

Hate Crime Policy

1.0 SCOPE

Purpose

1.1 This document set's out whg's policy towards tackling incidents of hate crime, which is in line with government standards and guidelines.

1.2 Definition

The government defines a hate crime as any criminal offence targeted at a person because of prejudice or hostility based on a personal characteristic. Personal characteristics listed by the Home Office include:

- Race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality or national origin
- Religion or faith
- Gender or sexual identity
- Sexual orientation
- Disability

1.3 We accept the Home Office definition but also recognise that anyone can be a victim of a hate crime. Other examples of groups include vulnerable people targeted because of their age, asylum seekers and refugees.

1.4 Examples of incidents of hate crime include:

- Assault
- Threatening behaviour
- Robbery
- Damage to property
- Inciting others to commit hate crimes
- Harassment
- Verbal abuse

This list is not exhaustive.

1.5 We will not tolerate hate crime in any of the communities where we operate. We value diversity and recognise the rights of customers to live in safe and vibrant neighbourhoods with strong community cohesion.

1.6 We are committed to making whg a safe and inclusive working environment

for colleagues.

- 1.7 We recognise that hate crime is not only a criminal offence but can also have a devastating impact on individuals. We will provide support to customers and colleagues to ensure that all reports of hate crime are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

Applies to

- 1.8 This policy applies to whg customers, colleagues and to perpetrators who may visit whg properties.

Legal and regulatory framework

- 1.9 This policy complies with our legal and regulatory responsibilities.
- 1.10 We recognise that hate crime is a form of Anti-Social Behaviour. The HCA's Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires Registered Providers to 'work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods where they own homes'. Registered providers are expected to show how they are preventing the incidence of ASB and stopping its escalation.
- 1.11 We comply with existing legalisation surrounding hate crime. Relevant legalisation includes the Criminal and Justice Act 2003, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Crime and Policing Act 2014, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Prevention

- 2.1 We will ensure that all measures are taken to prevent hate crime in our workplaces and in the communities in which we operate.

Reporting

- 2.2 We accept reports of hate crime from individuals by phone, letter, email, in person or through an advocate.
- 2.3 We aim to handle all cases promptly and sensitively, fostering a culture where victims are supported and feel confident to report incidents.

Victim-centred Approach

- 2.4 Whg will always attempt to ensure that any action taken is in accordance with a victim's wishes and beliefs. A victim will have to agree with all suggested actions before they are taken. We will tailor our services to meet the needs of victims and residents. Victims will be encouraged to cooperate with us and will be supported to help them stay in their home.
- 2.5 We are a third party reporting centre, whereby individuals can report a hate crime if they feel uncomfortable going to the police. We respect confidentiality, but matters will be forwarded to the police should any safeguarding issues arise or issues which pose a significant risk to the individual or the general public.

Enforcement

- 2.6 Our actions will be prompt, firm and proportionate to the severity of the case.
- 2.7 We will remove sexist, racist, homophobic or obscene graffiti when identified or reported.
- 2.8 We will take legal action against perpetrators where necessary, after all opportunities for redress have been exhausted. Examples of these include mediation, written warnings and Restorative Justice.

Supporting Victims

- 2.9 We will provide advice and assistance on safety and security measures to victims. We will signpost victims to further support services like counselling services and victim support groups.
- 2.10 We will consider the support needs of vulnerable perpetrators, particularly if their behaviour results from substance misuse or if they have a disability. In these instances, we will refer vulnerable perpetrators to appropriate services where applicable.

3.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 3.1 We will measure our performance against key performance indicators, and progress will be reported on a biannual basis to the Customer Services Committee. All hate crimes will be individually reviewed by the Community Safety Team to ensure that this policy is adhered to.
- 3.2 The Community Safety Team will produce quarterly reports on our performance to the Neighbourhood and Community Housing Service Panel. These will measure our performance based on the number of reports received and customer satisfaction.

4.0 MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 4.1 This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Housing and reviewed by the Policy group every three years or sooner in the event of significant legislative or regulatory changes.

5.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1. Documents, policies and procedures associated with this policy are:
- Whg Anti-social Behaviour Policy, Domestic Abuse Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy and Information Sharing Protocol Policy
 - Action against hate: the UK government's plan for tackling hate crime - Home Office, 2016
 - Hate crime action plan: Challenge it, Report it, Stop it - Home Office, 2012
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
 - Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - Crime and Policing Act 2014
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Human Rights Act 2010

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| Document author | James Wall, Community Safety Operations Manager |
| Document owner | Gary Brookes, Director of Housing |
| Legal advice | None |
| Consultation | None |
| Approved by | Policy Group-November 2017 |
| Review Date | May 2021 |
| Corporate Plan aim | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver high quality homes and services for our customers. • Be an exceptional place to work that attracts, develops and retains talent. |
| Equality analysis | Not required |
| Key changes made | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added additional legalisation including the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. • Included information on whg's role as a third party reporting centre. |