

What is harassment?

Harassment is any deliberate attack suffered by an individual or group because of their colour, race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, illness, appearance. Sometimes it may be for another reason. If you believe you are being harassed we will investigate it according to our policy.

Harassment can be an isolated incident or a series of incidents.

Harassment includes behaviour such as

- racist behaviour or language
- hate crimes
- actual or threatened violence
- abusive or insulting words or behaviour
- actual or threatened damage to another person's home or possessions
- writing threatening, abusive or insulting graffiti or other written material

What is Circle Anglia's approach to harassment?

Circle Anglia condemns harassment and will take all reports seriously. We aim to promote a safe and secure environment for people to live in. We aim to prevent harassment from happening. We set out clear requirements of our tenants in our tenancy agreements. We take enforcement action where appropriate. We support residents who are experiencing harassment. We work in partnership with the police and other partners to prevent and deal with harassment.

I am experiencing harassment. What should I do?

If you are experiencing harassment, intimidation, actual or threatened violence contact the Police straight away.

You can also contact us to talk about how to deal with the situation. You can contact us by phone, email, in person or on our website. We will offer you advice when you first contact us and arrange for an officer to contact you within one day to assess the problem. We will agree an action plan with you within two weeks of you reporting the problem.

This action plan will include an agreement on how and when we will communicate with you and how any necessary support can be provided.

What actions can be taken?

The actions we take will depend on:

- the type of behaviour and its impact on you and others;
- the age of the perpetrator;
- whether the perpetrator is a resident;
- whether the perpetrator is vulnerable, and
- what actions are likely to be most effective.

We will discuss options with you for resolving your particular case. Some options that we will consider are

- Providing you with extra security
- Putting you in contact with other agencies for advice and support
- Taking action against the perpetrator. To be successful we must have strong evidence
- Offering you advice on rehousing options.

What legal action can you take against the perpetrator?

Committing harassment is a crime. If the perpetrator is a tenant of Circle Anglia it is also a breach of their tenancy agreement. Some possible legal actions are

- Injunction
- Anti-social behaviour order (ASBO's)
- Extending or terminating a starter tenancy
- Tenancy demotion order
- Possession order

If we decide to take legal action we will need good evidence to present to the court. You will usually need to attend court and give evidence so we will often ask you to keep a diary of incidents.

What are Circle Anglia's service standards for dealing with harassment?

We will

- Investigate all complaints of harassment
- Take a victim-centred approach, being sympathetic and supportive

- Always have someone available to deal with harassment during office hours
- Make initial contact with you within 1 working day
- Remove offensive or discriminatory graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported
- Arrange for victims to speak to staff in a private and safe environment
- Where possible provide staff of the same sex and/or ethnic origin if you request this
- Agree an action plan with you within 2 weeks of you reporting an incident and review this every month
- Offer clear advice and support when you report an incident
- Use a range of legal and non-legal remedies to resolve harassment, taking an approach that is appropriate to the case
- Where we are unable to resolve harassment cases ourselves, we will work with other agencies to find effective and quick solutions. →