

Hate Crime Policy

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Author(s): Community Safety Manager

1. Our policy statement

- 1.1. This document outlines our definition and approach to deterring and tackling hate crime on our estates. It is to comply with regulatory and legal requirements.
- 1.2. Our ASB policy and procedures must be read and fully applied alongside this policy. They outline all actions, options and processes that must be followed when managing any ASB case, including hate crimes and incidents. This specific policy addresses the additional requirements and considerations when managing hate-related cases.
- 1.3. This policy underscores our commitment to addressing hate crime comprehensively. This includes raising awareness, preventing and deterring such incidents within our communities, and promoting community cohesion.

2. The scope of this policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all homes and customers managed directly by Sage Homes or by anyone acting on our behalf.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all of Sage Homes' tenancy types, including general needs social housing tenancies, whether for new-build or relet homes and shared ownership homes. There may be restrictions on the action we are able to take depending on the tenancy type.

3. Associated frameworks

- 3.1. This policy has been drafted with consideration of relevant legislation, including but not limited to the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and Public Order Act 1986 as well as other acts detailed in the ASB Policy.

4. Principles

- 4.1. We recognise the debilitating impact of hate crime on individuals, families, and communities, including its potential to heighten tensions and disorder. We are committed to fostering safer, more inclusive environments that uphold equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- 4.2. We strive to raise awareness about hate crime, including how to report it and the actions we take to address it as well as ensuring our reporting methods and communication channels are clear and accessible.
- 4.3. All reports are treated in a confidential, serious and sensitive manner.
- 4.4. Hate incidents and crime derive from prejudice. This is something we will not tolerate. We will act quickly, proportionately and appropriately to protect victims, prevent further incidents, and address the behaviour.
- 4.5. Recognising that victims may be particularly vulnerable, we provide a tailored response that considers the intersection of different social identities, offering additional communication, reassurance, and support to address their unique needs.
- 4.6. We take a victim-centred approach when responding to hate incidents and crimes. If a victim (or other person) believes that an incident was motivated by hate, we will treat it as such unless proven otherwise or deemed wholly unreasonable.

5. Our definition

- 5.1. Our definition of hate crime encompasses any criminal offence or incident perceived by the victim or any 3rd party to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or transgender identity – whether real or perceived. In addition to these nationally monitored categories, we also include age, gender and alternative subcultures.
- 5.2. Alternative subculture refers to groups with a distinct collective identity, unique values, and specific styles in clothing, makeup, body art, and music e.g. goths.
- 5.3. A victim does not need to meet our definition detailed at 5.1, e.g. one does not need to be gay to experience homophobic abuse. Inaccurate assumptions do not negate its classification as a hate incident/crime.
- 5.4. We also recognise that people may experience multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously and these can intersect to create a nuanced and heightened experience for the victim that cannot be considered in isolation.
- 5.5. Hate crime and incidents can take a variety of forms, examples include but are not limited to verbal/online abuse including offensive jokes, violence or threats of violence, damage, arson/attempted arson, harassment, mate crime.
- 5.6. Mate crime, a form of hate crime, involves the befriending, exploiting and/or abuse of a vulnerable person e.g. financial, sexual and/or criminal exploitation and cuckooing etc. Victims may be vulnerable owing to a learning disability, age or physical or mental health condition and may not recognise themselves as a victim. Officers must apply our Vulnerable Persons and Safeguarding Policies where mate crime is identified.
- 5.7. Although individual incidents may not constitute a crime, repeat incidents may amount to harassment and in turn exacerbate a victim's trauma and marginalisation, affecting their wellbeing and increasing vulnerability. We take all reports of hate seriously, recognising the cumulative impact of repeat incidents, and encourage our customers to report all incidents.

6. Prevention and deterrence

- 6.1. We seek to prevent and deter incidents through various methods, including:
 - 6.1.1. Setting clear expectations and emphasising the importance of considerate living and community cohesion with all new customers.
 - 6.1.2. Promoting awareness of hate crimes/incidents and reporting methods via our website and quarterly newsletter.
 - 6.1.3. Monitoring data to identify trends and hotspots, including hate-motivated political activity, to allocate resources and address rising tensions.
 - 6.1.4. Collaborating with partners to organise and/or participate in local initiatives which educate and encourage positive relations within communities e.g. family fun days, estate walkabouts, advice surgeries.
 - 6.1.5. Celebrating relevant national awareness days, e.g. Hate Crime Awareness Week by organising, supporting and participating in community events.

7. Raising awareness and encouraging reporting

- 7.1. We recognise that hate crime is often underreported due to a lack of understanding and fear that reports won't be taken seriously. To address this, we aim to build confidence and trust by providing:
 - 7.1.1. Offer clear and varied reporting methods, ensuring it is accessible to all
 - 7.1.2. Clear information on our website about definitions, reporting procedures, what to expect after a report is received as well as links to support agencies and resources illustrating the impact of hate crimes.
 - 7.1.3. We pride ourselves as having a high visibility on our estates should our customers wish to report matters to us in person.
 - 7.1.4. A serious, supportive, and non-judgmental approach to validate victims' experience, encourage reporting and aims to instil confidence and trust.
- 7.2. We encourage use of Third-Party Reporting Centres, where trained staff can report incidents to the police on behalf of victims and witnesses, provide guidance, and assist with obtaining relevant support. Officers will be able to assist in obtaining details of local and national centres.
- 7.3. We also accept reports from third parties. In these circumstances we will speak with the victim. However, we may still proceed and take appropriate action where the third party is willing to provide evidence, but the victim is not.
- 7.4. We will monitor and review data on hate incidents and crime reports, benchmarking our findings against those of similar housing providers. If we identify potential underreporting of hate incidents and crimes in our areas, we will take steps to address this by raising awareness within affected communities to encourage reporting.

8. Risk and prioritisation

- 8.1. We are committed to responding swiftly and effectively to all reported hate crimes and incidents, classifying them as high risk with a one-day response time, meeting with the victim promptly, addressing any damage, and facilitating referrals to support services.
- 8.2. We will assess and offer additional security measures based on the victim's needs and available resources, collaborating with partners where required.
- 8.3. Where a victim's safety is at immediate risk, we may offer emergency accommodation, in accordance with our Lettings and Allocations Policy. However, if we are unable to offer such accommodation we will endeavour to support and assist victim(s) by liaising with the relevant Local Authority and or other housing providers where appropriate.
- 8.4. If there is no immediate risk but a victim of a hate incident or crime requests a transfer or move, it will also be handled according to the Lettings and Allocations Policy.
- 8.5. We will report any immediate risk to life or property to the police (if the victim has not already done so) and apply Vulnerable Persons and Safeguarding Children, Young Persons and Adult Policies in relevant cases.

9. Tools and powers

- 9.1. We do not tolerate hate crimes or hate-related incidents, and we prioritise the safety and well-being of victims. To support victims, we will consider the full range of tools

and powers available to us and support our partners in taking swift, proportionate action to address hate incidents/crimes when there is evidence to do so, as set out in our ASB Policy and Procedures

10. Support

Victims

- 10.1. We recognise that hate crimes and incidents have a profound impact, targeting an individual's core identity. We are also aware that hate victims often experience heightened anxiety and risk of repeat victimisation. Therefore, we offer additional communication, reassurance, and signpost or refer to specialist support, while exploring restorative options (where available).

Those causing harm

- 10.2. Those causing harm may also have individual needs and will collaborate with partners to help them access appropriate support where available.
- 10.3. We will encourage those who have caused harm to engage in restorative justice if the victim wishes to pursue this and explore relevant behavioural change programmes in their local area where available.

11. Partnership working

- 11.1. We are committed to collaborating with relevant multi-agency partnerships, including local authorities, police, housing providers, fire service, third sector, and voluntary organisations. Through these partnerships, we aim to:
- 10.1.1. Promote awareness and understanding within our communities.
 - 10.1.2. Support initiatives that foster community cohesion and reduce tensions.
 - 10.1.3. Share information and coordinate actions with partner organisations to effectively address hate crimes and incidents collaboratively.
 - 10.1.4. Ensure all parties have access to relevant support.

12. Equality and diversity

- 12.1. Sage is committed to making sure all services are accessible to all our customers. Our staff will be trained to make sure they are communicating appropriately with our customers, and they have the relevant information.
- 12.2. This policy will be applied in a way which makes sure we treat all customers with fairness and respect. We recognise our duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and any other protected characteristic defined within the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 12.3. On request we will provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and formats including braille and large print.

13. Delivery of this policy

- 13.1. This policy should be read alongside:

- Antisocial Behaviour Policy & Procedure
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Vulnerable Customers Policy
- Lettings and Allocations Policy
- Hate Crime Policy Supporting Guidance

13.2. The effective delivery of this policy including training, guidance and support required by staff for implementation of this policy will be provided by the Community Safety Team.

14. Customer engagement and feedback

- 14.1. We issue transactional surveys on an ongoing basis to continuously capture feedback and gather real-time insights for focussed improvements. Where feedback indicates dissatisfaction, the appropriate team will promptly contact the customer to discuss and work towards resolving the issue. Insights gained from these interactions will also be used to inform and implement necessary improvements to service delivery.
- 14.2. We seek to engage our customers to help shape all of our policies and procedures. We do this by obtaining feedback on drafts from our customer scrutiny panel which help to inform and shape this document.

15. Training and development

- 15.1. It is the responsibility of all Sage Homes staff to execute this policy. All officers will receive relevant training tailored to their roles and responsibilities to identify, respond to, and record incidents of hate crime and incidents (including mate crime). We will also keep our officers updated on changes in regulations and best practices through ongoing training and educational opportunities.

16. Policy review

- 16.1. We will review this policy at least once every four years to make sure it remains relevant and accurate unless:
- Legislation/regulation or industry changes require otherwise, making sure that it continues to meet our aims and industry best practice.
 - We identify any problems or failures in this policy as a result of customer and stakeholder feedback, complaints, or findings from any independent organisations.

Version	Checked by	Amendments	Approved at/by	Date of Approval	Published by	Date of Review
2.2	Head of Resident Services	Strategic review and update to corporate template	Customer & People Committee	Nov 24	Policy & Service Improvement	Nov 28