

# Disability Hate Crime Matters

Report of event held on 31st March 2016  
at New Scotland Yard and next steps



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# Introduction

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 over 100 people attended an event held at New Scotland Yard run jointly by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and Inclusion London to promote Disability Hate Crime Matters, an initiative aimed at improving the identification, investigation and response by police for Disability Related Hate Crime and Incidents.

The initiative was developed by the MPS DHC Multi Agency Working group, independently chaired by Anne Novis MBE, advisor to MPS and Trustee of Inclusion London.

Representatives came from London Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) and the MPS as well as other agencies including local government, health, the Crown Prosecution Service, the British Transport Police, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the media.

The welcoming address to the event was given by Commander Mak Chishty (MPS Hate Crime Lead) and Chief Superintendent Dave Stringer (Engagement Team). Speakers included Anne Novis MBE, independent advisor to the MPS who gave the background to Disability Hate Crime Matters, Tracey Lazard, CEO of Inclusion London, who talked about the DDPO perspective on Disability Hate Crime, and DC Maria Gray, who explained what the Disability Hate Crime Matters initiative is and how it works.

After the presentations we broke down into discussion groups, with each group looking at one of three questions:

1. What can Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DPPOs) do in partnership with local police to improve reporting of Disability Hate Crime?
2. How can DDPOs get involved in multi-agency hate crime work in boroughs?
3. What joint work would you like to see progressed around Disability Hate Crime?

The main points noted down by the groups have been typed up and recorded from page 8 onwards. Key themes that emerged through the

discussions have been pulled together into the recommendations in the next section. The themes include:

- The unique and positive contribution that DDPOs can bring to Disability Hate Crime work.
- The need for funding to enable DDPOs to focus on Disability Hate Crimes.
- The importance of and need for support to report.
- The need to raise community awareness of Disability Hate Crime – what it is and how to report it.
- The need for education of both sides – for the police in disability equality and for Disabled people in what Disability Hate Crime is
- Barriers to Disabled people being listened to and treated as “reliable witnesses”

The event concluded with closing comments from Chief Superintendent Dave Stringer and Anne Novis MBE who looked forward to further joint working between the MPS and DDPOs.

Feedback about the event was extremely positive. Deaf and Disabled people were impressed that the MPS hosted the event at New Scotland Yard and felt this represented a commitment to taking Disability Hate Crime seriously. There was also feedback that the discussions were interesting and useful and that Disabled people felt their views were heard. There was a call for more events and support for DDPOs to promote information and to get involved, making use of different specialisms such as physical activity and sport. There was also a call to look more specifically at the issue of “mate crime”.

“Mate crime” is covered by hate crime against disabled people as it involves befriending and grooming disabled people in order to commit crimes against them.

## Recommendations

- MPS and other agencies to pro-actively and routinely seek to engage DDPOs in DHC work.
- MPS, MOPAC and funders interested in DHC to work strategically together to ensure funding builds the capacity of DDPOs to focus on DHC.
- Improved reporting processes through more investment in support to report and improving the accessibility of these reporting mechanisms .
- Better and more consistent promotion of the Safer Places Scheme.
- Investment in more awareness raising and training for police, DDPOs and the community in what Disability Hate crime is and how to report it.
- Increased focus on “mate crime” including awareness raising of how to recognise and report it, also sharing of information on effective strategies to prevent and tackle it.



# Progress since March 2016

## Metropolitan Police Service

- ✓ Continued Disability Hate Crime Matters (DCHM) briefings to key police officers and crime reporting centre staff. As of 25/10/16 there are now 702 reports of DHC since the briefings began on 19/1/2016 . This is unprecedented. There have been in excess of twenty briefings given by DC Maria Gray with input from Anne Novis and Ruth Bashall and these are ongoing.
- ✓ Each borough is now disseminating briefings to frontline staff.
- ✓ Regular review and monitoring of the DHCM initiative. Questionnaires sent to boroughs on a quarterly basis. These are reviewed by the CSU Service Delivery team who respond to any needs that emerge and more briefings arranged if needed.
- ✓ Looking at additional ways that police reports can be checked to see whether crimes where a victim is a Disabled person should have been flagged as DHC. One of those ways is to check for the use of offensive words that are regularly used against Deaf or Disabled people. This is done via a word search on our systems.
- ✓ Awareness of the DHCM initiative increased through speeches and presentations given to:
  - Other police services
  - Community safety Unit
  - Detective Inspectors
  - Crime Screening Units
- ✓ Promotion of the hate crime reporting app Self Evident
- ✓ Promotion of True Vision online reporting website

## Self Evident App

This is a new Smartphone app, which is free to download and aimed at making it easier to report hate crime. It enables victims to immediately report an incident, with the information going directly to the Police via a secure server. Users can also upload photographic and video material as part of their report, as well submit a verbal statement or footage of the incident.

