

## The DDPO Disability Hate Crime Data Project

Data and analysis from the first six  
months

## About Inclusion London

Inclusion London supports over 70 Deaf and Disabled Organisations working across every London borough. Through these organisations, our reach extends to over 76,000 Disabled Londoners.

## About the London DDPO Hate Crime Partnership

The London DDPO Hate Crime Partnership is funded for 5 years from 2018. It is the only Pan-London partnership between Deaf & Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) working to combat hate crime against Disabled people in London. This is the only partnership of its kind in the UK.

We represent DDPOs at over 20 key strategic meetings a year to influence policy and decision makers. We work closely with the wider MOPAC Hate Crime Partnership (Community Alliance to Combat Hate or CATCH) via Stay Safe East, led by Galop, who provide support across all hate crime strands and whose membership includes DDPOs from this partnership.

The 24 DDPOs currently involved in this partnership offer different levels of Hate Crime support, including Specialist HC Advocacy, Peer Advocacy and Support, Awareness raising and Third-Party Reporting Centres.

As the lead organisation of this partnership, Inclusion London provides capacity building to strengthen the network of support, hate crime data and insights and strategic policy and campaigning work so that no Disabled person needs to suffer alone if they experience Hate Crime.

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# Overview of Data

## Referrals

### Number of Cases and Ongoing Work

Between July 2021 and December 2021, 5 DDPOs (Deaf and Disabled Peoples' Organisations) reported starting work on 59 new cases involving disability hate crime.

29 of these new cases came to the DDPO by themselves (as self-referrals), 20 were referred by the police, and 10 were referred by other organisations.

In addition, the DDPOs were already supported 20 clients on previous hate crime work; in total, 79 cases involving hate crime were open during this time frame.

### Types of Hate Crimes

Currently, there are five protected strands under hate crime law: race, faith, sexual orientation, transgender identity, and disability. We also collect data on misogynistic and ageist hate crimes.

As well as the 59 disability hate crimes, there were also 9 racist hate crimes reported, 1 sexual orientation hate crime, and 2 ageist hate crimes.

### Demographics of Clients Supported

The demographic information of clients sent was for both new cases and ongoing cases. It is not always collected and for this project we did not want advocates to feel pressure to collect this information. Therefore, the data below is incomplete and will not add up to the full 79 cases.

### *Disability, Condition, or Impairment*

40 victims were physically disabled, 17 had mental health distress or trauma, 17 had a learning disability, 11 had chronic health conditions, 8 were neurodivergent, 4 had a cognitive disability, 2 had sensory disabilities, 1 was Deaf, 1 was deafened/hard of hearing, and 1 had a condition/impairment/disability not listed.

### *Age*

57 of the victims were aged between 18 – 65. 2 victims were under 18 and 10 were over 65.

### *Race*

36 of the victims were white, 6 were Asian, 5 were Black, and 1 was mixed race.

### *Ethnicity*

32 of the victims were British, 6 were African, 2 were Bangladeshi, 1 was Indian, 1 was Irish, and 1 was Pakistani.

### *Sex and Gender Identity*

32 of the victims were cis women, 22 were cis men.

### *Sexual Orientation*

38 of the victims were straight, 1 was gay.

## Police Involvement and Support Provided

### Police Involvement

20 of the 59 new cases were referred to the DDPOs by the police. Of the remaining 39 cases, 5 individuals went on to report the crime to the police, taking the reported total up to 25. The remaining 34 did not want to report the crime.

The biggest reason for not reporting the crime to the police was either a lack of physical evidence or otherwise being unable to reach the evidential threshold for anything to happen.

Inclusion London's 'Poor Police Response' report showed how only 19 disability hate crimes were prosecuted in 2020-21, despite the lowest reported disability hate crimes in any of the previous three years totaled 413. It is unsurprising that victims of disability hate are reluctant to go through a long process — which will involve them re-telling the experience and could be retraumatizing — only to have a small chance of any outcome.

When we look at the outcomes and support provided by the DDPOs in the next section, we will see how some of this support is better provided or only provided by community-based organisations. In these instances, reporting to the police wouldn't achieve the outcomes some individuals want, anyway.

