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IPAG Hate Crime Report

This report has been jointly produced by Gurvinder Sandher, the County Chair and
Elaine Bolton, the County Vice Chair and Chair of Tunbridge Wells District
Independent Police Advisory Group (IPAG).

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the IPAG Chairs, members of the District IPAGs and Police officers and staff, especially the Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and partner organisations, including MCCH, who were involved in this piece of work for their support, views and ideas on hate crime in Kent.

1.0 Objective of Report

The key role of the IPAG is to:-

- Be a critical friend to Kent Police
- Challenge conventional thinking
- Improve how the Police deliver their services
- Engage with our communities

Hate crime is one of the key themes for the IPAG during the 2015/18 term. Originally the plan was to focus on disability hate crime. Following the EU referendum in June 2016 there was an increase in race hate crime, so it was agreed that this should also be included.

The aim of this report is to:

- Gain an understanding from Kent communities involved in IPAGs on:
 - the number of hate crimes reported
 - their experience of hate crime and Kent Police involvement
 - how to encourage greater reporting of hate crime
 - how Kent Police can improve how victims of hate crime are treated
- Review hate crimes and victim satisfaction
- Review data on hate crimes, to identify trends and issues of concern

The definition of a hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice:

- based on a person's race or perceived race
- based on a person's religion or perceived religion
- based on a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- based on a person's disability or perceived disability
- against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender

2.0 Methodology

In having hate crime as an IPAG theme and carrying out the review the following have taken place:

- The main agenda item for the October 2016 County IPAG meeting was hate crime, with an over view of hate crime issues and a presentation on the Jigsaw project with MCCH, which also included a focus group
- Focus groups with a brief developed by Elaine Bolton, County Vice Chair (Appendix 1). Focus groups were held at the County facilitated by Elaine Bolton and at the District IPAGs facilitated by the District IPAG Chairs at Canterbury, Dartford and Gravesham and Maidstone. In Maidstone four focus groups were held with each focussing on different communities e.g. Church youth group, transgender youth groups and people with learning difficulties. Over 60 people were involved.
- District IPAG specific actions on hate crime
 - Discussion around hate crime took place at the following District IPAG meetings: Medway, Tunbridge Wells, Shepway, Thanet and Sevenoaks. The discussions included “hot spots”, patterns, repeat victims, repeat offenders, number of crimes broken down into the diversity strands
 - Questionnaires issued to members of District IPAGs in Shepway, with five being returned
 - Jess Harman, Shepway District IPAG Chair with the CLO, Mick Cronin has delivered presentations to five secondary schools on hate crime
 - Support from MCCH in Medway in delivering training and setting up reporting hubs, launched in November 2017 at Medway Police Station
 - Mystery shopping scheduled in Tunbridge Wells
 - Networking between members of the Thanet IPAG, especially the Synagogue and Mosque

- Attendance by Elaine Bolton at the Hate Crime Forum, Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) Board and Diversity and Inclusion Board where issues that affect hate crime are discussed and actioned e.g. transgender issues.
- A review of the website on hate crime issues
- Review of strategies, guidance, research and local and national media on hate crime.
(See Appendix 2) These included:
 - Kent Police documents e.g. Action against hate – Kent Police local action plan for tackling hate crime 2016
 - Research and consultations carried out by Galop, University of Sussex
 - Strategies and guidance produced by EHRC, Stonewall, TUC, CPS, Central government, UK Race and Europe Network
 - Media coverage e.g. Misogyny being recorded as a hate crime, as introduced in Nottinghamshire Police to encourage more victims to report incidents and crimes (2017), hate crime against taxi drivers in Tunbridge Wells (2017/18)

3.0 Our findings

3.1 The number of hate crimes being reported

The Home Office stated that the number of hate crimes recorded by the Police in 2016/17 has increased sharply by 29 % to more than 80,000.

In Kent the volume of hate crime reported continues to increase. In the last rolling year (RY) the volume of recorded crime has increased numerically by 1149 (September 2017), which is a total increase of 1050 or 49.6 % on the previous rolling year.

Across the five categories recorded the results are:

Category	Kent (RY September 2017)	Nationally 2016/17
Race	+ 688 or 42 %	+ 62, 685 or 78 %
Sexual orientation	+ 133 or 42 %	+ 9157 or 11 %
Religion/Faith	+ 82 or 155 %	+ 5949 or 7 %
Disability	+ 145 or 91 %	+ 5558 or 7 %
Transgender	+ 17 or 49 %	+ 1248 or 2 %

Reasons given for the increase in hate crime included: the terror attacks, the use of social media, improved recording of hate crimes, the rise in trust and confidence to report hate crime and being more aware of the ways in which hate crime can be reported (e.g. online, third parties – Tell Mama, True Vision and third party hubs)

In the focus groups the question asking about the number of hate crimes to be estimated wasn't always asked. When it was asked the estimates were fairly accurate due to receiving updates from the CLO at the District IPAG meetings.

