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## **Hate Crime Policy**

**SER-POL-32**

**Version 3.0**

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**Date approved: 4 February 2020**

**Approved by: People and Places Committee**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Southway Housing Trust (the Trust) is committed to working with others to make South Manchester a place that people are proud of – a safe place where people choose to live, work and play.
- 1.2 The Trust recognises the damaging effect that hate crimes have on the quality of life of our customers We are committed to tackling all incidents of hate crime through a robust, victim-centred approach.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the Trust's approach to dealing with Hate Crime and Hate Incidents.

## **2. Definitions of Hate Crime**

Hate Crime is defined within the following legislation:

- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998,
  - The Crime and Security Act 2001, and
  - The Criminal Justice Act 2003.
- 2.1 The broad definition of a hate crime is any crime or harassment where a person's prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in their choice of victim. A victim of a hate crime doesn't have to be a member of a minority group or someone who is generally considered to be a vulnerable person; in fact anyone can be a victim of a hate crime.
  - 2.2 Hate crime is any hate incident which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. Hatred is a strong term that goes beyond simply causing offence or hostility.
  - 2.3 A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence, and is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate because of the victim's:
    - Race, colour, ethnic origin nationality or national origin,
    - Religion or belief
    - Disability
    - Sexual orientation
    - Disability

- Sex
- Age
- Gender, including gender reassignment or transgender identity

2.4 Hate crime and harassment can take many forms including:

- Physical attacks – such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, verbal abuse and arson
- Threat of attack – including offensive letters, abusive or obscene telephone calls, texts, emails or via social media, groups hanging around to intimidate and unfounded malicious complaints
- Verbal abuse or insults - offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures
- Littering outside homes or through letterboxes.

### **3. The Trust's Commitment to Tackling Hate Crime**

- 3.1 We will respond to reports of Hate Crime as a priority within one working day.
- 3.2 When a customer reports a hate crime / incident they will be listened to, treated with respect & dignity and we will retain confidentiality where appropriate.
- 3.3 We will ensure there are a variety of accessible ways to report hate crimes / incidents for customers, colleagues, partner agencies and members of the public.
- 3.4 We will operate a harm centred approach when dealing with reports of Hate Crime and where a customer who is reporting Hate Crime is assessed as vulnerable we will offer a range of support measures as well as signposting to other agencies.
- 3.5 Where we identify additional support needs of the parties involved, we will make appropriate referrals to specialist agencies.
- 3.6 The Trust is a third party hate crime reporting centre and will promote awareness of this to encourage our residents & communities to disclose incidents.
- 3.7 The Trust will have a nominated co-ordinator who will ensure all necessary actions are taken in line with this policy and liaison with partner agencies is effective.

- 3.8 We will work closely with partners to tackle hate crime including the Police, other landlords, local authorities, mental health teams and youth support services.
- 3.9 We will record the victim's background, cultural and religious beliefs as they advise and within the Home Office definition, to ensure consistency when working with our partners.
- 3.10 Where the police are investigating a hate crime incident, they will be the lead agency and the Trust will work with them to ensure appropriate and timely responses to requests for support and action.
- 3.11 We will ensure that cases are investigated thoroughly in a timely manner, that appropriate actions are recorded and that cases are reviewed regularly, particularly in relation to risk and harm.
- 3.12 The Trust will use a wide range of tools and powers to challenge unacceptable behaviour and will decide on a case by case basis which tools and powers are the most appropriate to use.
- 3.13 We will undertake action that is reasonable and proportionate. We will take legal action in cases where early intervention techniques have not been successful and the harmful behaviour is continuing, or where complainants need protection to prevent further incidents from occurring and where the perpetrator is refusing to engage.

#### **4. Staff Training and Performance Management**

- 4.1 We will ensure that our staff receive appropriate training and guidance in order to be able to respond appropriately to reports hate crimes/incidents
- 4.2 We will continually seek ways to improve our service and practice in relation to responding to hate crimes. We will ensure that performance targets are set for managing such cases and that we will regularly review customer satisfaction with the service that has been received.
- 4.3 An annual report on Hate Crime will be provided to the People of Places Committee.

## 5. Related Policy Documents

- Hate Crime Procedure
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure
- Environmental Enforcement Policy and Procedure
- Single Equality Scheme
- Allocation Scheme
- Tenancy Agreement

## 6. Policy Review

- 6.1 The policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if a change in legislation means this is required.

<b>POLICY REVIEW HISTORY</b>	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
<b>Previous versions</b> (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
v1 – Board – 21/01/2014 V2 – People and Places Committee January 2016. V3 – People and Places Committee 4 February 2020.	
<b>Date of last EIA:</b>	January 2020
<b>Review lead by:</b>	Jane Gant
<b>Main points or amendments made and reasons</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve language and layout, reduce formality;</li> <li>• Having a more victim focussed approach to Hate Crime and being clearer on our role in dealing with this;</li> <li>• Include a commitment to improving the service and staff training and awareness raising.</li> </ul>	
<b>Next review due:</b>	Q4 2022/23
<b>Approval Level:</b>	People and Places Committee