



Equality and Social Justice Committee

Evidence Paper for the Inquiry into Social Cohesion

28/04/2025

This paper addresses the Inquiry terms of reference, as follows:

- The key issues which impact social cohesion in Wales and consider whether interventions need to target specific groups of people, geographical areas or particular key issues.
- Examples of best practice and other interventions/needed to support social cohesion and overcome tensions. This includes understanding the role the third sector plays in supporting social cohesion and what barriers it faces, including funding.
- What support the Welsh Government provides to community groups and organisations and identify whether there are any opportunities to provide additional support. This includes examining the limitations and barriers which exist given some aspects of support for social cohesion are reserved to the UK Government (for example policing, media and internet regulation), and what action could be taken to overcome these challenges.

The paper also addresses additional questions received from the Committee on 4 April regarding the Community Cohesion Programme.

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1. Social cohesion in Wales.

The wider context for community cohesion.

- 1.** Social (or community) cohesion is affected by a myriad of short-term triggers, world events and long-term societal factors, which can quickly create or exacerbate tensions.
- 2.** Short-term triggers would include the devastating attack in Southport on 29 July 2024. This was followed by hateful and divisive narratives and fuelled by misinformation and disinformation. These events highlighted a deliberate effort to fragment our communities and sow fear and doubt amongst minority communities. Though Wales experienced no riots, we still experienced the corrosive and real-life impact of online hate and misinformation on social cohesion.
- 3.** We will continue to see the impact of world events on cohesion within Wales. The Covid-19 pandemic led to novel tensions arising from misinformation about the virus and lack of compliance with public health restrictions. Conflicts in the Middle East can often create tensions in Wales due to the impact felt by diaspora communities, protests and boycotting of organisations perceived to be involved with either side of conflicts. The online sphere also has an increasing impact on community divisions and can lead to both short-term unrest or compound long-term societal trends such as increasing polarisation and declining trust in public bodies.
- 4.** Long-term societal factors, such as poverty, declining trust in public institutions and criminal justice agencies or negative perceptions of net migration, also impact cohesion. If people do not trust authority, such as the police, they will not reach out for help when a victim of hate crime or may be more likely to spread conspiracy theories or become perpetrators. Malign actors seek to capitalise on this loss of trust with alternative narratives which create division.
- 5.** Although Welsh Government has devolved responsibility for community cohesion and the well-being of anyone present in Wales, we do not have responsibility for justice and policing, counter-extremism, media and internet regulation, and many other areas of law or policy which can limit our ability to resolve tensions effectively.

Measuring Cohesion in Wales

6. The Annual Well-being of Wales report (under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) includes a dedicated 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities' chapter. This chapter provides context and an assessment of progress towards community cohesion in Wales.

7. Welsh Government collects community cohesion indicators as part of the National Survey for Wales. 2024-2025 results will be available later in 2025. The last collection in 2021-2022 showed that of those surveyed:

- 84% agreed people in the area from different backgrounds get on well together;
- 82% agree people treat each other with respect and consideration; and
- 79% agreed they belong to the local area.
- Nearly two-thirds of adults (64%) agreed with all three of these measures of community cohesion.

There was no statistically significant difference between men and women, or by ethnicity, agreeing with all three statements.

8. Measuring cohesion is inherently difficult as it relates to individual perceptions which can often change. Our Well-being indicators are proxies by which we try to measure cohesion over time. The 2021-22 results show a slight decrease from 2020-21 but an increase since lows in 2016-17.

9. Nevertheless, localised areas have experienced periods of unrest and division in recent years, often sparked by short-term triggers but with underlying long-term societal factors at play. The response to UK Government proposals for asylum accommodation in Penally (2020) and Llanelli (2023), as well as disorder in Mayhill, Swansea (2022) and Ely, Cardiff (2023), are examples of this.

10. The Penally and Llanelli situations demonstrate limitations we experience without responsibility for the asylum system. Both situations related to inappropriate accommodation which would have made implementation of Nation of Sanctuary and Community Cohesion policies very difficult. Multi-agency work is underway in Llanelli to help address ongoing tensions.

11. The response to the Ely disorder learned lessons from the Mayhill situation the previous year. The Cardiff and Vale regional cohesion team was involved in brokering and driving forward the Ely and Caerau Community Plan, which is included in the best practice annex below.

Welsh Government Policy

12. In recent years, our communities have faced unprecedented challenges, with impacts which are still unfolding. There is growing evidence that not all communities have coped in the same way and that those with key resources, including physical assets, strong partnerships and local advocates, tend to be more resilient to the types of shocks which all have experienced in recent years and which are likely to continue. Yet, in the most challenging of circumstances, Welsh communities have repeatedly shown the strength, resilience and unity so synonymous with who we are as a nation.

13. Partners are telling us there is a need for a fresh look at community policy in the light of the pandemic, when local action was so vital. We are taking the first steps in developing a Communities Policy.

14. Communities Policy involves co-productive, ways of working between Welsh Government and communities and the ways in which we can enable communities to be thriving, empowered and connected, recognising the inherent strengths which communities possess. This forms the basis of the relationship and approach seen in our work to build community cohesion between different groups.

15. The Welsh Government's primary vehicle for supporting cohesion is our Community Cohesion Programme. The *'After the Riots' report*, jointly published by British Future, Belong, and the Together Coalition in September 2024, identified our Cohesion Programme as an approach which *'offers useful lessons for England.'*

16. The Programme is delivered across all 22 Local Authorities by Local Authorities in collaboration with a team at Welsh Government who manages the overall Programme. For the purposes of this programme, Wales is divided into eight cohesion regions: Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan, Cwm Taf, Gwent East, Gwent West, Mid & West Wales, North-East Wales, North-West Wales, and Swansea Bay. Structuring the Programme in this way provides a pan-Wales framework to respond dynamically and collaboratively to the needs of communities.

17. The Programme embeds the development of bespoke interventions that suit the characteristics of the region and its communities. This flexibility within the Programme recognises that each area has its own unique strengths and challenges. Workplans are co-produced regionally with local authorities, while aligning to the aims of the Programme established by Welsh Government.

18. Flexibility within the Programme allows the regional teams to respond to emerging and unforeseen key issues impacting communities in Wales. Past examples include:

- Assisting marginalised communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Supporting the local authority response to the sudden migration of sanctuary seekers from Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Hong Kong.
- Working with relevant partners and affected communities during periods of heightened tensions.

19. Welsh Government delivers wider initiatives which implement the Public Sector Equality Duty and build cohesion, for example:

- The [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) is delivering Welsh Government's goal to make Wales an anti-racist nation, which includes the goal to become a Nation of Sanctuary through the implementation of the Nation of Sanctuary vision.
- The [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#) sets out the actions to strengthen equality for LGBTQ+ people, to challenge discrimination, and to create a society where LGBTQ+ people are safe to live their lives.
- The Welsh Government engages with a wide range of stakeholders via Ministerial-led fora such as the Wales Race Forum, the Faith Communities Forum, and the Disability Equality Forum.

20. Welsh Government is also tackling socio-economic inequality which can exacerbate social divisions, resulting in disharmony within communities. The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on 31st March 2021 and requires relevant public bodies, including Welsh Ministers, to give due regard to the need to reduce inequalities resulting from socio-economic disadvantage when taking strategic decisions. Alongside the implementation of the Duty, Welsh Government is delivering targeted and universal programmes to alleviate financial pressures and help maximise income, through initiatives such as Universal Primary Free School Meals, the Schools Essentials Grant, Flying Start and the Childcare Offer.

21. Alongside the Community Cohesion Programme (discussed below) the Welsh Government seeks to support victims of hate crime and dissuade those who would be perpetrators. Support is achieved via the Wales Hate Support Centre (run on our behalf by Victim Support Cymru) which offers tailored advice

and advocacy for hate crime victims across Wales. The Hate Hurts Wales campaign (see further details in Annex) promotes awareness of hate crime and available support, as well as showing perpetrators the effect and consequences of hate. The Wales Hate Support Centre has been extended until March 2027 and the Hate Hurts Wales campaign has been increased from £216,000 to £500,000 in 2025-26 to increase its reach and effectiveness.

22. In 2025-26 we will undertake further work around hate crime perpetrators, work to support community recovery where tensions persist, and work to support users of online platforms exposed to hate and misinformation.

