

## **YOUR PLACE ANTI-RACIST GUIDANCE**

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### **WHAT IS ANTI-RACISM?**

There are many different definitions, but broadly speaking, anti-racism is the ongoing practice of actively identifying, challenging and dismantling racism at individual, institutional and systemic levels, while building policies, cultures, and behaviours that create racial equity.

Being an anti-racist organisation means intentionally identifying and dismantling systemic barriers and practices that create and reinforce racial inequities, while ensuring fair access, voice and opportunity for all.

Taking steps to create an anti-racist and inclusive workplace culture will help tackle racism, and enable all staff to perform to the best of their ability every day. All our people have a right to live and work in a safe environment without discrimination or the fear of harassment or abuse.

We define racism as the system of power that advantages some groups while disadvantaging others, based on perceived race, ethnicity, nationality or cultural identity. It operates through individual attitudes and behaviours, institutional practices and wider structural inequalities.

We recognise that it can take many forms, from use of racist and offensive language, to insensitive or undermining 'jokes', comments or banter.

Racism can be directed at people based on skin colour, ethnicity, nationality, migration status or cultural identity. It does not only affect those with visible differences but also people perceived as 'other' due to language, name, accent or heritage.

We all have a role to play in challenging racism. As an organisation, we take responsibility for creating safe structures and support systems that empower everyone to do so, while ensuring leaders are accountable for meaningful action.

### **WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR YOUR PLACE?**

Put simply, tackling homelessness often means also tackling racism. Structural racism plays a major role in who is most at risk of homelessness and how people experience housing systems.

Racialised minorities disproportionately affected by homelessness and more likely to be pushed into deprived neighbourhoods and poor-quality housing due to systemic inequities.

Shelter's 2021 survey found that Black and Asian people are far more likely to be denied safe and secure housing. We also learnt that one in three Black people who have experienced homelessness reported discrimination from social or private landlords!

In Newham, we know that older Black men face the highest risk of homelessness, reflecting the intersection of racial, economic and housing inequalities.

We are based in the UK's most diverse borough and our residents and staff reflect this rich diversity.

This means we (as an organisation) have a vital responsibility to put in place structures and strategies that actively prevent racism and to ensure the right support is available when harm does occur.

### **WHAT THIS DOCUMENT AIMS TO DO**

Your Place's Anti-Racist Guidance sets out a clear message: racism will not be tolerated. It provides practical tools to help everyone in our community actively tackle racism, with clarity on our zero-tolerance and trauma-informed approach. Real-life scenarios are included to show how anti-racism can be put into practice in everyday situations.

### **SUPPORT TO THOSE AT THE RECEIVING END OF RACISM**

We recognise that racist incidents and behaviours can cause significant harm to those who experience them directly, as well as to bystanders and the wider community.

We will check in sensitively with everyone involved - confidentially and with care. For staff, this will usually be led by their line manager. For residents, this will be a support worker and/or the support team manager.

Together with the resident, we will identify what they need to feel safe, secure and valued in their home. This may include additional support sessions, links to external organisations, a room move (where practical) or help accessing shared spaces. Support will always be tailored to each resident's individual needs and wishes.

For staff, we will arrange a debrief with a manager as soon as possible after the incident, ideally within 48 hours. This will usually be with their line manager but can be with any manager, including the on-call manager if it happens out of hours.

Staff will be able to leave work immediately after the incident if needed, and may take the following day as an additional wellbeing day.

They will also receive the contact details for our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). In addition, staff will be offered space to discuss the impact of the incident with a colleague of their choice.

Where an individual or team has been particularly affected, we will also provide a one-off Reflective Practice session for additional support, if requested.

## **OUR ANTI-RACIST APPROACH**

Racism is not acceptable in our workplace or our home. We encourage everyone to report incidents, whether they have experienced them directly or witnessed them.

We will respond to every report and provide tailored support to those who experience racist behaviour. Each situation will be addressed and we will work with the person who displayed racist behaviour to encourage understanding, learning and positive future change.

We recognise that people respond differently to experiences of racism. All responses are valid and no one's feelings or perceptions will be dismissed.

We will investigate all reports of racist and discriminatory behaviour.

If an incident is perceived by the person affected or by a bystander to be motivated by hostility towards race or ethnicity, it will be recorded as such and considered in our response.

We adopt a zero-tolerance approach to racist behaviour. This means we will always challenge it, aiming to do so in a constructive way that engages the person in dialogue and encourages change.

