

# Housing Services Hate Crime Policy 2025-2028

## Service Area

Housing – Housing Services

## Policy Owner

Housing Services Area Housing Manager

## Policy Category

**Regulatory** - required to demonstrate compliance with landlord statutory duties, Regulator of Social Housing standards, and Housing Ombudsman requirements.

## Version controls:

| Version | Category   | Trigger | Review Cycle | Author                                | Date             |
|---------|------------|---------|--------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1.0     | Regulatory | New     | 3 years      | Housing Services Area Housing Manager | 01 February 2026 |
|         |            |         |              |                                       |                  |
|         |            |         |              |                                       |                  |

If you require this policy in another format or language, please contact the Housing Service by emailing [housing@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:housing@winchester.gov.uk) or calling **01962 848 400**

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out Winchester City Council Housing Services approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to hate crime affecting its residents. It ensures victims are supported, perpetrators are held accountable, and communities are safeguarded.

We acknowledge that hate crime is a form of antisocial behaviour, and we will deal with all hate crime incidents in line with our Antisocial Behaviour policy and Procedures.

Where a hate crime is suspected, we will always encourage victims to contact the Police as the lead agency for criminal investigation. The Council will work in partnership to support victims, share information lawfully, and take tenancy enforcement action where appropriate

We will not tolerate hate crime in any form and will take robust action against perpetrators while recognising and supporting the needs of victims

This Policy is supported by the Hate Crime Procedure 2025–2028, which sets out how Housing Services implements this Policy in practice, including operational processes, risk assessment, victim support, and escalation.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Winchester City Council tenants, staff, contractors, and partner agencies acting on behalf of the Council.

This Policy covers hate crimes and hate incidents based on race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identity, or any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

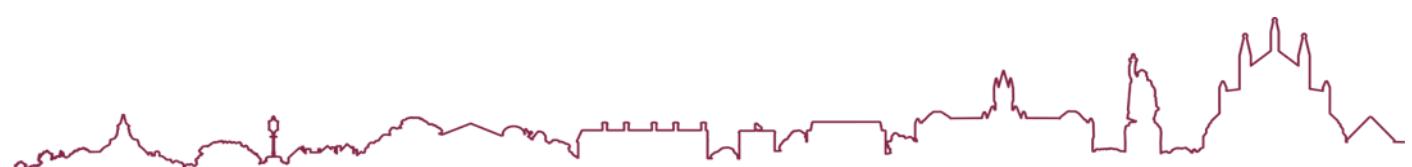
This scope aligns with the Hate Crime Procedure 2025–2028, which details the roles, responsibilities, and steps for Housing Officers, contractors, managing agents, and partner agencies in responding to hate crime and hate incidents

**Hate Crime:** “Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility, prejudice based on a person’s race or perceived race; religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability; and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.”

**Hate Incident:** “Any incident which the victim, or anyone else thinks, is based on someone’s prejudice towards them based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or because they are transgender. Not all hate incidents will amount to criminal offences, but it is equally important that they are reported.

## Our Policy Statement

Winchester City Council Housing Service is committed to ensuring that every resident can enjoy their home and community in safety, free from fear, intimidation, or discrimination. Hate crime is



unacceptable, will not be tolerated, and will be treated as a priority.

We are committed to:

- Placing victims at the centre of our response.
- Acting quickly and proportionately to reports of hate crime.
- Working in partnership with police and specialist agencies.
- Taking enforcement action against perpetrators where appropriate.
- Promote reporting, provide awareness, and community cohesion.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

