



University of  
Leicester

The Leicester  
**HATE  
CRIME**  
Project

**Findings and  
Conclusions**



The **HATE CRIME** Project  
Leicester

# **Findings and Conclusions**



This research was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Background to the Project</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	What is a hate crime?	6
2.2	What were the aims of the project?	7
<b>3</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1	How did we conduct the research?	8
3.2	Who took part in the study?	9
<b>4</b>	<b>Research Findings</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1	In what ways do people experience hate crime?	13
4.1.1	Everyday experiences	13
4.1.2	Forms of victimisation	14
4.1.3	Most recent experience	17
4.2	Who are the victims?	19
4.2.1	Multiple and intersectional identities	22
4.2.2	Social and economic factors	26
4.3	Where are people victimised?	29
4.3.1	Private and public spaces	29
4.3.2	Public transport	32
4.4	How does hate crime affect victims?	34
4.4.1	Fear of victimisation	34
4.4.2	The emotional and physical impact	36
4.4.3	'Normalising' hate	42
4.4.5	Wider impacts	44
4.4.6	Coping strategies	49
4.5	Who are the perpetrators?	52
4.5.1	Profile of perpetrators	53
4.5.2	Relationship between victims and offenders	55
4.5.3	Addressing offending behaviour	61
4.6	What support do victims need?	64
4.6.1	Police responses	64
4.6.3	Other responses	72
<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>78</b>

**This Findings and Conclusions report is part of a series of publications produced as part of The Leicester Hate Crime Project:**

*Findings and Conclusions: Full Report*

*Findings and Conclusions: Executive Summary Report*

*Victims' Manifesto*

*Briefing Paper 1: Disablist Hate Crime*

*Briefing Paper 2: Gendered Hostility*

*Briefing Paper 3: Homophobic Hate Crime*

*Briefing Paper 4: Racist Hate Crime*

*Briefing Paper 5: Religiously Motivated Hate Crime*

All of these publications can be accessed at [www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies](http://www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies).

# 1 Introduction

Over a two-year period from 2012 to 2014 the Leicester Hate Crime Project team conducted groundbreaking research into acts of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility. Funded by the Economic Social and Research Council, this research – Britain’s biggest ever study of hate crime victimisation – uncovered new insights into the nature and forms of these acts and their impact upon victims, families and wider communities.

The broad aims of the Leicester Hate Crime Project were to examine people’s experiences of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility; to understand the physical and emotional harms suffered by individuals and their families; and to identify ways of improving the quality of support available to victims. The study used a deliberately broad and inclusive definition of hate crime in order to capture the experiences of *anyone*, from *any background*, who felt that they had been victimised specifically because of their identity or perceived ‘difference’. This framework enabled us to expand upon the range of victim groups and experiences typically covered within conventional studies of hate crime. Rather than focusing solely upon the five strands of victim identity (race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and transgender status) which are monitored by criminal justice agencies, we wanted to give a voice to victims who have tended to be peripheral or ‘invisible’ within academic research and official policy but whose victimisation can often bear all of the hallmarks of recognised hate crimes.

The city of Leicester has an extraordinarily diverse population. It is home to substantial minority ethnic populations that are both newly arrived and well-established, as well as a wide range of faith, sexual and other minority communities, and it is this rich diversity which made Leicester a highly appropriate site in which to explore experiences of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility. This is a study which clearly has relevance to local policy, practice and activism, but which also has broader implications for other multicultural environments within the UK and further afield.

This report presents the findings from the Leicester Hate Crime Project and has been structured to outline victims’ experiences and expectations collectively, although where significant variations between and within groups have emerged, these have been identified. In addition to the comprehensive findings and recommendations included in this report, we have produced an *Executive Summary*, a series of themed briefing papers and a *Victims’ Manifesto* for organisations to pledge support to. We sincerely hope that this body of work makes a real and sustained difference with respect to helping organisations and individuals challenge all forms of hate crime.

***Neil Chakraborti***

***Jon Garland***

***Stevie-Jade Hardy***

September 2014

## 2 Background to the Project

### 2.1 What is a hate crime?

Hate crimes or incidents are defined by the College of Policing (2014: 3) as 'any crime or incident where the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in determining who is victimised'. For the purposes of the Leicester Hate Crime Project, a similarly broad definition was used:

*A hate crime refers to acts of violence, hostility and intimidation directed towards people because of their identity or perceived 'difference'.*

All types of targeted victimisation – from verbal abuse, harassment and threatening behaviour through to attacks on property and violent assaults – were included under this framework, while the reason behind using the concept of 'difference' was to capture *all* experiences where someone was targeted because of a characteristic that made them stand out in the eyes of the perpetrator. The College of Policing (2014) identifies five monitored strands of hate crime:

- disability
- race
- religion
- sexual orientation
- transgender status.

This research project was designed to examine hate offences suffered not just by these officially monitored victim communities but by *all* of those other groups whose experiences can often be overlooked by academics, policy-makers and practitioners. During the process of conducting this study we heard from sizeable numbers of participants from 'hidden', less familiar or emerging communities including, for instance, people victimised because of their 'different' modes of dress, appearance or lifestyle ( $n=376$ ); people with learning disabilities and/or mental ill-health ( $n=229$ ); members of recently arrived migrant groups such as the Roma, Polish, Somalian, Congolese and Iranian communities ( $n=197$ ); members of the trans community ( $n=44$ ); and homeless people ( $n=15$ ) (see Section 3 for more information about the sample). Rather than imposing artificial restrictions on the range of identity or lifestyle characteristics that could be considered, the framework used within this project instead facilitated a wider analysis of targeted violence, hostility and intimidatory behaviour.

As is evident throughout this report, victims' experiences of hate and prejudice took many different forms, such as:

- being sent hate mail or offensive messages on Facebook and Twitter;
- having the windows of their car smashed;
- having graffiti spray-painted over their house;
- being mimicked or mocked for a speech impediment or physical disability;
- having fireworks or faeces pushed through their letter box;



- being tipped out of their wheelchair;
- having their headscarf, veil or face covering ripped off;
- being befriended and then exploited and humiliated; and
- being spat at, intimidated and physically attacked.

To reflect the dynamic nature of hate and the wide variety of forms it can take, the terms 'hate crime', 'targeted hostility' and 'targeted victimisation' are used interchangeably within the report.

## 2.2 What were the aims of the project?

The Leicester Hate Crime Project had three broad aims:

- to discover as much as possible about people's experiences of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility;
- to understand the physical and emotional harms suffered by victims and their families; and
- to identify ways of improving the quality of support offered to victims.

In order to address these aims – and to improve policy responses for victims – we worked in close collaboration with a range of organisations, including Leicestershire Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Victim Support, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust and both the City and County Councils. Key policy leads from these organisations formed part of the project's steering group and were consulted at regular intervals throughout the research process.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 How did we conduct the research?

Within this project we employed a 'softer', more subtle approach to locating and engaging with a wide range of diverse communities. This approach involved the research team spending prolonged periods of time in public spaces and buildings across the city, including international supermarkets, cafes and restaurants, charity shops, community and neighbourhood centres, libraries, health centres, places of worship, pubs and clubs, taxi ranks, and shelters and drug and alcohol services that support 'hard to reach' groups. Adopting this method enabled us to engage with over 4,000 members of established and emerging communities in order to raise awareness of the project itself, and to promote further recognition of the harms of hate and available pathways of support for victims.

To investigate victims' experiences of hate and prejudice, the study used a mixed methods approach that included:

- an online and hard-copy survey, translated into eight different languages<sup>1</sup>;
- in-depth, semi-structured face-to-face interviews; and
- personal and reflective researcher field diary observations.

From the outset we realised that for practical and logistical reasons we would not be able to attain a statistically representative sample of each of the myriad communities we wanted to hear from. We therefore developed a dual method of administering our survey – via hard copy questionnaires (which were distributed through dozens of community locations in the city, and through educational establishments, charitable institutions and other liaison points) and online – in order to gain as many and as diverse a range of responses as we possibly could. The research team worked with Ipsos MORI, a leading market research company in the UK and Ireland, to develop the survey instrument.

A total of 1,106 questionnaires were completed by people aged 16 and over who had experienced a hate crime in accordance with the definition employed within this study. Of these questionnaires, 808 were completed on paper and 298 were completed online. Ipsos MORI entered the resultant survey data into data analysis software and worked with the research team in interrogating it.

The project used in-depth face-to-face qualitative interviews to further explore the nature, extent and impact of hate crime victimisation. Depending on the individual or group, interviews were conducted either individually or in the presence of family members, friends or carers as appropriate. Overall, interviews were carried out with 374 victims, and in combination with our survey respondents we heard from a total of 1,421 victims over the duration of the study<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, the Lead Researcher kept a field-note diary throughout the research process. The diary was used to detail observations and informal conversations with community groups, participants and practitioners. These accounts provided additional insight into the context and impact of victimisation, and have been included where appropriate alongside the main findings.

---

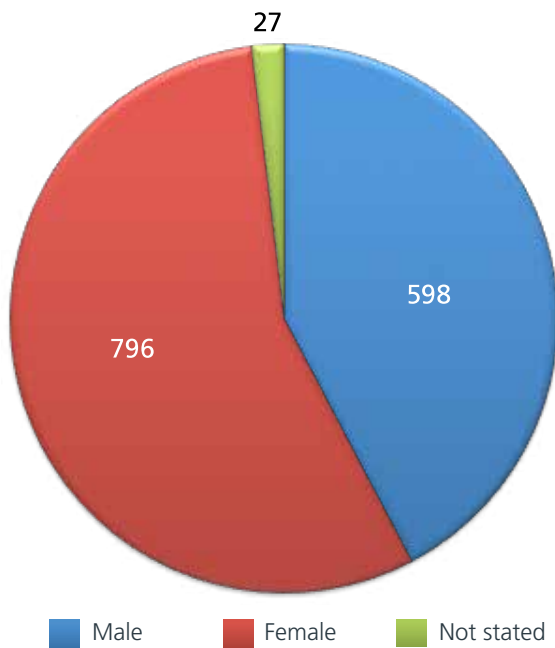
<sup>1</sup> The survey was translated into Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi, Somali and Urdu.

<sup>2</sup> 59 of the 1,106 survey respondents also took part in face-to-face interviews with the research team.

### 3.2 Who took part in the study?

The profile of research participants was extremely diverse in terms of age, gender identity, ethnicity, refugee and asylum status, religion, sexual orientation and disability. From the outset, participants were able to self-define all aspects of their individual demographics, as well as the type of hate crime victimisation they had experienced. Figures 1-5 and Table 1 provide a breakdown of how the respondents within this study described themselves.

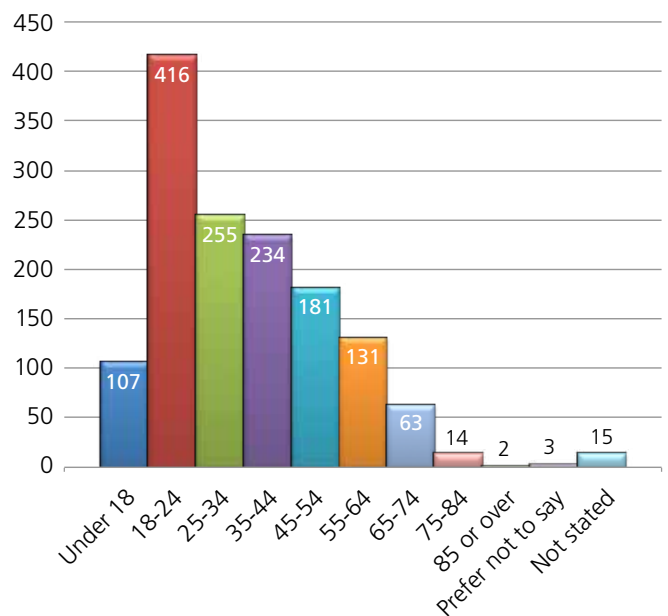
**Figure 1: Gender of respondents**



56% of those taking part in the study were women and 42% were men, with 3% describing themselves as transgender.

29% of our participants were 18 to 24. The next largest age group was 25 to 34 which made up 18% of our sample, followed by 16% who were 35 to 44. 13% of our sample were aged 45 to 54, 9% were between 55 and 64 and 8% were 16 & 17 years old. 6% of our sample were 65 and over.

**Figure 2: Age of respondents**



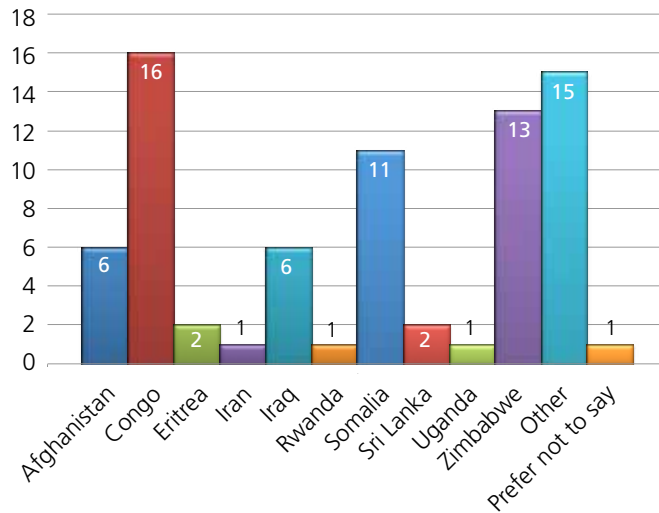
48% of our respondents described their ethnicity as White. 89% of this White sample were White British, which equated to 43% of the overall sample of all ethnicities. 29% identified as Asian, and 13% described their ethnicity as Black. Small proportions said they were of mixed ethnic heritage (3%), Middle Eastern (2%), or had Gypsy/Traveller roots (2%).

**Table 1: Ethnicity of respondents**

Ethnicity	Breakdown of Participants (from both survey and interview)	
	Number	Per cent (%)
White British	604	43
White Irish	10	1
White Eastern European	23	2
White Western European	19	1
Any other White Background	20	1
Black British	63	4
Black Caribbean	18	1
Black African	108	8
Any other Black background	4	0
Asian British	163	11
Indian	123	9
Pakistani	50	4
Bangladeshi	14	1
Chinese	40	3
Any other Asian background	21	1
Irish Traveller	1	0
European Roma	14	1
English/Scottish/Welsh Gypsy	12	1
Any other G/T background	3	0
Afghani	5	0
Iraqi	17	1
Iranian	1	0
Any other Middle Eastern	9	1
White and Black Caribbean	9	1
White and Asian	8	1
White and Black African	2	0
Any other mixed background	10	1
Any other ethnic group	8	1
Prefer not to say	5	0
Not stated	37	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,421</b>	<b>100%</b>

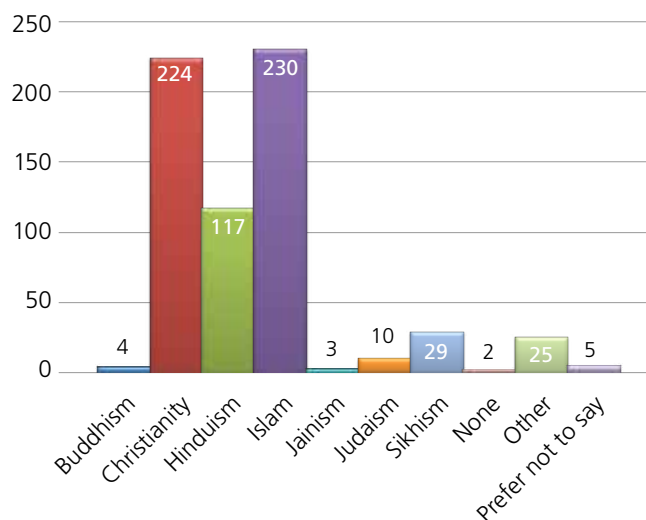
6% of those who took part in the study had refugee or asylum seeker status in the UK. Of those who were refugees or asylum seekers, 18% were from the Democratic Republic of Congo, 15% were from Zimbabwe and 13% were from Somalia. A small minority of participants were from Iraq (7%) and Afghanistan (7%).

**Figure 3: Country of birth or origin of refugees and asylum seekers**



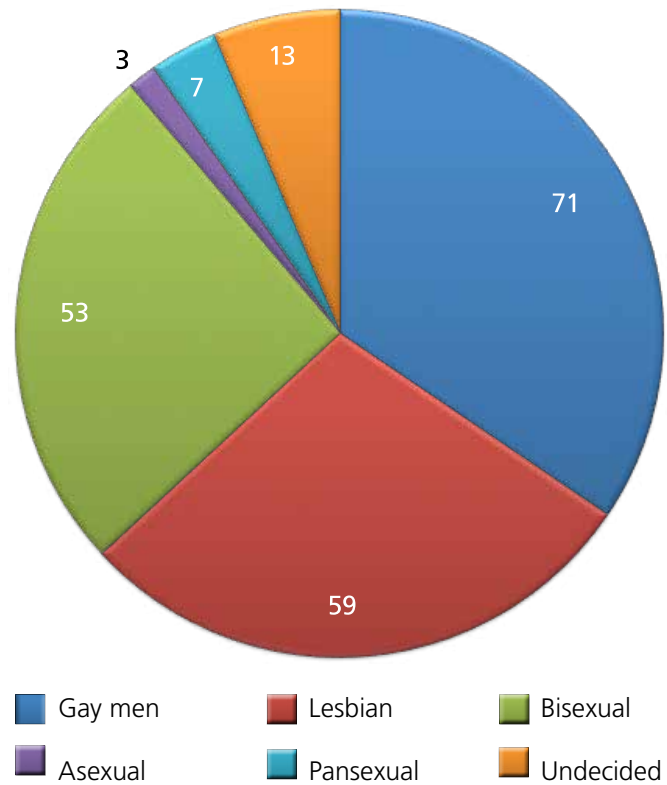
Among those who stated that they practised a religion, 35% were Christian, 35% were Muslim, and 18% were Hindu. Smaller numbers of respondents were Sikh (4%) and Jewish (2%).

**Figure 4: Denomination of respondents who practised a religion**



The majority of research participants described themselves as heterosexual (76%). Of those with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual, 32% were gay men and the sample included similar proportions of lesbian (30%) and bisexual (27%) respondents. A small number described themselves as either pansexual (3%) or undecided (7%).

**Figure 5: Sexual orientation of non-heterosexual participants**



The survey was completed by 134 people who identified as disabled while an additional 137 disabled people took part in individual or group interviews, giving a total of 271 (19% of the full sample). This subset of participants had a range of physical and/or learning disabilities and mental health conditions, including anxiety disorders, autism, cerebral palsy, depression, Down’s syndrome, impaired speech, memory loss, multiple sclerosis, schizophrenia and a range of other learning, mobility and movement impairments. For some of our participants the physical and learning disabilities they had were from birth but for others it was the result of disease, age, or accidents.

A significant proportion of participants within this subset had multiple disabilities and had been targeted due to these different aspects of their identity.

Table 2 outlines the profile of questionnaire respondents and their range of disabilities.

**Table 2: Aspect of disability targeted in hate incidents**

Victim targeted because of:	Breakdown of survey sample who identified as disabled	
	Number	Per cent (%)
Mental ill-health	37	28
Physical disabilities	36	27
Learning disabilities	24	18
Learning disabilities and mental ill-health	14	10
Learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental ill-health	10	7
Learning disabilities and physical disabilities	7	5
Learning disabilities and mental ill-health	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100</b>

## 4 Research Findings

### 4.1 In what ways do people experience hate crime?

- 9 out of 10 victims had experienced verbal abuse
- 7 out of 10 victims had experienced harassment
- Disabled people were more likely to have experienced multiple forms of targeted hostility compared to other groups of victims

From the outset the project used a deliberately broad definition of hate crime to capture the experiences of anyone from any background who felt that they had been targeted because of their identity or a particular feature of 'difference'. By using this more inclusive framework we were able to capture the hate crime experiences of a diverse range of victim groups, which varied from violent, extreme attacks to the more 'everyday' incidents of name-calling and threatening behaviour that can be so damaging to physical and emotional well-being.

#### 4.1.1 Everyday experiences

Often it is the more violent and extreme acts of targeted hostility which attract media, political and academic attention while the experiences and cumulative harms of the more 'ordinary', everyday forms of abuse, bullying and harassment go unacknowledged. Within the Leicester Hate Crime Project we wanted to examine *all* types of targeted hostility and not just 'higher profile' ones. We heard from hundreds of victims who spoke of being routinely ignored, stared at and spoken to in a belittling and derogatory manner.

*It was the manner in which she spoke and how she looked at me, I felt so degraded. She looked up to me with this certain look in her eyes of pure dislike ... that was the most racist experience I have ever had and she never said a racist word.*

Male Bangladeshi restaurant worker

*We're not just being targeted verbally and being given the cold shoulder, dirty looks and fingers. We're also getting something that has moved slightly further and is a bit more dangerous.*

*I've had people when I walk past them spit at me and spit at the floor. You can see that it's a show of disgust.*

Veiled Muslim woman

*If I go with anyone in my wheelchair they always speak to the person pushing it. Even though I find it difficult standing up, I end up standing up and saying "I'm here, talk to me".*

**Male with multiple physical disabilities**

*It's the name-calling and things like that. You never really know with people how far they would go and how fast things can escalate. What could be somebody asking a question, or name calling, or anything like that, can easily turn to violence in less than a minute. It isolates you.*

**Transgender woman**

To an outsider, incidents such as being stared at, being threatened and being called abusive names may seem relatively trivial. However, for many of the victims in this study these experiences were a routine feature of their daily lives and had a profound emotional and psychological impact upon them, as discussed shortly.