Where a criminal act occurs, we will also support the individual to report it to the police as a hate crime.

There will be different responses depending on whether the person who displayed racist behaviour and/or person affected by a racist incident is a member of staff or a resident.

Our priority will always be to support the victim first and ensure that they are respected and are able to feel safe in the environment. Where staff perpetrate racism, this will be addressed by the People team and will get an immediate response. This may include disciplinary action or education and/or mediation.

It is important to mention that staff are held to higher standards of behaviour, reflecting their professional responsibilities.

Where a resident is the person who displayed racist behaviour, our immediate response will be to make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable. We will require the individual to engage with support or corrective action to address their behaviour. Any repeat incidents, refusal to engage or *behaviour of a particularly serious nature* will result in stronger consequences, up to and including formal sanctions and eviction through serving notice.

*Behaviour of a particularly serious nature* includes (but is not limited to):

- Physical assault, intimidation, or harassment motivated by race or ethnicity

- Repeated racist slurs or hate speech directed at individuals or groups
- Displaying or distributing racist materials (ie., posters, graffiti, online content)
- Targeted bullying or sustained harassment based on race, ethnicity, or nationality
- Refusal to comply with agreed corrective actions following previous incidents
- Any incident that places another resident, staff member, or visitor at risk of harm or creates a hostile living environment

We will support the person affected confidentially and we will be led by their wishes when deciding whether to report or escalate. Except in the most serious cases, no action will be taken without their consent.

We will always communicate with the person affected and where appropriate with bystanders, to explain what action has been taken and why.

We will share as much information as we can regarding any sanctions or other outcomes.

Our general approach to those who have displayed racist behaviour/s, will be to support individuals to recognise the impact of their behaviour and to change.

We recognise that ending racism requires more than excluding individuals who act in racist ways — it requires addressing the attitudes and behaviours that underpin racism.

However, we also acknowledge that this may not be appropriate in all cases, and where the incident is particularly serious or is repeated, we will take stronger actions which may include disciplinary processes in the case of staff, or eviction in the case of residents.

We are committed to our Warning & Exclusions Policy and will implement it as necessary to help us tackle all forms of racism across the service.

### **MISUSE OF THIS GUIDANCE**

While we take all reports seriously, we also recognise our responsibility to maintain the integrity of our Anti-Racism guidance. This policy should be used for its intended purpose: addressing concerns about racism and promoting inclusion. Those who misuse these procedures, whether through false allegations, retaliatory complaints, or attempts to undermine workplace processes, may face appropriate consequences while we continue to protect those reporting legitimate concerns. We encourage good faith use while maintaining clear expectations that misuse of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

## SCENARIOS

The following scenarios are not intended to cover all possible examples of racist behaviour and our response. It is intended to provide guidance to help you decide what to do when an incident happens.

### **A contractor or volunteer makes a racist or discriminatory comment about immigrants, which is overheard by a member of staff.**

#### How to respond:

#### **1. Immediate action**

- The staff member who hears the comment must report it immediately to their line manager.
- If they feel able, they should also challenge the behaviour directly in the moment, making it clear that racist or discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.

#### **2. Manager responsibility**

- The line manager must address the incident directly with the individual.
- If the perpetrator is a contractor or a corporate volunteer, the matter must also be escalated to their employing organisation.
- The seriousness of the breach must be made clear, including the potential consequences (e.g termination of contract, exclusion from further volunteering).

#### **3. Recording and reporting**

- The incident must be documented in writing and submitted to the People team. Initial concerns can also be raised by phone or in person, but a written record is mandatory.
- Reports must include:
  - A description of what happened
  - Relevant names
  - Date, time, and location of the incident
- The People team will log the incident formally and ensure it is reported.

#### Consequences and escalation:

- The People team will determine and implement any follow-up action in line with our zero-tolerance policy.
- Possible actions include:
  - Formal warning to the individual
  - Removal from site pending investigation
  - Termination of contract (for contractors)
  - Exclusion from volunteering roles (for volunteers)
- All outcomes will be recorded and, where appropriate, communicated to those affected.

