

Hate crimes and hate incidents

A **hate incident** is any event, occurrence or action which the victim, or anyone else thinks was motivated by or hostility based on any of the following things:

- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Transgender identity

Anyone can be the victim of a hate incident. For example, you may have been targeted because someone thought you were gay even though you're not, or because you have a disabled child. Not all hate incidents are criminal offences but should still be reported to the police.

When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as **hate crimes**. A criminal offence is something which breaks the law of the land. Any criminal offence can be a hate crime if it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on disability, race, religion, transgender identity or sexual orientation.

The police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) have agreed the following definition for hate crime:



Hate Crime:

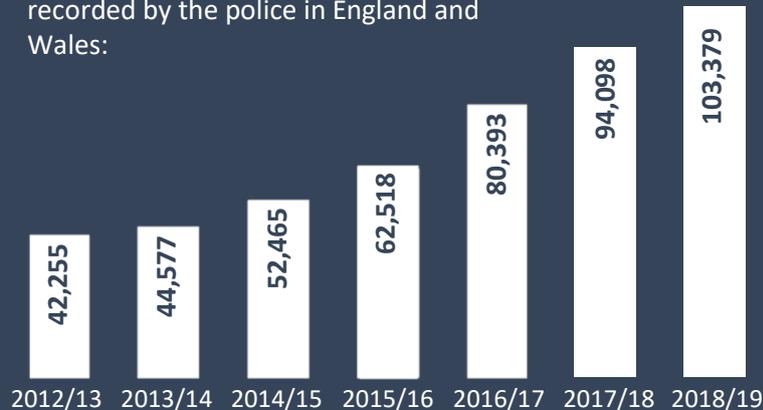
Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.

In other words In other words, **crime + hostility/prejudice = hate crime**

Incidents which are based on other personal characteristics, such as age and belonging to an alternative subculture, are not considered to be hate crimes under the law. You can still report these, but they will not be prosecuted specifically as hate crimes by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

Why is hate crime different to other crimes?

Number of hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales:



Hate crimes are different to other forms of crime because perpetrators purposefully target victims based on prejudice or hostility towards a group of people (not just individuals). Perpetrators are likely to re-victimise that group by committing further hate crimes.

What is the impact of hate crime on at-risk individuals and communities?

- Research shows that the psychological distress experienced by victims of hate crime is higher than victims of crimes not motivated by prejudice (American Psychological Association)
- Hate crimes can cause fear, anxiety, anger, and humiliation
- To victims, hate crimes feels very personal because they are targeted because of who they are or who they are assumed to be
- Victims feel especially vulnerable as they feel that they cannot change the reason why they were targeted e.g. race, sexuality, religion etc.
- Repeat victimisation can worsen the emotional toll of hate crime
- In addition to the psychological and emotional consequences, hate crime can cause people to change their behaviour to avoid hate crimes and incidents, such as not going out as much or avoiding certain areas
- Witnessing or hearing about hate crime also impacts wider communities' feelings of safety and security.

Anyone - a victim or witness - can report a hate crime or hate incident.

Victims or witnesses can report a hate crime directly to the police, either in person at a police station, online, or over the phone. However, not all victims/witnesses feel confident reporting directly to the police and may choose an alternative method to report. Some methods such as reporting online to the True Vision website will allow victims or witnesses to report anonymously which may be preferred by some community members.

