# CLEVELAND

# HATE CRIME

## STRATEGY

*2025 - 2035*

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A hate crime is defined as:

"Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's:

- race or perceived race
- religion or perceived religion
- sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- disability or perceived disability

and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender."

A full definition can be found in Appendix 1.

## ***INTRODUCTION***

The Cleveland Strategic Hate Crime Partnership was re-established in October 2024, with the purpose of developing a multi-agency strategic level approach to tackling hate crime across Cleveland. The partnership is chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner and involves representatives from statutory community safety and criminal justice organisations, voluntary sector organisations and community representatives.

A key focus of the Partnership is to develop a cross Cleveland Hate Crime Strategy as a local commitment to effectively tackling hate crime and supporting victims of hate crime and hate incidents. The work of the partnership and scope of this strategy defines a hate crime in accordance with the legislative definition which can be found at Appendix 1.

The racially motivated disorder of summer 2024 demonstrated a clear need for organisations to come together and effectively challenge prejudicial attitudes and robustly tackle offending, whilst ensuring that difficult conversations are held locally and that the voice of all communities are included in this dialogue. This, together with feedback from communities across all strands of diversity that they are facing increasing levels of intolerance within the community, galvanised organisational commitment to confronting and tackling hate crime locally in Cleveland.

A programme of consultation and engagement with organisations that represent diverse communities across Cleveland was undertaken to ensure that this strategy effectively meets the needs of all those who live, work and socialise in the Cleveland area.

## ***VISION***

Our vision is:

> "For all adults and children in Cleveland to be able to live free from hatred and hostility motivated by prejudice."

The key outcomes this strategy aims to achieve are:

- People who live, work and visit Cleveland understand what hate crime is, how to report it and how to access support.
- Hateful attitudes and behaviours are challenged.
- Victims of hate crime and hate incidents have access to appropriate support tailored to their individual needs.
- Reports of hate crime are robustly investigated.
  Hate crime perpetrators receive an appropriate sanction.

We will achieve these outcomes by:

- Raising awareness of both hate crime and the various reporting mechanisms.
- Raising awareness of the criminal justice process and effectively managing public expectations in relation to this.
- Preventing hate crime through education, early intervention and community cohesion activities.
- Tackling hate crime through effective enforcement and partnership working.
- Using restorative justice approaches where appropriate.
- Improving support for the victims of hate crime and hate incidents.

## *HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS*

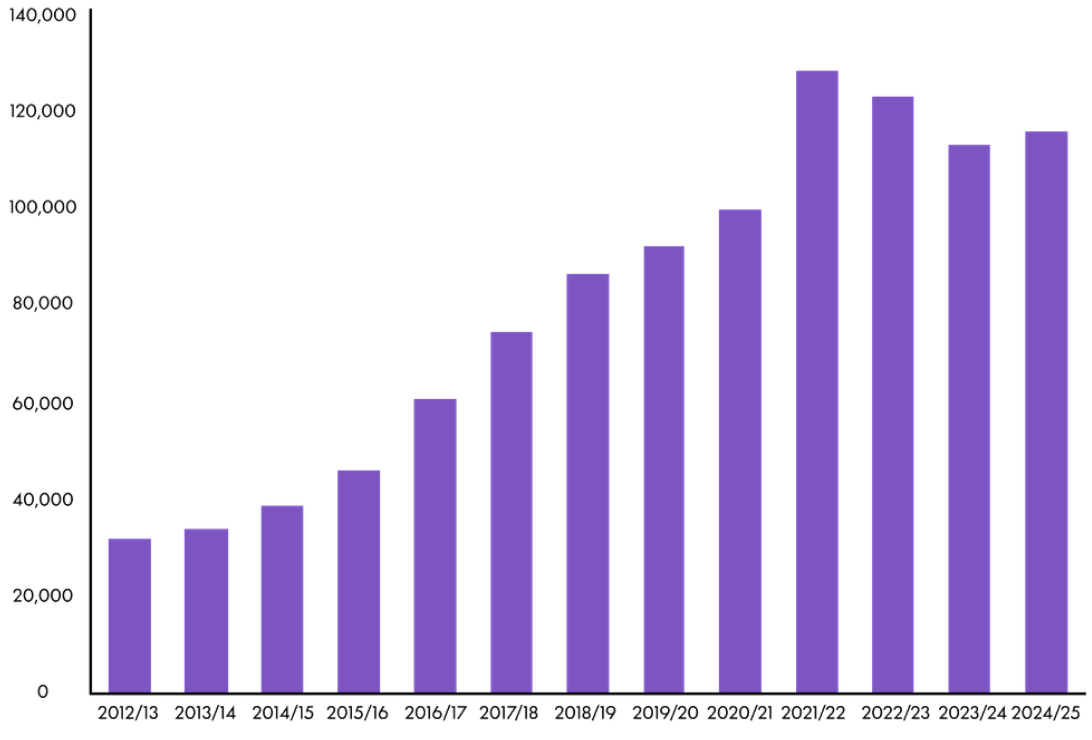
We will monitor the success of this strategy by focusing on:

