

Extracts from Metropolitan Police website : **Community Service Unit** – at 23 March 2007

<http://www.met.police.uk/csu/whatscsu.htm>

“If you're a survivor of a hate crime, we can help you take the next step. If you're a survivor of a hate crime and need support to move on, we can help you get there”

Every crime has a bad effect on the victim but **hate crimes** are probably the most damaging. They **happen when a person hates someone else enough to abuse them, attack them or commit some other offence against them.**

Sometimes the crime happens in what should be the peace and safety of your own home and the violence or other abuse comes from someone you know well.

Sometimes it happens because someone, a complete stranger to you, doesn't like anyone who is different to them. A different skin colour, a different race, a different religion, a different sexual orientation.

Whatever the cause, it hurts - not just physically but in other ways too. And its effects - fear, outrage, anger - can be felt throughout a community. Every crime is senseless but hate crimes are probably the most senseless - because they come from prejudice and ignorance.

Community Safety Units

We don't pretend that our service will make up for the pain and suffering you've gone through, but **the officers working in these new units will do all they can to help you deal with what's happened to you.**

We'll keep a record of what's happened

The police station that covers the area where it happened will hold the details on their files. But you can go into any other station in London and get an update on your investigation. When you first speak to us, we will give you a special reference number and all you have to do is tell the other station what the number is and they will give you the information you want.

We may ask you for some extra details to help us with your investigation, for example if anything like this has happened to you before.

And if you think you are still in danger, we will let your local police station know straight away

We will arrest the suspect if we can (this is called a positive arrest policy)

We are on your side. If there is enough evidence and the suspect is still there, we will arrest him or her. This is to give you time and space to think to do anything you need to do **and to talk to us without fearing further harm or abuse.**

In some cases, we may not be able to arrest the suspect there and then and we will explain why. We will do our best to catch the person or people responsible and deal with them in the most appropriate way, taking your wishes into account. We will tell you or the person you've chosen to speak for you what we have done and why. We will keep you up to date with the progress of your investigation and tell you if and when the case will be going to court.

We will ask you to make a written statement telling us what happened, about anything similar that might have happened to you in the past and whether you fear it could happen again. This statement may be used in the court case.

What we need from you

If you have seen or experienced something that you think is probably a hate crime, please tell us about it. If you can, write down the date, time and circumstances and ask anyone else who saw what happened for their name and address. Then get in touch with us.

Even if we can't arrest anyone or if you don't want to get involved in a prosecution, any information you can give us will help us build up our knowledge. **The more we know about these crimes and who commits them, the better we can work to prevent, detect and investigate them in the future.**

We also want to know what you think of the service you receive from your Community Safety Unit. You can talk to the Chief Superintendent at your local police station. Your views and feedback can help us do things even better.

The Community Safety Unit will:

keep improving the way we investigate cases of domestic violence, racist and homophobic crime (hate crimes);

pursue, arrest and prosecute people who commit hate crimes;

be open about how we investigate hate crimes;

in partnership with other organisations, provide support for those who have suffered from hate crimes;

liaise with other organisations to make sure we are giving the best possible service at all times;

build new partnerships to combat hate crimes;

make sure we record everything we do in an investigation and that the person who has reported the hate crime is kept up to date.

Hate crime - <http://www.met.police.uk/csu/hatecrime.htm>

Why come to us?

Hate crime hurts us all. It strikes at the heart of our communities. We are the police officers and staff of your local police station. We care about protecting the people who live in our communities. **We're here to help anyone who, like you, has been affected by someone else's** prejudice, ignorance or violence. With support from specially trained staff of your local Community Safety Unit, we'll do all we can to help you deal with what's happened to you.

What can we do for you?

Advise you

It's not always easy to know if what has happened to you is a crime. If someone shouts abuse at you in the street or sends you hate mail because of your religion or sexual orientation - is that a crime? What if your partner bullies or intimidates you at home? Or do they have to hurt you before it counts as a crime? If you're not sure, please ask us. **It's our job to identify what's happened and make sure that appropriate action is taken.**

Stay in touch

We will stay in touch with you and see you through the whole investigation, from start to finish. Our aim is to contact you within 24 hours of you reporting the offence to let you know what's happening. We will also give you a phone number, so you can call us directly to find out how your case is going or talk about anything that might be worrying you.

Find help for you

With your consent, we can put you in touch with other local support organisations that understand your specific needs.

Protect you

If appropriate we will arrest the suspect at the time to protect you from further harm and give you time to think. If that's not possible, we will do all we can to find them. We will take your wishes into account

when we decide what to do with them. Whatever happens, we will let you know what's going on every step of the way.

Give you guidance

We'll talk you through all the procedures so that you know what you're being asked to do, and why. For example, we'll probably want you to give a statement explaining what happened. And if you have to go to court, we can explain the court process to you and let you know what will be expected of you.

How you can make a report

You can come in to any police station, anywhere in London, or one of us can visit you at home, if that's easier or more comfortable for you. You can talk to us yourself or ask someone else to speak on your behalf, like a friend or relative, a community leader or your solicitor. You could even ask someone from your local authority, housing association or advice bureau to speak for you.

No matter who we talk to, whatever you or anyone else tells us about what happened to you will be treated confidentially, sensitively and appropriately.

http://cms.met.police.uk/met/boroughs/kensington_chelsea/09contact_us/index

Notting Hill Police station - 020 7376 1212
99 - 101 Ladbroke Road
Notting Hill
London
W11 3PL

Email: BS-Secretariat@met.police.uk

Getting here

Tube station: Holland Park (Central) or Notting Hill Gate (Central) - Opening times: 24 hours a day