



## HARRASMENT POLICY

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Karin housing will treat any harassment as a serious matter. We will adopt a victim centered approach when investigating allegations of harassment and all investigations will be conducted carefully and sensitively.

1.2 Victims will be given support and practical help to ensure they continue to live peacefully in their homes, and positive action taken against perpetrators of harassment wherever possible.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we effectively prevent harassment, supporting customers who are being harassed and taking action against perpetrators.

### 2.0 Legal framework

2.1 In tackling harassment, Karin is committed to complying with relevant legislation and standards:

- Housing Act 1996
- Protection from eviction act 1997
- Crime and disorder act 1998
- Disability Discrimination act 1995
- Anti social behaviour Act 2003
- Race relations act 1976/race relation (amendments ) Act 2000
- Police reform act 2002
- Commission for racial equality code of practice on rented housing 1991
- Human rights act 1998

### **3.0 Policy statement**

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we effective in preventing harassment, supporting customers who are being harassed and taking action against perpetrators

3.2 Karin aims to achieve this by:

- Taking steps of prevent all forms of harassment
- Using a victim- centered approach
- Taking action against any person responsible for harassment
- Working with agencies to help provide support for victims
- Sharing information with partners
- Meeting all data protection confidentiality requirements
- Providing appropriate training
- Providing tenancy support

3.3 In order to support and protect customers experiencing harassment, we will:

- Providing a supportive environment to encourage reporting
- Giving information and advice to support victims
- Take action against perpetrators where possible
- Provide a range of options to support victims
- Liaise with relevant agencies where are unable to help
- Always ensure customers safety and confidentiality

### **4.0 Implication**

#### **Definition**

- 4.1 Karin recognizes harassment may occur based upon an individual's (or group's) race religion, gender disability, sexual orientation, illness or age.
  - 4.2 However, Karin recognises harassment may occur for any other reason other than those listed in 4.1 above so we will initially investigating any case as harassment if the victim or anyone else perceives it to be harassment
  - 4.3 Upon further investigation, we will make a judgment on whether to continue to manage the case of harassment.
  - 4.4 Harassment can be an isolated incident or series of incidents, there may also be no motivating factor.
- 4.5 Act of harassment include (but not limited to):
- Racist behavior or language
  - Hate crime

- Actual or threatened violence
- Abusive or insulting words or insulting or literature
- Behavior that interferes with the peace , comfort or convenience of others

## **Enforcement**

4.6 Taking action against perpetrators of harassment sends out a clear message to other residents that we will not tolerate such behaviour.

4.7 the option we choose to take will vary from case to case and can depend on:

- The type of behavior and its impact on others
- The severity and duration of the harassment
- The age of the perpetrators
- Any vulnerability suffered by the perpetrator
- Whether the perpetrator is a resident a resident or non-resident
- The evidence available to support a case
- The wishes of the complainant

4.8 For harassment cases, Karin will use the full range of tools available to tackle anti-social behaviour , as well as:

- Injunctions
- Possession action
- Criminal proceedings

4.9 Where the perpetrator is not a tenant the Anti –social behaviour Act 2003 allows landlords to grant an injunction against anyone who threatens to or engages in conduct capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance to any person

4.10 If the alleged perpetrator is a tenant of another Register Social landlord, we can request that they action against the perpetrator.

## **Where no perpetrator is identified**

4.11 Instance where no perpetrator can be identified , or the person being harassed will not identify the perpetrator, we will liaise with the police to increase their profile in the area, give warnings to possible perpetrators and even visit all tenants stating that harassment will be dealt with

4.12 similarly, we will send a general warning letter to all tenants in the area or contact the tenant association to communicate the message that we take harassment seriously and will take action.

## **Working with others**

4.13 Local authorities have a variety of roles to play in tackling harassment and have various powers to enforce notices against nuisance (under the Environment Protection Act 1990, control of pollution Act 1974 and the local Government Act 1972).

4.14 Many local authorities have race units, which may be able to provide support for tenants being harassed. The race unit may be able to access counselors, interpreters, security measures and even surveillance equipment in the most serious cases.

4.15 Local authorities have a strategic role to play on combating harassment and some have a set up inter agency forums to devise borough wide strategies and monitor incidents in their arrears .

Where such forums exist Karin will co-operate and participate in such forums.

4.16 On consortium schemes we will work effectively wit other landlord partners and stakeholders including local safer neighborhood teams to eradicate and tackle harassment including joint interviews, joint visits and joints action where appropriate.

### Security

4.17 Important to the security of a property can act both as a deterrent to criminals and to make vulnerable residents feel safe and sure within and outside their properties.

This can include proper window locks, door entry system, the gating of alleyways where people might congregate etc.

4.18 Where appropriate, advice will sought from local police and crime prevention advisors.

### Support and referrals

4.19 We will refer to specialist agencies, where relevant, who provide specialist help and support to tackle harassment and work with the local agencies and community groups to help provide support for victims of harassment.

### Professional witnesses

4.20 Where necessary Karin will employ professional witnesses for the purpose of gathering evidence.

4.21 This is generally appropriate where harassment is taking place but we are unable to obtain evidence, or where people are too afraid to come and act as witnesses.

### Transfer

4.22 Karin may award a management transfer status if there have been physical assaults or a life endangering incident, or where incident or the complainant is no longer able to live in the home.

4.23 Where emergency accommodation is required, Karin will support residents and provide comprehensive advice on housing options including approaches to local authorities and reciprocals.

### **Service standards**

4.24 we will make initial contact within 24 hours for harassment cases.

4.25 we will remove offensive or discriminatory graffiti within 24 hours or being notified.

4.26 We will arrange for complainants to speak to staff in a private and safe environment.

4.27 Where possible we will provide staff of the same sex and /or ethnic origin where requested.

4.28 We will work with each customer to agree an action plan for managing their case. This will include agreeing on the method and frequency of communication throughout the case.

4.29 we will review all open cases after 3 months. If we feel a case should be closed, we will discuss this with the customers and give them an opportunity to appeal.

4.30 After a case is closed we will conduct a satisfaction survey in writing

4.31 We will deal with victims in a sympathetic and supportive manner and treat all information as confidential.

4.32 We will take legal action where appropriate, advising victims of their rights.

4.33 where we are unable to resolve cases of harassment ourselves, we will work with other agencies to find effective and quick solutions.

### **5.0 Monitoring**

5.1 Harassment cases will be reported in accordance with Anti-social behaviour policy.

### **6.0 Equality and diversity**

6.1 It is essential to recognize that customers of all races, ages, religions, gender, sexual orientation and disability should be treated equally and fairly.

6.2 we will initially investigate any case as harassment if the victim or anyone else perceives it to be harassment

6.3 offensive or discriminatory graffiti will be removed within 24 hours of being notified.

6.4 All customers will have access to this document upon request or from our website [www.karin-ha.org.uk](http://www.karin-ha.org.uk)

6.5 This document can be translated or provided in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, audio) upon request.

6.6 Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff.

## **7.0 Responsibility**

7.1 It is the responsibility of the Chef Executive to ensure that this policy is in place.

7.2 The Head of housing is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

7.3 The head housing is also responsible for ensuring that staffs involved in the tackling harassment are trained.

## **8.0 consultations**

8.1 This policy will be reviewed in consultation with resident at least once every two years