



Understanding Hate Crime

On Thursday 10th February, we hosted an online webinar on Understanding Hate Crime. The event was an opportunity to learn more about hate crime with inputs from those on the front line in communities as well as some of the latest research.

Over 100 people attended – the largest webinar the SCSN has hosted to date.

The driver for the event was in response to increasing numbers of hate crimes in Scotland today. We know that these types of crimes do not only affect the individual but can have a pervasive impact on entire communities. We also know that we have a lot further to go to adequately address this issue in Scotland. With this in mind, the SCSN felt the community safety sector need to continue to work together to better our understanding of hate crime and improve this national picture.

On the day, we had sessions from:

- Rania Hamad on her doctoral research 'How and why hate crime occurs: exploring the accounts of people convicted of hate crime in Scotland'
- Dr Joe Webster on the bonding effect of hate, through his recent publication 'The Religion of Orange Politics'
- Nina Munday from The Fife Centre for Equalities on community perspectives and experiences of hate crime
- Abdul Rahim and Sam Tedcastle from the Centre for Good Relations CIC will explore the use of tension monitoring processes to assess community relations and detect tensions, and consider the merits of introducing similar processes in Scotland.

After the presentation there was a 20 minute panel discussion where attendees asked questions.

Context

To begin the event, the SCSN gave a brief update on the current context in Scotland. The main highlights were:

- In 2019-20, 62% of hate crimes included an aggravator for race, 20% sexual orientation and 8% religion, 4% disability, 1% transgender identity and the remaining 5% included multiple hate aggravators.
- In 2020-21 there was an overall increase in the number of charges.
- Major 'trigger' events such as Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, media reporting and political rhetoric and policies have had a major impact on prejudice and hate.
- Under-reporting of hate crime remains a serious issue in Scotland.
- 2021 - The Scottish Parliament passed the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill.
- In February 2021, the Scottish Government published A Study into the Characteristics of Police Recorded Hate Crime in Scotland citing:
 - one third experienced hate crime as part of work duties
 - Almost two-thirds of hate crime victims and three quarters of perpetrators were male.
 - In around half of crimes the victim did not know the perpetrator, with more than a third involving a perpetrator who was an acquaintance of the victim.
 - One in ten crimes involved a victim and perpetrator who were in different physical locations (including phone calls and cyber-enabled technologies).
- June 2021 - HCIMS also carried out a thematic inspection of Hate Crime signalling the need for major improvements in understanding the nature and scale of hate crime in Scotland and addressing problems with third party reporting.
- In December 2021, Scottish Government published a report on 'Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities Action Plan' (2017). The report showed encouraging on: raising awareness of hate crime and encouraging reporting and ensuring the availability of better and more robust data and evidence
- Scottish Government will shortly begin work to co-create a new hate crime strategy, for publication later this year. The new support implementation of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021.

Presentations

'How and why hate crime occurs: exploring the accounts of people convicted of hate crime in Scotland' – Rania Hamad

Speaker Bio:



Rania Hamad is currently on secondment as a Professional Justice Social Work Adviser with the Scottish Government's Community Justice Division. She has been employed as a social worker with the City of Edinburgh Council for 14 years. During this time she has worked in youth justice services, adult justice social work services and is a qualified Practice Educator. Her latter role with the City of Edinburgh Council was as a Senior Practitioner for Hate Crime and Restorative Justice, responsible for service developments in relation to working with people who have been convicted of hate offences, and developing a Restorative Justice service for hate crime (both in a community setting and in custody) in partnership with Police Scotland and Community Justice Scotland. She is also in her third year of a part-time PhD in Social Work at the University of Edinburgh, with a focus on the causes of, and responses to, hate crime.

