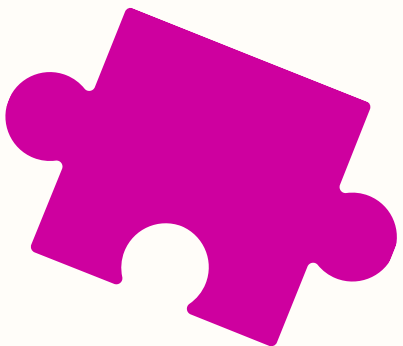
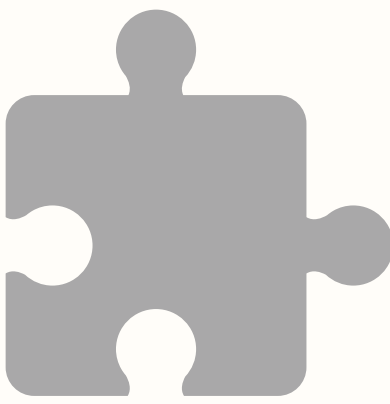




NORTHERN IRELAND HATE CRIME CAMPAIGN



WE STAND TOGETHER

MINI-MANIFESTO

ADDRESSING HATE CRIME
IN ANTRIM & NEWTOWNABBEY

“Those not in the room, in the room”



INTRODUCTION

Hate crime remains a real concern across Antrim & Newtownabbey — and the disorder of summer 2024 showed how quickly tension can escalate where trust is thin and early intervention is missing. Addressing it calls for a collaborative, proactive approach that rebuilds trust and ensures every community feels safe, valued and included.

This Mini-Manifesto was developed from workshops and conversations led by Victim Support NI and local partners through the We Stand Together OCN Level 3 training delivered in February–March 2026. The issues, asks, and commitments reflect the views and lived experiences of the training participants — people who live, work and are invested in the district and its future.

The views and recommendations contained within this Mini-Manifesto are those that emerged through participant discussions during the programme. They should not be interpreted as representing the corporate position of Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council, Victim Support NI, or other organisations involved in supporting or delivering the programme. The participants are also not intended to be representative of every community or perspective across the Borough.

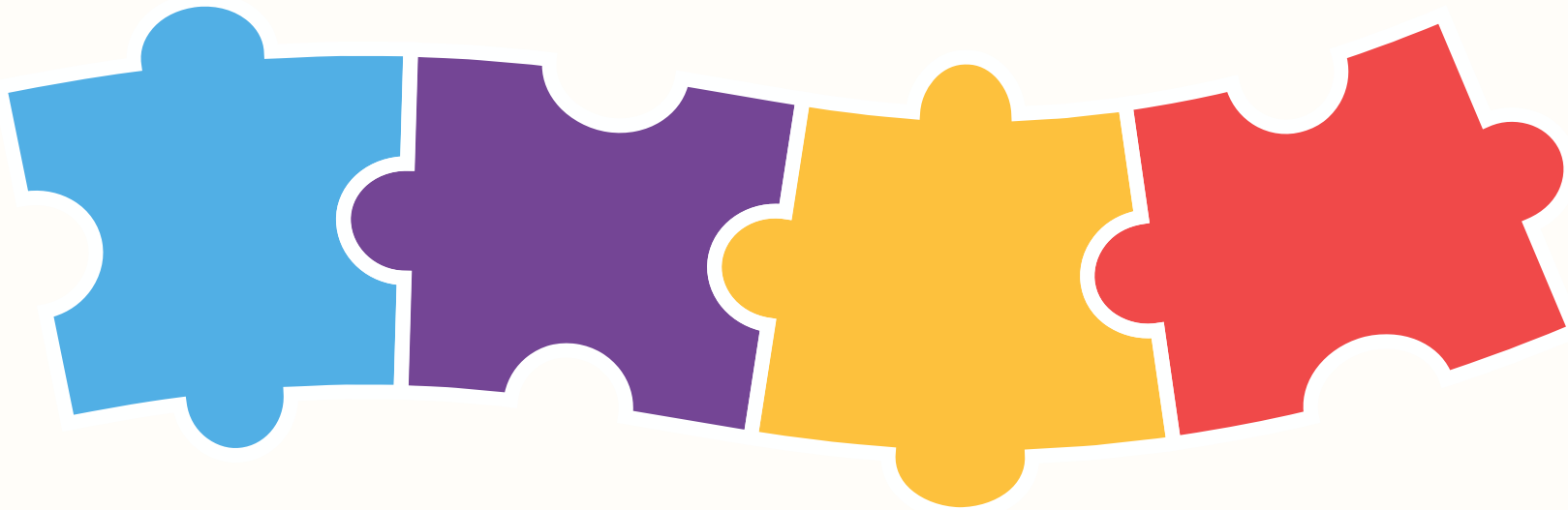
It builds upon Victim Support NI’s ‘Northern Ireland Hate Crime Manifesto’ (launched in 2024) and applies its themes to Antrim & Newtownabbey.

