

MEND submission  
to the Office for Democratic Institutions  
and Human Rights (ODIHR) 2013 report,  
“Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region:  
Incidents and Responses”

## Anti-Muslim hate crime 2013



Muslim engagement  
& development

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## Introduction

This report contains details of incidents of anti-Muslim hate crimes which have been reported in local and national media in the UK and which form part of our regular monitoring of such incidents by cataloguing them on our website, [www.mend.org.uk](http://www.mend.org.uk).

These incidents are presented under the following categories:

1. Assaults or attacks on persons of Muslim background
2. Attacks on Muslim property or institutions
3. Verbal abuse on persons who are, or suspected of being, of the Muslim faith

Incidents in some cases inevitably cross over into the other categories, for example where individuals have been subjected to verbal abuse in the course of an attack on a place of worship.

A total of 150 incidents are outlined in this report, up from the 111 incidents documented in our 2012 submission and 76 incidents in our 2011 submission. As with the 2012 submission, a similar proportion of incidents occurred on social media (41%). In 2013, there were 65 incidents involving an attack on Muslim property or institutions and 23 assaults or attacks on Muslims or persons of Muslim background.

It is important to state here that our documentation relies exclusively on reports in local and/or national media and websites dedicated to documenting anti-Muslim hate crime and Islamophobia and is therefore neither an exhaustive nor a comprehensive review of anti-Muslim hate crime in the UK in 2013. The actual figures for anti-Muslim hate crimes in the UK for 2013, based on official figures for the year, is suspected to be far greater with the Metropolitan Police Service, which records Islamophobia with a distinct crime flag, reporting a 65% increase on 2012 figures (year on year to August 2013).

With continuing concerns over the low level of official reporting of anti-Muslim hate crime, and the fact that police forces do not disaggregate data adequately to capture those crimes which are defined by anti-Muslim bias, what we present here is a mere fraction of all anti-Muslim hate crimes occurring in the UK.

It should be further noted that the method we employ to document anti-Muslim hate crime in the UK, relying on local news reports, is affected by the changes to the industry and the steady decline of local newspaper titles and/or devotion to coverage of court proceedings. While we make every effort to identify news reports which relay incidents of hate crime and abuse directed at Muslims, the demise of local publications and changes to news production necessarily impacts on the number of incidents which are captured. This further demonstrates the limits to sourcing information on anti-Muslim hate crimes from media coverage.

Needless to say 2013 was a significant year in the collation of incidents of anti-Muslim hate crime and in the study of the environment which feeds and nurtures such prejudice that raises the probability of criminal acts.

In May 2013, two young Muslim converts murdered a British serviceman near a military barracks in Woolwich, south London. The brutality in the act of killing and the perpetrators' justification of the loss of civilian life in Iraq and Afghanistan reminds us that events overseas continue to have an impact on domestic security and community relations. More recent

events concerning Islamic State (or Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) and a discernible rise in anti-Muslim hate crimes in 2014, though not the subject of this report, nonetheless reinforces this.

Its relevance has a direct bearing on the domestic security agenda and counter-terrorism policy and powers have continued to influence and shape public and political discourse on British Muslims. This is most evident in the report published by the Taskforce on Tackling Radicalisation that was set up by the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, in the immediate aftermath of the Woolwich attack.

The Taskforce report, which was published in November 2013, is dealt with in the concluding section on positive developments, notably because the report makes a clear recommendation on the investigation of hate crime by police forces in a way that pays sufficient attention to aggravating factors and bias motivations.

The interplay of domestic and international affairs is further in evidence in another major incident occurring in 2013, the placing of bombs on the grounds of or around mosques at three locations in the West Midlands and the murder of Muslim grandfather, Mohammed Saleem Khan, as he left his local mosque after the late evening prayer.

The far right sympathiser and 'race war' enthusiast, Pavlo Lapshyn and his involvement in far right groups in the Ukraine before his arrival in the UK to take up postgraduate studies, reinforces the importance of cross border co-operation in tackling hate crime and the transnational movements that nurture such hatred.

A section is added after the categories of hate crime involving persons, property or institutions and verbal abuse and comprises of statements, comments or interventions by those holding public office, and media commentary which serves to reinforce negative stereotypes of Muslims. Section four on Anti-Muslim public discourse details how these statements or media representations can, and are, used by far right parties and extremists to deride Islamic beliefs and practices and create an environment in which Muslims are vulnerable to hate crime.

High profile legal cases on sex grooming and child exploitation have continued to play a role in public discourse on or about Muslims with media coverage persisting in 2013 after a number of high profile prosecutions in 2012. This is also dealt with in section four.

The gender dimension has also arisen in recurring debates about the face veil in the UK with a media frenzy sparked by the banning (and later ban reversal) of the niqab by a college in Birmingham. A related development involves a public debate on gender segregation on university campuses on the back of guidelines introduced by Universities UK on the subject and incidents of segregated events organised on student campuses. This too is dealt with in the section on Anti-Muslim public discourse.

As with last year, 2013 saw local elections in England and Wales which, again, has seen the dissemination of anti-Muslim material and speech. These are dealt with in the section on verbal abuse and anti-Muslim hate speech and in the section on anti-Muslim public discourse.

A further factor that has had significant impact on incidents of anti-Muslim hatred are the demonstrations that have continued to be organised by the English Defence League and the Scottish Defence League in towns and cities in the UK. Indeed, recording incidents at the time of, or around, such demonstrations reflects their potency in fomenting hate crimes and establishes a direct causal relationship in specific instances between hate crimes and far right social movements.

The splintering of movements and the rise of new, far right social movements has been in evidence in 2013. A factor informing the splintering and shifts in the composition and size of far right movements has been the high profile 'conversion' of the two founders of the English Defence League, Stephen Lennon and Kevin Carroll. While Lennon's subsequent public and social media communications cast heavy doubt on his 'conversion', his departure, along with co-founder Carroll, has changed the far right scene in the UK.

A final section concludes with positive developments which are cause for optimism in tackling anti-Muslim hate crime and hate speech in the UK including our work with newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners on introducing a specific crime flag for recording Islamophobia.

## Recording Hate Crime

Studies show an endemic under-reporting of hate crime with victims often regarding hate crimes as too minor, or as occurring too frequently, to bother reporting these to the police. From a study we conducted in Tower Hamlets in 2013, we found that Muslim women who wear face veils faced regular abuse, particularly in public places and on public transport, but regarded these incidents as too commonly occurring to report them to the police. Incidents ranged from verbal abuse, such as being called 'letter box', to more serious incidents of distress and harassment, such as being told on public transport to remove the face veil because 'This is England!'.