Some key highlights from the presentation were:

- Who commits Hate Crime? Research says key factors are:
 - Gender – twice as likely to be male than female
 - Age – younger age range (under 25)
 - Ethnicity – (in UK) - white.
 - Substance use – alcohol use often a feature
 - Socio-economic background – often unemployed/low-income, & previous offending (caution)
- Causes of Hate Crime:
 - Prejudice, stereotypes, authoritarian personality, fundamental attribution error, 'just world fallacy'; Shame and anger; Masculinity and 'toxic masculinity'; Loss; 'Threat' and socio-economic factors; Family/peer group; Community; Education; Structural hierarchies; Institutional discrimination
- Motivations to commit Hate Crime included:
 - Thrill Seeker – 66%. Groups of bored young males seeking 'excitement'.
 - Defensive – 25%. Motivated by perceived threat from 'outsiders'; aim to send a message that victim or group are unwelcome. Changing demographics.
 - Retaliatory – 8%. Response to situations where 'ingroup' has been attacked by 'outgroup' (spikes after trigger events e.g. 9/11; Manchester 2017).
 - Mission – 1 out of 169. Totally committed to bigotry & ideology of hate - primary focus of life. More likely to perpetrate serious or fatal violence (e.g. Anders Breivik in Norway 2011).

- Effective Interventions:
 - Flexible; tailored to individual – no 'one size fits all'; Non-labelling & non-judgemental; Holistic; seeks to address wider issues e.g. use of violence, substance use, poverty; 'Educational' component re: prejudice/bias/diversity; Victim empathy; Managing conflict; 1:1 approach; Acceptance, understanding, trust; Restorative justice element ideal, where appropriate

For further detail – please see [presentation](#).

The bonding effect of hate, through his recent publication 'The Religion of Orange Politics' – Dr Joe Webster

Speaker Bio:



Dr Joseph Webster is Assistant Professor in the Study of Religion at the University of Cambridge and Fellow in Anthropology at Downing College. His research focuses on Protestant fundamentalism and religious exclusivism. His first book (*The Anthropology of Protestantism*) studied an Exclusive Brethren fishing community in Aberdeenshire. His second book (*The Religion of Orange Politics*) examined PUL fraternalism within the Orange Order in Scotland. As part of this project, Dr Webster gave expert testimony to the Scottish Government Justice Committee on repeal of the *Offensive Behaviour at Football Act*. He continues to advise the Scottish Government on sectarianism and religious hate. His research has been widely covered in the media, including within the *Times*, *Sun*, *Express*, *Herald*, *Scotsman*, and *Irish News*.

Some key highlights from the presentation were:

- Findings from his book 'The Religion of Orange Politics'
- Reflections around the intense 'bond' of shared identity created via acts of hate
- Recommendation that policy makers must take this aspect into account when seeking solutions
- Crucial insights around 'hating the haters' and the bonding effect this has also.

Dr Webster asked we do not share the presentation due to the sensitive nature of the content.

Community perspectives and experiences of hate crime - Nina Munday from The Fife Centre for Equalities

Speaker Bio:



Nina Munday (née To), Chief Executive - Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE)

Nina was given the role to establish Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) in Sep 2014. Nina has over 25 years' experience of working in the equality sector in the UK. Throughout her career she held senior executive positions in many strategic organisations. Most recently, Nina was the Diversity and Inclusion Consultant for Singapore Disabled People's Association for two years and Director of Edinburgh and Lothian's Regional Equality Council for eight years.

Some key highlights from the presentation were:

- Harm of hate crime includes:
 - Short and long-term emotional impacts
 - Continuing to feel "frightened or scared" following the offence
 - Loss of confidence
 - Having a longer recovery period
 - Higher levels of depression, anxiety, and anger
 - Having suicidal thoughts
 - Reduced feelings of safety
 - Loss of sense of belonging
- Reasons why people do not report hate crime:
 - Feelings of embarrassment by the victim; Fear of reprisals from the perpetrator; Lack of trust in the police and the criminal justice system to treat them fairly and with respect; Fear of going to court; Feelings of isolation and the victim fearing that they won't be believed; The victim may regard the incident as an everyday thing that they have to put up with; Not wanting to "cause a fuss"; People not realising they had experienced a hate incident/crime; Negative experience when reporting previous hate incident/crime

For further detail – please see [presentation](#).

The use of tension monitoring processes to assess community relations and detect tensions, and consider the merits of introducing similar processes in Scotland - Abdul Rahim and Sam Tedcastle from the Centre for Good Relations CIC

Speaker Bios:



Sam Tedcastle

Sam Tedcastle is a mediator and facilitator with twenty years' experience of conflict resolution work. She works at Centre for Good Relations as senior practitioner on cultural, gang violence, planning and environmental issues. She has worked with Mediation Northern Ireland as their Field Manager in England to develop the practice of civic mediation. In 2006 Sam was a Commissioner on the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, which informed national UK Policy on cohesion and immigration matters. More recently Sam has returned to her roots to continue to develop civic mediation practice in Scotland. She worked with WWF Celtic Seas Partnership applying civic mediation and stakeholder engagement processes to build transnational, cross-sectoral partnerships in the Celtic Seas. As part of this role she applied civic mediation processes to build relationships with the fishing industry, governments and ENGO's.



Abdul Rahim, Director at Centre for Good Relations CIC

A mediator and facilitator with over sixteen years experience of working with complex multi-party, multi-issue dialogue processes within and between local authorities, statutory agencies, the third sector and communities. A qualified trainer in Civic Mediation and Peace-building methodologies.

Extensive experience of developing 'Civic Mediation processes', which take a holistic approach to dealing with issues of contention and dispute; working with stakeholders from all backgrounds and at all levels from policy makers, senior management and civic leaders, through to front-line staff and grassroots communities. Involved in developing appropriate interventions to dealing with issues that organisations and communities find difficult to resolve on their own; facilitating processes that bring stakeholders into a 'safe', managed space to develop constructive relationships, and work through issues collaboratively towards a satisfactory conclusion.

Some key highlights from the presentation were:

- Why monitor community tensions?
 - To avoid shock/blindside, such as Burnley disturbances 2001, when those in power had not understood the level of tension that were developing in the town in advance.
 - To avoid escalations of conflict
 - To gain a community narratives about events
- Establishing a tension monitoring process is about a collaborative approach to building resilience in communities and developing an early response to managing emerging tensions with a view to reducing the potential for conflict

escalation. Types include - Capacity building in communities; building skills to undertake low level conflict interventions; trained mediators in communities and community facing agencies and

- The merits of introducing tension monitoring processes are:
 - Signs of growing divisions in Scotland (hate crime, increasing protests and demonstrations pointing to deeper societal tensions)
 - Collective understanding and monitoring of tensions could enable earlier, more constructive interventions

For further detail – please see [presentation](#).

Question and Answer Session

There were some questions in response to the presentations.

Q: How do you take account of the bonding effect of hate within policy without making hate seem acceptable?

A: Understanding the motivators of these behaviours does not make the behaviours acceptable. If we take the example of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012– it backfired as the policy did not take account of the perpetrator motivations. To fail to understand this is a fast-track way to have legislation that fails.

Q: Can you give good practice examples around restorative justice with hate crime perpetrators?

A: Yes, victim empathy and awareness work. Using a proxy for example. For more information, please contact Rania.Hamad@ed.ac.uk

Q: Does the bonding effect of hate relate to women too?

A: There is not clear data unfortunately around women's experiences, most of the data (although not universally) points to young men. There are women in these spaces, however the majority is men.

Q: The performative part of the hateful practices is a huge part of the motivation e.g. orange marches cancelled when they cannot go past catholic areas – do you agree?

A: Yes, agreed, but motivations of intimidation cannot be seen as the full picture and to ignore the other factors does not give an accurate portrayal.

Feedback

92% of respondents rated the value of the conversations as 4 or 5/5 stars.

88% of respondents rated the speaker's inputs 4 or 5/5 stars.

92% felt the topic was relevant.

The main 'takeaways' from the event were around deeper knowledge of hate crime in terms of – legislation, statistics, complexities, different perspectives and the drivers.

A key idea that participants took away was around 'hatred of haters' and why this needs challenged.

There were some comments on greater awareness of partnership working potential and opportunities to tackle hate crime; better information sharing and the importance of evidence-based work.

Some participants commented that more time for discussion would have been welcomed.

Some comments on the event:

"Very interesting subject, distressing too. Good to learn more about the evidence base and wider links to social inequality."

"There is still a lot of work to do in Scotland to tackle hate crime and we need to continue to share information on the subject"

"Thought provoking and challenging which is a good take away!"

"Good event. Hopefully it will become an annual theme for the network".

"Great event, time well spent. Thanks to all for arranging and the great set of speakers!"

We also had a twitter # for the day, reaching 19,093 accounts, creating 72 engagements and 7 URL clicks.