- Increasing reports – raising awareness
- Reducing repeat victims
- Reducing repeat perpetrators
- Increasing positive criminal justice outcomes, including restorative approaches
- Increasing victim satisfaction

Due to high levels of under reporting in relation to hate crime, the success of the strategy will not focus on reducing reports.

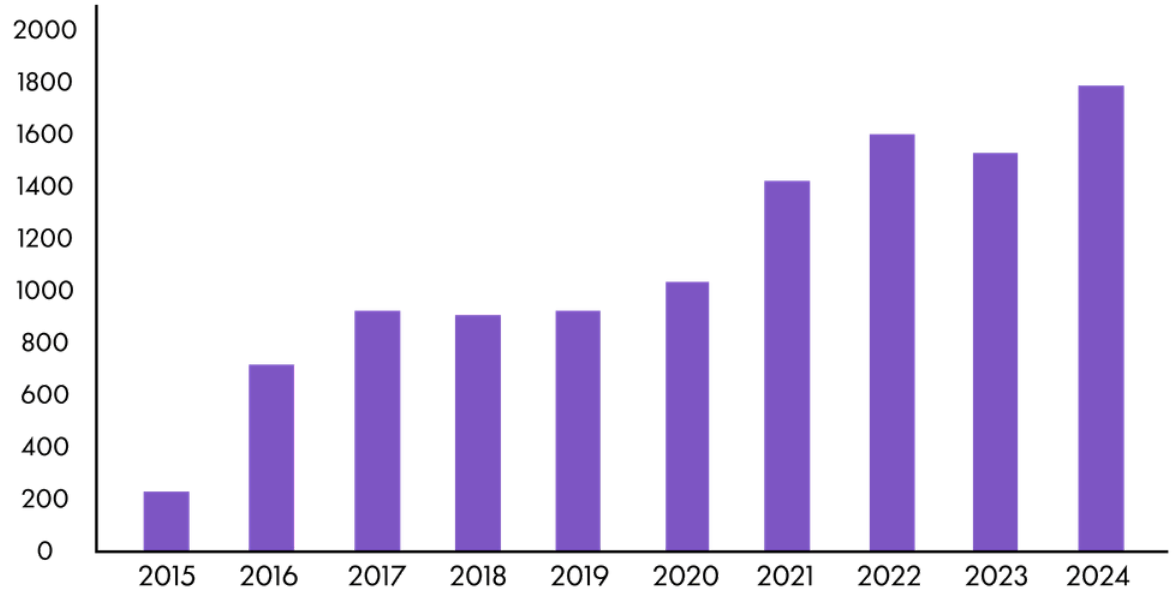
## *LOCAL AND NATIONAL PICTURE*

National Home Office statistics for reported hate crime from 2012/13 to 2024/25 show a steady increase, with a downward trend in reports since 2022/23. This data excludes Metropolitan Police Service data due to changes in their recording practices in February 2024 which makes recent data incomparable with figures from previous years.



Over the last ten years reported hate crime in Cleveland has steadily increased, with a slight decrease in 2023 followed by an increase in 2024 which is attributable to increased reporting during the summer disorder period.

