

# Harassment



east  
end HOMES

## WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

Harassment takes many forms. It is defined as “unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found to be objectionable and offensive and that might frighten or intimidate”.

People who are being harassed often feel isolated and stressed, and this can affect all aspects of their everyday lives. It is, therefore, important to seek help as soon as possible, if you feel you are being harassed.

EastendHomes aim is to ensure that all complaints of harassment involving residents are tackled promptly and positively. It is committed to combating all forms of harassment including, racial harassment, sexual harassment, harassment against people living with HIV or AIDS and harassment of disabled or gay and lesbian residents.

Differences of attitude and culture or misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT – which could include...**

- any behaviour which patronises, intimidates or offends, e.g. remarks, looks, jokes or offensive language, behaviour which makes people feel viewed as sexual objects and which causes offence, even if unintended.
- Deliberate potentially objectionable physical contact which the person has not consented to or had the opportunity to object to.

Although this most often involves women being harassed by men, this policy applies equally to harassment occurring between people of the same gender, or of men by women.

### **RACIAL HARASSMENT – which could include...**

- any behaviour which causes discomfort, intimidates or offends or which incites others to do so - derogatory names, insults, racist jokes or ridiculing cultural difference.
- the display or circulation of offensive material, including racist graffiti, electronic mail or information published through the Internet.
- verbal abuse and threats of physical attack.

### **PERSONAL HARASSMENT – which could include...**

- behaviour which makes direct or indirect reference to disability or impairment - and thus causes discomfort, patronises, insults or offends people with a physical, sensory or mental disability
- behaviour which makes direct or indirect reference to religion or culture thereby causing discomfort or offence
- repeated gibes in reference to personal traits, appearance or sexual orientation
- Pressure to become involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour

### **BULLYING—which could include...**

Bullying is the misuse of power or position to persistently criticise and condemn; to openly humiliate and undermine an individual's ability until the person becomes so fearful that their confidence crumbles and they lose belief in themselves. These attacks on the individual are normally sudden, irrational, unpredictable and usually unfair. Bullying could include: verbal and/or physical intimidation - threats, shouting, derisory remarks, often in front of others

- spreading malicious rumours
- written messages that are defamatory, derisory or threatening

### **OTHER COMPLAINTS – which could include...**

- Damage to property
- Vandalism and offensive graffiti
- Threatening with animals

### **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Your Tenancy agreement (Clause 4.6) states that “you, your family and your visitors must not harass any other tenants or their visitors, our employees or contractors or any other person in the local area on the grounds of race, colour, religion, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, appearance or mental or physical capability. Any breach of this clause, we can take legal action to evict you.”

### **OUR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- We will take a victim centred approach
- We will normally respond to complaints of harassment within 3 days
- (24 hours for urgent cases).
- We will investigate all complaints and take them seriously.

- We will discuss timescales with you and agree with you how to deal with the situation.
- We will arrange support for victims and witnesses.
- We will keep you ( and the perpetrator) advised in writing at all times of all developments.
- We will record and monitor all complaints of harassment and liaise with other agencies
- We will work with the police and other agencies to stop harassment.

### **WE WILL ALSO HELP YOU BY:**

#### **Stage 1 – Mediation:**

We can help by talking through the problems with you and the perpetrator. We can also refer the case to an independent mediation service.

#### **Stage 2 – Gather Evidence:**

If we can't resolve the complaint by talking through them or mediation, we will need to gather evidence of harassment.

#### **Stage 3 – Take Further Action:**

If the evidence that we gather confirms harassment has occurred, we will then take appropriate action against the perpetrator.

**Any resident who is subject to harassment is encouraged to report any complaint of harassment to the Police immediately and then to us at East End Homes.**

**You are encouraged to report any complaint of harassment to the Police immediately and then to us at EastEndHomes.**



National Domestic Violence Help Line (24hr)	0808 2000 247
<i>NSPCC Child Protection Helpline</i>	<i>0808 800 5000</i>
Shelterline	0808 800 4444
Victim Supportline	0845 30 30 900
Police Community Safety Unit	020 7275 4757
Street Matters! For Young Women	020 7791 9600
Tower Hamlets Women's Aid	07000 782 539
Tower Hamlets Victim Support (9:30-5:00pm)	020 8983 6454
Tower Hamlets Asian Women's Aid	020 7790 9955
Haven (Rape & Sexual Assault)	020 7247 4787
Mens Advice Line	0808 801 0327
Broken Rainbow	0845 260 4460
Rights of Women (Legal Advice)	020 7251 6577
Women's Trust	020 8522 7856
Isis (Women's Drug Service)	020 7426 0399
<i>Tower Hamlets Council Services</i>	
Homeless & Advice Service	020 7364 7474
<i>Children's Social Care Team</i>	
Advice and Assessment Team (E3 and E14)	020 7364 5606
Advice and Assessment Team (E1 and E2)	020 7364 3859
Council Out of Hours Services	020 7364 4079
Samaritans	08457 909 090

**Remember Harassment is a crime. Always phone 999 in an emergency.**

**Language Options and translations –caring for your needs**

Copies of this document can be made available, on request, in a range of formats including:

**Translation (including Bengali, Somali and other community languages)**

- Braille
- Large Print
- Audio Tape

To request a different format, please contact your local housing Centre.

**Other Leaflets available include:**

- Rents**
- Repairs**
- Customer care**
- Estate Services**
- Anti-Social Behaviour**
- Lettings Service**

**Our services are confidential, free and available to everyone.**

**How to contact us:**

**EastendHomes**

**Tayside House, First Floor, 31 Pepper Street, London E14 9RP**

**Telephone: 0207 517 4700 Fax: 0207 515 0218**

**Email: via the website: [www.eastendhomes.net](http://www.eastendhomes.net)**

