

# Hate Crime in Birmingham

An excerpt from the Strategic Assessment 2009/10



Nechells

Washwood Heath

Ward End

Vauxhall

Saltley

Alum Rock

BIRMINGHAM

Little Bromwich

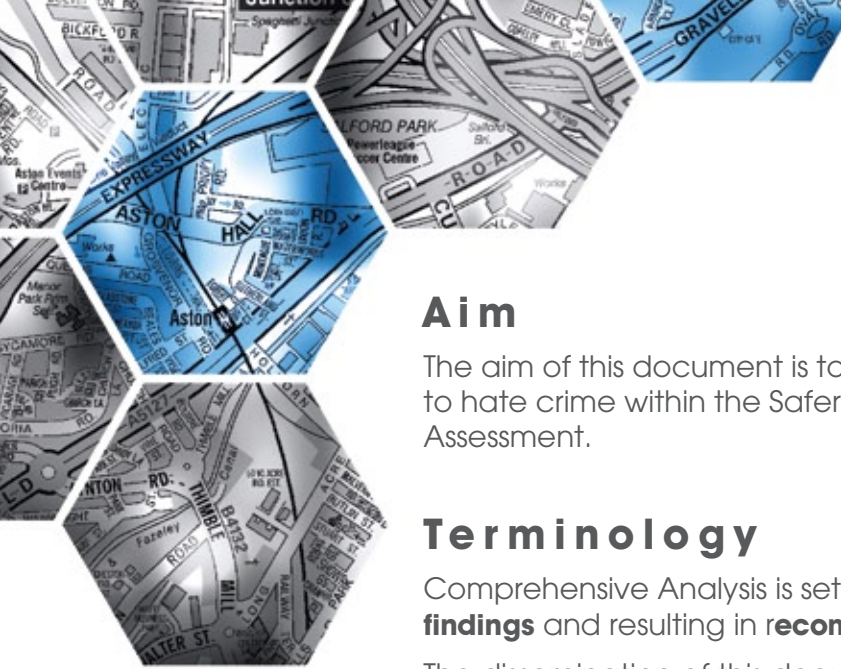
Bordesley

Bordesley Green

Small Heath

Sparkbrook

Small Heath



## Aim

The aim of this document is to inform partners of the key findings relevant to hate crime within the Safer Birmingham Partnership 2009/10 Strategic Assessment.

## Terminology

Comprehensive Analysis is set out through **inferences** formed from **key findings** and resulting in **recommendations**.

The dissemination of this document is permitted although please note that the final version within the Strategic Assessment may differ in content.

**YTD** refers to the financial year to date unless stated otherwise.

## 11 Data Sources (used within the full Strategic Assessment)

- Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline
- Acorn
- Birmingham City Council Empty Property Team
- Birmingham City Council Waste Management Services
- Birmingham Schools Exclusion Team
- Census 2001
- Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007
- Office of National Statistics (License Number: C2009000397)
- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Police
- Violent Crime Reduction Accident and Emergency data (Linxs)



# Analysis

The following is an excerpt from the Safer Birmingham Partnership Strategic Assessment 2009/10. Each priority has been subject to a full crime pattern analysis (CPA) before inclusion within the document. Each CPA will be available upon application following the publication of the Strategic Assessment. Please note that the Hate Crime CPA is currently marked Confidential.

## Hate Crime

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

Hate crime in Birmingham, as recorded by West Midlands Police, represents between 3% and 5% of nationally recorded hate crime. Since April 2007 Birmingham recorded 2999 racially motivated hate crimes, 106 faith hate crimes, 185 homophobic hate crimes, 7 transphobic hate crimes and 39 disability related hate crimes. Although it is widely acknowledged that all crime is under-reported (although to differing extents dependent on the type of crime) it appears hate crime is significantly under-reported within Birmingham.

In October 2007 Birmingham started recording a significantly lower number of racist hate crimes. A high proportion of racist hate crime occurs in the City Centre and more offences tend to be committed on Fridays and Saturdays, which reflects the involvement of the night time economy on recorded hate crime. However, the peak for offending is 1500hrs - 1600hrs and as 47% of known offenders are aged under 25 years old it can be inferred that young people travelling home from school/college via city centre transport connections are also vulnerable to hate crime.

Both offences committed after school and within the night time economy are highly visible and this may go some way to explaining the greater numbers of recorded racist hate crime compared to other types.

The F1 Strategic Assessment 09/10 notes that the nature of the majority of the racial offences have "mainly been where a verbal or physical argument has taken place between two individuals, and due to the ethnicities of one of the parties concerned a racist remark has been made". In addition it is noted that "many of the victims of Hate Crime offences have been individuals who are employed in the services industry and have included taxi drivers, shop assistants and bus drivers.