Community Cohesion Programme

The Committee asked a range of questions related to our Community Cohesion Programme. Responses have been grouped to avoid duplication:

1. An update on the delivery of the strategy, including details of how the Community Cohesion Co-ordinators are delivering the strategy.
2. Clarity on the Community Cohesion programme and its governing principles.
3. Any actions, if any, that were taken following the review of the community cohesion programme in 2021/22.
4. Detail of the role of the Community Cohesion Co-ordinators including how they work within local authorities, with the third sector, the police and the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership.
5. A breakdown of the funding / or how are the posts funded.
6. Any information you could share about the work of the Community Cohesion Coordinators in the 8 regions, including any examples of best practice.
7. Whether there are any strategies in place for mitigating misinformation or disinformation online

23. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 goal of a Wales of Cohesive Communities and the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty and Socio-Economic Duty) drive our Community Cohesion work. We co-produce

Community Cohesion Programme workplans with local government to ensure local circumstances are taken into account when designing interventions.

24. Regional workplans are developed and agreed at the start of each year as part of the grant monitoring process and are developed to align with both national and local priorities. Progress against these workplans is monitored on a quarterly basis by Welsh Government.

25. The Programme is aligned to the Public Sector Equality Duty with all actions connected to one or more of the three aims of the duty:

(a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;

(b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

26. The Programme is also driven by the well-being goal of making 'Wales of cohesive communities', with all regional teams diligently following the five ways of working (collaboration, integration, involvement, long-term, and prevention) which are mainstreamed throughout their work programmes.

27. In 2021, the Welsh Government commissioned Diverse Cymru through open procurement to undertake a rapid review of the Community Cohesion Programme. The aim of the review was to assess the design and delivery of the programme and identify lessons for how the programme could improve.

28. The independent review found that the Community Cohesion Programme 'was valued by most stakeholders, who felt that it focuses on the right issues and makes an important contribution to progressing Community Cohesion in Wales.'

29. The report was in favour of maintaining many aspects of the programme, praising the flexibility to deal with emerging issues and the regional structure of the Programme, although some changes were made:

- Following the review longer-term funding for the Programme was agreed. Three-year funding awards were made from April 2023, with the option of extending an additional two years from 2026 onwards.

- A small grants scheme was introduced as part of the Programme. This is administered by each region and awarded to third sector organisations and partnership projects tailored to local communities.
- We have improved mechanisms for sharing good practice between regions and strengthened collaborative working between regions. The regional Community Cohesion teams deliver a range of activities as part of their roles. Partnership working is key to the delivery of this work.

30. The aims of the Programme are to:

- a. Monitor community tensions and work with partners to mitigate them: The Cohesion teams have a critical role within regional structures for assessing and managing community tensions, working closely alongside police and local authority community safety leads. This work includes liaising with third sector and community organisations during times of heightened tensions.
- b. Support public bodies and other organisations with the provision of training on equality and inclusion related issues: Cohesion teams provide, commission, or coordinate community cohesion related training, for local authority staff, elected officials, or others with a key role to play in building community cohesion.
- c. Act as conduits between communities and public bodies to promote participation in policymaking and equality of opportunity for communities: This work includes developing an understanding of opinion shapers, local community leaders, and trusted voices in the region, and using these relationships to raising awareness of relevant issues and opportunities, such as consultations, decisions and funding opportunities.
- d. Ensure community cohesion issues are considered in the development of local authority plans and policies: The Cohesion teams play a role in ensuring that local authorities are engaging with minority groups and considering their perspectives and circumstances when developing policies or taking decisions which are likely to affect them. This would include Well-being Plans, Strategic Equality Plans, and Equality Impact Assessments, and/or Community Safety planning.

- e. Foster good relations by developing events and projects to bring people from across different communities together: The teams deliver accessible and inclusive outreach and engagement events, activities, and initiatives which foster good relations between groups through reducing segregation and increasing empathy and understanding.
- f. Deliver of a small grants scheme: Each region administers an annual small grant scheme to assist third sector community groups to promote and foster cohesion within their communities via tailored projects.

31. In 2024-25, the programme was funded at a total cost of £1,260,000 per annum, which provided £157,500 of grant funding to each of the eight cohesion regions. This funded a Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator, up to three Cohesion Officers and an activities and small grants fund per region. In 2025-26 this will increase to £1,600,000 and provide £200,000 per region.

32. Welsh Government takes a proactive approach to tackling misinformation around our policies, identifying areas where it is prevalent, and countering it through a clear, positive communications approach, accurately reflecting the reality of our work and values. Officials make use of Government Communication Resources to develop proactive and reactive approaches to addressing misinformation. The RESIST 2.0 toolkit and the Wall of Beliefs toolkit are examples of these.

