



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

15th September 2023

Hate Crime Scrutiny

1. Background

- 1.1. Hate crime trends can be a helpful indicator of community tensions and as such, the Commissioner agreed with the Police and Crime Panel to include hate crime as a key indicator in her Police and Crime Plan.
- 1.2. Further to this and following ongoing discussions with the Panel, the Commissioner committed to undertaking a scrutiny inquiry into hate crime in Devon and Cornwall.
- 1.3. This work was undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in early 2023 and the scrutiny report was published in July 2023 alongside the Commissioner's Annual report.
- 1.4. The purpose of the scrutiny inquiry was to:
 - Examine hate crime prevalence across Devon and Cornwall, including increases in police recorded hate crime and trends in geography and crime type, and the prevalence of violent crime;
 - Review the effectiveness of the force's strategic and policing response to hate crime and how this meets the needs of victims and the wider public;
 - Hold the Chief Constable to account in any areas where the force appears to fall short in its response.

2. Findings

- 2.1. Hate crime currently accounts for around 2.5% of all recorded crime in Devon and Cornwall. Over the past three years, recorded hate crime has increased. In the 12 months to July 2022, 2,603 hate crimes were recorded in Devon and Cornwall.
- 2.2. The inquiry demonstrated that police recorded hate crime in Devon and Cornwall is increasing, but this does not tell the whole story. Whilst we know that hate crime is still significantly under reported, it is likely that recent increases in police recorded hate crime are at least in part due to increased reporting, and in some cases, improved recording practices by the police.
- 2.3. Whilst around half of hate crime reports are recorded as types of violence, violence with injury represents a small proportion of hate crime. More than half of stalking and harassment offences related to malicious communications, which includes offences committed online.



- 2.4. The inquiry demonstrated that the police are working hard to tackle hate crime and provide a good service to victims, but some persistent issues remain for the policing of hate crime. This means that not all hate crimes are reported to the police and some victims of hate crime do not have a positive experience of the police. However, we do know that victim satisfaction rates are slightly higher for victims of hate crime (73%) than for victims of all crime (72%).
- 2.5. Although some areas for improvement were identified the inquiry demonstrated that these areas had already been identified by the police, and appropriate steps are being taken to deliver continued improvement for victims of hate crime.
- 2.6. The Commissioner therefore made no new recommendations to the Chief Constable but will continue to monitor hate crime performance and delivery on an ongoing basis, and report hate crime trends to the Panel through the Performance Scorecard.
- 2.7. The full report, which is appended, can also be [read online](#).

Contact for further information:

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