



Hate Incidents and Hate Crime Policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

This policy outlines how we tailor our approach to tackle forms of Anti-Social Behaviour that are hate-related. Hate incidents and hate crimes can leave victims feeling isolated and can significantly impact individuals, families or communities. We are committed to combatting hate-related incidents and promoting safe and cohesive communities.

2.0 Definitions

The police and the Crown Prosecution Service define a **hate crime** as:

'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity'¹

A **hate incident** may or may not constitute a criminal offence. Here we have widened the definition of a hate incident to include an incidence of anti-social behaviour that is perceived by the victim to be motivated by prejudice. This could include, for example, anti-social behaviour targeted at an individual because of their age, gender or employment status.

Hate incidents and hate crime can range from isolated incidents of hostility to collective acts of aggression. They can include: attacks or threats of attack; verbal abuse or insults; and exclusion.

3.0 Prevention

We aim to prevent hate incidents and hate crime by ensuring that actual or potential perpetrators are aware of the specific consequences of hate-related acts. Effective and inclusive resident involvement, such as community events, can help develop cohesive communities and promote positive relations between different groups.

¹ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/hate-crime>

To encourage reporting, we aim to build awareness of hate-related incidents amongst residents through publicising information and advice via a range of media, such as our website and leaflets.

4.0 Responding to reports

We respond to all reports of hate-related incidents within one working day. We encourage victims of a hate crime to report this to the police. Where there is a threat to their life or safety, we report this to the police.

We take a victim-centred approach and all reports which are perceived by the victim to be motivated by prejudice are recorded as a hate incident. If, following investigation, there is no evidence of targeted harassment, we continue to deal with the matter in line with our ASB procedure and aim to defuse tensions between the victim and the perpetrator, for example, through mediation.

Where possible, we provide support with translation. We do not expect friends or relatives to interpret for victims but will take such reports if this is the victim's preferred communication method. We never rely on children who are under 18 to translate these reports.

5.0 Supporting victims and witnesses

We understand that the first report of a hate-related incident may be made weeks or months after persistent harassment. We do not limit our focus to isolated reported incidents, but consider the continuity of incidents over a period, which together can damage the physical and emotional health of victims and their families.

Staff are sensitive to the particular impact that these types of cases can have on the victim, a family and a community. We may provide support or make a referral to an external agency, including social services, health services and victim support.

6.0 Security measures

Harassment often centres on a victim's home and as such impacts their daily life. We help protect tenant and licensees through security measures to their home and surrounding area, as appropriate and in partnership with other agencies such as the police. We assist homeowners by approving security improvement requests as needed. Witnesses at risk of intimidation or reprisals are eligible for the same types of support and protection

All repairs relating to security of or damage to a property as the result of violence or offensive graffiti are dealt with as an emergency, which means we aim to make safe within 24 hours of it being reported.

7.0 Action against perpetrators

We are aware of the powers of the court to increase sentencing in cases where there is evidence of hostility motivated by prejudice. We consider using the full

range of civil and legal remedies against perpetrators, including: injunctions and possession proceedings and the use of mandatory grounds where applicable.

Where possible and appropriate, we support perpetrators to engage in restorative justice and behavioural change. If the perpetrator has support needs, we also take this into account and either provide support ourselves or refer the perpetrator to external support agencies such as social services, health services or support agencies.

8.0 Alternative accommodation

We acknowledge that moving home for a victim, particularly those with a family, can be disruptive, unsettling and can be viewed as a victory for the perpetrator. Residents should not be pushed out of their homes because of experiences of hate-related incident. However, if a victim is unable to remain safely in their home due to harassment, we can advise them of their options for re-housing and support them in finding alternative accommodation.

We continue to pursue action against the perpetrator after the victim has moved home, where we have enough evidence to do so.

9.0 Working in partnership

We cannot prevent and tackle hate-related incidents alone, particularly given the effect that these incidents can have on the wider community. An effective response requires us to work closely with other agencies, looking beyond the individual reported incidents that relate to the home. We work closely with the police to collect evidence, such as CCTV.

We join and participate in multi-agency forums relating to hate incidents and hate crimes in areas where we hold substantial housing stock. We help develop and participate in local networks of third party reporting centres.

10.0 When the victim requests that no action is taken

We recognise that hate-related incidents can cause fear among victims and therefore have regard for a victim's wishes if they insist that no action is taken, and we have no safeguarding concerns.

We always explain what actions can be taken against perpetrators, some of which need not involve the victim, such as applying for an injunction of affidavit evidence, which does not require the victim to attend court.

In cases where there are numerous complaints amongst the community and one victim has withdrawn their report, we judge, on a case by case basis, the safest way to manage the complaint.

11.0 Monitoring

We monitor the number and nature of hate-related incidents reported to us to establish whether such incidents are more common to a specific area or are affecting various individuals in one community. We also monitor the diversity data of both victims and perpetrators to increase our understanding of which groups

are most affected by hate incidents and hate crime. We report on the data and the results of our analysis every six months.

12.0 Supporting staff

We understand that staff may find investigating hate-related incidents upsetting and stressful, and ensure that staff are properly supported and offer them support through the Employee Assistance Programme.

We provide guidance to staff on how to record incidents and make them aware of local support agencies for victims of hate incidents and hate crimes. All staff are trained on equality and diversity as part of their induction.

We promote a safe and diverse working environment for staff and contractors. We do not tolerate abusive behaviour towards staff and will take action against residents who show prejudice towards staff.

13.0 Our approach

In writing this policy we have carried out assessments to ensure that we are considering:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Privacy and data protection

To request a copy of these assessments, please contact us at policy@nhg.org.uk

14.0 Reference

- Criminal Justice Act 2003
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by Anti-terrorism, Crime & Security Act 2001)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014

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