#### 4.1.2 Forms of victimisation

Within the survey respondents were asked what form their victimisation took and how often they were targeted. Verbal abuse emerged as the form of hate crime most likely to have been experienced by respondents (87% had been targeted this way) and it was also the form that victims had suffered the most (see Figure 6). This was followed by harassment, with seven in ten having been victimised in this way (70%), and of this sample 34% experienced it repeatedly. Property crime (e.g. burglary, theft, or damage to victims' houses or cars) featured too, with 11% of the sample experiencing this form of victimisation repeatedly, and a third 'once or twice' (33%). Just over a quarter of the survey respondents had been a victim of cyberbullying (27%) and a similar proportion had

**Interviewer:**

*So when you were at school how often did people call you names?  
How often did people hit you?*

**Female English Roma Gypsy:**

*Every day.*

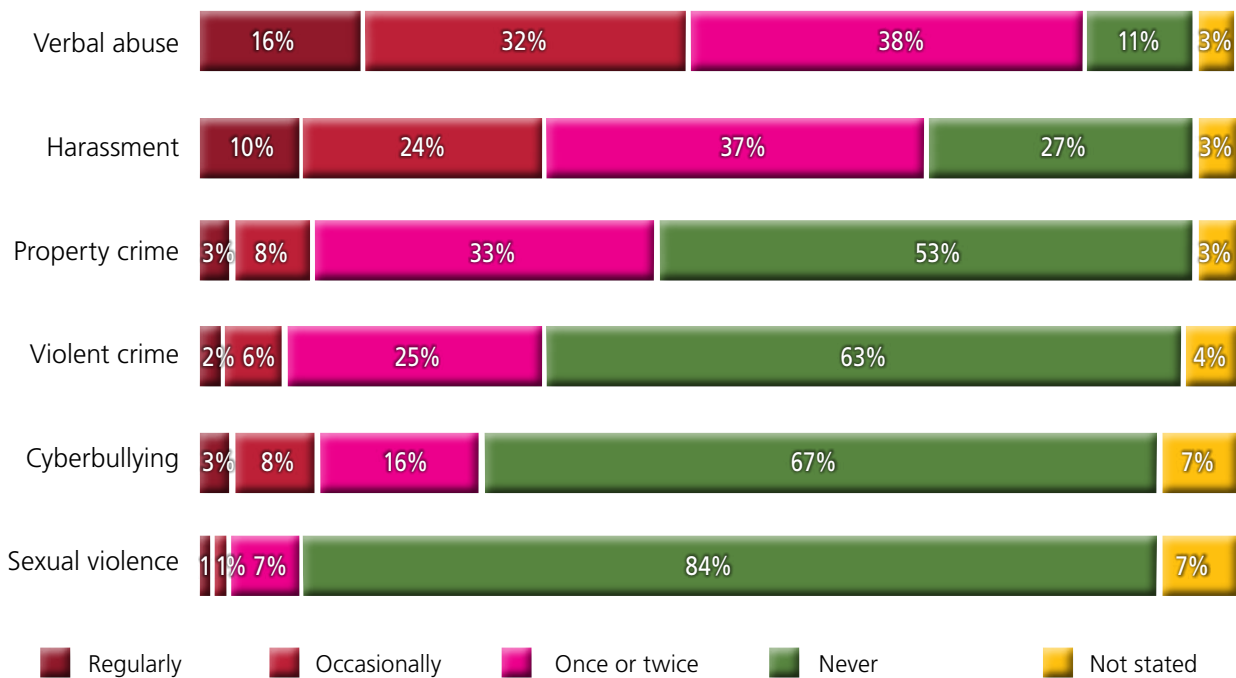
experienced violent crime (32%) (e.g. physical assault or mugging) with 8% of victims being targeted in this way repeatedly, and 25% 'once or twice'. One in ten respondents had experienced a sexually violent hate crime (10%) such as rape or sexual assault.

*I actually logged every hate crime and I'd got about 500 in one year. And that went on for two and a half years.*

**Transgender woman**



**Figure 6: Frequency of victimisation by form of hate crime**



Within the in-depth interviews we were able to explore the nature of hate crime victimisation in much more detail. Participants’ experiences of victimisation were extremely diverse, and included being sent hate mail or offensive text messages; having the windows of their family car smashed repeatedly; being mimicked and mocked for a speech impediment or physical disability; having eggs thrown at their house or faeces pushed through their letter box; being befriended and then exploited, humiliated or robbed; and being intimidated and threatened at work, in the street, in pubs, clubs and restaurants and at home.

Experiences of physical attacks also varied widely within the sample.

*I was walking through an estate on a sunny day and I simply looked at them. They didn't like the look of me, so they ran up to me and they chased me and I fell and I couldn't get up because I'd broken my knee, and they kicked me in the face, and they kept doing that repeatedly.*

Male with mental ill-health

*There's a shop at the end of our road and we'd have to do a mile detour because you couldn't walk that way up the road. If you did you'd get stoned ... get the shit kicked out of you on a regular basis.*

Female of mixed ethnic heritage

*If you pull up on the side of the road you have all sorts chucked at trailers, sometimes bricks ... [One time] a car had driven by, it had slowed down, somebody had thrown something the size of an orange, lobbed it at her, it had missed her, whizzed by her head, hit the ground and it was an explosive device.*

**Female English Roma Gypsy**

*These people with bikes and two golf clubs came and we just ran ... They ended up getting my friend in the face with a golf club ... they were just tearing at his clothes, beating him up ... That was a very frightening experience. We were shit scared of going there again.*

**Male with an alternative mode of dress and appearance**

*One day I was walking with my friend and this person came in and kicked my friend and started swearing. My friend just asked him "Why are you swearing at me?" And he threw his bike and came for a fight.*

**Male asylum seeker from Pakistan**

Within the research sample there were some notable differences in terms of the types and frequencies of hate crime experienced by respondents. For example:

- Men were more likely than women to have experienced verbal abuse;
- Men were more likely than women to say they experience harassment *regularly*;
- Men were more likely than women to have experienced violent crime.

This is also true of specific groups, with the homeless, Gypsies and Travellers and transgender respondents experiencing verbal abuse and harassment more frequently than others. The regularity of these experiences was evident even in the context of our own interactions with respondents. Prior to one interview, for instance, a transgender participant was verbally abused several times during just an eight-minute walk to meet the Lead Researcher. We also witnessed disparaging remarks, intimidatory behaviour and hostile looks being directed towards participants belonging to each of those groups on countless occasions<sup>3</sup>.

Overall, disabled respondents had been subjected to some of the highest levels of verbal abuse, harassment, violent crime and sexual violence when compared to other groups of respondents. For example, 92% of disabled respondents had experienced harassment, 90% verbal abuse, 50% violent crime and 22% sexual violence. Many disabled participants referred to harrowing experiences on buses and other forms of public transport (see Section 4.3.2 for further detail), while other risk-laden environments and contexts included schools, the city centre, supermarkets and other social spaces such as bars and restaurants. The regularity with which people with disabilities encounter acts of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility became more vividly apparent during the course of interviews.

---

<sup>3</sup> On those occasions where a member of the research team was present to witness acts of hostility being directed towards an interviewee, we asked the individual or family in question whether we could help them report the incident, or if they would prefer us report it on their behalf. Throughout the research process all interviewees were informed about how to access support services and report hate incidents, and links to local and national support were promoted through the project website.

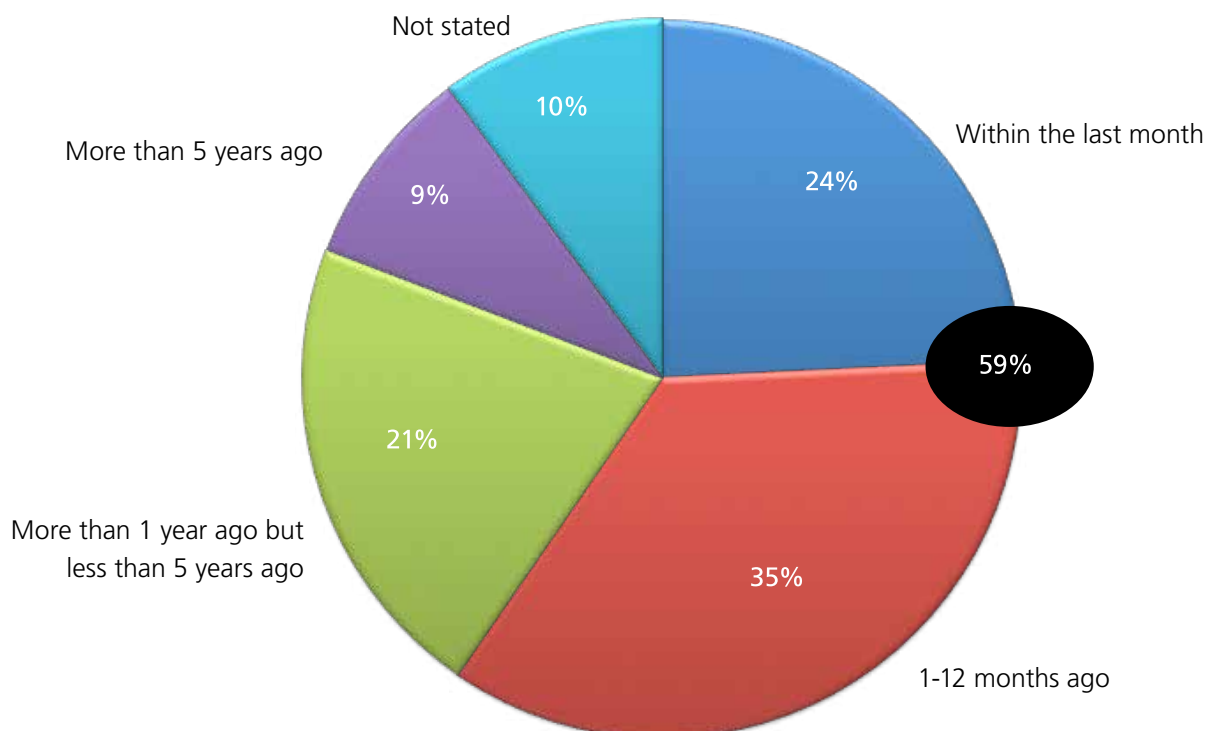
*I met a group today which was made up of people with multiple physical and learning disabilities. I have conducted many group based interviews with disabled people and it never fails to shock me how routinely they are victimised. Today alone I heard about the countless names that disabled people were called on a daily basis, including 'spag', 'retard' and 'paedo'; I heard about multiple incidents in which individuals within the group were followed and intimidated as they walked down the street or through the city centre; and I heard about numerous cases in which disabled people were exploited, such as one male who had allowed local youths to frequent his flat only to be robbed and physically assaulted. The frequency with which disabled people experience abuse, harassment and exploitation is truly hideous.*

Researcher field diary entry

### 4.1.3 Most recent experience

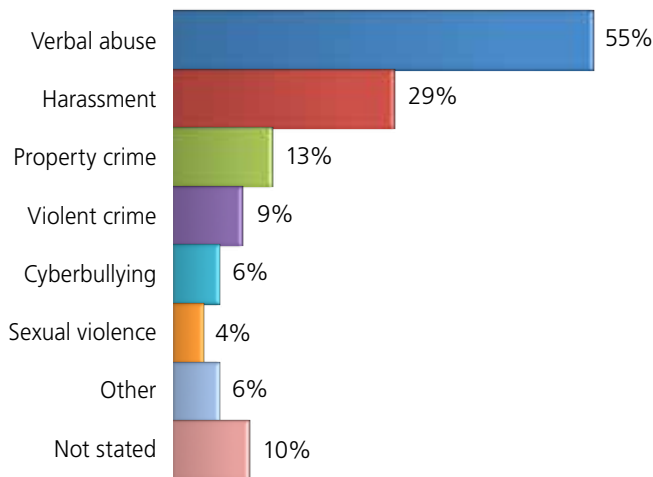
For the majority of those surveyed, being the victim of targeted hostility was a current and ongoing issue. For three in five respondents their most recent experience of hate crime had been within the past year (59%), and for a quarter within the last month (24% – see Figure 7). A similar proportion had last experienced hate crime more than one year ago but less than five years ago (21%), and for one in ten respondents their most recent incident was more than five years ago (9%).

**Figure 7: Length of time since most recent experience of hate crime**



When survey respondents were asked what form their most recent experience of hate crime had taken, over half mentioned verbal abuse (55%), three in ten harassment (29%), and 13% property crime (see Figure 8).

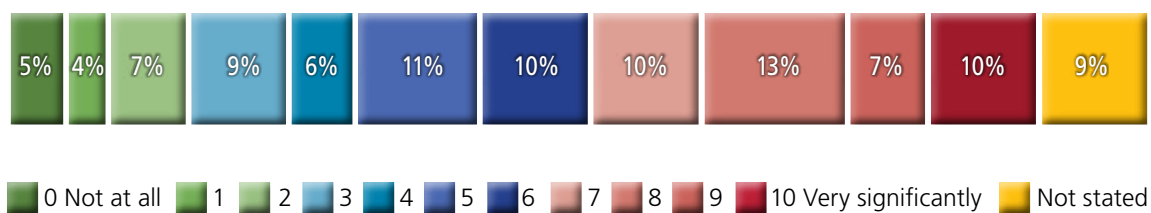
**Figure 8: Form of most recent experience of hate crime**



In terms of differences within the total sample, gay and lesbian respondents were more likely to have been verbally abused during their most recent experience of hate crime than other groups of respondents, and bisexual respondents were more likely than others to have suffered sexual violence. Also, respondents with disabilities were more likely to say harassment or violent crime formed part of their most recent experience of targeted hostility than other groups.

Respondents were asked what impact their most recent experience of hate crime had had on their quality of life. 61% felt that the impact had been significant (Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Impact of most recent experience of hate crime**



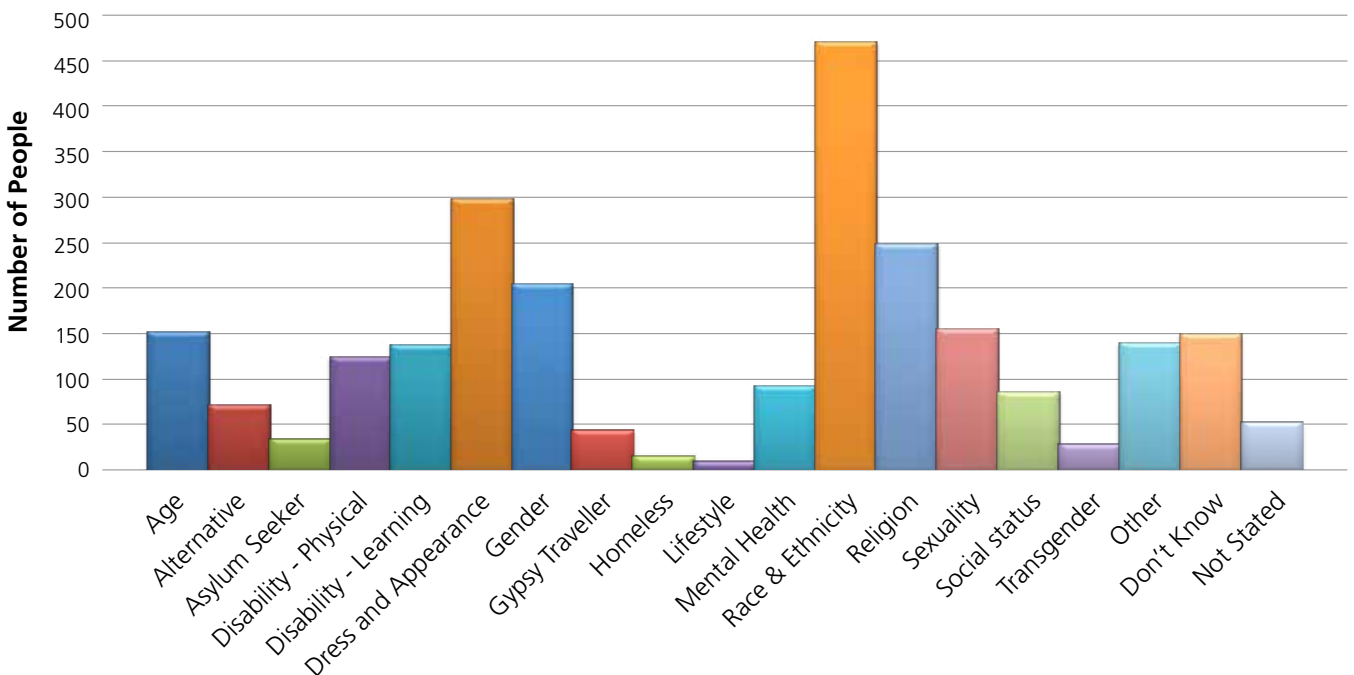
There are some notable differences when it comes to the impact of different forms of hate crime. Respondents were asked to rate how their most recent experience had affected them on a scale of one to ten, with one being 'not at all significantly' and ten 'very significantly'. Respondents whose most recent experience of hate crime had involved harassment, property crime or violent crime were more likely than others to say it had affected them very significantly (17%, 15%, and 29% gave a score of '10' respectively compared with 10% overall). In addition, respondents with physical disabilities were more likely than others to have been very significantly affected by their most recent experience of hate crime (21% compared with 10% of the total sample), as were those who knew their offender(s) (15% compared with 10% of the total sample).

## 4.2 Who are the victims?

- A third of victims had been targeted because of hostility towards their race
- Dress and appearance were significant contributory factors towards people’s experiences of targeted hostility
- Half of all respondents had been victimised because of more than one aspect of their identity or perceived ‘difference’

As mentioned above, criminal justice agencies in England and Wales such as the police and Crown Prosecution Service are required to monitor five strands of hate crime: namely, hostility directed towards a person’s disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender status. However, as the College of Policing acknowledge within their 2014 hate crime operational guidance, there are victims who are targeted as a result of other hate-related hostilities. Accordingly, within this project we used a framework that set no boundaries on the range of identity characteristics or markers of ‘difference’ which can conceivably form the basis of a hate crime. This approach enabled us to capture a broad range of experiences and, as Figure 10 reveals, allowed victims to choose for themselves which aspects of their own identity or ‘difference’ they felt had been targeted.

**Figure 10: Identity characteristic targeted by offender**



As Figure 10 indicates, race was most commonly cited by respondents as being the reason for why they had been targeted (33%). Dress and appearance emerges as a significant contributory factor for 21% of participants. Dress and appearance includes visual identity markers which can contribute to people being more easily identifiable as having a specific ethnicity, gender, religion or

sexual orientation. The category was also selected by people who wear 'different' modes of dress<sup>4</sup> or have a strikingly alternative appearance, as well as those who have physical imperfections such as birthmarks and scars. Additionally, 17% of respondents cited their religion; 14% their gender; 11% their age; 10% their learning disability; 9% their physical disability; and 11% their sexual orientation.

The findings demonstrate that those five identity strands monitored by criminal justice agencies featured highly in why victims felt they were targeted. However, within these categories the hostility suffered by some of the more unfamiliar and overlooked groups becomes apparent. For example, within the overall sample of participants who felt they had been victimised because of their race, substantial numbers of the respondents belonged to new and emerging communities, such as Black African ( $n=86$ ) (which included significant numbers of Congolese and Zimbabwean), as well as to communities with a more established presence such as Indian ( $n=61$ ), White British ( $n=38$ ) and Chinese ( $n=29$ ) (Section 4.5 includes further detail on the profile of perpetrators and the relationship between the victim and perpetrator).

Looking more closely at different groups of survey respondents, Black and Asian people were more likely than respondents overall to say that their race had been a reason for why they were targeted (85% of Black and 54% of Asian respondents said this, compared with 35% overall). Women were more likely than men to say that their dress and appearance had been prime factors in their victimisation (39% of women cite this compared with 27% of men), while younger respondents were also more likely to refer to the relevance of their dress and appearance (40% of 16 to 24 year olds did this compared with 34% overall). Muslim respondents were more likely than others to cite their religion as a reason (76% compared with 29% overall), as were Asian respondents in general (52% compared with 29% overall). Women also cited religion more frequently than men (33% compared with 25% for men).

There are some interesting nuances within the sample of respondents, including victims who belong to a specific community or who have a certain 'obvious' identity characteristic which did not feature as a factor in the motivation for their victimisation. For example, the survey sample included 77 asylum seekers and refugees, yet only 14 felt that they had been victimised because of their asylum seeker or refugee status. Of the 63 who identified as being an asylum seeker or refugee but who did not feel that they had been targeted for this aspect of their identity, 68% reported that they had been targeted because of their race, 40% their gender, 22% their age, 22% their dress and appearance, and 19% their religion.

The same is true for the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) sample, as 173 people identified as LGB in the survey but only 111 cited this as a motivating factor in why they had been targets of hate crime. Bisexual participants were least likely to have experienced targeted hostility towards their sexual orientation, with only 43% of this sample referring to this as a reason. Of those who identified as being LGB but who had not experienced homophobic targeted hostility, 31% felt they had been targeted for their dress and appearance, 19% their race, 13% their alternative dress, appearance or lifestyle and 11% their gender.

As Figure 10 illustrates, a small but significant proportion (13%) of the sample ticked 'Other' when asked why they felt that they had been victimised. Within this category many aspects of 'difference' were identified as contributing to their victimisation, including:

- a distinctive or strong accent;
- a lack of religion;
- body shape or weight;

---

<sup>4</sup> Often the term 'alternative subcultural status' is used as a catch-all label for members of alternative subgroups such as punks, metallers, emos and goths.

- education status;
- homelessness;
- immigration status; and
- social status.

The findings from this study challenge conventional ideas regarding which victim groups or identity and lifestyle characteristics should be considered relevant to hate crime policy. The experiences of some of the more marginalised victim groups – such as asylum seekers and refugees, European Roma and the homeless – and of those targeted on the basis of having unfamiliar (in the context of hate crime policy) visual identity markers – such as age, gender, larger body shape or alternative subcultural status – bore all the hallmarks of more recognised hate crimes in terms of their nature, impact and selection of the victim. The following quotations are taken from an interview with a woman who had experienced targeted hostility on a daily basis because of her weight and body shape.

