

# TACKLING HATE CRIME TOGETHER POLICY

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Stockport Homes Group (SHG) is committed to delivering the best possible services for people experiencing hate incident. SHG believes that no one should live in fear of hate incidents and will take reports seriously and treat reports of hate incidents as a priority. SHG wants customers and staff experiencing hate incidents to feel confident that positive action will be taken and encourages residents to report such incidents. This policy applies to any customer living within a SHG neighbourhood regardless of tenure.

## 2 DEFINITION OF HATE

2.1 SHG defines Hate as:

“Any act committed against a person or property that, the victim or anyone else thinks, was motivated by hostility towards someone based on their race, religion or belief, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or alternative sub-culture.”

## 3 STOCKPORT CONTEXT

3.1 Stockport was less ethnically diverse than the national average with 92% of the population identifying themselves as white in the 2011 Census compared to 86% nationally. People who describe themselves as Asian Pakistani are the largest Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) group in Stockport, around 6,600 in 2011.

3.2 Over time however, the diversity of the population is increasing and the number of people identifying themselves as from a BME group almost doubled from 2001 to 2011, to 22,500 and is likely to have increased since.

3.3 Stockport has seen an increase in both the Muslim population and people of no religion between 2001 and 2011. On the whole these populations are younger than average.

3.4 The distribution of the BAME population across Stockport is not even; the areas of Heald Green, Cheadle & Gatley and Heatons South are particularly diverse. In each of these areas there are particularly high rates of the population who identify themselves as from an Asian Pakistani or Indian background, the total BME population in these wards approached 20% in 2011.

3.5 These areas are also those with higher than average rates of people whose religion is Muslim; 50% of Muslims in Stockport live in one of these three wards. Gatley also has a community of residents whose religion is Jewish.

3.6 More specifically looking at the Stockport Homes tenant base: -

- **Ethnicity** – The majority of SHG tenants describe themselves as white British. A total of 9.9per cent of tenants describe

themselves by other categories which is on a par with the overall Borough figure which at the 2011 census was 7.9 per cent but is thought to have increased since

- **Religion** – A majority of SHG tenants describe themselves as Christian (59.2 per cent) with 5.4per cent describing themselves as being of another religious denomination. This is lower than the overall Borough figure of 63.2 per cent
- **Disability** – A total of 23per cent of SHG tenants describe themselves as disabled. This is higher than the overall Borough at 18.4% and significantly higher than England which is 17.6 per cent as a whole.
- **LGBT** – A total of 1.8per cent of Stockport Homes' residents describe themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, however this is likely to be an under reporting. The Government when introducing Civil Partnership arrangements estimated it to be less than 5 per cent and Stonewall estimate it to be 5.5 per cent.

## 4 STRATEGIC LINKS

4.1 SHG is a member of the Safer Stockport Partnership (SSP) and plays a key role in the delivery of some of the Partnerships overarching priorities The SSP Plan 2018-21 details specific measures of how the Partnership will protect vulnerable people from hate incidents.

4.2 SHG recognises that confidentiality is fundamental to developing a relationship of trust with persons who experience hate incidents and guarantee that any information provided will be in the strictest of confidence. SHG will only share information where it is absolutely necessary and will only be exchanged in line with the Safer Stockport Partnership (SSP) protocols for exchange of information and relevant protocols for both child protection and vulnerable adults.

4.3 SHG recognises that it cannot work in isolation and the causes and effects of hate incidents are wide ranging and varied and can affect persons in different ways.

4.4 SHG will therefore seek to work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that the best possible individual and family support is developed, delivered and evaluated. Some partners include but are not limited to:

- Greater Manchester Police
- Safer Stockport Partnership
- Breakthrough UK
- Social Care
- Children and Young People Services
- Stockport Safeguarding Children's Board
- Stop Hate UK, Stockport

4.5 SHG will be represented on relevant strategic groups to play an active role in tackling Hate Incidents.

4.6 In addition to being linked to the SSP priorities, the Hate Policy has clear links to many of Stockport Homes' strategies, policies and action plans, in particular:

- ASB Strategy 22-25
- ASB Policy
- Equality & Diversity Strategy & Action Plan
- Homelessness Strategy
- Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy
- Stockport Councils Statement on Equality and Diversity.
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Housing Options Procedures
- Stockport Homelessness Strategy
- People and OD policies including the Code of Conduct.

## **5 POLICY STATEMENT**

5.1 SHG seeks to create sustainable neighbourhoods whereby people from all different backgrounds and groups can exist side by side within a culture of co-operation and respect. By responding positively to hate incidents, SHG will develop a culture of zero tolerance to such incidents, thus combating exclusion and promoting people's ability to play their full part in society.

5.2 SHG will treat all reported incidents of hate very seriously and will take immediate and appropriate action whenever incidents are reported or identified. Where an incident occurs towards a member of the LGBTQ+ community, SHG will offer and arrange for an employee who identifies as part of that community to be the point of contact for taking details of what has happened. Similarly, if a racist incident occurs SHG will (so far as possible) offer and arrange for an employee of the same ethnicity to take the initial details of the complaint, if the victim so wishes

5.3 Incidents of hate can be traumatic for the victim and can lead to on-going disputes, community tension and the isolation of individual and/or families. SHG will offer support including counselling to those affected by hate incidents

5.4 SHG acknowledges that zero tolerance of hate incidents is in the best interest of the organisation, its customers, staff, and the Borough as a whole.

5.5 SHG will promote hate services online and provide an online reporting tool to make it easier for victims to come forward

5.6 A victim-centred approach will be used to ensure that customers have access to appropriate support services and feel able to work with SHG staff in

the investigation of the incident. SHG will ensure that a single point of contact deals with the case from start to finish.

5.7 SHG will use the legislative framework to ensure the protection of victims to stop the incidents repeating. This can include legal action such as injunctions

5.8 SHG will work to prevent homelessness and to helping victims of hate incidents remain in their home feeling safe. This will be done by offering and providing target hardening measures including, but not limited to, extra locks, security light and other measures.

5.9 SHG will follow any relevant child protection/vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures where it is believed a child or vulnerable adult is at risk due to incidents of hate incidents.

5.10 SHG will work with other agencies and specialist organisations to ensure that appropriate best practice is employed in the prevention of and response to hate incidents. SHG will support and encourage victims of hate to report incidents to Greater Manchester Police.

5.11 SHG recognises that encouraging more incidents being reported enables it to gauge the true scale of the issue in Stockport and enables SHG to target resources and overall may prevent further incidents occurring.

5.12 Employees are given appropriate training which covers the impact of and Stockport Homes' response to hate incidents. Staff are trained to recognise hate incidents and how to challenge and respond. In addition, support and guidance is given to employees who may be a victim of hate incidents. SHG does not condone hate incidents or incidents perpetrated by employees under any circumstances and will not treat such incidents as a purely private matter.

5.13 SHG will provide a confidential service and will not exchange any information with any other agency without the persons written consent or unless vulnerable adult or child protection issues are suspected. In these circumstances information will be exchanged in order to prevent and detect incidents and will be carried out in line with Safer Stockport Partnership information sharing protocol.

5.14 SHG will meet any access or cultural needs of the victim for example providing an interpreter or assisting those with poor literacy skills or disabilities.

5.15 SHG will map and monitor hate incidents/incidents to identify any trends. Using this information SHG will undertake targeted work to prevent incidents occurring.

## **6 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment of this policy has been undertaken and no adverse impacts have been identified. Any hate incident/incident is given priority status for investigation. This is positive preferential treatment.

6.2 There is potential differential impact for disabled customers due to possible vulnerability due to physical or mental health. This could include customers whose disability may mean they have poor literacy. The policy is linked to the ASB Policy which negates this risk as it details support available to customers to complete incident diaries. Alternatives to diaries for customers with poor literacy skills are also provided as required including the use of voice recording technology.

6.3 There is potential differential impact against BME due to language barriers where a customer's first language may not be English. The Policy again negates this risk as the ASB Policy makes provision for interpreter services and using a risk assessment matrix to establish vulnerability.

## **7 OWNERSHIP, MONITORING & REVIEW**

7.1 This Policy is owned by the Operations Directorate and will be monitored by the Operations Management Team. There is, in addition responsibility in each Directorate for the implementation of the policy.

7.2 The Policy will be reviewed in line with the Operations Management Policy and Procedure Review Schedule.

7.3 The number of Hate incident cases will be monitored quarterly, and performance will be publicised on the website.