



Older People – Is Hate Crime and Issue?

The workshop followed on from a presentation given by Paul Giannasi in the morning session with the objective of looking at the Home Office decision NOT to include age related hate crime within recordable hate crime.

The discussion covered several points including:

Group 1

- Age could be included but what age? Define old age. How can vulnerability be separated out from age-related hate crime?
- Fear of crime is far greater in older people but statistically they are less likely to be the victim of crime than a younger person.
- BUT is it simply that age related crimes are not reported because of vulnerability?
- Trouble with Youths complaints are common from older people – are these hate crimes?
- Deterrents such as the mosquito device are effective and popular with adults but are seen by young people as a breach of human rights. Ageism??
- Do different hate crime labels create segregation? Creating labels over-complicates the issue and creates more types of crime.
- If people are getting fixed penalty notices for minor crimes but get greater penalties if the same incident is hate related surely this suggests the initial penalty was too lenient?
- Specific measures needed to control abuse in care home settings and bogus/distraction burglary
- Risk assessments for elderly victims, including target hardening/personal safety. More victim support required if victim is older or lives alone.
- Older people tend to be perpetrators of crimes against NHS staff and staff feel this is *because* they are older.

Group 2

- Age related illness is often covered under disability hate crime anyway.
- Difference between a hate incident and a hate crime?
- Hate crime label and issues are indicators of community tension and possible lack of cohesion
- Vulnerability in its own right is an aggravating factor for sentencing
- There has been discussion in some areas around addressing age related hate incidents as a local issue, without support from the police. This is problematic as it relies on getting data from the police
- How do all these discussion by professionals actually impact on communities?
- Divisions in hate crime definitions fragments the response to the main problem of lack of cohesion. Ageism is endemic and an everyday fact of life for many people.



- If older people complain about kids hanging round when they are not doing anything wrong this is also ageism, likewise if the police move them on for no reason. Needs to be an understanding of the needs of different age groups.
- Economic status is insufficiently considered as a potential root of a specific category of hate crime.
- How do we respond to older perpetrators of hate crime?
- What are our roles and responsibilities as services?

From the two groups a total of 14 people were for the Home Office stance of not including age in the list of reportable hate crimes, 8 were against the stance and 2 abstained.