*I was morbidly obese for most of my life. I have only recently lost weight and I notice that people are treating me different now. And especially with losing the weight, the more I lose the more respectful people treat me, and it makes me really angry, because it just controls your life if you are always afraid of going out.*

*I never had any physical abuse; it's verbal and just blanking you, ignoring you. People pointed at me in shopping centres and people would say mean things, clearly within earshot, so I could hear it. And it makes you feel like you're not worth the same as other people.*

We heard from many victims who recounted awful experiences of the types of targeted hostility which are so damaging to them and yet which would not routinely be recorded as a hate crime by the police.

*In 2009 I was stabbed opposite a police station on a main road. It took the police a few days to catch up with the person that did the offence and .... when they caught up with him, he explained to them that he just didn't like my appearance, the fact that I had pictures tattooed on my body.*

Male with a strikingly alternative appearance

*I've had verbal comments but I can deal with verbal; it's when it becomes physical. If you can spit at me what else can you do ... they assume just because you sell the Big Issue you're a smackhead, you live on the streets, you're a druggie, you're this and you're that.*

Male Big Issue seller



*I got raped, then I found out I got HIV. People assume that people with HIV it's all down to their own fault. How can it be my fault? ... I was working on World Aids Day [when] someone spat, like hocked up and spat it in my face ... People shout out "You're just a virus".*

Male with HIV

Some of the victims we spoke to found it difficult to pinpoint the exact reason for their victimisation. This was particularly true when it came to gender-based hostility. We heard from many victims who felt that they had been subjected to prejudice and hate not simply because of their gender, but because they had not been performing their gender role 'properly' in the eyes of the person targeting them. Society has certain dominant ideas and expectations regarding how men and women behave and conduct themselves, based upon fairly rigid and 'traditional' ideas of masculinity and femininity. Those who do not 'conform' to these expectations can find themselves the targets of hostility, and we heard from a number of people who had been verbally abused, sent hate mail and offensive messages on social networks, and even sexually assaulted, because they had not performed the role of a woman, a wife or a mother 'correctly'.

#### 4.2.1 Multiple and intersectional identities

The survey enabled respondents to specify the aspects of their identity or 'difference' which they felt had motivated the offender to target them. Of the total sample, 50% ticked more than one reason. Similarly, when respondents were asked about which features of their identity made them concerned about being victimised again, two-thirds referred to more than one characteristic (64%). For example, many felt that they had been targeted because of their race *and* their religion; their mental ill-health *and* their physical or learning disability; or their subcultural status (e.g. goth, emo or punk) *and* their dress and appearance.

Within the in-depth interviews we were able to explore these trends in victimisation in much more detail. The following quotations highlight the experiences of people who had been victimised for multiple aspects of their identity or lifestyle.

*If you actually express your gender identity in ways that don't conform to perceived societal norms ... because everyone has their own idea about what a Trans person ought to look like as well, so if you actually combine that with say a goth identity or a metal identity then you really are going to attract a lot of unwanted attention.*

Transgender woman with an alternative mode of dress and appearance

*I'm a young Asian female and I think there's a lot of negative stuff that can come from that ... Racism is something that's probably going to follow me throughout my life unfortunately. I'm actually in a relationship with a White man and we have experienced racism and passers by making comments to us, particularly from the Asian community ... I've also experienced classism because I'm working-class and from the north ... I get a lot of abuse because of my accent.*

Female Asian British student



*Yeah, I've experienced some abuse for my race, but more religious and also for my sexuality. I've been called a terrorist, and just generally saying that we [Muslims] are a problem at the moment ... I got called Paki in the workplace, I was really, really angry about it. Then I started a new job, no one made any racist comments but they made it about my sexuality. It just replaced race.*

Gay Muslim man

*I met a man who was in his 30s today at a mental health support group. I could not believe the multiple ways in which he had been targeted. First, he had experienced racist abuse for being Asian. Secondly, he had been targeted because of his physical disability and for being visually impaired. Thirdly, he and his partner had been targeted for being gay and a mixed ethnic couple.*

*Casually over a cup of tea he spoke about being bullied, verbally abused, harassed and even physically attacked since childhood for all of these different reasons. He finished by saying that sometimes he's not sure which aspect of his identity he is targeted for and that he's just 'different'. It made me realise that it can be incredibly difficult for victims to pinpoint the exact reason for their victimisation when there are so many identity characteristics and situational factors involved.*

Researcher field diary entry

As mentioned previously (see Section 4.2.1), 'dress and appearance' emerged as a significant contributory factor in experiences of hate crime victimisation. It became apparent from the interviews that victims are often targeted not because of just one aspect of their identity, but rather because of multiple factors such as visual identity markers or finding themselves in high risk situational contexts. Religious markers such as the veil and the turban, and support aids such as walking sticks and guide dogs, were seen to increase the likelihood of victims being targeted on the basis of their association with a particular community.

*I was actually quite shocked, you know. At the time I had just recently started growing my beard. I didn't actually have a beard before. So straight away that connection, oh my God, had I not grown the beard would he have still said that?*

Muslim man

*When I looked less convincing it did happen a lot more. And it was just sort of random, random verbal abuse, and it would normally be where I was walking through town, walking through the centre of town.*

Transgender woman

*Obviously I have like the tightest jeans on and I look really gay. People shout stuff all the time like "faggot", "queer".*

Gay youth

*When you carry a white stick you're very vulnerable to people who are looking out for susceptible people to take from, to rob, and you do find the white stick's a giveaway ... It does make you feel vulnerable and it's the same when you live on your own. See if you hear a noise outside you can't look out the window and see what's there.*

Female with a visual impairment

*I've only just started covering my hair, and people do look upon you differently. You do get picked on and called names more. But they don't realise who's Pakistani, who's Indian and who's Hindu or Muslim or whatever, they just target you on one thing. Like you're Muslim, and that's it.*

Muslim woman who wears a headscarf

The notion of vulnerability featured heavily within both the survey and the interview data. Where victims ticked 'Other' within the survey, there were many references to *'being too nice'*, *'I'm in a vulnerable situation'* and *'I'm an easy target'* as explanations for their victimisation. Within the interviews, participants referred to the perception of being in a vulnerable position due to their social and economic circumstances or having a disability or mental ill-health. The notion of vulnerability played a significant role in victims' concerns about targeted hostility and their perceptions of what had motivated the perpetrator to target them, as noted in the comments below.

*To be honest I thought I was untouchable until two, three years ago. I don't know why. But it's just suddenly came home to me how vulnerable I really am.*

Male with physical disabilities

*When I've been walking home, I have heard people on the other side of the road say there's that bloke with the dog. It makes me feel so vulnerable, because they know where I live. Where does this stop?*

Male with a visual impairment

*I think some of it is that confidence and being happy with yourself. Like if you are not sure, you give off an air of vulnerability which can be picked up on I suppose.*

Transgender woman

*We're targeted because we're soft. All that hate, all those crimes that men commit. They can't target the men so we're the soft ones, so all that hate is there.*

Veiled Muslim woman

*You ignore the names that you're called, you can't retaliate, you don't know who's calling you it because you can't describe people. If you're carrying a white stick they know you've got a disability and you're vulnerable.*

Visually impaired woman

*I think they targeted me because they knew I was the soft one, the nervous one.*

Elderly woman

In-depth qualitative interviews were used to explore further intersections between identity characteristics and situational factors and the relevance this has to people's experiences of victimisation. It is within these interviews that we were able to investigate how certain socio-economic and cultural factors had contributed to victims being in vulnerable situations, and therefore at higher risk of exposure to hate and prejudice.

### Case Study 1

*I think they targeted me because they could see that I'm not well and vulnerable or that I might be gay and an easy target.*

The Lead Researcher met Colin<sup>5</sup> through a voluntary support group. He suffers from mental ill-health and identifies as being gay.

During a recorded interview Colin focused on being targeted because of his sexual orientation. However, he briefly mentioned that he was experiencing problems at home. An individual from the local area had befriended Colin, and subsequently moved himself into his flat. He had taken Colin's keys off of him, began eating his food and refused to leave. Colin had been in many vulnerable situations because he felt lonely and wanted friends. Colin was aware that his mental ill-health, his sexual orientation and the places he was visiting made him an "easy target".

### Case Study 2

*They actually did things to me, like taking me outside the train station and drawing faces on me and things like that. So it's kind of like a mental attack as well I suppose really.*

Gavin has a physical disability, mild learning difficulties, experiences mental ill-health and has been alcohol dependent for much of his adult life. He lives in an area characterised by socio-economic disadvantage, and relies on public transport.

All of the above factors have contributed to Gavin experiencing multiple forms of targeted hostility. He is regularly called abusive names, mocked by strangers for his appearance and stammer, and has been exploited and physically attacked by acquaintances, neighbours and 'friends'.

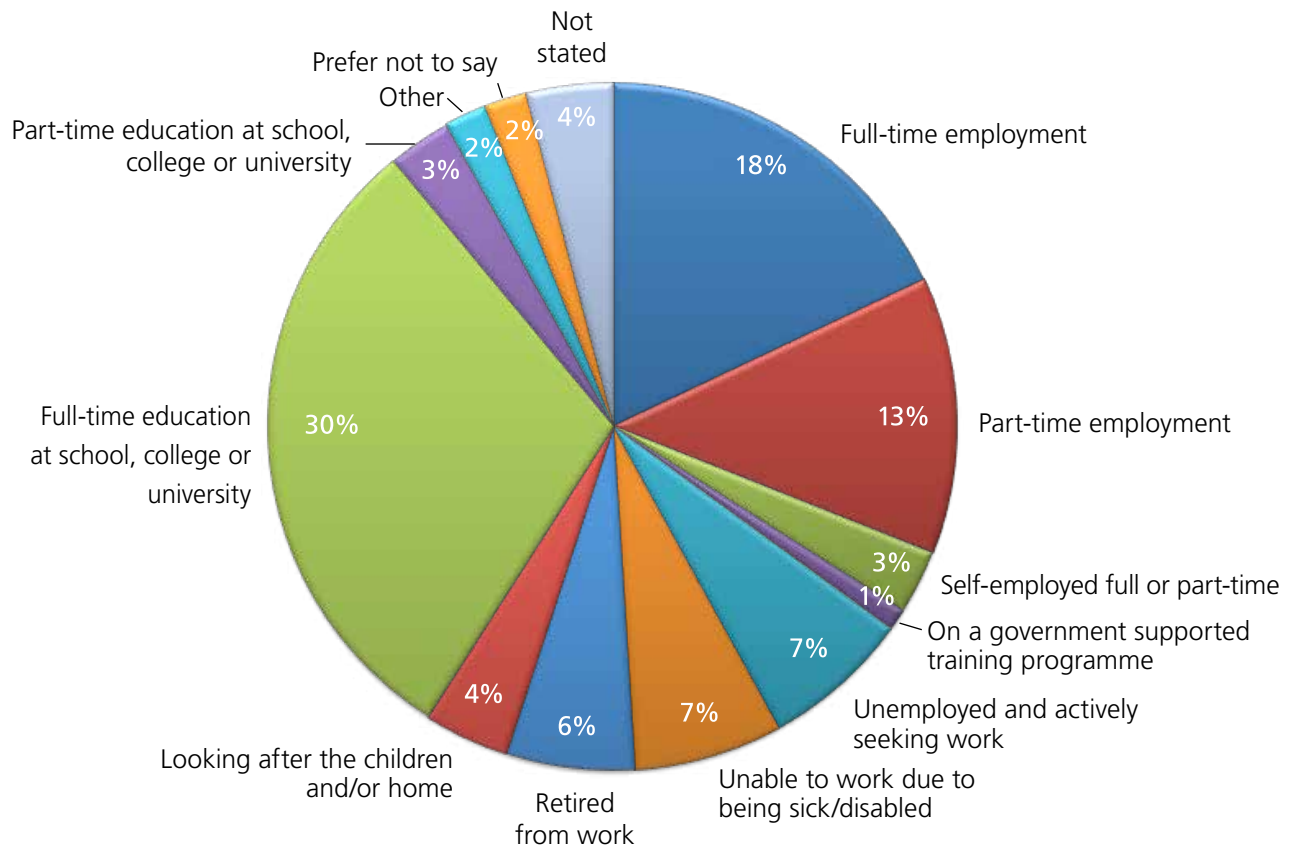
<sup>5</sup> The participants' real names have been changed to preserve their anonymity.

The number of factors referred to by respondents as reasons behind their experiences of targeted hostility bears some relationship to the level of impact these experiences had on victims. Respondents who felt they had been targeted for more than one reason were more likely than those targeted for one reason alone to say the crime had a very significant impact on their quality of life. A similar pattern is apparent regarding victims' concern about hate crime.

#### 4.2.2 Social and economic factors

Socio-economic status emerged as a recurring theme in relation to motivating and/or contributing to experiences of targeted hostility (this theme is discussed more extensively in Section 4.4). A third of those surveyed were in employment, including self-employment (33%), and another third were in full or part-time education (34%) (see Figure 11). Smaller proportions were unemployed and actively seeking work (7%), unable to work due to sickness or a disability (7%), retired (6%), or were looking after children or their home (4%).

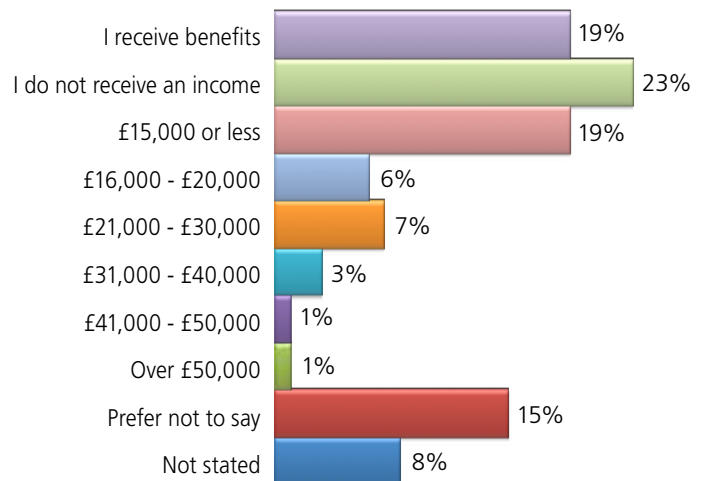
**Figure 11: Working status of respondents**



As revealed by Figure 12, large numbers of survey respondents received very low or no yearly income. A quarter said they did not receive any income (23%) and one-fifth had an income of £15,000 or less (19%). One in five stated that they received benefits (19%). 2% earned more than £40,000 a year. It is worth noting, though, that almost a quarter of respondents chose not to respond to questions about their income (23%).

There were particular victim groups who felt that the recent government focus on welfare reform had contributed to a rise in their experiences of targeted victimisation. Specifically those with physical disabilities, people with mental ill-health and the homeless commented on the increase in bigotry and hostility towards them.

**Figure 12: Income of respondents**



*Then I walked down the street and got other comments. There was one car that drove by me shouting 'What are you fucking like, you can see really!' That same evening, a couple of guys were on a pushbike and one of them shouted, "If you're blind, we all are!" ... It's definitely got worse. Another time I walked out of here, two guys, two people walked past me, one turned round and said "You fucking skank, you can see really", saying that I was doing it for benefit reasons.*

Male with a visual impairment

*Because they think we're scum. They say "You scumbags, you're begging!" We weren't begging. We were just sitting there in the doorway waiting. And they walked up and said "Do you want some money?" and we said "No", and he went "Get a fucking job!" and one of them just walked up to me and just kicked me. My brother pushed me out of the way and got kicked in the face.*

Homeless man

*Before I had my accident I had been working for 25-30 years, so I contributed to the benefit system. Now I'm on benefits and I'm being targeted because of it. We feel as though there's a bit focus on it at the minute that is causing everybody to target people on benefits. I don't know whether you've seen the programme that's on TV tonight – Benefit Street. From what I've seen of the adverts of that it's a good bit of propaganda. They paint a picture that everybody on benefits is a scrounger.*

Male with physical disabilities

### Case Study 3

*People say I'm a waste of space because I'm bone idle, lazy. They say I'm screwing the system for everything I can get ... What people say plays on my mind a lot. If you've got depression you sort of go over and over what people say.*

Today I went to meet a community group which supports people with mental ill-health. I went from table to table and a recurring theme was the government's focus on benefit reform and how this impacts on their everyday life. The range of service users' illnesses included schizophrenia, manic depression and anxiety disorders, and the majority of participants reported that the prejudice they faced and their experiences of targeted hostility had increased in the last year. This echoes the conversations I had with people at the homeless shelter last week where respondents spoke of more and more people shouting terms such as 'scumbags' and 'benefit scroungers' at them.

From speaking to these different groups it seems the impact of this is two-fold. The disabled, those with mental ill-health and homeless people are bearing the brunt of the increased hostility and intolerance towards people who receive benefits or who are unable to work. However, they are also feeling the austerity measures most acutely with support services being stretched, and in some instances stopped altogether. The community group I attended today is one of the last service providers to whom participants can turn for support and social interaction. Without this voluntary-run community group the participants said they would become increasingly isolated, which would perpetuate their feelings of vulnerability and increase their risk of victimisation.

Researcher field diary entry

## 4.3 Where are people victimised?

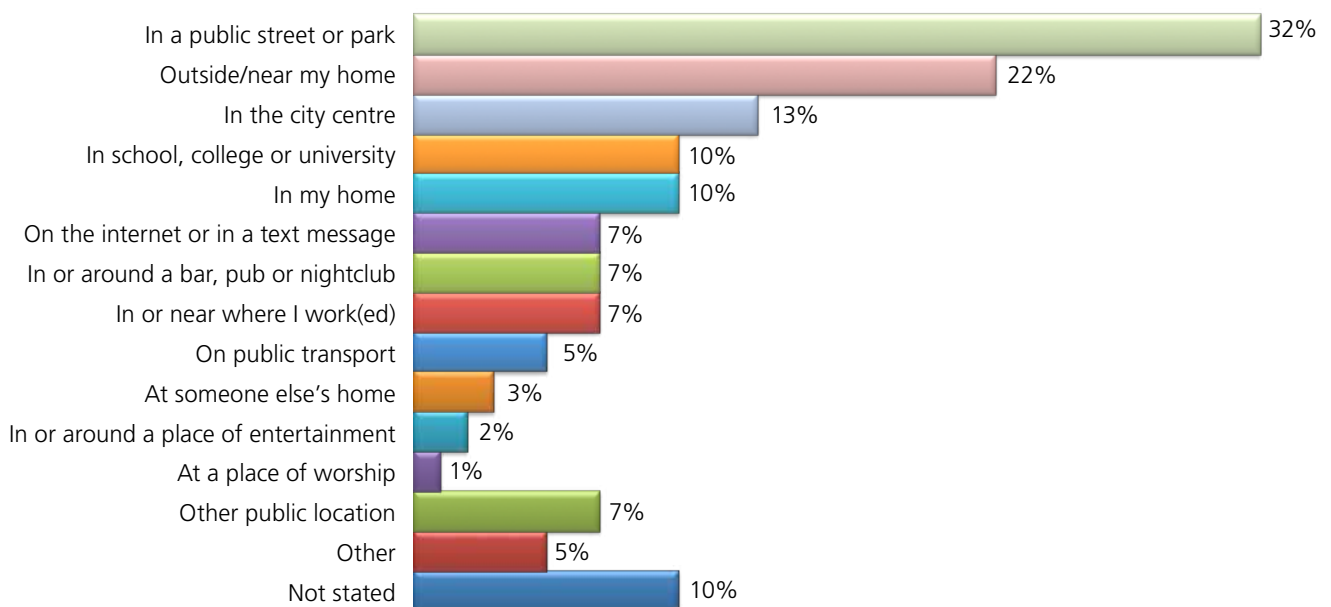
- A third of hate crimes had taken place in a public street or park
- A third of harassment offences had taken place outside or near the victim’s home
- People targeted because of their learning disabilities were more likely to have encountered hate crime on public transport than any other group of victim

To find out more about the nature of hate crime victimisation participants were asked where their experiences of targeted hostility had taken place. Our research suggests that the range of locations in which victims are targeted is just as diverse as the range of offences they are subjected to.

### 4.3.1 Private and public spaces

The survey data illustrates that a third of respondents had experienced their most recent hate crime in a public street or park (32%, see Figure 13). Just under a quarter had experienced targeted hostility outside or near their home (22%) and 13% had been targeted in the city centre, whilst 10% had been targeted in school, college or university, and a similar proportion in their own home. While religion is the third most common reason for why respondents felt they had been victimised (19% cited religion as a factor), just 1% said their most recent experience had occurred at a place of worship.

**Figure 13: Location of most recent experience of hate crime**



The location in which a hate crime takes place can heavily influence how the incident affects the victim and their family. This is particularly true when incidents occur in or near the victim's home.

*Well it's very fearful when they attack your home because you're always that fearful that they're gonna burn it down or something in the night; we've had that said to us before. Well it doesn't take a lot for a caravan to get going, it's not like a house with walls, it's basically wooden.*

English Gypsy woman

*They smashed the car window and then they smashed the front door. We've got CCTV, but if somebody wants to hide, it's only a deterrent ... If they attack the home then somebody has stepped over a line, invaded your privacy a bit too much.*

Orthodox Jewish man

*If it happened in the street, it would be a case of being upset at the time, but it's a case of going to the car and driving away from it. When it's next door, there's nowhere you can go.*

Couple with multiple health issues and physical disabilities

We spoke to victims who felt that a range of situational factors contributed to them being in a more vulnerable position, and therefore at higher risk of being exposed to hate and prejudice. Experiences of hate crime within a work setting, for example, illustrate the intersections between identity characteristics and situational factors. Those who work within the nighttime economy frequently experienced fraught and difficult situations when dealing with drunk and abusive customers, with many of the taxi drivers, restaurant workers and takeaway owners feeling especially prone to being harassed while carrying out their jobs.

