



Hate Crime & Hate Incident Policy

Document Control							
Valid from	Valid to	Version	Status	Author	Owner	Approval	Description of Change
June 2024	June 2027	1	New Policy	Housing Operations Manager	Director of Housing	Co-Exec July 2024	New
Distribution:			Groupwide Policy / Customers / aligned with ASB policy				
Other Relevant Documents:			Other Policies and Strategies that relate to this one: ASB Policy ASB Procedure Domestic Abuse Policy Safeguarding Policy EDI Policy Complaints Policy Tenancy Policy Home Choices Policy Information's Sharing Procedures GDPR / Data Protection Policy				
Comments:			Groupwide policy – aligned with ASB Policy				
Please indicate that the following issues have been considered during the production/review of this policy			New legislation, regulation and best practice has been considered				Y
			Equity, diversity and inclusion				Y
			Health, safety and welfare				Y
			Data protection				Y
			Risk management				Y
			Sustainability				Y
			Value for money				Y

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Futures Housing Group (FHG) values the diversity of our customers and workforce and believe that all customers, their families and visitors, have a right to live without fear of abuse, intimidation, harassment, humiliation or attack, irrespective of gender, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or appearance.
- 1.2 We recognise that we live in a multicultural and diverse society, we appreciate the benefits that such diversity brings to our communities and encourage all to welcome diversity in their locality.
- 1.3 We understand that hate crimes and incidents can have a serious and devastating impact on an individual's and families' sense of security, health and wellbeing but also has a negative impact on communities in relation to cohesion and integration.
- 1.4 This policy supports the delivery of effective action to manage Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Disorder Act 2014 and aligns with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2024.

2. POLICY SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to customers of all tenures living in a home owned or managed by Futures Housing Group (FHG) including: general needs, supported & sheltered housing, temporary accommodation, market and intermediate rent, service users, licensees and employees across the group.

It applies to leaseholders and shared owners, albeit our approach to dealing with Hate Crime and Hate Incidents will be led by the relevant leasehold covenants. If necessary, we may take legal action under the terms of the tenancy agreement, lease, license and other relevant legislation available to us.

- 2.2 We will ensure all customers are treated in a fair, transparent, equitable and inclusive manner and work in partnership with communities, local organisations and statutory agencies, to ensure we tackle discrimination and treat our customers according to their needs. Thus, ensuring we consider the needs, characteristics and vulnerabilities of our customers and employees when we respond.
- 2.3 We have a separate policy for; ASB, Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding but recognise that reports of abuse, harassment and hate crime could be an indicator of potential hate crime or hate incident, e.g. complaints about verbal abuse could be related to domestic abuse, safeguarding and non-hate related abuse.

We will ensure that any potential indicators are actively considered as part of our investigation and in conjunction and accordance with our ASB, domestic abuse and safeguarding policies.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Our purpose, underpinned by our values and commitment, is to support strong communities where our customers feel safe and secure in their homes.
- 3.2 Our vision, is providing quality homes and “services for better futures”, thus supporting customers and working with partners to make our communities better places to live.
- 3.3 This policy supports the Group’s values and is a commitment to improving lives and supporting customers and employees by detailing our response to complaints and allegations of Hate Crime and Incidents.
- 3.4 FHG will not tolerate hate crimes or hate incidents towards our customers, their visitors, our employees, other agencies or contractors.
- 3.5 Our commitment is to prevent, tackle and resolve wherever possible using a range of tools and powers to achieve a balance of prevention, enforcement and support for our customers.
- 3.6 We aim to provide effortless reporting mechanisms for victims of hate crime and hate incidents. We will do this by working together with external partners, statutory agencies and using technology to help deliver an inclusive and accessible service.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Hate Crime is any criminal offence which the victim, or any other person, views as being caused by prejudice or hate because of a person’s actual or perceived disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Hate crimes can include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Assault
 - Criminal damage to the property or personal belongings
 - Robbery
 - Sexual assault
 - Theft
 - Harassment
- 4.2 Upon Conviction, hate crimes carry heavier sentences than ASB.
- 4.3 Not all hate incidents are criminal offences behaviour identified as harassment will be dealt with through our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. When we receive a report, we will investigate this to establish if Hate is the likely cause. The individual does not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related. It is enough if another person thought that the incident was hate related.

Hate incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse or insults
- Isolation and exclusion

- Abusive phone calls or text messages/hate mail
- Online abuse including abuse via social media platforms
- Distributing discriminatory literature
- Bullying or intimidation and/or incitement
- Damage to home, pets, vehicle, etc.

4.4 Mate Crime is a term used where people within communities, particularly people with learning disabilities or mental health issues are befriended with the intention of them being exploited and abused financially, physically, emotionally or sexually.

4.5 Mate Crime is also a form of Disability Hate Crime. The perpetrator is likely to be perceived as a friend who will use this relationship for exploitation. For instances of 'mate crime' please refer to the safeguarding policy and referral process if applicable.

5. OUR APPROACH

5.1 In responding to complaints and allegations of Hate Crime and Incidents, we intend to:

- 5.1.1 Provide clear information on how to report hate crime and incidents.
- 5.1.2 Inspire confidence that we want to deal with all hate crime and incidents and encourage reporting of incidents.
- 5.1.3 Respond quickly and effectively to hate crime and incidents at an early stage, assess risk, try to prevent further incidents and / or the escalation of the seriousness of incidents and complete a time bound action plan with the customer to minimize and / or reduce risk of harm.
- 5.1.4 Investigate reports of hate crime and incidents sensitively, provide victims with support and undertake a victim centered approach taking all reasonable steps to prevent it.
- 5.1.5 Improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of adults and children that are affected by such incidents.
- 5.1.6 Raise awareness and understanding amongst customers and our workforce of hate crime. This will be supported through the provision of training and communications.
- 5.1.7 Create a consistent approach for recording and monitoring hate incidents and look to identify repeat incidents.
- 5.1.8 Work in partnership with various key agencies when dealing with hate crime and incidents, sharing information and taking joint action where required, to help create safer communities.

6. CUSTOMER DISSATISFACTION

6.1 If customers are dissatisfied with the approach taken by FHG or the handling of Hate Crime or Hate Incident cases, they can be referred to our complaints policy.

- 6.2 Complaints received as part of the ASB Case Review, formally known as the Community Trigger process, will be dealt with by the Local Authorities Community Safety Team and in accordance with the relevant local policing bodies process. It will not be dealt with via FHG's complaints policy.

7. REVIEW

- 7.1 We will undertake a review of this policy every 3 years, unless there are changes in legislation that require an earlier review.
- 7.2 We will review procedures relating to it and staff training needs at regular intervals to ensure that it continues to operate best practice and that service improvements are implemented.