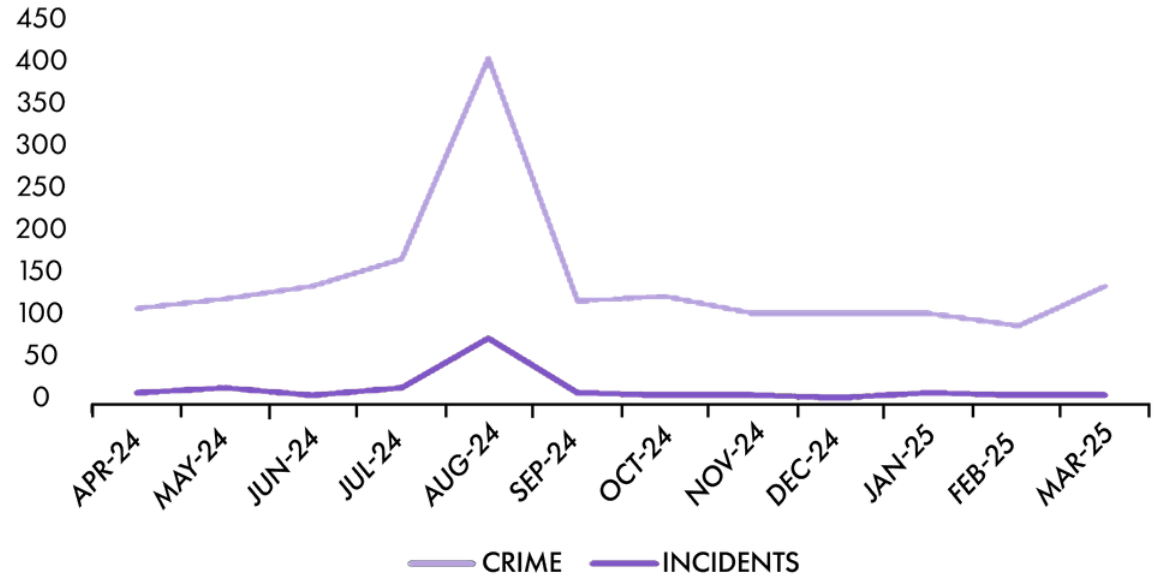
***REPORTED HATE CRIME IN CLEVELAND***




The Crime Survey for England and Wales provides a more reliable indication of the true extent of victimisation, as opposed to the reported figures. CSEW estimates that only half of all hate crimes experienced are reported to the Police. Local consultation would suggest that this is a conservative estimate and that victimisation rates may be far more than double the reported figures.

Local reported hate crime for Cleveland for 2024/2025 remains relatively constant throughout the twelve month period, with a noticeable spike in August 2024 during the period of disorder.

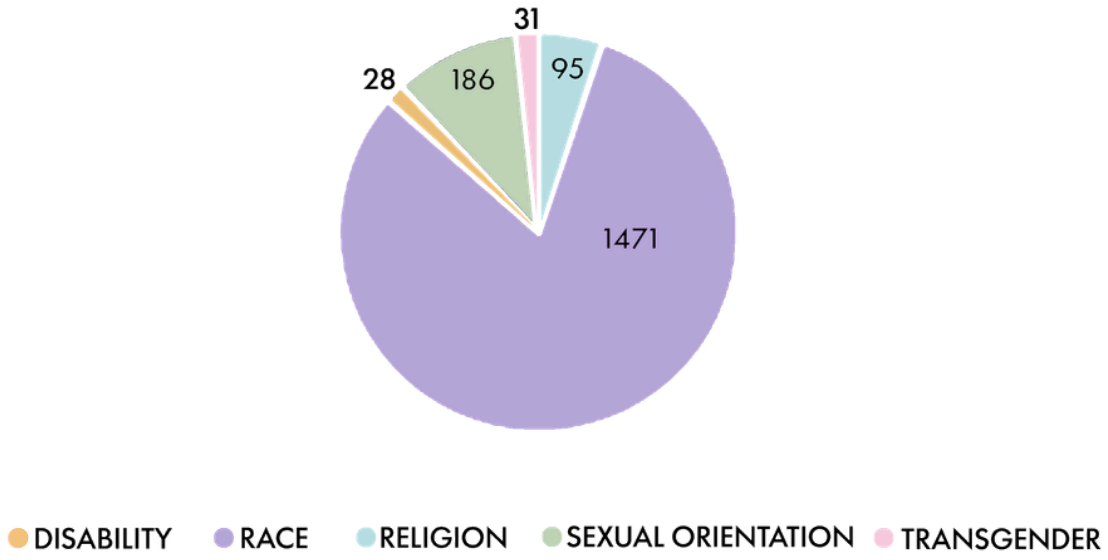
***REPORTED HATE CRIME IN CLEVELAND 2024/25***



By far the most reported strand is race, followed by sexual orientation. Reports for disability and transgender identity are very low, with the lowest category being religious hate crime.

Hate crime can be complex and involve intersectionality, with victims identifying with more than one protected characteristic. Discussions with police colleagues regarding the data suggests that the way hate crime is recorded presents challenges for the police where there are areas of intersectionality. For example, victims of religious hate crime are often from ethnically diverse communities impacting the primary motivation for hate crime incidents. This may result in incorrect recording of race hate crime, rather than religious hate crime. This is a national, rather than a local issue, and work is ongoing within police forces to put in place more accurate recording practices in relation to hate crime, particularly in relation to religious hate.

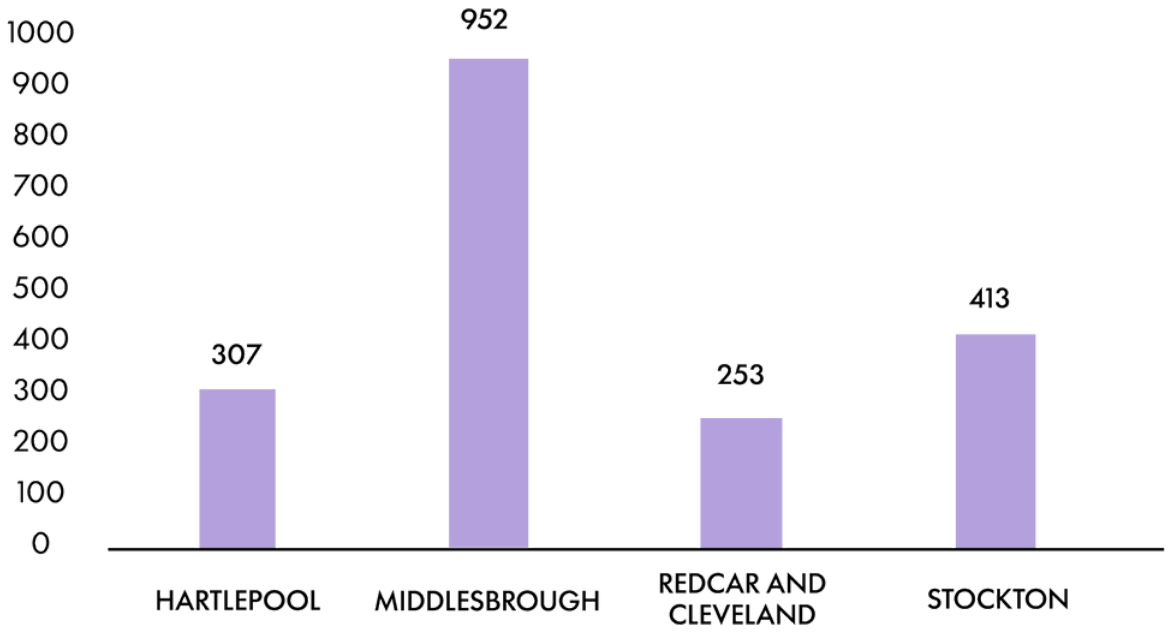
***RECORDED HATE CRIME BY PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC***




The level of reports differs across the four Local Authority areas that make up Cleveland, with Middlesbrough having by far the highest number of reports, followed by Stockton. This is reflective of the increased diversity of these two areas in comparison to Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland. In the 2021 census 17.6% of Middlesbrough residents identified as ethnically diverse, compared to 8% in Stockton, 3.5% in Hartlepool and just 2.3% in Redcar and Cleveland.

It should also be recognised that the disorder of August 2024 disproportionally impacted reports within both Hartlepool and Middlesbrough, but particularly in Middlesbrough.

## *RECORDED HATE CRIME BY LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA*




A victim experience survey is undertaken with randomised victims of hate crime in Cleveland who had reported to police. The levels of return are not sufficient for the results to be considered statistically significant, however they do provide an indication of the areas where improvement is needed in terms of police response to reports.

Whilst satisfaction with initial contact and treatment by the police are relatively high, satisfaction with follow up after incidents are reported is relatively low at 61.9%. The victim experience survey is undertaken with victims of several different crime types and satisfaction with follow up is consistently the lowest area of performance, therefore this issue is not only related to hate crime victims.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Whole experience 182 Total responses | Whole experience 135 Total satisfied | Initial contact 124 Total responses | Initial contact 104 Total satisfied |
| | | Whole experience 74.2% % Satisfied | Whole experience 71.1% % Satisfied previous | Initial contact 83.9% % Satisfied | Initial contact 81.8% % Satisfied previous |
| Actions 147 Total Responses | Actions 109 Total satisfied | Follow up 147 Total responses | Follow up 91 Total satisfied | Treatment 147 Total responses | Treatment 130 Total satisfied |
| Actions 74.1% % Satisfied | Actions 71.5% % Satisfied previous | Follow up 61.9% % Satisfied | Follow up 70.0% % Satisfied previous | Treatment 88.4% % Satisfied | Treatment 87.7% % Satisfied previous |

## *VICTIM VOICE*

To support development of this strategy engagement has been undertaken with diverse groups and communities from across Cleveland to better understand the issues, and the reasons behind under-reporting. Feedback is briefly summarised below:

- Lack of understanding as to what constitutes hate crime and what can be reported.
- Mistrust of the police and authority due to experiences in country of origin.
- It happens so often why bother reporting – normalisation of behaviour.
- Fear of repercussions from perpetrators.
- Negative previous experiences of reporting.
- Perceived inaction by police and other agencies when incidents are reported.
- Not knowing how to report.

## *GOVERNANCE*

Governance for the strategy will be provided by the Cleveland Strategic Hate Crime Partnership. The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Delivery will be monitored through a strategic delivery plan which will be refreshed on an annual basis.

This strategy recognises that the responsibility for effectively tackling hate crime does not lie with one single agency. We will take a partnership approach to achieving the stated aims and outcomes, ensuring that victim voice is a central thread to all the work undertaken.

Whilst this strategy focuses predominantly on all strands of hate crime as recognised by law (Race, Religion, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Transgender Identity) work undertaken through the strategy will remain cognisant of developments in relation to other forms of prejudice including misogyny and alternative sub-cultures.

## *APPENDIX 1 – DEFINITION OF HATE CRIME AND HATE INCIDENTS*

A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

Crime committed against a victim because of their association with someone with one of the above five characteristics is also defined as hate crime – this is known as associative hate crime.

Whilst there are nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, only five of these are recognised under hate crime legislation. The below definitions cover each of the protected characteristics which are covered under hate crime legislation:

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| ***RACE*** | Race as a protected characteristic incorporates ethnicity, nationality, national identity, skin colour and caste.<br><br>Some religious groups are protected by race because of their long history and culture which is seen as determining ethnicity. For example, the Gypsy and Roma community are considered at ethnic minority for this reason.<br><br>It is important to recognise that racism does not have to involve differences in skin colour. |
| ***RELIGION*** | As a protected characteristic, religion not only protects those who belong to a recognised faith group, but also those who hold no belief or do not follow a religion.<br><br>The protected characteristic also refers to beliefs, including religious or philosophical beliefs as well as a lack of beliefs.<br><br>In terms of hate crime this means that if someone was targeted because they held agnostic or atheist beliefs, they could still be a victim of hate crime. |
| ***SEXUAL ORIENTATION*** | The protection of sexual orientation as a characteristic protects everyone, not only because of actual orientation – heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual – but the perception that someone may be a specific sexual orientation whether they are or not.<br><br>As such, if someone who identified as heterosexual, but was perceived by an attacker to be gay or bisexual and attacked because of that perception, they would be considered victims of a sexual orientation hate crime. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ***DISABILITY*** | Disability is defined as 'any physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.<br><br>Some conditions are classed as a disability from the point of diagnosis, including cancer, HIV and AIDS and multiple sclerosis. Conditions such as schizophrenia, bi-polar or clinical depression would be regarded as a disability, irrespective of whether they are being medically treated.<br><br>Alcoholism, obesity and drug addiction are not classed as disabilities, however some of the medical conditions than can stem from these conditions could be, such as liver disease or diabetes. |
| ***TRANSGENDER IDENTITY*** | Gender reassignment as a protected characteristic relates to the protection of people who identify as trans who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process of reassigning their sex.<br><br>This protection applies from the moment someone starts the transition process and does not require medical treatment or a Gender Recognition Certificate. |

A non-crime hate incident is an incident that is not classified as a crime but is perceived by the victim or anyone else, such as a bystander or witness, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards one or more of the above five characteristics.

Following the case of Miller vs The College of Policing (2021), which ruled that perception based recording of hate crime incidents could be an infringement of freedom of expression legislation, the way in which non crime hate incidents are recorded has changed from being entirely based on the perception of the reporting person to taking a 'proportionate, necessary and commonsense approach' (UK Government, 2023)

When determining whether an incident should be recorded as a non-crime hate incident the police will[1]:

- Consider, using common sense reasoning and drawing on supporting information where available, whether the subject involved in the incident in question was motivated by intentional hostility or prejudice towards a particular characteristic.
- Consider whether there is a common-sense reason not to record a non-crime hate incident - for example if the complaint is trivial, irrational and/or malicious.
- Consider whether the recording of a non-crime hate incident would interfere with the subject's right to freedom of expression.

[1] Home Office Statutory Guidance - Non-Crime Hate Incidents: Code of Practice on the Recording and Retention of Personal Data


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