*When I was growing up, I did experience a lot of racism. But a lot of it when I think back was down to ignorance of culture, because we were different. As an adult I went into the restaurant trade and this is when I had my worst racial experiences.*

Indian restaurant worker

*Like I said before I worked at a Chinese takeaway and had eggs thrown. You always have half-drunk people come in, and then they start, you know, throwing a tantrum. It could be broken glasses, broken windows or insults. All sorts.*

Two Chinese takeaway owners



*He'll probably tell me off for saying it, but he has been bullied in his workplace for the last four and a half years. My son came home from work one day and he was actually in tears when he walked through the door. Somebody at work turned around and said "Don't touch that cup, [gives name] touched it ... he might have Aids".*

Mother of a young gay disabled man

Equally, spending time in social settings such as schools, bars or nightclubs poses a risk of targeted hostility which can have significant impact. Many of our interview participants spoke of the 'danger' posed by social spaces in the nighttime.

*The most dangerous part of my daily life is using washrooms in public places like restaurants and bars and pubs and hotels, clubs and all these things. That is really, really dangerous for me.*

Transgender woman

*At nighttime when everybody's drinking, the easier it is to say comments they wouldn't normally say. I'd say definitely out, at night in clubs and stuff when people are drinking is the worst time for me.*

Gay youth

*There are certain times that we go out now. Like Saturday evening, we don't go out, no, it's dangerous for my kids, I tell them not to go outside at night.*

Chinese woman

*You can't walk at nighttime in my area. How can you trust the people on the street? All of them they are a stranger for you.*

Male asylum seeker from Pakistan

The fear of victimisation within a public setting can have a significant emotional impact on victims and their families. In particular, victims can develop defence mechanisms which involve actively avoiding certain areas or situations, taking evasive action to avoid the risk of encountering groups that may pose a risk to them, or even not going out at nighttime at all (see Section 4.4 for more detail on the impact of hate crime).

There are some interesting trends which emerge from the survey data. Different types of hate crimes are more likely to occur in particular places. Respondents whose most recent hate incident had involved **verbal abuse** were more likely to have experienced it:

- in a public street or park (40% compared with 32% overall); or
- in the city centre (17% compared with 13% overall).

Respondents whose most recent hate incident had involved **harassment** were more likely to have experienced it:

- outside/near their home (32% compared with 22% overall);
- in school, college or university (15% compared with 10% overall);
- in their home (14% compared with 10% overall); or
- in/near their workplace (11% compared with 7% overall).

Respondents whose most recent hate incident had involved **violent crime** were more likely to have experienced it:

- in a public street or park (58% compared with 32% overall);
- in the city centre (21% compared with 13% overall);
- in or around a bar, pub or nightclub (14% compared with 7% overall); or
- at someone else's home (7% compared with 3% overall).

### 4.3.2 Public transport

A sense of increased vulnerability on public transport was referred to by a substantial proportion of the victims who took part in this study. Public transport brings together groups of people in a confined space, and for certain victim groups it was found to be a social setting which heightened their risk of targeted hostility. For one in twenty respondents their most recent experience of hate crime had taken place on public transport (5%). Respondents targeted because of their learning disabilities were more likely to have suffered their most recent hate crime on public transport compared to any other victim group.

Through the in-depth interviews we learnt about many accounts of targeted hostility taking place on public transport from people with learning and/or physical disabilities and mental ill-health.

*Throwing papers and swearing at us on the bus ... they're calling names and hitting people.*

Female with learning disabilities

*Most students travel to and from school on yellow buses and some students call people from Ellesmere window lickers. Just because they look out the window, they're not actually licking the windows, so why should we be called window lickers when we're normal people?*

Female with learning disabilities

*I use regular buses in the morning and some bus drivers are horrible to me.*

Female with learning and physical disabilities

*If a bus is full of kids, the kids start shouting and then, on transport, when they start shouting at you, when you've done nothing wrong and then they're shouting at you...*

Male with learning disabilities

Being targeted on public transport is not exclusive to people with physical or learning disabilities and we heard many accounts from people who had been singled out because of their mode of dress, including veiled women, asylum seekers and people of alternative subcultural appearance. However, we found that people with physical and/or learning disabilities who were able to travel independently experienced regular harassment and verbal abuse. Social and economic factors are highly relevant in this context, with evidence suggesting that people with less material wealth are at greater risk of being victimised on public transport. This is attributable to the fact that people who can afford to buy a car or who are able to pay for taxis can avoid the types of situation that place them at risk of targeted hostility, whereas those on a low income often have no choice but to take buses and then 'run the gauntlet' of verbal abuse and harassment that comes their way.

## 4.4 How does hate crime affect victims?

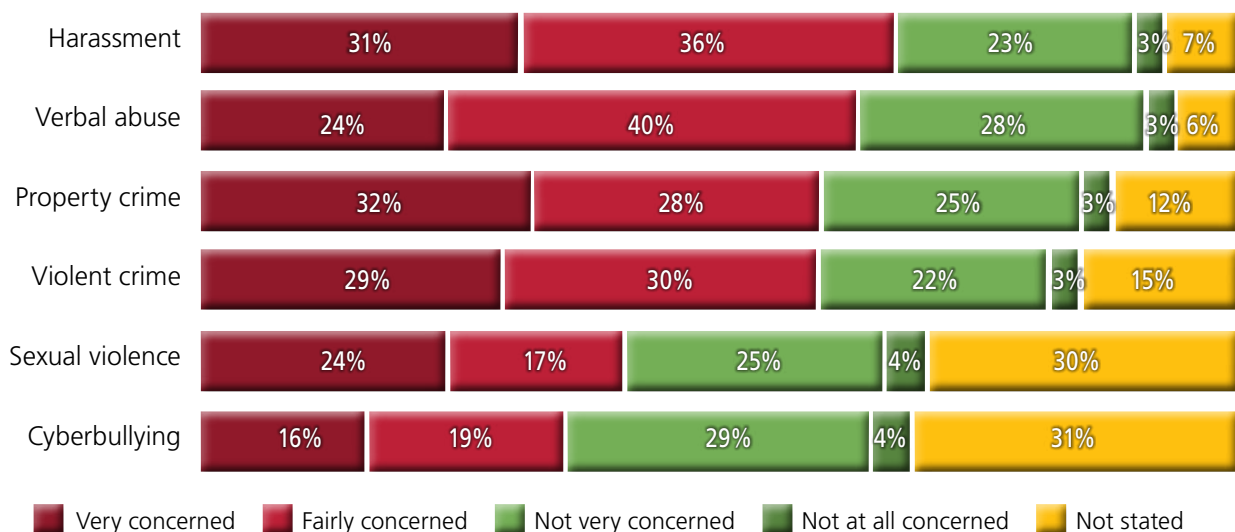
- 95% of victims felt that hate crime had detrimentally affected their quality of life, with feelings of depression and thoughts of suicide cited by high numbers of people targeted because of their mental ill-health, transgender status and learning disabilities
- Hate crime victimisation had become a routine feature of everyday life for many participants, and particularly those who felt cut-off from ‘mainstream’ society
- Victims employed a range of strategies to feel safer and to reduce the risk of victimisation, including avoiding public spaces and attempting to conceal their identity

Hate crime is known to have a significant emotional and physical impact on the victim, their family and in some contexts their wider community. This section looks at the different ways in which targeted hostility affected participants within this study.

### 4.4.1 Fear of victimisation

All of the participants involved in this study had been a victim of targeted hostility at least on one occasion, and the survey explored how concerned they were about becoming a victim again. Concern about being a victim of targeted hostility was revealed to be high, though there was more concern about certain types of crime than others (see Figure 14). Respondents were most likely to be worried about being victims of harassment, with two-thirds saying they were *very* or *fairly* concerned about this (67%). This is closely followed by concern about verbal abuse (64%).

**Figure 14: Concern about different types of victimisation**

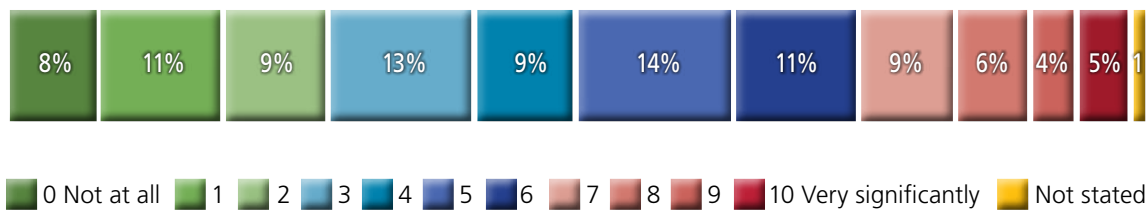


Respondents with disabilities were more likely to be worried about being a victim of harassment or verbal abuse when compared with the overall sample:

- 81% of disabled respondents were concerned about being a victim of harassment compared with 67% overall;
- 77% of disabled respondents were concerned about being a victim of verbal abuse compared with 64% overall;
- 88% of respondents victimised because of their mental ill-health, physical disabilities or learning disabilities were very concerned about becoming a victim of violent crime in the future.

When looking at violent or sexual crimes, younger respondents were more likely to be concerned compared to other age groups. Over two thirds (66%) of those aged 16 to 24 expressed concern about being a victim of violent crime compared with 60% overall, and 53% of this age group were concerned about sexual violence compared with 41% overall. Just under half of younger respondents expressed concern about being victims of cyberbullying (46% compared with 35% overall). There are also some differences in levels of anxiety according to gender. Transgender respondents were more likely to be concerned about verbal abuse than the overall sample (82% compared with 63% overall) and women were more likely to be concerned about sexual violence than men (49% compared with 29% of men).

**Figure 15: Impact of fear of hate crime on quality of life**

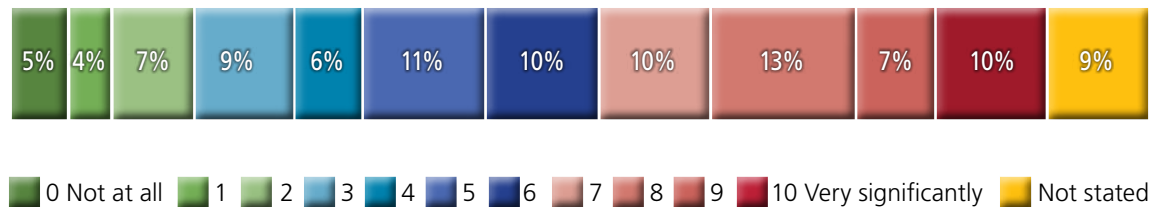


When asked about how much the fear of hate crime had affected their quality of life (on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is very significantly), 91% of respondents observed that they had been affected in some way (see Figure 15). Respondents who had been victims of particular types of crime were more likely than the overall sample to say that their quality of life had been very significantly affected by the fear of hate crime. 11% of those who had experienced sexual violence, 9% of those who had experienced violent crime and 8% of property crime victims gave a score of 10, compared with 5% overall.

#### 4.4.2 Emotional and physical impacts

As noted in Section 4.1.3, respondents were asked about the impact of their most recent experience of hate crime upon their quality of life. Only 5% of the total sample felt that their most recent experience had resulted in no impact on their quality of life (Figure 16).

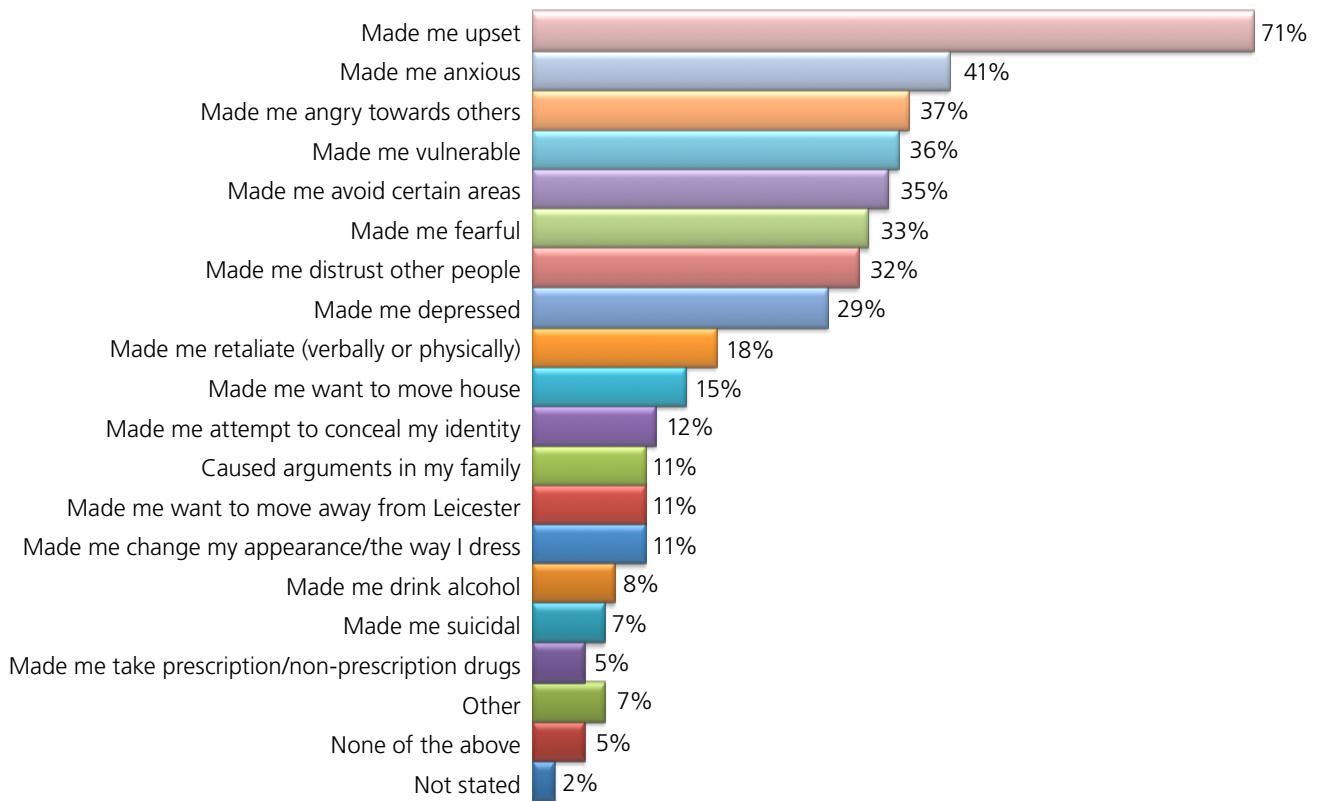
**Figure 16: Impact of most recent experience of hate crime**



We found that the level of impact varied according to the type of hate crime that victims were subjected to. Respondents whose most recent experience of hate crime had involved harassment, property crime, or violent crime were more likely than others to say it had affected them significantly. Amongst the sample of victims there were particular groups who referred to greater impacts on their quality of life compared to others. Respondents who felt they had been targeted because of their physical or learning disabilities were more likely to say their quality of life had been very significantly affected by their most recent experience of hate crime (24% and 18% respectively gave a score of 10 compared with 10% overall).

When respondents were asked about the impact of their experiences on their emotional and physical wellbeing, a range of responses were provided. Within the questionnaire, respondents were asked to select from a list of possible impacts which ranged from 'made me feel upset' to 'made me want to leave Leicester'. The impact of victimisation was analysed according to different types of offence, with Figure 17 detailing the impact of verbal abuse, harassment and cyberbullying and Figure 18 outlining the impact of property crime, violent crime and sexual violence.

**Figure 17: Impact of verbal abuse, harassment and cyberbullying**



As Figure 17 illustrates, only 5% of the total sample stated that their experience of verbal abuse, harassment or cyberbullying had had no impact, and feeling upset was the most common response. When the data is broken down, a higher proportion of transgender respondents referred to feeling upset (95%) compared to the sample as a whole (71%), and this was followed by those survey respondents who felt that they had been targeted because of their gender (83%), sexual orientation (80%) and religion (79%). A high proportion of the total sample referred to feeling anxious (41%), vulnerable (36%) and fearful (33%) as a result of their victimisation, with respondents targeted because of their mental ill-health reporting the highest levels of anxiety (72%), followed by those who felt targeted because of their gender (58%) and learning disabilities (58%).

*I conducted one of the most horrific interviews I've ever done today. I could not believe what I heard – how could this form of victimisation still be taking place in Leicester in 2013? A whole family had been targeted, including the son being bullied at school, the windows of the family car being smashed in repeatedly, and the mother and father being physically attacked leaving them with broken bones.*

*The impact of this form of victimisation was clearly visible on both the mother's and the father's face. They both cried silently throughout the interview. The mother stated that she rarely left the house now and felt anxious and vulnerable when she did. The father spoke of feeling emasculated and of the regret and guilt he felt for bringing his family over from Iraq "for a better life". Their lives have been torn apart by hate crime.*

Researcher field diary entry detailing an interview with a family of asylum seekers from Iraq

There were also some subtle differences in the survey data between groups when it came to feelings of vulnerability. Nearly three quarters of respondents targeted because of their mental ill-health or physical disabilities (72% each) stated that their experience(s) had made them feel vulnerable, which is substantially higher than the 36% overall (Figure 17). The survey data illustrates the significant emotional impact that verbal abuse, harassment and cyberbullying can have on particular sets of victims.

The interviews provided further insight into the impact of targeted hostility upon people's feelings of self-worth, their confidence and emotional well-being more generally.

*The stuff they're saying about you is the same stuff you have fought for years. To be comfortable in your own skin. To come out and say "This is who I am and I'm happy with it". So when it does happen it's something you can't change but it's something you struggle to accept.*

Gay youth

*It makes you feel demoralised. It makes you feel hated. It makes you feel isolated, unwanted.*

Muslim man

*It makes you feel quite upset and angry. You know there was a time when I couldn't leave the house without crying.*

Mother of a girl with autism



*It made me feel small, insignificant, like nothing mattered. I didn't matter, I was just a gay person, get used to it.*

Gay man

*You try to forget these things but somehow it becomes almost a part of you. You can't get rid of it. It's like a bad smell: you try and try and try and you just can't get rid of it.*

Female with mental ill-health

*He gets it every day. If it's every single day it grinds you down. When you've got neighbours and people who you thought were friends saying silly remarks, it does get you eventually. I don't care how strong you are, it does grind you down.*

Mother talking about her gay disabled son

*I think growing up gay, it's true to most people, my generation and even now growing up gay, your experiences at school are horrible, they can scar you and have an effect on you for the rest of your life.*

Gay man

The use of a field diary – and in particular the process of detailing informal discussions and participant observations – facilitated a greater recognition of the impact of hate offences when understood in relation to the nature of the incidents, the context in which they took place and the interplay between identity, circumstance and vulnerability. To an outsider, incidents such as being stared at, being called abusive names and being harassed may seem relatively insignificant. However, the use of detailed field notes recorded by the lead researcher provided insights into the lived reality and pervasive nature of this form of victimisation.

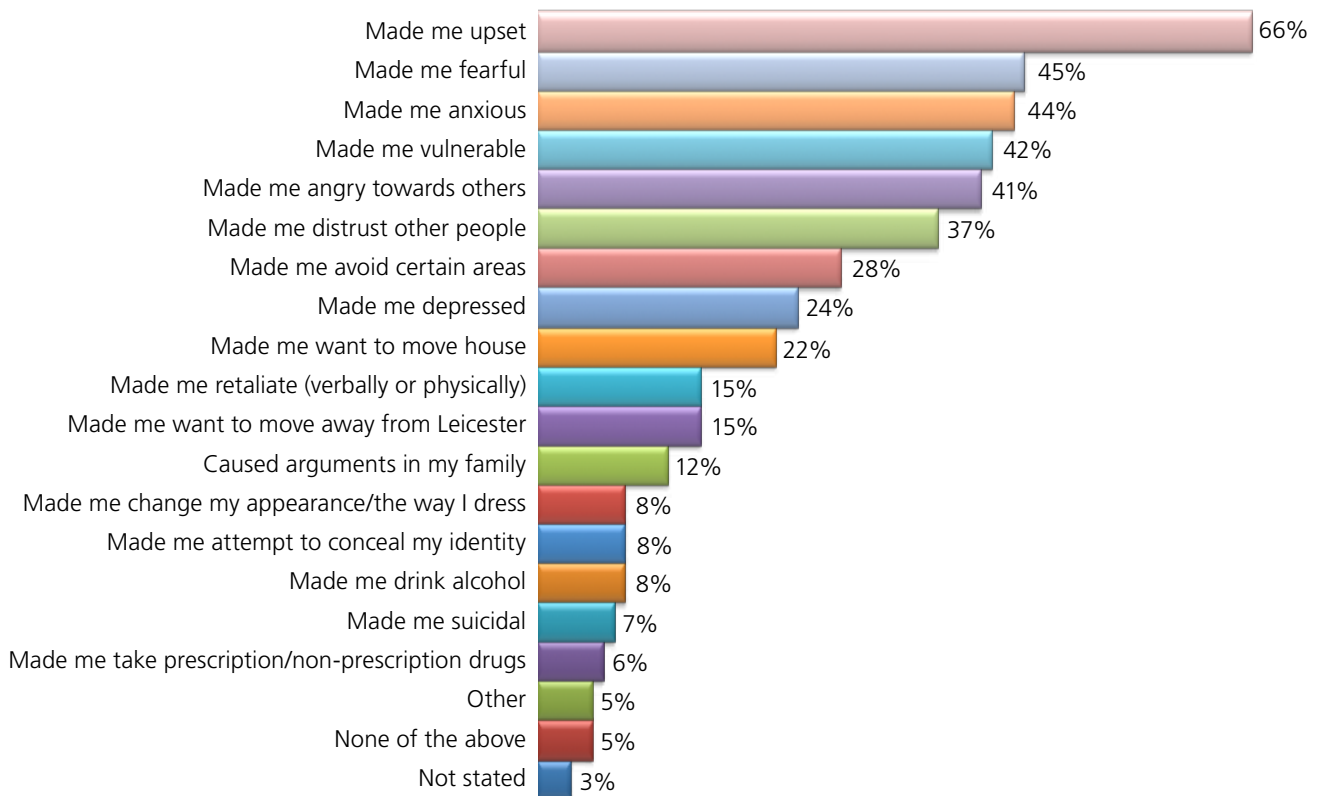
The diary entry below describes a participant victimised for multiple aspects of his identity. He lives within an area characterised by socio-economic disadvantage, receives little familial support and struggles with his mental health.

