

LGBT HATE - REAL LIFE STORIES

“Inspiring stories from very brave people.”



**“I wanted to tell my story, it was hard for me,
but I did it, and I’m glad.”**



On behalf of The Fed and Hart Gables we would like to welcome readers to our LGBT* Hate 'real life stories' booklet.

LGBT* stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. The term LGBT* is intended to emphasise a diversity of sexuality and gender identity-based cultures and is sometimes used to refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender, instead of exclusively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender.

Hart Gables is a specialist support service for those who identify as LGB and/or T* across the Tees Valley. This booklet has been commissioned by the North East's LGBT* Federation who are a regional infrastructure organisation working to unite LGBT* individuals, groups, organisations and communities across the North East of England.

The booklets content is an expansion of the work that the two organisations planned and delivered in October 2015, to support and promote National Hate Crime Awareness Week. The objective of the work carried out in October was to explore with service users and local service providers the barriers they face when encountering homophobia, transphobia and biphobia in their communities, homes and the workplace. Similarly, the services wanted to learn what participants thought were the crucial keys to breaking down those barriers but most importantly of all, they wanted to help other services and individuals truly understand the emotional depth and impact that LGBT hate can have on a person.

The work was achieved by delivering two events across the North East.

Within these pages you will find true encounters of LGB and/or T* hate crimes and incidents experienced and shared by some of the North East's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender* community. We hope that by highlighting their stories we will inspire and encourage others to report their incidents to the Police, and other support services in the area.

In the remainder of this booklet you will find useful information around victim impact, top tips for services dealing with LGBT hate, helpful contacts and an acknowledgement to all those who have helped us create 'LGBT Hate – 'real life stories'. All information enclosed has been gathered and adapted from the workshops carried out in October 2015.



The man with the cigarette

My story is a little bit unbelievable, but at the same time, it's true. It dates back to a time in 2013 when I had just very recently started working as a Hate Crime worker for an LGBT charity in the local area. I was at work with my co-worker, when a man came into the office, he was smoking a cigarette and looked extremely irritated. 'Who has been putting alcohol bottles in my bin' he shouted, I looked at him slightly dumbfounded and told him we were a no alcohol zone service, and that he was mistaken, at that he became even more irritated, so I politely but firmly asked him to leave, as he walked out of the office he shouted back at me 'you fucking thick dyke'. Obviously, I was more than incensed and very offended. I phoned the Police straight away and told them what had happened; within hours the Police arrived and took my statement. A few days later I was informed that the man had been arrested and was due to appear in court within the next few months. Previous to the court

hearing, I was told that it would be difficult to prove that the incident was homophobically motivated as the offender was claiming he was not homophobic. This was quite disappointing for me, as he had quite transparently attacked my sexual orientation on his way out of the office. Thankfully his true colours were illustrated just before court when he said to the solicitor he said 'if I was homophobic, I would have called the puff'. A section 146 was implemented and the offender was found guilty, and hit with a fine that I considered to be pretty acceptable.

My story was positive, the offender was caught and punished and I felt satisfied with the result. Throughout my experience I felt an array of emotions, but the most prominent emotion I can remember feeling was anger. I felt angry that someone thought they had the right to use a specific part of my identity to abuse me and completely get away with it. My advice to anyone

who falls victim to a hate incident is to use whatever emotion you feel to drive you through the reporting process. I say this with absolute conviction, because I know although it's hard, if we don't report our incidents, people think that hate crime doesn't exist, and we all know that's just not true.

~ Sarah Lewis

Gay & Bisexual men's sexual health support service, in & around Newcastle.
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I forgive you

I was at a party with some of my friends, I was possibly only 14 or 15 at the time. I had known that I was bisexual for a while but didn't know how to tell anyone. I remember feeling like that night was the time to tell my friends and was confident about it. I told them one by one and I remember that one of the boys told me that bisexuality 'wasn't real' and that I had to choose one or the other. He also said that if I was gay, he didn't want me hanging around with his girlfriend. He actually tried to protect her for the rest of the night. I felt awful, like I shouldn't have told them because I had ruined their night.

