

# Police running Hate Crime campaign in Edinburgh

Lothian and Borders Police launched a programme in Edinburgh this week to try and combat any kind of act which amounts to what is known as hate crime in the city. This includes any kind of verbal abuse which targets people for reasons of religion, colour, age or race, as well as any physical behaviour which has the same effect.

As part of the initiative, which began on Monday, officers will provide a visible presence throughout many popular areas of the capital and engage with local residents, businesses and visitors to prevent and detect Hate Crimes.

Edinburgh remains a safe place to live, work and visit, with the city centre viewed by many as an exciting and vibrant hub.

The area has seen a six per cent drop in crime over 2011/12 compared to the previous years and recent surveys by the City of Edinburgh Council and Essential Edinburgh reflect the confidence the majority of the public have when out shopping and socialising.

However, the increase of visitors during the summer for the many attractions and festivals that the city centre offers and the increase in business for the various pubs and clubs across Edinburgh can also result in a rise in reports of Hate Crime.

Police are warning that such behaviour will not be tolerated.

A number of bus shelters in popular areas of Edinburgh will advertise the campaign and urge anyone who witnesses a Hate Crime or perceives that they have been the victim of a crime to contact police.

Over the coming weekend 4- 6 May Lothian and Borders Police

and their partners at British Transport Police and City of Edinburgh Council will carry out a joint operation at many of the licensed premises in the capital.

The multi-agency initiative will visit a number of establishments including pubs, clubs and off licenses to raise awareness of the impact Hate Crime can have on victims, their families and communities to ensure such incidents don't arise.

Taxi drivers will be asked to display Hate Crime campaign stickers in their vehicles, warning passengers of the consequences of becoming involved in crimes of this nature.

Chief Inspector Gavin Phillip who has policing responsibility for the city centre said: "Lothian and Borders Police is committed to tackling Hate Crime in all its forms and will work together with partner agencies to raise awareness of the issue and reassure our communities that all reports will be investigated thoroughly.

"It is completely unacceptable to verbally or physically abuse any other person because of their race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability or age.

"This includes people such as door staff, taxi drivers and police officers who are legitimately carrying out their respective roles.

"Any person who does engage in this behaviour will be robustly dealt with.

"Those wishing to report a crime can do so by calling 0131 311 3131, alternatively they can make a report anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111