3.2 Experience of being a victim of hate crime

There were examples of IPAG members and members of the focus groups being victims of hate crime. Four were race related – Slovak, Pakistani, Turkish and Irish Traveller. Two had been reported, with the example of racism and swearing not being reported. The two reported resulted in police involvement and an arrest. One was five years ago and it was felt that if it happened now they would have taken it further and pushed for more than a fine. There were also examples of transgender hate crime and the majority didn't report – reasons given was

“wanted to ignore it and keep away from trouble” or “it was just something that happens sometimes”.

3.3 Awareness of hate crimes in the community

There were examples where hate crime in Kent communities was mentioned in the focus groups including:

- Race hate crime
 - Not reported as they “are used to it”
 - Comments on Facebook
 - Irish traveller families, who are advising Kent Police
 - White “Doorman”
 - Perceived correlation between the Brexit vote and an increase in hate crime, which has made some people (e.g. the far right) to have more confidence to be open about their prejudices
 - Taxi drivers (One who is a member of the Tunbridge Wells District IPAG)
- Sexual orientation
- Religion/belief
- Transgender
- Disability

This shows some evidence which is consistent with research carried out by Stonewall in 2017: 21 % of LGBT people, 41 % of trans people, 34 % of BAME LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident due to their sexual orientation or gender identity in the last 12 months. Also young people are at greatest risk with 56 % of Trans young people having experienced hate crime.

IPAG chairs also sit on Gold Groups e.g. the Thanet Chair sits on Gold Group meetings for events in Thanet – EDL march, to manage community tensions, including hate crime.

3.4 What Kent Police and partners can do to encourage reporting hate crime

There were many examples raised in the focus groups to encourage the reporting of hate crime and they included:

- **Providing greater understanding of what hate crime is**
 - To young people using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
 - Educate people on what is considered to be a hate crime and mate crime through presentations to schools (primary and secondary) and colleges and community groups
 - Work with the local media
 - Share good news stories on the number of people prosecuted through the local and social media
 - Discuss how certain language used is seen as hate crime
 - Breaking down that “it’s normal to be a victim of hate crime” for victims of hate crime

- **Reporting hate crime**
 - Making it easier to report hate crime and reduce bureaucracy
 - Consult with young people on what would encourage them to report
 - Having more ways to report such as Apps and on line on the new Kent Police website
 - Working with communities that wouldn’t normally report as they feel the Police may not do anything
 - Online/texting services and help lines
 - Break down the perception that it is not taken seriously by the Police
 - Manage the fear that is experienced by victims of hate crime
 - Third party reporting hubs
 - Dispel the fear of wasting Police time when incidences are low level
 - Lack of time – victims worried that it would take a long time and not achieve much

- Addressing the fear of repercussion from offenders – no expectation that the Police would be able to protect victims or witnesses from intimidation or reprisals
- Victims not understanding the process - when already upset by the incident they do not want to be involved
- Lack of deterrent – perception that sanctions were not high enough to prevent people committing hate crime
- Potential that poor experience with the Police in home nations may affect not reporting hate crimes
- Phone 101 – reduce delays and provide more communication at time of call about what the process is – when not an emergency
- Information spread to communities to encourage reporting of hate crime, even when no further action can be taken to underline the importance of the Police having an accurate record of the number of incidents to help target resources and assess the scale of the problem
- Disability reporting pack has been developed by Learning Disability Partnership Groups at Dartford and Gravesham and this could be used as a basis for building other reporting packs for Hate crime that encourage contact with the Police
- Promoting Tell Mama and True Vision
- Promoting Hate crime phone lines
- Having a Hate crime app
- Holding a Victim service improvement board and publicising its actions and progress
- Promoting the different types of resolution e.g. community resolutions, conditional cautions, police cautions, proportionate justice, which involves victim choice
- Promoting the process e.g. evidential statement, victim personal statement – the opportunity for the victim to say how the crime has affected them

From other sources transgender victims fear of being outed is a significant barrier to reporting LGBT hate crime, Stonewall recommend that the Police should improve their training to identify and record homophobic, biphobia and transphobic hate crime, provide better support to victims and bring perpetrators to justice (Stonewall, 2017) ¹

84 % of respondents experienced more than one occurrence of online abuse and 59 % experienced six or more occurrences of online abuse. 72 % had not reported their most recent experience and nearly half said that they did report online hate crime said that they did not find it easy to report (Galop 2017) ²

Also the Hate Crime Project at the University of Sussex found that knowing a victim or even hearing about an incident can have significant consequences, as they had more empathy for victims who came from their own community. Also knowing a victim of hate crime was linked to them having less positive attitudes towards the Police, the CPS and the government. ³

