



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Help for social housing tenants when faced with anti-social behaviour

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Introduction

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) in your neighbourhood can make life miserable. It is unacceptable behaviour that comes in many forms – such as noise, abusive behaviour, littering, or illegal drug taking – and we always want it to stop.

But sometimes it isn't easy to know who can help. That's because many local organisations – including the police, local authorities, and social housing landlords – have different powers, roles, and responsibilities to help and support victims.

This information aims to make it easier for social housing tenants to know how to get help to tackle anti-social behaviour. It sets out the powers, roles, and responsibilities of the different local organisations so tenants know where to get help in their situation.

What is anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Anti-social behaviour includes a range of nuisance and criminal behaviours which are causing distress to others. Whether someone's actions can be classed as anti-social behaviour relies heavily on the impact it has on other people.

Behaviour that is more frequent or persistent is more likely to be considered as anti-social behaviour. The type and intensity of the behaviour also matters.

Landlords, the police, and local authorities consider all these factors when deciding how best to deal with reports of anti-social behaviour. Each report is looked at individually by considering the suffering of the victims and the impact on the wider community.

Landlords will have policies for dealing with domestic abuse, for which there are separate legal protections, and which is not regarded as ASB. Examples of anti-social behaviour can include:

- noisy and/or abusive behaviour
- vandalism,
- graffiti,
- intimidation,
- public drunkenness,
- littering,
- fly tipping,
- illegal drug use
- excessively barking dogs

Some behaviour, even though it may cause nuisance to individuals, may not be regarded as ASB. For example, this can include:

- one-off parties and barbecues
- infrequent and occasional noise or disturbances
- children's play
- occasional dog barking
- excessive noise from domestic appliances (e.g. washing machines, vacuum cleaners)
- minor vehicle repairs
- gossip
- escalated disputes.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour

Your first steps when faced with nuisance or disturbance

If you are made to feel uncomfortable or inconvenienced by other people's behaviour around your home, **where it is safe to do so**, you should first try to approach the other party involved to explain to them how their actions are affecting you and ask them to change their behaviour. Sometimes, other people may not be aware that their behaviour is causing distress or nuisance and letting them know may help.

If you feel threatened, intimidated, or witness a crime, you should **always contact the police first**. You can contact the police by calling 999 to report emergencies or by calling 101 for non-emergencies.

Useful advice about how to deal with a problem neighbour can be found at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/problems-where-you-live/complaining-about-your-neighbour/> or <https://asbhelp.co.uk/tackling-the-problem/>

Reporting anti-social behaviour

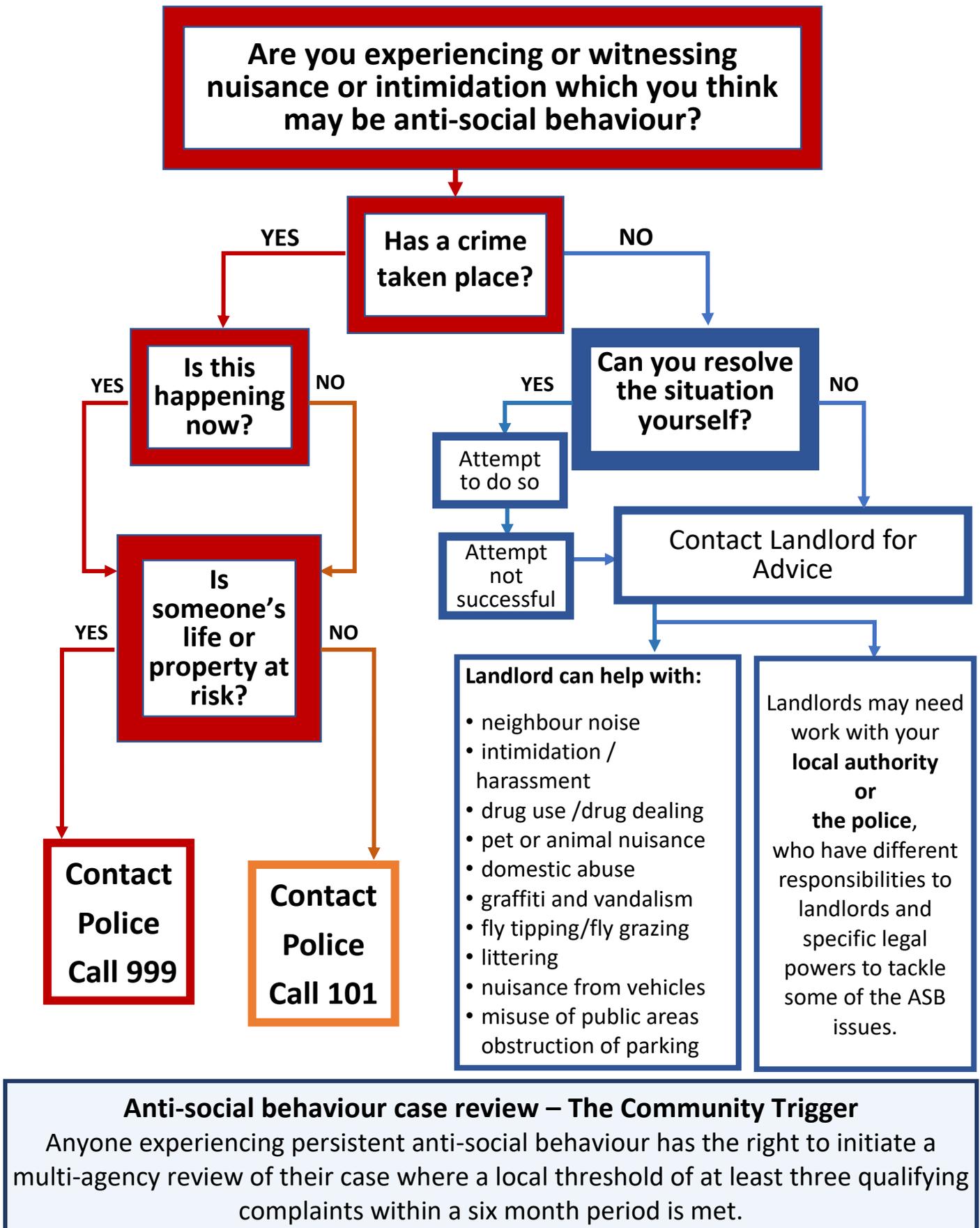
If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour and haven't been able to resolve the situation, you should contact your landlord first for help and advice. Depending on the type and intensity of the anti-social behaviour you may be asked to also report the incident to the police or your local authority.

It is helpful to keep a record of the type of behaviour involved, and its frequency. This could include a written list of dates and descriptions or photos if it is fly tipping. However, you shouldn't photograph or video other people unless you are asked to do so by an agency (like the police or the local authority) involved in your case. The agency supporting you will be able to advise how you should do this if it is necessary.

Your landlord may need to involve and work with other partners to help you and provide you with the most appropriate help and support.

People's safety must always be the priority. **If threatened, or if you believe your or others' safety is being put at risk by someone's behaviour, contact the police first. You should also notify your landlord who may also be able to take action or help you.**

The diagram below sets out a pathway to obtain help.



Who to contact

Your Landlord

Registered social housing providers (such as housing associations and local authority landlords) have a responsibility to prevent anti-social behaviour by keeping the neighbourhood and communal areas under their control safe and clean. ⁽²⁾

Landlords should make it easy for tenants to report anti-social behaviour, take complaints seriously and act professionally. They must publish, and provide to you if you ask, documents that set out the types of behaviours they can help to tackle.

Your landlord should make it clear what information they need from you, and what help they can provide, and keep you updated until your case has been closed.

They should also tell you about the help available from other agencies, such as your local authority or the police, and support you to approach them if you need help. This is because other agencies have different powers and responsibilities to help. They should also put you in touch with services such as [Victim Support](#), if needed.

Finally, landlords should also inform you about your right to make an application for an ASB case review (also known as the Community Trigger). More information on this is provided below.

What can landlords do to help?

There are two approaches landlords can take:

- using non-legal solutions:
 - advising people their behaviour is unacceptable and must stop
 - issuing direct warnings
 - acceptable behaviour agreements
 - referral to mediation or other support services, such as the Supporting Families programme that supports vulnerable families.
- using legal remedies such as:
 - civil injunctions
 - possession proceedings.

Tenancy agreements provided by landlords set out their expectations about the behaviour of tenants. Landlords can take action against people who do not comply, and they have the right to seek to evict a tenant in serious cases.

If your landlord decides to take legal action, you might be asked to help by providing evidence or to attend a court to give evidence in person. Your landlord will support you through this process. Alternatively, they may use a professional witness to provide evidence in court on your behalf.

Civil injunctions

Your landlord can seek civil injunctions through the courts to stop people engaging in acts of anti-social behaviour in a specific location. Some injunctions can be given without notice, but they are only available if there has been a threat or use of violence.

Possession proceedings

In serious cases, landlords may be able to evict the perpetrator of anti-social behaviour through the courts. Landlords are expected to take this action as a last resort only, where all other reasonable steps to stop the behaviour have failed.

Landlords working with partners

Landlords will work with partners, especially local authorities, and the police, using powers available under The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ⁽³⁾.

These powers include:

- **Criminal Behaviour Orders** – issued by a criminal court against a person who has been convicted of an offence and is causing anti-social behaviour.
- **Dispersal Powers** – this allows police officers to order a person who is causing harassment, alarm, or distress to leave a specific area for up to 48 hours.
- **Community Protection Notices** – local authorities, the police, and sometimes social landlords can issue Community Protection Notices to address a wide range of problems such as littering and noise nuisance.
- **Public Space Protection Orders** – used by local authorities to prevent behaviour and nuisance that is persistent, unreasonable and/or detrimental.
- **Closure Orders** – a court order which closes down properties that are causing serious nuisance, disorder, or criminal behaviour. This means there is a temporary ban on occupying the property.

Before making a referral to another partner, your landlord should advise you why this is necessary and get your permission. Importantly, if your landlord is involving partners, it is still responsible for the continued management of your case.

Your local authority

Local authorities can help if anti-social behaviour is happening in buildings or on land that a landlord does not own or control, or the problem has an environmental impact (e.g. air quality, contamination of land, noise pollution).

You can use the links below to report the following issues directly to your local authority if they happen on land or buildings that are not owned or controlled by your landlord:

- [noise nuisance / excessive noise from DIY](#)
- [abandoned vehicles](#)
- [dog fouling](#)
- [graffiti / vandalism](#)
- [littering / fly tipping / fly-grazing / fly posting](#)
- [lost or stray dogs](#)
- [discarded syringes or needles](#)

Help with noise from neighbours

Noise from neighbours is one of the most common anti-social behaviour complaints.

Sometimes people don't know they're causing a problem, so it's well worth speaking to them directly, if it is safe to do so, before you get anyone else involved.

Your landlord may be able to solve the issue if their tenant is causing the problem.

Local authorities have specific powers to deal with noise pollution. Their environmental health teams can investigate noise complaints and take action to help, including issuing noise abatement orders or community protection notices, which set out what the person causing the noise must do to stop the nuisance. If they do not comply, they could face further legal action. Sometimes, a visit by your local authority's environmental health team, and/or a warning letter, can solve the problem. ⁽⁴⁾

Police

The police are a key partner for social landlords and local authorities in tackling anti-social behaviour. They can act as a highly visible deterrent to perpetrators and their presence can also provide reassurance to affected communities.

The police's core responsibilities include protecting life and property, preserving order, preventing the committing of offences, and bringing offenders to justice.

The police may need to work with social landlords and local authorities to:

- arrest perpetrators
- prevent and deter incidents from taking place
- support victims
- protect people from the impact of anti-social behaviour.

Locally, police officers have responsibility for working with partners at the community level to develop sustainable solutions to anti-social behaviour issues. They are often supported by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who provide a visible patrolling presence to deter crime. They can be approached by anyone with concerns about anti-social behaviour or crime in their area.

You may be able to report anti-social behaviour directly to your local police force via their online portal. Information about contacting the police can found be at <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/>

Other agencies

As well as contacting your landlord, your local authority or the police, you may prefer to contact an independent advice agency such as [Citizens Advice](#) and [ASB Help](#).

They offer free, independent, and impartial advice. With your permission, they can approach the agencies you have been dealing with as an advocate on your behalf.

You may also contact a solicitor for legal advice, though you may have to pay for any advice and help that you are given.

Contact details for some of the agencies who can help can be found below.

ASB case review

Victims of persistent anti-social behaviour, who don't think they have had a satisfactory response to their reports of ASB, have the right to ask for a multi-agency review of their case. Certain thresholds must be met for cases to qualify for ASB case reviews, which are also known as the Community Trigger.

During an ASB case review, agencies will consider the action taken so far and will come together to try to find a solution. Agencies taking part are known as responsible bodies. They include local authorities, the police, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in England, and registered providers of social housing (mostly housing associations).

The review body (normally your local authority) must keep applicants informed of the progress of the case, including:

- the decision on whether the threshold is met for the review to go ahead;
- the result of the review; and,
- any recommendations made as a result of the review.

Your landlord will be able to explain how the review process works and help you to make the application to your local authority. You can also get help with the process from the police or local authority or advice agencies such as [ASB Help](#).

The ASB case review process is not a complaints procedure. If you have a complaint about your landlord's handling of your case, or the response you have received from another service provider, you should follow their complaints procedures. If you are unhappy with the way your landlord has dealt with your complaint you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service - <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

What is the threshold for a case review?

You can apply for an ASB case review, but your local authority will decide whether the review will take place. They will look at things like:

- the number of incidents you have reported and the frequency of reports to agencies, such as the local authority, police, or your landlord
- the effectiveness of their responses
- and the potential harm of the anti-social behaviour to you or the victim.

A national threshold means a review is likely to go ahead if you have made three qualifying reports within 30 days of incidents, in a six-month period. Some local areas have a lower threshold, but they are not allowed to have a higher one. The number of reports matters, not the number of responses received.

Requesting a case review

You can ask for an anti-social behaviour case review by contacting your local authority. Requests for a review may come directly from the victims or from a third party (with the victim's permission), such as a family member, friend, or a local elected representative (e.g. your councillor or MP).

If your case review application is successful, the reviewing authority (usually your local authority) and the relevant agencies must consider the impact of the anti-social behaviour on you and decide whether the threshold has been met. The person who requests the ASB case review must be informed of the outcome.

The case review process

Agencies have a duty to undertake a case review when an application meets the locally set threshold. They will share information, review what action has previously been taken, and decide whether there are additional actions that can be taken. The local ASB case review procedure should clearly state the timescales in which the review will need to be undertaken.

The case review panel should always consider inviting the victim to attend the case review to help members of the panel to understand the level of harm and impact. If you wish, your landlord may be able to go with you or represent you, or you can seek independent support from another organisation such as [Victim Support](#).

Outcome of the review

Once the panel has ended its review of your case, you will be informed of the result. Where further actions are necessary, an action plan will be discussed with you, setting out timescales for actions that have been agreed.

You can appeal to the review body if you are not happy with the way the review process was carried out or with the decision on whether the threshold was met.

Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes

Hate incidents or hate crimes can be acts of anti-social behaviour, where the behaviours are felt, by the victim or others, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Landlords should have procedures for dealing with hate incidents within their overall approach to anti-social behaviour.

How to report hate incident or hate crime

If you are the victim of a hate incident, hate crime, or have received a serious threat of this nature you should report it to the police, either by calling 101, 999 in an emergency or online at the hate crime reporting website True Vision www.report-it.org.uk. True Vision allows you to report hate crime as a victim or witness online without the need to visit a police station.

General information on hate crime can be found here:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/hate-crime/what-are-hate-incidents-and-hate-crime/>

Further information and advice

You can get further help and advice from a range of different organisations such as:

- Citizen Advice - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- ASB Help - <https://asbhelp.co.uk/>
- ASB Resolve - <https://www.resolveuk.org.uk/>
- Victim Support - <https://www.victimsupport.com/>
- Finding a local solicitor – <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/>
- Local Community Safety Partnerships ⁽⁵⁾
<https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/community-safety/community-safety-partnerships>
- Police - <http://www.police.uk/>
- Home Office guidance on the ASB review case (Community Trigger) -
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/anti-social-behaviour-asb-case-review-also-known-as-the-community-trigger>
- Get help with stress – NHS - www.nhs.uk
- RSPCA – animal welfare <https://www.rspca.org.uk/>

Background information

1. The terms [social housing](#) and registered provider are defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. Social Housing is defined at S68(1) and Registered provider at S80(2)(9)(a). Social housing includes low-cost rental accommodation (such as affordable rent properties) and low-cost home ownership accommodation. Registered providers include local authority landlords and private registered providers (such as not-for-profit housing associations and for-profit organisations) of social housing.
2. The Social Housing Regulator’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires registered providers to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they own homes, and specifically to publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle ASB in areas where they own properties.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-and-community-standard>
3. Parts 1 to 4 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provide six powers for use by local agencies, summarised in the table below. Taken together, these options provide a broad enforcement regime which local partners in most circumstances. The legislation can be found via <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted>

| Enforcement Power | What it does | Who Can Take Action | Sanctions for Breaching Order |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| ASB Civil Injunctions | Individuals (aged ten and older) conducting anti-social behaviour can be issued with an ASB injunction which prohibits them from certain activities and/or requires them to attend rehabilitative activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Local Authorities • Social Landlords • Transport for London & Transport for Greater Manchester • The Environment Agency & Natural Resources Wales • NHS Protect | A "contempt of court" punishable by up to 2 years in prison |
| Criminal Behaviour Order | Individuals with a criminal conviction can have a CBO attached to their sentence if they have behaved anti-socially. BOs can place prohibitions or requirements on an offender designed to address their anti-social behaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The courts (upon application from the prosecution) | Criminal offence punishable by up to five years in prison (if tried at a Crown Court). |
| Community Protection Notices | Adults or businesses responsible for environmental issues which have diminished the 'quality of life of those in the locality' can be required to remedy the problem. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Local Authorities (and registered providers if they are delegated authority). | Criminal offence punishable by Fixed Penalty Notice. |

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|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Public Space Protection Orders | Specific activities can be prohibited in a designated area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities (in consultation with the police) | Criminal offence punishable by Fixed Penalty Notice. |
| Dispersal Powers | <p>Individuals (aged ten or older) conducting anti-social behaviour in a public space can be directed to leave that specified area for up to 48 hours.</p> <p>Their property can be confiscated if they are using it to conduct ASB.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police | Criminal offence punishable by up to 3 months in prison. |
| Closure Powers | <p>Access to a building associated with ASB can be restricted for up to 48 hours (for those other than the residents).</p> <p>The courts can extend the restriction for up to 6 months and can apply to residents.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police Local Authorities | Criminal offence punishable by up to 3/6 months in prison (depending on the circumstance). |

- Local Authorities must investigate complaints about issues that could be a “statutory nuisance”, a nuisance covered by the [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#). Further information on neighbour disputes including noise can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes>
- Community Safety Partnerships consist of five 'responsible authorities' - police, local authority, fire and rescue authority, probation provider and Clinical Commissioning Groups and are under a duty to assess local community safety issues and draw up a partnership plan setting out their priorities.