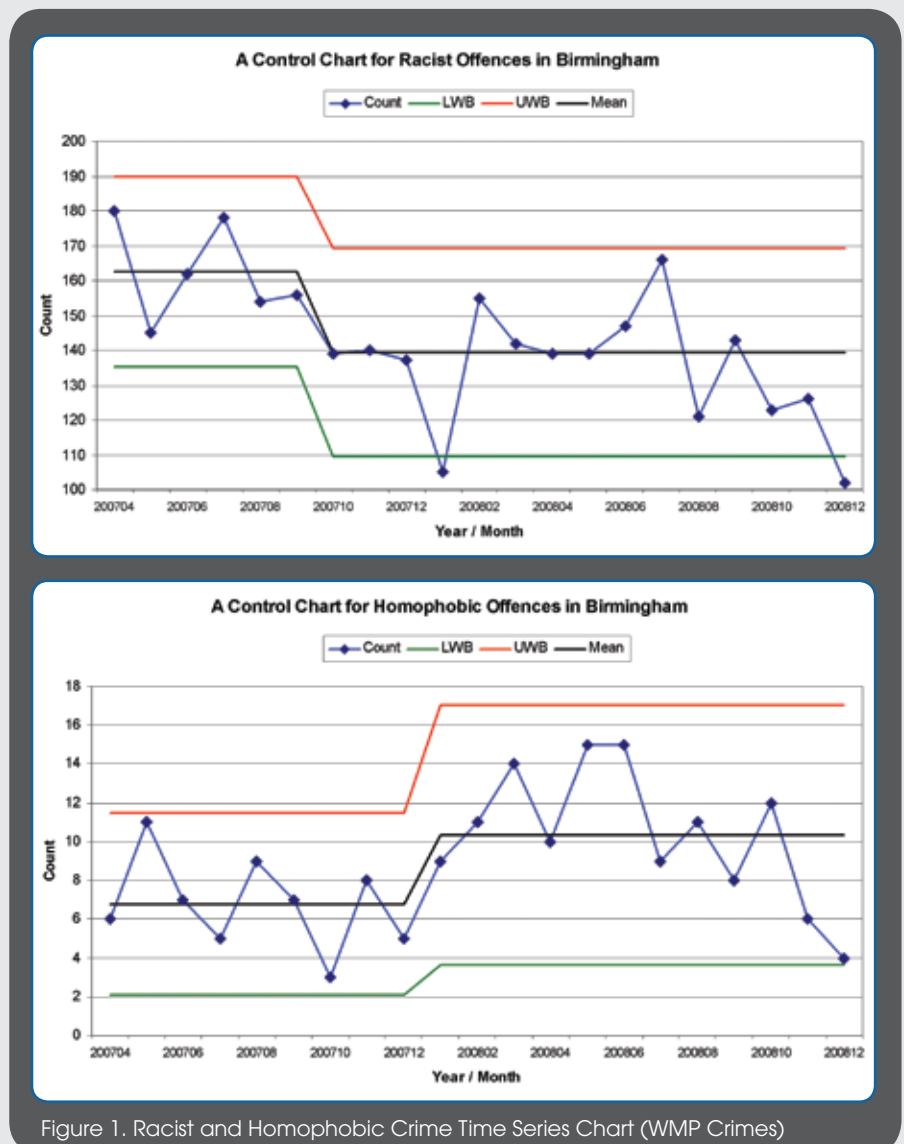


Figure 1. Racist and Homophobic Crime Time Series Chart (WMP Crimes)

Additionally a significant proportion of the victims have been individuals who are in a position of authority and in the process of carrying out their duties have been assaulted and abused by offenders. These victims have included police officers, door staff, traffic wardens and security staff”.

The majority of race hate offenders are White males but Black offenders are the only ethnic group that are over-represented compared to the Birmingham demographic profile. Asian victims are the most targeted of ethnic groups but both Asian and Black victims are over-represented by 2-1.

The same area of the City Centre is also significant for faith hate crime, although there is a much more distinct 1500hrs – 1600hrs peak. ‘Places of worship’ is the most common offence location for faith hate crimes. The greatest represented religion of both faith hate victims and offenders is Islam, although it should be noted that a considerable percentage of victims and offenders did not state their religion.