3.5 What Kent Police and partners can do to improve how victims of hate crime are treated

There were many examples raised at the focus groups on what Kent Police and partners can do to improve how victims of hate crime are treated and they included:

- Ensure a quick response to a hate crime being reported
- Improve the support/provide enhanced support and practical advice for victims – face to face and online, to help manage the fear the victim maybe experiencing
- Improve the feedback and communication - Keep victims updated, especially after the initial contact
- Use the media (news, radio phone ins etc.) and social media to share good news stories on the number of people prosecuted and other associated data
- Treat victims “with dignity” and “believe them”
- Have one officer as the contact
- Improved communication and support could prevent victims from withdrawing from the prosecution process
- Reviewing complaints involving hate crimes against Police officers

In Kent the number of charges has been steadily increasing since May 2016, with 280 (RY September 2017) an increase of + 65 or 30.2 %. However the charge rate has continued to decrease as the overall volume of crime increases (September 2017)

The latest figures, 2015/16 show that the CPS completed more than 15,000 hate crime prosecutions, which is the highest level ever. A third of those convicted saw their sentence increase because of the hate crime element of the offence, also the highest ever. In Kent the CPS recorded 341 hate crimes in 2015/16.

4.0 Conclusion

This was the second piece of coordinated work carried out by IPAG members under the new District model. Although only four Districts carried out hate crime focus groups, the theme enabled other Districts to personalise work to the needs of their District. These included setting up reporting hubs, having regular updates and discussions on hate crime and presenting to local schools.

From these and reviewing strategies, guidance, research and local and national media on hate crime the following conclusions can be made for Kent:

- Hate crime continues to increase
- Hate crime continues to be a concern for local communities
- Victims of hate crime, especially certain communities, which include race and LGBT+ do not report hate crime to the Police
- Victims of hate crime do not always feel that it is worth reporting or that they will be taken seriously

5.0 Recommendations

1. To ensure victim satisfaction District IPAGs to:
 - a. To review a hate crime from reporting to its closure and providing feedback, especially involving the victim's journey such as trans people and people with learning difficulties
 - b. To review complaints involving hate crimes against Police officers
 - c. Hate crime to become a regular agenda item for the District IPAGs – trends, hot spots etc.
 - d. Mystery shopping to be carried out – reporting a hate crime online, by phone, face to face and through a third party reporting hub to ensure ease of reporting and effective and sensitive recording (Especially for those victims with learning difficulties or English not being their first language)

- e. Work closely on a district level to promote National Hate Crime Awareness Week
- 2. A review of the training provided on hate crime – especially ensuring that how the victim is affected and the victim’s journey is included
- 3. Kent Police to make better use of media and social media opportunities on hate crime to encourage victims to report and offenders to be aware of their actions and the effect it has on their victims, reduce repeat offenders and to prevent potential offenders of hate crime
- 4. Kent Police to put more focus on on line hate crime
- 5. Ensure the DASH App is publicised
- 6. We would suggest having a named internal lead identified within Kent Police to move these recommendations forward and a review in 12 months’ time to check progress in conjunction with the County IPAG Chair and Vice Chair.

Hate Crime – Focus Groups in the Districts

Introduction (by you and your Kent Police rep plus using the information from the County IPAG meeting and local statistics)

- **IPAG theme**, reasons and what is involved - see terms of reference
- **Definition of a hate crime** = is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice:
 - based on a person's race or perceived race
 - based on a person's religion or perceived religion
 - based on a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
 - based on a person's disability or perceived disability
 - against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender
- **Definition of a hate crime incident** = any non crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice on the above characteristics.
- **True Vision** use the following more plain English versions. Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender identity. This can be committed against a person or property. A victim does not have to be a member of the group at which the hostility is targeted. In fact, anyone could be a victim of a hate crime. Hate Incidents can feel like crimes to those who suffer them and often escalate to crimes or tension in a community. For this reason the police are concerned about incidents and you can use this site to report non-crime hate incidents. The police can only prosecute when the law is broken but can work with partners to try and prevent any escalation in seriousness.
- **Current initiatives** e.g. hate crime, mcch Jigsaw project (education package for schools raising awareness of hate crime towards people with learning difficulties/disabilities), increase in reporting, increase in prosecutions, sentence uplifts to hate crime offenders, police tactical lead in each Division, CLOs review each hate crime report, Kent Police local action plan for tackling hate crime
- **How to report** e.g. 101, 999 (if an emergency), True vision (report-it.org.uk), True Vision app, 3rd party reporting hubs, email /phone your local Community safety unit (CSU) or at a police station

Questions

1. How many hate crimes are reported each month

- to Kent Police
- in this District

Give the answers, plus emphasise under reporting and discuss.

