



Better for everyone

# Hate Incident and Hate Crime Fact Sheet

## What is a Hate Incident?

A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the person or persons involved, or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one of the following characteristics:

- Age
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Marriage or Civil Partnerships
- Gender identity
- Alternative lifestyles and sub-cultures

When the circumstances of a hate incident amount to a crime, it is recorded in one of two ways:

### A Crime Linked to a Hate Incident:

This is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one of the following characteristics:

- Age
- Sex
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Marriage or Civil Partnerships
- Alternative lifestyles and sub-cultures

### A Hate Crime:

A hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one of the following characteristics.

- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Gender identity

## What is the issue?

Hate crimes and crimes linked to hate incidents affect victims, families and the wider community and target people and communities because of the things they cannot and should not have to change. It ranges from verbal abuse and harassment to criminal damage and serious assaults. Victims and witnesses are more likely to be vulnerable or require a police response that takes account of their situation.

Hate crimes and crimes linked to hate incidents are an area subject to under reporting where the key challenge is to ensure that victims are confident to report, and that once reported, the hate element is recognised so that support, safeguarding and appropriate interventions can be provided.

Whether the crime has been recorded as a hate crime or a crime linked to a hate incident, they are still investigated in the same manner and with the same concern and support for the people involved.

## Why is it important?

Resilient and cohesive communities are more likely to engage with services and report crime and anti-social behaviour. To achieve this there are a range of tools and powers available to partner organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour.

However our real strength in communities lies in the recognition and cultivation of place based community assets and seeking to mobilise these in order to support each other, listening to the individuals within those communities in order to improve a sense of belonging and purpose so that people are safe and free from the fear of crime.

The implementation of the Community Cohesion Toolkit will ensure that issues around community tensions are identified sooner to ensure a partnership response and avoid escalation. The Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) will have a key role to play, feeding in issues around community tensions and implementing schemes that will help form a more cohesive community.

## How does it impact people?

A safe, strong and prosperous community is also a cohesive one. It is important that people have a sense of belonging and feel proud about where they live. It is also important to understand the impact which tensions and conflict may have on our local communities.

## County Durham context

- There were 441 reported hate crime incidents in County Durham in 2019/20 compared with 360 in 2018/19, an 18% increase. In 2020/21 there were 359 reported hate crime incidents in County Durham to the end of December 2020, which represents a 4% increase compared to the same period in 2019/20 (344 incidents).
- Since 2014/15 there has been a year on year increase in the numbers of recorded hate crimes in County Durham. In 2019-20 there were 723 crimes in comparison to 555 in 2018/19, a 30% increase. In 2020/21 there have been 593 crimes to the end of December 2020, which is a 10.6% increase compared to the same period in 2019/20 (536 crimes).
- Since 2016, Durham Constabulary has delivered a program of engagement and awareness with our diverse communities through our strong Neighbourhood Policing model. Victims have been encouraged to report hate incidents and hate crimes and this has contributed to a rise in reporting.
- In County Durham hate crime is reported most frequently by people working in the licensed economy and hospitality trade; by staff in health care settings and schools; and by residents in neighbourhoods where there are high levels of antisocial behaviour.
- At a regional level, Durham Constabulary has the highest percentage of successful prosecutions across all five hate crime strands.

In relation to racially / religiously aggravated offences:

- Across the various strands of hate motivated incidents, based on protected characteristics, the most prevalent was race hate crime. Between 2018/19 and 2019/20 race hate crimes increased by 19% up from 242 to 288. In the first three quarters of 2020/21 there have been 242 race hate crimes indicating by the year end it is likely that these will again increase.
- Durham has a higher resolved rate than the national average, and regional forces, but is comparable to most similar forces.
- Durham's resolved rate of 23.3% in 2019/20 is ranked 10th highest of all 43 forces.
- Durham has a lower crime rate per 1,000 population when compared to the national, regional and Most Similar Force areas.

## National context

- Home Office statistics indicate that in England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester police) in year ending March 2020, there were:
  - 105,090 hate crimes recorded by the police, an increase of 8% compared with year ending March 2019 (97,446 offences).
  - While increases in hate crime over the last five years have been mainly driven by improvements in crime recording by the police, there has been spikes in hate crime following certain events such as the EU Referendum in June 2016 and the terrorist attacks in 2017.
  - As in previous years, the majority of hate crimes were race hate crimes, accounting for around three-quarters of offences (72%; 76,070 offences). These increased by 6% between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2020.
  - Religious hate crimes fell by 5% (to 6,822 offences), down from a peak of 7,203 in the previous year. This was the first fall in religious hate crimes since year ending March 2013.
  - Sexual orientation hate crimes increased 19% (to 15,835), disability hate crimes by 9% per cent (to 8,469) and transgender identity hate crimes by 16 per cent (to 2,540). These percentage increases are smaller to that seen in recent years.
  - Over half (53%) of the hate crimes recorded by the police were for public order offences and a further third (38%) were for violence against the person offences. Five per cent were recorded as criminal damage and arson offences.
  - Across the 2019/20 period, the Durham Police force area number of race hate crimes was lower (503) in comparison to Cleveland (712) and Northumbrian (1,858). The North East had the lowest number of race hate crimes (3,073) compared to all other regions across England.
- The Office for National Statistics assess that hate crime is underreported by as much as 50%. The reasons for this underreporting are complex, but are broadly linked to:
  - A lack of awareness that the actions of others amount to hate crime
  - A belief that the police are too busy to deal with the matter
  - Fear that reporting the matter to the police will lead to reprisals
  - In some cases, a lack of confidence in the police amongst some communities.

## Resources

<https://www.hatehurts.co.uk/>

<https://nationalhcaw.uk/>

<https://www.theredcard.org/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2019-to-2020>