Ways to report hate crimes or hate incidents include:



In person

- At a police station
- At a third-party reporting site - these are locations with staff trained to support victims or witnesses to complete hate crime reporting forms. Sometimes it can be difficult to find out where there are third party reporting sites locally but they could be a library, community organisation, faith institution, or youth centre



Over the phone

- To the police at 999 (emergency e.g. the crime is ongoing or somebody is at risk of immediate danger)
- To the police at 101 (non-emergency e.g. there is no immediate danger to anybody)
- To an alternative, such as Stop Hate UK (0800 138 1625) which offers independent and confidential Hate Crime reporting services: www.stophateuk.org/talk-to-us



Online

- To the Police using the True Vision website www.report-it.org.uk
- Via alternative websites such as:
 - Tell MAMA for anti-Muslim incidents: www.tellmamauk.org
 - Community Security Trust for anti-Jewish incidents: www.cst.org.uk

Organisations that provide support include:

Victim support: provides specialist practical and emotional support to victims and witnesses

- Phone: 08 08 16 89 111
- Online: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Citizen advice: give free, confidential information and advice

- Adviceline: 03444 111 444
- Chat with adviser online: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

True Vision: gives information about hate crime or incidents and advice on how to report it

- Online: www.report-it.org.uk

Stop Hate UK: provides independent, confidential and accessible reporting and support

- Phone: 0800 138 1625
- Online: www.stophateuk.org

Tell MAMA: records and measures anti-Muslim incidents and supports victims

- Online: www.tellmamauk.org

Disability Rights UK: has information on disability hate crime

- Online: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Galop: LGBT+ anti-violence charity that provides support to victims of hate crime

- Phone: 0207 704 2040
- Online: www.galop.org.uk

Support Line: offers confidential emotional support by telephone, email and post

- Helpline: 01708 765200

Crimestoppers: provides reporting services and advice

- Phone: 0800 555 111
- Online: www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Equality Advisory & Support (EASS): advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights

- Advice line: 0808 800 0082

Community Security Trust (CST): has a dedicated team which deals with antisemitic incidents and provides victim support, while respecting confidentiality at all times

- CST national emergency number: 0800 032 3263
- Online: www.cst.org.uk

It is important that victims and witnesses are able to make informed decisions around reporting hate crimes or hate incidents. Below are some reasons people decide not to make reports or issues people face when they do report with some information that we can use to help people make an informed decision.

Belief that nothing will happen after a report is made: The police see hate crime as an important priority, however it is true that the majority of hate crime reports do not result in a prosecution. In the year April 2019-March 2020 there were more than 105,090 hate crimes reported but only 10,950 hate crime prosecutions.

It is important victims or witnesses understand that there may not be a prosecution if they report a hate crime. However there are other reasons victims may want to report hate crime:

- It enables authorities to map where hate incidents and crimes are occurring. Based on this data they can identify which areas may need greater protection, and direct resources to these areas
- Perpetrators of hate crime will often repeat offend, over a number of reports there may be enough evidence to prosecute that offender
- It can educate the public on the prevalence of hate crime. It sends a message that hate crime is not accepted and prevents it from seeming normal

Lack of trust in police or reluctance to speak to police: For many people speaking to the police is a frightening or daunting prospect. While most police officers treat hate crime witnesses and victims kindly and with respect, some officers do not realise the trauma faced by hate crime victims and on occasion do not act sensitively or thoughtfully enough. While the police are always improving how they deal with hate crime and hate incidents it is important not to promise victims or witnesses a positive experience which may not be the reality.

For those who do not want to engage with the police, it is possible to report hate crime anonymously for example through the true Vision website www.report-it.org.uk. Victims and witnesses should be aware that while anonymous reporting means they will not have to speak to the police, it also means there is a reduced chance that the police will be able to investigate the hate crime and identify a perpetrator.

Belief that reporting will take a long time: Reporting in a police station can take a long time, sometimes there is also a long wait on the 101 non-emergency line. However, the true vision online hate crime form can be completed in just a few minutes. If the victim or witness gives their details the police will follow up with a phone call or visit, if they reported anonymously the police will not contact them

Language barriers: Language barriers can prevent those who can't speak or write in English from feeling able to report hate crimes or hate incidents. If completing an online form it is likely a victim or witness will need support from a person who can translate. Reporting over the phone is likely to be very difficult without support from somebody who can interpret, however the police do provide an interpretation service for most languages in police stations.