*I have just conducted an interview with George who really struggles with his mental ill-health and it was so upsetting to see what he has been through. Throughout George's life he has been seen as 'different' and therefore an easy target. He has been made fun of, called abusive names and exploited by his neighbours and by people he thought were his friends. To an outsider being mocked because of a stammer or mimicked because you have a funny walk might seem trivial. And yet seeing George, a grown man, crying and talking about how these experiences have compelled him to attempt suicide on multiple occasions, makes you realise how insidious and destructive name-calling and harassment can be.*

*The interview recording is powerful and gives us important data, but it fails to capture some of the things I've observed during the course of getting to know George. Take, for instance, the physical environment George lives in and the safety measures he incorporates into his everyday life to reduce the risk of victimisation. He has to have multiple locks on his front door; he keeps the curtains drawn at all times; he is too scared to turn the lights on even if it means he has to sit alone in darkness; and he rarely ventures out of his flat. That's the reality of what life is like for George.*

The data collected on the impact of targeted property crime, violent assault and sexual violence differed slightly to that collected on the more 'everyday' forms of targeted hostility, as seen in Figure 18.

**Figure 18: Impact of property crime, violent crime and sexual violence**



Again, only 5% of those who had experienced property crime, violent crime and sexual violence referred to those offences having no impact. As Figure 18 shows, four out of ten respondents also stated that their experiences of hate crime had made them feel angry towards others (41%) and distrust other people (37%). However respondents targeted for their transgender status (77%), physical disabilities (73%), mental ill-health (72%) and learning disabilities (66%) were more likely to describe feeling vulnerable than the overall sample (42%). In addition, victims of transphobic hate crime felt significantly higher levels of anger and distrust (62% and 62% respectively) than the overall sample (41% and 37%).

As Figure 18 demonstrates, a quarter of the total survey sample stated that their experiences had made them feel depressed, with some significant variations evident within the data. For example, over half (51%) of those targeted because of their physical disabilities stated that being a victim of targeted hostility had made them feel depressed (compared to 24% of the overall sample), while 43% of those who felt victimised because of their sexual orientation (43%) and gender (41%) also said this. The mental and physical health impact of targeted victimisation emerged as a significant theme within the interviews.

*He's on the sick at the moment through depression. He's not dealing with it. He has panic attacks when he goes into crowds you know, in town.*

Relative of a man with physical disabilities

*It was terrible, it was very dark point in my life. I felt like I just wanted to end it. It was just hatred every single day. To make it even worse my family weren't even that supportive. They were probably the worst.*

Gay youth

*With MS one of the things we find is that the higher your stress levels are, the more problems you can have with MS. It can progress quicker ... I ended up having to go back into hospital.*

Female with multiple physical disabilities

*I'm on antidepressants. My blood pressure was up.*

Gay woman

*Years ago I was at breaking point, it really made me ill. If I'd been on my own I think I'd have, well I don't know what I would have done.*

Female targeted because of her elderly status

In particular those targeted because of their mental ill-health, transgender status and learning disabilities were more likely to report feeling suicidal as a result of their victimisation (46%, 38% and 26% respectively). These figures are significantly higher than the corresponding proportion of the total sample who felt the same (7%). Equally, just under a third of victims targeted because of their learning disabilities (29%) stated that their experience(s) had made them turn to alcohol, while around four in ten of those victimised because of their mental ill-health said that their experiences of hate crime had made them turn to alcohol (41%) and to drugs (39%) (compared to 8% and 6% for the overall sample).

#### Case Study 4

*When I first moved in they would hit the windows with their fists or footballs. They would throw open my window, putting grass into my living room. Even today I'm so scared to open my windows, not even putting my light on ... They target me because I'm Asian and by myself ... When they do it my heart pounds. I get panicked because I didn't have a nice relationship with my husband. I mean, I've gone through a lot and now this.*

Jasmina is an Asian British woman in her late 40s who wears a headscarf which she thinks makes her identifiably Muslim. She lives on her own in a majority White British area which is characterised by socio-economic disadvantage and high levels of youth anti-social behaviour. She has been disowned by her own family for wanting a divorce from an emotionally and physically abusive relationship. Jasmina has been spat at, called racist names and had her shopping thrown all over the street by young people from the local area. Her victimisation continues and this has a significant emotional and physical impact on her. Jasmina rarely leaves her home out of fear and often confines herself to the back room of her house so that the young people, who congregate outside, do not know that she is in. By just looking at Jasmina you can see the exhaustion and anguish that she carries with her every single day. This is compounded by the lack of support she receives from her family, friends, the council, the housing association and the police.

#### 4.4.3 'Normalising' hate

Within the total sample of participants there were certain groups of victims whose experiences of hate crime victimisation formed part of their day-to-day life. It was within this smaller sample of participants that the impact of hate crime had, to some extent, been 'neutralised'. In part this can be seen as a coping strategy (discussed in further detail in 4.4.4), whereby participants had come to accept that targeted hostility was an 'ordinary', 'routine' feature of their everyday life.

*When you're young, at first it upsets you, because you don't understand so much when you're young. You think, "What have I done? Why are you doing that to me, I haven't done anything wrong?" When you get older you understand more and you live with it, you toughen up against it. And then obviously you fight back. But when you're young it is horrible, I'm not gonna tell you no lies.*

Female English Gypsy

*I more or less expect something to happen every day. I'm getting quite used to it, and you know I'm so used to the verbal abuse.*

Transgender woman

*When I told my friends about what happened to me, they found it hilarious that I reported it to the police. Because they think it's something weird to do, they're just so used to it they no longer view it as a hate crime at all.*

Muslim youth

*People shouting or spitting or throwing bottles from cars or, you know, stuff like that. But that stuff happened all the time, it was nothing out of the ordinary at all.*

Female with an alternative mode of dress and appearance

*I've been here 18 years so I'm used to it. It's one of those where... it's not nice. I don't think anybody, for any reason, getting shouted at down the phone, or sworn at, or threatened is nice but unfortunately it's part of the trade.*

Asian man who works as a taxi driver

*I suppose because I grew up over here, in the old days it was quite bad but in a way I've got used to it.*

Chinese youth

*On a day-to-day basis we have comments passed, people giving us weird looks, saying something. We've always had that, but since high profile incidents such as Woolwich it does spike up.*

Veiled Muslim woman

There are certain groups and communities who lack a sense of established or recognised civic presence and who find themselves marginalised from the awareness-raising, policy-making and advocacy evident within 'mainstream' society. It is within this context that hate crime can be seen by the victim as 'part and parcel of everyday life'<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> This description is taken from an interview with a victim of religiously-motivated hate crime.

*I visited a community group today which supported asylum seekers and refugees and it was shocking to hear how 'normalised' experiences of prejudice and targeted hostility had become within the group. I was talking to Mohammed first who suggested that everybody in the room had probably experienced hostility and intolerance since being in the country. I had not quite appreciated how true this statement was until I made my way around the group, and people from Zimbabwe, Somalia, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan and Syria shared their experiences of everyday prejudice and acts of targeted hostility. None of the participants had reported their experiences to the police for fear that this would affect the outcome of their 'leave to remain' application. Mohammed spoke about targeted hostility almost being a 'rite of passage' of being in another country.*

Researcher field diary entry

Through the use of a field diary, and specifically by reflecting on how we as researchers approached and engaged with victims, we developed a more comprehensive understanding of the lived reality of victimisation. By using official terminology and labels such as 'victim' we were inadvertently creating a barrier between ourselves and these participants as they often did not recognise their experiences as being hate crimes and did not see themselves as victims. The diary entry below illustrates the importance of developing a more personal and practical approach to engagement with diverse and 'hidden' communities.

*I met with Joyce today who had set up a small community group to help African women experiencing domestic abuse in the local community. The group is run from her home so we were sat in her front room with her children playing at my feet. I asked her if she had ever been a victim of hate crime, to which without hesitation she replied "No". This led to an awkward pause. I decided to fill this by detailing what form hate crime can take and what aspects of identity someone could be targeted for. She looked up at me, raised her arms and replied "Oh I get that every day". Joyce had never heard of the term hate crime but had experienced racially motivated verbal abuse and harassment as part of her daily life and had never reported it to anyone.*

Researcher field diary entry

#### **4.4.5 Wider impacts**

Hate crimes are often described as 'message crimes' designed to intimidate not only the victim but also their family and even the broader community they are perceived to belong to. Through interviews we were able to explore the wider impact of targeted hostility. We found in some instances that participants' family members could be directly and indirectly victimised (as illustrated on pp.46-47 through the field diary observation involving a family from Iraq). We also heard from respondents who felt guilty because their family and friends had been affected by their experiences, or fearful because their family were at risk of further victimisation.

*Well the harassment and hate was really leveled at my daughter and her family, but then it overflowed onto us. So if I'm out in my car and I'm seen by the perpetrators, I'm given abuse. Cut throat signs. The 'V' signs. Laughed at but not in a joking way, in a mocking way ... It's had such a profound effect on Mary, her husband and the kids, that it automatically then rolls on down the family.*

Woman targeted because of a family member's mental ill-health

*They did stuff to my brother as well. They used to whack him on the way home, with sticks and stuff, just because he was my brother.*

Young person with autism

*When it comes to throwing eggs at the door, it's not very nice. I have my kids here. I'm scared for my kids because what if they just come and hurt my children when I'm not here?*

Zimbabwean man

*I don't feel myself or my children are safe, because I know that the group are going to attack me again. In my house they attacked me twice, and then they attacked my wife and car and the children and everything has been damaged. Our health is now going down. I don't feel my children are safe if I leave home and when I'm outside all I think about is hoping that my home has not been attacked again.*

Male asylum seeker from Iraq

*We all know somebody who wears a veil. And in my case it's my sister and her daughters. So it affects us all when someone is victimised ... it just demoralises you, because you feel even more vulnerable.*

Veiled Muslim woman

The survey asked respondents about the impact of targeted hostility upon their family. Among those respondents who had experienced hate crimes involving verbal abuse, harassment, or cyberbullying, over one in ten stated that those incidents had caused arguments within their family (11%). One in eight of those who had experienced property crime, violent crime or sexual violence noted the same impact (12% respectively). Family arguments caused by hate crime are more likely to occur when the respondent knows the people who carried out their most recent hate crime, whether this is as an acquaintance, neighbour, work colleague or even family member. The impact of the most recent hate crime on respondents' quality of life correlates with whether or not the crime had caused arguments within their family.



*Today I met Claire whose daughter had autism and was being bullied at school by other children. It transpired that the parents of the other school children had begun a 'hate campaign' against Claire, verbally abusing her for not being a good mother and taking to Facebook to spread malicious lies. Claire spoke about the impact that this experience had on her family. She now rarely lets her daughter out because of the fear of her being victimised. She also spoke about how she and her husband had started arguing because he could not understand why she was letting them get to her. Claire said this had made the whole ordeal worse as she felt even more isolated, even from her own family.*

Researcher field diary entry

In addition to impacts upon family members, past studies have referred to the wider community harms of hate crime; namely, the process by which these harms extend beyond the individual victim to create a sense of fear and apprehension amongst people with similar identity characteristics to the victim. Those wider harms were not consistently evident within this study. For example, during the early stages of the project many of the thousands of people with whom we engaged were unaware of any of the problems encountered within their own community, and did not feel as though other people's experiences of targeted hostility had any bearing on their own quality of life. This sense of detachment from what are commonly, and simplistically, assumed to be homogenous and fully connected communities came through especially strongly in some of the interviews with gay men.

*I think in a city like Leicester where we've got such a broad, diverse, ethnic community, and a strong faith background, if you come from one of those faith backgrounds, and you're gay, or lesbian, bisexual, trans you're facing a double whammy of isolation and prejudice. The gay commercial scene probably won't cater for you; it's very White and if you're not into drinking, then it definitely won't cater for you. And your own cultural group, this ethnic and faith group will not embrace your sexuality, you're completely isolated.*

Gay man

*I hate the gay community, they're the most utterly malicious people, not all of them, but the majority of them are malicious. Malicious and evil.*

Gay youth

*I think the LGBT communities, if they exist, have to take a certain responsibility themselves. The scene in Leicester is very small, it's tiny and it tends to be young, White and tends to be very working class. The middle class professional gay people, they're elsewhere. And also the scene is shrinking, not just in Leicester but in other communities because technology has changed, people don't need to go to bars and clubs to meet people.*

Gay man



*There is internalised hatred in the gay community. I've met straight and gay men who hate camp gay men. They think they are better than camp ones because they're less gay, or something. There's a certain dynamic among the gay community as to whether somebody's dominant, and dominance associates with masculinity and there's a hatred of the submissive.*

Gay youth

However, the wider community impact of hate crime became more apparent in the context of religiously motivated victimisation and within some of the smaller, more marginalised minority groups, including the trans, homeless and English Roma communities (see Case Studies 5, 6 and 7).

### Case Study 5

*We're all tarred with the same brush. We're used to it. We've grown up with it all.*

*Even a newborn child in our community, it's hated because it's been born. Now that child, it has to come into the world, the parents let that child in and they love that child, so why should everybody else hate it? It's not done anything wrong.*

Extracts from a group interview  
with English Roma Gypsies

Today I got a real sense of the community impact of targeted hostility. Before today I had only come across the wider impact of hate crime in the Muslim and Sikh groups I've engaged with. I conducted a group-based interview with English Roma Gypsies and they catalogued a lifetime of hate crime. Different participants spoke about how it made them feel when they heard about targeted attacks on people from within their community. Mary recalled an experience where the whole community had come together to support a family whose caravan had been set on fire. The group went further to say that hate crimes against their community contributed to a lack of trust towards the settled community. It was clear that the impact of targeted hostility impacts all members of this community and in many ways ostracises them further from mainstream society.

Researcher field diary entry

### Case Study 6

*The first couple of times that you lose somebody from the community you get upset and whatever else, but then eventually you come to the point where I can't remember half their names now ... Since I've been out on the scene anywhere between seven and twelve people have killed themselves.*

Transgender woman

I attended a group for transgender people today and there was a real sense of community. Different members spoke about how the group offered their only source of support. The saddest part was hearing how many of the group members had killed themselves due to the persistent prejudice and targeted hostility they had experienced. The impact that this had on the group was clearly visible and this must be understood amongst the backdrop of them all experiencing hate crime on a daily basis.

Researcher field diary entry

### Case Study 7

*We have to stick together. We are like one big family. If there's somebody new we look out for them.*

Homeless man

I returned again today to the breakfast club for homeless people. I played scrabble with a group and got talking to a man they called 'Captain'. Every time someone walked into the room, the group I was with began a conversation with them to 'catch-up'. I got the feeling that everybody knew each other. I decided to ask the 'Captain' about this observation and he alluded to how dangerous it was to be homeless. He spoke of how he had noticed more and more people coming to the breakfast club and sleeping homeless. The rest of the group joined in saying that they have to look after each other because for some, this was the only interaction they had.

Researcher field diary entry

#### 4.4.6 Coping strategies

When asked about the impact that hate crimes had on respondents, a sizeable proportion had employed tactics that could be termed as coping strategies or defence mechanisms (see Figure 18). Among those respondents who had experienced hate crimes involving verbal abuse, harassment, or cyberbullying:

- nearly one in five felt that these hate crimes had made them retaliate verbally or physically (18%);
- over one in ten had attempted to conceal their identity (12%) or had changed their appearance or way they dress (11%);
- 8% stated that they had turned to alcohol; and
- 5% stated that they had taken prescription or non-prescription drugs.

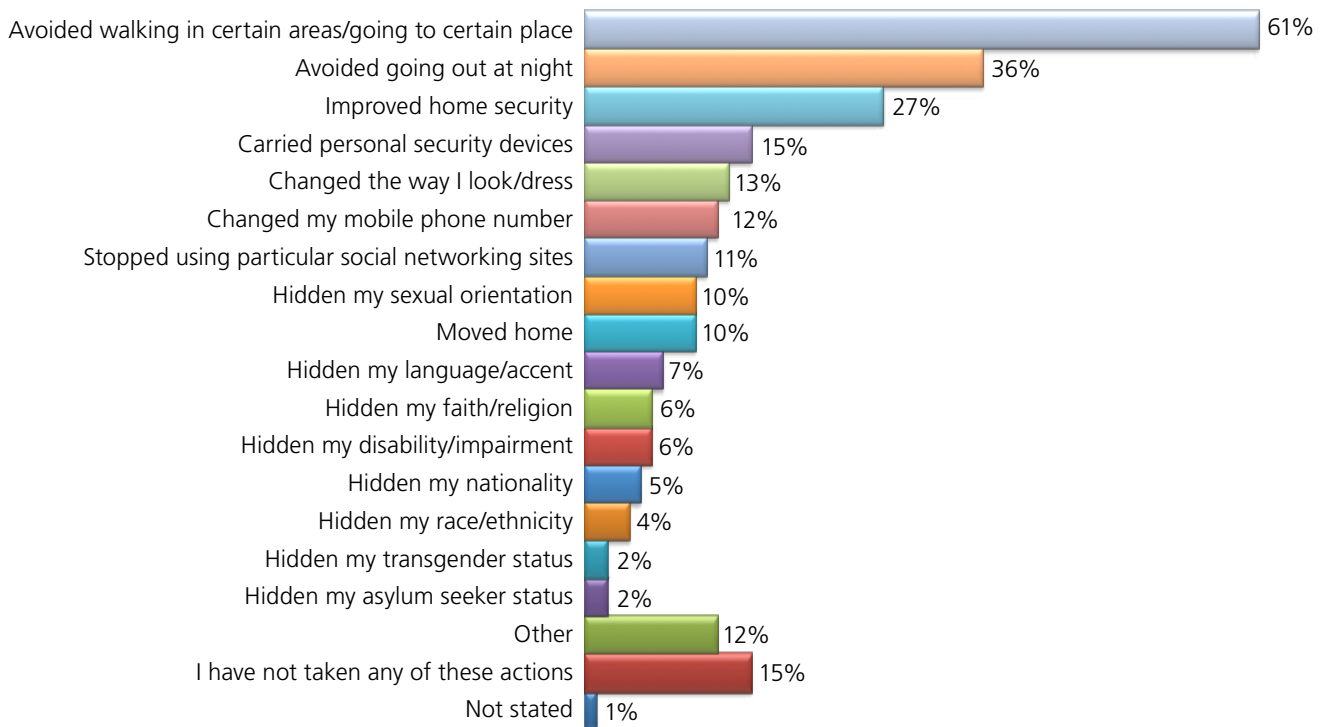
Within the interviews we were able to pick up on a number of strategies that victims employed to feel safer and reduce the risk of victimisation. These ranged from personal changes in dress and/or appearance, including Sikh men cutting off their hair, Muslim women removing the veil and Muslim men shaving off their beards. We also captured the more practical strategies employed by our sample such as crossing the road to avoid large groups of people, carrying safety devices, installing CCTV, and bypassing certain areas altogether including public parks, transport, places of leisure and other ostensibly 'safe' spaces for those not at risk of hate crime. In some instances we heard from victims who had moved house and even considered leaving Leicester to avoid further victimisation.

Within the survey respondents referred to a range of strategies employed in order to make them feel safer and minimise the risk of repeat victimisation (see Figure 19):

- three-fifths of respondents avoid walking in certain areas or going to certain places (61%);
- over a third avoid going out at night (36%);
- over a quarter have improved their home security (27%).

As identified in Figure 19, in some cases respondents had undertaken more extreme measures, such as attempting to hide their nationality, their race/ethnicity, their transgender status, or their asylum seeker status. This is also true in instances where the participants knew the people who had committed their most recent hate crime. These victims were more likely than those who did not know the perpetrator to have changed their mobile phone number or to have moved home.

**Figure 19: Steps taken to feel safer**



Amongst the sample there were differences in the measures adopted by participants to make themselves feel safer, with women more likely than men to have taken such steps. They were more likely to avoid walking in certain areas or going to certain places (67% of women used these avoidance strategies compared with 54% of men) and to avoid going out at night (43% compared with 27%). They were also more likely to have improved their home security (31% of women compared with 20% of men), started carrying personal security devices (19% compared with 10%), and changed their mobile phone number (13% compared with 9%).

*I dress down whenever I go out, rather than dress like I would actually like to, you know there's things that I would do differently if it were acceptable. To be honest even if I lived in London I'd probably do things differently.*

Gay youth

*I went to B&Q and bought CCTV cameras from my own pocket and put a CCTV camera on the front of the house, on the back of the house, and the side.*

Male asylum seeker from Iraq

*I have one of the numbers of my mobile phone as a video and another as a voice-recorder. So if you do get into trouble, or you think you're getting into trouble, you can just put your hand in your pocket, hold the key down and start recording.*

Transgender woman

There were also differences between forms of victimisation and the strategies implemented to reduce the risk of re-victimisation. Respondents who had been victims of verbal abuse, harassment or violent crime were more likely than respondents who had not been victims of such crimes to avoid walking in certain areas or going to certain places. Similarly, those who had been victims of harassment or violent crime were more likely to avoid going out at night than respondents who had not been targeted in these ways.

