



# North Somerset Hate Crime Strategy

2019 - 2022

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# Foreword



*"Hate crime in all its' forms has a significantly harmful effect on the well-being on those people affected directly by it and on their wider community.*

*The policing teams across North Somerset are absolutely committed to dealing with hate crime offenders robustly and ensuring that those subjected to hate crime feel confident in reporting to the police and partners, and well-supported throughout the investigation process and beyond.*

*We welcome the new strategy for 2018-2020 which reiterates our shared priorities and commitment to tackling this issue in partnership and which will underpin our joint approach to tackling this issue."*

**Chief Inspector Leanne Pook,  
Avon & Somerset  
Constabulary**



*"Hate crime whether by physical assault, damage to property or verbal abuse can ruin individual lives, make people fearful of living and enjoying their everyday lives and break down the fabric of our communities and neighbourhoods.*

*It can affect all communities and lead to the isolation of people and groups of people from the rest of the community.*

*We believe that every member of our community should feel safe - wherever they live, learn, work or play in this District.*

*We welcome this new strategy for 2018 - 2020 as it provides a framework for the partnership to focus our resources into shared priorities for tackling hate crime in North Somerset."*

**Howard Potheary  
Community Safety  
Manager, North Somerset  
Council**



*"SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) has been delivering services to tackle racism and hate crime for 26 years in North Somerset. We have supported 120 cases involving 288 people since 2015.*

*Our clients have suffered a wide range of distressing incidents from verbal abuse to damage to their homes, cars and businesses to physical assaults. Some have been hounded out of their homes.*

*As well as the visible damage, hate crime causes hidden harm – such as mental health issues, inability to get out and about, identity crises or absenteeism from school for example. We welcome this strategy and will be doing all we can to make sure it has a real and positive impact for North Somerset communities.*

*There is no place of hate in North Somerset!"*

**Alex Raikes MBE - SARI  
Local Hate Crime Support  
Provider**

# Introduction

The Hate Crime Strategy 2018 - 2020 is the second to be produced by North Somerset Council and its partners. The strategy sets out a clear vision for tackling hate crime in North Somerset against our three key partnership priorities:

- To respond to hate incidents and hate crimes in North Somerset Communities effectively
- To ensure communities know what hate crime is, how to report it, the support available and to challenge hate by others with a focus on young people.
- To promote and celebrate the diversity and contributions by all communities in North Somerset.

Over the next three years we will build upon the current partnership structures working together with communities to deliver on our priorities with the overall aim of reducing hate crime in North Somerset.

Hate crime has a significant impact on those experiencing it. Being targeted because of personal characteristics or perceived characteristics can leave people feeling vulnerable. It can harm an individual's physical and/or mental health, damage their self-esteem and leave them feeling isolated. Hate crime can also affect personal freedom, with people feeling forced into changing their routine, their appearance and behaviour, and sometimes even where they live. In North Somerset we must all say no to hate crime and make clear in our communities this will not be tolerated.

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## National Context

The UK Government has identified a plan for tackling hate crime, over the coming months and years.

The plan, '*Action against hate – a plan for tackling hate crime*', was launched in July 2016 and outlined the key priorities in addressing hate crime. As a hate crime partnership, we remain committed to these overriding objectives:

### Preventing a hate crime

We will prevent hate crime by dealing with the beliefs and attitudes that can lead to hate. Providing young people and teachers the right tools and skills to challenge hatred and prejudice from an early age.

### Responding to hate in our communities

We will have a robust approach to perpetrators of hate crime and focus on identified high-risk locations a for hate crime, including public transport, the night-time economy and the internet.

### Increasing the reporting of hate crime

We are committed to giving victims the confidence to report, the awareness of how to report and make it easy to report in a variety of ways.

### Improving support for victims of Hate

We will work to ensure victims are provided with timely, appropriate and effective support, both at the time of reporting their crime and through the criminal justice system

### Building our understanding of hate crime

To tackle hate crime effectively it is imperative we understand the scale and nature of it in our communities. We will identify hate crime data, share it with agencies and analyse it to determine opportunities and risks.

# Responding to Hate in North Somerset (RHINS)

The RHINS multi-agency partnership was established in 2002 and leads the implementation of the North Somerset Hate Crime strategy. The purpose of RHINS is to:

- promote best practice and collaborative working between local agencies, support organisations and members of the community involved with hate incidents in North Somerset.
- achieve consistency of approach and effective resolution of hate incidents across partner agencies.
- identify any hate crime issues using available partnership data and to collaborate and use the resources of all partners to tackle identified issues
- raise awareness of and improve confidence in the reporting procedure as well as unblock any blockages in reporting
- give support and guidance on the development of partner policies and procedures that relate to hate incidents or the promotion of equality, diversity and community cohesion.



## RHINS

Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset



STAND AGAINST RACISM & INEQUALITY



# What is Hate Crime?

Hate crime whether by physical assault, damage to property or verbal abuse can ruin individual lives, make people fearful of living and enjoying their everyday lives and break down the fabric of our communities and neighbourhoods.

It can affect all communities and lead to the isolation of people and groups of people from the rest of the community.

A Hate crime is a crime that is motivated by prejudice against a person because of their:

- Ethnicity or race
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Transgender identity
- Gender

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.

Please see Appendix 1 for North Somerset Council Adopted Hate Crime Definitions.

Hate crime can be:

- a physical attack, like assault or spitting
- name calling, verbal abuse or rude gestures
- threats, harassment or intimidation
- abusive letters, phone calls, leaflets, posters, graffiti, e-mails, social media, texts or phone calls.
- humiliation or degradation
- vandalism or criminal damage to property

## If you report a hate crime you:

- stop it getting worse
- prevent it happening to others
- help identify the offenders
- make your community safer
- will have a say in what happens.

## When you report you:

- Will be listened to and asked what happened and nothing will be done unless you wish it to be
- May rest assured your information will be kept private and safe
- Will be offered practical help and emotional support as your case develops
- Will be invited to draw up a jointly agreed action plan



## Hate Crime Performance Data

The latest national data shows that in England and Wales during 2016/17, there were 80,393 offences recorded by the police in which one or more hate crime strands were deemed to be a motivating factor.

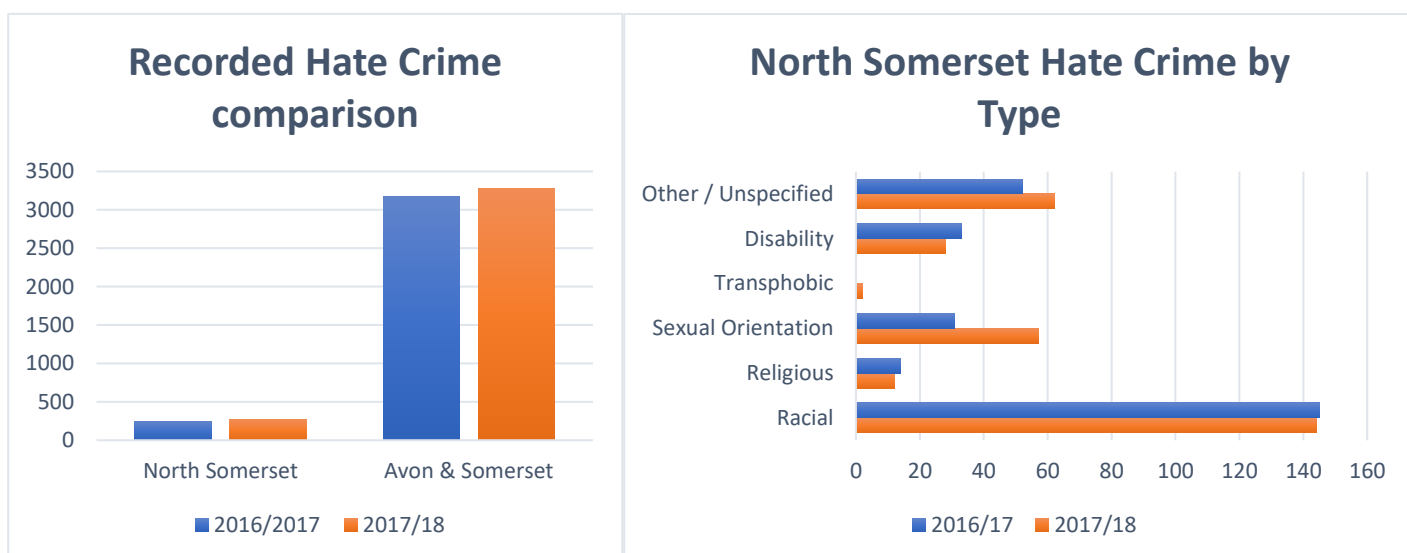
This was an increase of 29 per cent compared with the 62,518 hate crimes recorded in 2015/16, the largest percentage increase seen since the series began in 2011/12.

The increase over the last year is 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.

Under reporting and under recording of hate crime has been an issue nationally. Police and partners in Avon and Somerset have worked particularly hard to improve confidence of victims to report and officer's ability to identify and correctly record hate crime in the past two years

2016/17 was seen as a benchmark year for more accurate recording of hate crime so accurate trend analysis cannot be done before then.

In 2017/18 there were 271 Hate Crime incidents recorded by police in North Somerset. This is a 10% increase from 246 incidents recorded in 2016/17.



Just under 1 in 2 are racially motivated with a notable increase to reporting of sexual orientation related offences (following targeted awareness campaigns) which was the second highest hate crime type recorded in 2017/18

In 2017/18, Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI) opened 41 new hate crime victim support cases in North Somerset. This is a 5% increase compared with the 39 cases in 2016/17. These 41 cases comprised of 9 disability, 28 race, 1 religion or belief and 3 sexual orientation based hate crimes. Just under 50% of those incidents were verbal abuse with 25% physical assault. Weston-super-Mare council wards saw 19 or 46% of all incidents for which SARI were supporting the victim.

# The Strategy

## VISION

A North Somerset that embraces difference, where everyone can live, work, study and visit in safety, with respect and free from the harmful effects of prejudice

## MISSION STATEMENT

People affected by hate incidents/crime are heard, understood, supported and engaged, through a range of multi-agency responses that: empower victims; facilitate positive outcomes; reduce and prevent harm and improve community cohesion.

### Objective

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

To ensure an effective response to hate crime and hate incidents in North Somerset Communities.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

To ensure communities know what hate crime is, how to report it, the support available and to challenge hate crime against others.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

To promote and celebrate the diversity and contributions by all communities in North Somerset.

### Actions

Ensure victims receive timely, appropriate and effective support and this is effectively signposted

To ensure partnership engagement with young people to build awareness of hate crime and what to do

To actively support events in the community which promote and celebrate diversity

Multi-agency staff are equipped to identify and respond effectively to hate incidents

To be pro-active in awareness raising and tackling online prejudice bullying

Share hate crime data to identify where to focus our resources and develop stronger relationships with the community.

Through analysis and intelligence, we will identify and target vulnerable and isolated communities at risk of hate crime

To focus awareness on emerging incident types and in identified communities of need

To build a community network of hate crime support and signposting champions.

# CHALLENGE IT, REPORT IT, STOP IT



# Appendix 1 – North Somerset Council Adopted Hate Crime Definitions

A Hate crime is a crime that is motivated by prejudice against a person because of their:

- Ethnicity or race
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Transgender identity
- Gender

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.

It is acknowledged that there is more specific definitions for a range of different hate crime types. North Somerset Council has adopted the following definitions which it will consider through its work as part of RHINS to achieve the following objectives: -

*Strategic Objective 1:- To ensure an effective response to hate crime and hate incidents in North Somerset Communities.*

*Strategic Objective 2: - To ensure communities know what hate crime is, how to report it, the support available and to challenge hate crime against others.*

*Strategic Objective 3: - To promote and celebrate the diversity and contributions by all communities in North Somerset*

## **Antisemitism**

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

*(International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition see <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>)*

## **Islamophobia**

Islamophobia is any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

*(Runnymede Trust Definition see <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Islamophobia%20Report%202018-Executive%20Summary.pdf>)*

## **Homophobic**

Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic hate crimes or incidents are motivated by the offender's hostility or prejudice towards lesbian, gay, bi or trans people. Anyone can be a victim of a homophobic, biphobic or transphobic incident - it does not matter if the victim is lesbian, gay, bi, trans or straight. It is a hate crime if someone shouts homophobic, biphobic or transphobic abuse at someone in the street, or physically attacks them because they think they're gay, lesbian, bi or trans.

*(Stonewall Definition see <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/hate-crime/what-hate-crime>)*

## **Disability**

Disability hate crime is “Any incident/crime, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person’s disability or perceived disability.”

*(Association of Chief Police Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS))*

## **Anti Gypsism**

Anti Gypsism is a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination.

*(The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe definition anti-Gypsism)*

North Somerset endorses the definitions above. This is not an exhaustive list and new definitions will be added in the future as they are adopted by North Somerset Council.