Unlike racist hate crime, recorded homophobic hate crime has increased during the last 2 years with significant increases

in levels since January 2008. Recorded homophobic hate crime is also driven much more by the night time economy with peaks in offences occurring Friday night / Saturday morning, Saturday night / Sunday morning, with the hotspot centred on Birmingham’s ‘Gay Village’. In fact 42% of all recorded homophobic hate crime occurred within the F1 Operational Command Unit. Although ‘road’ is the top offence location, as with racist hate crime, the other top offence locations for homophobic hate crime revolve around residential properties. In fact 23% of all homophobic hate crime occurred within a dwelling whereas 6% and 3% occurred within pubs and clubs respectively.

The majority of known homophobic offenders are white males aged 14-25. Most offenders live outside of the City centre and 28% live outside of Birmingham. All BME victims of homophobic hate crime were considerably under-represented and although offenders and victims residences were pretty evenly distributed throughout Birmingham more were recorded on the E1 OCU than any other area.

Of all homophobic and transphobic offences only 1 was regarded as domestic violence; yet a considerable amount of research

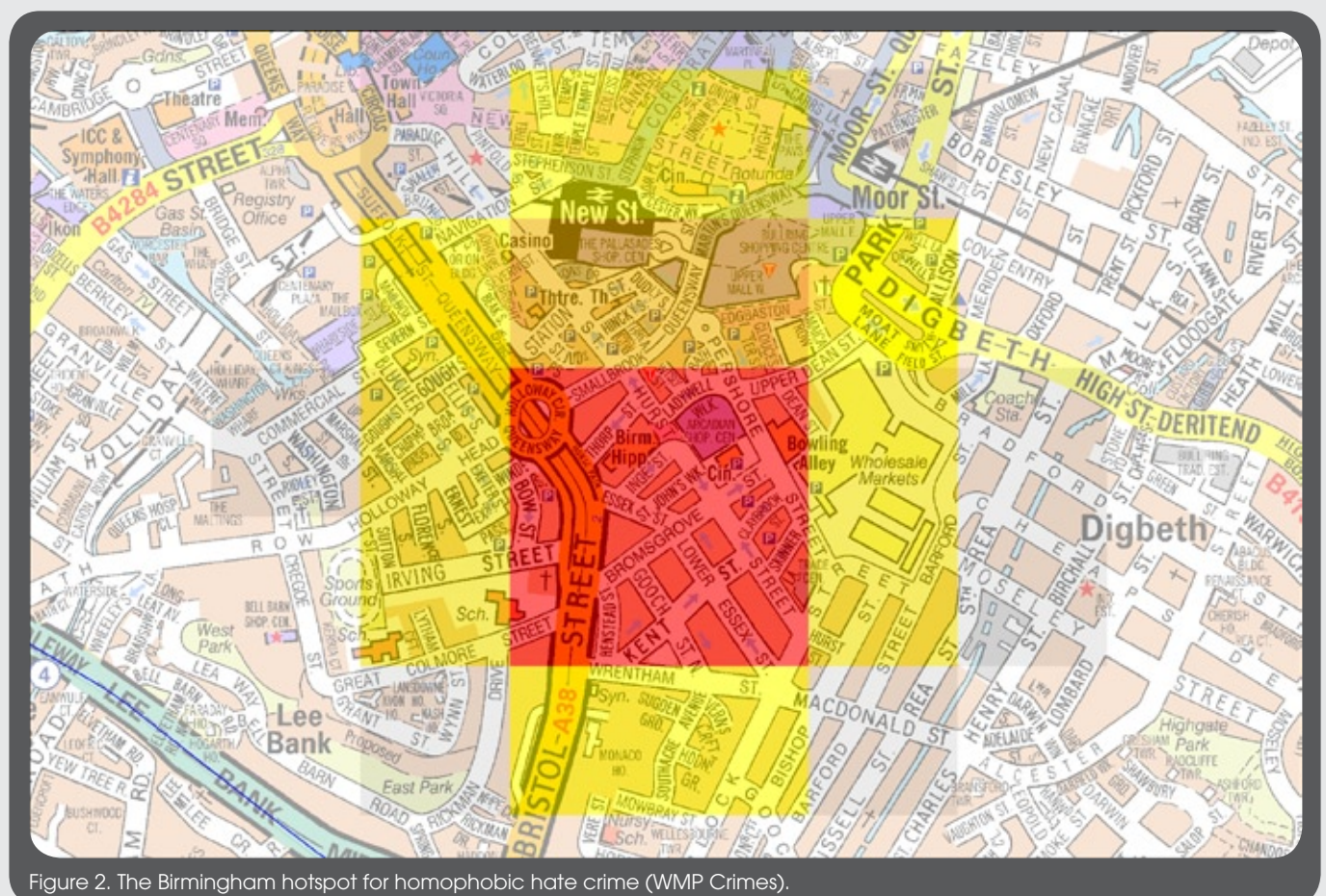


Figure 2. The Birmingham hotspot for homophobic hate crime (WMP Crimes).