For more info: <https://www.witnessconfident.org/self-evident-app>

## True Vision

The True Vision website provides information about hate crime and how to report it, including:

- what hate crimes or hate incidents are.
- the ways you can report them.
- information about people that can help and support you if you have been a victim.

The website includes an online form you can use to report hate crime.

<http://www.report-it.org.uk/home>

## Inclusion London

- ✓ Resource list of all DDPOs put together by Inclusion London and collated by borough made available to police so they can contact and work with the organisations.
- ✓ List of DDPOs in London already working on DHC made put together.
- ✓ Inclusion London DHC facebook site set up to enable London DDPOs working on DHC to communicate and share information.

<https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/campaigns-and-policy/facts-and-information/hate-crime/disability-hate-crime-facebook-group/>

- ✓ Inclusion London training for DDPOs in Hate crime Against Disabled People attended by representatives from 14 London DDPOs.
- ✓ DDPO DHC consortium work with 14 DDPPs initiated and supported by Inclusion London to build the capacity of DDPOs to work on DHC individually and in partnership with other DDPOs.
- ✓ Further training for London DDPOs planned.



## Feedback from group discussions



- 1. What can Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPOs) do in partnership with local police to improve reporting of Disability Hate Crime?**
  - Raise awareness of Safer Places campaign
  - Buddy for victims of hate crime, eg person who has been through hate crime paired with someone who wants to report hate crime so that the process of reporting crime is easier
  - Funding is a big issue – need to find willing volunteers
  - Sharing information between agencies
  - Police need to work with hate crime charities
  - Pegasus database – 4 number pin when calling emergency services

- Let the Deaf and Disabled communities know when the police have done their job – let them know it is worth reporting (empowering people) – something is being done
- Third party reporting – is a start, becoming more than hearsay
- To increase reporting educate people on what hate crime is and instil confidence of the vulnerable people
- Reporting every time something happens means people will be reporting all the time
- Reasons why people don't report – too much hassle to do it (reporting app?)
- Hate crime being treated as Anti-Social Behaviour is a problem
- Other agencies that work with Disabled clients that need to be aware not just Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations
- People don't report as they don't see the point (particularly the British transport Police) – no faith in the service
- Flashing a card to a member of Transport for London staff to make them aware of issues at that point
- Lack of confidence – particularly in the process of reporting – needs to be easier
- Weighing up whether it is worth reporting – if it is a one off?
- Police need to feed back to raise confidence – reporting successes back to the communities
- Intelligence – people report to their community leader which is then passed on to police – gives people a reason to report
- There are so many ways of reporting yet still people aren't – why?
- Police having organisations be advocates to inform the police of crimes – cross bridges between the different communities

- People experience the police to fail them (Chinese whispers of bad experiences so confidence must be instilled to disprove these expectations)
- Disability liaison officers (dedicated)
- Training drastically needed throughout all boroughs – continuity among teams so that experience is shared
- More involvement with disability organisations – drop ins with police officers to take reports
- Good advertising – awareness training, posters, multi-media promotion
- Disability hate crime forum - having a single organisation overseeing organisations and police
- Volunteers to assist at police stations – advocates to help Disabled and Deaf people in regards to process both suspects and victims
- Make sure that the process of reporting hate crimes to police is accessible to everyone, make sure it is a clear process that can be transparent from original report through to completion
- Educations (police) from DDPOs – to address feeling awkward speaking to people and lack of education
- Raising awareness – police don't know how to speak to Disabled people
- Grassroots DDPOs – what is disability hate crime? – need to know to support victim reporting and to know what is unacceptable
- Educating Disabled people and the public
- Learning disabilities – most unreported
- Basic sign language course for police
- High number of autistic people caught up in criminal justice – vulnerable people on estates caught up in gangs

- Disabled people need to be educated themselves to see what they find acceptable and the reporting side of the situation – issue of people with mental health support needs not wanting to report it
- Funding/cuts – lowers priority
- Trust for London and City Bridge – funding for hate crime work
- Support for individuals
- Different community groups working together
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting sites
- Confidentiality – however still reported
- Fear – what’s going to happen if reported – Disabled people need support to report
- Procedure – kept safe – support to report
- Safer places for people – local shops..etc
- Hidden disabilities – awareness needed amongst police
- OUR KEY POINTS
  - Education on both sides – police and raising awareness among Disabled people
  - Support to report