After lack of evidence / high evidence threshold, the next two most common reasons for not reporting hate crimes were: wanting someone to talk to in confidence without the pressure to report to the police, and prior negative experiences with the police where the victim was disbelieved.

Other reasons with lower numbers included:

- Distrust of the police

- Fear of authorities
- Just wanting the abuse to stop

### *Reporting and Police Involvement Case Studies*

Reasons for not reporting to the police were also discussed in the 'Poor Police Response' report, and many of those are echoed in responses from DDPOs through this project.

Just as was raised by Merton CIL previously, Real Tower Hamlets explained how counter-claims were leading to hate crime cases simply being abandoned. One client was subject to verbal abuse, vandalism, and long-term harassment from a neighbour, which she reported to the police. The police spoke to the neighbour who immediately made a counter-claim of hate crime. Following this, the police said there was not enough evidence either way and stopped pursuing the case. Through persistence Real were able to provide a solution through other means, which will be explored in the next section.

Previously, Merton CIL discussed how they had perpetrators who were being encouraged to file counter-claims against the victims Merton CIL were supporting. Once a counter-claim has been filed, and a situation comes down to one person's account against another's, it is unsurprising there is rarely a satisfactory outcome. As we will see later, over half of the disability hate crimes took place at the victim's home; a location which is unlikely to have cameras or surveillance, unless the victim can afford to install them independently, so there often aren't other forms of evidence.

Another matter raised during the case studies was how the police interviews and interactions themselves often failed to take disabled victim's support needs into consideration. This then had negative effects on physical and mental health, with one victim having to be taken to hospital after having seizures brought on by the unnecessary stress caused by meetings with the police.

## Support Provided

In terms of the support provided, day-to-day support around housing, financial, and safeguarding were the most common, with every single case supported receiving this kind of support.

Emotional support was the next most common form and support specifically regarding the legal and criminal justice system and hate crime came in third. Half of all cases also involved the advocate signposting the victim to further support or resources elsewhere, reinforcing the importance of community links for bespoke support for individuals.

Cases often carried over into the next quarter, as demonstrated by there being 20 ongoing cases already being supported going into July 2021. Of the 50 cases (20 ongoing and 30 received in July-September) from the first quarter, 24 were still being supported throughout October-December specifically for matters relating to the disability hate crime.

This long-term commitment to support is rarely considered in funding decisions. Neither is the fact that many organisations only receive funding to have a part-time advocacy service; it is not uncommon for one advocate to be expected to manage their entire case load in less than two days a week as this is all the funding allows for.

### *Support Provided Case Studies*

Housing support came out as the most frequent kind of support that had positive outcomes for victims of hate crime.

Clients supported by Camden Disability Action, Merton CIL, and Real Tower Hamlets moved to different properties after support was given by the DDPOs to pursue this route.

In hate crime, there is often discussion about making sure the victim does not have to move home as the result of the actions of others, which is a valid and understandable approach when that is the preference of the victim.

In the Camden Disability Action case in particular, a different perspective was provided; that of the hate crime causing so much harm – which resulted in PTSD – that the victim’s original home would be forever associated with those toxic memories. In this instance, the victim’s wellbeing was improved by being given the option to move and leave at least some of that behind her.

These two perspectives — wanting to stay or wanting to move — can be the right decision for different victims and this reinforces the importance of providing someone with all the available options. What is right for one person may not be for another. The issue that arises is when the victim is not making the choice, they are having to pursue that route because alternative action is not being taken by the system that is meant to help or protect them. This is where advocates can be especially valuable, ensuring that the individual’s views are being heard and included.

Other types of support provided included reaching out to members of the community, as Breaking out of the Bubble did in one case, to implement community-level and peer support for victims, which dissuaded the perpetrator from further harassment. This route was only possible because of the organisations’ links to the community, reinforcing how important it is that funding includes hours and finances for this community engagement.

Finally, there were also examples of support that may not immediately be considered hate crime support, such as Real providing support on curating social media spaces and security

features to help prevent online harassment, or Merton CIL's support to rebuild self-confidence in independent decision-making, a self-confidence that some victims lost after experiencing a hate crime.

