 1

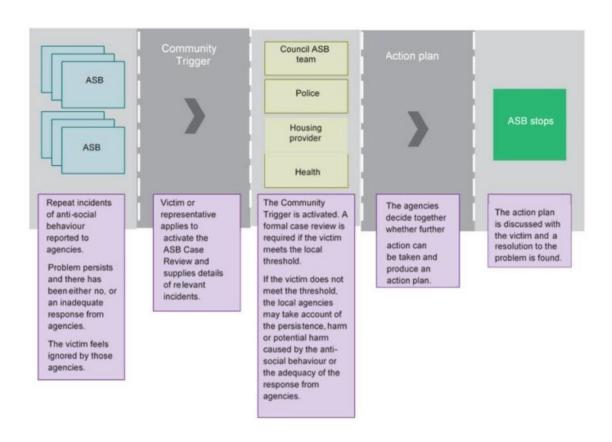
3. Purpose

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"To give victims and communities the right to request a review of their case where a local threshold is met, and to bring agencies together to take a joined up, problem-solving approach to find a solution for the victim."²

¹ For the purpose of the community trigger threshold, agencies should consider the cumulative impact of the anti-social behaviour rather than each individual incident causing harassment, alarm and distress. Due regard should also be given to the persistence of the ASB, harm or potential harm caused and the adequacy of the response to the behaviour.





4. Principles

The Community Trigger is available to victims of anti-social behaviour who believe they have not had a satisfactory response to their case and the ASB persists. It is not an alternative complaints procedure and will not review concerns about service provision. Service complaints should be directed to INSERT NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY OR POLICE FORCE complaints procedure.

5. Threshold and Qualifying Complaints

To activate the Community Trigger a victim must meet the following threshold test: -

The victim has reported 3 separate, but related incidents² (Qualifying complaints, as detailed below) to either the local authority, police or housing provider within the preceding 6-months to the application, and the anti-social behaviour still persists. OR

² the three incidents do not have to be of the same ASB category (noise, threats, foul and abusive language etc) but they need to relate to the same case and not 3 completely unrelated incidents



A senior manager (insert level of seniority) within the authority decides that a Community Trigger is necessary to safeguard a vulnerable victim of anti-social behaviour³

An incident must be a 'Qualifying Complaint'. A Qualifying Complaint is an incident that has been reported to either the council, police, or registered provider of housing within 30 days of it taking place.

A single incident which is reported to more than one agency only constitutes as one Qualifying Complaint.

When considering a Community Trigger activation request, due regard should be given to the:

Harm or potential harm caused by the anti-social behaviour
Adequacy of response to the anti-social behaviour
Persistence of the anti-social behaviour

Good conscience and professional judgement should be exercised to allow the community trigger to progress, even when the threshold is not met (by 3 qualifying complaints), where there are concerns about risk and vulnerability and/or incidents of hate.

Furthermore, all community trigger applications will be passed onto the relevant bodies (detailed in section 6). When there is uncertainty or debate as to whether the threshold is met, if one or more of the relevant bodies considers that it is met, then the Community Trigger should be accepted.

Regardless of the previous actions taken in the case, if the anti-social behaviour persists, a Community Trigger activation request (that meets the threshold) should be accepted. The Community Trigger hearing will then determine whether any new or alternative actions are more likely to be effective to resolve it.

6. Relevant Bodies and Responsible Authorities

The Relevant Bodies and Responsible Authorities are outlined in the statutory guidance as:

- Local Authorities
- Police
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) in England and Local Health Boards in Wales
- Registered providers of social housing

In the local context of this policy, the relevant bodies and responsible authorities are:

INSERT NAME OF Council

³ Appropriate seniority may include the ASB Team manager (or above), a police officer of the rank of Inspector (or above) or a similar senior officer within another responsible authority.



INSERT NAME OF Police
INSERT NAME OF Clinical Commissioning Group
INSERT NAME OF AREA Registered providers of social housing

The Community Trigger case review must not only include a representative(s) from at least 3 of the agencies listed above but should also include representatives from other agencies relevant to the case. This could include the fire and rescue service, mental health, and drug and alcohol support agencies for example.