## **A resident reports that another resident made a racist comment towards them in the kitchen.**

### How to respond:

- The resident making the report must be supported immediately to ensure they feel safe and reassured. Staff must explain that the incident will be taken seriously, formally recorded, and acted upon.
- The staff member receiving the report must raise a CCIA and record the incident on InForm. The resident's risk assessment must also be updated.
- The staff member or manager will speak directly with the resident responsible for the racist behaviour. It must be made clear that the behaviour is unacceptable, in breach of our Anti-Racist Policy, and will have consequences. While corrective support will normally be offered, the conversation must emphasise accountability and the potential sanctions for further incidents.
- A written record of the conversation and outcome must be provided to the resident, in line with the first stage of our Warning & Exclusions Policy.

### Consequences and escalation:

- If there are repeat incidents, further stages of the Warning & Exclusions Policy will apply.
  - A **first written warning** will be issued, alongside a support conversation on how to prevent recurrence.
  - A **final written warning** will be issued if behaviour continues, again accompanied by a support conversation.
  - Residents will be clearly informed that any further racist behaviour may result in notice being served and loss of accommodation.
- Some incidents may be deemed so serious (ie. threats, violence, persistent harassment) that notice will be served immediately.

### Confidentiality & safeguarding:

- If the person targeted does not want follow-up action (ie. due to fear of repercussions), this will be respected where possible. However, staff retain the responsibility to challenge and act on any further racist behaviour, including those witnessed directly, without referring back to the original report.

**A resident is behaving aggressively and inappropriately in the lounge. When staff intervene to de-escalate the situation, the resident directs a racist comment towards them.**

How to respond:

### **1. Immediate safety and de-escalation**

- The first priority is to ensure the safety of staff, residents, and others in the space. Staff must attempt to de-escalate calmly, using agreed conflict management techniques, and encourage the resident to disengage from the situation.
- If the aggression escalates to physical violence, implied threats, or behaviour that could constitute a criminal act, staff must call the police without delay. The racist element of the behaviour must also be explicitly reported to the police as part of the incident.

### **2. Challenging racist behaviour**

- Once the immediate risk has passed, staff must make clear to the resident that the racist comment was unacceptable and in direct breach of our Anti-Racism Guidance.
- The racist behaviour will not be treated as a secondary issue: it will be addressed alongside the aggressive behaviour, and its seriousness will be clearly explained to the resident.

### **3. Recording and reporting**

- The incident must be documented in full:
  - A CCIA must be raised.
  - The incident must be logged on InForm with full details, including the nature of the racist behaviour, the context, names, times, and location.
  - The risk assessment for the resident must be updated to reflect the behaviour and potential for further escalation.

Consequences and escalation:

- The resident must be informed that any repeat incidents will lead to consequences under the Warning & Exclusions Policy.
- If warnings or notice are issued, the racist behaviour will be recorded explicitly as a cause, not just the aggression.
- Sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour, with escalation from warnings to notice as appropriate.
- Some behaviour may be so serious (ie. physical assault with racist language, repeated targeted abuse, or sustained intimidation) that immediate notice is served without prior warnings.

Assessing seriousness:

- Our response will take into account the severity of the incident.

- For example:
  - **Minor but harmful behaviour:** one-off racist slur during heated argument → addressed with warning, corrective support, and clear consequences for repetition.
  - **Serious behaviour:** implied threats, targeted personal abuse, or repeated racist comments → may move directly to a final warning.
  - **Severe behaviour:** physical assault, sustained racist harassment, or creating a hostile and unsafe environment → may lead to immediate notice and eviction.

**A staff member witnesses a member of the public using racist insults towards a resident outside the reception.**

How to respond:

**1. Immediate safety and intervention**

- The staff member must prioritise the safety of the resident and others present.
- If it is safe to do so, the staff member should firmly instruct the member of the public to stop and to leave the premises immediately.
- The resident should be encouraged to come inside the building so they are in a safe, supported environment.
- Staff must use caution in approaching the member of the public, as they are unknown to us and risk cannot be fully assessed.

**2. Escalation to police**

- If the individual refuses to leave, becomes aggressive, or the behaviour escalates, staff must contact the police immediately.
- The racist nature of the abuse must be made clear in the report to the police as a potential hate crime.

**3. Support for the resident**

- The staff member must check in with the resident to ensure they feel safe and heard.
- The incident must be followed up by connecting the resident with their support worker, or the support team manager, to provide further assistance and reassurance.

Recording and reporting:

- The incident must be logged on InForm with full details, including:
  - What was said/done
  - Date, time, and location
  - Names of those involved (where possible)
- A CCIA must be raised to ensure organisational oversight and follow-up.
- The risk assessment for the resident should be reviewed and updated if required.

