

## Hate Crime Policy

Version Control						
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Final	21.07.20	03.08.20	Board	N/A	03.08.23	Operations Director
2023 Review				30.10.23	30.10.26	Operations Director

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Westmoreland Supported Housing Limited (WSHL) is a registered provider of social housing providing supported housing. We believe that everyone has the right to live their lives in peace and with dignity.
- 1.2 Every incident of Hate Crime has the potential to leave individuals and communities isolated and victimised. We recognise the effect that Hate Crime can have on the quality of life of individuals and communities and are committed to tackling all reported incidents through a robust and victim-centred approach.
- 1.3 We will work in partnership with the care providers who provide care and support for our residents as well as statutory and voluntary organisations to provide advice and support to victims of Hate Crime, as well as dealing with the perpetrators. This will be in line with current legislation and good practice.

### 2. Legal and Regulatory responsibilities

- 2.1 Our approach to dealing with Hate Crime will meet the requirements of Regulator for Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard which requires Registered providers to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.
- 2.2 Relevant legislation includes, but is not limited to:
- Public Disorder Act 1986
  - Housing Act 1988
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
  - Housing Act 1996
  - Criminal Justice Act 2003
  - Equality Act 2010

Relevant legislation is all that legislation either by way of Common Law, Act of Parliament or Statutory Instrument which relates to this policy. and is in force at the relevant date.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Hate Crime** – when someone is hostile to someone because of their disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other perceived difference and they show their hostility through intimidation, harassment, damaging property and/or violence.

### 4. Our approach

- 4.1 We are committed to promoting good relations between different communities and people of difference in the areas we cover. Not all hate incidents amount to criminal offences but those that do become Hate Crimes. We are committed to dealing with hate incidents and Hate Crimes.
- 4.2 We condemn all forms of hate incidents and crime and aim to respond positively and as a matter of urgency to any reports from our residents, Care Providers or the local community.
- 4.3 We will take prompt and effective action in responding to Hate Crime ensuring victims understand their options. We recognise that effective action can only be taken if incidents are reported. We are therefore committed to raising awareness, promoting reporting, monitoring incidents and tackling Hate Crime across our housing.
- 4.4 We will take a person-centred approach, if the person reporting the crime or incident believes it to be motivated by hate then we will record and investigate it as such.
- 4.5 We will be guided by the advice and good practice of organisations with expertise in tackling Hate Crime. We will participate in local multi-agency arrangements for dealing with hate incidents and Hate Crime, making ourselves aware of Hate Crime initiatives in areas where we work and - where appropriate - using them to provide support and advice.
- 4.6 We will take prompt and effective action in responding to reports in line with our anti-social behaviour procedures. We will ensure victims understand their options and we will provide the support they need in conjunction with the Care Provider and other local agencies.
- 4.7 We will use the powers we have where, after investigation, perpetrators are found to have been involved in a hate incident or crime. Action will depend on the seriousness of the incident

but could include non-legal or legal remedies, possession action or disciplinary action where a member of staff is the perpetrator.

## **5. Reporting hate incidents or crime**

5.1 We recognise the importance of reporting Hate Crime in enabling victims to receive support and help local police to understand the extent of the problem and to prevent escalation and Hate Crime happening to others.

5.2 Where a criminal offence has taken place, we will encourage the person making the report to contact their police. Where they are unwilling to do this, we recognise our duty in reporting the incident to the police.

## **6. Responding to reports of hate incidents or crime**

6.1 When we receive a report of a hate incident or crime we aim to:

- Remain professional and non-judgemental with both victims and people accused of carrying out the hate incident or crime.
- Acknowledge all reports received, document and monitor them.
- Investigate - where appropriate - all reported incidents within 5 days of reporting.
- Support victims by working with them to identify agreed actions they are comfortable with.
- Identify and encourage other residents who can offer support and/or evidence to do so.
- Liaise with relevant organisations and the police to make sure we act in line with legislation, good practice and local protocols.
- Agree how we will communicate and keep everyone up to date.

6.2 We will follow our procedures for dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour, monitoring and reporting on action taken.

## **7. Working in partnership with the police and other agencies**

7.1 We will work closely with other agencies to tackle hate incidents and crime as appropriate, such as the police, care providers, local authorities, mental health teams, other landlords and youth support services. Where a crime has been committed, we will ensure that it is reported by the person affected or ourselves.

7.2 Where the police are investigating a Hate Crime incident, they will be the lead agency and we will work with them to ensure appropriate and timely responses to requests for support and action.

7.3 We will work with victims, witnesses and - where appropriate - Care Providers to understand the issues and identify the best organisations or people to provide the support needed to report the incident or crime and follow it through.

## **8. Closing Cases**

8.1. Where a report of Hate Crime has been investigated, we draw it to a close. A case may be closed where an investigation has been concluded, appropriate action has been taken and no further incidents have occurred over a given period (this will vary depending on the nature of the case). We will consult the complainant before proposing to close a case and explain our reasons for doing so. We will listen to any reasons they give us as to why the case shouldn't be closed.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

9.1 We will ensure there is effective management and monitoring of all cases with regular reviews to ensure a consistent approach and to assess the impact of our actions

9.2 The Operations Director will report on Hate Crime cases to the board 6 monthly

9.3 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

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