*It's that feeling that gets left with you. You do feel scared. Now whenever I go to town I'm extra careful what I do and where I go. Even when you go down an escalator I'll wait until no one's there before I get on the escalator. If there are lots of people in the lift I won't go in there. It affects you in different ways.*

Muslim woman

*I feel I can't walk outside that door [pointing to the front door]. If I go to the shop anything could happen.*

Hindu youth

*You're always living in fear. I mean a woman in a burka or a man with a beard, will try not to go out at night, avoid pubs, avoid dark alleyways, avoid stopping near a car and speaking with someone looking for directions. It's all just fear.*

Muslim youth

As the above quotations indicate, for many of the victims we heard from, employing strategies and defence mechanisms to reduce the risk of victimisation only did so much. The feeling of vulnerability and the fear of future victimisation remained a constant feature of their day-to-day reality.

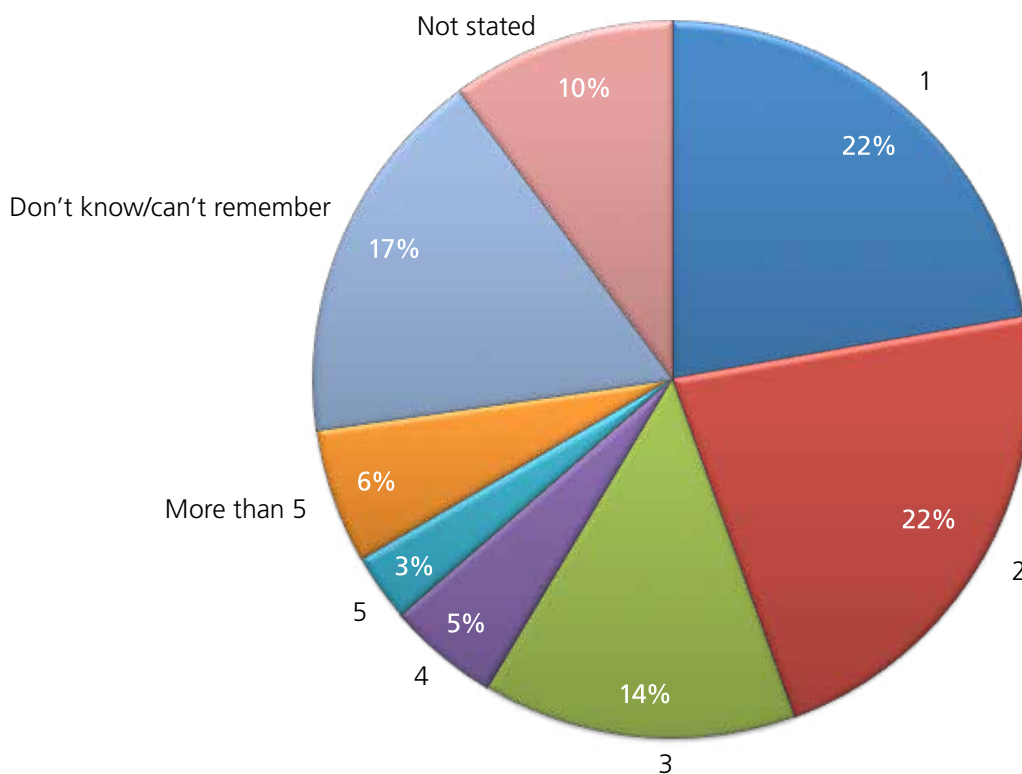
## 4.5 Who are the perpetrators?

- Seven out of ten of victims' most recent experiences had been perpetrated by a male offender(s) and a similar proportion had been perpetrated by offender(s) aged 30 or under
- In a third of cases the perpetrators had been known to victims either as acquaintances, neighbours, friends, work colleagues, family members or carers
- Perpetrators came from a diverse range of backgrounds, and belonged to majority and to new and emerging minority communities

The questionnaire asked participants about the profile of perpetrators involved in their most recent experience of hate crime. This section provides a breakdown of the number of these perpetrators, along with their gender, age and ethnicity.

Just over one in five respondents had experienced their most recent hate crime at the hands of a single offender (22%, see Figure 20) and the same proportion cited two offenders being involved (22%). For nearly a third of respondents three people or more had been involved (28%).

**Figure 20: Number of perpetrators involved**



There are some differences between the type of experience and the number of offenders involved. Participants whose most recent experience of hate crime had involved:

- **sexual violence (this included being sexually harassed, being touched inappropriately and being raped)** – were more likely than others to say it had been perpetrated by one offender;
- **violence (this included being pushed, punched, kicked, mugged and being hit with weapons)** – were more likely to say there had been five or more offenders;
- **property crime (this included having the car windows smashed, having eggs thrown at the house, having graffiti sprayed on the walls and having fireworks pushed through the letterbox)** – were more likely than others to say they did not know or could not remember how many offenders had been involved.

#### 4.5.1 Profile of perpetrators

When it comes to the gender of the perpetrator, close to seven in ten survey respondents stated that their most recent experience of hate crime had involved a male offender (68%), and for a quarter it had involved a female (26%). Male respondents were more likely to have experienced a hate crime involving a male offender (74% of men said this compared with 64% of women), and female respondents were more likely to have experienced a hate crime involving a female offender (30% of women said this compared with 20% of men).

In the case of their most recent experience of hate crime, those who had known the person/people who perpetrated it were more likely to say female offender(s) had been involved (47% of those who knew their offender(s) said this compared with 21% of those who did not). Conversely, those who had not known the offender(s) were more likely to say male offender(s) had been involved (85% of those who did not know their offender(s) stated this compared with 72% of those who did). There were also some subtle differences in the survey data between where the offence had taken place and how many perpetrators had been involved. For example, respondents who had experienced their most recent hate crime in or near their place of work were more likely to say it had been carried out by one offender (37% compared with 22% overall), whereas those whose most recent hate crime had occurred on the internet or in a text message were more likely to say five or more offenders had been involved (12% compared with 6% overall).

Respondents whose most recent hate crime had occurred at school, college or university were more likely to state that female offender(s) had been involved, with over half saying this was the case compared with a quarter overall (53% compared with 26%). Respondents whose most recent hate crime had occurred in a public street, park or the city centre were more likely to say male offender(s) had been involved (85% compared with 68% overall), as were those whose crime had taken place in leisure venue such as a bar, pub or nightclub (88% compared with 68% overall).

*It's normally like four or five white, young, early twenties, maybe late teens, men. And they will be the ones who will usually start shouting stuff.*

Transgender youth

*All of them were underage, they were seventeen or eighteen and all of them were totally drunk. You can smell it when they talk to you.*

Sikh youth

*I think people under a certain age – teenagers or early 20s – they do it because they're with two or three people and I'm on my own. It doesn't happen if I've got somebody with me.*

Male with a visual impairment

*The people that pester me the most are the people in the category of 20 to 30 years old, there's usually about two or three of them, and they're usually male. If there's just a male it is very rare that they will actually do anything violent. And if there's a female in the company, then I'm usually quite safe.*

Transgender woman

Just over a third of the survey respondents' most recent hate crimes had involved an offender aged between 20 and 30 (37%), and a further third had involved a teenage offender (33%). 16% of these most recent incidents had involved an offender aged between 31 and 40, and 11% had involved someone aged between 41 and 60. Only 1% referred to an offender aged 61 or older and 4% referred to an offender aged 12 or younger.

Respondents were more likely to have experienced a hate crime involving offender(s) of a similar age to themselves:

- Respondents aged between 16 and 24 were more likely than respondents overall to say their most recent experience of hate crime had involved offender(s) aged between 13 and 19;
- Respondents aged between 25 and 34 were more likely than respondents overall to say their most recent experience of hate crime had involved offender(s) aged between 20 and 30;
- Respondents aged between 35 and 54 were more likely than respondents overall to say their most recent experience of hate crime had involved offender(s) aged between 31 and 40.

Our survey data illustrate that hate crime perpetrators come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Three fifths of survey respondents stated that their last experience of hate crime had involved a white offender (61%). One in six said that their most recent experience had involved an Asian offender (16%) and 12% referred to a Black offender. The diversity amongst perpetrators becomes more striking when looking at specific strands of hate crime victimisation. Taking racially motivated hate crime as an example, just under two thirds of respondents described the offender as White British (58%). However, significant numbers of respondents said that an Asian/Asian British (17%) or Black/Black British (15%) individual had been involved in their most recent experience of targeted hostility. The interviews complemented the survey data in demonstrating that the perpetrators involved in racist and religiously motivated hate crime come from various different backgrounds.



*I don't want to sound racist, but I have to be honest and realistic. Mainly the abuse comes from White English youth, not always. Most of the time it's young people probably between 17 to 30.*

An Imam

*Generally, it's actually from Asian people. Although if you want it in proportion, I would think White people account for ten per cent of it. The rest of the time it is usually Asian people. I also get Black people who scream "Hitler should have finished you off!"*

Orthodox Jewish man

*It was an Asian young boy saying "When are you going back to Africa?" Instead of making me angry, it made me laugh.*

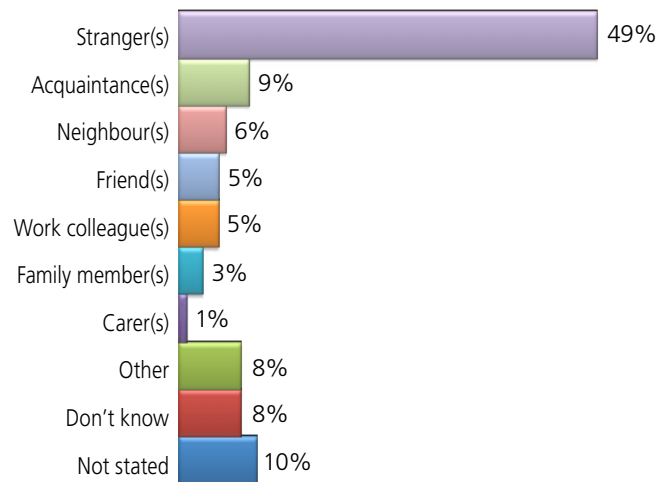
Male Zimbabwean refugee

Patterns of perpetration are also evident in other strands of hate crime, including acts of gendered hostility. In these cases, although the majority of offenders involved in respondents' most recent experiences of hate crime were identified as White British (55%), over a quarter stated that an Asian British, Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi (27%) individual had been involved in their victimisation. The findings from this study illustrate that the profile of hate crime perpetrators is much more diverse than is commonly assumed, and the next section considers this complexity further.

#### **4.5.2 Relationship between victims and offenders**

Commonly, hate crime has been thought of as a form of crime in which the perpetrators are strangers to the victim. However, we found that this was the case in only half of the most recent incidents of hate crime (49%). Looking at those who knew their offender(s), fewer than one in ten said that they were acquaintances (9%), neighbours (6%), friends (5%), or work colleagues (5%), while under one in twenty said they were family members (3%) or carers (1%) (see Figure 21).

**Figure 21: Relationship between the victim and offender<sup>7</sup>**



Some interesting patterns emerged from the survey data regarding the victim's relationship with the perpetrator:

- Men were more likely than women to state that those who had carried out their most recent hate crime were strangers;
- Respondents aged 55 to 64 were more likely to say they had known the offender(s);
- Those aged 16 to 24 were more likely to say the offender(s) had been friends;
- Respondents whose last experience of hate crime had involved harassment, cyberbullying or sexual violence were also more likely to say they had known the offender(s);
- Those whose most recent experience had involved verbal abuse or violent crime were more likely to say they had not known the offender(s);
- Respondents with refugee or asylum seeker status were more likely to have known the offender(s) involved and to say they had been neighbours or family members.

The findings from the survey demonstrate that the victim-offender relationship can sometimes be more complicated than is commonly thought. This is particularly true when the perpetrator is a neighbour, work colleague or 'friend' (see Case Study 8).

<sup>7</sup> The percentages within Figure 21 exceed 100% as respondents were able to select more than one responses reported to a network/organisation outlined in Table 3, 11% did not answer the question, and 6% selected 'Other'.

### Case Study 8

*I was at a stage where I was trying to take my own life because it was easier than living next door to him. I was put on antidepressants rather quickly.*

Janet

Janet and Michael both had multiple physical disabilities and health issues. They had moved into a new house and it was not long until the neighbours started keeping them awake by shouting at each other and with the noise of their television. The neighbours began to make them feel uncomfortable by looking over into their garden and through the windows into their house, and upsetting them by being rude when they came across each other in front of the house. One of the neighbours did not like Janet and Michael's dog barking and so he began feeding it poisoned food through the letterbox, which resulted in the dog becoming ill. Janet and Michael resorted to reporting the noise from their neighbour to the council and were sent a recording device, which the neighbour was informed about. However, this prompted the neighbour to do the same and he began recording Janet and Michael.

Things escalated and Janet and Michael began to receive verbal abuse about their disabilities, their nationalities and their social status. Their car was repeatedly scratched and their son was physically attacked. Although the police, the council, Victim Support and a disability organisation became involved, the issue was never resolved. Out of fear of the deterioration of their mental and physical health, Janet and Michael decided to move house.

Researcher field diary entry

There has been a prevailing assumption that hate crimes are acts committed by people from established majority groups. However, the findings from this study illustrate that the reality is much more complex. We found that both majority and minority groups, and both established and new and emerging communities can express prejudiced views and commit acts of targeted hostility.

*What I hear now is about Eastern Europeans, what I hear now is about Romanians, Polish and it's the same rhetoric what was being said in the 70s: "They're coming for our jobs, our houses, our schools, our NHS system" and even sometimes "Watch out for our young girls".*

African Caribbean man

*Even in supermarkets Somalians can be particularly aggressive, I think it all stems from their background and where they've come from. That's the problem, there's a large community in this area that causes issues.*

*We have a similar problem in our area. There's a very large Polish community, and they're very aggressive. And that's hard, because we've lived here since 1966 and we never had a problem. Now the communities that have come in seem to put barriers up.*

Elderly Hindu women

*When these Somalian people came here, we thought they were very nice and they were good people you know. But they're not what we think. I'll tell you one thing, they'll be worse than the West Indians. You wait and see. Because when they came to this country, the government gave them the houses, they have given them the money, they have given them the furniture, they have given the job. As soon as they came in the country within six months they are all over the place. Anywhere you go, any department you go, you find the Somalians. If my son go look for a job he's born here, he's been educated here, he go look for a job, he'll not get a job. Go down to St Matthews, it used to be the West Indians and they have been driven out from there, now it's all Somalians. One day it's gonna be a no-go area.*

Pakistani man

We also found evidence of prejudice within different ethnic and faith communities directed towards other, similar communities.

*She said "I know, I'm Sikh, and we know about Islam, we know about your religion, pathetic. I can't believe in this day and age you're allowed in this 21st century". She just went on and on. Oh another bit I missed out, she said "You're terrorists, you're terrorists!"*

Muslim man

*I took my things, turned around and saw a free till and just went. An Asian man came, threw my basket and said "People like you who long to take over our country, you should not be allowed to get away with it". The Asian was a Hindu.*

Veiled Muslim woman

*I'd find I'd only be walking down the street and I'd have Black people verbally abuse me, because I'm half-caste. It's really weird ... White people, Black people they'd try and pick on you cause, you know, you're mixed race.*

Mixed ethnic heritage man with learning disabilities

Moreover, during the course of interviews a number of participants expressed antipathy and hostile views towards disabled, gay and transgender people.

*The Sikh population here in Leicester, the ones I've bumped in to, they've being really, really nasty to me. I'm permanently banned from one of the Sikh temples. I think it's the dress code. Last time I was there, I had 10 people around me yelling at the top of their voices. They threw me out, saying "Never come back".*

Transgender woman

*I know a male Muslim teenager, late teens who was realising that he was gay. He went to his GP to try and find some help, support and found that the GP was also Muslim and the GP just started shouting at him. Then he went to his imam and the imam hit him.*

Gay man

*I've had too much trouble with Somali youths hurling abuse. They're not tolerant, they are not interested in being tolerant, they're not interested in anything other than their culture. ... I mean they are nasty to their own people; I mean it's nothing personal, if they think one of their own people is gay or lesbian they have no problem with killing them.*

Transgender woman

*I hate to say it but the vast majority of the abuse I came across is from people that are, it's mainly Muslims, honestly they've got different values. You would think they would understand more than anyone, but they don't at all.*

Gay youth

It was also evident that members of some minority ethnic and faith communities were not averse to being hostile towards someone who shared the same ethnicity or faith as them. This was often because of their own prejudice towards particular identity markers or certain forms of 'difference', or a perception that someone is a 'failure' on account of their sexual orientation or mental ill-health, for example (see Case Study 9).

### Case Study 9

I visited a mental ill-health support group today which provides a specialist service for women from minority ethnic communities. I took part in a Bhangra lesson to begin with and then sat at a big table with the group whilst we ate lunch. I made my way around the table having informal conversations with the women who were mainly Hindu and between the ages of 25 and 60 years old. It was really shocking to hear of the prejudice they faced from their own family and within their own community. One woman spoke at length about being shunned from the extended family, no longer being invited to family parties and the snide comments she received about her mental health. I cannot imagine how upsetting and how isolating her situation is when the people you look to for support are the ones who are actually causing the pain.

Researcher field diary entry

The findings illustrate that there is 'no one size fits all' type of offender. In comparison to the diversity that exists with respect to the profile of perpetrators, victims' perceptions of what motivates perpetrators to commit hate crimes were strikingly similar. As the selection of quotations below suggests, participants referred to a sense of unfamiliarity and intolerance towards 'difference' as being key motivating factors behind acts of targeted hostility. Perceived vulnerability was also identified by participants as being central to why they thought they had been victimised (see Section 4.2.1 for further commentary on these themes).

*Everybody. Everybody. Young, old, White, Asian, Black ... Each and everybody's got it in them somewhere, normally when they've had a few drinks and it comes out, simple as that.*

Asian man who works as a taxi driver

*We were shocked because you look at the car, she's a woman. You kind of almost expect that behaviour unfortunately from certain class of people. She's clearly got money, she's got a career of some sort. I mean it just doesn't fit the bill.*

Asian British man

*It can be single lads on their own, even girls, older people, younger people. You can't really put a sort of picture on that person.*

Gay man of mixed ethnic heritage

*I think that people are always afraid of the other, whatever that is. And I think that we are an easy target, as people who stand out as different.*

Female with an alternative mode of dress and appearance

*They look at you, just because we're different from them. Like, we've got the disability and things, they think they can wrong you and tell you what to do, and push us around.*

Female with a learning disability

With a lack of understanding of 'difference' and diversity being most frequently identified by our participants as motivating factors in the commission of hate crime, it was unsurprising that educational approaches featured heavily in how victims thought perpetrators should be dealt with.

### 4.5.3 Addressing offending behaviour

One of the areas we were keen to explore was how victims felt about existing hate crime legislation in terms of whether and how it had been used to punish the offenders who had targeted them, and whether this legislation met their expectations with respect to offering an appropriate level of punishment. Among the reasons for having hate crime laws in place is their capacity to act as a deterrent to potential offenders; to convey a message of solidarity to minority victims; to signal society's condemnation of such acts; and to acknowledge the additional harms caused by hate crimes.

However, of the thousands of people we engaged with over the course of the research only a small proportion knew what a hate crime was and barely anyone had any knowledge of existing hate crime laws. To an extent, this challenges some of the thinking behind hate crime legislation, as it appears that very few people at a grassroots level – and in environments where people are most likely to require protection from the law – know that this legislation even exists. This in turn made exploring victims' opinions on hate crime legislation much more difficult.

In addition to having little prior knowledge of hate crime laws, relatively few survey respondents had any prior experience of seeing their offenders brought to justice through the courts system. Only 4% (or in real terms  $n=39$ ) of respondents' most recent experiences of hate crime had gone to court. Of those cases that had got that far, just over half (54%,  $n=21$ ) had seen the offender found guilty, while 5% ( $n=2$ ) had seen the case dismissed/discontinued and in a similar proportion (5%,  $n=2$ ) the offender had been found not guilty. 18% ( $n=7$ ) of respondents stated that their case had not gone to court yet, and a further 15% ( $n=6$ ) did not know the outcome of their case. These figures indicate that a surprisingly high proportion of those participants whose cases went to court did not know the outcome. When this issue was probed further it was evident that this was the result of victims not being kept up to date with developments within their case and/or victims finding the whole procedure of going to court too confusing.

Interviews provided an effective mechanism for exploring how victims would have liked to have seen the person or people responsible for targeting them punished. It emerged that participants felt that a restorative

justice and/or a mediation element should feature in the punishment given to hate crime offenders. However, views on the effectiveness of this approach amongst those victims whose case had involved restorative justice and/or mediation were rather mixed.

*I think they should get punished at a really extreme level. Really be done for it. Whatever they get charged with, whether it's prison or a fine, I think they should have to go to some sort of support group and have to help people. Then they can understand how these people are feeling when it happens.*

*I would like to do restorative justice. Being put in a room with the person who had done it and explain what they've done.*

Gay youth

*You should send them to work in the communities, how they see, how they look and all these culture values. Help them to understand how they look and their values. They might get some clues or ideas. You can punish but the ideas will still be there. Why are they doing it? Because they don't know the real facts, the beliefs and values of other people. You need to send them into communities and work with them.*

Sikh youth

*He got done for drunk and disorderly. I would like to have seen him get some sort of assault charge. And the stuff he was saying, it doesn't hurt physically, but no one should have that abuse really. So maybe, a fine and some community service might have been a bit better.*

Gay man

When interviewees were asked what they thought would prevent people from committing a hate crime in the future, the majority were in favour of adopting an educational approach, as opposed to a criminal justice or punitive one.

