



Sexual Orientation Hate Crime Factsheet



What is a Hate Crime?

Hate Crime is a term that describes an incident or crime against someone based on an aspect of who they are, or who they are perceived to be; their Identity. Identity is divided into five Protected Characteristics in relation to Hate Crime. These are categories of identity that might be the target of prejudice, hostility or hate. These characteristics are:

- Race or Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion of Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity

“ I was assaulted by a man whilst I was holding hands with my lesbian partner. He grabbed me from behind and thrust himself into me and then verbally attacked me ”

- Freya, 21. LGBT In Wales Hate Crime and Discrimination, Stonewall Cymru

Sexual Orientation Hate Crime

The 2018/2019 Hate Crime Statistics for England and Wales were published by the Home Office on 15 October. The statistics show a 17% increase in recorded hate crimes across Wales compared to 2017/2018. Sexual orientation hate crimes made up 19% of all hate crimes recorded by the four Welsh Police Force Areas. This is a 12% rise from the previous year.

Date	Amount of cases (Wales)	Sexual orientation related cases (Wales)
2017/18	3,370	670
2018/19	3,932	751

It is thought that increases are due to the improvements made by the police in their identification and recording of these hate crime offences and more people coming forward to report these crimes rather than a genuine increase. However, genuine increases cannot be ruled out. Due to the barriers to reporting, it is also thought that hate crimes are still being under reported.

“I will report if it's really serious. Petty hate crime like this is constant and I don't have the time or energy to pursue every instance.”

- Bisexual participant, The Hate Crime Report, Galop, 2016

Barriers for Reporting Sexual Orientation Hate Crimes

Er bod gennym well dealltwriaeth o gyffredinrwydd ac effaith Troseddau Casineb LGB+, rydym yn cydnabod bod rhwystrau o hyd i riportio Troseddau Casineb a chyrrchu cymorth.

Fear

- LGB+ people may be concerned about being 'outed' by the police if they report homophobic/biphobic hate crime. Even if they are 'out' to family and friends, they may fear their identity being revealed to the wider community.
- Some people may be fearful about the situation becoming worse if they decide to report. For example, asylum seekers that are LGB+ may be worried about reporting homophobic hate crimes. The Home Office can request for an LGB+ Asylum Seeker to 'prove' their sexual orientation, and if you are unable to do this there is a fear that you would be deported. For many it seems easier to keep it to yourself, however you can still get support from Victim Support even if you do not wish to report to the Police.

Mistrust of Police and Criminal Justice Agencies

- Due to a history of tensions and prejudice, and despite modern improvements in training and diversity, some minority groups fear that they will not be taken seriously or will be seen as wasting police time.

Lack of Information

- Some victims do not know about third party reporting centres like Victim Support so if they are not comfortable reporting to the police they will not report at all.
- For many years, Hate Crime has not been included on the school curriculum. Many children grow up unaware of what a Hate Crime is. Therefore, when confronted with the word 'Crime', they did not know that many acts of Bullying and hostility are categorised as a Hate Crime.

How to report a Hate Crime

If a Hate Crime has taken place, we advise that you contact the police by one of the following methods:

- If it is an emergency and the crime is still taking place, call **999**.
- If it is not an immediate emergency, call **101**.
- If you prefer, you can go to your **local police station** and report the crime there.
- Victim Support can report to the Police **on your behalf** and you can choose to remain **anonymous** if you wish
- Witnesses of Hate Crime can also contact **Victim Support** to report an incident

However, we understand some people might be concerned about involving the police for a variety of reasons. Victim Support will provide you with help and support whether you decide to involve the police or not. To talk to us, please contact us through any of the following options:

- To contact our Hate Crime Services at Victim Support contact us on **0300 30 31 982**
- Visit our website at **<https://www.reporthate.victimsupport.org.uk/>**
- **Twitter@ VictimSupportHC**
- **Facebook: VictimSupportHC**
- **Instagram: vswaleshatecrime**
- If you wish to make a self-referral email: **hate.crimewales@victimsupport.org.uk**

Regardless of whether you report the crime to the police or contact us directly, we advise keeping a note of all incidents related to Hate Crime. Ideally this would include times, dates and details of what happened. This is valuable if you decide to change your mind reporting it at a later date, or if the abuse is consistent or ongoing.

The support we offer covers helping with simple tasks like filling out forms, offering personal and home security, but we can also assist with bigger problems. These include ongoing emotional support, housing and police advocacy or support with understanding the criminal justice system over the course of your trial. We'll give you the information you need to understand your options and next steps.