

Hate & Mate Incidents & Crime Policy

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Policy Owner	Emma Morgan, Head of Housing & Support
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Approved by	Director for Customers and Communities (Deputy CEO)

Version Control
Version 1 - New policy, replacing Racial Harassment Policy
Version 2 -

Changes Made	Section	Date
New policy	All	01 st October 2024

Introduction

Caredig believes that everyone has the right to their chosen lifestyle as long as this does not affect the quality of life of others. This means being tolerant, accepting and respecting the needs and choices of other people. Caredig has an important role in preventing, reducing and tackling Hate and Mate Incidents and Crime for residents, communities and Caredig staff. We recognise the effect that Hate and Mate Incidents and Crime have on the quality of life of residents and we are committed to tackling all incidents through a robust, victim centred approach.

This Policy affirms the Caredig's commitment to deal with all incidents of Hate and Mate Incidents Crime on an individual and community level. It is the policy's intention to ensure that victims are able to live and work in any Caredig property and scheme without fear of harassment, intimidation or attack.

Our Values

In applying this policy/strategy, we will be guided by our values. Our values determine how we behave towards our customers, our colleagues, our partners and our work: -

Kind - We recognise that relationships are at the heart of everything we do, at the heart of good relationships is kindness

Innovative - we continuously strive to be the best we can whilst seeking creative ideas to improve and grow

Trusting - We trust people to do the right thing, because good relationships are built on mutual trust and respect

Accountable - we accept the responsibilities of our role and are accountable for our actions and for doing what is right.

Definitions

- Hate crime is a criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived:
 - Disability
 - Race or ethnicity
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender identity
- A Hate Incident is a criminal or non-criminal incident which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived:
 - Disability
 - Race or ethnicity

- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Mate Incidents and Crime usually means befriending vulnerable people in order to take advantage of them, exploit or abuse them. It is regarded as a form of disability hate crime or age hate crime but can also resemble cases of domestic abuse or violence. Victims of mate crime are often vulnerable due to learning disabilities, mental health problems or illness, or age (targeting vulnerable older or younger people)
- For the purpose of this policy 'Allocated Officer' can be a Community Housing Officer, Extra Care Manager, Support Worker, Service Coordinator, Team Leader or Operational Manager.
- For the purpose of this policy, 'Tenant' is used to describe the contract holder.

Caredig approach

Caredig will take a zero-tolerance approach to Hate Incidents, Mate Crime and The Crime and will work with the Police, Victim Support and other appropriate partners to investigate the alleged instances and occurrences. Caredig will take the appropriate action to tackle the perpetrators.

We acknowledge that the hate or prejudice element of an incident may have a different effect on some victims in comparison to general anti-social behaviour. Hate Incidents are always extremely personal in nature and target the very core of people's identity. This may lead to increased vulnerability. Hate Incidents will often have a direct or indirect impact on whole families and communities, which may lead to future community tensions. We will adopt an holistic approach to prevent escalation.

Perception by anyone that a hate incident has occurred is all that is required to report/record an incident whether a crime has been committed or not or whether there is any evidence to identify the hate element or not. All incidents will be recorded if perceived by the victim or any other person to be a hate incident, until further investigations process otherwise. This does not mean that the alleged perpetrator is immediately assumed guilty.

A person does not have to belong to a particular group to be a victim of Hate Crime. For example, you can be a victim of homophobic abuse but can be heterosexual.

Support of Complainants and Witnesses

We want to ensure complainants and witnesses feel believed, heard and supported when they report a hate or mate incident or crime, by offering day to day support right through to helping them attend court in the rare occasions this is necessary. We will therefore always provide a named contact, an 'Allocated Officer' who will

maintain regular contact, keeping them fully informed as possible throughout the process.

The level of support given will be tailored to meet the needs of that particular individual and the circumstances of the case. Where appropriate, we will assist complainants to access support and assistance from other agencies such as the following:

- Victim Support Cymru
- National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre for Wales
- Galop who provide support for LGBTQ+ victims
- Mind Cymru
- BAWSO who provide support for those of Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds
- Scope who provide disability support

Caredig believes that residents play a key part in the successful management of Hate and Mate incidents and crimes as we are reliant on information from people reporting incidents in order to be able to act. Therefore, we expect residents to cooperate with reasonable requests to assist (such as agreeing to taking personal actions, keeping appointments, keeping records of incidents, taking part in mediation, reporting incidents to the Police etc). Residents may also be expected to attend court and provide a witness statement and will be fully supported by Caredig to do this.

Where residents are unwilling to cooperate and therefore effective action is not possible, Caredig may close the case without further investigation.

Prevention of Hate & Mate Incidents or Crime & Partnership Working

Caredig will use policies and initiatives as detailed in our Tenant Insight & Involvement strategy to improve community relationships, promote our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and the Caredig belief that differences should be respected and valued and, where possible reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring.

Caredig will work in partnership with a diverse range of partners at both strategic and operational levels. These include:

- Allocation policies & Pre-Tenancy information and support
- Income collection policies
- Designing out ASB in new developments and making physical alterations to existing buildings where possible
- Attending partner meetings such as Police led Safer Communities' meetings
- A transparent service Complaints policy
- Clear clauses in the Occupation Contracts
- Community days with partners
- Community clean up days
- Improving the physical environments of our communities

Resident Engagement

The policy has undergone consultation with staff and tenants via the Caredig Circle and website promotion.

What is covered by the policy/strategy?

This policy is informed by the following legislation and regulation;

- The Equality Act 2010
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

Roles and Responsibilities

All Caredig staff have a duty to report hate or mate related incidents or suspected hate or mate related incidents. Caredig has adopted the Victim Support approach of "See it, Hear it, Report it".

Community Housing Officers, Service Coordinators, Team Leaders and Extra Care Managers are responsible for the case management of all hate and mate incident and crime reports. The Operational Managers for Housing Management, Supported Living and Extra Care are responsible for the overall performance management. The Head of Housing & Support has overall responsibility.

Equal Opportunities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Caredig will ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010; age, disability, gender-reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation in the provision of housing, services or employment and will monitor the use of this policy to identify whether any particular group are disproportionately dissatisfied or subject to unfair disadvantage.

References to other relevant policies and Procedures

- Allocations
- Possession & Eviction
- Ending Contracts
- Tenant Insight & Involvement Strategy
- Managing Unacceptable Behaviours Policy
- Lone working
- Safeguarding
- Temporary Exclusion (Supported Living only)
- Business Continuity Plan