*The ignorance in some of the young boys and girls nowadays is there because they've not been educated. They've not had support from their parents in terms of knowing what's right, what's wrong, what you can say, what you can't say or what you shouldn't say.*

Black British man



*It's down to education. People who come to this country really do need to understand that they can't continue their own cultures. You've got to integrate.*

Transgender woman

*The only punishment for those people is to educate them. We are all human beings, what they did is wrong. So this is my only request: if they be punished be it through education.*

Male asylum seeker from Iraq

*Obviously education is important. But it is very interesting, I had someone here talking about inter-faith issues, also doing research. And I told them it's very nice making your big inter-faith dialogue days, where you get 50 people and you ask all the leaders to come along and you all nod and say the same thing. But it's not filtering down.*

Orthodox Jewish man

*I went to the LGB tent and I filled out a form to see if there's anything they could change and I said, yeah, get more people into schools. For the younger generation.*

Gay youth

Within the last decade academics and policy makers have increasingly focused on the purpose and application of hate crime legislation, and in particular whether it should be extended to include other identity characteristics or lifestyles beyond the monitored five strands. Although these debates are important, the findings from this project illustrate how few cases of hate crime ever end up going to court. Rather than wishing to see offenders punished more severely through the higher sentencing tariffs available under hate crime legislation, participants within this study were overwhelmingly in favour of educational approaches which offered offenders – and specifically young people who had or who were at risk of committing hate offences – an opportunity to learn about the positive elements of diversity and the harms associated with hate crime through a programme of tailored intervention. As mentioned above, many also spoke positively about the ideas behind restorative forms of justice, and in particular the capacity of restorative interventions to encourage offenders to comprehend the consequences of their actions for victims and their families.

## 4.6 What support do victims need?

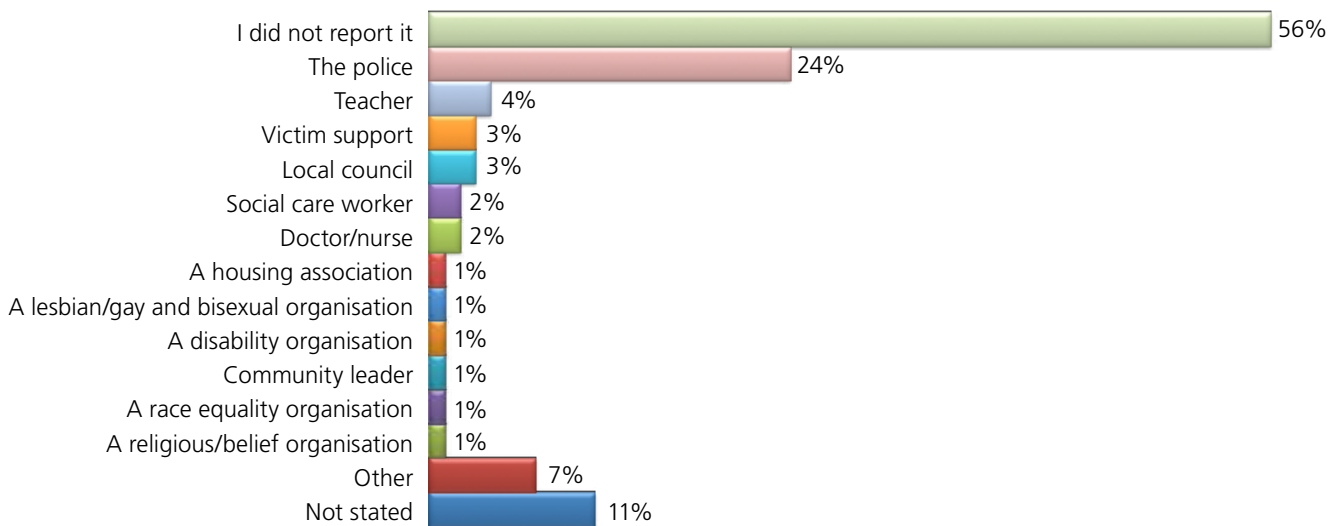
- Only one in four victims had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police
- Over half of all respondents had not reported their experiences to anyone
- Low numbers of victims had reported to a third party reporting organisation or to professionals in a position to offer support

One of the key aims of the Leicester Hate Crime Project was to assess hate crime victims' expectations and experiences of agency responses to their victimisation, and to identify ways of improving the quality of support offered to them. Usually this process begins by reporting an incident to a criminal justice agency or through a third party reporting mechanism. Within the survey, respondents were asked if they had reported their most recent experience of targeted hostility to organisations and individuals in a position to offer support, and if so, to which.

### 4.6.1 Police responses

Only a quarter of respondents stated that they had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police (24%, see Figure 22).

**Figure 22: Reporting patterns**



There were some subtle differences in patterns of reporting to the police between respondents from different demographic groups. For example, only 14% of those targeted because of their sexual orientation and 17% of those targeted for their alternative dress, appearance and lifestyle had reported their most recent experience to the police, both of which are notably lower than the 24% overall reporting level. In comparison, significantly higher reporting rates were evident amongst respondents who had been targeted because of their physical disability (56%) and/or learning disability (44%).

There were some nuances in reporting levels amongst survey respondents who had experienced different types of victimisation. Victims of verbal abuse were the least likely to have reported the crime to the police (16%), followed by:

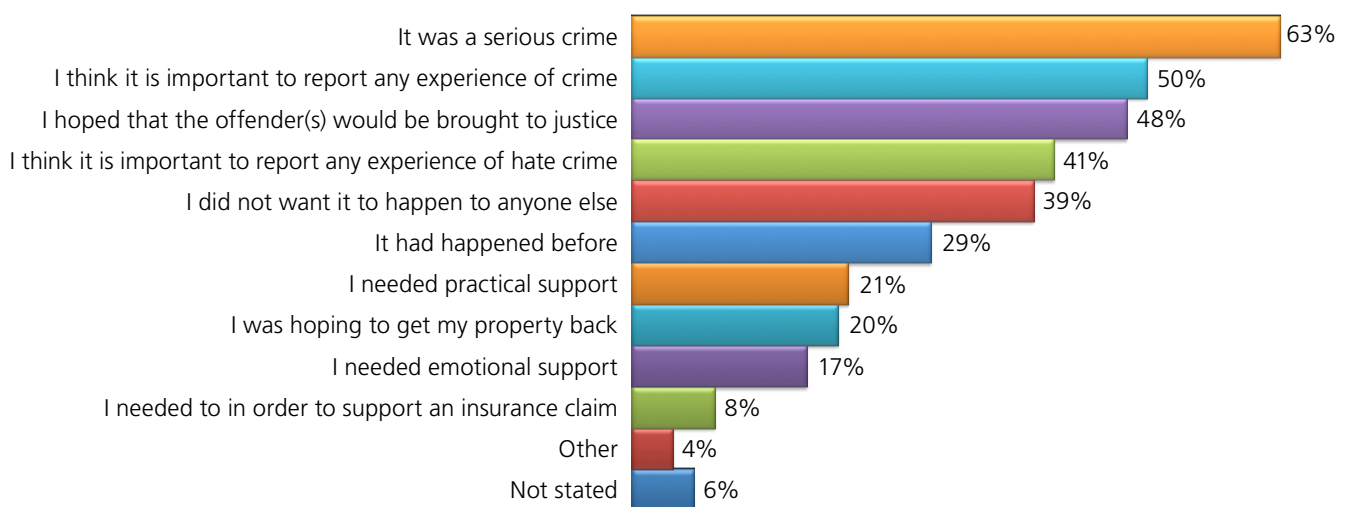
- 33% of victims of harassment;
- 36% of victims of cyberbullying;
- 41% of victims of sexual violence;
- 60% of victims of violent crime; and
- 62% of victims of property crime.

The greater the impact the hate crime had on the respondent at the time, the more likely they were to have reported it to the police. Those who said that the crime had affected them very significantly (giving a score of 10 out of 10, where 0 represents no effect at all and 10 represents a very significant effect) were more likely to have reported their experience of hate crime to the police (55% compared with 24% overall).

Survey respondents were also more likely to have reported the hate crime to the police if they knew the offender(s) involved (31% of those who knew the offender(s) did so compared with 20% of those who did not). Respondents whose most recent experience of hate crime had occurred in or near their home or at someone else's home were more likely to have reported it to the police (45% and 44% respectively compared with 24% overall).

When asked why they had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police, almost two-thirds of survey respondents stated that they had done so because it was a serious crime (63%, see Figure 23). Half said that they had reported it because it is important to report any experience of crime (50%); 48% had done so in the hope that the offender(s) would be brought to justice; and 29% had reported because it had happened before.

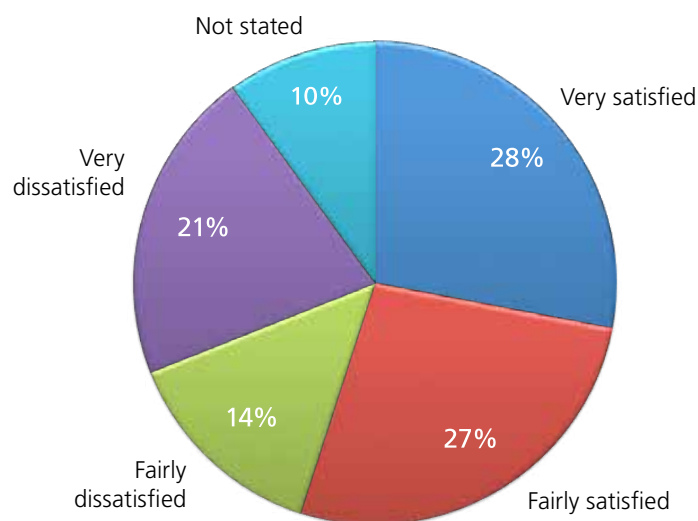
**Figure 23: Reasons for reporting**



Three-quarters of respondents felt that the police had recorded their most recent experience of hate crime after they reported it (72%). This finding is concerning as it means that nearly a third of respondents who had reported a hate crime to the police did not feel that the police had recorded it as such (28%). Also of concern is the fact that fewer than half of respondents thought that the police had investigated their most recent incident (43%). In a fifth of cases the police had given the victim practical support (20%) or emotional support (18%). In just one-sixth of cases did respondents think that the police had arrested someone (16%). There were some slight differences between the circumstances surrounding the hate crime being reported and the response provided by police. For instance, survey respondents who had reported a hate crime involving violence were more likely than others to have said that the police arrested someone in relation to the case (31% said this compared with 16% overall). Respondents who had known the offender(s) involved in the reported hate crime were more likely to have said that the incident culminated in a warning being issued (24% compared with 12% overall). Also, respondents who reported a hate crime involving just one offender were more likely to have said that someone was arrested as a result (33% compared with 16% overall).

In terms of how satisfied our sample was with the response and support they had received from the police, just over half of those who had reported their last hate crime to the police said that they were satisfied with the police's response (55%, see Figure 24). However, around a third were dissatisfied with the response they had received from the police (35%).

**Figure 24: Levels of satisfaction with the police**



Respondents who felt that they had been very significantly affected by their experience of hate crime were more likely to be dissatisfied with the response of the police than others who were less affected (54% compared with 35% overall). This is also true for those whose most recent hate crime had involved violence (53% of such respondents were dissatisfied with the police response compared with 35% overall).

The contrast between our participants' expectations of the police response and the actual level of service they had received emerged as a significant theme within the interviews. Due to the sheer number of comments expressed about the police, the following section includes more quotations than in other parts of this report. Unfortunately, positive encounters with the police were heavily outweighed by negative ones, although the quotations which follow illustrate the broad range of experiences that our participants had with the police.

*They were really good actually, they came and followed up a couple of days later. I think they purposely sent out a gay copper to my house, to set an example. I was surprised how good they were, they were really good.*

Gay man

*The PCSO has done everything he can. He went door-to-door, every single door and it was the same story – the man is abusive. The PCSO understood the impact it was having on us.*

Female with multiple physical disabilities

*I have to say these two police officers now have been very supportive. But it's too little too late for us. Hopefully, if other people were in a similar situation they would actually take the time to listen and judge it fairly.*

Relative of family affected by hate crime

*We are all told to report incidents, [and so] we went and reported this to the police. Our experience following that was actually extremely negative ... we were told that because they couldn't find anybody that they were not going to record it as a hate crime, but as a drunk and disorderly incident, public affray or whatever they call it. That has made me feel extremely sad ... I started to think I would have been better off not reporting it because then I would not have had the added stress of going through all of that and nothing happening.*

Veiled Muslim woman

*Their services were appalling. The police promised, I don't know how many times, to follow up and come round to my flat, and all sorts of things. I don't even have a crime reference number ... they just completely ignored me, which is really, really frustrating.*

Transgender woman

*When you like talk to the police up town, they ask you all these questions that have nothing to do with the incident ... Most of the police officers are really rude as well.*

Gay youth

*I called the police and they said there's nothing we can do because you're not under threat. I reported again, to say I wasn't satisfied. They sent an officer out who said, "Can't you find a different way to walk to the club you go to?" I said "No - I haven't done anything wrong".*

**Male with physical disabilities**

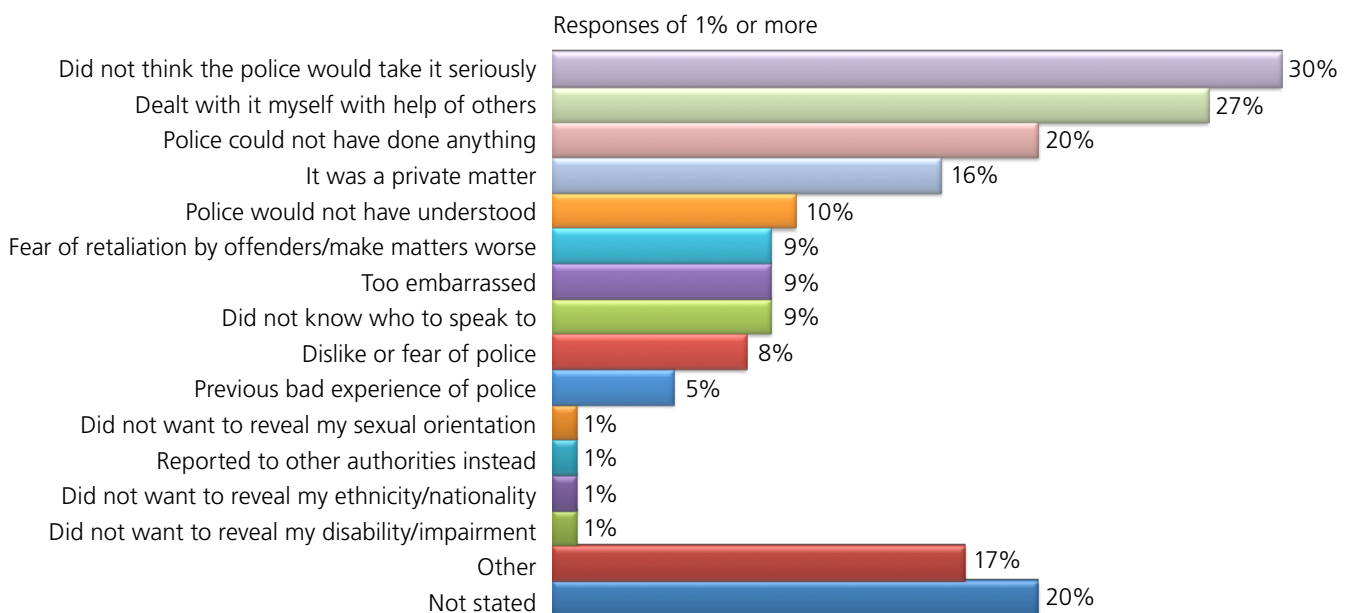
*I'm quite surprised that I've even heard the police do anything. They never helped me no matter how many times I go in and complain. ... So like I say, my experience with the police is that they are just useless and worthless. They'll investigate every other crime but that [type of] crime.*

**Gay man with mental ill-health**

When the survey respondents were asked if they would encourage others to report to the police, one in five stated that they would not encourage others to do so (20%); this percentage increased to 34% for respondents whose most recent experience of hate crime had involved violence. This could be linked to the fact that these respondents were more likely than others to be dissatisfied with the police response (as noted above).

Over three-quarters of our survey respondents had not reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police, a worryingly high figure (76%, see Figure 25). When asked why, the most frequently cited reasons were that they did not feel the police would take it seriously (30%), that they dealt with it themselves or with the help of others (27%), or that the police could not have done anything (20%).

**Figure 25: Reasons for not reporting to the police**



The majority of our interviewees had not reported any of the hate incidents and/or crimes they had experienced to the police. The three most frequently cited reasons within the survey data for not reporting – that the police would not take the matter seriously; that victims dealt with it themselves; and that the police could not have done anything anyway – also emerged as significant factors via the interview process. As in the section above, we heard from many victims who shared their experiences and expectations of the police, and for this reason an extended selection of quotations has been included here too.

*There's not much they can do anyway because you never come across those people again. I would never recognise them. There's no way they could get them. It would just be a waste of time on my side to report it to the police.*

Female Zimbabwean asylum seeker

*I mean, what's the point in telling them? They won't listen. Someone like you can [directed at the researcher]. If we go to anyone and report it, they make assumptions about who you are. And they won't understand.*

Male with learning disabilities

*If I went to the police to report every single incident I wouldn't be doing anything else. I would be spending half my day being insulted and humiliated. Then the other half a day I would spend in the police station reporting things.*

Transgender woman

*If you've not got an independent witness then the police aren't interested. If it's just slagging you off, smirking, rude signs you're told to ignore it. Which if it happens to you occasionally, you can. When it's happening to you all the time and over a long period of time, it really, it really gets to you.*

White British woman

*When I've spoken to gay people and they've mentioned things have happened to them I'm like "Did you report it?" And in nearly all of the cases they haven't, they're either "What's the point?" or they don't realise it is something they can report. Like lots of victims of hate crime they think you've just got to put up with that. No-one is going to take it seriously.*

Gay man

*Ideally I should report it, and I know that I should report it. Will I go to the police and say somebody was being verbally abusive, being racist towards me, chanting these words? Do I expect them to do anything? It's a waste of time. If they cannot deal with Stephen Lawrence in 20 years what chance do I have with verbal abuse? It hurts but it doesn't kill.*

Male Zimbabwean refugee

From analysis of our survey data, we found that the reasons for not reporting a hate crime to the police varied across respondents from different groups:

- Those aged 16 to 24 who had not reported their hate crime to the police were more likely than others to say that they had not because they dealt with it themselves/with the help of others (34% compared with 27% overall);
- Respondents who had known the offender(s) involved in their most recent experience of hate crime were more likely than others to say that they had not reported it to the police because it was a private matter (29% compared with 16%), for fear of retaliation (18% compared with 9%), or because they were too embarrassed (16% compared with 9%);
- Respondents whose most recent experience of hate crime had involved verbal abuse were more likely to say they had not reported it to the police because they did not think they would take it seriously (36% compared with 30% overall);
- Respondents with disabilities were more likely to say they had reported the crime to other authorities instead of the police (6% compared with 1% overall).

One of the strong themes to emerge from the interviews was a sense of victims feeling as though they were receiving an especially poor level of support from the police because of who they are. We heard from many participants from different backgrounds who felt that the police response had been influenced by negative attitudes towards their identity or perceived 'difference', be it their disability, ethnicity, mental ill-health, religion, sexual orientation or transgender status.

*We are scared of the police, even if they said they would change their ways. If we see somebody fighting, we would just change the way we are going, we wouldn't want to be involved. They might start blaming us. Once the police know we are asylum seekers then the way they are talking to us is changed. You can't call the police, if you call the police maybe they arrest you instead.*

Male asylum seeker from Pakistan



*A lot of BME people that I speak to find the level of confidence in the police is not that high. Nobody believes that these guys can do anything anyway. Unless it's the other way round, and you do silly stuff and see how quickly they descend on you!*

Zimbabwean man

*And they tell me to call the police, I just don't see the point. Every time my name gets mentioned it looks bad for me. I feel it's like a no win situation if I report. If like there's two incidents in one night, my name keep cropping up, it looks like I'm some sort of trouble maker or I'm out with the wrong sort of crowd.*

Gay woman of mixed ethnic heritage

*I'm beginning to think there is now some sort of, what do they call it, institutionalised racism. So is this institutionalised Islamophobia? We have two ladies who have reported incidents, conveniently the CCTV is the wrong way. It's not recorded as a hate crime but as a public affray. Let's report another one and conveniently the CCTV footage is lost.*

Veiled Muslim woman

*If the police are standing and someone calls me a nigger, they are straight over there. If someone calls me a filthy dyke, like, they just wait for whatever witty retort I come back with and stand and have a giggle.*

Black British gay woman

*The majority of them [the police] are very ignorant with anything to do with mental health.*

Male with physical disabilities and mental ill-health

It was noted within this section that only one in four of the victims we spoke to had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police. It is apparent that victims of targeted hostility need more support from the police if they are to report with greater regularity, particularly in the context of understanding the process of how to report to the police and how incidents of hate crime are investigated. The lack of confidence in the police's ability to take hate crime seriously, and the disconnect between the response victims expect and the service they receive from the police, is concerning. However, responses to hate crime require understanding and intervention from other agencies too, and for this reason the research explored which other organisations victims may be turning to in order to access support.