7. Information Sharing

For the Community Trigger process to be effective, relevant information must be shared across relevant bodies and partner agencies under the following legislation;

• The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 requires relevant bodies to share information pertinent to a community trigger activation and review. (please refer to schedule 4, para 6(2))

Where a request is made to an agency which does not exercise public functions, that agency may comply with the request subject to para 7(4) Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Paragraph 7 (4) of Schedule 4 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides the disclosure of information is not required where it relates to non-exempt personal data which would be a breach of Data Protection legislation, a breach of any obligation of confidence owed by the person making the disclosure, or which is prohibited by parts 1 to 7 of Chapter 1 of Part 9 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

- Schedule 2 5(b) to the Data Protection Act 1998
- Section 115 Crime and Disorder Act 1998

8. Who can raise a Community Trigger?

A victim can be an individual person, business, or community group.

A third party can make an application for a Community Trigger on behalf of a victim, with their consent. This can include a friend, relative, carer, councillor, Member of Parliament, or another professional person. We will still need to contact the victim to establish the facts and will need to confirm this consent.

A senior manager [INSERT LEVEL OF SENIORITY] within the authority who decides that a Community Trigger Review is necessary to safeguard a vulnerable victim of anti-social behaviour (please refer to section 5)



9. Who is not suitable for the Community Trigger?

A person who wishes to remain anonymous in the Community Trigger application.

A person who wants a review of a Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decision in relation to the prosecution or non-prosecution of a criminal offence.

A person who is dissatisfied with a decision made by a civil or criminal court.

A person whose complaint is about service provision-

10. How to raise a Community Trigger

INSERT NAME OF AUTHORITY administers and coordinates the Community Trigger in INSERT AREA NAME. It does not matter which agency a victim has reported incidents to, INSERT NAME OF AUTHORITY will obtain the details of incidents relevant to the Community Trigger application.

A victim can activate the Community Trigger by any of the following methods:

- Online portal
- Download form
- Email INSERT ADDRESS
- By phone: INSERT NUMBER
- In writing: INSERTJOB TITLE, DEPT AND ADDRESS

11. The Community Trigger Application Procedure

Upon receipt of an activation request, the INSERT TEAM/ OFFICER /ASB COORDINATOR will acknowledge receipt of the activation request within [SET LOCALLY] working days from the date of the trigger application.

INSERT JOB TITLE will disseminate each Community Trigger application to all of the relevant bodies (listed in section 6).

Prior to making a decision as to whether the threshold is met, the SPOC will contact the victim within [Timeframe set locally] (preferably by telephone) and complete a Community Trigger Contact Form (CTCF) to gather information about the incidents of ASB and agency involvement in the case. A harm centred ASB risk assessment will also be completed and a discussion/referral to support services will be made if appropriate.

Where the victim cannot be reached, the SPOC should make reasonable efforts to contact them (letter, phone, email, visit etc). Where contact cannot be made, the Trigger will be listed as withdrawn and closed. A letter confirming this action will be sent by letter to the victim [Timeframe set locally].



On completion of the CTCF, the SPOC will complete a Community Trigger Partner Agency Response (CTPAR) form. The form will require the identified partners and responsible agencies to provide information on the reports they have received, and details of any actions taken. The agency should be informed of the timeframe to return the information. [Set Locally]

Good conscience and professional judgement should be exercised to allow the Community Trigger to progress, even when the threshold is not met, where there are concerns about risk and vulnerability and/or a hate incident has occurred. When there is uncertainty or debate as to whether the threshold is met, if one or more of the relevant bodies considers that it is met, then the Community Trigger should be accepted.

A decision letter should be issued to the applicant within [SET LOCALLY] working days of the application.

Where the threshold is not met, the letter should clearly explain the reasons why and include details of the appeal process.

