

# TfL, transport police and community groups take a stand against hate crime and abuse

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Transport for London (TfL) has announced a series of measures it is putting in place to continue to improve how it tackles hate crime on the network, making public transport a more welcoming and safer place for everyone as more people return to the network. This follows several months engaging with community groups and TfL's frontline staff to better understand lived experiences and concerns about hate crime on the transport network.

Everyone has the right to use public transport without fear of abuse because of their disability, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, religion or any other characteristic. TfL takes a zero tolerance approach to all forms of abuse on its network and is working hard to ensure its customers and staff are safe, feel safe and have the confidence to report any incident knowing that it will be taken seriously and investigated.

Hate crime is significantly underreported across society and transport is no exception. In 2019, more than 2,760 hate crimes were reported to the police but the real figure is thought to be higher. Extensive engagement over the past six months with a range of community groups, including Covid-19 Anti-Racism Group, Shomrim, and Tell MAMA, has shown that more needs to be done to communicate with, and inform

passengers and staff about hate crime, and to show solidarity and support to victims.

In response, TfL is taking the following action:

- Customers travelling on public transport from today will see TfL's new campaign focused on tackling abuse on the network. Posters are displayed across the network encouraging customers and staff to stand in solidarity against hate and abusive behaviour. Messages include 'London stands together against abuse on our transport network', 'we won't tolerate hate crime', 'we won't stand for abuse of TfL Staff' and 'we won't accept drunken abuse of TfL Staff'
- From early 2022, new Diversity and Inclusion training for all new bus drivers will include a module specifically about dealing with hate crime. The training will be developed in consultation with London based community groups to tackle hate crime. Additionally, from today updated guidance on how to report and support victims of hate crime is being issued to all bus drivers
- TfL's STARS programme is introducing a new educational exercise for London's secondary schools which explores the impact of hate crime and encourages pupils to share the solidarity message that hate crime will not be tolerated

TfL continues to work closely with its transport policing partners to support the investigation of hate crimes on its public transport network to bring offenders to justice. Over 2,500 police and police community support officers patrol the network to improve the safety of customers and staff and reassure those who may feel vulnerable.

Police crime figures show that a quarter of all work-related violence and aggression incidents are hate crimes. TfL takes a zero-tolerance approach to all types of staff abuse against its transport staff and works alongside the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and British Transport Police (BTP) to tackle it. This includes targeted operations for physical assault and verbal aggression on staff, public order offences, hate crimes and drunken abuse. 4,500 body worn cameras for staff have been in operation across the TfL network since the end of 2020 to help reduce workplace violence.

Rabbi Herschel Gluck OBE, President of Shomrim, said: "It is deeply appreciated by everyone that uses the TfL network that this campaign has been initiated to fundamentally improve the security and dignity of the conditions and journeys of all those that work in and use the transport system, without exception. We are looking forward to its imminent and full implementation."

Siwan Hayward, Director of Compliance, Policing Operations and Security, said: "London is one of the most diverse cities in the world, with a long tradition of openness towards people of all faiths, nationalities and backgrounds. Tackling abuse and hate crime on our network is a priority for us and we're proud to be working with the communities we serve and the police to take action, protect our customers and staff, and provide support to victims. My message to all those who use and work on the transport network is clear – abuse will not be tolerated, report anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, and let's all stand together against hate."

Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor of London for Transport, said: "There is no place for hate crime of any kind in our city and everyone deserves the right to use our transport network without fear of abuse, including

TfL staff. This new campaign, combined with a range of enhanced measures to improve training and education, has been developed with community groups and the police to tackle the issue head-on and clearly demonstrate that hate crimes will not be tolerated.”

Superintendent Lisa Garrett, British Transport Police, said: “Preventing and tackling hate crime is a BTP priority. We have highly visible patrols and dedicated operations across London to ensure the safety and security of passengers and staff. When incidents do happen, we’re ready to respond and have access to CCTV and staff body worn video which often gives us vital evidence to identify suspects and make arrests. We take these incidents very seriously, so we strongly encourage anyone who witnesses or is a victim of hate crime to contact BTP by texting 61016, and in an emergency dialling 999.”

Paul Lynch, Regional Director London and Wales, Stagecoach Bus: “Our Bus Drivers experience challenges everyday whilst providing an excellent customer experience to our customers. Sadly, hate crime is one of the more challenging elements and this is on the increase. Behaviour like this shouldn’t have to be tolerated by anyone. The safety of our people and customers is at the heart of everything we do. We welcome this brilliant campaign, which includes all of London’s bus network people, as further evidence of us working together to ensure that unacceptable behaviour is reported so that action can be taken to make London’s transport network even safer.”

*Photo credit: Transport for London*