



RACIAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Introduction

A key aim of the Government's Communities Plan (Sustainable Communities Building for the Future) is to improve the quality of life for all and racial harassment is recognised as a significant barrier to achieving this goal.

It is widely accepted that there is often an under reporting of racial harassment incidents. Midsummer is committed to supporting residents affected by racial harassment and raising public awareness of its commitment to combating this.

Policy Statement

Midsummer has a corporate commitment to dealing with all forms of racial harassment and will play a full and positive role in the community, working with others to prevent and eradicate racial harassment wherever it occurs.

This policy supports Midsummer's Equality and Diversity Policy and defines how Midsummer will deal with incidents of racial harassment involving its residents.

The policy confirms Midsummer's commitment to deal with all incidents involving its' residents promptly and positively ensuring that they are able to live in their property free from racial harassment, intimidation and attack.

Midsummer condemns all forms of racial harassment and will use all available powers and resources to deal effectively with individuals, groups and perpetrators involved in a racially motivated incident, where either the person suffering harassment or the perpetrator is a resident, or a visitor to a Midsummer property.

In addition, Midsummer will:

- take a victim centred approach when responding to cases of racial harassment
- ensure that all employees are trained to identify the needs of victims and witnesses of racial incidents, so that they can provide a responsive and effective service whilst respecting the need for sensitivity and confidentiality
- take appropriate action, taking into account the nature and severity of the incident and the options available, including working with the police. The full range of civil legal remedies will be considered including injunctions, anti-social behaviour orders, tenancy demotion orders and possession proceedings.
- encourage victims and witnesses to report all incidents of racial harassment by publicising and promoting its policies and procedures and offering appropriate support.

- respond positively to any reports of alleged racist incidents in a flexible and sensitive manner and ensure that they are accurately recorded, investigated and monitored in accordance with the Association's service standards, policies and procedures.
- confirm the number of cases reported as part of the quarterly housing management performance report, with an annual report to Board to summarise the number of cases reported, final outcomes, geographical location, service standards achieved and financial cost of any repairs to the property including any additional security provided.
- actively seek feedback from groups and individuals on the impact of the policy
- continue to use its Head Office as a local Racial Harassment Reporting centre
- comply with all legislation and regulations relating to racial harassment and will refer where appropriate to relevant codes of practice

Definition

Midsummer has acknowledged and adopted the definition of a racist incident from the MacPherson report:

“A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”

In addition, Midsummer acknowledges the definition of racial harassment used by the Commission of Racial Equality:

“Racial harassment is violence, which may be verbal or physical and which includes attacks on property as well as on the person, suffered by individuals or groups because of their colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origins, when the victim believes that the perpetrator was acting on racial grounds and/or there is evidence of racism”

Legislation

In fulfilling its obligations under this Policy, the Association will have regard to the following legislation:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 and The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Protection from Harassment Act 1977
- The Protection from Eviction Act 1997
- The Housing Act 1988
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Police Reform Act 2002

Linked Policies

- Equality and Diversity
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Protection from abuse
- Tenancy Management

- Rental Allocation
- Tenure
- Resident Involvement
- Harassment

Training

All relevant staff will receive training on this Policy and its supporting Procedure.

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