Accurate data on the scale and nature of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic hate crime is obscured by intransparent recording practices by police forces in England and Wales which do not disclose the faith identity of victims of religious hate crime in official data. The bar chart below displays the total instances of religious hate crime in all police force areas in England and Wales in 2013/2014. Because police forces (except London's Metropolitan Police Service) do not record anti-Muslim hate crimes under a separate crime flag, it is impossible to discern the level of hate crime directed at Muslims in the UK in all force areas bar the MPS.

A Freedom of Information request to all police forces in England and Wales seeking information about the number of anti-Muslim incidents in 2013 revealed that Islamophobia in many areas had doubled. Of the 43 forces sent FOI requests, only 24 provided data.<sup>1</sup>

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) identifies the number of anti-Semitic hate crimes as a subtotal within the faith or religion category. This level of detail is not currently captured in relation to other race and faith groups. It is paramount that all religions and faith communities be treated equally and that statistics are disaggregated to disclose the number of hate crimes affecting Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and other faiths too.

Figure 1 shows the number of Islamophobic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service in the year April 2013 – March 2014 with details on the percentage increase on the previous year for some London Boroughs.

Figure 1



<sup>1</sup> UK anti-Muslim hate crime soars, police figures show, *The Guardian*, 27 December 2013

Table 1 shows the number of religion hate crimes occurring in England and Wales in 2013/2014.

Religion hate crimes by police force area 2013/2014  
Home Office, Hate Crime in England and Wales

Table 1

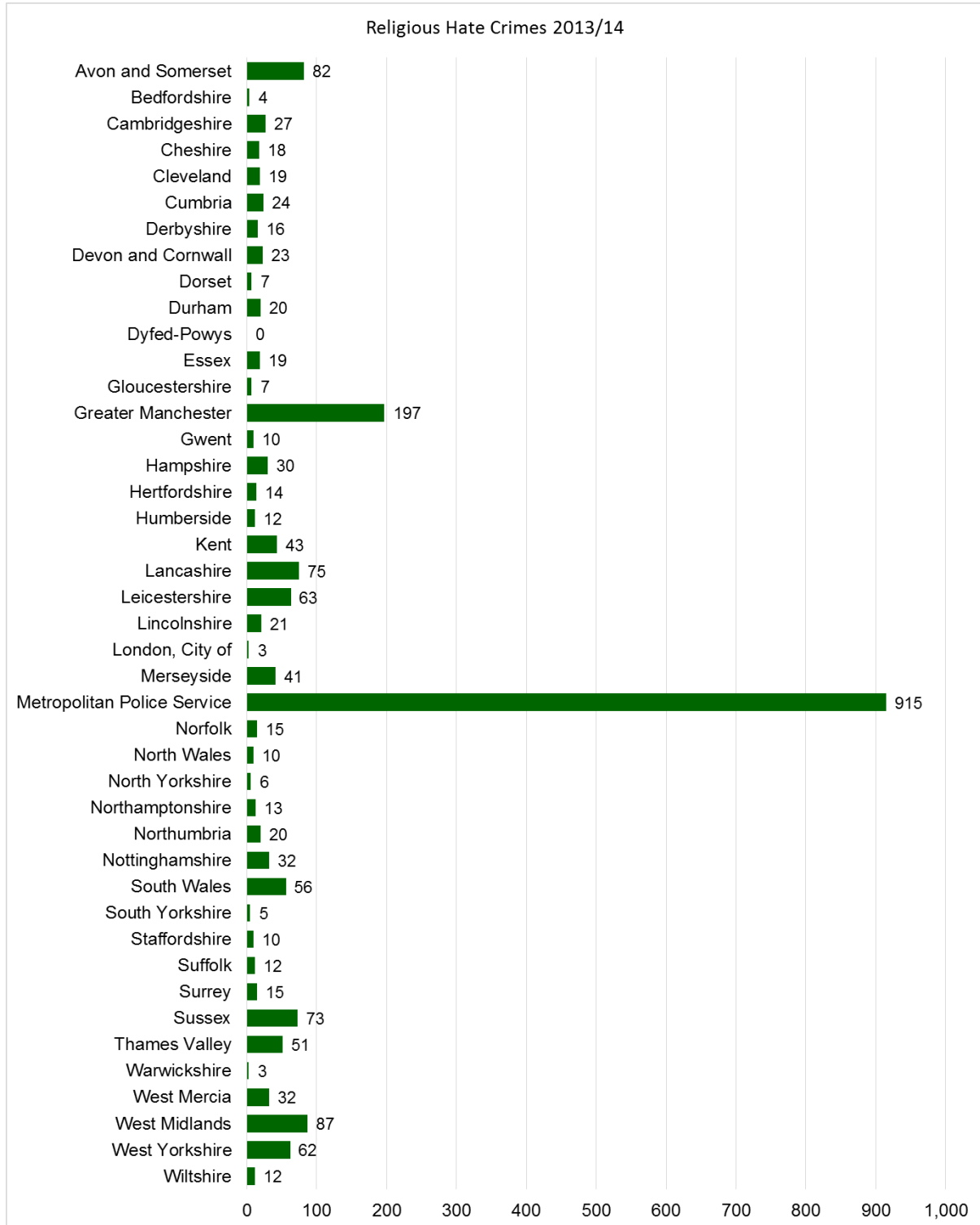
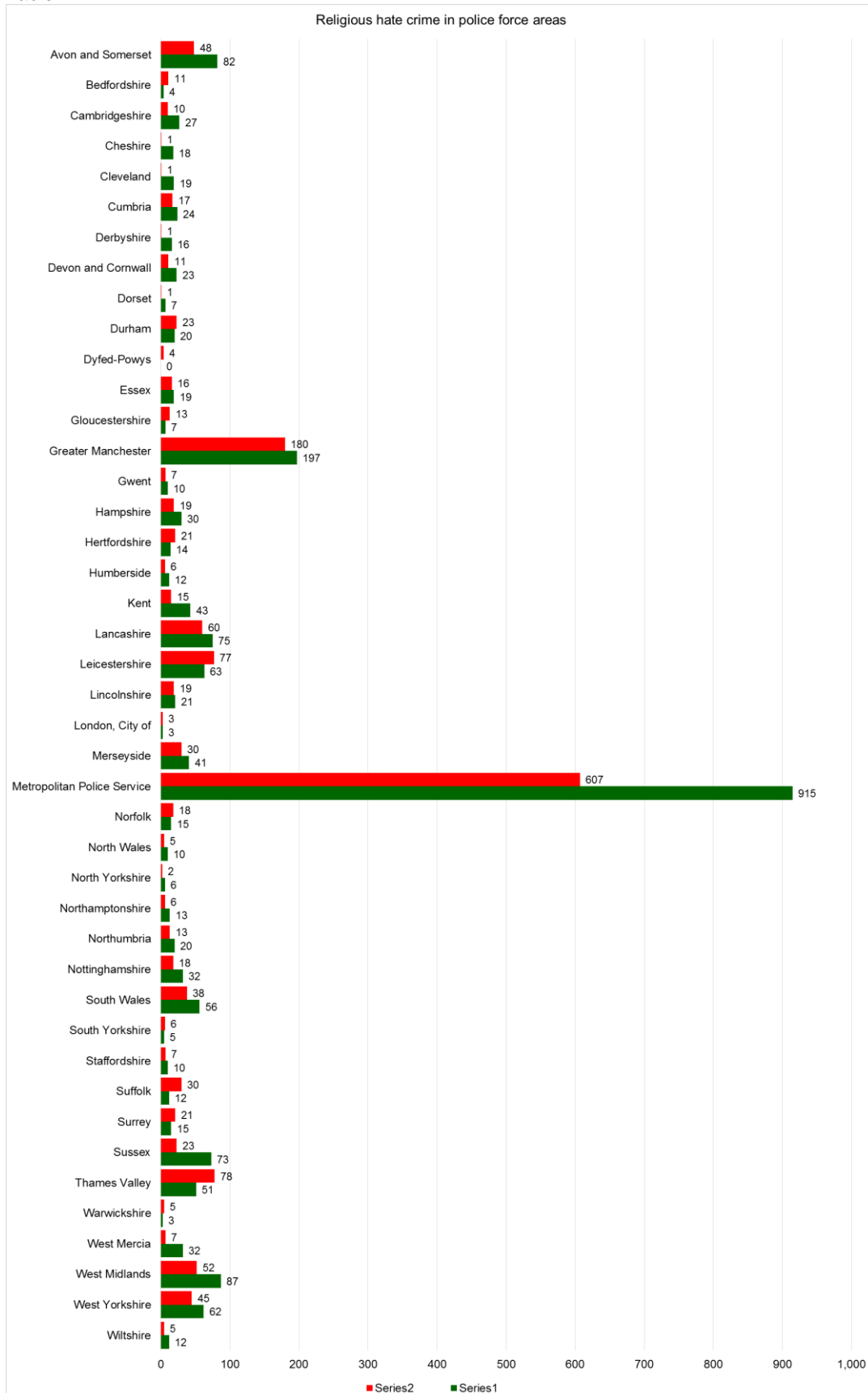