| <b>Roles</b>                                   | <b>Responsibility</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Housing Officers/ASB Officer</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Receive, record, and triage all hate crime and hate incident reports.</li><li>- Complete risk and vulnerability assessments and contact victims.</li><li>- Lead investigations, evidence collection, and communication with victims and alleged perpetrators.</li><li>- Agree and review action plans, ensuring regular updates.</li><li>- Make referrals for support for the victims and their household members.</li><li>- Liaise with Police, Community Safety, and partner agencies as needed.</li><li>- Escalate high-risk cases to Team Leaders, Safeguarding, MARAC, or the Community Safety Partnership.</li></ul> |
| <b>Area Service Managers/ Service Managers</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide case supervision, quality assurance, and oversight of risk management.</li><li>- Approve legal actions, referrals, and case closures.</li><li>- Ensure consistency with policy, safeguarding, and equality requirements.</li><li>- Oversee data quality, reporting, and staff training in hate crime awareness and response.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Residents and Tenants</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Abide by tenancy conditions.</li><li>- Not engage in hate-related or discriminatory behaviour.</li><li>- Report hate incidents promptly and cooperate with investigations.</li><li>- Engage with support or behaviour interventions as required.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Complainants / Victims</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Report hate incidents clearly and as soon as possible.</li><li>- Provide information or evidence where possible to support investigations.</li><li>- Work with the Council on agreed action plans and safeguarding assessments.</li><li>- Engage with support services and receive regular updates on progress and outcomes.</li></ul>   |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Partner Agencies</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work jointly with the Council to investigate and manage hate crime.</li> <li>- Share information lawfully under data protection and safeguarding protocols.</li> <li>- Participate in MARAC, MAPS, or Community Safety Partnership processes as appropriate.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Safeguarding Leads</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide oversight of cases involving children, young people, or adults at risk.</li> <li>- Ensure compliance with safeguarding legislation and internal policy.</li> <li>- Support staff in making timely and appropriate referrals.</li> </ul>                         |
| <b>Community Safety Team</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with Tenancy Services on cross-tenure hate incidents.</li> <li>- Coordinate multi-agency responses and prevention work through the Community Safety Partnership.</li> </ul>  |

Operational delivery of these roles is detailed in the Hate Crime Procedure 2025–2028, which provides step-by-step guidance on receiving reports, risk assessment, support, investigation, and enforcement.

## Reporting Anti-social Behaviour

Tenants can report Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) through a range of accessible channels. The Council aims to make reporting straightforward, supportive, and responsive so that residents feel confident raising concerns.

## Emergencies

If the situation involves a crime in progress, immediate risk, or threat to life, residents must contact the Police on 999.

For non-emergency policing matters (noise, harassment, drug activity), residents should contact 101.

## Telephone Reporting non-emergencies

Tenants can contact the Council's Customer Service Centre by calling 01962 848 400.

Details will be passed to the Housing Services Team to be logged and triaged.

## Email Reporting

Residents may email [housingtenancy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:housingtenancy@winchester.gov.uk) to report ASB concerns about a tenant, victims or alleged perpetrators.

Email reports should include key details such as dates, times, location, the nature of the issue, and any known individuals involved. Officers will acknowledge the report and advise of next steps.

## Online Reporting

ASB can be reported online using the Council's form, which also allows Tenants and residents to upload information or supporting details.

Submissions generate an acknowledgement and a case reference number for follow-up.

For full operational guidance on receiving, triaging, and recording hate crime and hate incident reports, please refer to the Hate Crime Procedure 2025–2028.

## In-Person Reporting

Residents may speak to a Housing Officer directly by visiting the Council offices Monday to Friday, 10am–3pm or the Housing Services Team are available Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-430pm

This option can be particularly useful for vulnerable residents, those needing support to describe the issue, or individuals who prefer face-to-face communication.

## Policy Principles

Winchester City Council is committed to providing a timely, sensitive, and robust response to all reports of hate crime and hate incidents. We will act decisively to protect victims, prevent recurrence, and hold perpetrators accountable.

The following are our key commitments:

- All hate crime cases will be recorded and managed as **Category A (High Risk)** under the Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure.
- All reports of hate crime or hate incidents will be treated as urgent and prioritised for immediate assessment
- Victims will be contacted to offer reassurance, support, and initial safeguarding
- A risk assessment and personalised action plan will be agreed setting out actions, support options, and communication arrangements.
- Regular case updates will be provided until the case is resolved, with more frequent contact where risk or vulnerability requires.
- High-risk or complex cases will be **escalated without delay** to the Community Safety Partnership, MARAC, or for legal enforcement action, in line with statutory powers and partnership protocols.

Where appropriate, cases will be jointly managed through multi-agency meetings to ensure coordinated support and enforcement.

Victims and witnesses will be offered tailored support, safety planning, and regular updates. This includes signposting to Victim Support, ASB Help, and specialist community organisations

All cases will be managed in full accordance with the Council's Hate Crime Procedure, Safeguarding Policy, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, ensuring fairness, dignity, and proportionality at every stage.

The detailed operational steps for risk assessment, early support, safety measures, action planning, multi-agency coordination, case review, and closure are set out in the Hate Crime Procedure 2025–2028

## **How we record incidents and information management**

When you report a problem, we record it on our secure housing case system.

