

Hate crime

The information presented in this report is correct at the time of publication. However, as much of the information included here is extracted from 'live' systems and remains the subject of on-going operational activity, audit and scrutiny, changes to the underlying data may occur. Information presented in this report may therefore differ from that presented in subsequent publications from Cleveland Police.

'Hate crime' refers to any crime against a person which is perceived to be motivated by a person's hostility or prejudice against certain characteristics; race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

This can be committed against a person or property.

Tackling hate crime remains high on the agenda for the partnership and **forms part of the Community Safety Plan 2017-20** within 'Protecting vulnerable people' and the Police and Crime Plan 2016-21 within the priority of 'Better deal for victims and witnesses'.

Following the national picture, the number of hate crimes and incidents are on the increase. The most recent national statistics are from 2016/17 (published Oct 17) noted a rise of **29% across England and Wales.**

The increase was thought to reflect both a genuine rise in hate crime around the time of the EU referendum and also due to ongoing improvements in crime recording by the police. The Office for National Statistics have stated increases in recent years in police recorded violence against the person and public order offences have been driven by improvements in police recording. Around nine in ten hate crime offences recorded by the police are in these two offence groups. In Stockton, the increase was at a slower pace (**+16.3%**) than nationally (**+29%**).

Following on from this, during **the most recent 12 months**, there has been a **further 52 (+24.1%) hate crimes** recorded in Stockton compared to the previous year (April 16 to March 17).

The offences relate to incidents which are perceived to have a **hate and criminal element** and account for 86% of all the hate crime incidents recorded (268 of 316 incidents). Those with **no criminal behavior** are recorded solely as a **hate incident.**

As the actual number of Hate crime offences are only low in numbers (268 crimes), **they account for less than 2% of all crime in Stockton.**

Figure 10 – Hate crime statistics in Stockton 2014 to 2018

Year	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	Numerical change from 2014 to 2018	% change from 2014 to 2018
Hate crime	115	147	184	216	268	153	133%

Looking at crime trends, over the past five years, offences have doubled, from 115 crimes to 268 (+133%). This is a similar picture across the Tees Valley area.

Unlike the majority of crime types, **the rise in levels can be seen as a positive**, with more victims now willing to come forward.

Alongside this, the **public are now becoming more aware** of what a Hate crime is along with more robust reporting practices.

The increase is similar to the national picture of a year on year increase (+80% from 2014 to 2017, 87% in Stockton)¹.

Like with domestic abuse, the true extent of hate crime is not quantified by the number of crimes. The actual figures do not represent the real experiences of victims, particularly from minority groups.

There are five centrally monitored strands of hate crime:-

Figure 11 – Levels by strands

Type	2017/18	2016/17	Change	% change	% of Hate crime
Racial	198	175	23	13.1%	73.9
Transgender	9	5	4	80%	3.4
Disability	21	7	14	200%	7.8
Religion/Belief	8	7	1	14.3%	3.0
Sexual Orientation	32	22	10	45.5%	11.9
Total	268	216	52	24.1%	100

Offences with a racial element account for the majority of crimes (73.9%), followed by sexual orientation (11.9%). Other types of hate crime remain in low numbers.

It is within the other four strands of hate crime (not including racial) where there **needs to be some strong focus on increasing the reporting of incidents**.

¹ ONS website – Hate crime

There also continues to be little information reported via the Third Party Reporting Centres (TPRC) – this has been noted as an issue through the operational hate crime meetings and is measured within the Hate crime action plan.

The Police Communities and Partnerships Team are currently reviewing the process of increasing the reporting to TPRC to start to build on knowledge through trained Community Connectors (Champions). This is incorporated into a further action regarding the development of questions around the theme of ‘what could agencies change to make things better to report?’

There is also a potential gap within services, ensuring staff within adult social care are aware of the possibility some clients may be victims of **disability hate crime** and yet afraid (victim) or uncertain (carers/employee) on how to report this. **This is reflected in the low number of disability offences.** The low figures for disability reporting could potentially be due to a gap in the training and awareness of all SBC frontline services in recognising the strands of hate.

What are we doing to tackle hate crime in Stockton?

Being a victim of crime because of who you are rather than a ‘non-targeted’ crime has greater impact on a victim’s health and well-being.

Locally, crime data shows victims from this type of crime can be **repeatedly victimised**.

Young adults are also **at risk** of this type of crime with **one in six of all victims** aged 17 and under.

Men are more likely to be a victim of hate crime (2 out of every 3 victims) however there have been several repeat victims in Stockton who are female. Alongside this, **one in 8 victims have been** subject to **more than one hate crime**.

Locally two third of all residents who participated in Stockton Residents Survey felt **there was good community cohesion in the borough**.

A monthly multi-agency Hate Crime Group remains in place to tackle the issues surrounding Hate crime. This includes an open session which covers general topics and trends, followed by a closed session where all hate crime incidents and crimes are discussed.

The purpose of this is to identify any repeat or vulnerable victims, locations or changes in offending behavior and to ensure the right services have been offered to the victim.

The action plan has been implemented based upon five key strands:-

- Preventing Hate crime
- Responding to Hate crime in our communities
- Increasing the reporting of Hate crime
- Improving support to victims
- Building our understanding of hate crime

To date, there has been some good progress in many of the key areas:

- Catalyst - have been key in raising awareness of hate crime issues through awareness sessions and use of social media along with the development of pathways for third party reporting
- Training and awareness sessions for SBC elected members have taken place and anticipated this will be rolled out to other directorates within SBC
- Roll out programme of awareness sessions within education establishments
- Commissioned temporary accommodation providers given information and guidance on how to make referrals
- Development of promotional video to be shown within community events
- Focus group held through the PCC and further sessions planned with Victim Crime and Advice Service (VCAS)

The PCC is also committed to addressing and investing in Hate crime. This includes increasing the number of staff who are dedicated to the investigation, prevention and support for this type of crime. The crime investigators have seen some real progress in the past year, resulting in the successful detection of offences. Alongside this, VCAS and other bespoke services such as Transaware and Hart Gables continue to play an invaluable role in offering support to victims of Hate crime.

A support group has recently been implemented in Stockton offering help to young **gay, bisexual and transgender individuals** focusing on mental health awareness (Behind the eyes project).

It is evident there are still a number of gaps:-

- Low number of reports via TPRCs
- Overall the reports of hate crime regarding the four strands **excluding racial remain low**
- **Clients and employees within adult social care** may benefit from further training and awareness sessions on what constitutes a hate crime, particularly those with mental health issues or a disability