Where the threshold has been met, the decision letter will include:

- An outline of the next steps of the Community Trigger process with associated timescales. Provide a flow chart if available
- Contact details of the SPOC
- Details of support and advocacy agencies available to the applicant and how they can be referred.
- The opportunity to attend the initial part of the Community Trigger hearing to discuss the harm and impact that the ASB has had on their (and their family's) lives, submit a statement or allow someone to advocate on their behalf

Other agencies, relevant to the case, such as mental health teams or drug and alcohol support services should also be engaged with, and relevant information obtained. Reference should be made to the existing information sharing agreements, information sharing permitted by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2014 and Data Protection Act/GDPR 2018.

Where the Community Trigger activation is accepted, the INSERT TEAM/OFFICER/ASB COORDINATOR will identify an appropriate SPOC (Specific Point of Contact) to manage the Community Trigger. This SPOC will normally be an INSERT APPROPRIATE JOB TITLE, who has had no direct involvement in the case.

The SPOC/ASB COORDINATOR/INSERT JOB TITLE will contact all the partner organisation's representatives to arrange the date and time of the community trigger panel hearing. This will include an independent chair and a minute taker. As a minimum, the panel must include representatives from at least 3 of the responsible bodies which are detailed below: -



- INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY ASB Team Manager/equivalent Manager.
- Police Sector Inspector/Partnerships Inspector.
- Social Housing Provider (relevant management level)
- CCG (relevant management level).
- Community Trigger SPOC/INSERT JOB TITLE

Any recommendations or appropriate actions identified during the initial review process, where an immediate risk of physical or psychological harm is present, should be actioned and should not be unduly delayed until the meeting of the panel. Any interim actions taken should be communicated to the SPOC/ASB COORDINATOR.

Minutes of the community trigger panel hearing, and the action plan must be circulated and agreed by all panel members by ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC within [SET LOCALLY].

All panel members who have actions to complete must endeavour to do so within the time frame allocated. Panel members must inform the ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC when actions have been completed or to explain why an action is delayed.

After the community trigger panel hearing, the SPOC will inform the victim of the outcome of the review, ideally by phone call but then formalised in writing within [SET LOCALLY]. The victim should be informed about the actions agreed, except those actions which identify the perpetrator's protected personal and sensitive data. They should also be notified on what grounds they are able to lodge an appeal and how they are able to do so (please see section 12).

A follow up community trigger panel hearing may be required before closing the Community Trigger, especially in relation to cases where there is high risk and vulnerability. This will ensure the recommendations made on the initial action plan have been completed and further actions can be proposed if necessary.

12. Appeals

Our appeals procedure is fully conversant with Schedule 4, Part 1 of the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 which details that an applicant can appeal if they are dissatisfied with the way in which the relevant bodies have:

- a. Dealt with an application for an ASB Case Review (e.g. where the victim disagrees that the threshold is not met) or
- b. Carried out an ASB Case Review (e.g. not followed the Community Trigger Policy and Procedures OR failed to consider a critical piece of evidence)

13. Monitoring of the Action Plan

It is vital to the spirit of the process that the agreed actions are completed in the timeframe set out in the action plan. It is the responsibility of the agency's representative to complete



their required actions and inform the SPOC/ASB COORDINATOR when each action is completed. is informed when these actions have been completed.

Where an action is not completed within the agreed timeframe the ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC will contact the person assigned the action. If the action remains outstanding for [SET LOCALLY] the ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC will escalate this to the assigned person's direct line manager. Outstanding actions that remain incomplete for more than [SET LOCALLY] will be escalated up through the organisation's upward line management structure.

An action is not considered complete until the ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC is informed. If it is no longer viable, or if the action is no longer necessary because another course of action has resolved the case, then it is the responsibility of the person assigned the action to inform the ASB COORDINATOR/SPOC. That person should also advise what the outcome was so that partners can agree further actions to be completed or whether to re-refer the case for discussion.

14. Future Applications

Where further requests for activation of the Community Trigger are received following a decision, these will be considered on their merit and may be allowed where there is a material change in the circumstances of the case.

Where multiple requests for activation of the Community Trigger are received without good cause, the INSERT NAME OF AUTHORITY may refer to 'The Policy on Unreasonably Persistent Complainants' or that of the relevant organisation.