

Hate Crime and Harassment Policy

1.0 Purpose of policy

- 1.1 This policy outlines Karbon Homes' approach to tackling hate crime and harassment
- 1.2 This policy demonstrates our commitment to working in partnership with other agencies to tackle hate crime and harassment using relevant legislation, guidance and best practice.
- 1.3 This Policy should be read in conjunction with hate crime and harassment and ASB procedures

2.0 Objectives

This policy ensures that Karbon Homes approach to preventing and effectively tackling Hate Crime and Harassment fulfils the following policy objectives:

- Places emphasis on prevention and early intervention
- Ensures reports of hate crime and harassment are dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner
- Supports victims and adopts a victim centred approach
- Supports perpetrators to amend their behaviour where appropriate
- Work in partnership with other organisations and agencies including but not limited to Police, Local Authority, specialist support agencies and third sector organisations
- Complies with relevant legislation, guidance and best practice

3.0 Policy detail

3.1 Prevention

- 3.1.1 The rights and obligations contained within the tenancy agreement and other supporting documentation will be explained as part of the sign up process. The tenancy agreement sets out expected standards of behaviour and outlines implications on the tenancy if a tenant, members of their household or visitors to the property perpetrates hate crime or causes harassment.

3.1.2 Karbon Homes will work closely with partner agencies to raise awareness and improve understanding of hate crime and harassment and the impact on victims as well as to actively promote community cohesion

3.1.2 Karbon Homes is committed to improving the services we provide to our customers and will learn from best practice in the sector to achieve this and to ensure that customers are provided with an effective and high quality service.

3.2 Reporting incidents of hate crime and harassment

3.2.1 Karbon Homes is committed to ensuring that the reporting of incidents is as easy as possible for customers.

3.2.2 Hate crime and harassment can be reported in a number of ways to Karbon Homes:

- In person to any member of Karbon Homes staff
- By telephone (during office hours and via the out of hours service)
- In writing or by email
- By using the Karbon Homes online reporting system - www.karbonhomes.co.uk
- Via social media
- Via a local Community Safety Team – these may be named differently within individual Local Authorities
- Via a tenants/residents association, community group or community representative

3.2.3 Where the victim is at risk or where appropriate we will encourage victims to report the matter to the Police or to other relevant agencies for support and assistance

3.3 Tackling incidents of hate crime and harassment

3.3.1 Karbon Homes will adopt a victim centred approach and any actions will be tailored to the needs of the customer.

3.3.2 Karbon Homes will ensure that anyone reporting incidents will be taken seriously and will be treated in a sympathetic, supportive and non-judgemental way and will be given advice and assistance as a priority

3.3.3 We will treat all information given to us in confidence and will only pass on the information to other agencies if we have permission unless we have a duty to disclose information in order to:

- Protect the victim.
- Prevent harm to someone else.
- Prevent or detect a crime.

3.3.4 Where appropriate, rehousing requirements and housing options will be discussed. Officers will make every effort to ensure that a safe and secure environment is provided for customers and their families, and will work alongside specialist agencies to provide advice and assistance.

- 3.3.5 Karbon Homes can provide victims with some small items of personal security equipment such as personal alarms. Other security may be offered such as lock changes, window and door alarms immediately to provide some reassurance and peace of mind. We may also consider carrying out further security measures such as dusk until dawn lights, or additional door or window locks where appropriate and based on a risk assessment.
- 3.3.6 Karbon may also make referrals to partner agencies such as the police, the local authority or the local fire service for additional security or where a much greater level of home security is required (or where security is required as a matter of extreme urgency).
- 3.3.7 If repairs or security measures are needed to victims' homes we will undertake these as a high priority. For example, securing damaged doors and frames, boarding up windows and changing locks will be treated as emergency repairs.
- 3.3.8 Where there is evidence to suggest that the tenant and/or family members would be at immediate and substantial risk, advice will be offered to victims and they will be referred to the relevant Local Authority and the Police. Each Local Authority has a responsibility to provide immediate temporary accommodation under the Housing Act (1996) and the Homelessness Act (2002)

3.4 Support

- 3.4.1 We will support victims by dealing with their reports promptly, keeping them informed of any developments relating to their case and referring them to appropriate support services, where necessary. We will work closely with the victims throughout all stages of the case, to ensure that they are aware of the action being taken.
- 3.4.2 Karbon Homes will ensure that anyone experiencing hate crime or harassment can access appropriate support as a matter of priority. Where we are unable to provide support directly, victims will be referred to other agencies
- 3.4.3 Karbon homes will:
- Offer same sex interviews or caseworkers for victims when requested
 - Arrange for an interpreter or signer where required.
 - Ensure any letters, paperwork or literature is translated into a victim's first language wherever necessary.
 - Ensure that where children or young people are affected by hate crime and harassment, that referrals are made to appropriate agencies
 - Support victims to take appropriate legal measures to protect themselves and their families and signpost them to appropriate agencies where they can access help and support to use both civil and criminal laws.
 - Make appropriate safeguarding and any other necessary referrals if we believe that a child or an adult is at risk due to hate crime and harassment.

- 3.4.4 Karbon Homes acknowledges that perpetrators of harassment can change their behaviour and will, therefore refer them to other agencies for support, education and assistance as and when appropriate.
- 3.4.5 Karbon Homes recognises certain issues can contribute towards this kind of behaviour for example drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems, isolation, exclusion and discrimination. Perpetrators of hate crime and harassment will be offered support through referrals to specialist agencies where necessary.

3.5 Intervention

- 3.5.1 Karbon Homes will seek to address the first report of an incident effectively and promptly. This may reduce likelihood of further incidents.
- 3.5.2 Karbon takes all forms of hate crime and harassment seriously and will take appropriate and proportionate action to address this type of conduct across all Karbon owned or managed properties. Non legal remedies and or/legal proceedings may be considered to resolve these issues. Action will only be taken after consulting the victim and considering their wishes.

Methods of interventions may include:

- Use of the powers provided by the tenancy agreement to take action against a tenant who is breaching the terms of a tenancy agreement.
- Use of the powers provided by the lease to take action against a leaseholder who is breaching the terms of a lease or contract.
- Mediation
- Acceptable Behaviour Agreements
- Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP):
- Injunction.
- Demotion Orders
- Postponed or Suspended Possession Order

3.6 Partnership working

- 3.6.1 Karbon will work closely with relevant partner agencies, especially the police, to address, raise awareness, educate and prevent hate crime and harassment. We will inform the police about all hate crime and harassment incidents reported to us with the consent of the victim.
- 3.6.2 We will actively work with the police to effectively tackle all reports of hate crime and harassment. We will develop partnership arrangements with relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, where appropriate.

4.0 Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The Assistant Director of General Housing is responsible for delegating the operational implementation of this policy.

- 4.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years (or earlier if there are changes to legislation/regulation/good practice). Review will be coordinated by the Strategic Planning and Insight Team.

5.0 Equality and Diversity

- 5.1 This policy is implemented in line with the Group's Equality and Diversity Policy and associated legislation. Consideration will be given to all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 5.2 This policy and associated documents are available in different languages and alternative formats where necessary.

6.0 Data Protection and Privacy

- 6.1 We have a clear policy on data protection and sharing data with other partners/third parties under the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation. This is clearly set out in the Data Protection Policy for the Karbon Homes Group which in association with the Data Protection Procedures must be followed throughout the operation of this policy.