33. We have developed a fact-check blog, 'For the Record', to provide short, factual information to challenge myths and misinformation on Welsh Government policy, such as the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.

34. Further work is intended in 2025-26 to equip community leaders with the tools to navigate difficult conversations and misinformation.

35. Through our Hwb educational platform, we provide information and resources for school staff, learners and their families. There are resources for practitioners to support the teaching of media literacy as well as activities to help learners think critically about how to be responsible and ethical users of AI. The Keeping Safe Online area of Hwb also contains information about misinformation and online hate including a section specifically written with and for children and young people. Keeping Safe Online provides further resources for parents.

36. Welsh Government is working with Ofcom to understand how new Online Safety Act 2023 powers can be effectively utilised in Wales. Attempts to work directly with tech platforms to tackle online hate and misinformation have not been successful to date.

37. Best practice examples of work the Cohesion Programme has been recently involved with is set out in the Annex at the foot of this evidence paper.

2. Support for community groups and organisations.

38. Across the Welsh Government funding is allocated to community groups and organisations for a variety of different policy objectives. There are well over 40,000 voluntary organisations operating across Wales today – many of them supporting the most vulnerable people in our society. Whilst not all these groups will have cohesion as their primary purpose, active community groups can be a supportive factor for cohesion across and within communities.

39. The Social Justice portfolio provides support to communities in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- A small grants scheme is part of the Cohesion Programme. All funded projects must deliver activities that support minority communities to address community tensions or bring communities together.
- Welsh Government continues to invest in Third Sector infrastructure, including Third Sector Support Wales (comprising WCVA and the 19 County Voluntary Councils) which enables any organisation to seek support on governance, volunteering and sustainable funding.
- An additional £2m revenue and £2.9m capital will be provided to support Third Sector activity across Wales in 2025-26, recognising and valuing the role the Third sector organisations and volunteers play in supporting our communities thrive and improve Wales' well-being.
- The Cohesion teams are required to work with community-based organisations to identify and secure additional sources of funding to support community cohesion projects. Welsh Government funding for the Third Sector also supports [Funding Wales](#), a free, online resource which contains information of local, regional and national funding opportunities.
- The [Community Facilities Programme](#) is a capital grant programme which provides grants of up to £300,000 to help community led projects to purchase and/or improve well used and much needed community assets.
- The [Community Asset Loan Fund](#) (CALF) is a £7.5m loan fund which provides long-term (up to 25 years) loan funding of up to £300,000 to incorporated third sector organisations seeking to take on community assets. These loans must be used towards the purchase or improvement of

community assets. The CALF is managed on our behalf by the WCVA. We know that communities with a good community asset base are more resilient than those without. Community facilities provide a focus for community action, improve cohesion and provide local access to services.

- A range of equality and inclusion-related funding routes, such as Grassroots Pride Fund, Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) funds and others, also help to ensure the third sector can support community cohesion activity. Regional ArWAP Convenors also help to foster two-way dialogue to help us deliver visible, tangible improvements lived experiences.
- Our Nation of Sanctuary policy recognises that new arrivals need support to integrate effectively, and migration processes must be carefully managed to ensure host communities feel the benefit of that migration. We provide a range of funding and policy interventions and work closely with the UK Government, local government, and Sanctuary Coalition Cymru to implement this work.
- Wider allocations relating to those with protected characteristics also support our community cohesion work. This work is mainstreamed across Welsh Government rather than always requiring bespoke funding streams.

40. In addition to funding, we work closely with partners in a Team Wales approach to co-produce solutions as far as possible. Partnership working is essential to ensure the state of cohesion or tensions are properly understood and a multi-agency approach can be brought to bear for the most effective outcomes. We aim to empower communities to implement local solutions, wherever possible.

41. Third sector organisations and people with lived experience are increasingly being targeted due to their affiliation with cohesion, equality or inclusion-related initiatives. We worked closely with Welsh Refugee Council and EYST during recent examples of this targeting to ensure they understood our approach, that they felt supported, and their positive contributions were recognised, and so that an offer of security measures could be made. Further work is planned to help third sector organisations and associated individuals to keep themselves safe before or during any hateful online targeting and harassment.

42. We have worked with community groups to develop a tool to help guide community leaders to structure conversations with concerned community members. The tool aims to help communities to spot and mitigate the spread of hate or misinformation.

