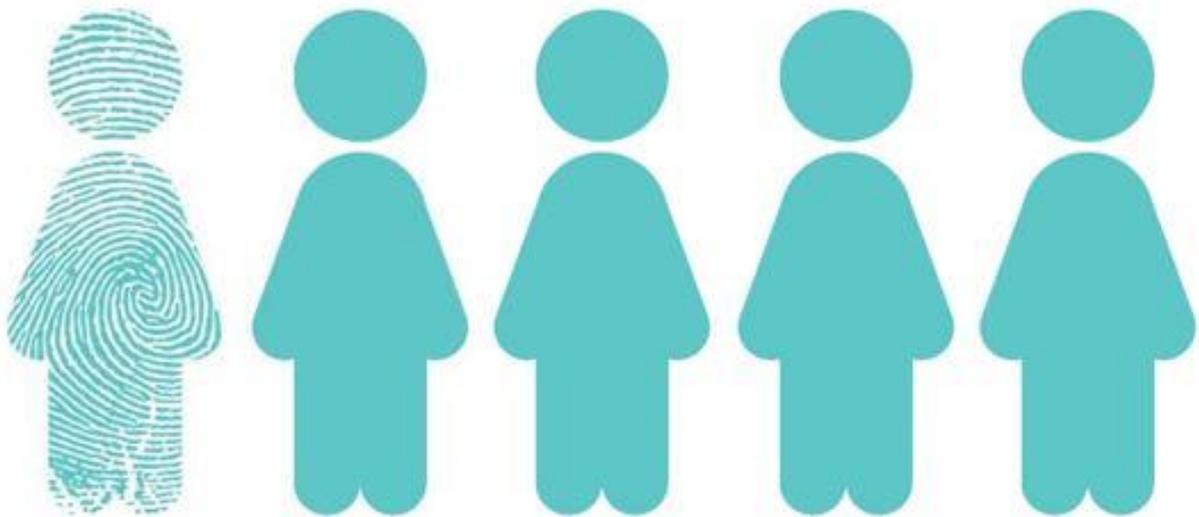


Hate Crime

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people's experiences of hate crime in Wales



Introduction

Hate crime is a serious offence which can have devastating and long-lasting effects on individuals and communities. This report, based on research carried out by Stonewall and YouGov in 2013, reveals that one in five lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales – equating to tens of thousands of people – had been the victim of a homophobic hate crime or incident over the last three years. This abuse can include verbal insults, harassment, damage to property, physical attacks and sexual assault. As a result, lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales report that they are anxious about crime and do not feel safe in their own homes and communities.

It is encouraging that the Welsh Government and partner agencies across Wales have made tackling all forms of hate crime a priority, and measures to raise awareness, increase reporting rates from witnesses and victims and improve experiences of the criminal justice system will continue to be key to reducing overall rates of hate crime. However, this research shows that there is still a lot of work left to do to.

Despite great progress in tackling discrimination in recent years, it is still the case that many lesbian, gay and bisexual people do not feel comfortable holding their partner's hand as they walk down the street. The freedom to be yourself and feel safe in your community is a fundamental right, and we will continue to work with partner agencies and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people across Wales to ensure that in the future, people are no longer targeted for being who they are.

Andrew White

Director, Stonewall Cymru

The Welsh Government's *Tackling Hate Crime and Incidents: A Framework for Action* uses the following definitions of hate crimes and incidents:

A **hate crime** is any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation or gender identity.

A **hate incident** is any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on actual or perceived disability, race, religion, and belief, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Methodology

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,544 lesbian, gay and bisexual adults from across Britain. The findings of the 174 respondents from Wales are presented here. The survey was conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGov Plc GB panel of 350,000+ individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. Fieldwork was undertaken between 28th February and 19th March 2013. Further information on the research and full results from across Britain in *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Hate Crime Survey 2013* can be found at www.stonewall.org.uk/hatecrime.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people's experiences of hate crime

Homophobic and biphobic hate crime is a serious problem in Wales. **One in five** (19 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people surveyed in Wales had been the victim of a homophobic hate crime or incident in the last three years. **One in ten** (11 per cent) experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident in the last 12 months. Types of hate crime experienced included verbal insults, harassment, damage to property, physical attacks and sexual assault.