It is a living document, intended as a contribution to addressing hate crime locally. Other voices and solutions are welcomed.

Antrim & Newtownabbey is home to strong community and spirit, good schools and growing diversity - and there is real good practice to build on. Yet significant challenges were identified by participants:

- Concerns around trust in the PSNI and statutory bodies, based on experiences described by some participants.
- A community and voluntary sector that can be competitive rather than collaborative.
- Legacy divisions between and within neighbourhoods that still shape relations.
- A lack of preventative planning and early intervention, exposed during the summer 2024 disorder, and subsequent disorders in 2025 and 2026.

- Myths and misinformation about migration that participants felt can fuel intimidation and vandalism - leaving some people living in fear.
- The influence of social media in spreading fear and falsehood.
- The importance of stronger and more consistent political leadership - and concern about rhetoric that can, at times, increase tensions
- Public reluctance to show solidarity openly, even where it exists quietly.
- Education disparities, socioeconomic disadvantage and limited employment opportunities in some areas
- Rural and suburban communities overlooked in wider strategies.



THE ISSUES:

Several recurring themes were identified:

Trust in Policing & Statutory Services

Some participants described a lack of trust in the PSNI and statutory bodies, with experiences shared during the programme contributing to that mistrust. Rebuilding it is foundational to everything else. It is worth saying that good practice exists too: strong police engagement with a range of community groups was also recognised.

Hate Expression in Public Space

Recurring hate expression, including persistent graffiti in prominent locations, in one case directly opposite a police station, signals to targeted communities that they are unwelcome, and undermines confidence in institutions when it is left unaddressed.

A Fragmented Community & Faith Sector

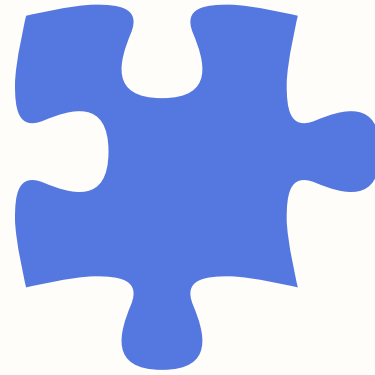
Community organisations can end up competing rather than collaborating, duplicating effort. This extends to the faith sector: there is strong work within churches, but it is harder to join up across churches, chapels and the wider community — even though there is excellent good practice to build on, such as church/community initiatives in Monkstown village and ‘Welcome Church’ approaches.

Legacy Divisions, Within and Between Communities

Divisions persist not only between traditional communities but within them and across neighbourhood borders — shaping who will and won’t work together. Honest engagement with local history and ‘street myths’ (mythbusting) is part of moving forward.

Prevention & the Summer 2024 Disorder

A lack of preventative planning and early intervention was exposed during the summer 2024 disorder. Communities need to be able to see tension coming and act early.



Migration Myths & Living in Fear

Myths and misinformation about migration - amplified on social media - can contribute to fear, division and hostility and, in some circumstances, have been associated with intimidation and vandalism, leaving some residents living in fear. Participants also recognised the importance of distinguishing misinformation and harmful narratives from legitimate discussion and debate around migration policy and local service provision.

Political Leadership

Participants pointed to a lack of leadership from some political representatives, and to rhetoric that at times inflames rather than calms. They highlighted the important role political representatives can play in challenging hate, reducing tensions and promoting positive community relations, and identified opportunities for stronger and more consistent leadership in this area.

Quiet Support, Public Silence

Where local people disagreed with demonstrations and hostility associated with migration and expressed support for those being targeted, that support too often stayed behind closed doors. The gap between private sympathy and public solidarity matters.

Education, Opportunity & Complacency

Education disparities, socioeconomic disadvantage, limited employment opportunities and longstanding cultural and historical barriers continue to affect some communities. This sits alongside real recognition of good schools and good practice.

‘Who’s Not Here’ & Overlooked Areas

Rural and suburban communities, and underrepresented groups, are too often missing from wider strategies — and from the room.

OUR ASKS:

(of the wider community & governance)

Embed the Principle in Policy

Embed in policy that ‘hate crime is not just a criminal justice issue; it’s a community issue’.

Prevention & Early Intervention

Prioritise diversion and early intervention — and work out the practical ‘how’, learning from best practice in previous local and policing initiatives and in other jurisdictions.

Better Political Leadership

Encourage constructive behaviour and leadership from political representatives, and effective use of Stormont committees (such as Communities, Justice and relevant subgroups). Ask the Council and PSNI to keep these matters on the agenda.

Connectors: Sport, Arts, Heritage, Food & Music

Use sport, the arts, heritage, food, culture and music to bring people together — as the ‘glue’, rather than relying on overt initiatives alone.

Education & Experiential Learning

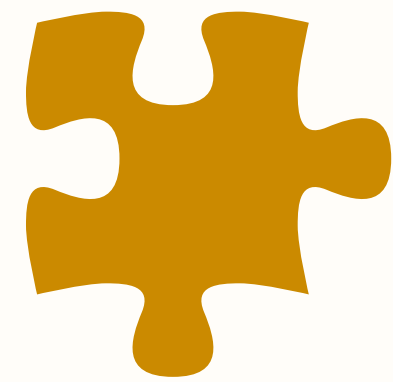
Awareness-raising and diversity initiatives in schools — experiential learning that grows empathy from a young age — plus a hard look at syllabuses toward the skills needed today, and practical accountability around hate-motivated bullying.

Skills & Employment

Support for the skills and employment that help people succeed in the modern workforce.

Practical Support for Asylum Seekers

Practical support for asylum seekers: legal and solicitor support, help with bank-account access, and language accessibility, and greater awareness of and access to the support available to them.



Mental Health Collaboration

More readily available mental health support, better coordinated rather than every organisation ‘doing its own thing’.

Visible, Local Advocates

Promote visible, localised advocates who encourage communities to engage and to report.

Recognise & Resource Good Practice

Recognise good practice from NIHE and housing associations in supporting locals and newcomers — and resource the local initiatives that work, with better awareness of and engagement with available funding.

Protected Characteristics & Data

Ask public institutions to keep equality considerations and relevant Section 75 categories under review, and, where appropriate and lawful, to publish demographic breakdowns so that inequalities and emerging issues can be better understood and tracked.

Don’t Overlook the Everyday

Address the everyday issues, including environmental problems such as fly-tipping and rubbish, that shape how safe and cared-for a place feels.

OUR COMMITMENTS:

(what we will do...)

Be Better Active Bystanders

Be better active bystanders, and promote it across the community.

Provide More Training

Provide and facilitate more training.

Join Up & Collaborate

Increase partnership working and collaboration — joining up good practice and sharing good news rather than duplicating effort.

‘Those Not in the Room, in the Room’

Actively seek ways to bring in those usually missing — and attend and facilitate events with people from different backgrounds.

Support Neurodivergence & Cognitive Needs

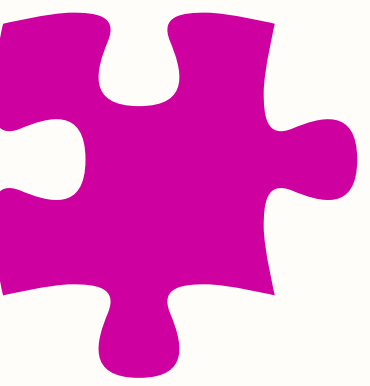
Implement effective support for neurodivergence and other cognitive needs, with the PSNI and other partners.

Grow Community Champions

Promote ‘community champions’ (building on approaches such as Barnardo’s Thrive), including disabled athletes and role models who raise awareness across the categories — for example, tackling racism in football and promoting LGBT inclusion.

Newcomer Induction

Run newcomer induction programmes across the Council area — building on good practice such as the English-language conversation course at Whiteabbey Welcome — recognising integration as a two-way street.



Practical Resources Where Needed

Provide practical resources where they’re needed (down to the level of providing bicycles), and address the gaps that hold people back.

Cut Through the Red Tape

Tackle the bureaucracy and access-to-funding difficulties that make life hard for small charities doing this work.

A Living Document

Keep this a living document — adding initiatives if and when needed.



IMPACT

If we pursue the above, participants hope to see:

Rebuilt Trust

As policing and statutory services become more responsive — and good engagement is recognised and extended — trust will grow and more victims will report with confidence.

Joined-Up Communities

A more collaborative community and faith sector will stop duplicating effort and start compounding it — turning isolated good practice into shared strength.

Prevention That Works

Better preventative planning and early intervention will mean communities can see tension coming and act before it escalates - helping to reduce the risk of a repeat of the tensions and disorder experienced in summer 2024, and the subsequent disorder over the past years.

Solidarity Made Visible

Quiet sympathy will become public solidarity, isolating hate rather than its targets.

Empathetic Young People

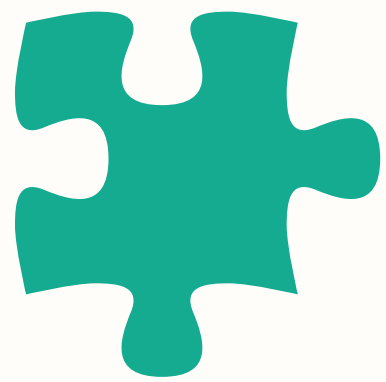
Experiential learning from a young age will build a generation more confident in difference and quicker to reject hate.

Everyone in the Room

Underrepresented groups and overlooked rural and suburban communities will be brought in - so decisions can better reflect the range of experiences across the district.

A Model to Build On

By recognising, joining up and resourcing what already works, Antrim & Newtownabbey can build a model of good practice that lasts — and that others can learn from.



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This Mini-Manifesto is a living document — shaped by and for the people of Antrim & Newtownabbey. We welcome further collaboration, feedback and action from anyone committed to building a safer, more inclusive community.

Contact: admin@hcasni.org.uk | www.hcasni.com



HATE CRIME ADVOCACY SERVICE

Support for you each step of the way

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