3. Annex – Cases studies

Examples of best practice

Ely and Caerau Community Plan

43. Following the tragic death of Harvey Evans and Kyrees Sullivan and the disorder in Ely, Action for Caerau and Ely (ACE) was appointed to co-ordinate the development of a Caerau and Ely Community Plan, jointly funded by Welsh Government, Cardiff Council and the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner.

44. ACE embarked on a listening exercise with residents of all ages. to identify the strengths of the community as well as the challenges they faced. ACE heard from 1,234 people between August and December 2023, in open events, groups, surveys and conversations, and gathered almost 4,000 comments across 47 engagements. These views were collated into 6 themes:

1. Children & Young People
2. Community Safety & Safeguarding
3. Spaces and the Environment
4. Health & Wellbeing
5. Employment, Living Standards & Cost of Living
6. Communication and Community Building

45. In early 2024, ACE brought together residents, public and third sector partners in a series of community workshops to dig deeper into the issues identified during the community-wide listening exercise. In these sessions, attendees jointly designed positive, tangible action actions for change, which formed the Community Plan.

46. The entire Community Plan development process was overseen and agreed by a Community Steering Group, made up of local volunteers who live or work in the community. The final steering group meeting took place in April 2025.

North East Wales Multi Cultural Hub

47. North East Wales Multi Cultural Hub (NEWMH) was established in 2022, with 3 years funding allocated to Tŷ Pawb and Wrexham County Borough Council via

the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Culture, Heritage and Sport Fund. The NEWMH is a community-driven initiative delivered in partnership with Race Council Cymru and aimed at fostering a more equitable and interconnected society by celebrating and recognizing diversity. The Hub serves as a platform for its members by amplifying voices often unheard, empowering communities to lead on making the change they wish to see. Since its establishment, the Hub has:

- Supported the involvement of volunteers from minority ethnic communities in North East Wales to actively take part within the arts, culture and heritage sector.
- Hosted exhibitions of the work of local minority ethnic artists.
- Commissioned artists local minority ethnic artists to deliver community and school arts projects.
- Provided seed funding, via small grants, to Hub members to deliver projects which celebrate and raise awareness of the rich diversity of cultural heritage across North East Wales.

48. The Hub also provides a direct link to smaller community groups in the area. This was valued during the 2024 summer unrest, as public bodies were able to meet with community leaders in one place facilitated by the Hub.

The Diverse Together Conference

49. The North-east Wales and North-west Wales cohesion teams co-organised the Diverse Together conference in April 2025, which brought together around 170 community organisations and public sector partners from across the region to identify examples of good public sector practice and how this positive work can be applied more widely. There was a focus on engagement and consultation, in particular how public bodies can create effective dialogue with diverse communities which breaks the cycle of one-way transactional consultations.

50. The conference ended with the joint action to develop a framework to enable the continuation of this sharing and learning between communities and partner organisations.

Blue Light Engagement Event

51. In 2024, the Mid and West Wales cohesion team hosted a 'Blue Light Engagement' event designed to build trust and understanding between refugees, asylum seekers, and emergency services. The event provided a welcoming space for dialogue, myth-busting, and practical information sharing about emergency services and community safety. The event helped break down barriers and led to increased confidence in reporting and accessing support among participants. Due to its success, a second cohesion region requested support to replicate the model locally and was delivered successfully.

Engagement with Muslim communities

52. The Gwent East cohesion team alongside Gwent Police has set up a series of regular meetings with Muslim representatives, designed to build and strengthen relationships with community members and provide them with an opportunity to raise concerns or issues. This meant that when the unrest happened during the summer of 2024, there was already a framework in place to engage with communities and mosque. These existing relationships enabled Gwent Police to attend Friday prayers across Newport during this period of unrest with the same message of solidarity and reassurance and provide an update on actions to keep communities safe. Providing all mosques with the same information at the same time reduced the risk of misinformation being spread and avoided having messages misinterpreted.

Flip the Streets Project

53. A primary school in Swansea contacted the Swansea Bay cohesion team about an increase in hateful incidents within the wider community. Sessions were delivered to pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 focusing on topics such as positive relationships, respect, and healthy communication both within the school and the broader community. These sessions were delivered in close collaboration with partner agencies specialising in community safety, cohesion, and online safety.

54. The success of the sessions led to a project with Flip the Streets and Fresh Creative to create a lasting memory that showcased the school and wider community as inclusive and rights-respecting. The pupils were given the opportunity to develop a graffiti art piece to represent what matters most to their community. This artwork was unveiled at a community day, where pupils participated in creating their design with a local artist. The project was a collaboration between the local community, South Wales Police and the Swansea Council.

Cymunedoli Cyf

55. Cymunedoli Cyf inspires communities to believe, to create and to maintain, and is there to support communities to own and manage resources locally. Cymunedoli Cyf is an innovative network, which works with and supports community initiatives. Its purpose is to support each other's efforts, strengthen the case for co-operation, and help the local economy.

56. The Community Facilities Programme has funded a number of the approximately 50 local groups across Gwynedd and Conwy which make up Cymunedoli Cyf, this includes: Antur Stiniog, Antur Waunfawr, Dref Werdd, Menter Ty'n Llan, Partneriaeth Ogwen, Plas Carmel, Tafarn y Heliwr, and Yr Orsaf.

Hate and Community Tensions Board Cymru

57. The Hate and Community Tensions Board Cymru is a standing group to advise Welsh Ministers and policy makers on hate crime and community tensions and provide leadership across criminal justice agencies in Wales. The membership consists of representatives from Welsh Government, the Cohesion Programme, the four police forces in Wales, British Transport Police, the Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners, Crown Prosecution Service, Victim Support Cymru, academia and third sector organisations. We have a standing item on the agenda to discuss regional community tensions on a pan-Wales basis, identifying any trends and opportunities to work together on interventions to address hate and community tensions.

58. A recent example of the work of the Board was the co-production of the 'Tackling Hate Crime - The Power of Victims Voices' conference in November 2024. The conference provided an insight into identity-based hate crime and other hate experiences for hate crime practitioners across Wales, informed by Wales Hate Support Centre research alongside input from its Lived Experience Advocacy Forum, with the aim of identifying tangible steps to improve the response to hate crimes and the support available to all victims.

Hate Hurts Wales

59. Hate Hurts Wales is the Welsh Government's national anti-hate crime campaign. The objectives of the campaign, which began in December 2020, are to encourage victims and bystanders to report hate crime, and to build confidence of victims by highlighting the positive outcomes that can come from reporting a hate crime and the support available from the Welsh Government funded Wales Hate Support Centre. The campaign also calls on the people of Wales to stand up against hate and show potential perpetrators the damaging

impact, not only on the lives of the victims, but also the repercussions on their own lives.

60. The campaign was developed with input from stakeholders across our equality networks, the four police forces in Wales, Victim Support and CPS, and was tested with a wide range of focus groups comprising representation from across the five protected characteristics including two on race focus groups.

61. The campaign has delivered a range of activities including television and radio advertising, digital advertising, Wales Online advertorials, and out of home advertising. We have worked with criminal justice partners to target location where there have been higher incidences of hate crime.

62. Evaluation of the Hate Hurts Wales campaign in 2023-2024 found there was a 32% increase in calls to the Wales Hate Support Centre compared to when the campaign wasn't running, with a 10% increase in case referrals to Victim Support.

Focus on Southport attack and UK disorder 2024

63. The Committee has highlighted last summer's unrest as a particular area of focus for the Inquiry. Following the devastating attack in Southport and subsequent violent disorder, the Welsh Government worked closely with a range of partners as part of the overall response in Wales. This included:

- a. Engagement with Police Forces to ensure identifiable vulnerable locations would receive a priority police response if reports to the Police were made.
- b. The First Minister, Eluned Morgan MS, met senior policing leads in Wales and convened a meeting with representatives from community groups and voluntary sector organisations in Wales, including faith leaders. The First Minister then published a Written Statement: 'Supporting the safety of people and communities in Wales following the incident in Southport on 29 July'.
- c. The Community Cohesion regional teams monitored online and offline spaces for community tensions and fed information to police and relevant community safety partners.
- d. The Wales Hate Support Centre monitored for any spikes in hate crime related to the unrest, reached out to race and faith-based organisations in Wales, and delivered targeted communications. Our anti-hate crime campaign, Hate Hurts Wales, ran in August 2024

64. Since August 2024, Welsh Government has undertaken further work to identify ways to provide community reassurance during future incidents, helping community organisations with tools to identify and address online hate and misinformation. This will be strengthened by further work in 2025-26.

65. Welsh Government engaged with community organisations ahead of the trial of Axel Rudakubana in January 2025 to provide reassurance and share guidance on dealing with misinformation.

66. Ministers met with the Children's Commissioner for Wales' Youth Panel to discuss the impact of the disorder on children and young people.