suggests domestic violence is more common than this. An additional area of disparity includes detection rates: where as 28% of all racist hate crime since April 2007 has been successfully detected, only 20% of homophobic offences and 0% of transphobic offences were detected. This issue is also an area of concern for disability related hate crime where only 10% of offences were detected. There is also curiously a greater percentage of racist hate crime successfully detected when the offender is not known to the victim compared to when the offender is known. Due to the low numbers of both transphobic and disability related hate crime it is difficult to identify any trends.

There have been no recent surveys in Birmingham of LGBT or disabled communities specific to hate crime. It is therefore difficult to confirm the reasons for under-reporting. National surveys of victims of homophobic hate crime suggest that crimes aren't reported because they are not considered serious enough or because it is believed the police can't or won't do anything about it. Some of the most cited reasons for under-reporting within the disabled community regard difficulty accessing services, insensitivity of the officers, or the absence of confidence in the criminal justice system. It is also reportedly the case that disabled victims often fail to recognise the seriousness of the offence.

**Homophobic, transphobic and disability related hate crime is significantly under-reported in Birmingham.**

**The 2 biggest barriers to reporting homophobic, transphobic and disability related hate crime is the perception that hate crime is 'normal' within these communities and the perception that an adequate quality of service is not provided.**

**There is also a gap in the standard of detection between racist hate crime and all other types of hate crime due to low levels of reporting.**

**Hate Crime victims are more likely to withdraw their complaint to West Midlands Police if the offender is known to them.**

**Recorded racist and faith hate crime is significantly influenced by offending within the night time economy and offending involving Birmingham's young people travelling home from school. Recorded homophobic and transphobic hate crime is significantly driven by the night time economy.**

It is therefore concluded that the largest threats to hate crime in Birmingham are inconsistencies in detection rates and under-reporting. It is also concluded, due to the differing trends associated with the different types of hate crime, that offenders and victims of hate crime should not be treated as a single homogenous group.

It is important that the reasons for under-reporting all types of hate crime within Birmingham are confirmed in order to concentrate efforts to resolve the issue. Analysis of victim satisfaction surveys is currently ongoing within the Safer Birmingham Partnership in an effort to identify areas for improvement.

Table 1 shows the rate of hate crime recorded in Birmingham, Dudley and Coventry. Although Birmingham records a higher rate of race hate crime this isn't surprising due to the larger proportion of BME communities within the Local Authority Area. The point of interest is that all three Local Authority areas receive relatively low rates reports of hate crime.

HATE CRIME	LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA		
	BIRMINGHAM	DUDLEY	COVENTRY
RACE	1.20	0.42	1.07
FAITH	0.05	0.01	0.07
HOMOPHOBIC	0.09	0.04	0.07
TRANSPHOBIC	0.00	0.00	0.00
DISABILITY	0.01	0.00	0.03

Table 1. The rate per 1000 population of hate crime Apr08 – Dec08 (WMP Crimes)

As the volume of reported hate crime to the police is essential in order to increase the quality of victim support, and then to increase the potential number of successful prosecutions, the referral mechanism of third-party reporting centres must be robust and directly involve West Midlands Police in some capacity.

Scope argue that CDRP's such as the Safer Birmingham Partnership could play other valuable roles such as identifying hotspots for hate crime and by conducting intelligence-led work that could help police identify repeat hate crime perpetrators<sup>1</sup>. Although much of this work is already completed by SBP in relation to other crime types it may be that a localized response by level 1 resources is more appropriate to address both hate crime and community re-assurance.

Scope also argues that the effectiveness of such partnerships is dependent on fully involving disabled people and their organizations in co-producing responses to hate crime. It's further suggested that police forces, housing officers and social care professionals work closer via a safer estates/neighbourhoods model within this intelligence led approach, as is currently proving effective within the Metropolitan Police.

It must be noted though that many of these suggestions are contained within the Birmingham Hate Crime Strategy launched in March 2009. A plan has been finalised to implement these recommendations and even at such an early stage it appears appropriate attention is being applied to the issues of concern highlighted here. Further more, it can be inferred that successful implementation of the Hate Crime Strategy will have a significant benefit to the above issues regarding hate crime, which will in turn ultimately lead to more successful prosecutions of hate crime offenders by the Crown Prosecution Service.