Table 2 compares the data on religion hate crimes occurring in England and Wales in 2013/2014 with 2011/2012.

Comparison of religion hate crimes by police force area 2013/2014 and 2011/2012  
 Home Office, Hate Crime in England and Wales, 2013/2014 and 2011/2012

Table 2



## Incidents of anti-Muslim hate crime in the UK

1. Assaults or attacks on persons of Muslim background
2. Attacks on Muslim property and institutions
3. Verbal abuse and hate speech

This report covers 150 incidents of anti-Muslim hate crime in the United Kingdom.

The pie chart below details the incident type and proportion of the total, based on the three categories: assaults on persons, attacks on property or institutions and verbal abuse or anti-Muslim hate speech.

**[insert Pie chart]**



## 1. Assaults or attacks on persons of Muslim Background

- 1.1. A Muslim woman, Umairi Musa, was assaulted by two women while she sat with a pregnant friend, Mary Marandran, in a Glasgow park.<sup>2</sup> Musa and Marandran heard racist abuse directed at them before the physical assault took place. Musa, who threatened to call the police, was told to hand over her mobile phone.

Musa was punched in the head, causing her to fall to the ground. She was then punched repeatedly in the head and body while on the ground and her hijab pulled off her head. She was also robbed of her mobile phone.

While Musa sustained a bruised left cheek, grazed knee and a sore neck, Marandran suffered muscular pain. There was no damage to her unborn baby.

CCTV cameras in the park picked up the incident as it happened and an operator alerted the police to the assault taking place.

Eileen Kennedy, 28 and her niece, Paige Bain, 16, pled guilty to racial assault. Kennedy also pled guilty to resisting arrest and Bain admitted racially aggravated assault. Kennedy was sentenced to two years and six days<sup>3</sup> and Bain later received a sentence of two years and eight months.<sup>4</sup>

- 1.2. Two Asian men, aged 25 and 21, were verbally and physically attacked in the early hours of 1 January 2013 by two men and one woman after leaving a pub in Kent.

Shannon Boughton, 20, complained about the two Asian men not speaking English saying they should "go back to their country". The two Asian men were then attacked by the assailants after they left the pub.

One of the victims was knocked unconscious with a single punch. The attackers pulled the 21 year old's jumper over his face and proceeded to kick and punch him.<sup>5</sup> Boughton also struck one of the victims over the head with one of her shoes. The assailants further attempted to convince a witness to the incident to change her account of the affair.

Matthew Liles, 25, was sentenced to four and a half years after pleading guilty to wounding with intent, assault causing actual bodily harm and perverting the course of justice. Shannon Boughton, 20, and Jamie Waldock, 22, were both sentenced to 18 months in youth custody and imprisonment respectively for racially aggravated bodily harm and perverting the course of justice.<sup>6</sup>

- 1.3. Following an English Defence League demonstration in Cleckheaton on 17 March 2012, seven men were charged with violent disorder for acts committed including hurling racist abuse at a motorist and his passenger, spitting on the passenger, throwing a drink at their car and chasing another Asian man and subsequently beating him when he fell to the ground.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 1.27 pg. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *The Scotsman*, 1 January 2013

<sup>4</sup> *Daily Mail*, 22 January 2013

<sup>5</sup> *Kent News*, 7 January 2013

<sup>6</sup> *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 16 December 2013

<sup>7</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 1.22 pg.9.

All seven men pleaded guilty to violent disorder with several sentenced for aggravated offences.

Kevin Docherty, 39, was jailed for 14 months after pleading guilty to violent disorder and racially-aggravated criminal damage.

Robert Collington, 27 was imprisoned for 12 months after pleading guilty violent disorder and causing racially aggravated fear of violence.

Stephen Woodhead, 33, was jailed for four months after admitting to racially-aggravated common assault.

David Lawler, 30, was given a 13 month jail sentence and Mark Peel, 34, was sentenced for 12 months after both pleaded guilty to violent disorder.

Ben Phelps, 19, was given 10 months' youth custody and Bradley Allsop, 17, was given a 12 month youth rehabilitation order, with supervision and 120 hours' unpaid community work. Both admitted to violent disorder.

In addition, they men were banned from attending any future EDL gathering.<sup>8</sup>

- 1.4. A 30 year old Asian woman was attacked in Colchester on 28 January 2013 when she was struck to the back of the head, causing her to fall to the floor, while her attacker shouted racist abuse at her.<sup>9</sup>

An appeal was for witnesses to the incident was issued by Essex police but no further information is available in connection with this incident.<sup>10</sup>

- 1.5. Two women were charged with offences after an attack on a Kurdish family at their takeaway shop following an English Defence League meeting in Plymouth on 31 August 2011.<sup>11</sup>

The male victim and family member was racially abused and told to "go back to his own country." A female member of the family had her arm scratched during the incident. An unknown member of the mob threw a glass which smashed close to the family's infant son who was sat in a car seat inside the takeaway shop.

Since the incident, the Kurdish family have sold the takeaway and moved away.

Hayley Wells, 28, admitted religiously aggravated common assault and was given a suspended three month prison sentence and ordered to complete 200 hours unpaid work.

Kelly Watterson, 30, was given a 12 month community order with 150 hours unpaid work after admitting to affray. Both were further ordered to pay £100 to the victim.<sup>12</sup>

- 1.6. A 14 year old teenager was charged for shouting abuse and attacking two Muslim women by attempting to remove their headscarves in Edinburgh on 2 May 2013.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *The Telegraph and Argus*, 16 January 2013

<sup>9</sup> *Daily Gazette*, 3 February 2013

<sup>10</sup> *Essex Chronicle*, 3 February 2013

<sup>11</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 2.22 pp.16-17.

<sup>12</sup> *Plymouth Herald*, 23 February 2013

<sup>13</sup> *Herald Scotland*, 5 May 2013

No further information is available in relation to details of the charges pursued against the youth or any injuries sustained by the victims although a police inspector submitted a report about the incident to the office of the Scottish procurator-fiscal.

Police Scotland responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that a 14 year old was charged under section 50A(1)(b) and (5) of the Criminal Law (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 1995.<sup>14</sup>

- 1.7. A 78 year old Asian woman was physically assaulted by a man who committed a string of offences in Aylesbury on 3 June 2013.

The 31 year old man racially abused passers-by in the park, broke windows and doors of a house belonging to an Asian family and racially abused the elderly woman before pushing her over.

The man was arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated common assault, racially aggravated intentional harassment in addition to racially aggravated criminal damage.

He was released on bail until 23 July to allow for further enquiries.<sup>15</sup>

Thames Valley police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that one person was charged with racially aggravated criminal damage and sentenced to one day in prison.<sup>16</sup>

- 1.8. A cyclist tried to pull off a Muslim woman's face veil as he rode past her near Victoria Park in Leicester on 26 May 2013.

The victim was walking to the park with her family at the time of the incident. Two men on bikes rode toward them and one of the men reached out and grabbed the victim's veil as they rode past. The victim managed to push him away and the men rode off.<sup>17</sup>

The local paper reported a police appeal for witnesses.

Leicestershire police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that a suspect was identified and arrested in connection with the incident but that due to 'insufficient evidence' no further action was taken and the case filed as 'undetected'.<sup>18</sup>

- 1.9. Ahmad Farhan was assaulted as he left a London Underground station on 18 August 2012. As he left the train, the victim became wary of a group of men who stepped off the train.

Farhan heard one of the men, Salvatore Allegro, 48, say "go back to your own country you f\*\*\*ing Muslim c\*\*nt".

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<sup>14</sup> Freedom of Information request, Police Scotland, *reference IM-FOI-2014-1797*

<sup>15</sup> *Bucks Herald*, 5 June 2013

<sup>16</sup> Freedom of Information request, Thames Valley Police, *reference HQ/PA/002392/14*

<sup>17</sup> *Leicester Mercury*, 11 June 2013

<sup>18</sup> Freedom of Information request, Leicestershire Police, *reference 006476/14*

Upon exiting the station, Farhan was punched by another man James Whitbread, 36, on his upper body. As the rest of the group stood over him, he received a number of punches to his face and head. Farhan fell to the ground and hit his head. He received another punch from Whitbread and Allegro. Farhan suffered a bloody nose after the assault. He has also experienced breathing difficulties and pains to his neck since the attack and has not been able to use public transport.

Allegro and Whitbread were both found guilty of a racially aggravated public order offence. Allegro was further found guilty of common assault. Whitbread and Allegro both received a suspended six month prison sentence. Allegro was ordered to carry out 120 hours unpaid work while Whitbread was given an 18 month supervision requirement. Both were further ordered to pay the victim £100 in compensation.<sup>19</sup>

- 1.10. A 36 year old Asian taxi driver, Mohammed Afzal, was attacked and racially abused by three men after picking up a fare at a pub in Glasgow on 24 May 2013.

Afzal was called to the job at La Cala bar in Dennistoun, Glasgow. Arriving at the pub, Afzal was racially abused. One of the men punched him in the head and face. Another two men also punched and kicked the victim after he ran outside the bar and attempted to return to his car.

The men continued their assault outside the pub inflicting violence and threatening to kill Afzal.

Afzal suffered minor injuries and has been afraid to work following the incident.<sup>20</sup>

Afzal had written a letter to Police Scotland, questioning their investigation into the incident including why they had asked him to explain his reasons for reporting the incident as 'racially aggravated'.

Police Scotland responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that one individual had been arrested for assault and referred us to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service for further information in connection with the incident.<sup>21</sup>

- 1.11. A 79 year old Muslim man was attacked on his way to an Islamic Centre in Uxbridge on the evening of 6 July 2013. He suffered from serious head injuries as a result of the attack.

Fraser Giles, 17, hurled racist abuse at the elderly man before punching him in the face. The pensioner fell to the ground and Giles then kicked him in the head.

A group of people, including Giles' father, was with the offender at the time of assault. His father pulled Giles away and they fled from the scene.

The elderly man was treated at the scene for head injuries and consequently taken to hospital in serious condition.

Giles was charged with grievous bodily harm with intent. He was sentenced to eight years on 12 December 2013.

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<sup>19</sup> *News Shopper*, 14 June 2013

<sup>20</sup> *The Scotsman*, 5 July 2013

<sup>21</sup> Freedom of Information request, Police Scotland, *reference IM-FOI-2014-1797*

Giles' father, Daniel Giles, 39, was charged with assisting the offender and was sentenced to 10 months. He was immediately released after being held on remand since July 2013.<sup>22</sup>

Ben Howett, 20, and Hade Smith, 18, were charged with perverting the course of justice and were given a suspended sentence of eight months.<sup>23</sup>

- 1.12. Kevin Dunne, 57, was sentenced to seven months in prison after he racially abused and assaulted Muslim taxi driver, Shabir Ahmed, who had dropped him and his friends at Newport's Celtic Manor Resort on 26 May 2013.

Newport Crown Court heard Dunne had wrongly accused Ahmed of being linked to the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby, in Woolwich, south London. Dunne said: *"You know what happened last week in London? It was one of your brothers who done it. Where are you from?"*

After Mr Ahmed ignored the comment and asked for his £12 fare Dunne gave him a bit of change and a 20 pence tip, saying: *"That's all you're having. \*\*\*\* off out of here, you \*\*\*\*\* Paki."*

Dunne further assaulted Ahmed by striking him on the head and punching him in the face.

Dunne admitted being "intoxicated" and accepted a charge of racially aggravated assault. Dunne was also fined £110 and ordered to pay £85 costs for a public order offence for also abusing a security guard and police at the time of his arrest.<sup>24</sup>

- 1.13. A 55 year old woman was brutally attacked on her way home in Mayfair, London, on 29 July 2013; during Ramadan.

The woman, who was returning from a friend's house after closing her fast before sunrise, was grabbed from behind by a man who repeatedly punched her in the back of the head.

After falling to the ground, the attacker continued the assault while using vulgar language against Muslims, Ramadan and Islam. The attacker then grabbed the woman's headscarf and dragged her along the pavement.

The woman was left bleeding in the street. The attacker further slapped her with his blood-stained hands, leaving an imprint on her face. The woman fell unconscious as he ran away.

She was treated in hospital with surgery performed to her face.<sup>25</sup> The police were unable to identify the perpetrator due to the CCTV footage in the area being of poor quality and unclear.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Uxbridge Gazette*, 10 July 2013

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Standard*, 13 December 2013

<sup>24</sup> *South Wales Argus*, 12 July 2013

<sup>25</sup> *Islamic Human Rights Commission*, 1 August 2013 [available at: <http://ihrc.org.uk/news/articles/10631-horrific-attack-on-55-year-old-muslim-woman>]

<sup>26</sup> Response received by email from Abed Choudhury, Islamic Human Rights Commission, 28 August 2013.

- 1.14. Three men, aged 30, 33 and 47, were attacked and verbally abused by nine men in Glasgow city centre on 29 September 2013. All three were taken to hospital with the eldest victim requiring surgery for a severe ear wound as a result of the assault.

The incident was reported to have been a racially-motivated attack. Although Police Scotland made an appeal for witnesses, no further information is available in connection with this incident.<sup>27</sup>

Police Scotland responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests were made in connection with the incident. 'Extensive enquiries proved negative and a media appeal also failed to generate any further leads'.<sup>28</sup>

- 1.15. A 55 year old Somalian woman wearing a burqa was punched and verbally abused in Woolwich town centre in south east London on 29 June 2013.

Tracy Davies, 46, was found guilty of racially aggravated common assault on 2 October 2013. She was ordered to pay a £150 fine, £100 compensation and £105 to cover costs.<sup>29</sup>

- 1.16. A 22 year old women was attacked on the metro in Tyne and Wear in October 2013 by a man who tried to pull her face veil off her face.

The man came and sat next to Yasmin Bint Shafiq and told her "I want to see your face".

Bint Shafiq ignored the man who then grabbed her and forcibly tried to pull her headscarf and veil off.<sup>30</sup>

In a TV interview following the incident, Yasmin admitted to waiting two months before reporting the incident to the police. She said she had been left terrified after the incident and deferred relaying details of the attack to the police.

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 1.17. An 82 year old man, Mohammed Saleem Khan, was stabbed to death after attending prayers at his local mosque in Small Heath, Birmingham, on 29 April 2013.

His assailant, Lapshyn Pavlo, told the police he had murdered Mr Saleem because he hated "non-whites".

Lapshyn, 25, also plotted explosions near mosques in Wolverhampton, Walsall and Tipton between April 24 and July 18.

Lapshyn was jailed for at least 40 years after pleading guilty to murder and plotting the explosions on 21 October 2013.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *BBC News*, 30 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-24340379>]

<sup>28</sup> Freedom of Information request, Police Scotland, reference IM-FOI-2014-1797

<sup>29</sup> *BBC News*, 4 October 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-24398104>]

<sup>30</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 16 October 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/muslim-woman-wearing-niqab-is-attacked-on-tyne-and-wear-metro/>]

<sup>31</sup> *BBC News*, 25 October 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-24675040>]

- 1.18. A 22 year old Muslim nurse in Newcastle was attacked in the grounds of Freeman Hospital on 24 May 2013.

Khadija Mohamed fell to the floor after a man tugged hard at her headscarf from behind causing her to tumble. While standing over her, the attacker aggressively told her “You’re one of them, you’re one of them”.

Mohamed fought to free herself while passers-by shouted at the man to leave her alone. Once she managed to get away, she fled to a bus stop and went home.<sup>32</sup>

Mohamed did not report the attack to the police or the hospital at the time but said later in a TV interview that she decided to speak up about it “*so that people understand that Muslims are just regular people. We’re just regular human beings like everyone else*”.<sup>33</sup>

- 1.19. An Asian attendant at a service station was attacked in Wigan on 25 October 2013.

The attacker ran into the service station and threw a large piece of raw bacon at the attendant before running out of the premises.

Police confirmed it was a “racially motivated crime” due to the “connotations attached to the meat” and because an Asian man was targeted.<sup>34</sup>

The police issued an appeal for witnesses.<sup>35</sup>

Greater Manchester Police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests have been made in connection with the incident and the crime has been finalised as ‘no further lines of enquiry’.<sup>36</sup>

- 1.20. There were a number of incidents of racial or religiously aggravated assault committed by a gang of youths in the vicinity of Cradley Heath mosque in Birmingham. Muslim pensioners were assaulted, a young Muslim boy was slapped outside a mosque and a Muslim driver was surrounded while his car was smashed by the teenage gang between 16 and 24 October.

In the first incident, on 16 October 2013, a 68-year-old Muslim man was verbally abused by a group of four males before being hit by one of them.

The following day, a 70-year-old man was walking back from the mosque when he was approached by a group of eight or nine males. The elderly man faced verbal and racist abuse before being kicked.

On 20 October, five teenagers surrounded a car with a male driver inside. The youths kicked the car to such an extent that it was damaged to the point of being written off.

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<sup>32</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 23 October 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/newcastle-nurse-attacked-while-wearing-muslim-headscarf/>]

<sup>33</sup> SKY Tyne and Wear [available at: <http://tyneandwear.sky.com/news/article/86594/freeman-hospital-nurse-attacked-while-wearing-muslim-headscarf/>]. Accessed on 24 October 2013

<sup>34</sup> *BBC News*, 29 November 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-25157246>]

<sup>35</sup> Greater Manchester Police, 29 November 2013 [available at: <http://www.gmp.police.uk/live/nhoodv3.nsf/WebsitePagesLite/3432C4D03468D59E80257C32004B3AEE?OpenDocument>]

<sup>36</sup> Freedom of Information request, Greater Manchester police, *reference 2372/14*

In a further incident, on 24 October, a mother was leaving the mosque with her three children when they were racially abused by the gang. Her eight year old child was spat at and slapped across the head by one of the gang members.

Five teenagers, aged between 15 and 16, appeared in court in April 2014. They were charged with the use of threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour to cause harassment, alarm or distress and criminal damage.

Another 17 year old teenage youth previously pleaded guilty to three racially aggravated assaults, criminal damage and harassment with words in relation to the same incidents.<sup>37</sup>

No further information is available in connection with the trial and sentencing of the youths.

- 1.21. A 48 year old woman wearing a headscarf was repeatedly punched in the head by two white women in a park in Barking, East London on 5 May 2013.

The Somali woman was playing with her two children when an argument broke out between her children and another child over the swings in the park. When she tried to intervene, two women confronted her.

The victim made motions to indicate she could not speak English but the women punched her on the head while shouting racist accusations including “Muslim terrorist”. She suffered from swelling and bruising as a result of the assault.

The two white women left the park in a car and the victim was taken to hospital.

Although the woman did not understand English, her young son understood the abuse hurled at his mother and reported the incident to the police.<sup>38</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 1.22. Two Muslim women were racially abused by a drunken man with a knife on 3 September 2013 in Barton Hill, Bristol.

Farduja Jama was walking to a cash dispenser with her eight year old son when she heard a loud voice shout out “Off with the hijab”.

David Norris, 39, approached her with a six inch knife in his hand. He threatened her saying “Take the hijab off. This is England, you are not allowed. Take the hijab off before I stab you.”

Norris then pointed the blade at Jama and placed it against the left and right side of her neck.

In a second incident on the same day, Norris approached Iqbal Osman who was watching her child play in a park. Norris asked why she was wearing too many clothes and why she had “that thing” over her head, indicating her headscarf.

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<sup>37</sup> *Express & Star*, 30 April 2014

<sup>38</sup> *Barking and Dagenham Post*, 15 May 2013



He further swore and proclaimed “Muslim people, you are taking over my country” before brandishing a knife from within his coat.

Norris was placed on remand for 7 months and admitted to two counts of religiously aggravated harassment and two counts of possession of a bladed article. He was given a two year community order, with two years supervision, and a six month alcohol treatment requirement.<sup>39</sup>

- 1.23. A 20 year old woman, who was wearing a hijab, was spat at as she walked by a service station in Leicester on the afternoon of 4 February 2013.

The woman noticed three young men approaching her as she walked. One of the men spat on her as they passed by her and the group laughed before walking off.

PC Dave Adams of Leicester Police said “The victim felt upset and frightened following the incident and feels that she was targeted because she was wearing a hijab.”

The police released a CCTV image of the three men as part of an appeal.<sup>40</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

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<sup>39</sup> *The Bristol Post*, 16 April 2013

<sup>40</sup> *Leicester Mercury*, 15 February 2013

## 2. Attacks on Muslim property or institutions

- 2.1 A pig's head was left outside a mosque in Newbury, Berkshire, on 23 October 2012.<sup>41</sup>

Rory Rowbottom pleaded guilty to racially aggravated harassment and a section 4 public order offence in connection with the incident. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in January 2013.<sup>42</sup>

- 2.2 Two men and a woman were sentenced for attaching bacon to the door handles of Edinburgh's Central Mosque and throwing bacon strips inside on 31 January 2013.<sup>43</sup>

Chelsea Lambie, 17, and Douglas Cruikshank, 37, were charged with behaving in a threatening or abusive manner likely to cause fear and alarm. The Crown Prosecution Service claimed the offence was racially aggravated.<sup>44</sup>

At trial, text messages sent from Lambie's phone were used to corroborate the bias motivation. Messages sent by Lambie, included one which stated "Going to invade a mosque, because we can go where we want."

A further text message exchange on Lambie's mobile phone stated "What you do last night?" The reply was "Went to the mosque in Edinburgh and wrapped bacon round the door handles, opened the door and threw it in ha ha ha."

Lambie was found guilty and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment.

Douglas Cruikshank pled guilty after racial aggravation was removed from the indictment. He received a nine months prison sentence.

Wayne Stilwell, 24, also pled guilty in August 2013 to religiously aggravated attack and was sentenced to 10 months.<sup>45</sup>

- 2.3 The landlord of a shop unit in Chipping Norton received a threat that it would be "burnt down" after the West Oxfordshire District Council gave its approval for the vacant shop to be used as a mosque. Chipping Norton Town Council received objections to the plans, particularly over transport and fire safety.

The shop unit landlord, Georg Wissinger, said he had "received a call saying if I went ahead with it, it would get very hot – I thought that meant it would be burnt down so I am no longer offering the shop."<sup>46</sup>

Although no formal complaint was made, the police confirmed they were investigating a phone call made to the premises between 2 and 4 February 2013.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> ENGAGE Submission (2013) – incident reference 2.16 pp. 15-16.

<sup>42</sup> *BBC News*, 23 January 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-21163501>]

<sup>43</sup> *The Scotsman*, 4 February 2013

<sup>44</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20 June 2014

<sup>45</sup> *BBC News*, 20 June 2014 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-27941589>]

<sup>46</sup> *BBC News*, 13 February 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-21446848>]

<sup>47</sup> *BBC News*, 14 February 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-21458926>]

Thames Valley police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that two media appeals were issued in connection with the incident but no arrests or charges brought forward.<sup>48</sup>

- 2.4 Liam Ferrar, 24, left a frozen pig's head outside the Thurnby Lodge Community Centre in Leicester on 26 December 2012.<sup>49</sup>

The building was being used as a place of worship by the Muslim community while an application to convert the former Scouts Hut into an Islamic centre was being considered by Leicester City Council. The plans were met with significant opposition from members of the local community with the far right organisation, the British National Party exploiting the situation for party political gain. The leader of the BNP, Nick Griffin, travelled to Leicester to appear at a demonstration outside the centre.

The city council rejected the proposals to convert the building into an Islamic centre in January 2013.<sup>50</sup>

Ferrar was given a suspended sentence of 12 weeks' imprisonment after he pleaded guilty to causing religiously aggravated harassment.<sup>51</sup>

- 2.5 A 43 year old man was charged with religiously aggravated harassment after leaving a pig's head in the car park of North Jamia Mosque in Watford during evening prayers on 21 February 2013.

Karl Smith pleaded guilty to the charge. The case was adjourned for a further hearing on March 21.<sup>52</sup> No further information is available in relation to trial or sentencing in connection with this incident.

- 2.6 An investigation was launched by the North Wales Police after a garage behind Shafiul Islam's home in Shotton was torched on 2 April 2013.

Shafiul Islam, his wife and three children, including a newborn, escaped from the blaze but the fire eviscerated the garage and killed the family's two guinea fowl. The cost of re-building the garage and the loss of the contents was estimated at £11,000.

The incident follows demonstrations by far right groups against proposals to convert the Shotton Lane Social Club into an Islamic centre.<sup>53</sup>

Giuseppe Michael Calvert, 19, and another man started the fire in the garage and tried to start another one at the back door of the house. The two men were caught on CCTV cameras which the family had installed to protect themselves following earlier acts of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Calvert was sentenced to three years for arson. The second man has not been identified.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Freedom of Information request, Thames Valley Police, *reference HQ/PA/002392/14*

<sup>49</sup> ENGAGE Submission (2013) – incident reference 2.20 pg. 16

<sup>50</sup> *BBC News*, 13 January 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-20915604>]

<sup>51</sup> *Daily Mail*, 18 February 2013

<sup>52</sup> *Muslim News*, 31 March 2013

<sup>53</sup> *BBC News*, 21 May 2011 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-13483834>]

<sup>54</sup> *Daily Post*, 31 May 2013

- 2.7 Jamia Masjid Swafia mosque in Wakefield was vandalised with unspecified food thrown at the side of the building on 4 April 2013.<sup>55</sup>

Officers from the central neighbourhood police team in West Yorkshire carried out door to door inquiries as part of an investigation. An appeal for information was also made via Wakefield Central Neighbourhood Policing Team's Facebook page.

West Yorkshire police responded to a Freedom of Information request about this incident to disclose that no arrest were made and following investigation, the matter has now been finalised pending any further information coming to light.<sup>56</sup>

- 2.8 Graffiti displaying offensive anti-Muslim messages, such as "terrorist scumbags", was sprayed onto the hoardings of a mosque building site in Cambridge.<sup>57</sup> The graffiti which appeared overnight on 17 April was brought to the attention of the police.

The plans for the mosque in Mill Street, Cambridge, have been strongly opposed with far right group, the English Defence League, demonstrating against what they have deemed a 'super mosque'.<sup>58</sup> Leaflets 'whipping up anti-Muslim hysteria' have also been circulating in Cambridge about the mosque plans.<sup>59</sup>

The police issued an appeal for witnesses in relation to the incident.

Cambridgeshire Police confirmed to us under an FOI request that one person was arrested in connection with the crime but was released without charge.<sup>60</sup>

- 2.9 The letters "EDL" were daubed in grey paint on a mosque in Bedminster and in red paint on a Sikh temple in Redfield. Both were vandalised with the graffiti between 21 and 25 September 2012.

Two men were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage but were later released from bail with no further action taken in April 2013.<sup>61</sup> The police launched an appeal for witnesses thereafter but no further information is available in connection with the incident.

Avon and Somerset Police responded to our Freedom of Information request stating that two arrests were made in connection with this crime and the suspects were released on bail as evidence gathering and enquiries progressed. However, due to 'insufficient evidence' no charges were brought against the suspects and no further action was taken. An appeal for information was later renewed.<sup>62</sup>

- 2.10 Graffiti was spray painted near the Shah Jahan mosque in Woking, Surrey with further incidents of vandalism evident inside a nearby shop and on the wall of a building housing flats, where the words 'Saddam Hussein', 'Bin Laden' and 'EDL' were daubed on 12 November 2012.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> *Wakefield Express*, 11 April 2013

<sup>56</sup> Freedom of Information request, West Yorkshire police, *reference 2014127/2713*

<sup>57</sup> *Cambridge News*, 18 April 2013

<sup>58</sup> *Cambridge News*, 20 February 2013

<sup>59</sup> *BBC News*, 13 December 2011 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-16158923>]

<sup>60</sup> Freedom of Information Request to Cambridgeshire Police, *reference 0684/14*

<sup>61</sup> *Bristol Post*, 18 April 2013

<sup>62</sup> Freedom of Information request, Avon and Somerset Police, *reference 928/14*

<sup>63</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 2.18 pg. 16.

Laura Woodward, 19, admitted four counts of racially and religiously aggravated criminal damage and two counts of criminal damage. Woodward was sentenced to a 12 month community order and ordered to perform 100 hours unpaid work.<sup>64</sup>

Georgina Gontar, 20, pleaded guilty to breach of an ASBO, four offences of racially aggravated criminal damage and two offences of causing criminal damage. Gontar received two custodial sentences of 10 weeks and seven weeks to run concurrently.<sup>65</sup>

- 2.11 A Muslim community centre in Stevenage was targeted with pork meat placed on the gated entrance to the building and over the entrance door handles. Dog faeces was smeared on front of the entrance a day after pork meat incident.

Two men, aged 21 and 24, were arrested on suspicion of religiously aggravated intimidation and harassment but were later released. No further action was taken following a decision by the Crown Prosecution Service.<sup>66</sup>

- 2.12 Two men were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage after a window of a mosque on Agbrigg Road in Wakefield, West Yorkshire was smashed in May 2013. Two other individuals, a man and a woman, were also arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit criminal damage.<sup>67</sup>

The rural neighbourhood police team investigated damage at the mosque.

West Yorkshire police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that six individuals (five males and one female) were arrested in connection with this crime. Three were released without charge and three were convicted of racially/religiously aggravated criminal damage.<sup>68</sup> Further details were published in the Chief Constable's report:

"Stephen Bolton, 48, Martin Addy, 26, and Darren Lumb, 46, were convicted after a series of incidents. As part of their conviction they have been fined and ordered to pay compensation. They will be banned from entering Agbrigg and are also banned from associating together in public in West Yorkshire."<sup>69</sup>

- 2.13 The Masjid-e-Usman mosque in Bolton was sprayed with racist graffiti on the day after the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby. The mosque walls were daubed with "Islam= Evil" and a car parked on the mosque grounds was sprayed with the words 'Terrorist inside' across its doors.<sup>70</sup>

Greater Manchester police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests were made in connection with the incident and that the crimes has been finalised as 'no further lines of enquiry'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> getSurrey, 7 March 2013 [available at: <http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/local-news/teenager-admits-racist-graffiti-near-4720925>]

<sup>65</sup> getSurrey, 23 April 2013 [available at: [http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/s/2132893\\_asbo\\_woman\\_jailed\\_over\\_racist\\_graffiti\\_spree](http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/s/2132893_asbo_woman_jailed_over_racist_graffiti_spree)]

<sup>66</sup> *The Comet*, 9 May 2013

<sup>67</sup> *Wakefield Express*, 18 May 2013

<sup>68</sup> Freedom of Information request, West Yorkshire police, *reference 2014127/2713*

<sup>69</sup> Chief Constable's Report, Community Outcomes, Issue 009. *West Yorkshire Police*, 28 February 2014.

