

Exeter City Council Housing Services

Residents' Hate Crime Policy 2025 – 2030

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1.Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Exeter City Council Housing Services (ECC) guidelines on managing reports of hate crime and hate incidences.
- 1.2 It is designed to be used alongside our new Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy as a framework for our approach by providing staff and residents with information to help identify and respond effectively to residents' needs.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Hate Crime Policy is to strengthen our commitment to tackling hate crime and incidents and to make sure support is available to people who are victims of hate crime and hate incidents, ensuring a victim-centered approach.

1. Policy Statement

- 2.1 It is our intention to promote a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime in all its forms.
- 2.2 The policy sets out to define hate incidents and hate crime and associated behaviour.
- 2.3 The policy sets out the responsibilities of staff in relation to reporting and recording hate incidents, supporting victims and witnesses and dealing effectively with perpetrators.
- 2.4 The new Housing Residents' Vulnerability Policy provides guidance in the assessment of vulnerability of victims of hate incidences or hate crimes.

- 2.5 It is recognised that ECC Housing cannot deal with hate crimes and hate incidences alone, but that it is important to have a multi-agency approach.
- 2.6 This policy is intended as guidance to set out a clear and effective response to deal with reports of hate incidents.
- 2.7 A detailed procedure has been drawn up which set out the risk assessment and action planning that will take place following receipt of a report of a hate incident or crime.
- 2.8 We as a landlord will monitor hate crime incidents across our housing and identify any persistent alleged perpetrators and use this information to improve our services to tenants.

3. Legal duties and statutory requirements

- 3.1 In its 'Learning From Severe Maladministration Report'¹, the Housing Ombudsman stated that 'Landlords must also ensure they have robust procedures for handling distinct but sometimes related ASB issues on domestic violence, hate crime, and reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010'.
- 3.2 Under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard in the Consumer Standards it states that 'Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing'².

4. Definition of Hate Crime and Hate Incidences

- 4.1 In the Crime and Policing Act 2014, a hate crime is defined 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 race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.'³
- 4.2 A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
- 4.3 Evidence of the hate element is not a requirement. People do not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related. It would be enough if another person, a witness or even a police officer thought that the incident was hate related.

- 4.4 Hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault, bullying, incitement to hatred as well as damage to property.
- 4.5 When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as hate crimes.
- 4.6 Under the new Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, we have set out how we will categorise incidents of anti-social behaviour and the responses to these.
- 4.7 Hate crime and hate incidences will be treated as Category 1 offences and a response will be made within 24 hours of the first report.
- 4.9 A detailed procedure has been drawn up to deal with reports of hate incidences and training has been provided to all staff within Housing.

5. Implementation of the policy

- 5.1 This policy follows guidance and references from the Housing Ombudsman report 'On the record: Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management'⁴ and its recommendations.
- 5.2 Staff will treat all reports seriously and confidentially and swiftly, responding to hate incidents by the next working day.
- 5.3 All staff will produce accurate, detailed reports on our housing management data system.
- 5.4 We will always treat our tenants (or leaseholders) with respect and gather supporting information.
- 5.5 We will meet the victim at a location of their choosing within an agreed period to identify the facts and impacts of the incidents and complete a detailed risk assessment.
- 5.6 We will work with partner agencies including the police to provide assistance, this could include a referral to a community based or specialist support service if the victim wants this course of action.
- 5.7 Staff will investigate all reports fully before drawing up an action plan and provide regular updates (at a frequency to be agreed) to complainants on progress made.
- 5.8 Contact with witnesses and other residents will only be made following consent from the victim.
- 5.9 Cases will be reviewed on a regular basis by senior officers and only closed after discussion with the victim.

6. References

Legal duties and statutory requirements:

Equality Act 2010: Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standard Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code (housingombudsman.org.uk)

The Care Act 2014

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Social Housing (Regulation) Act

Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Criminal Justice Act 2003

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Counter-Terrorism Security Act 2015.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Human Rights Act 1998

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Data Protection Act 2018

Related documents:

ECC Housing Strategy

ECC Tenancy Policy

ECC Housing Domestic Abuse Policy

ECC Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

ECC Safeguarding Policy

ECC Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy

ECC Residents' Vulnerabilities Policy

Footnotes:

1. [Learning from severe maladministration report – November 2024 \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)
2. [April 2024 - Neighbourhood and Community Standard FINAL.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
3. [What is hate crime? | Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk)
4. [KIM-report-v2-100523.pdf](#)
5. [Anti-social behaviour powers: statutory guidance for frontline professionals \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)