

Dealing with racism, discrimination and harassment

For customers

We follow the ethos of the Code of Practice for Racial Equality in Housing and the Respect Agenda in dealing with racism and other forms of harassment.

Our Respect team supports this approach, through which harassment is a breach of the company's tenancy conditions. All claims of harassment will be fully investigated. The company will work with partners to provide support to victims of harassment and take action against perpetrator(s).

Under our guidelines for tackling anti-social behaviour we will investigate and respond to claims of harassment on the grounds of:

- Race
- Disability
- Age
- Sexuality
- Gender

Harassment is not confined to physical attacks on people or damage to property. Verbal abuse and other forms of behaviour are also included.

Our allocations policy provides that additional priority can be given where it is necessary to protect the safety of an individual or family. This clause is particularly relevant in relation to cases of harassment.

Racism

We have adopted the definition of a racist incident recommended by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report. This states that **'a racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'**.

Our racial harassment policy aims to:

- Achieve a "Positive Impact on Communities" by promoting positive relationships in neighbourhoods, and reducing racial harassment;
- Achieve this by working within the ethos of the Code of Practice for Racial Equality in Housing and the Respect Agenda;
- Reduce racial harassment and the fear it can cause by and to adopting a zero tolerance approach to abuse of tenants and staff;
- Use effective methods in preventing and tackling racial harassment including:
 - taking legal action as a last resort
 - ensuring that appropriate resources are available to deal with this issue
 - supporting witnesses
 - Fostering a culture where residents feel able to report racial harassment to Amber Valley Housing.
- Proactively work with ethnic minority residents and groups to provide support and to improve services;
- Monitor performance, and to ensure that our approach provides value for money;
- Act fairly in matters relating to racial harassment, not treating anyone unfairly because of their race, colour, ethnic and national origin, nationality, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV/Aids status, responsibility for dependants or age.

If you would like to see the full version of the Racial Harassment Policy please contact us.

Employees

The company is opposed to all forms of discrimination and harassment and will give support and assistance to all victims of such behaviour.

Discrimination and harassment is a breach of the company's policies - action will be taken against any employee or contractor who is proven to have harassed, discriminated or victimised others.

Training will be given to employees, and board directors to enable them to identify and deal with all forms of discrimination and harassment. Employees who consider they are suffering discrimination or harassment may pursue a grievance through the company's grievance procedure which covers investigating and managing issues of alleged discrimination or harassment.

A "whistle blowers" charter is included within the employee "Code of Conduct" to protect those employees who need to report misgivings or more serious compliance, legal or other issues.

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