

Anti-social behaviour guidance notes

Harassment and hate crime

This leaflet gives you advice about what to do if you are a victim of harassment or hate crime.

What is harassment?

Harassment is deliberate behaviour intended to intimidate, dominate or harm an individual or group. It can include:

- Physical assault
- Abusive graffiti
- Arson/attempted arson
- Verbal or written abuse
- Threatening or abusive behaviour
- Damage to property
- Bullying and intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Harassment due to sexual orientation, race, disability or religion
- Domestic violence

What is hate crime?

Hate crime is a criminal incident believed to be motivated by prejudice or hate and may involve some of the actions listed above.

What can I do about it?

There are a number of practical things you can do if you are a victim of harassment or hate crime. You can:

- Contact your local police station and speak to a trained officer. In an emergency you should dial 999.
- Report the incident to L&Q Direct and speak to one of our trained operators.
- Keep a diary of all incidents, including dates, times and details of what happened, where it happened and who was involved. Diary sheets are available from L&Q Direct or your local L&Q office.
- Consider approaching the people responsible to ask them to stop the behaviour causing you distress. Do not do this if they are aggressive, violent, or if you think it will make matters worse.

- Keep a record of any conversations you have. This information may be used as evidence at a later stage.
- Take out an injunction (or other legal action) against the people responsible. We recommend you seek independent legal advice before doing this.

What will L&Q do?

If you report harassment or a hate crime to L&Q we will carry out an investigation and try to establish the facts. We will:

- Allocate you a case worker who is responsible for investigating the incident.
- Check if there have been any similar incidents involving the people you told us about.
- Contact others living nearby to see if they have experienced similar problems.
- Contact the people you think are responsible to discuss how the problem might be resolved.
- Take action against residents in breach of their tenancy or lease agreement.
- Work with partners such as the police & local authority to stop the offending behaviour and help build safer neighbourhoods.
- Take steps to minimise threats to your safety and the safety of your household.
- Remove racist and offensive graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported.
- Put you in touch with agencies that will give you advice and support.
- Contact you regularly to keep you informed about progress with the investigation.
- Treat all complaints confidentially and not reveal your identity to others without getting your permission first.

Please remember we can only take legal action to stop someone from harassing you if we have enough evidence to prove the case. For this reason, it is important that you report all incidents to the police (and L&Q) and tell us about any other people who may have seen or heard what happened.

How do I report an incident to L&Q?

You can report incidents of harassment and hate crime by:

Phone: 0800 015 6536 (Weekdays 8am to 8pm and Saturdays 9am to 1pm)

Letter: PO Box 194, Sidcup DA15 0AJ,

Email: L&Qdirect@lqgroup.org.uk

In person: At your local L&Q office

If you need to report an incident outside of normal office hours you can contact our Violence & Hate Crime Reporting Service on 0800 015 6536.

Where can I find more information?

Anti-social Behaviour Action line

General advice and information about anti-social behaviour.

Tel: 0870 220 2000

www.respect.gov.uk

Home Office

Information about crime, anti-social behaviour and criminal justice.

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commission

News and information about equality and human rights.

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Victim Support

Information and support for victims and witnesses of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Victim Support Line: 0845 3030 900

www.victimsupport.org.uk