The next day when I went into school and people were asking me about it, I said that I was joking and it was a drunken

mistake. I stayed in the closet until I was 17.

I recently met with that boy again and he was very apologetic about the whole situation. He told me he didn't care if I was gay or bi. He felt awkward at first but after I reassured him that I was fine and forgave him, he was alright. Some people think I was stupid to forgive him but we were only teenagers at the time and many people had influenced what many of us thought at that point.

I wish I had someone I felt comfortable to go to at that point but I didn't. I recently set up an LGBT group at school to show support for everyone in the community. This is the first thing my school has done for

the LGBT community and even after mentioning to people in my school, I'm still experiencing homophobia. I guess it'll be a while before it ends for good but at the moment the best we can do is group together and give each other the support we need.

~ Anonymous

Mockery at the market

I live in Sunderland but I am a regular visitor to the Grainger Market in Newcastle upon Tyne. I often use the fruit and vegetable stalls and the staff are made up of young men who fill the shelves and women who sell the goods.

On Saturday afternoon in 2014 I heard a male employee mention the word "homosexual", although he was a few feet away from me, I ignored it.

On Tuesday afternoon in January 2015 I visited the stall again. As I queued up to buy my goods one of the male workers left his work filling the shelves to stop a passer-by, who I think he knew, and in a loud voice he shouted "there's your boyfriend" and pointed at me. I knew he was pointing at me because I was

the only person in the queue. There was so much mockery in his body language and behaviour and the man he had stopped just looked at me and laughed. I felt deeply hurt and humiliated.

I found out the name and address of the head office and sent a letter of complaint but I received no reply. I eventually turned to the Arch where I saw two police officers who listened to me sympathetically, they even visited the manager of the stall the following day.

I also went to visit the woman who manages the Grainger Market on behalf of the city council and she personally contacted the manager and pressed him for a letter of apology. I received the letter and it was unsigned. I have made enquiries to see if

I can take this case to court for damages, as I have been deeply hurt by the experience and I consider it to be an invasion of privacy in regards to my sexuality. I have been advised by friends that it would be unwise to do so, as it would be very expensive.

I think it's best to leave the incident in mid-air and even though services have taken productive steps to highlight this intolerant behaviour, I do feel as though I am not satisfied by the outcome, and I think the legal system should help someone in this situation.

~ John



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Transphobia at work

I used to work for a company before and during my transition. I worked there for 4 years before I decided the time was right to come out and transition from female to male. The management were very good in the beginning, by allowing me to change my name, but they wouldn't let me wear a name badge to reinforce this change with the customers. After 6 months the store got a new manager and she hadn't known me prior to my transition. She kept changing my shifts saying I was making the customers uncomfortable, so instead of doing mornings she put me on evenings were more customers were under the influence of alcohol and other substances, which I felt put me at risk of transphobia from these customers. Luckily this never occurred

and the customers were great, sometimes asking about transitioning and what it entailed. Things continued to get worse in the shop and the store manager stopped letting me use the toilet in the back office claiming it was a women's toilet even though it didn't have a ladies or gents sign on it. Instead, I was made to use the toilet upstairs that the office staff used, still women. The most frustrating thing about this was the office was locked at 6pm and my shift didn't end till 9pm, which meant after 6pm I couldn't access a toilet.

I had been on holiday and came back to a written warning for money loss, however the dated incident was when I was on holiday. At this point I felt persecuted by the store manager

and I wasn't strong enough as a person and I resigned from my post, working there was effecting my mental health.

After my ordeal at work I decided that I would access a support service, I started attending the RtoB group at Hart Gables and since then I have progressed on to be a volunteer and now a staff member.

I know that through accessing the support I needed, I have only became stronger, if I was in the same position now as I was back then, I know I would have the strength to say no to the discrimination that I was subject to.

