

RAILWAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 The Association will not tolerate any form of harassment, and will take prompt and effective action.
- 1.2 The Association will adopt a victim centred approach. The interests of the victim are paramount and they will be treated sensitively, courteously and respectfully.
- 1.3 This policy will be implemented in accordance with the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy.

2. Implementation of the Policy

- 2.1 Harassment is deliberate or intentional behaviour that is targeted at individuals or distinct groups because of their particular ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion. It is the interference with a person's comfort or safety. It is persistent and recurs.
- 2.2 Harassment can include physical or verbal abuse, intimidation, attacks on or damage to property including graffiti.
- 2.3 The Association's tenancy agreement clearly states in Clause 3 (6) that residents must not cause or permit any form of harassment on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability, in their home, within the locality of their home, or to any employee or contractor of the Association.
- 2.4 The Association has procedures for dealing with complaints of harassment and staff will work within the agreed time-scales of the procedure.
- 2.5 Complaints of harassment may be received verbally or in writing from the complainant or someone acting on their behalf. A complaint may also be anonymous.
- 2.6 Every report of harassment will be recorded and acknowledged in writing. (Anonymous complaints will be recorded but not acknowledged).
- 2.7 The victim and any witnesses will be interviewed, supported and a detailed assessment will be made.
- 2.8 Every report of harassment will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be agreed with the victim.

2. Implementation of the Policy, continued

- 2.9 All complaints and information will be treated as confidential. This will not be shared with other parties, or a victim's identity made known to another party, without their consent. However, information may be shared with a statutory agency such as the Police if this may help to prevent or detect a crime or serious incident or if there is a child protection issue.
- 2.10 Mediation will be arranged if this may resolve the problem.
- 2.11 The Association will, where appropriate, initiate legal action against the perpetrator for breach of tenancy conditions and/or seek other legal remedies on behalf of victims.
- 2.12 Consideration will also be given to offering a victim a priority transfer to alternative accommodation, if appropriate.
- 2.13 The provision of appropriate security measures, repairing damage to the victim's home, and the removal of graffiti will be undertaken promptly.
- 2.14 Residents who are responsible for deliberate damage as a result of harassment will be recharged the full cost of the damage.
- 2.15 The Association will have awareness of multi agency forums, local agencies and services so that there is a source of information and advice, support for the victim and/or to investigate the harassment should an incident occur.
- 2.16 A victim satisfaction survey will be carried out to find out if the victim was satisfied with the action taken by the Association, if there are ways in which the Association's response could be improved and to check that there has not been any further harassment.

3. Responsibility

- 3.1 The Director of Housing Services is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

4. Monitoring

- 4.1 Incidences of harassment will be reported to the next meeting of the Housing Services Committee.

5. Review

5.1 This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis, including consultation with residents.

6. Appeal

6.1 There is a right of appeal against any decision made by the Association in relation to dealing with harassment. An appeal can be made through the Association's complaints procedure.

This policy applies to the beneficiaries of Joseph Hornby Stockdale Almshouses.

November 2007

This policy can be made available on request in other languages, large type, Braille or in audio format.