

Hate Crime

Briefing for homelessness services

Let's end homelessness together

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Introduction

Hate Crime is a growing problem in the UK, with more incidents being reported each year. In 2015/2016 there were 62,518 recorded incidents where hate crime was a motivating factor.¹

During the month following the EU referendum vote in July 2016, the number of hate crime incidents reported in the UK rose a dramatic 48% compared with the same time in the previous year.² Incidents of hate crime are most likely to happen to males between the ages of 16-26, with the largest victim group by religion being those from Muslim backgrounds.³

Despite many of these incidents being related to threats and harassment towards 'visible minorities' within communities across the UK, hate crimes can be driven by a range of different motivations. Homelessness services should respond proactively to these issues to ensure that vulnerable clients and staff are supported by their service to tackle this challenge.

Definitions

A **hate crime** is any criminal offence that is motivated by hostility on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity. A **hate incident** is a non-crime that occurs, but is perceived by the victim to be motivated by any of the aforementioned personal characteristics.⁴

Individuals who are accessing support from homelessness services can also be at particular risk of **repeat victimisation**. This is where a victim of reported hate crime was also the victim of another reported hate crime within the previous 12 months. Repeat victimisation can occur due to the geographical location of individuals, for instance rough sleepers being targeted due to their location on the street or repeated accessing of day centres and frontline services.

Reporting hate crime

You can report a hate crime if you have been a victim yourself, witnessed an incident or are reporting on behalf of someone else.

1. In an emergency

Call police 999 or dial 112

Call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via their website www.crimestoppers-uk.org

2. Contact the police

You can speak to the police confidentially without giving personal details, however be aware that information you provide could be used in a prosecution so should be as accurate and precise as possible, especially as the police won't be able to contact you back.

¹ *Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2014/15* http://report-it.org.uk/home_office_release_hate_crime_data_for_201516

² <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/sep/07/hate-surged-after-eu-referendum-police-figures-show>

³ 0.4% of all 16-25 year olds and 0.5% of all male 16-25 years experienced personal hate crime in the 2015/16. 1.1% of Muslims compared with 0.1% of Christians experienced hate crime in 2015/16. *Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2014/15* www.report-it.org.uk/files/ho_hate_crime_statistics_201415.pdf

⁴ College of Policing – Hate Crime Operational Guidance <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/college-of-policing/Hate-Crime-Operational-Guidance.pdf>

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3. Online reporting

It is now possible to report online using:

http://report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

4. Self-reporting form

Self-reporting forms can be downloaded from [here](#), and then sent into your local police force.

5. Third party reporting centres

It is possible to report hate crime via a third party organisation including: Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Voluntary Services and local authorities.

Responding to and preventing hate crime in your service

Good practice around preventing hate crime in your service:

- **Involve clients** and ensure that they all understand your organisation's zero tolerance approach to incidents motivated by hate. Be clear to ensure that they understand the role that they play in spotting and reporting hate crime. Your organisation should have access to translation services so that those with limited English are still able to communicate clearly to staff.
- **Regularly evaluate** and review your internal policies and procedures to ensure that they accurately reflect changes in legislation and patterns of behaviour relating to changing contexts e.g. computer usage. All staff should be required to read and confirm they understand the principles and purposes of your services harassment and bullying procedures and code of conduct. You may find it useful to refer to Homeless Link's Reducing Evictions and Abandonments Toolkit.⁵
- **Structured discussions** and sessions with clients that promote cultural and diversity awareness, reflecting on attitudes and beliefs, can improve understanding of victim experiences and mitigate against racially motivated offending.
- **Build partnerships with local organisations** who have expertise in particular areas e.g. LGBT organisations, disability charities and Migrant Refugee Community Organisations.
- **Effective staff training on hate crime** is essential so that your staff members can confidently recognise and report hate crime incidents that could happen within your service. They will also be able to respond to enquiries from their clients and discuss issues in key working, or one-to one sessions.
- **Make it easy for clients to report hate crimes** by ensuring that your service is a safe environment where they will be listened to and taken seriously. Your clients may have had negative experiences with police before which may impact on their likelihood to trust police in future when reporting. Use visible notices and information boards to display information on reporting. For useful resources, posters and handouts for clients and staff, contact your local police or check online.⁶

⁵ Homeless Link Reducing Evictions and Abandonments Toolkit www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/A%20guide%20to%20preventing%20evictions%20and%20abandonment.v2.pdf

⁶ True Vision has a range of posters in different languages that are free to download and useful for getting information out to staff and clients within your service. <http://report-it.org.uk/downloads>

Further reading and resources

ChildLine - a free, private and confidential service to help anyone under 19 in the UK. Trained counsellors are available to support day and night, either by phone, email or 1-2-1.

www.childline.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau - a network of 316 independent charities throughout the UK that give free, confidential information and advice to assist people with legal, money, legal, consumer and other problems.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

College of Policing – Hate Crime Operational Guidance

library.college.police.uk/docs/college-of-policing/Hate-Crime-Operational-Guidance.pdf

Crimestoppers - an independent charity helping law enforcement solve crimes. They have an anonymous 24/7 phone number, 0800 555 111, that people can call to pass on information about crime.

www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Equality Advisory Support Service - advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights, across England, Scotland and Wales.

www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

Get Safe Online – a resource base of unbiased, factual and easy-to-understand information on online safety.

www.getsafeonline.org

Self Reporting form

www.report-it.org.uk/self_reporting_form

Stop Hate UK - one of the leading national organisations working to challenge all forms of Hate Crime and discrimination, based on any aspect of an individual's identity.

www.stophateuk.org

The Chartered Institute of Housing – How to tackle hate crime policy briefing

[www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/How to tackle hate crime](http://www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/How_to_tackle_hate_crime)

True Vision – an online resource dedicated to providing up to date information on hate crime, details on how to report it and a range of resources, downloads and materials to use in your service.

www.report-it.org.uk/home

UK Government: Action Against Hate – The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime (July 2016)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/hate-crime-action-plan-2016

Victim Support - an independent charity for people affected by crime and traumatic events. Their specialist teams provide individual, independent, emotional and practical help to enable people to cope and recover from the effects of crime.

www.victimsupport.com



What we do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations working directly with people who become homeless in England. We work to make services better and campaign for policy change that will help end homelessness.

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