~ Anonymous

Hate in the workplace

So it's 2010, I'm subjected to derogatory and insulting comments suggesting I wanted to be a man and did things men do, and comments to others suggesting I was to be feared as a sexual predator, I pulled the perpetrator to one side and expressed my wish that he stop making the comments as I found them very uncomfortable, his response was very agreeable until he stood up to leave the meeting room, leant over, squared his face up to mine, smirked and said 'I hope you didn't lose any sleep'. The direct comments from the perpetrator stopped only to be continued by a colleague previously involved in 'banter' suggesting that having mistakenly entered a gay bar on a work trip they didn't know how quick to get out as it was full of weirdos, men in dresses and disgusting gays they didn't want to be around because they didn't know what they could catch. This was typical of comments made within the department, others would laugh, join in to add to the conversation. Over time I was excluded, ignored, and disrespected professionally when trying to do my job, made to feel worthless, frustrated, fearful and anxious. I began to find it increasingly difficult to socialise with colleagues, it affected my concentration at work, and my self esteem.

I tried to resolve matters by seeking the support of my manager, my manager generally responded by telling me to take no notice, that I was mistaken, even though he had

started a conversation questioning the sexual orientation of Joe McElderry and had overseen the conversation about Ricky Martin's coming out being viewed as the waste of a cock. Homophobic comments continued, a recurring theme was that gays belonged in the same category as paedophiles, there was no difference and they should be put up against a wall and shot.

In 2012, I sought meetings with HR because I was feeling worse about work and how I was being treated. I raised the same issues as I had with my manager for the first time as the stream of comments taken at any available opportunity was taking its toll on me emotionally, psychologically and physically. I was having difficulty sleeping, having low mood and withdrawn, I was going to sleep hoping that I wasn't going to wake up in the morning.

Eventually, I went to see the occupational health nurse in 2013. I advised her of how I was feeling unwell, bullied and overworked. I also told her about the comments I had been hearing from colleagues about my sexual orientation and how the office would go quiet and conversations would stop when I walked in, how I felt unsupported except by one colleague. It was proposed I had a follow up meeting to review my health and wellbeing in 6 weeks, it didn't happen.

Sexual and sexualised comments were still being made in August

2014, I continued to raise complaints, I was selected for redundancy in September 2014. I raised a formal grievance based on my employer having not adequately exercised duty of care towards me, and a subsequent appeal based on factual inaccuracies, the lack of acknowledgement that I was made to remove reference to homophobic behaviours on an annual appraisal and that the impact of statements which, even if made in 'general conversation' were not taken into account. I highlighted that repetition of derogatory comments about gay people knowing that a gay person is present was deliberate and directed at me, and the comments were made in that way to avoid reproach by claiming it to be banter or topical to the news at the time therefore the comments were highlighting my differences and increasing my isolation at work, they were not a few isolated comments that would make 'anyone feel uncomfortable'.

My appeal was turned down, next stage was an employment tribunal. From raising a grievance there is a 3 month time limit to take it to a tribunal. My option to take it to a tribunal was not available as the length of time my employer had taken to respond to my appeal exceeded the 3 month limit.

~ Anonymous



GASBAGS is a peer ran, social support group for **gay/bisexual men**. The group is open to men over the age of 18 and is based at Byker Community Centre, 153 Headlam Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE6 2DX. The group meets on **Tuesday evenings 6pm - 8pm**. The group is funded by Byker Community Trust and Big Lottery Fund. Contact GASBAGS Call Keith **0191 2655777**.

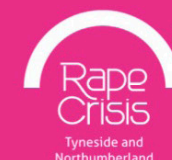
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VERA BAIRD
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER



My hateful best friend

It wasn't easy for me to come out during my school days, but when I eventually did people were more than accepting of me, except for someone I called my 'best friend' for 4 years.

She would text me abuse from anonymous number saying things such as "Maybe if you weren't a lesbian you would still have friends" and saying I should die. I would also get essays of abuse and accusations over Facebook when I was supposed to be on holiday, or away coming to terms with myself. When I found my first girlfriend at the start of college, I wanted to introduce her to my friends who were still friendly with my so called 'best friend', but when I did, she stated that she wouldn't come near me because I held another girls hand, gave me constant filthy glares and hurled malicious comments towards me.

