

What is harassment?

Someone may be harassed for a number of reasons, for example because of their sexuality, gender, race, disability, religion or age. Harassment takes many forms, including violence, threats, abuse and damage to property. It can involve verbal abuse and name calling, offensive graffiti or post. It may cause physical injury, mental stress, anxiety or insecurity.

The different types of harassment include:

- **Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment may involve physical assault, verbal abuse or threats, damage to property or continual and unwanted sexual advances. It may come from someone you know, a partner or ex-partner, or from a stranger.
- **Racial harassment:** Racial harassment is hostility towards people because of their colour or ethnic origin. It includes physical assault, verbal abuse and name calling, threats, damage to property, racist graffiti, racist letters or posters.
- **Harassment because of religious belief**
Our tenants are of many cultures and faiths. All tenants must feel free to follow the faith they chose without being harassed.
- **Harassment of Lesbians or gay men**
Lesbian and gay men have the same rights to live free from harassment as other tenants. Harassment of lesbian and gay tenants because of their sexuality is not acceptable.
- **Harassment of the physically or mentally disabled**
People who are disabled have the same rights to live free from harassment as other tenant. Many of these tenants are classed as 'vulnerable' in housing law and we have a duty to protect their interests.

- **Harassment of the young or elderly**

Many of our tenants are young. They make a valuable contribution to the community. We also have some elderly tenants who may live alone and can easily be made to feel insecure. Harassment of young or elderly tenants because of their age is not acceptable.

Safety and confidentiality

- Your safety and privacy are our top priorities. We realise that every situation is different and that you are the one who can best decide what is right for you;
- We will do whatever we can to support you. However, if you discuss the options with us but then feel unable to take the matter further, we will fully respect your wishes;
- You can always come back to us if you change your mind; and
- Please remember that we will treat anything you say in the strictest confidence and we would not normally discuss your situation with another agency or anyone else unless you clearly asked us to do so.

How can we help. We will:

- Listen to your concerns;
- Discuss options with you;
- Put you in touch with key agencies; and
- Take robust action against any tenant that harasses another tenant or their visitors.