We only collect and share information that is relevant, necessary, and proportionate.

We follow the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Council's Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

Sometimes we work with other agencies (for example, the police or support services). We will only share your information with them if it is safe, legal and will help protect people or resolve the issue.

## **Resident Involvement**

This policy has been developed and will continue to be reviewed in consultation with tenants, in line with Winchester City Council's Tenant Partnership and Inclusion Plan.

Feedback gathered through surveys and focus groups contributed to this final version. A summary of consultation feedback and responses is available on request

For further information on how to be involved please visit our webpage.

## **Winchester City Council Complaints Policy**

Complaints will be handled in line with Winchester City Council's Housing Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, which set out a clear, fair, and accessible process for resolving complaints.

You can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- By completing the online complaints form
- By email to: [customerservice@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:customerservice@winchester.gov.uk)
- By telephone: 01962 848 400
- In writing to: Winchester City Council, Colebrook Street, Winchester, SO23 9LJ
- By speaking directly to any council officer

If you remain dissatisfied after our response, you can escalate your complaint to the **Housing Ombudsman**, an independent service that reviews housing complaints across England. We aim to make the complaints process straightforward, fair, and transparent.

## Recording and Information Management

When you report a problem, we record it on our secure housing case system.

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Sometimes we work with other agencies (for example, the police or support services). We will only share your information with them if it is safe, legal and will help protect people or resolve the issue.

## Performance Monitoring and Learning

We regularly check how well we are supporting safe and happy neighbourhoods by looking at:

- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) especially how safe residents feel in their neighbourhood.
- How quickly, fairly, and effectively we deal with cases and outcomes.
- Annual reports on ASB performance and learning will be shared with senior management and tenant panels.”
- Feedback, complaints and compliments from residents.

We learn from every case. If something could be done better, we share that learning with staff and update our ways of working.

We also review complaints and decisions from the Housing Ombudsman to make sure we follow best practice.

## Equality and Safeguarding Considerations

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and feel safe at home. We also ensure reasonable adjustments are made for residents with additional needs or vulnerabilities

Please refer to our Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for full details.

We follow the Equality Act 2010 (**PSED**) and make sure we consider people's individual needs and circumstances - whether they are victims, witnesses, or accused of a Hate Crime.

We only take legal or formal action when it is fair and proportionate to do so.

If we think anyone (adult or child) is at risk of harm, we will always put their safety first and follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

## Related Policies and Legislation

## Legislation

- Housing Act 1985, 1996
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Noise Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Protection from Harassment Act
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Safeguarding Adults Act (Care Act) 2014
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Regulators' Code 2014

## Regulation and Standards

Regulator of Social Housing – Consumer Standards (2024):

- Neighbourhood and Community Standard – expectations for safe, clean neighbourhoods and collaborative working.
- Tenancy Standard – responsibilities for tenancy management and supporting positive behaviour.
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – ensures openness with residents.
- Safety and Quality Standard – requires safe, well-maintained homes.
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 – Strengthens proactive regulation, consumer standards, and Housing Ombudsman powers.
- Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code (2024) – Sets requirements for fairness and effective complaint responses.
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) – Especially TSMs relating to neighbourhood management, ASB, and overall satisfaction.

## Related Policies

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy (Adults and Children)
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Complaints Policy

## Governance and Review

The Housing Services Manager is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if legislation, guidance, or best practice changes.

All housing staff are trained on anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, equality and legal powers, and they regularly update their training to keep residents safe.

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Adult at Risk** - An adult who has care and support needs and may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, or harm, as defined in the Care Act 2014.

**Complainant** - A person who reports a hate incident or hate crime to the Council.

**Perpetrator** - A person alleged or proven to have committed a hate crime, hate incident or related antisocial behaviour.

**Community Safety Partnership (CSP)** - A statutory multi-agency partnership that brings together the Council, Police, Health, Fire, Probation, and other agencies to reduce crime, disorder, and protect communities.

**Emergency** - Situations requiring an immediate police response, reported via 999, where there is imminent risk of harm or a crime in progress.

**MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)** - A meeting of agencies to manage the safety of high-risk victims of domestic abuse. Hate crime cases may be referred where domestic abuse or significant risk is present.

**MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements)** - Arrangements to manage sexual and violent offenders who may pose a risk to the public.

**MAPS (Multi-Agency Problem Solving)** - Local multi-agency meetings that coordinate responses to complex ASB, safeguarding, community safety and repeat victimisation concerns.