



- DEALING WITH RACIST INCIDENTS

Redland's commitment to deal firmly and promptly with any kind of harassment is contained in our Policy Statements on nuisance and harassment, including the plain English version available to all residents. It is also clearly stated in our Tenants' Handbook, given to all new tenants.

Our determination to stamp out racial harassment, and to respond effectively to racist incidents, cannot be over stated.

A "racist incident" is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or by any other person.

'Racial harassment' is any unwelcome or hostile act or series of acts carried out on racial grounds. In the context of housing this will include

- physical assault
- damage to property
- racist graffiti
- arson or attempted arson
- verbal racial abuse
- threatening or abusive behaviour
- malicious complaints, letters or telephone calls
- rubbish dumping at the victims home.

The Housing Manager or the Technical Manager, as appropriate, should be notified immediately of any incident reported to the Association where the person making the report believes there to have been racist motives or where a member of staff believes such motives may have existed.

The Housing Manager or Technical Manager will ensure that action taken by the Association is properly recorded and monitored and reported to the Executive Committee.

Redland will arrange to see the victim within 5 working days to discuss what action the Association can take to both support the victim and to prevent any recurrence. If necessary, Redland will arrange for an interpreter to be present.



The priority for staff visiting victims should be to ensure that effective support and advice is provided and a course of action agreed. Staff should also be aware of the need to keep proper and detailed records which, if legal action is ultimately taken, will form an important basis of our evidence. Victims must be kept informed at all times of the action taken and decisions made by Redland.

The repair of any damage, including removal of racist graffiti, will be dealt with as an emergency repair.

If a tenant wishes to move to escape harassment or through fear of further incidents, a full report will be compiled and referred to the Executive Committee (or Chairman) with a view to the award of overriding social needs priority on Redland's waiting list. The report will also be referred to the relevant local authority/Bristol Housing Register, with a view to obtaining re-housing priority.

We recognise the particular skills, expertise and determination of other organisations dealing with racial harassment and racist incidents and we will endeavour to make use of these. We particularly value the work of, and our links with, locally based SARI (Support Against Racist Incidents). We will actively encourage and help victims to report incidents to both the police and to SARI and we will help and support those organisations in any actions they take.

If a Redland tenant is identified as the perpetrator of racial harassment or racially motivated incidents, we will take the strongest possible action against that tenant. In considering what action we can take, the views and wishes of the victim will be of crucial importance. The Association makes clear through various publications – handbooks, newsletter, leaflets and, most significantly, our tenancy agreement – that it considers racial harassment and racist behaviour to be entirely unacceptable. Any formal action we can take, and which will be reported to our Executive Committee, will normally be under the terms of the tenancy agreement if we take such action we will normally ask a Court to award the Association outright possession.

Other forms of legal action may be open to victims or the Police; these include action under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. These possibilities should be considered in liaison with victims and external agencies.

Redland will take steps to help protect victims and vulnerable households through security improvements where this is appropriate. We will consult with Crime Prevention Officers, and with the local authority, with a view to improving safety in common areas (eg lighting, layout) in any area or estate where harassment is occurring. We will take measures to increase the physical security of victims homes, including the supply and fitting of adaptations (eg letter cages, additional locks) considered necessary by victims. We will also



liaise with the police, SARI and any other relevant organisation about the provision of panic alarms, mobile telephones etc.

Redland will not consider housing any applicant who has been evicted as a result of racist behaviour or against whom legal action for racist behaviour has been taken.

Redland supports the efforts of SARI, the police and local authorities in combating racism and will support initiatives undertaken by these organisations.

This Policy is effective from : Jan 2005
This Policy is due for review: Jan 2008
Responsible Officer : Head of Housing
Responsible focus group : Equalities