## **A member of the public posts racist content about our residents on social media.**

### How to respond:

#### **1. Immediate action**

- The post must be reported immediately to the Communications team.
- The Communications team will take steps to have the content removed (ie., reporting it directly to the platform) and, if necessary, issue a public response in line with organisational policy.

#### **2. Escalation**

- Where the content is threatening, targeted, or could constitute a hate crime, the matter must also be reported to the police.
- Screenshots and links to the post must be saved and shared with the Communications team and the People team to ensure a record is kept, even if the content is removed.

#### **3. Support for residents**

- Staff must inform the Support team so they can check in with residents affected, offer reassurance, and provide additional support where needed.
- Residents should be reminded of our zero-tolerance approach and assured that the organisation is taking action to protect them.

### Recording and reporting:

- The incident must be logged on InForm with full details, including:
  - A copy of the content (screenshot and link)
  - Date, time, and platform used
  - Any actions taken (ie., reported to platform, reported to police)
- A CCIA must also be raised to ensure organisational oversight.

## **A staff member makes a discriminatory or inappropriate comment about a colleague wearing a hijab.**

### How to respond:

#### **1. Immediate action**

- If it is safe and appropriate, the comment should be challenged immediately by those who witness it, making it clear the behaviour is unacceptable.
- The incident must then be reported to the relevant manager without delay.

#### **2. Manager responsibility**

- The manager must inform the People team and follow up directly with the staff member who made the comment.
- It must be explained why the behaviour was discriminatory, the impact it may have caused, and that it breaches organisational policy.
- An investigation will take place if necessary, and a decision will be made as to whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

#### **3. Recording and reporting**

- The incident must be logged in writing, with details of what was said, the date, time, location, and names of those involved, and then sent to the People team.
- The People team will ensure the matter is formally recorded, investigated, and tracked in line with organisational processes.

#### **4. Serious incidents**

- In very serious situations — such as violence, serious threats, or intimidation — staff must immediately contact the police. Racist or discriminatory behaviour that reaches this threshold will be reported as a potential hate crime.

We will also work with external agencies, where appropriate, to seek specialist guidance and support, and to ensure our practice reflects the latest legal requirements and best practice in tackling racism and discrimination.

# APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

## OUR APPROACH TO ANTI-RACISM

As part of our organisational commitment to anti-racism and our Anti-Racism Guidance, this document outlines how our Communications Team will address racist comments and hate speech on social media and digital platforms.

### 1. Zero tolerance for racism and hate speech

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of racism or hate speech. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Racial slurs, insults, or discriminatory language.
- Hate speech targeting individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, or nationality.
- Content that promotes violence, intimidation, or discrimination.

This policy will also apply to hate speech targeting individuals or groups based on gender, sexual orientation, religion and disability.

### 2. Monitoring and review of comments

We will review all comments on our social media posts regularly. Comments will be reviewed by our team within a maximum of 72 working hours of being posted, though much sooner where possible.

Posts or comments that violate this policy will be removed (posts, where possible) or hidden (comments) as soon as possible.

If a resident or staff member has been targeted, we will inform the People Team or relevant Manager so that they can offer support and reassurance.

### 3. Action for violations

We will take the following actions when encountering racism or hate speech:

- Comments on our page will be hidden so that they cannot be viewed. If it is a post on our page, it will be removed.
- Where we identify repeated offences, the user will be blocked from commenting on our social media platforms.
- Content that is not on our own pages will be reported to the social media platform, though we are unable to guarantee action.
- Records will not be kept on our servers (due to GDPR and no legal basis), however, the hidden comments will remain visible to the Communications Team within the platform.

### 4. Recording and reporting hate crimes

If we encounter content that we believe constitutes a hate crime, we will take immediate action to save all of the following details (screenshot of the comment and the post it relates to, link, time/date, action taken) and report it to the People Team at Your Place by email, so that it can be escalated to the appropriate authorities. We will also report the content within the platform, after saving evidence of it. We will cooperate with police or relevant authorities where necessary.

**What constitutes a hate crime:** threats of violence, incitement to violence, or any content that encourages harm against individuals or groups based on race or ethnicity.

We will not routinely monitor content on other social media accounts or webpages, however, if we are made aware of content in violation of this policy that relates to Your Place (including our community of residents and staff), the actions above will apply.

The People Team will be responsible for keeping full records of hate crimes, and actions taken, to ensure organisational oversight.