



Hate Crime and Third Party Reporting Centres

A mapping and scoping exercise

Key findings

What is the issue?

Hate crime is described by Police Scotland as crime motivated by malice or ill will towards a social group by: race; sexual orientation; religion or faith; disability; or gender identity.

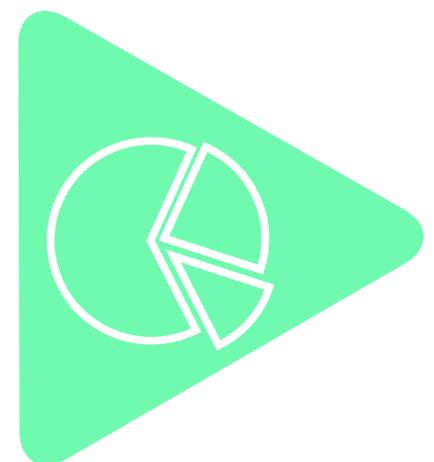
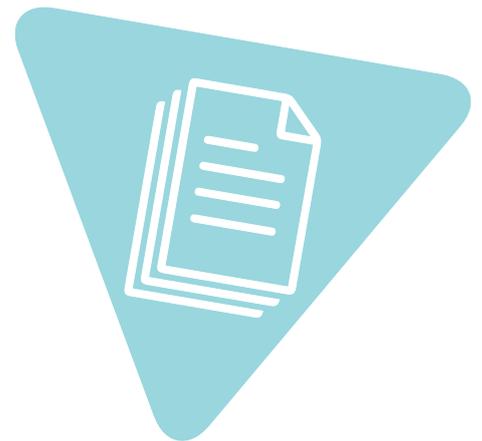
Hate crimes are abhorrent and target marginalised and vulnerable members of our communities with devastating effect on both victims and their families. Hate crime is also known to disproportionately affect people with learning disabilities and is also significantly underreported.

People do not always feel comfortable reporting hate crimes directly to the Police. To overcome this, Police Scotland work in partnership with various public sector and third sector organisations to provide safe and private spaces for people to report hate crimes. These spaces are called Third Party Reporting Centres (TPRCs). TPRCs exist as a means for people to report hate crime(s) anonymously.

Aim of the scoping exercise

This report is the result of a mapping and scoping exercise of Third Party Reporting Centres (TPRCs) in Scotland conducted by SCLD in March 2016. The purpose of the exercise was to ascertain:

- Which listed TPRCs still consider themselves to be TPRCs.
- Levels of TPRC activity in relation to learning disability and corresponding resources.
- To whom the TPRCs report so as to establish a chain.
- Their knowledge about the difference between gender-based violence and hate crime.



This information was gathered through the use of a survey that was distributed to the TPRCs listed on the Police Scotland website. Asking the TPRCs themselves for their level of activity and resources was thought to be the most effective way of creating a map of active TPRCs and gaining a better insight into activity and resources.

Third Party Reporting Centres

In March 2016 there were 384 listed TPRCs listed on the Police Scotland website. Of these, 34 were duplicates and 40 had no valid contact details. The result of this is that 74 TPRCs were automatically excluded from this piece of work. 146 of the remaining 310 TPRCs were contacted during March 2016, which is a response rate of 47.1%.

What does the report tell us?

Geography of Third Party Reporting Centres

129 TPRCs declared themselves to be active from the 146 contacted. What became apparent is that there is a relative proliferation of active TPRCs throughout the of West of Scotland, with 24 in Greater Glasgow, 21 in Lanarkshire and only 4 in Aberdeen, 7 in Dundee and 10 in Edinburgh. Additionally, the map of active TPRCs suggests that there is somewhat of an urban bias; with only 5 active TPRCs across the whole of the Highlands and Islands.

Activity of Third Party Reporting Centres

- 88.3% of the 146 contacted TPRCs considered themselves to still be TPRCs, 11% no longer considered themselves to be TPRCs and 0.7% were unsure about their status.
- 48.5% of the TPRCs reported having no activity in the previous twelve months and a further 40.9% stated that they had been not very active (i.e. only one or two incidents had been reported).
- 86.3% of the TPRCs said that staffing and resources was not an issue for them and a number of them said they had received training from Police Scotland.
- 61% of the TPRCs stated that they would report issues through Police Scotland's Online Reporting Tool. 10% stated that they would report through a named contact with the Police, 14% would either call 101 or go into a local station, 8% would report it internally and 7% were unsure how to report hate crimes.

- 87% of the TPRCs did not answer whether gender based violence was reported differently from hate crime. There are a couple of reasons which could explain why this figure is so high: the difficulty in disaggregating characteristics from reported hate crime and the high levels of inactivity amongst the Third Party Reporting Centres.

Awareness and Role

Although the majority of the TPRCs contacted indicated that they considered themselves to be TPRCs, the levels of awareness of the role and function of TPRCs was low in the majority of responses and clarification was sought before responding positively.

A sense of confusion about the role of a TPRC was apparent throughout the data collection and it was clear that there was a sense of reluctance for organisations to respond negatively to whether they were a TPRC. As a result, organisations were unable to evidence their role. The very low levels of activity in the twelve months prior to the survey indicate that the public also have a low awareness of what Third Party Reporting is and what the function of a TPRC is. This is not helped by the lack of consistency across Scotland about which organisations are likely to be TPRCs.

In some local authorities all the libraries are listed as TPRCs and for the most part seemed reasonably aware about the role of a TRPC, whereas in other councils only some libraries are listed and in some there are no libraries listed. However an issue arose during conversations with Midlothian libraries and it became apparent that a number listed as TPRCs were only staffed by one person at a time and/or did not have or could not guarantee a private room to discuss issues with the victim.

There was also a similar lack of consistency with Social Work Services across, and even within, local authorities about whether they operated as TPRCs. This lack of cohesion from Social Work services seems like a missed opportunity as social workers and support workers are ideally placed to assist with reporting incidents and if this avenue were to be explored then it could see a higher pick up of hate crimes.

Staffing and Resources

Most organisations indicated that they had the staffing and resources to be a TPRC. However many of them intimated that this was only at the current levels of activity; and if the levels of activity were to increase then they may not have the staffing and resources to fulfil this role. The level of inactivity being reported could be misleading as TPRCs are indicating that they have the staffing and resources to be a TPRC with little to no activity.

Some respondents noted that they had displayed Police Scotland branding, which is why they had answered that they were a TPRC, but they were not sure what it really entailed. This was particularly true of organisations where the person originally responsible for enlisting as a TPRC had left the organisation.

Furthermore the lack of a suitable place which guarantees privacy is something that requires further investigation. Additionally many public facing organisations require booking of private spaces, meaning that they potentially could not deal with issues on an ad hoc basis. In some cases this negates the purpose of being a TPRC. If the premises only has member of staff on duty at a time then they would not be able to cope.

The majority of respondents (61%) were aware of Police Scotland's Online Reporting Tool. However this means that 39% were unaware of the tool and some were unsure of how to report incidents at all. It became apparent that this confusion about reporting is more a by-product of low levels of activity rather than not having received training.

What are the recommendations from the report?



- An investigation into the feasibility of utilising the reach of Social Work Services, Support Workers and Carers to maximise the number of incidents that are reported.
- The role of a Third Party Reporting Centre has to be much more clearly defined.
- There has to be more cohesion and consistency about which organisations are listed and known to be Third Party Reporting Centres. A discussion needs to be had about which organisations are suitable and can provide a secure space for privacy.
- Once certain types of organisations are known to be Third Party Reporting Centres then that allows for public awareness to be increased in a much more systematic way. i.e. every child at primary school is taught that a library or a pharmacy is a place where you get can report something.
- The database of Third Party Reporting Centres needs to be maintained more routinely with consideration paid to the available resources i.e. staffing and a private room.