## 2. **How can DDPOs get involved in multi-agency hate crime work in boroughs?**

- Overwhelmingly positive experience where DDPOs are involved
- Funding and capacity is a major barrier to participation for DDPOs
- Need to share information better

- Agencies don't talk to each other
- Agencies don't know what DDPOs are and what they do
- Safetynet People First for example run meetings, give training on Disability Equality and the Safer Places campaign, work with housing associations, British Transport police and the Council and provide victim support
- Real DDPO provides buddies as a way of supporting 3rd party reporting
- Disabled people are starting to not put up with Disability Hate crime anymore
- Some Disabled people are getting assertive but many are not
- People will don't know what Disability Hate Crime is
- Needs lots of awareness raising
- Need to work with Domestic Violence groups
- Need various ways of offering support
- Huge issue is the need for funding
- Disability Hate crime has not been prioritised by funders – lack of evidence – vicious circle
- We need agencies at a local level to pro-actively engage with DDPOs
- We also need funding to make it work
- Go out to deliver awareness (wider crimes)
- Police not taking things seriously from the victim
- Role plays to raise awareness
- DVD's, eg "We say No to Bullying"
- More positive of individual, more likely to engage with others

- Disability hate crime (police not serious about it)
- More studying about impairments which can lead to better understanding – therefore can be believed in court
- Disabled people do not want to complain at certain times
- Working with charities to support others
- Where DDPOs are involved this is experienced in a positive way but this can only be to a certain level due to funding restraints
- Question of whether Blue Badge theft could be classed as a Disability Hate Crime



### **3. What joint work would you like to see progressed around Disability Hate Crime?**

- Process of reporting more accessible – lots of ways to do it but is not happening
- Raising confidence in the process of reporting (not in the police service)
- What can be achieved
- Better understanding
- Better communication between services/police
- Success stories/intelligence
- Technology – apps
- Greater access to police and networking (organisations being involved in training police staff)
- Have more discussions with Hate Crime teams
- Police liaison officers for Disabled people (PLOD system)
- BSL charter – (Sign Language Charter) MPS to consider adopting this charter? (Leicestershire and Derbyshire)
- Newsletter – social media, website (posters in other languages)
- Set up help groups around London (funding/resources)
- More joint work, ensure all Disabled people know what disability hate crime is
- Raise awareness
- Explain what a hate crime is to the victim and criminal
- Getting Disabled people to report everything

- More meetings with local Disabled people and the police – communication
- Get the message out there
- The police give capability for Disabled people – would give community confidence
- More Disabled police officers
- Report any assaults of rude comments
- Work with housing associations (not taking reports seriously)
- “As a society, we are not involved enough”
- Problems with neighbours
- Know what a hate incident is
- Equality
- Being part of the police life
- Lack of understanding – need better understanding
- More education to teenagers about disabilities
- Ensure more people know what disability hate crime is – recognise what it is
- Explain to people what hate crime is
- Reporting negative incidents
- Local Disabled people come together to talk
- Police think about recruiting Disabled people – brings understanding and action
- Education and training

- Communicating the message across – recognising what it is and how to report the crime
- Working with housing associations
- Cadets promoting the work they do – become youth champions, Disabled young people working with cadets aged 10 – 18 in schools, youth clubs and on estates
- Meet and discussion
- Phonelines effected by cuts = very impactful
- Telephone number for them to then contact police
- Their point of view
- People don't know what to do
- Saliva testing kits – spitting incidents
- Changing people's perception
- Funding needed – issues about carrying on
- Training for police to help
- Some people won't admit disabilities
- Keep safe guards more in the loop
- Relationship between police and DDPO
- Approach local CVS
- Better training to ensure security can deal with Deaf and Disabled people
- Make smaller companies able to deal with Deaf and Disabled people
- A delay for people to interview Deaf and Disabled people which can lead to trouble due to a disability and the case falls flat

- More specialists trained and interviewers available
- Open day at police stations
- Deaf and Disabled people speaking to police people, giving feedback on how the Deaf and Disabled people feel on how police act towards them
- “Breaking down the barrier between the community and Disabled people”
- Police reassure and engage with Deaf and Disabled people



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