



Home Office

Baroness Williams of Trafford
Minister of State for
Countering Extremism

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Dame Vera Baird QC
Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales
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27 January 2021

Dear Vera,

Thank you for your letter of 9 November to the Minister of State for Crime and Policing regarding police recording of hate crimes. I am replying as Minister of State in the Home Office. I am sorry for the delay in responding to your letter.

Firstly, I want to take this opportunity to assure you that this Government takes all forms of hate crime very seriously, and these abhorrent acts will not be tolerated in our society. We recognise that hate crimes have a deep impact on victims because they are targeted against some intrinsic part of the victim's identity. As you know, the effect of these crimes is often felt not only by the victim, but also family, friends, neighbours and others in their community. Through fear, abuse and violence, hate crime can limit people's equality of opportunity and infringe their basic human rights.

I am unable to comment on Stop Hate UK's claims in relation to the under-recording of hate crime in anti-social behaviour incidents. There may be a number of reasons why the police may not record an incident as a hate crime, including a lack of sufficient evidence. Moreover, not every reported incident will be a crime. Where it is established that a criminal offence has not taken place, but the victim or any other person perceives that the incident was motivated wholly or partially by hostility, it may instead be recorded and flagged as a non-crime hate incident. More information on this recording can be found here: <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/hate-crime/responding-to-non-crime-hate-incidents/>.

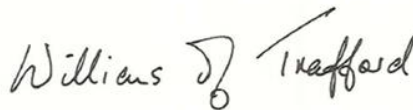
In 2019/2020, there were 105,090 hate crime offences recorded by the police in England and Wales, an increase of 8% compared with 2018/2019 (103,379 offences). Like other categories of police recorded crime, this increase is thought to be largely driven by improvements in police recording practices. There is also a growing awareness of hate crime that has likely attributed to an improved identification of such offences. The independent Crime Survey for England and Wales shows hate crime has fallen by 38% over the last decade and it is encouraging that there has been a downward trend in incidence.

Nonetheless, we recognise that more can be done. This is why the hate crime action plan (Action Against Hate: The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime), published in 2016 and refreshed in October 2018, included policies on improving the reporting and recording of hate crime. In particular, we required police forces to disaggregate hate crime data by faith for the first time and ran a national public campaign to make clear that hate crime is unacceptable and raise awareness about reporting it.

My officials routinely work with Stop Hate UK. We will also engage with them further to understand more about the data they hold in relation to this issue.

Finally, I have relayed your feedback to the Home Office Hate Crime team who are currently working closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council and civil society partners to ensure police forces are reassuring affected communities and encouraging reporting of hate crime.

I hope you find this reply helpful in setting out the Government's position in relation to the issues you raised.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature reads "Williams of Trafford" in a cursive script. The word "Williams" is written in a standard cursive, followed by "of" in a smaller, more decorative script, and "Trafford" in a larger, more prominent cursive.

Baroness Williams of Trafford