#### 4.6.2 Other responses

Over the last decade there has been an increase in the use of third party reporting centres that are located in non-criminal justice organisations. The aim of such centres is to offer an alternative reporting outlet to that of the police while also recognising that hate crime is not just the responsibility of the criminal justice system. Such centres offer victims the opportunity to share experiences of targeted hostility with a wide range of non-statutory organisations. With only a quarter of survey respondents having reported their most recent experience to the police, we wanted to explore whether alternative reporting options were being used instead. This included a range of networks, organisations and people in positions of authority and trust (see Table 3).

Just one fifth of those who took part in the survey had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to an individual or organisation(s) other than the police (18%, see Table 3 for a breakdown of those organisations respondents reported to).

**Table 3: Reporting patterns to agencies other than the police**

	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants %
Teacher	47	4
Victim Support	31	3
Local council	28	3
Social care worker	20	2
Doctor/nurse	18	2
Housing association	14	1
Disability network/organisation	11	1
Lesbian, gay and bisexual network/ organisation	11	1
Community leader	9	1
Race equality network/organisation	8	1
Faith network/organisation	8	1
Local library	3	0
Transgender network/organisation	3	0
True Vision	2	0

Table 3 illustrates how few respondents had reported their experiences through a third party organisation or mechanism. Aside from police officers, teachers were the most likely individuals with whom respondents had shared their experiences of hate crime (4%), compared to social care workers (2%), a doctor or nurse (2%) or a community leader (1%). In terms of which organisations our respondents had reported to, Victim Support and the local council were most frequently cited (both 3%). Only 1% of respondents had reported their most recent experience of hate crime to one of the community support organisations referred to in Table 3, such as those for lesbian, gay and bisexual groups, or those relating to disability, race equality, and/or religion/belief.

Although the figures are worryingly low, disabled respondents were more likely than those who do not identify as disabled to have reported their most recent experience of hate crime to a social care worker, a doctor/nurse or a housing association:

- 10% of respondents with a disability had reported the crime to a social care worker compared with 1% of those without a disability;
- 4% of those with a disability had reported the crime to a doctor or nurse compared with 1% without a disability, and
- 5% of disabled respondents had reported the crime to a housing association compared with 1% of those who were not disabled.

As discussed in Section 4.6.1, respondents were more likely to have reported their most recent experience of hate crime to the police if it had had a very significant impact on them, or if they had known the offender(s) involved. The same pattern was identified in terms of reporting to social care workers, doctors/nurses and housing associations:

- 7% of those who stated that their most recent hate crime had affected them very significantly, and 5% of those who had known the offender(s) involved, reported it to a social care worker (compared with 2% overall);
- 9% of those who stated that their most recent hate crime had affected them very significantly, and 4% of those who had known the offender(s) involved, reported it to a doctor or nurse (compared with 2% overall).

*Today I visited a group for elderly Sikh women, a mental ill-health support group and conducted three individual interviews. Not one person out of the 100 individuals had heard of third party reporting centres. I reeled off local libraries, community centres and online reporting mechanisms but not one individual had heard of them, let alone used them.*

*I am shocked because I know that both the City and the County Councils have awareness raising campaigns, as well as the police. There appears to be a clear disconnect between those who decide where to place reporting centres (and how to raise awareness of them) and those who are directly affected by hate, prejudice and targeted hostility.*

Researcher field diary entry

*It doesn't surprise me at all that people don't know what a hate crime is or where to report one. The police have definitions like hate crime and hate incidents and I think they are fairly complex things to grasp. There is not enough promotion done by the police and other public bodies. It's vastly under-funded and under-supported.*

Gay man

*Last year the council was doing a big thing about hate crime, particularly disability hate crime and I went to the conference at the start and there was nothing else after that. So they did all the big praise about what they were going to do, but then they did nothing.*

Female whose family was targeted because of her husband's mental ill-health

In total, 56% of our survey respondents had not reported their experiences to the police or any other organisation or individual in a position to offer support<sup>8</sup>. When looking at the differences between groups, those respondents who felt they had been targeted because of their alternative dress, appearance or lifestyle or their sexual orientation were least likely to have reported their experiences to anyone (74% and 69% respectively, compared to 56% overall). Within the survey, respondents were asked why they had decided to report their experience of hate crime to a specific organisation. Over a third cited that the reason they had reported a hate crime to one of the organisations outlined in Table 3 was because they felt they had needed emotional support (36%), while around a fifth stated that they had not wanted to be a victim of hate crime again (22%) or that they had needed practical support (20%).

Within the interviews we sought to probe what support participants had received from non-criminal justice organisations. Interviewees were especially expressive about Victim Support.

*Victim Support was fantastic. They arranged times for us when he [the perpetrator] was out. I was in quite a state by the time I got to them, but she [Victim Support worker] would phone me every other day to make sure I was coping.*

Female with multiple physical disabilities and health issues

*I've been under Victim Support for quite a time now ... I have got somebody there who listens, and if I don't think the police are taking it seriously, I've got somebody who is happy to push it along as well. The police seem to take them more seriously than what they would take me.*

Male with a visual impairment

<sup>8</sup> Participants could select multiple organisations/networks and people in positions of authority when asked whom they reported their most recent experience of hate crime to. Of the total sample, 56% had not reported their experience to anyone, 24% had reported to the police, 20% had reported to a network/organisation outlined in Table 3, 11% did not answer the question, and 6% selected 'Other'.

*I went to Victim Support. I'd gone to see him [Victim Support worker] like three or four times before he mentioned that this would make a brilliant story, and could he use it in his thesis. And I was like "Ok, whatever". He made me feel that he was just using me to pass an exam. I didn't get any help.*

Male victimised for his HIV status and sexual orientation

*I was offered counselling. I kinda went, no, no, no, I'm a closed person. But part of me wishes I had of done that, because I would have got it all out then, rather than let it fester. Because it was a long time before I could talk about it.*

Female victimised because of her gender

*I think Victim Support probably would have been helpful. I didn't feel that I really needed to talk to anybody about it at the time. But looking back I maybe should have done, 'cause it did change the way I acted and if I went out. I didn't take it at the time because of the way it was offered. It's a good thing that it's offered, but the way it's offered it's like the police, and certainly in my case, I was at the police station, they asked "Do you want to talk to anybody about this attack?" Well no you don't, you just want to go home. So maybe if there was some follow up, more follow up than there already is, then that would be a lot better.*

Gay man

Victim Support was an example of an organisation with which victims were generally satisfied once they had accessed its services. One of the positive aspects of these services referred to by participants was the speed with which support is provided. However, many participants spoke of not wanting to use Victim Support immediately after they had experienced a hate crime, but instead to have the opportunity to access their services later down the line. Unfortunately, when they felt that they were ready to talk to somebody about their experiences, they found the process of accessing Victim Support to be difficult. Primarily this was because victims did not receive a follow-up notification to remind them of how to access Victim Support, and therefore participants felt as if they had missed their opportunity to use the service. This was particularly true for some of the more marginalised and isolated groups who often had very little, if any, knowledge of Victim Support and how to engage with its services.

Several interviewees had also turned to other organisations, such as housing associations, the local council or a tailored community support service, to report their experiences of hate crime and/or to receive support.

*When my wife was sitting with a handful of tablets, I phoned the doctor, the doctors were absolutely brilliant. They said "Get her down here in ten minutes". It wasn't a case of "You need to book an appointment" or anything like that, no, "Get her down here in ten minutes". And got her down to see a doctor, got her put on antidepressants. That was when it was really at its worse. Basically the doctors kept an eye on us.*

Male with physical disabilities

*A lot of doctors know nothing about us, a lot of health professionals know nothing, a lot of psychiatrists know nothing. How many psychiatrists are there in Leicestershire trained in transgender people?*

Transgender woman

*The City Council were awful. They didn't want to get us away from the person who was abusing us, every day of our lives. And it was every day. The worker actually said "I don't see a problem, he's a nice guy".*

Male with physical disabilities

*I remember last time when I was assaulted, I was really desperate to sit down and have a talk with somebody, but I didn't really get much attention from the LGBT centre I went to just afterwards. I didn't get much attention from Victim Support either.*

Transgender woman

*I'm satisfied with the City of Sanctuary people. They are such good people. They are helping a lot and they are doing plenty to help us, to help everyone actually. Because of their behaviour as well and they have a passion, they listen completely to you and they are trying to find a solution for your problems.*

Male asylum seeker from Pakistan

The views of victims with respect to the response they received from their local council and housing associations were overwhelmingly negative (see Case Study 10). The most commonly cited reasons for this were that staff working within those organisations lacked knowledge of what a hate crime is, had not taken victims' experiences of hate crime seriously and had failed to intervene early on within the victimisation process. Those participants who had engaged with such organisations to access their support services often found that the response they received did not help but instead simply reinforced their sense of victimisation, despair and isolation.

### Case Study 10

*I phoned up the council and said "I've got a bit of a problem here, not sure what the best way to deal with it. Could you give me some advice?" The housing officer came out and said, "Well, the best thing to do is fill these diary sheets in". So for about three weeks it was like one incident after another and I kept sending in my sheets.*

*I came out my house one day at the same time as him [the perpetrator]. I was just going up the hill and he came up behind me and grabbed me. He said, "You are reporting me to the council". I'm like "I don't know what you're talking about; you've got the wrong person". He says "Have I now?" and he produced the diary sheet with what I'd written on, with my name on it! She'd [housing officer] not even wiped out my name. And he's like "You send in one more of these sheets and you'll be eating your hospital food through a straw for the rest of your life".*

*So I went home and phoned the council. I spoke to her and said "What on earth do you think you're up to? Those diary sheets were supposed to be in confidence for you to build up a pattern of behaviour". I said "You have just given my diary sheets to the person who's causing the problems and now I've just been threatened!" I said "You might as well just hang me outside my house and say 'Take pot shots'".*

*A month later on bonfire night, I'm lying in bed and my little dog's going wappy. I then got this smell. Luckily my next door neighbour held a key for me, so I phoned and said "I can smell burning, can you just pop round for me?" Someone had put a firework through my door, knowing I can't get out of bed. It's catch 22, report this and I get more problems. But I phoned up the council and said "I'm sending you a diary sheet, it's a serious incident, you need to jump on this now 'cause it's getting out of control". They did nothing, not a thing. Didn't even go and visit them, just filed the diary sheet.*

*It was getting to the stage where every day I was getting dog mess through the door, I was getting shouted at if I went out in the street. It was that bad that I installed a CCTV camera in my back garden. People were in my back garden at night, and they were knocking on my windows, smashing up flower pots and pulling the flowers out. I gave the DVD to the council and said "Look at this and then tell me there's not a problem around here". The council sent the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer to go and talk to them and it got worse from there. They'd been shown the DVD so knew I'd sent it in and they'd seen people from the council walking down my drive two weeks previously.*

*I phoned up the community support officer, who was on holiday for a week. I said "Can you please get someone else to just keep an eye on the place". I said "I don't frighten easily, but I'm getting worried". I got put to bed that night, next thing I know my next door neighbour has broken the door in and is dragging me out the house. I woke up because I was choking, because I could smell the smoke. I can't do a damn thing about it, I'm stuck in bed. Somebody had come round the back of the property and poured petrol over the door and set fire to it.*

Female with Multiple Sclerosis who is in a wheelchair



## 5 Recommendations

We have given considerable thought to how we should frame the recommendations section of this report. The weakness of many similar reports is that their recommendations are often difficult to enforce, vaguely worded, or simply unfeasible, and consequently very few tangible benefits are gained from them. Additionally, we feel that it is not our place to dictate to those who are responsible for creating, enforcing or monitoring hate crime policy how they should be doing their job. This is especially true within the prevailing financial climate, in which many of the organisations who have the capacity to challenge hate, prejudice and targeted hostility face challenging austerity measures.

From the outset this project has been victim-led; our main goal was to identify the experiences, needs and expectations of victims, many of whom tend not to be represented within academic research or official policy. For this reason our recommendations embody the voices of those whose lives have been directly affected by hate crime. The relevance of these recommendations is not limited to any particular community, organisation or type of hate crime; rather, they represent a wish-list of the most commonly cited needs and expectations shared collectively by victims from all kinds of backgrounds. We feel that they are an important, achievable and victim-centred set of recommendations whose implementation can help to deliver more effective services for victims locally and nationally.

### **1. Frontline practitioners should treat victims with empathy, humanity and kindness.**

This first recommendation appears self-evident. However, over the course of this project hundreds of victims have shared their frustration and distress at feeling as though the professionals they turn to for support are not listening to them. Crucially, this was a common criticism directed not just towards one organisation in particular but towards frontline practitioners across a range of different service providers, reflecting the fact that responding to hate crime is not simply a police or criminal justice issue but one that has relevance to all agencies with responsibilities for maintaining public safety, health and well-being.

As this report has documented, hate crime has a significant emotional, physical and health-related impact on the victim. Whilst this impact is far-reaching and commonly requires multi-layered responses, often what victims feel they need immediately and above all else is to be listened to and for their experiences to be taken seriously.

### **2. Organisations should consider early interventions before incidents escalate into violence.**

For many of the victims who took part in this research, hate crime formed part of their everyday lived reality. For a quarter of all respondents the individual(s) responsible for their victimisation were known to them, and we heard time and time again from victims who were repeatedly targeted by neighbours, young people from their local area, work colleagues or acquaintances. Often these incidents were being reported to the police or a non-criminal justice organisation, but due to the nature of the incident no action was taken. In a number of instances the harassment subsequently escalated into violent assault.

When research participants were asked what would make for more effective service delivery, many spoke of their desire for organisations to recognise the pervasive and damaging nature of verbal abuse and harassment. If organisations were to take these incidents more seriously, and to intervene at an earlier stage, participants felt that this would prevent future victimisation and would make them feel less vulnerable and more supported.



### **3 Hate crime awareness campaigns should be publicised in more appropriate community locations.**

This report has highlighted victims' lack of familiarity with the term 'hate crime'; their lack of knowledge of what forms and types of crime can be considered 'hate crimes'; and their lack of awareness of how to access support services. We are conscious that in recent years, and particularly at a local level, there has been an emphasis on developing and promoting hate crime awareness campaigns. However, the findings from this study illustrate that such campaigns are failing to resonate with people at a grassroots level, and especially those from smaller and emerging minority communities and from economically disadvantaged environments.

When our research participants were asked where hate crime awareness campaigns should be publicised, a range of appropriate places were suggested. These included community locations, entertainment venues and other large social spaces which bring people together, as well as supermarkets, bars, restaurants and coffee shops, public transport, leisure centres, places of worship, community and neighbourhood centres, GP surgeries and health centres, and places of work. All of these locations would help to connect those who are at risk of, or who have already experienced hate crime victimisation, with sources of support and help. In addition, participants in this study felt that hate crime awareness campaigns should avoid tokenism, and should be designed in consultation with victims and representatives from diverse communities in order to achieve visibility and impact.

### **4 Public transport should be made safer for all.**

Many participants stated that travelling on public transport heightened their risk of suffering targeted hostility and increased their sense of vulnerability. This was especially the case for certain groups such as those with learning and/or physical disabilities and/or mental ill-health. The impact of being targeted on public transport was considerable, with victims taking significant measures to avoid certain routes that involved buses or trains, or even eschewing public transport altogether.

One of the main suggestions for how public transport could be made safer related directly to the previous recommendation. Participants referred to the need for more visible campaigns that raised public awareness of hate crime, which would include a strong message that all forms of targeted hostility would not be tolerated. It was also suggested by participants that public transport companies could promote clear reporting strategies for their customers, which would include something along the lines of the following statement:

***'If you have been called an abusive name, harassed or assaulted during your journey, or if you witness someone being targeted in any of these ways, then please report it and help to make public transport safer for us all'***

This message could then be followed by a list of individuals or organisations that people can report to, such as a member of staff, the local council, an online reporting mechanism or the police. Poster campaigns detailing the harms of hate, fully-functioning and clearly visible CCTV cameras, and staff fully trained to recognise and deal with hate incidents were other practical suggestions offered by participants in this study which could make travelling on public transport safer for actual and potential hate crime victims.

## **5 The public should be encouraged to take appropriate action when witnessing hate crimes.**

We heard from many participants whose experiences of targeted hostility took place within a public setting. Seeing bystanders rushing past, turning a blind eye, or simply observing their victimisation without offering to assist directly or indirectly, often contributed to a heightened sense of humiliation and isolation. While the onus for reporting hate crimes often falls upon the individual victim, we heard from many participants who felt that witnesses could do much more to help in those situations.

Crucially, their suggestions did not involve witnesses placing themselves in any danger, or taking direct action such as intervening when someone is being verbally abused or physically attacked. Rather, participants called for witnesses to do more by reporting the incidents they observed to an appropriate organisation or individual, or by checking whether a victim was 'ok' after the altercation. Such suggestions could be factored into hate crime awareness campaigns in order to shift the responsibility for reporting away from just the individual victim, and to remind members of the public that we all have a collective responsibility to do what we can to challenge hate, prejudice and targeted hostility.

## **6 Third party reporting mechanisms should be located, staffed and publicised appropriately.**

As outlined within this report, very few of our respondents had reported their experiences to an organisation other than the police. Through the process of engaging with thousands of people from different communities, it became starkly evident how only a very small number of individuals knew that they could report a hate crime online or at places like their local library or community centre.

Once the idea of third party reporting centres and mechanisms was explained to participants they were often positive about having an alternative outlet to police stations where they could report their experiences of victimisation. Key ways of making third party reporting schemes more accessible and effective would be for practitioners to use more proactive engagement methods to identify which public venues are used by specific communities to liaise and socialise; for practitioners to ensure that the people working in these venues have adequate knowledge of hate crime and reporting procedures; and for practitioners to publicise their availability appropriately and extensively using the methods suggested in Recommendation 3.

## **7 Organisations should simplify reporting procedures and make them more victim-friendly.**

We heard from many participants who felt that the time and emotional stamina required to report a hate crime was often underappreciated by statutory and voluntary organisations. For those with work and childcare commitments or caring responsibilities, taking time off to report hate crimes was simply not an option open to them, particularly as these experiences were such regular events for large numbers of victims. Equally, the level of courage, patience and resilience needed in order to share harrowing experiences with an unfamiliar, and potentially sceptical third party was something that participants believed was commonly overlooked by practitioners.

Concerns were also raised by numerous victims, and particularly those from new and emerging communities and those for whom English was not a first language, that the reporting process was far too complicated. Many of them referred to cultural and linguistic barriers which prevented them from reporting, and to needing more support and clearer lines of communication from police officers and practitioners through what can be a challenging and daunting process.

## **8 Organisations should engage more extensively with different groups and communities.**

One of the ways to bridge the gap between practitioners and those directly affected by hate crime is through more meaningful engagement. This report has outlined many of the barriers facing victims in terms of reporting their experiences to a relevant organisation and accessing support. All too often participants remarked that if police officers and other support services made more of an effort to engage with them then they would develop a more informed understanding of the issues victims faced, while victims themselves would feel that their experiences were being taken seriously.

Rather than taking the more 'obvious routes' to accessing communities – via gatekeepers and self-appointed 'leaders', for example – we found that employing a 'softer', more subtle approach to engaging with a wide range of diverse communities was a more effective way of connecting with people. The research team spoke to people working in and spending time in scores of leisure sites and community meeting points across different parts of the city. Through this process of engagement with diverse groups and communities, we heard many individuals express annoyance at what they felt was the tokenistic approach taken by some organisations to community liaison, which often took the form of narrow lines of communication with self-styled community leaders. Such an approach can fail to represent the variety of experiences and concerns of people within and beyond these communities. For this reason many of our research participants called for the police and other relevant organisations to see community engagement as an integral part of their role, and to adopt a more comprehensive mode of engagement similar to the one utilised within this project.

## **9 Voluntary and tailored community services should be supported and properly resourced.**

One of the main aims of this project was to identify ways of improving the quality of support provided to victims. This became ever more challenging as the project went on as more of the services which provide support for some of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society were falling victim to government austerity measures. This was particularly evident in the context of tailored support services for people with learning and/or physical disabilities and people with mental ill-health.

When participants were asked which services they turned to when they wanted to share their experiences of targeted victimisation and to receive support, they often mentioned small, voluntary and community-based groups rather than some of the more mainstream organisations. We heard from many participants who said that their voluntarily-run mental ill-health support group, locally-run women's group, homeless shelter, and asylum seeker or refugee group (to name just some examples) were where they felt safe, supported and able to talk about their experiences. Unsurprisingly then, when asked what would improve the quality of support available for victims of hate crime, a common response was to call for more council and government support for those kinds of voluntary and community-based groups. Freeing up resources to support these groups is pivotal to their continued existence and can give them a platform to extend the level of support provided to service users dependent on their presence.

## **10 Non-punitive responses to hate offending should be pursued to challenge underlying prejudices.**

There is often an assumption that members of the public – and particularly victims of crime – demand punitive responses to offending behaviour. Within the context of this study however, participants showed an

overwhelming preference for the use of educational interventions and restorative approaches to justice, as opposed to extended prison sentences or harsher regimes. Moreover, this preference was shared by victims of different types of violent and non-violent hate crime and from different communities, ages and backgrounds. Many participants spoke of wanting the offender to understand the impact that their behaviour had had on them, their family and in some cases their wider community which could be achieved through the use of facilitated mediation. More broadly, participants called for schools, youth workers and community groups to use educational programmes as a platform to inform young people about positive aspects of diversity, to connect divided and segregated communities, and to raise awareness of the harms of hate. Overall, participants felt that the use of smarter punishment – and not harsher punishment – offered a more effective route to challenging underlying prejudices, and therefore to preventing future offending.

**In addition to this report, the research team have compiled a series of themed briefing papers covering specific strands of hate crime, a *Victims' Manifesto* which organisations have been invited to pledge support to, and an *Executive Summary* of key findings. Copies of these reports are available at [www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies](http://www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies).**





This research was funded by the  
Economic and Social Research  
Council (ESRC)



University of  
**Leicester**

© University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH UK  
[www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies](http://www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies)