

# Hate crime incidents in Midlothian increase by more than 30%

**Hate crime incidents in Midlothian increased by more than 30% as police continued to deal with the 'hangover' over new laws last year.**

A Police Scotland update on crime in Midlothian reported the number of hate crimes recorded between October, last year, and March was 181 -nearly a third higher than the five years average covering the same period.

Acting local area commander Kirsty McArthur-Kerr told a meeting of Midlothian Police and Fire Board that the offences covered a range of aggravators including disability, race, religion, sexual orientation and transgender.

And she said the rise was anticipated in the wake of the introduction of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act that was introduced on the 1st of April 2024.

Inspector McArthur-Kerr told the board: "We are still seeing the hangover from that and we continue to work with partners to encourage reporting of all hate crimes.

"Hate has no place in society and Midlothian police will actively pursue offenders and report criminality where evidence supports this."

The report revealed that elsewhere operations were having a positive impact on incidents across the county with no

fatalities on the roads reports over the last year – something Councillor Peter Smaill hailed as not recalling being reported before.

And there was a drop on housebreaking incidents, including attempted break-ins by nearly 13% with the detection rate higher than the national average at almost 39%.

Inspector McArthur-Kerr said a dedicated housebreaking team had been established in the county with officers hand picked for their investigation skills.

She told the board the team was able to look at not just individual reports, but bring them together to look for trends and tackle them.

She added the availability of dashcam footage and doorbell camera and CCTV had made a huge difference to catching criminals telling the board “it is worth its weight on gold.”

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter