

Community trigger coordinator for anti-social behaviour case reviews

Dedicated role to support victims and applicants with anti-social behaviour case reviews (community triggers), manage anti-social behaviour cases and share best practice among partners.

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Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Organisational
Topic	Anti-social behaviour Community engagement Criminal justice
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Region	South West
Partners	Police Business and commerce Fire and rescue service Government department Local authority Voluntary/not for profit organisation

Key details

Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	January 2014
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Communities General public

Aim

This new role assists us to:

- provide victims of anti-social behaviour (ASB) the right to request a case review when their reported ASB incidents are continuing or remain unaddressed.
- encourage a joined up, multi-agency, problem solving approach to resolve the most persistent, complex cases of ASB.
- work with victims and provide a victim-centred approach to the resolution of ASB.

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes are:

- to resolve (or at least decrease) the ongoing ASB issues
- to improve the lives of those affected
- take a victim-centred approach
- increased number of community triggers for ASB
- improved multi-agency approach for complex cases of ASB
- increased trust and confidence in the police
- stronger and more confident partner working relationships

Description

Graffiti, littering, damage to property, noise, street drinking and people hanging around outside shops or homes can all be reported as ASB to the council, police or housing providers. Left unchecked, ASB can have an overwhelming impact on its victims and, in some cases, on the wider community.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced specific measures designed to give victims and communities a say in the way that complaints of ASB are dealt with. This includes the ASB case review, formerly known as the community trigger, which gives victims of persistent ASB reported to any of the main responsible agencies (such as the council, police and housing providers) the right to request a multi-agency case review where a local threshold is met.

If a complaint meets the following criteria, they can start an ASB case review:

- Three or more reported incidents of ASB, which occurred on separate occasions, within the last six months (at least one needs to have been reported within the last month).
- A reported incident of hate crime within the last six months.

Applications may either come directly from the victims of ASB or from a third party (with the victim's consent), such as a family member, friend or local elected representative (a councillor or MP). The victim may be an individual, a business or a community group. If the application is successful, a case review panel is organised.

In November 2022, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) appointed a dedicated ASB case review coordinator. The aim of this role was to develop ASB case reviews further, support applicants in the application of an ASB case review, manage cases and share best practice among partners.

Most victims who have used the ASB case review have been impressed with how quickly positive action was taken as a result. Due to the restorative approach used throughout the process, victims are grateful to feel 'heard' by professionals, particularly during panel meetings.

The ASB case review has empowered victims to challenge lack of action taken by agencies. It provides a mechanism for multi-agency accountability which cannot be achieved through single agency complaints processes. Where the threshold is not met, the ASB case review coordinator will still establish if there are any further actions that can be taken to bring the case to a satisfactory conclusion.

It also became apparent through community trigger panels that some partners felt less confident about using civil powers. To address this, the OPCC funded a 'Holistic Anti-social Behaviour Training Program' currently being rolled out throughout the county between March–May 2023 to support learning, provide clarity, networking opportunities and understanding between partner agencies.

Overall impact

Anecdotally, the number of triggers has been low but have increased with a new dedicated coordinator in place. Between January–December 2018 there were seven ASB case review applications. This rose to 18 between January–December 2022. There were 38 applications from January–September 2023.

Most applications have been genuine, and several have been longstanding complex cases.

Learning

- Practitioners lack confidence in their powers and how to enforce these. Having a dedicated ASB case review coordinator enables best practice to be shared among partners.
- The ASB case review is a good way to bring partners together, particularly as it is mandatory for the relevant bodies to attend.
- Some cases were being missed by agencies. The ASB case review is a safety net at times for such cases. The ASB case review coordinator supports this safety net.
- A number of cases coming through have been ongoing for years, some of which were high risk. The ASB case review coordinator helps manage such cases.
- Victims really appreciate attending the meetings and feeling 'heard' – it is very powerful and also makes agencies 'sit up' and take necessary action.

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Tags

Victim care