The continual abuse played havoc with my mental health. It felt like she was turning everyone against me. I fell into a deep depression; I struggled to eat, sleep, I had breakdowns and then I started to self-harm. My family had been looking forward to the holiday, mentioned earlier, for a long time. It had been donkeys years since we all went away together. I was convinced I didn't want to go, that I shouldn't go. It felt like I was running away from my problems, that I was too depressed to enjoy it and I would just be a burden on the family. This really upset my mother; my depression was taking its toll on my family and my friends without me even realising it.

Starting college, my girlfriend at the time introduced me to the charity Hart Gables. I was a bit hesitant at first, but I started to feel more safe and comfortable. I cut the bully out of my life, and

soon after my school friends did too referring to her as 'poisonous'. My depression was still affecting my everyday life, as I was still self-harming. After my now ex discovered this, she told me about Hart Gable's one-to-one service and I decided to give it a go. I got a lot of helpful advice and a sympathetic ear that really helped me to build my confidence. I continued going to groups and received support from one-to-ones, which led me to stop self-harming and have more courage. I now work for Hart Gables, I'm now strong enough to be able to support others the same way they supported me.

~ Sian Parker



A sinking ship

During the Hate Crime Awareness week I was asked to produce a piece of art that portrayed my own hate crime experience and talk people through the meaning of it, sort of like my personal story, here I will try write in words the connotation.

The Portrait I painted was of a ship caught in a vicious storm with crashing waves, a maelstrom, black clouds with thunder and lightning, the ship was caught a blaze. Within the portrait I placed some hidden messages, at the head of the tidal wave, the word 'emotions' was written and around the maw of the maelstrom was the words 'fight the odds'. These hidden messages to me are very powerful and helped connect an emotional tie to the portrait. The black clouds naturally symbolize sorrow and the lightning

illustrates anger, and when the two are seen is never a good sign. The Ocean's boisterous waves breaking and crashing all around, is life when it's at its worst, the tidal wave is the crushing wave of emotion that washes over you when you are feeling lost. The Maelstrom is the dark void in which anyone would try to sail away from. The burning ship represents the individual who is wounded, trying to fight their way through all the odds, no matter how bad the odds are stacked against them, they have to keep going, otherwise they will drown.

To me, this is what it felt like when I was a victim of hate crime. It's a constant struggle but you have to keep going no matter what, because the minute you stop, you get lost and sometimes there is no coming back. Sometimes people don't

need help from others, sometimes they continue along themselves, but most of the time it's vital that someone comes along and pulls you up, before you go under.

When you fall victim to LGBT hate, getting the right support you need could change your life, give yourself that chance by contacting local services.

~ Jynx Necros



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Hate at my house

As I got out the taxi to walk to the front of my house I noticed something was wrong. As I approached the front garden my heart sank. Rubbish had been scattered all over, flour and eggs had been thrown at my windows, tomato sauce and other various foods had been used to vandalise the front of my home and a bag of wood chippings at been spread all over my lawn. I spent the next few hours cleaning up the damage.

I didn't ask myself why, because I already knew. For weeks I had been getting abuse for being Transgender, I had been verbally assaulted in the street, numerous pizzas had been sent to my home and I faced daily laughs and sniggers from local children and their parents.

It's hard to describe how it makes you feel, but to sum it up for you, I would say I felt scared,

targeted and alone. It's even harder when you are already dealing with poor mental health, but these incidents created an almost unbearable feeling of anxiety and emotional pain, and I knew then I needed some support.

I contacted my local LGBT service who encouraged me to phone the Police, this is exactly what I did. Cleveland Police were very accommodating in that they took my incidents seriously, something I never thought they would do, I guess sometimes you don't think these incidents are as serious as others or that the Police would really understand them. They got me in touch with community safety and they gave me security adaptations for my home, which made me feel a lot safer. Although they never found the perpetrator, I felt better knowing that someone was supporting me and taking my

crime seriously, but not only, I have empowered that I had made this happen, I took control back.

