Hate Crime Conference 2024

Breakout rooms: A Summary of discussions

During the breakout sessions, a further knowledge share took place on particular strands based on the literature review and specialist service insight. Participants were invited to share good practice, insight and observations on the topics of;

- Disability hate crime
- Religion and Race hate crime
- LGBTQ+ hate crime (including Transgender identity)
- Children & Young People

The topics were clustered in this way to represent how they appear within academic research, for example, religious and race based hate are often presented together.

The feedback from the breakout sessions are summarised into the topics of 'Good Practice' 'Opportunities' and 'Challenges'.

Good Practice

A range of good practice already taking place in Wales across the four Force areas was shared;

Community Engagement and Inclusion

- Linking disabled individuals to their communities while ensuring safety and inclusion.
- Collaborating with sports clubs and community organisations to foster cohesion and inclusivity.
- Drop-in sessions and forums encourage open conversations and provide face-to-face support.

Proactive Policing and Collaboration

- Police leadership emphasising proactive engagement builds trust and fosters intelligence sharing.
- Inter-agency collaboration between police, victim services, and housing teams enhances case management and victim support, particularly in ASB related hate cases.
- Partnerships with organisations like Scope and LGBTQ+ groups encourage reporting and tailored support.

Education and Awareness Initiatives

- Anti-racism and cultural awareness training for police increase understanding of lived experiences and promote inclusivity.

- Storytelling by officers and staff with disabilities starts conversations and builds empathy.
- Outreach programs educate bystanders on their role and empower communities to report hate crimes.

Youth Engagement and Outreach

- School visits, youth council initiatives, and investment in education build trust and awareness among young people.
- Sports-based programs and visits to sports grounds provide positive experiences and promote inclusivity.
- Training young people on allyship and bystander intervention fosters a culture of support and respect.

Victim Support and Empowerment

- Women's voice groups and specialist victim support initiatives focus on inclusivity and responsiveness.
- Personal police engagement, such as home visits and direct interventions, builds trust and confidence.
- Partnerships between police and victim support services ensure holistic care, including emotional support and risk assessments.

Accessible Solutions and Communication

- Efforts to improve transport accessibility, such as creating safe zones on buses, address practical barriers for disabled individuals.
- Consistent updates from police, housing, and victim services maintain transparency and trust.
- Accessible reporting methods and community-centred policing enhance engagement.

Restorative Justice and Behavioural Change

- Encouraging educational alternatives, such as conditional cautions, promotes learning and long-term behavioural change for perpetrators.
- Case-specific police support and restorative justice initiatives demonstrate a commitment to fair and effective resolution.

Building Trust Through Positive Experiences

- Highlighting positive outcomes and support for victims and witnesses restores faith in the system and fosters mutual understanding.
- Acknowledging challenges faced by police during hate incidents promotes empathy and collaboration with local communities.

Challenges

Disability and Accessibility Issues

- Disability is overlooked compared to other strands, with limited advocacy and resource support.
- Challenges in evidence collection and addressing "mate crime."
- Accessibility barriers, including transport and infrastructure in rural communities.
- Underreporting due to stigma, normalization, and lack of tailored resources.
- Disability hate crimes are overlooked, underreported, and lack adequate advocacy.
- Accessibility challenges in housing, transport, and infrastructure leave disabled individuals vulnerable.
- Limited resources and specialization hinder evidence collection and support for victims.

Intersectionality and Cultural Competence

- Balancing equality with individualized support for diverse communities.
- Limited cultural awareness among officers and agencies, affecting service delivery.
- Language barriers that place children in emotionally harmful situations, causing secondary victimisation.
- Mistrust of law enforcement among refugees, asylum seekers, and marginalized groups.
- Cultural competence among agencies and officers is limited, impacting diverse communities.
- Refugees and asylum seekers harbour mistrust due to past experiences with law enforcement.
- Intersectionality complicates the balance between equality and tailored victim support.

Policing and Trust Issues

- Negative perceptions of policing eroding public trust.
- Police capacity limitations and funding cuts.
- Communication gaps between police, housing, and victim services.
- Counter-allegations and malicious claims complicating case resolutions, particularly in ASB related hate cases.

Youth and Early Influences

- Children exposed to abusive behaviours from a young age, normalizing harmful attitudes.
- Lack of parental accountability for children's behaviour.
- Exposure to harmful online content and toxic influencers.
- Normalization of bullying in social media and peer environments.
- Early exposure to negative influences leads to hate behaviours in children.

- Social media and online influencers expose young people to harmful content like misogyny and toxic messaging.
- Children are sometimes exposed to adult issues, such as acting as interpreters, which impacts their well-being.

Online and Community Tensions

- Proliferation of online hate and difficulty holding perpetrators accountable.
- Politicization of issues like gender identity, creating barriers to understanding.
- Community disagreements over reporting incidents, leading to mistrust and reluctance to engage.
- Online hate crime is pervasive, impacting both rural and urban communities.
- Jurisdictional challenges make holding online perpetrators accountable difficult.
- Rural areas face unique challenges with digital hate due to limited local resources and a higher dependency on being digitally connected.
- Political and social divides, including those tied to transgender rights, exacerbate mistrust and division.

Victim Support and Wellbeing

- Inadequate resources for victims, including LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Victims modifying their behaviour instead of perpetrators being held accountable.
- Severe impacts on mental health, including risks of suicide.
- Lack of education and awareness on hate crime laws and reporting processes.
- Capacity limitations within the police hinder proactive and reactive responses.
- Funding cuts reduce the availability of support services for victims.
- Victims feel unsupported due to communication gaps, lack of updates, and inadequate case resolutions.
- Women's voices are underrepresented in engagement and support initiatives.
- Gender imbalances exist in the way victims and perpetrators are supported or held accountable.
- Persistent hate crime leads to severe mental health outcomes, including suicidal ideation.
- Victims often modify their behaviour to avoid incidents, leading to further emotional distress.

Normalisation and Social Barriers

- Race and religion-based hate crimes normalized and underreported.
- Gender imbalance in community engagement efforts.
- Political and social divides undermining cohesion and support.
- Disability hate crimes, mate crime, and hate related bullying are often normalized, leading to underreporting.
- Social media and cultural factors contribute to the minimization of hate incidents.
- Fear of anonymity loss and a complex reporting process deter victims, particularly in LGBTQ+ and disability contexts.

Awareness, Education and Prevention

- Misunderstandings about gender identity, sexual orientation, and hate crime laws hinder prevention and support.
- Education and awareness campaigns are needed to address harmful attitudes and promote inclusivity.
- Restorative justice and victim-centred approaches could enhance accountability and healing.

Opportunities

Community Engagement and Collaboration

- Building strong, year-round relationships with diverse communities through liaisons, school partnerships, and community groups.
- Multi-agency initiatives like blue light events and collaborations with housing and victim services improve trust and outcomes.
- Shared responsibility across public agencies ensures a collective approach to tackling hate crime.

Awareness and Education Campaigns

- Initiatives like Disability Pride events, "Be Kind" movements, and unconscious bias webinars foster understanding and positive behavior.
- Campaigns during key events like Disability History Month raise awareness about hate crime impacts.
- Promoting critical thinking and providing education on allyship and marginalized experiences encourage empathy and inclusivity.

Youth Engagement and Positive Role Models

- Programs like "Show Racism the Red Card" and youth forums empower young people to voice their needs and learn tolerance.
- Specialized youth engagement officers and school visits foster trust and awareness early on.
- Positive role models in schools, youth clubs, and sports provide guidance and counteract harmful messaging.

Improved Reporting Mechanisms

- Expanding anonymous and accessible reporting methods, such as posters, apps, and lighter-touch options, encourages more victims to report.
- Collaborations with organizations like Scope create tailored resources for underrepresented groups, including the disabled community.

Victim Support and Empowerment

- Providing tools like cameras for evidence gathering and expanding victim support services for children and LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Sharing lived experiences through events and campaigns amplifies marginalized voices and builds understanding.
- Promoting restorative justice options focuses on education and long-term change for perpetrators.

Safe Spaces and Visibility

- Introducing hate crime charters and stickers for public spaces like buses, taxis, and venues ensures safer environments.
- Supporting marginalized individuals to be visible in media and public spaces promotes acceptance and reduces stigma.

Specialist Roles and Training

- Investing in specialist officers for hate crime and community engagement enhances victim support and case handling.
- Training police, support workers, and communities on cultural competence and hate crime issues fosters inclusivity.

Publicising Positive Changes

- Actively promoting progress, such as cultural awareness training, new reporting mechanisms, or improved victim support, rebuilds trust and confidence in institutions.

Innovative Solutions and Pilots

- Pilot programs linking police with victim services and housing agencies address complex community needs.
- Exploring creative methods like youth-led initiatives and technology-driven reporting improves engagement and outcomes.