



How often do you use
the following services?
2018 - 2019

Foreword 3
The Panel’s objective 4
About the Panel 4
How We Engage..... 6
Influencing the Debate 6
Evaluating our Impact 8
Specific work areas 9
Panel Members..... 17
Budget 20

Foreword

The Communications Consumer Panel, with its unique position and expertise, continues to help inform and shape communications policy. By looking at a wide range of often interrelated and overlapping issues from the consumer, citizen and small business perspective we aim to ensure that their interests are protected and promoted. Over the past year, we have achieved this through a combination of expert scrutiny; constructive challenge; lobbying; giving advice; research; initiating and facilitating debate; and working collaboratively with key stakeholders.

There is more to be done - but we are particularly pleased with the results of our sustained efforts on lobbying for better mobile coverage; and on the value of our research into, and promotion of, the issue of digital engagement. But as you will see from this annual report, the Panel has been active in many other areas that touch the lives of consumers and citizens.

We believe that digital engagement remains especially important as we move to a society where there will be a 'digital by default' delivery of many government services, and consumers who are not online risk becoming increasingly disadvantaged, disempowered and disenfranchised. Being excluded from an ever more online world has now become a matter of significant consumer and citizen harm. As market developments move on apace, with applications unimagined even a few years ago, it is vital that consumers' interests are kept at the heart of policy making - not least so that people feel confident using new technology and get a good deal from doing so. Economic, societal and environmental benefits will flow from a vibrant, competitive and consumer focused market. This is key to the Panel's work and its raison d'être.

We are particularly interested in the accessibility of communications technology, so that consumers - including people with a disability - aren't excluded from the benefits available; and we believe that high standards of customer service are needed to underpin trust and confidence in the sector. These will remain key themes for us as we make sure that communications providers and regulators take consumer concerns seriously and take action to address people's needs.

An important part of the Panel's role is to work closely with our stakeholders to ensure that together we can harness the power of transformation in the communications sector - and facilitate the ability of people to move from being digitally excluded to being part of a society of digitally capable, empowered UK consumers and citizens.

I hope that this report provides a comprehensive and informative view of the Panel's work, its achievements and the value it provides to stakeholders - not least of whom are those whose interests it sets out to protect and promote.

Jo Connell OBE DL - Chair

The Panel's objective

The Panel's objective is to:

“protect and promote the interests of consumers, citizens and small businesses in the communications sector by giving advice to Ofcom, the EU, Government, industry and others.”

About the Panel

The Communications Consumer Panel consists of eight independent experts who work to achieve the above objective. We were established by the Communications Act 2003 as the independent, policy advisory body on consumer interests in telecommunications, broadcasting and spectrum markets (with the exception of content issues). The Panel carries out research, provides advice and encourages Ofcom, Government, the EU, industry and others to look at issues through the eyes of consumers, citizens and small businesses.

The Panel pays particular attention to groups such as older people, people with disabilities, those living in rural areas and those on low incomes - who are potentially vulnerable; and to the needs of small businesses, which face many of the same problems as individual consumers.

There are four members of the Panel who represent the interests of consumers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales respectively. They liaise with key stakeholders in the nations to understand the perspectives of consumers in all parts of the UK and input these to the Panel's consideration of issues. These Members also attend the Ofcom Advisory Committee for each nation so that there can be a two-way communication of ideas.

The Panel engages with stakeholders to inform the advice that it gives and to help to keep the interests of consumers, citizens and small businesses on the agenda across the sector. The Panel also engages with a range of other organisations working on behalf of these constituencies - including those representing older and disabled people.

Often described as a 'critical friend' to Ofcom, the Panel provides robust and independent advice that is constructive, realistic and cognisant of the trade-offs which regulatory decisions often involve. This is made possible by the fact that Ofcom shares information and ideas with the Panel at the beginning of the regulatory process, before consulting formally with other stakeholders. This unique position enables us to give strategic advice on policies early on in their development so that consumer interests can be built into Ofcom's decision-making from the outset.

The Panel operates in an efficient low-cost way. We are based at Ofcom's offices so have low overheads. Ofcom shares data and research with us, meaning that the

Panel need only do research in carefully targeted areas where we identify a need for a specific consumer perspective. And by being involved closely and early in the regulatory process we can influence decisions in a constructive and timely way.

Panel members are appointed by Ofcom, subject to Ministerial approval, in accordance with Nolan principles and are eligible for re-appointment. Ofcom funds the Panel and provides a small but highly effective executive support team.

Changes to the Panel during 2012 -2013

In Summer 2012 the Chairman, Bob Warner, and three other Panel Members completed their terms of appointment. On stepping down, Bob noted that the growing importance of communications technologies in people's lives means that it will be even more important in the future for consumers to have a strong voice. He said: "I'm pleased the Panel will continue to protect and promote consumer interests, with new Chair Jo Connell taking up the challenges for the future. I'm particularly pleased that during my year as Chair, the Panel has campaigned successfully to improve unsatisfactory mobile coverage and ensured that consumers in each of the four UK nations will finally benefit from mobile coverage obligations and the new world of 4G."

New Chair Jo Connell warmly thanked Bob Warner, Fiona Ballantyne, Colin Browne, Roger Darlington and Maureen Edmondson - who had stepped down in March 2012- for all their work on the Panel. Jo noted that during the previous year, rapid developments in the communications sector, coupled with changes in the consumer landscape, had meant that the Panel played a vital part in shaping the communications sector for the benefit of consumers, citizens and small businesses. Introducing the new Panel, Jo highlighted that it will continue to engage with stakeholders across the UK.

The Members of the new Panel are:

- Jo Connell OBE DL (Chair)
- Kim Brook, Member for Wales
- Jaya Chakrabarti
- Chris Holland, Member for England
- Libby Kinney, Member for Northern Ireland
- Mairi Macleod, Member for Scotland
- Craig Tillotson
- Bob Twitchin

To take advantage of the synergy between the Panel and Ofcom's Advisory Committee on Older and Disabled People (ACOD), and to avoid potential duplication of work, cross-membership of the two bodies was established in Summer 2012. The remits of the bodies remain unchanged which means that Members, in their ACOD capacity, also provide specific advice to Ofcom on

communications issues relating to older and disabled people. This additionally includes television, radio and other content on services regulated by Ofcom and issues concerning the postal sector.

How We Engage

The Panel advises on a broad range of issues, which we address in three main ways:

- Key areas of engagement: substantial proactive work to push an issue up the regulatory or policy agenda or seek a specific change in policy.
- Research: to stimulate and influence debate and inform our policy advice and the work of others.
- Keep under Review: The Panel has also kept many other issues under review - particularly where the Panel has previously raised concerns and stimulated action - and intervened where appropriate.

Influencing the Debate

During the year, the Panel has provided written and oral evidence to a range of organisations; has responded to a wide variety of consultations; and informed and stimulated debate by organising or presenting at a number of events and working with partners. These included:

The Consumer Landscape	Midata telecoms sector board	RIU workplan	Mobile quality of experience response	Price rises in fixed term contracts
Ofcom's 2nd 800MHz coexistence	Citizens Advice Scotland workplan	DCMS: Communications Review response	Phonepayplus workplan	Ofcom's annual plan
Improving access to Comms services for Disabled People	Citizens Advice: Consumer Futures	Consumer Focus workplan	BIS: Enhancing consumer confidence	Midata consultation
Broadband Stakeholder Group	Information, Connection and/or Signposting	Communications Review - consumer perspectives	Mobile quality of experience event	Digital Consumer Expert Group
Ofcom's Online Infringement of Copyright and the DEA	Ofcom's Simplifying non-geographic numbers	Ofcom's ADR Review	Ofcom's - benefits from scarce spectrum resources	Ofcom's Switching consultation
DMOL: reorganisation of DTT listing and LCN policy	Switching debate with Consumer Focus and CFC	Age Action Alliance Digital Inclusion Advisory Group	UK Online/LSE research symposiums	Older People and ICT - SUS-IT
Digital participation event with CFC	National Digital conference 2012	Westminster eForum online trust and accountability	Scottish Parliament Cross-party Group	Consumer Focus Scotland/Panel event - digital participation
Blackfriars Keeping in Touch event	RIU design	Supporting Safer Internet Day	Helping to promote Parentport	Supporting Get Safe Online week
Supporting Silver Surfers' Day	Consumer Experience launch	Copyright Hub Launch Group	ILC-UK/Panel event - Nudge or Compel	PhonePayPlus Mobile Malware summit
Government Digital Service: Assisted Digital Group	Consumer Forum for Communications	Digital Inclusion Super Group	WITT	Carnegie UK Trust
Go ON UK expert summit	St George's House consultation	DG Connect consultation	VLV engagement	NESTA complaints seminar

Evaluating our Impact

Whilst some of the work we do can be assessed in terms of quantifiable data, such as the number of consultations we've replied to or our publications output, we recognise that it can be harder to assess the influence we have. This is because our activity is often behind the scenes, shaping policy as it is just starting to develop; and the outcomes are often long term. So we greatly appreciate the feedback we get from our stakeholders. Here are just some examples of feedback about how the Panel's advice has influenced their work.

Nuisance calls

Following your comments on the draft Annual Plan, we have broadened out the reference to our work in this area. Instead of focusing solely on silent calls, we now explicitly state that we are taking a wider range of actions to tackle nuisance calls and messages as a whole, and outline the key elements of our five-point action plan.

Colette Bowe, Ofcom Chairman

The Consumer Interest Toolkit

We are grateful to the Panel for commissioning the Toolkit, which has challenged us to consider every aspect of Ofcom's work. We believe that the Toolkit has helped us shape Ofcom's culture as well as our practice... we believe that the Toolkit has brought significant benefit to citizens and consumers and will continue to do so in years to come.

Chris Taylor, Ofcom Director of Consumer Policy

Digital Engagement

The Carnegie UK Trust believes that access to broadband is essential in the 21st century, and the Communications Consumer Panel is one of our key stakeholders in our work on this agenda. The Panel's 'Bridging the Gap' report in 2012 was an excellent piece of work and directly informed new research that the Trust has now completed on digital exclusion in Glasgow. Panel members and staff are experts in their subject area and are really supportive partners in any project - a pleasure to work with.

Carnegie UK Trust

DTT coexistence

(In relation to the Panel's suggestion that vulnerable consumers should be permitted to have secondary DTT sets enabled in one visit, as disabled and elderly people often depend on TVs in more than one room.) I agree that the 2nd TV filter for the vulnerable is a very good point and one I'll suggest we take up.

Simon Beresford-Wiley, DMSL

Digital Policy

It has been great to work with the Panel this year. They have offered thoughtful and constructive feedback and challenge to our programme. I appreciate being able to draw on their expertise in the needs of people who may have difficulties using technology and look forward to continuing to work with them in future.

Team Leader - Digital Policy, Government Digital Service, Cabinet Office

Older people and digital participation

My colleagues and I, working on the NDA Sus-IT project and on KT-Equal, have greatly appreciated both the assistance and support of the Panel in hosting events to promote the recognition of the complex issues involved in sustaining ICT use by older people. The valuable contributions they made to the discussions at these events have helped to inform our approach to collaborating with technology providers and also in developing our documentation to support these collaborations.

Professor Leela Damodaran, Professor of Digital Inclusion and Participation,
Loughborough University

Community involvement

Everyone enjoyed the session and learned a lot...Our members were so involved in learning the Internet, how to use the mobile phone, experiencing 3D TV, and finding out about the services available, they didn't want to finish. It will be great to do more work together.

Tina Johnston, Older people's Services Coordinator, Blackfriars Settlement

Specific work areas

This section gives a brief comment under each heading. A more detailed narrative for each work area can be found in the Appendix.

Consumer Landscape: Panel continues to work in partnership to ensure consumers have a strong advocate in communications sector

Following on from earlier years' work, and recognising the need for a co-ordinated approach, the Panel has worked with stakeholders, both formally and informally, to help ensure communications consumers have a strong voice and are well represented in the emerging consumer landscape. We have contributed to the proposed approach for the Citizens Advice Service and submitted views on the work plans for the Regulated Industries Unit (RIU) and Citizens Advice Scotland.

Communications Review: Panel leads consumer debate

Former Panel Chair Bob Warner chaired *The Consumer Perspective seminar* last summer. This was the first in a series of seminars to discuss and develop policy options for the Communications Review. A [summary and video footage of the event](#) can be found on the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport) website. The Panel went on to make a [second submission](#) to DCMS, highlighting its views on a wide range of subjects impacting on consumers, citizens and small businesses.

Switching: Panel urges providers to work with Ofcom to design a unified switching system as soon as possible

A competitive market that gives consumers informed choice depends, inter alia, on an efficient and easy switching process in which people can trust. It should not inhibit providers from trying to gain or retain market share; but nor should it mean that consumers who do switch are likely to experience hassle and/or disruption. Clarity of consumer information (for example about contract length and early termination charges) is an important part of the equation. Low switching levels lead to reduced competition and a worse deal for consumers across the board. The Panel has suggested to Ofcom that there are a [number of areas that should be reviewed](#) with the aim of increasing levels of switching; and we have urged providers to work with Ofcom to develop a unified switching system as soon as possible. We believe, too, that switching harmonisation should not be limited to fixed line services - the same principles should apply to mobile, pay TV and cable services. We understand the complexity of the issue but nonetheless have urged Ofcom to explore how best completion of this work could be hastened.

As part of its work in this area, the Panel co-hosted the very successful *Switching Debate* with Consumer Focus and the Consumer Forum for Communications in April 2012 with presentations from Ofcom, BT and TalkTalk.

This issue remains one of our areas of key engagement for 2013/14.

Nuisance Calls: high on the agenda

After reducing as an issue for some time (in part following Government acceptance of the Panel's strong advice in 2010 that Ofcom be given powers to fine companies making persistent silent or abandoned calls up to £2,000,000) this became a big problem for consumers during 2012/13. Thus it has remained high on the Panel's agenda. Whilst we understand the complexity of the issue we also understand the harm these calls cause to consumers; and whilst we welcome the work Ofcom is doing in this area we have been robust in urging further progress - particularly in respect of more collaboration between relevant agencies, and in respect of using technology to place control in consumers' hands. We have urged industry to provide free CLI to consumers by default. We were pleased to see that, in response to our input, Ofcom broadened this work beyond just silent calls in its Annual Plan.

Together with Members of the Consumer Forum for Communications we have twice [written to the relevant statutory authorities](#) expressing our concern about unsolicited marketing calls, suggesting potential points of action and calling for co-ordinated action. The Panel also scrutinised and endorsed a series of new [consumer guides](#) published on Ofcom's website.

Mobile Coverage: spectrum auction finally sets mobile coverage targets for nations

The Panel has worked hard to keep mobile coverage high on the policy agenda and we are pleased that, as outgoing Chair Bob Warner highlighted, much progress has been made. However, just as we recognise that coverage has improved, we recognise too that reliance on mobile services (calls and data) has increased - and will continue to do so. Therefore, the issue of coverage is far from resolved. We have made the point that in today's world a lack of voice and/or data coverage is potentially an issue of real detriment. We have said that there remains an urgent need to drive rapid improvements in rural and semi-rural mobile voice and data coverage if these sections of society are not to be left behind.

We are pleased therefore that, after extensive discussions on the issue of mobile coverage, Ofcom accepted the Panel's recommendation to implement mobile coverage obligations for each of the nations.

We will continue to closely monitor the progress made through the rollout of networks and the Mobile Infrastructure Project.

Price Rises in Fixed Term Contracts: contrary to the expectations of most consumers

The Panel believes that consumers are not sufficiently protected from harm in respect of mid-contract price rises. We have consistently raised the issue, and [responded to Ofcom's consultation](#) accordingly. In short, it is the Panel's view that consumers should reasonably be able to expect that in a fixed term contract "fixed mean fixed"; that any deviation from that position must be transparent and clear to consumers; and that consumers should have a penalty-free right of contract termination if in contract price changes are made.

Consumer information, including contractual terms, remains one of our areas of key engagement for 2013/14.

Broadband Speeds: consumers need to know likely broadband speeds early in sales process

Timely consumer information and trust in that information is crucial and we [urged internet service providers](#) (ISPs) to give consumers information on their likely broadband speeds early in the sales process, before any decision to buy is made. Progress has been made and we are encouraged that some ISPs acknowledge that

better training is needed for sales staff. The Panel will monitor closely the outcome of Ofcom's further action to improve the provision of broadband speeds information for consumers.

Digital Engagement: digital divide risks becoming a digital gulf

The Panel has continued to raise the issue of digital engagement. The centrepiece of our work this year was a major piece of research - [Bridging the Gap: Sustaining Online Engagement](#) - which has received wide circulation and has informed other stakeholders' work in this area.

Whilst solutions may be complex, the issue itself is straightforward: about 11 million UK adults do not yet use the internet. The potential consequences of this exclusion are serious - for individuals, for society, for business and for the UK economy.

We made several recommendations, worked in partnership with other stakeholders and have participated in a number of events to ensure that the issue is kept at the forefront of policy makers' thinking.

The appendix to this report gives more detail on this high priority area and it remains a key area of engagement for the Panel.

Accessibility: improving access to electronic communications services

The Panel has been active in promoting access to services for vulnerable groups. We [responded to Ofcom's Call for Inputs](#) in respect of communications access for disabled people - supporting Ofcom's exploration of measures to improve access; and we highlighted how important it is to examine the holistic customer journey.

As a member of DCMS' Consumer Expert Group, we have advised on the development of a potential radio help-scheme and contributed to the development of the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology's report on *ICT for Disabled People*.

We have been active in urging improvements to text relay services, which are so important to people with hearing difficulties and speech impairments. We are pleased to see the progress made in this area and will continue to monitor the implementation of the next generation of relay services over the coming months.

On a similar theme, Panel Member for Scotland, Mairi Macleod, chaired a session at an Ofcom event in October 2012 that explored the consumer experience of subtitling. Mairi noted that subtitles can change people's lives - and the lack of them can cause enormous frustration and a sense of isolation. The meeting brought together various parties so that users' voices could be heard and key problems identified. The event was part of an ongoing project on subtitling quality that has led to Ofcom's recent consultation in this area.

Mairi has also been involved in the RNIB *Technology for life: tools for inclusion* work in Glasgow that referred to the fact that they had found the Consumer Panel's Framework for Digital Participation extremely useful in framing their findings. Meanwhile, Panel Member Bob Twitchin continues to be involved with a number of initiatives including those by AbilityNet.

Finally, Jo Connell chaired an Ofcom-hosted event in December for older stakeholders called 'Keeping in Touch: Making the Most of Communications Technology'. Local stakeholders found out about the roles of the Panel, ACOD and Ofcom and their rights as both citizens and consumers. They participated in hands-on demonstrations of communications technology, including mobile phones, the internet, tablet computers, audio description and 3D television.

Non-geographic numbers: free 0800 mobile calls good news for consumers

The Panel has been concerned for some time that confusion over prices for calls to non-geographic numbers could be either costly for some consumers, or could deter some from calling such numbers because of perceived high costs. In either case, there is the potential for consumer detriment. We have [engaged with Ofcom](#) on this issue and are pleased to see the plan to make things much clearer for consumers by showing access and service charges separately. We will continue to monitor progress, with a particular focus on communications to consumers.

We are particularly pleased to see that it is intended that calls to 0800 numbers will become free from mobiles.

Unexpectedly High Bills: avoiding bill shock

Whatever the reason, an unexpectedly high bill is not welcome and can have a significant financial impact on a consumer as well as the hassle of dealing with the matter. We have urged industry and other stakeholders to develop further information and aids to give consumers better control over their spending and alert them when they are likely to incur additional costs, in addition to taking action in relation to lost or stolen phones. Following work last year with the Ofcom policy team, the Panel supported a [new series of consumer guides](#) produced by Ofcom that explain how to avoid the key causes of 'bill shock'.

This issue remains one of our areas of key engagement for 2013/14.

Alternative Dispute Resolution: redressing the imbalance

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is an important, independent, safeguard for consumers and an effective way to redress the power imbalance that can exist between consumers and communications providers. So the Panel has consistently backed moves to improve the two ADR schemes - Ombudsman Services: Communications (OS) and the Communications and Internet Services Adjudication

Scheme (CISAS) - including the introduction of uniform decision-making principles to increase consistency of outcomes. The Panel is pleased that its views have played a part in changes that will help to make the complaints process more accessible and transparent for customers.

We believe that [more can still be done](#) to improve signposting, accessibility in its broadest sense and information about case outcomes. The Panel will watch developments with continued interest.

DTT/4G Coexistence: working to mitigate interference

We fully support the advent of 4G mobile services but, equally, we believe that the effect of any interference that its roll out might cause to Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) must be mitigated to ensure any inconvenience and cost to consumers is minimised. We have therefore engaged with this issue from the outset and [called for a UK wide campaign](#) to raise awareness of the problems and the solutions. We have throughout the year maintained close contact with Digital Mobile Spectrum Ltd (DMSL), the company set up to deliver a good outcome for consumers. We have challenged them on the processes and measurements and, thus far, have been reassured. We are paying particular attention to the needs of vulnerable consumers.

This issue remains one of our areas of key engagement for 2013/14.

Mobile Quality of Experience: the provision of better information

Around 6.6 million UK adult mobile customers do not say they are satisfied with the overall performance of their mobile provider, with 4.3 million stating dissatisfaction. Given the importance of mobile communications, we see the provision of information as a vital tool to help consumers make informed choices about which provider they select. We believe this information needs to be comprehensive, clear and holistic. We continue to urge all stakeholders to make progress on this issue, and we made a [detailed submission](#) in response to Ofcom's Call for Inputs.

Online Copyright Infringement: Panel advises on draft copyright infringement code

Following Ofcom's publication of a draft copyright infringement code, the Panel took part in a discussion session with other consumer advocacy groups and the regulator to look at how such a code could work in practice. This is a complex area, but one which we are glad to have remained involved with, and follows on from work we have been doing since 2010. Further work on the Code is now on hold pending Government agreeing a new Statutory Instrument for funding the scheme.

Online Personal Data: markets work better if consumers are empowered

The Panel is conscious of the growing market in consumers' online personal data, and its 2011 [Online Personal Data](#) research that highlighted significant concerns about how people can manage the collection and use of their personal online data - and how they make the important decisions about releasing that data.

When we conducted research into how people behave online, and consumers' awareness about how their data is collected and used, we found a significant lack of awareness coupled with concerns about how people's data is used. 79% of the people we surveyed said that they were highly concerned about their data being sold to third parties to target them with offers. We have continued our involvement in this topic and in September 2012 Panel Member Kim Brook, speaking at a Westminster eForum on online advertising and the consumer perspective on trust and accountability, said that markets work better if consumers are empowered: "But for this to happen consumers need better information to help them make informed decisions, control over the use of their data, reassurance from companies that they will minimise the amount of data collected - and importantly that it will be stored securely, and that companies will follow the rules."

Midata: addressing the issues

The Panel has continued to advise on the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) midata telecoms sector board. Responding to the [related consultation](#), the Panel said that it supported the policy direction but stressed that the data made available to consumers must be:

- meaningful;
- ubiquitous;
- easy to access and understand; and
- free to the consumer.

The Panel has concerns about privacy and data security issues, which must be addressed if the initiative is to be trusted and widely used by consumers. The Panel is also concerned about those consumers who may not use the internet; or do not necessarily respond to the availability of more information in a way that benefits them.

Information, Connection and/or Signposting Services: working to avoid detriment

The Panel has been concerned this year by an issue highlighted by PhonepayPlus in relation to potentially misleading "Information, Connection and/or Signposting Services". There is undoubted consumer detriment when consumers are misled (potentially unknowingly or unwittingly) into contacting a third-party commercial organisation and paying for advice or information via a premium rate service, when

that content is available direct from public or other commercial services at little or no cost. This is of particular concern in the case of consumers who are more vulnerable, including those who rely on mobile phones rather than a landline service. As we move towards a “digital by default” environment this issue is likely to lead to more customer harm unless action is taken. The Panel has therefore [supported in principle](#) a prior permissions regime, backed by effective and proportionate measures to ensure consumer protection.

Clarifying Consumer Law: digital content

The Panel welcomed BIS’ intention to define clearly what is meant by digital content; to clarify the standards that digital content should meet and who is responsible for ensuring that the ensuing rights are applied; and to identify the steps that a consumer can take if these rights are not met. The Panel stressed in its [response to the BIS consultation](#) the importance of simple and reliable, robust, clear and easily accessible information being available to consumers and information about these changes being communicated to consumers.

The Panel supported the provision of strong remedies, particularly the right to reject, and encouraged the consideration of this issue within the wider context of the commercial value of personal data online. Finally, the Panel endorsed fully the need for simplicity. The need to foster understanding through clear communication is, in the Panel’s view, of equal importance to the actions taken to clarify the law.

Panel Members

Jo Connell OBE DL (Chair)



After a career in IT, Jo retired as Managing Director of Xansa plc in 2003. She was a Trustee of Help the Aged from 1991 and Chair from 2004-2009 where she played a key role in facilitating and supporting the charity's merger with Age Concern England to create Age UK, the UK's largest older people's charity.

Since 2001 Jo's roles have included being a Non Executive Director at many information technology and communications companies including THUS Group plc. Jo was also Chair of the Hospice of St Francis, Berkhamsted, and Master of the Information Technologists' Company in 2008/9.

Jo is currently Pro Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Governors at the University of Hertfordshire, Chair of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists charity, a trustee of the Hertfordshire Community Foundation and a Non Executive Director of RM plc. In 2012 she was awarded the OBE for services to older people.

Kim Brook (Member for Wales)



After 15 years in the Army, Kim joined IBM, working in sales, industry marketing and business development positions related to IT, telecoms and the insurance industry. After 21 years in IBM he moved to Misys plc Insurance Division as Business Development Director. On retirement in 2000, he took over

Chair of the Community Foundation in Wales, a charity dedicated to raising and distributing funds to community projects across Wales.

From this work he has gained considerable experience of the realities of life in the most deprived areas in Wales and has developed a Wales-wide network of contacts in community organisations. He joined the Communications Consumer Panel in October 2008 on a two-year appointment, ending in 2010. He was re-appointed to the Advisory Committee Wales and to the Consumer Panel with effect from April 2011.

Jaya Chakrabarti



After two and a half degrees in Physics/Materials (University of Bristol) Jaya set up Big Red Square Ltd (then Squidge.com) in 1999 as a search engine company. Following Google the company went for plan B, a digital media company, Nameless Media Group Ltd. Jaya and her team have built Nameless into an award winning agency.

Chris Holland (Member for England)



Chris Holland was Head of Specialist Dispute Resolution at BT where he was responsible for a wide range of specialist customer service areas, including all aspects of BT's membership of Ombudsman services: communications. He helped implement the telecommunications ombudsman service (Otelo), and until March 2011 was a non-executive director of the Ombudsman Service Ltd. He was Chairman of the Otelo Members Board between 2006-2011. Chris held a number of customer services roles in BT, including heading the Chairman and Chief Executive's Service Office between 1987-2001.

A qualified counsellor, Chris has done voluntary work with young people. Currently he is Chairman of the Postal Redress Scheme (POSTRS); he acts as a consultant across all dispute resolution schemes offered by IDRS Ltd, including the Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme (CISAS); he has a consultancy role with Time to Change, a mental health charity; and he is a member of the Voice of the Listener and Viewer.

Libby Kinney (Member for Northern Ireland)



Libby is Director of Communications for the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. A print journalist for over 10 years, in the main with the Belfast Telegraph, she moved to a media management role with BBC NI in 2000. In her five years with the BBC she was responsible for the UK-wide promotion of a diverse range of programming from Panorama to Ballykissangel. In 2008 she was seconded to the BBC Trust as Head of Governance and Accountability for Northern Ireland.

Libby has a strong interest in those strands of work that centre on ensuring access and participation for everyone, with a particular focus on broadcasting and media literacy issues.

Mairi Macleod (Member for Scotland)



Mairi Macleod was born and brought up in the north of Scotland and now lives in Glasgow. She worked for 15 years in the field of access services for television, in particular subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing - first with ITFC, then a long period with the BBC in London and Scotland, and latterly with Red Bee Media Ltd.

Since 2009, she has been doing a variety of freelance work, including social policy research interviewing, training, subtitling and translating. In 2009, she was

appointed to Ofcom's Scottish Advisory Committee for a four-year term. Mairi is a volunteer for Deaf Connections, a charity based in Glasgow.

Craig Tillotson



Craig has enjoyed a successful and varied career over the last 25 years as a large business board director, unit director and strategy consultant in the telecoms and technology industries, gaining substantial operations and strategic management experience within the Vodafone and T-Mobile Groups. From 2001 to 2003 he was Product Management Director for Vodafone UK launching Vodafone Live and the original Mobile Broadband product set. In 2003 he became Strategy and Wholesale Director and in 2007 took over the leadership of the UK Consumer Business Unit.

In 2012 Craig was appointed as the first permanent Managing Director of the Faster Payments Scheme Limited. Faster Payments is the first new payments system in the UK for 20 years and provides UK businesses and consumers with a world leading capability for managing their important financial transactions. He is responsible for the day-to-day management, operational integrity and strategic development of the scheme.

He is also an Executive Director of the UK Payments Administration, and currently business leader for the developing Mobile Payments Scheme.

Bob Twitchin



Bob Twitchin was Chair of the Oftel Advisory Committee for Elderly and Disabled People (DIEL) from 2000 to 2004 and a member of the Ofcom Consumer Panel (now the Communications Consumer Panel) from 2005 to 2008.

Bob is an Associate of the Business Forum on Disability and a member of the steering group of PhoneAbility, the leading UK charity dedicated to improving access to ICT for older and disabled people.

He is a fellow of BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT, and formerly Chair of IT Can Help, a network of volunteers providing free help with computing problems to disabled people at home, in day care centres or residential care. ITCanHelp is part of Abilitynet, a UK charity helping disabled adults and children to use computers and the internet to change their lives at work, at home and in education.

Budget

	ACTUAL	BUDGET
	April 2012 - March 2013	April 2012 - March 2013
Panel member fees	87,639	96,877
Panel member expenses	13,663	22,415
Support (incl. Advisory Team, research, consultancy, stakeholder relationships and design and publications)	217,417	207,426
	318,718	326,718

The Panel commissioned or published a number of pieces of work during the year and commissioned a part-time contracted press/media adviser. Work included:

- Bridging the Gap: Sustaining Online Engagement (published 2012/13)
- The Consumer Journey (working title) - to be published 2013/14
- Refreshing the Panel's website (completed 2013/14)

The Panel also publishes a monthly bulletin providing a round-up of its activities and current issues affecting consumers in the communications market. If you would like to receive updates from the Panel, please email contact@communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk

Communications Consumer Panel

Riverside House

2a Southwark Bridge Rd

London SE1 9HA

contact@communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk

© Communications Consumer Panel

Published by the Communications Consumer Panel

Extracts from this publication may be reproduced for non-commercial, educational or training purposes on condition that the source is acknowledged and the findings are not misrepresented.

This publication is available in electronic form on the Panel's website in English and Welsh. We can also provide alternative formats on request.

www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk