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**Nexus supports new hate crime awareness campaign**



*30 June 2023*

Being you is not a crime. Targeting you is.

That is the clear message reverberating around our region after Northumbria Police joined forces with North East’s transport companies and the NHS.

Hundreds of posters aimed at tackling hate crime are being displayed on buses, the Tyne and Wear Metro and ferries, as well as at hospitals, GP practices and walk-in centres.

The campaign, led by the Force’s Community Engagement Teams, hopes to raise awareness of what constitutes a hate crime and encourage victims to report all incidents to police.

In order to make sure the message is heard loud and clear, as far and wide as possible, police have teamed up with Metro operator, Nexus, Stagecoach, Arriva and Go Ahead North East who will be displaying the posters on-board their buses and trains, at busy stops and stations, as well as on the Shields Ferry.

The posters are also to be shown on digital screens across NHS venues throughout Northumbria, including in major hospitals, surgeries and other centres.

Superintendent Scott Cowie, Northumbria Police’s lead for hate crime, said: “We do not tolerate hate crime of any kind within our communities and discrimination has no place in society.

“We hope this visible campaign sends out a very strong and important message to victims, perpetrators and the wider community as a whole.

“If you are abused because of your race, religion, sexual orientation, gender-identity or disability, that is a criminal offence – and as a Force, we are committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice.

“That abuse can appear in various forms, whether it’s verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault or damage to property. You do not have to suffer in silence – please come forward and report it.

“Our appeal also extends far wider to entire communities living here in the North East and beyond. We all have a role to play in reporting hate crimes, to ensure those offenders are rightly brought to justice.

“If you see somebody committing a hate crime, or know of any instances of abuse, reporting it can help us take swift action and potentially prevent similar incidents from happening to someone else.”

Customer Services Director at Nexus, Huw Lewis, said: “There is no place for hate crime and discrimination anywhere in society and we are proud to stand with our fellow transport operators, local authority partners and Northumbria Police to support this new awareness raising campaign.

“The campaign posters will be visible across the public transport network, including Metro, buses and ferries, and highlight how to report a hate crime.

“There’s a really strong message in the posters that abuse of any form will not be tolerated in our communities and on our transport networks. If you experience any form of threats, harassment or discrimination when travelling then please come forward and report it so that action can be taken against those responsible.”

Crimes committed against someone because of their race, religion or belief, disability, gender-identity or sexual orientation are hate crimes and should be reported to the police.

Please get in touch with us online via the ‘Report a Crime’ page of Northumbria Police’s website or by calling 101. If you are in immediate danger, always call 999.

If you want to keep up to date with the work we’re doing to tackle hate crime in your area, sign up to our new messaging platform Northumbria Connected.