

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. This policy is relevant to customers and colleagues.
1.2.	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race or Ethnicity A person's race or perceived race, or any racial group or ethnic background including countries within the UK and Gypsy and Traveller groups; this includes asylum seekers and migrants • Religion or Beliefs A person's religion or perceived religion, or any religious group including those who have no faith • Sexual Orientation A person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, or any person's sexual orientation • Disability A person's disability or perceived disability, or any disability including physical disability, learning disability and mental health or developmental disorders • Transgender identity A person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender, including people who are transsexual, transgender, cross dressers and those who hold a Gender Recognition Certificate under the Gender Recognition Act 2004
1.3.	<p>Any crime can be prosecuted as a hate crime if the offender has either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or transgender identity. • Or been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or transgender identity. <p>Examples of incidents of hate crime include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening behaviour • Verbal abuse • Physical assault • Damage to property

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inciting others to commit hate crimes • Harassment • Online abuse – call, text, email, social media. <p>This list is not exhaustive.</p>
1.4.	whg recognise the adverse effect Hate Crime has on our communities. The aim of the policy is to minimise this by deterring hate crime and dealing with incidents effectively and in line with legal and regulatory requirements.
1.5.	whg will not tolerate hate crime from 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.	whg are committed to making whg a safe and inclusive working environment for colleagues, hate crime including harassment and intimidation directed at colleagues will be dealt with in conjunction with whg's Acceptable Behaviour Policy.
1.7.	whg recognise that hate crime is not only a criminal offence but can also have a devastating impact on individuals. whg will provide support to customers and colleagues to ensure that all reports of hate crime are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
	Legal and Regulatory Framework
1.8.	whg recognise that hate crime is a form of Anti-Social Behaviour. The Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires Registered Providers to 'work in partnership with other agencies to deter, prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate crime in neighbourhoods where they own homes. Registered providers are expected to show how they are preventing the incidence of ASB and Hate Crime and stopping its escalation.
1.9.	whg 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 and Deterrent
2.1.	whg is committed to work in partnership with local authority departments, police and other agencies to deter, prevent and address hate crime incidents and to provide a victim centred, sensitive approach to all reports of hate crime. whg

	<p>will undertake the following actions to collaboratively assist in the prevention of Hate Crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with customers about their rights and responsibilities in alignment with their tenancy agreement. • Raise awareness of hate crime through colleague and community engagement. • Support cohesion, community development and regeneration initiatives in partnership with local agencies to support and strengthen our communities. • Challenge any behaviours or attitudes that feature hatred or prejudice amongst customers or colleagues. • Encourage and support victims to report incidents of hate crime.
	Reporting and Support
2.2.	whg shall accept reports of hate crime from any individual through multiple access routes, by phone, via customer portal, letter, email, in person or through an advocate.
2.3.	<p>whg aim to handle all cases promptly and sensitively, developing a culture where victims are supported and feel confident to report incidents. whg will specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate every report of hate crime where the alleged perpetrator and/or victim is a customer of whg. • Where a hate crime is reported, we will contact the victim within 1 working day to take details of the incident and agree an action plan for next steps. • Take a victim led approach and support victims to report incidents to police. • Respond swiftly to reports of emergency repairs in accordance with our Repairs Policy. • Provide a range of options to support victims of hate crime including target hardening measures within their homes, referrals to support agencies or through support to emergency accommodation where proportionate. • Engage with witnesses of hate crime and other family members to provide sign posting to support to relevant support services. • Work with partners to resolve cases of hate crime, whilst adhering to general data protection regulations (GDPR) • Take robust action against perpetrators of hate crime as appropriate and ensure enforcement of tenancy conditions. This could include early intervention tools, informal actions or civil legal proceedings. • Case audits to review best practice, learning opportunities and outcomes of actions taken. • Keep victims of hate crime updated throughout their case.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure victims of hate crime are allocated a named case officer to manage their individual case, and provide contact details to reach their lead officer.
2.4	whg will use all available powers and resources to deal effectively with perpetrators of hate crime, taking into consideration the full range of tools available to whg to address Hate Crime through the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014, as well as provide support to victims
2.5.	whg will remove hate motivated and offensive graffiti when identified or reported.
	Victim Centred Approach
2.6.	whg will ensure that any action taken is in accordance with a victim's wishes and is reasonable and proportionate to the evidence available. Victims will be advised of any action whg proposes to take. whg will tailor our services to meet the needs of victims and supported to where appropriate help them remain in their home.
2.7.	whg are a third-party reporting centre, whereby individuals can report a hate crime if they feel uncomfortable going to the police. whg 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
2.8.	whg actions will be prompt, firm and proportionate to the severity of the case in alignment with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Acceptable Behaviour Policy.
2.9.	whg 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, prior to legal injunctive action and actions against tenancies.
2.10.	whg 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.
	Partnership

2.11.	<p>whg will work in partnership with the relevant local authority and police partners to deter, prevent and address incidents of hate crime through developing stronger resilient communities.</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi Agency thematic meetings, operational and strategic • Multi Agency area-based tasking meetings – operational and strategic • Safer Walsall Partnership Board – and associated priority working groups • Community tension monitoring meetings • Case conferencing arrangements
3.0	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
3.1.	<p>whg will measure our performance against key performance indicators. All hate crimes will be individually reviewed by the Community Safety Team to ensure that this policy is adhered to.</p>
4.0	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY
4.1	<p>Customers or colleagues reporting hate crime will be treated equally and with respect. Any action to be taken against any perpetrator of hate crime will be discussed and agreed in advance with the victim wherever possible.</p>
5.0	TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION
5.1.	<p>The Community Safety Team receive relevant training in response to any changes in legislation or Government guidance with regards to hate crime and will oversee any hate crime investigations.</p>
6.0	MONITOR AND REVIEW
6.1	<p>This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Housing and Customer Services and reviewed by the Policy group every three years or sooner in the event of significant legislative or regulatory changes.</p>
7.0	ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
7.1	<p>Documents, policies and procedures associated with this policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whg Anti-social Behaviour Policy • whg Domestic Abuse Policy • whg CCTV policy • whg Acceptable Behaviour Policy • whg ASB privacy notice 2023 • Action against hate: the UK government's plan for tackling hate crime- Home Office, 2016

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Equality Act 2010• Human Rights Act 2010

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