

# Harassment Policy

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## **1.0 Scope**

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Hexagon residents.
- 1.2 The policy applies to harassment incidents either on Hexagon property or with a direct impact on a resident's use and enjoyment of their home.
- 1.3 This policy covers harassment of our residents by neighbours or members of the public; concerns about the behaviour of staff should be referred immediately to the Hexagon complaints procedure.
- 1.4 Our definition of harassment means a deliberate attempt to cause distress, fear or harm to a person.
- 1.5 Harassment can be based on age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion/ belief, sexual orientation or any aspect of the victim's life.
- 1.6 Harassment can take many forms including (but not limited to) threats, intimidation, verbal or physical abuse, vandalism, abusive messages or stalking.
- 1.7 Our definition encompasses harassment of any kind, for any reason; if the actions of the perpetrator are intentionally harmful, it is harassment.
- 1.8 If any person (not just the potential victim) believes harassment has taken place, then it should be treated as such, in the first instance.

## **2.0 Equality and Diversity**

- 2.1 An equality impact assessment 'initial screening' has been carried out which determined the policy has the potential to positively impact on all protected characteristics.
- 2.2 The policy is specifically designed to deal with harassment based on all protected characteristics so its application should help in tackling discrimination.

### **3.0 Statement**

- 3.1 We are committed to preventing harassment, supporting victims and taking action against perpetrators when appropriate.
- 3.2 We want to proactively engage with victims when we deal with harassment cases.
- 3.3 We believe in partnership working; we will work with external services when dealing with harassment.

### **4.0 Objectives**

- 4.1 The policy will be in line with statutory guidelines and existing tenancy/ lease agreements.
- 4.2 We intend to be supportive and approachable when harassment is reported.
- 4.3 We want to work with victims in developing our approach to each case.
- 4.4 When an incident is classed as harassment, and the perpetrator is our resident, we will investigate fairly and take firm action when necessary.

### **5.0 Policy**

- 5.1 We will investigate any incident of harassment (as defined in section 1) either on our property or affecting a resident's use and enjoyment of their home.
- 5.2 Our approach is victim centred. We will take concerns seriously when they are reported; our response will be professional and empathetic.
- 5.3 We will keep victims actively involved in their case and informed on progress – consulting and agreeing appropriate actions with them.
- 5.4 We will take steps to ensure those reporting harassment are safe and feel comfortable communicating with us – this includes allowing the victim to speak to an officer of the same protected characteristic (e.g. an officer of the same race or gender).

- 5.5 We want the victim to feel safe at home and will consider any reasonable adjustments to their property to help with this. We will also refer to specialised support organisations where possible.
- 5.6 In the most serious cases, we will explore the possibility of moving the victim depending on their wishes and the availability of housing.
- 5.7 Any repairs needed to prevent harassment will be carried out as a priority.
- 5.8 If the perpetrator is our resident we may choose to take further action. This will be considering the wishes of the victim and may involve legal or tenancy action.
- 5.9 We will engage with other agencies (e.g. local authorities, police, advocacy agencies) and multi-agency partnerships. The purpose will be to support the victim and, if necessary, assist with action against the perpetrator.
- 5.10 When an external agency is better placed to take a case forward, we will cooperate fully with them, with the consent of the victim.

## 6.0 **Legal framework**

6.1 This policy is designed to comply with the following legislation and guidance:

- Macpherson Report
- Equality Act 2010
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

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Hexagon