The all-encompassing nature of support that may be needed following a disability hate crime is not fully realised by those outside of the field of work or when hate crime support is only considered in terms of the criminal justice system involvement.

## **The Hate Crimes**

In considering the information below, note that the numbers may add up to more or less than the total hate crimes. This is because some cases had:

- Multiple perpetrators
- Multiple forms
- Multiple locations
- Information was only partially known
- Information was unknown

### **Where they took place**

Over half of all supported disability hate crimes supported by DDPOs occurred at the individual's home. After this, 1 in 7 hate crimes happened in the street, followed by 1 in 11 happening inside a community or commercial building.

While this is not a surprising finding — it has been found in previous work on disability hate crime — it continues to reinforce that disability hate crimes often take place at the location where people should be able to feel safest, their home. This has already been discussed in the support section earlier; working with the individual and the housing association is one of the most common forms of support hate crime advocates provide.

### **The perpetrators of the hate crime**

With the data collected about location described above, it is unsurprising that the most frequent perpetrators of hate crime were neighbours of the victim. Just under half of all reported hate crimes

were carried out by a neighbour. After this, 1 in 4 hate crimes were committed by a stranger in a non-professional role.

While the numbers after this are smaller, it should be noted that the combination of hate crimes committed either by a professional directly involved with the individual (such as a support worker) or a stranger working in a professional role at the time (such as a bus driver, shop employee, bank clerk) of committing the hate crime totaled 1 in 10 hate crimes.

### **Form the crime took**

1 out of every 3 disability hate crimes involved direct verbal abuse, followed closely by 1 in 4 involving ongoing harassment. 1 in 10 involved physical violence against the individual and 1 in 11 involved damage to the victims' property.

The ongoing harassment is a point noted in work by Donovan et al. (2021) in their work on hate relationships which were also often perpetrated by neighbours and at or in the victim's home. Their work details the profound impact on health this ongoing harassment had on people, and these same impacts can be seen in discussions in the case studies further up in our own findings.

### **An important consideration**

If we look at the details of the hate crime as a whole, a sobering picture emerges; that of ongoing harassment, perpetrated by neighbours that the victim cannot escape, at the property (their home) where the victim should be able to feel safest.

## Discussion

The data gathered from the first six months has already demonstrated that there are Disabled victims of hate crime missing from the official numbers. The data from just 5 DDPOs has added 10% to the Metropolitan Police's official figures. As more data is collected and as more DDPOs contribute data over the year, this number will likely only increase.

The high proportion of hate crimes occurring at the victim's home and perpetrated by neighbours backs up ongoing research that disability hate crimes are not primarily committed by "strangers in the street", which can be the impression created of hate crime in general. Many hate crimes are taking place at a victim's home, where they should be able to feel safe, and this means they often cannot get away from the ongoing harassment.

The work DDPO hate crime advocates and teams provide is diverse, bespoke, time intensive, and ongoing over many months. At times, funding decisions are made only looking at the front-line, hate crime specific tasks, and don't take in account the variety of support or the time it takes.

Finally, professionals and organisations who should work with the DDPOs and the victims of hate crime, can worsen already traumatic situations with their action or inaction. DDPOs frequently face additional barriers in advocating for and supporting their clients in meetings with the police, the criminal justice system, the council, housing associations, and other organisations. Communications with these teams can go back and forth for a long time or only be re-established because of the persistence of the advocates.

## Future Work

The DDPO Disability Hate Crime Data project is ongoing until at least March 2023 and we are always keen to discuss the possibility of new London DDPOs providing data. The more data we have, the better analysis we can do. There is a small financial reimbursement for DDPOs for quarterly submission of data.

For more information about the project and whether your DDPO might be able to become involved, please contact Lara Conner on [lara.conner@inclusionlondon.org.uk](mailto:lara.conner@inclusionlondon.org.uk)

## With Thanks

Thank you to all the DDPOs involved in the hate crime partnership for their ongoing work and support in both the partnership and in the disability hate crime data project.

Particular thanks to:

**Merton CIL**

**Real Tower Hamlets**

**Breaking out of the Bubble**

**Camden Disability Action**

**DeafPlus**

For the data they have already provided to the project. Your work is much appreciated.