My brother has physically and verbally abused me and has forbidden the rest of my family from having any contact with me because of my sexuality.

Alexander, 69 – Wales

One in twenty (five per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales see homophobic harassment or attacks as a 'very' or 'fairly big' problem in their area.

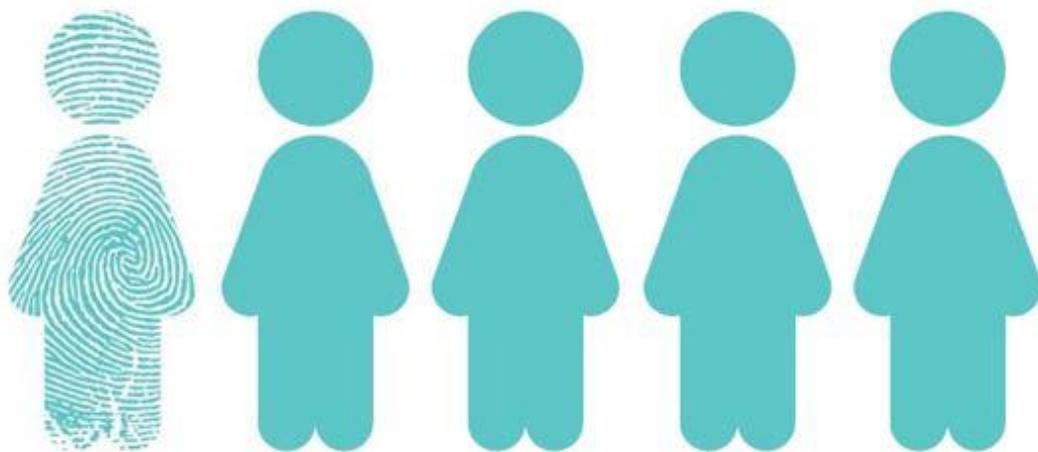


I have friends who have been attacked and physically and verbally abused in the street. My friends and I have been verbally abused by bouncers in local 'straight' bars.

Steve, 45 – Wales

Reporting hate crime and the police

More than four in five (86 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales and the Midlands who experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident did not report it to the police¹. A variety of reasons were given for not reporting, including thinking that an incident wasn't serious enough to report or that it wasn't an offence, that the police couldn't or wouldn't do anything or that it would not be taken seriously. Some respondents said they experienced this type of incident so commonly they did not always report it, and some expressed fears about outing themselves by reporting. Negative experiences of reporting events in the past were also cited as a reason for not reporting again.



One in five lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident in the last three years

¹ Sample doesn't allow for analysis of incidence reports by Wales alone



Without going over the top, the police did absolutely nothing, recorded it down as 'alcohol induced' when the incidents took place in sound state of mind.

Simon, 24 – Wales

Rates of confidence in the police among lesbian, gay and bisexual people are still low. Just **one in eight** (13 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales are confident that their Police and Crime Commissioner will address homophobic hate crime in their area.

The impact of hate crime

The effect of homophobic and biphobic hate crime is that lesbian, gay and bisexual people worry more about crime and feel less safe in their homes and communities. **One in four** (26 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales are worried about crime in general and for **one in twelve** (eight per cent) crime is their biggest fear ahead of issues such as illness, accidents or financial difficulties.



Unfortunately I am so severely anxious about being attacked I am permanently housebound.

Ed, 24 – Wales

Almost seven in ten (68 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Wales feel they are at greater risk of being insulted, intimidated or harassed than a heterosexual person. **More than two in five** (43 per cent) think they are at greater risk of being physically assaulted and **more than a quarter** (27 per cent) feel at greater risk of sexual assault than heterosexual people.

As a result of these worries, **one in four** (26 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say they alter their behaviour so they're not perceived as gay or bisexual in order to avoid being the victim of crime.



I am sick of feeling bullied and intimidated on my own street when I have worked very hard to be able to buy my own house. How is it fair for me to be made to feel like a lesser individual?

Tom, 33 – Wales

Recommendations

Police Forces

- **Train all police officers and control room staff** to identify and record homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes and incidents, including those perpetrated online, and deal with victims sensitively. Victims must be able to report hate crimes and incidents to all police officers, not just dedicated LGBT Liaison Officers.
- **Continue to provide different ways for people to report incidents** and support third party reporting services so that victims feel comfortable reporting 'less serious' crimes and incidents.
- **Use your data more effectively** on the number of recorded homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes and incidents by analysing the data to identify particular problems in divisional areas and take action to address any issues identified by your findings. Work with Community Safety Partnerships to share knowledge of local issues and develop positive relationships with local LGBT communities.
- **Engage more meaningfully with local lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people** to address the attitude among many victims that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes or incidents are not serious enough to report.
- **Work with schools to challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic attitudes** among young people and raise awareness of hate crime. Send police officers into schools and youth groups to talk about hate crime and challenge the use of casual homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
- **Be an LGBT-friendly employer** and tell people in the local area about the work being undertaken to support lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans police staff and officers. Work with Stonewall Cymru through its Diversity Champions programme and enter the Workplace Equality Index so you can identify progress year on year.

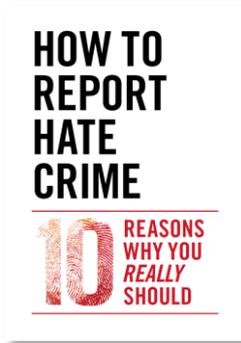
Police and Crime Commissioners

- **Make a public commitment to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime** and promote lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans equality. This will give confidence to LGBT people in the force area that their needs and concerns are understood by their elected representatives.
- **Hold the local police division to account** on how well it is meeting its legal duty to address the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans victims of crime. Make use of data on satisfaction with the police among LGBT victims of crime.
- **Protect and support the existing work of local police** to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime and support LGBT victims of crime. Make sure your Police and Crime Plan priorities underpin this work.
- **Work in partnership with lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people** in the local area to find out what their needs are and how well they think the police service is supporting them, in order to

inform your strategic priorities. Actively involve lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people in consultation exercises.

- **Hold victim services to account** on supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans victims of crime. Throughout the commissioning process through to delivery make sure support services are able to provide specialist support to witnesses and victims of hate crime.

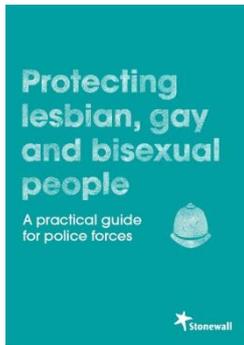
Resources



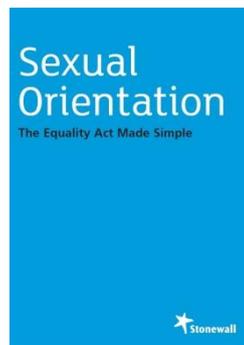
How to report hate crime: 10 reasons why you really should A bilingual guide for witnesses and victims



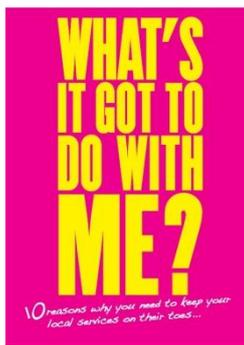
Hate crime reporting posters available in Welsh and English



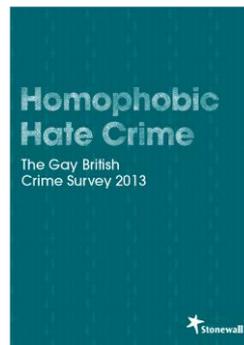
Protecting lesbian, gay and bisexual people: A practical guide for police forces



Sexual Orientation: The equality act made simple A guide for employers and public service providers



What's it got to do with me? 10 reasons why you should keep your local services on their toes A guide for public service users



Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2013 Full results of the research across Great Britain

If you have witnessed or experienced a hate crime or incident:

Call 999 in an emergency

Call 101 to speak to your local police force

**Report what's happened at www.reportheat.victimsupport.org.uk
or by calling 0300 30 31 982**

**For more information or to order any of our resources, please contact Stonewall Cymru's
Information Service on 08000 50 20 20 or by emailing cymru@stonewallcymru.org.uk**

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