



WILLOW TREE

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Hate Crime Policy

Version:	v1
Responsibility for the Policy:	Head of Housing & Customer Experience
Policy subject to resident scrutiny?	Yes
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Date approved by Board (if applicable):	3 September 2025
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1. Statement of Intent

Willow Tree Housing Partnership (WTHP) takes hate crime very seriously because of the devastating impact it has on individuals and communities. All WTHP residents, staff and contractors have the right to go about their daily lives without fear or intimidation. No resident, staff member or contractor should feel they are singled out, excluded or mistreated because of who they are, or because they belong to a particular group.

WTHP will raise awareness of hate crimes and related issues through information, advice and community work. This will include supporting the National Hate Crime Awareness Week through social media and our website.

We recognise that local, national and international events can trigger a spike in hate incidents and will aim to provide reassurance and information to affected communities.

Willow Tree Housing Partnership as a social housing provider is required to comply with the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. This means WTHP must work to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the law
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not, and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2. Policy Objectives

2.1.

To support our residents' rights to the peaceful enjoyment of their homes and community, and our staff and contractors' rights while at work, WTHP commits to being responsive, taking appropriate action and fair application of our policy.

Hate Crime and Hate Incident

A hate crime is defined by the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service as:

Any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic

A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence. It is a hate incident if the victim or any other person thinks it was motivated wholly or partly by hostility or prejudice based on one or more of the following:

Race - Any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated) by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's race, ethnicity, nationality or national origin, or their perceived race, ethnicity, nationality or national origin.

Religion and belief - Any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any

other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's religion or belief or perceived religion or belief.

Disability - Any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability, including physical, mental and neurological disability.

Sexual orientation - Any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.

Transgender identity - Any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice to a person who identifies as transsexual, transgender or transvestite and anyone holding a gender recognition certificate.

When a hate incident is identified as a criminal offence it is known as a hate crime. Any criminal offence can be a hate crime if it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on the above five characteristics.

3. Hate incidents and crime

Hate incidents and crime can take several forms including:

- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Bullying or intimidation
- Physical attacks
- Threats of violence
- Abusive phone calls, text messages or hate mail
- Online abuse through social media
- Displaying or circulating discriminatory literature
- Vandalism or damage to a person's home or personal belongings
- Graffiti
- Arson
- Malicious complaints

Both hate incidents and hate crime are a breach of tenancy and will be dealt with as such.

3.1. Responding to reports of hate incidents or crime

In responding to reports of a hate incident or crime we will follow our anti-social behaviour procedure and will:

- Adopt a victim-led approach, which means that if a person or a third party feels that they or someone else has experienced a hate incident or crime we will accept at the outset their version of events and conduct an investigation to establish the facts
- Talk and liaise with victims, agree an action plan and encourage them to

- report incidents to the Police
- Review any potential vulnerability and risk of harm to the victim and their family, and where appropriate and agreed put in place any safeguarding measures
- Offer victims and complainants our support and signpost to specialist support services
- Adapt our response to the individual circumstances and needs of the victim, recognising that every reported hate incident or crime will be different.

3.2. Third party witnesses

The definition of Hate crime allows for a third party to report and stand as a witness to a hate crime where they have witnessed the incident. Where we receive a report from a third party, we will investigate the incident, ensuring that interaction takes place with the victim as well as the third party.

The views of the victim will be considered should they not wish to pursue the matter, but this will not necessarily prevent us from taking appropriate action where the third party is willing to provide evidence and be a witness.

Victims will be encouraged to allow us to share information with other agencies, including the Police and local authority, to ensure that the full range of civil and criminal action can be pursued, and appropriate support provided. Where consent is not given and we consider there is a high risk of serious harm to someone involved, we may make a report to the Police without the victim's consent.

4. Performance Standards

- All reported hate incidents or crimes will be recorded on the housing management system.
- Details of hate incidents will be reported monthly to the Executive Team, quarterly to the Board and annually to the Regulator of Social Housing as part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- Regular training and continuous professional development on dealing with reports of hate will be undertaken by key operational staff to ensure skills and knowledge are current.

5. Reference Documents

External

- [The Housing Act 1985](#), [Housing Act 1988](#), [Housing Act 1996](#) and [Housing Act 2004](#)
- [ASB Crime & Policing Act 2014](#)
- [Crime & Disorder Act 1998](#)

- [Criminal Justice Act 2003](#)
- [Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act 2004](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#)
- [Public Order Act 2003](#)
- [Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006](#)
- [Sentencing Act 2020](#)
- [Regulatory Standards](#) from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and specifically the [Neighbourhood and Community Standard](#)

Internal

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure
- Anti-Social Behaviour Guidance
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Unreasonable Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

When setting policy, Willow Tree Housing Partnership will ensure a golden thread of best practice runs through all aspects of our operations in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion. We will seek to minimise adverse environmental impacts arising as a consequence of our work. This approach and all policies will be reviewed on their anniversary date or as new guidance or legislation is introduced, whichever occurs sooner.

Neighbourhood Standards

- ✓ Must have a policy. Yes
- ✓ Show how work with relevant organisations. We will work to prevent further hate crime, including participate in multi-agency arrangements where appropriate, co-operating with the police, local authority, other housing associations, community groups and multi-agency panels and relevant support services.
- ✓ How they deter and tackle hate incidents. We will deter hate incidents through raising awareness and working in partnership with other agencies.
- ✓ Enable easy reporting of the incidents. Tenants can report incidents online through our website, by email, or by telephone.
- ✓ Keep tenants informed about the case. We will remain in contact with tenants as agreed with them in case action plans.
- ✓ Prompt and appropriate action. We will respond within 24 hours of a report.
- ✓ Support tenants, including signposting.