Currently there is little data available to establish the extent of hate crime reported to other organisations. Even where this information is recorded it is usually restricted to racist incident recording. For example, Birmingham Schools Exclusion data restricts its recording of hate involved exclusions to racism. As racist hate incidents are recorded by schools it can be inferred that homophobic and disability related hate crime is also present. In recent years, technology has given children a new means of bullying each other. Cyber bullying, which is sometimes referred to as online social cruelty or electronic bullying, involves use of the Internet or other digital social media to cause harassment and typically involves young people. As 18% of students in grades 6-8 said they had been cyber bullied at least once in the last couple of months and it has been increasing in recent years<sup>2</sup> it appears that the absence of hate crime data in this area is a significant knowledge gap for the SBP.

It also appears that there are emergent race hate issues that may be relevant in Birmingham involving the current economic downturn.

<sup>1</sup> Getting Away With Murder, 2008

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html>



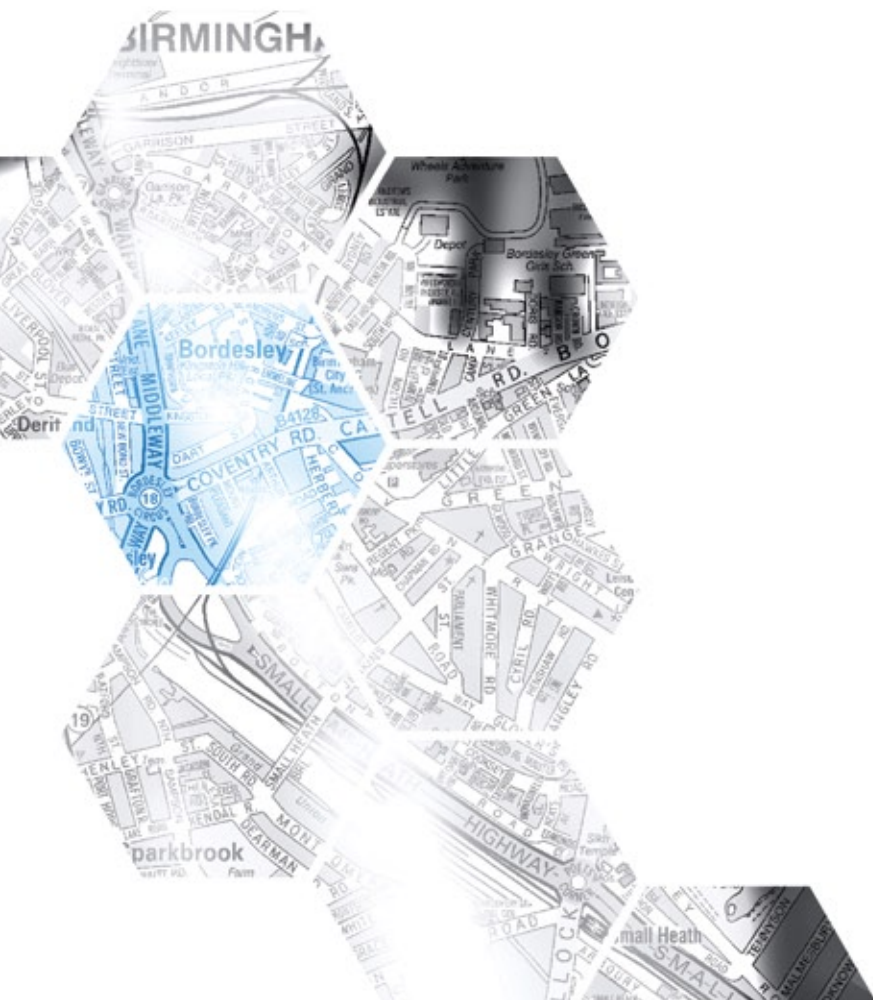
- Racist, homophobic and disability offenders/victims should not be treated as a homogenous group. In addition, SBP's partner data should be amended to reflect the type of hate crime and not just to address racist hate crime.
- The immediate development of a Hate Crime Protocol that transcends all agencies and third-party reporting centres with responsibility for addressing hate crime.
- A 'victim of hate crime' quality monitoring framework to be established using West Midlands Police's Contact Counts surveys with the aim of supporting the Birmingham Hate Crime Strategy.
- A Birmingham wide survey should be conducted to address knowledge gaps, establish the extent of under-reporting, and to confirm the perception of SBP and its partners within specific sections of the local community. Focus groups involving victims of hate crime should also be established in order to identify specific areas of improvement within service delivery.
- Analysis to be conducted on bullying, including variants such as cyber-bullying, to link in with ongoing hate crime work. It may be that this forms the basis of a strategy with the local education authority.





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