



BRO MYRDDIN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

HATE CRIME POLICY

Version	1
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Responsible person	Housing Services Manager

Introduction

The Association has an important role in reducing the incidence of hate crime and in providing support to victims of hate crime. We recognise the effect that hate crime has on the quality of life of our residents and we are committed to tackling all incidents of hate crime through a robust, victim centred approach.

This Hate Crime Policy affirms the Association's commitment to deal with all incidents of hate crime. It is the policy's intention to ensure that victims are able to live in any Bro Myrddin property without fear of harassment, intimidation or attack.

Scope of Policy

This Policy sets out the approach to be adopted by all members of Bro Myrddin Housing Association in relation to dealing with all forms of hate crime.

Applicability

The Policy applies to all Bro Myrddin residents. It is not within the scope of this policy to deal with the following:

- General incidents of anti-social behaviour - as these will be dealt with in accordance with the Association's Anti-social Behaviour Policy.
- Harassment and intimidation involving employees - as these will be addressed through the relevant human resources policies.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Bro Myrddin Housing Association takes all forms of hate crime seriously, and adopts a zero tolerance approach to incidents of hate crime. This policy outlines the core commitments adopted by the Association to work to prevent hate crime, and to deal effectively with incidents should they occur.

1.2 We recognise that this must involve close partnership working with our residents and other organisations in the communities in which we work, and will ensure that effective links are developed to achieve this.

We will meet all legal and regulatory requirements and work to ensure that our approach reflects best practice.

1.3 Bro Myrddin Housing Association is committed to working with all partners to prevent hate crime and to provide all victims of hate crime with a sensitive, appropriate service. We recognise that meeting this commitment may require an enhanced response to ensure that we respond promptly and positively in all cases. We will use all available powers and resources to deal effectively with perpetrators of hate crime or harassment, as well as to provide support to victims of hate crime.

2. Context

2.1 This Policy is set within the context of relevant legislation such as:

- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Public Order Act 1986
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- GDPR Data Protection 2018

It also aims to reflect the expectations outlined by our regulator in the Welsh Government regulatory framework for housing associations in Wales and with reference to the 'Hate Crime and Housing, Policy and Practice Update for Social Landlords'

3. Definitions

3.1 Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's:

- disability
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- Gender identity

This can be committed against a person or property.

A victim does not have to be a member of the group at which the hostility is targeted. In fact, anyone could be a victim of a hate crime.

Hate crimes may also of course include hostility or hatred based on other characteristics such as age, gender, political affiliation or vulnerability.

3.2 A hate incident is a criminal or non-criminal incident which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived:

- Disability.
- Race or ethnicity.
- Religion or belief.

- Sexual orientation.
- Gender identity

3.3 Mate Crime is a form of hate crime and is defined as the exploitation, abuse or theft from any person at risk from those they consider to be their friends.

4. Aims and objectives

4.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Association works effectively to deal with hate crime and, in particular, to do the following:

- Ensure that employees are made aware and trained to identify the needs of victims and witnesses of harassment, so that they can provide a responsive and effective service whilst respecting the need for sensitivity and confidentiality;
- Publicise and promote our policies and procedures, ensuring that the reporting of hate crime is accessible, with clear contact details for reporting incidents, and by offering appropriate support, whether this be solely or in collaboration with appropriate external agencies. We will ensure that all information is written as far as possible in plain English, and will provide information to residents in other formats and languages where required;
- Respond swiftly to reports of hate crime;
- For the Association to recognise the seriousness of hate crime and that it is treated accordingly. We also understand that it is significantly under-reported nationally;
- Support victims where they are required to give evidence; and
- Monitor cases of hate crime and maintain accurate records.

5. Policy outline

5.1 We will take the following actions to assist in the prevention of hate crime:

- Communicate with residents about their rights and responsibilities, emphasising the importance of allowing people to live peacefully in their homes and neighbourhoods and being a considerate neighbour.
- Support community development, community safety and regeneration initiatives, in partnership with local agencies that will support and strengthen local communities.
- Ensure that resident involvement arrangements are inclusive and contribute to the effective tackling of all forms of harassment and hate crime.
- Take positive steps to support those groups who may be especially vulnerable to harassment and hate crime as outlined above.
- Encourage and support victims to report incidents of hate crime.
- Challenge any attitudes and behaviours that foster hatred and prejudice, and encourage early intervention to reduce the risk of any incidents

escalating.

6. Dealing with incidents of hate crime

Incidents believed to be motivated by hatred or prejudice directed against any person or group of people based on any of the identifying factors, will be classified as a high priority for investigation purposes and irrespective of the nature of the actual behaviour reported.

Although the following is not an exhaustive list, incidents of hate crime may comprise, for example, one or more of the following:

- Physical attacks on people or property
- Intimidation
- Graffiti
- Arson or attempted arson
- Abusive or threatening language or behaviour
- Deliberate and targeted acts intended to deter residents from living in their home or to force them to leave.

We will ensure that we offer a consistent, effective approach to dealing with reports of hate crime and will do the following:

- Investigate thoroughly every case of hate crime reported where the alleged perpetrator and/or victim is a resident with the Association.
- When an incident is reported, we will aim to contact the person reporting it within one working day to take details of the incident.
- Remove any offensive graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported, if it is on our land. We will also do any related emergency repairs needed within 24 hours, if the resident lives in one of our properties.
- Provide a range of options to help support victims of hate crime. In cases where the safety and wellbeing of the victim(s) is at risk, the Association will offer support in the current home (including adding extra security where needed), or through provision of alternative accommodation where practicable. This will depend on the wishes of the victim.
- Offer support to witnesses of the incident and other family members.
- Work with the police and other local agencies to resolve cases of hate crime and help reduce it.
- Share information in line with good practice and any agreed protocols; whilst respecting confidentiality.
- Take firm action against the perpetrator as appropriate and enforce conditions of tenancy. This could include either early informal interventions, or a full range of civil legal remedies including injunctions and possession proceedings.
- Seek feedback from victims to monitor effectively their satisfaction with the service provided.

Where a resident is unhappy with the way in which their case has been handled by the Association, they may make a complaint in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

7. Equality and Diversity

We are committed to treating all our residents and staff with fairness and respect and we are committed to providing an equal service to all. Any action taken under this policy will comply with Bro Myrddin's Equality and Diversity Policy and current equalities legislation.

8. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

We will comply fully with the requirements of any new or existing relevant legislation. This will be done in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be further reviewed after three years or earlier if there are changes to the relevant legislation.

10. Accessibility

A copy of this policy will be made readily available to all stakeholders on request and will also be found on our website.