For additional support I turned to Hart Gables, a charity in which I have been a service user at for over a year now. My advice to any one dealing with similar issues to myself is to report them, whether it be to the Police or to someone like Hart Gables. It really does help, the key to getting through these incidents is having support, and people who are part of the LGBT community know all too well that sometimes family support is sparse, but that doesn't mean there is no support out there at all. Make that step and get the support you need, it may just help you more than you think.

~ Abbie Jayne



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RCHP welcomes LGBT people to participate in our full range of activities



Northumbria PCC, Vera Baird, believes absolutely no one should be victimised because they have a different faith, gender, disability or sexuality. Her Police and Crime Plan has given a clear commitment to ensuring that Northumbria Police listens to all communities.

Putting victims first and tackling hate crime are important priorities for the Commissioner. She is a key supporter of events in the region that celebrate LGB&T communities such as Pride, LGB&T History Month, International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) and Transgender Awareness Week. This year, she hosted a conference highlighting the impact of hate crime and encouraging organisations to work together to make it a thing of the past. She has six advisory groups, one of which is dedicated to LGB&T issues. This group meets to discuss any concerns they have as well as initiatives which are going well in the force region.

Commissioner Baird would like to encourage victims of hate crime to come forward and speak to police on 101 or 999 in an emergency - **being you is not a crime**.



Independent and free victim referral service, we will connect you with one of our Victim Care Coordinators who will offer a range of services depending on your personal needs to assist in your recovery from the crime. This may include: telephone or face to face contact, volunteer support, referrals to specialist organisations, provision of alarms, help arranging repairs and guidance through the criminal justice system. If you report a crime or incident to the police, they will, with your consent pass your details on to see if we can help. However, you don't have to report a crime to get help as you can contact us directly. Whether the crime happened recently or a long time ago, we can support 0800 011 3116 (Monday-Friday: 8am-8pm Saturday: 9am-5pm) enquiries@victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk

Public figure challenges Hate Crime

It is now some 5 years since the local press headlines read "A ROWDY thug head-butted a Councillor who gave evidence to have him and his family evicted."

I had been working as a volunteer in the local community in 2009 when I was subjected to verbal homophobic abuse from a young man. The man had a track record of anti-social behaviour and I was asked to be a witness by the Registered Social Landlord of the property where he lived. This resulted in an order being placed on the home for a year, that the tenancy would be in jeopardy should there be any further incidents. A year and one week passed and I was subsequently physically attacked by the same young man. The assault occurred after the young man admitted he had consumed a large quantity of alcohol. I was head-butted, punched in my arm & chest and my car was also damaged. This was the third occasion I had been targeted in two years. A previous verbal assault two years earlier had resulted in the perpetrator being imprisoned for seven weeks.

The case was taken to court, as it was clearly a hate crime and I will never understand why an innocent person is targeted because of prejudice in respect of

their sexuality. For me the whole episode was hurtful, embarrassing and distressing.

At the time whilst I felt hurt, I still felt there was no major homophobic problem in Hartlepool and did not want a young man, with his life ahead of him, imprisoned but hoped he would learn from it. I hold the belief that all people, regardless of their sexuality should be able to go out without fear of being attacked. The defence solicitor suggested that whilst the attack was unpleasant, unwarranted and unprovoked that sexuality was not an issue. The young man subsequently pleaded guilty, avoided a custodial sentence and I did not have to give evidence in court. A fine was imposed, which was paid and I donated the sum to a local youth charity.

You always hope that people learn from their mistakes but I again was subjected to abuse from the same young man earlier this year. Another court case and this time he pleaded not guilty and my partner and I had to attend court and give evidence. Thankfully he was again found guilty with a fine and a substantial community service. All I asked for was an injunction to keep my family and I safe, which was given for two years.

If I could change one aspect of the communities in which we live it would be to eradicate persecution. Unlike many Human Rights issues it is an ambition that touches upon the most personal and intimate aspect of somebody's life: their sexuality. Unlike other struggles for human dignity, LGBT issues are not limited to race, colour, gender, social classes, religious or cultural background or political convictions. Let us hope Hate Crime becomes a part of history.

~ Christopher Akers-Belcher



Byker Community Centre is situated in the middle of the Byker Wall and has space to hire for one off events and permanent sessions and groups. We actively encourage and implement groups and services ourselves that promote diversity. We have a wide variety of activities running from the centre, including lunch clubs, music groups for adults with learning disabilities and our Gay Mens support group 'GasBags'. For more information on the activities we provide, to talk to us about renting a room/space or joining our team of Trustees or Volunteers Contact Aly Tel 0191 2655777 Email bykercc@live.co.uk



Proud Supporters of The LGBT Federation

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At Gentoo, we do not tolerate hate incidents, and neither should you! We understand that they can make life unbearable. For that reason, as well as taking action against perpetrators we also give high priority to supporting Gentoo customers who are victims.

On request, we can offer an initial appointment with someone who has personal experience, or knowledge and understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity. However, all of our Victim Support Officers are sensitive to individual circumstances, and work closely with our customers to discuss options and agree with them what happens next.

Tel: 0191 525 5000

Web: www.gentoo.org





Hate in an email

It was the beginning of July when I got an email from a relative, in the email he told me about some relatives of mine that he had found who lived in Cornwall. I was excited at the prospect of having family in the UK but at the same time I was nervous about contacting them. Although I had apprehensions, I decided to contact them in hope that they would want to get to know me. I sent them an email and within two days they responded. I decided to meet up with them in Durham, and I took a friend along. When I got there it was very emotional, we were all very happy to meet each other and the day went really well. I told them about my sexuality and at the time they seemed to accept it, this acceptance from family I had never met left me feeling very proud of who I was.

Sadly, the acceptance stopped

there. A few months later I began to receive emails from the family which I had met. In the emails I found words of hatred towards my sexuality, the emails even contained threats on my life for being who I am. The worst part was that they came at a time when I was already feeling very low, and struggling with my mental health. The emails affected me so badly that I wanted to take my own life, I felt like it was the only way to get away from them. The next few weeks were very tough and if it wasn't for my support network I probably wouldn't have got through them.

Sunderland Pride came around, and after much persuasion I decided to go along, who knew this event would have such a positive impact on my life. When I was there I noticed the Police were there answering questions from the public and I decided to go

over and speak to them about the emails. After lots of liaising with them they looked into my incident and took action against my family. Since then, I have only received one email, which I would consider not as vicious as the others. I have received no more emails since the Police intervened and now I am able to continue with my life.

Who knows where I would be if I hadn't went to pride that day and hadn't had the courage to inform my local police force. What I do know is, that because I did, my life changed for the better and knowing that I had someone on my side allowed me to feel empowered again.

~ Hassan Abbas

Our Corner, Our Truth, Tough Stuff

About 20 years ago I got calls from a very irate woman who claimed that I was 'doing her bloke', well not likely. In the days before mobile phones, there was no way she could have had my telephone number so I suppose any one I had worked for could have given her my business card with my details on it. When I spoke to her I didn't intend to come out, I just wanted to remind her that she was speaking to an honest lass, who wasn't lying. In the end though she wasn't playing fair, she continued to shout and accuse me, so I ended up shouting, 'for god sake, I am queer, stop bothering me!'

It finally looked like the messages had stopped, but then I received a very unsettling one about 'sexual services' for her disabled son. I had no idea what she was talking about. All I could think of was when my mate Janet used to visit. Janet was paraplegic, which made it

difficult for her to be moved from the electric to manual chair, because these Tyneside flats have reet tight corners. When we were young we could hoist our paraplegic marras in and out of bed, on chair and on to the bog, and it's true I suppose we looked like young lads to the rest of them. At the time Janet didn't enjoy being hawked up and down, so instead, outside my flat on the pavement we would sit while she sat in the car, it was easy this way because we could get her anything she needed and we would just nip back to the flat for the toilet, a smoke and cups of tea and Janet had a bucket. Most folk going past enjoyed the banter, making little of the unusual.

I am out and proud, as are my kin, everywhere we go.

What I have just written isn't bog standard, this person was trying to associate depravity with being gay, highlighting homophobia

comes in many forms.

After I received the message I went to meet a couple of my pals, I was shaking. I felt so stupid wondering why someone had been leaving me messages like that, and even worse that someone had been watching my house and me and my pals. Most folk who walked past us enjoyed a little banter, saw friendly faces and smiled at us, they gave us the time of day and we reciprocated that warmth with human kindness, but that one person who saw us, saw something adverse, that had no truth to it and decided to harass us, based only on their perception of gay people.

So now it goes, none of us now know what's around the next corner.

~ Anonymous



Supporting vulnerable people and victims of crime across County Durham and Darlington is central to the work of Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner for Durham. His ambition is to make services for victims in County Durham and Darlington the best in the country. He believes that every victim of crime should benefit from the best possible service according to their needs and this can only be done by continuously improving the quality of the response and support available.

For this reason, reducing the impact of Hate Crime remains a priority and features in the refreshed Police and Crime Plan. Ron Hogg wants to reduce the incidence of Hate Crime and to increase confidence for individuals to report these appalling crimes, instead of suffering in silence. As part of his role as Police and Crime Commissioner, he puts all his efforts into representing and engaging with the LGB&T community to ensure that their voices are heard. Durham Constabulary is dedicated to tackling Hate Crime, to better serve people who have been a victim of Hate Crime, to end this type of crime, and as such, Ron Hogg encourages people to come forward to report Hate Crime.



Barry Coppinger, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is committing to tackling hate crime as part of his priority to 'Ensure a better deal for victims and witnesses.'

Barry is a keen supporter of the LGB&T community in Cleveland, having signed up to the rainbow laces campaign and giving an annual contribution to Middlesbrough Community Pride. He regularly meets with the LGB&T community to discuss hate crime and community safety issues.

Some examples of the work he has done to provide better support for LGB&T victims of hate crime are:

- Hosted a multi agency seminar focusing on Improving Response to Homophobic and Transphobic Hate Crime
- Commissioned Gay Advice Darlington & Durham to undertake some research into the barriers to reporting LGB&T hate crime, which has led to an action plan of activities
- Commissioned a series of training events for front line police and partner staff on Homophobic and Transphobic Awareness and Hate Crime
- Undertaken dip sampling of hate crime incidents across Cleveland and Durham to look at improving the victim journey through the criminal justice process
- Consulted with the LGB&T community on the use of Restorative Justice in hate crime cases
- Developed cross Cleveland standards for Hate Crime Reporting Centres and coordinated training sessions for Centre staff

Primary Contact

If you have been the victim of an LGB and/or T* hate crime or incident in the North East, please contact The Fed for support and signposting.

Please check out their website for more information about the service

www.lgbtfed.com

Alternatively, you can email them at mail@lgbtfed.com or write to their mailing address;

The LGBT Fed
Carnegie Building
Atkinson Road
Benwell
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 8XS

'It was difficult talking about my incident, I didn't think no one would care, but once I did, I finally felt like I mattered' ~ Abbie-Jayne

Victim Impact – How can a person be effected by LGBT Hate

- Mental Health Issues (Severe and Mild)
- Internalised homophobia – biphobia – transphobia
- Lack of confidence
- Disempowered
- Vulnerable
- Suicidal feelings/self-harm
- Leaving employment
- Leaving education
- Alcohol and drug misuse as a way of coping
- Unhealthy relationships/Sexual Exploitation
- Using their experience in order to do something positive
- Self-blame

Top Tips - How can we make a difference?

- Highlight that there are positive stories out there
- More training for people in all working environments around hate crime
- Referring to specialist services for victim support
- Awareness raising for existing LGBT hate crime services so people know they exist
- LGBT hate victim support groups
- Education around LGBT hate crime in schools, colleges and universities
- Third party reporting centres highlighted

Acknowledgements

On behalf of Hart Gables and The Fed, we would like to thank all those who took part in the workshops and provided us with the information we needed to create our booklet. We would also like to thank the photographers who captured the event and allowed us to share it with others and most importantly, we would like to say a big thankyou to all the brave LGBT individuals who stepped forward and allowed us to share their stories.

Helpful contacts

Hart Gables
220 York Road, Hartlepool, TS21