- *Did you know the definition of hate crime before today?*
- *How surprised are you by the figures – higher, lower etc.?*
- *Who in your communities were victims e.g. race, disabled, religion/faith, transgender, gay, lesbian or bi sexual etc.?*
- *What are the causes of hate crime in this District?*

2. Have you been a victim of hate crime?

If yes, discuss

- *What happened?*
- *When?*
- *What do you think caused the hate crime?*
- *Did you report it?*
- *If yes, how did you report it and to whom? What happened after you reported it? How satisfied were you with what happened?*
- *If no, why did you not report it? Now you know more about hate crime, would you report it? If yes, why? If no, why?*

3. In your communities are you aware of any hate crime?

If yes, discuss

- *What happened?*
- *When?*
- *What do you think caused the hate crime?*
- *Did they report it?*
- *If yes, How did they report it and to whom? What happened after they reported it? How satisfied were they with what happened?*
- *If no, why did they not report it?*

4. Hate crime is under reported. What can Kent Police and partners do to encourage reporting?

Discuss:

- *What ways/other ways could hate crime be reported?*
- *What could stop/discourage people from reporting hate crime?*
- *How could we especially encourage parts of our communities to report hate crime, especially young people?*

5. How can Kent Police and partners improve how victims of hate crime are treated?

6. Any other comments?

Next steps

- Thank your members for their contributions
- Collate the responses and email to Gurvinder Sandher (IPAG Chair) or Elaine Bolton (Vice Chair)
- The District responses will be collated and developed into a report with recommendations to Kent Police in late 2017
- Update at next County and District IPAG meetings in 2017

Any questions or comments please contact Elaine Bolton, Vice Chair

References

Kent Police documents

- Action against hate – Kent Police local action plan for tackling hate crime 2016
- Presentations, minutes and action plans from the Hate Forum, Protecting Vulnerable People’s Board, Diversity and Inclusion Board

Research and consultations

- Hate crime and discrimination (Stonewall, 2017) ¹
- Online hate crime report 2017 (Galop) ² LGBT+ people need an improved response from the police including, a quick response, good knowledge of LGBT+ issues, respectful, non-judgemental approach, to be believed and listened to, have the incident recorded as a hate crime and for the perpetrator(s) to be stopped
- Hate Crime Project at the University of Sussex (2017) ³ – This involves 1000 Muslims and 2000 LGBT people investigating the wider impacts of hate crime. Knowing a victim or even hearing about an incident can have significant consequences, as they had more empathy for victims who came from their own community. Also knowing a victim of hate crime was linked to them having less positive attitudes towards the Police, the CPS and the government. Most had not had contact with the Police about a hate crime and members of the Muslim community who had been in touch with the Police were less likely to believe that they would respond effectively than those who had not had contact. Also more than 60 % preferred restorative justice to an enhanced prison sentence, which they felt would be a more likely way to repair the harm caused by hate and prejudice. Four out of five knew someone who had been victimised in the past three years resulting in anger, anxiety and feelings of vulnerability. Many took steps to increase their own security, use social media to raise awareness of such attacks, avoiding areas where they thought an attack might be likely and joining community support groups.
- CPS consultation on hate crime (2017)

- Crime and disabled people: measures of disability – related harassment (EHRC, 2016 update)
- Causes and motivations of hate crime – EHRC (2016)

Strategies and guidance

- New guidance for the CPS (Home Office, 2017) – Online hate crime to be treated as seriously as offences in person by the CPS with the same “robust and proactive approach used with offline offending”
- Action against hate: The UK government’s plan for tackling hate crime – 2016-20 This focusses on preventing hate crime by challenging beliefs and attitudes that underlie hate crime, reducing the number of hate crime incidents, increasing the reporting of hate crime, improving support for victims of hate crime and building understanding of hate crime through improved data
- Dealing with Hate Crime – a guide for victims and NGOs helping victims - UK Race and Europe Network (2017) This includes an overview of the processes involved in a police investigation into hate crime, from crime scene to trial and how to report online hate e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram
- TUC guide to protecting migrant and black and minority workers from violence, harassment and abuse (2016) This provides a checklist for employers and union representatives, which includes policies and procedures, training and reporting.
- What to do if you are worried about racism – EHRC (2016). This provides information about employee rights and where to go to for help and support if racism is experienced at work or elsewhere, especially aimed at migrant workers, ethnic minorities and EU nationals. The National Police Chiefs’ Council says that “victims and those feeling vulnerable will receive support from the police and offenders can expect a strong response and enhanced sentencing”
- Reporting hate crime – EHRC (2017)

National and local media

- Guidance on hate crime online offences (BBC, 2017)
- Misogyny being recorded as a hate crime, as introduced in Nottinghamshire Police to encourage more victims to report incidents and crimes (2017)
- An increase in disabled children experiencing hate crime (ChildLine, 2017)
- Hate crime against taxi drivers – race and religion/belief (2017/18)