

Exeter City Council Housing Services

Residents' Hate Crime Policy 2026 – 2031

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1.Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Exeter City Council Housing Services (ECC) zero-tolerance approach to hate crime in all its forms and our approach to managing reports of hate crime and hate incidences.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Hate Crime Policy is to strengthen our commitment to tackling hate crime and hate incidents by ensuring a victim-centred approach.

1. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The policy defines hate incidents and hate crime and associated behaviour: sets out the responsibilities of staff in relation to reporting and recording hate incidents, supporting victims and witnesses and dealing effectively with perpetrators.
- 2.2 This policy is designed to be used alongside our current Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, and our current Housing Residents' Vulnerability Policy provides guidance in the assessment of vulnerability of victims of hate incidences or hate crimes. This policy recognises that ECC Housing cannot deal with hate crimes and hate incidences alone, which is why it is important to have a multi-agency approach.
- 2.3 We will monitor hate crime incidents across our housing to identify persistent alleged perpetrators, trends and context sharing this data with partners as appropriate to improve services to tenants.
- 2.4 This policy is intended as guidance to set out a clear and effective response to deal with reports of hate incidents.

- 2.5 This policy is supported by operating procedures, guidelines and training for staff on risk assessment and action planning. This is to ensure a consistent and transparent response to all reports of a hate incident or hate crime.

3. Legal duties and statutory requirements

- 3.1 In its 'Learning from Severe Maladministration Report'¹, the Housing Ombudsman states that 'Landlords must also ensure they have robust procedures for handling distinct but sometimes related ASB issues on domestic violence, hate crime, and reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010'.
- 3.2 Under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard in the Consumer Standards it states that 'Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing'.²

4. Definition of Hate Crime and Hate Incidences

- 4.1 The police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.'³ (and for the purposes of this policy a person who identifies as nonbinary).

There is no legal definition of hostility so we (the CPS) use the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike.'

- 4.2 A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
- 4.3 Evidence of the hate element is not a requirement. People do not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related. It would be enough if another person, a witness or even a police officer thought that the incident was hate related.
- 4.4 Hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault, bullying, incitement to hatred as well as damage to property.

- 4.5 When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as hate crimes.
- 4.6 The Council's Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy sets out how we categorise and respond to incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- 4.7 Hate crime and hate incidences will be treated as Category 1 offences and a response will be made within 24 hours of the first report.

5. Implementation of the policy

- 5.1 This policy follows guidance from the Housing Ombudsman report 'On the record: Spotlight on Knowledge and Information Management'⁴ and its recommendations.
- 5.2 Staff will treat all reports seriously and confidentially and swiftly, responding to hate incidents by the next working day.
- 5.3 All staff will input data of any incidents and produce accurate, detailed reports via our housing management data system.
- 5.4 We will always treat tenants (or leaseholders) with respect and gather supporting information.
- 5.5 We will meet the victim at a location of their choosing within an agreed period to identify the facts and impacts of the incidents and complete a detailed risk assessment.
- 5.6 We will work with the police and relevant partner agencies to provide assistance, including referrals to a range of support service where appropriate.
- 5.7 Staff will investigate reports before drawing up an action plan and provide regular updates (at a frequency to be agreed) to complainants on progress made.
- 5.8 Contact with witnesses and other residents will only be made following consent from the victim.
- 5.9 Cases will be reviewed on a regular basis by senior officers and closed after discussion with the victim.

6. References

Legal duties and statutory requirements:

Equality Act 2010: Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standard Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code
(housingombudsman.org.uk)

The Care Act 2014

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Social Housing (Regulation) Act

Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Criminal Justice Act 2003

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Counter-Terrorism Security Act 2015.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Human Rights Act 1998

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Data Protection Act 2018

Related documents:

ECC Housing Strategy

ECC Tenancy Policy

ECC Housing Domestic Abuse Policy

ECC Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

ECC Safeguarding Policy

ECC Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy

ECC Residents' Vulnerabilities Policy

Footnotes:

1. [Learning from severe maladministration report – November 2024 \(housingombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housingombudsman.org.uk)
2. [Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2024 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hate-crime-in-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024)
3. <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime>
4. [What is hate crime? | Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/what-is-hate-crime/)
5. [KIM-report-v2-100523.pdf](#)

6. [Anti-social behaviour powers: statutory guidance for frontline professionals \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/anti-social-behaviour-powers-statutory-guidance-for-frontline-professionals)