<sup>70</sup> *Asian Image*, 23 May 2013

<sup>71</sup> Freedom of Information request, Greater Manchester police, *reference 2372/14*

- 2.14 Strips of bacon were left at the entrance to Shah Jalal mosque in Cardiff on 22 May 2013.

The secretary general of the Muslim Council of Wales, Saleem Kidwai, said “They [the offenders] left pig meat at the door – bacon and all these things”.<sup>72</sup>

Police enquiries were reported to be ongoing. Further information is being sought from the police in connection with this incident.

- 2.15 The windows of a mosque in Grimsby were damaged following a party on 23 May 2013. A number of parked vehicles were also damaged and bins were overturned.

Eleven teenagers aged between 16 and 17 years were arrested in connection with incident.

Neighbourhood Policing Chief Inspector Will Jenkins, of Lincolnshire police force, noted that the investigation “will consider if the mosque was targeted for racial reasons.”<sup>73</sup>

A resident stated that, shortly after the incident, she saw 25 youths in the street who were chanting “we know where you are, we are coming to get you”.<sup>74</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 2.16 A milk bottle filled with paint was thrown at an Islamic Centre in Belfast on 23 May 2013.<sup>75</sup>

Two teenage boys were seen running from the scene. Police were treating the incident as a hate crime and issued an appeal for witnesses.<sup>76</sup>

No further information is available regarding the investigation or arrests in connection with this incident.

- 2.17 A fast food outlet in east London owned by a Muslim family was attacked on the night of 23 May 2013.

Two men entered the Dixy Chicken shop in Upton Park and banged on the serving counter shouting “You killed one of our soldiers, we’ll kill you”. The shop was also vandalised and the heavy glass doors of the shop were smashed.

The damage to the shop was estimated at thousands of pounds including a night’s loss of business and cooked food which had to be thrown away.

Two men were arrested for public order offences and criminal damage.<sup>77</sup> Further information is being sought from the police in connection with this incident.

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<sup>72</sup> *Wales Online*, 23 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/bacon-left-entrance-cardiff-mosque-4007527>]

<sup>73</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 24 May 2013

<sup>74</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 25 May 2013

<sup>75</sup> *UTV News*, 24 May 2013

<sup>76</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 27 May 2013

<sup>77</sup> *Newham Recorder*, 24 May 2013

- 2.18 A lighted bottle of inflammable liquid was thrown onto the roof of Zainabia Islamic Centre in Granby while Muslims were inside on the evening of 23 May 2013.

A witness, Fazilat Shivji, said she and her husband saw “a streak of fire” that landed on the roof of the mosque. Members of the community managed to put out the flames before the fire brigade arrived.

Detective Inspector Nick Glistler from Thames Valley Police noted that “this could have been far worse had it not been for the quick actions of the people who were standing outside at the time.”<sup>78</sup>

Thames Valley police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that a media appeal has been issued but no arrests or charges brought forward in connection with the incident.<sup>79</sup>

- 2.19 A man armed with a knife threw a smoke device into the Al Falah prayer centre in Braintree, Essex on 22 May 2013.<sup>80</sup>

Geoffrey Ryan, 43, was charged with affray and two counts of possessing an offensive weapon. He was sentenced to nine months’ imprisonment.<sup>81</sup>

Following the sentencing, Detective Constable Andy Young from Essex Police noted that the centre, which was targeted immediately after the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby, had hosted “local events intended to increase understanding and tolerance within a multi-cultural community”.

- 2.20 The walls of the Bournemouth Islamic Centre and Central Mosque was daubed with the words “Muslim scum” in red paint on 23 May 2013.

In a second incident, a man rattled the doors of the mosque and tried to force his way inside. When confronted by the imam and director of the mosque, Majid Yasin, the man ran off shouting after him.<sup>82</sup>

Dorset Police confirmed they were investigating the initial incident and further information is being sought in connection with this incident.

- 2.21 Racist slogans were daubed on a security door, on pavements and on a commercial bin in a back street behind Cobden Street in Burnley in the days after Drummer Lee Rigby’s murder.

Alongside the racist graffiti were the initials of far right groups English Defence League (EDL) and British National Party (BNP).

The graffiti came to the attention of Councillor Gary Frayling on the morning of 27 May 2013.<sup>83</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident despite an FOI request that was submitted to Lancashire Police.

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<sup>78</sup> *BBC News*, 24 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-22652906>]

<sup>79</sup> Freedom of Information request, Thames Valley Police, reference HQ/PA/002392/14

<sup>80</sup> *BBC News*, 24 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-22651294>]

<sup>81</sup> *BBC News*, 21 August 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-23780206>]

<sup>82</sup> *Bournemouth Echo*, 25 May 2013

<sup>83</sup> *Asian Image*, 28 May 2013

- 2.22 Vandals threw a stone smashing a window at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Stockwell, Brixton, on 27 May 2013.<sup>84</sup>

Although no one was arrested, the police confirmed an investigation was ongoing but no further information is available in connection with the incident.

- 2.23 Graffiti was painted onto the wall of the prayer hall of Pleasington cemetery in Blackburn.<sup>85</sup> The words “Pakis out”, “Islam murders scum” and “EDL” were daubed on the building.<sup>86</sup>

An appeal for witnesses was issued by Lancashire Police but no further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 2.24 Racist and Islamophobic remarks were spray painted on the walls and windows of a former pub in Lingfield, Leeds, which is to be converted into a Muslim run community centre, on the night of 31 May 2013.<sup>87</sup>

It is the second time the building has been vandalised. Earlier last year, the words “no mosque” were sprayed onto the building prior to a council meeting discussing the planning proposals. Moreover, the English Defence League held a protest against the plans in May 2013 at which a pig’s head was brandished.<sup>88</sup>

West Yorkshire police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrest were made in connection with the incident and following investigation the matter has been finalised pending any further information coming to light.

West Yorkshire police released a re-active statement about the incident:

“Racist graffiti was found at the old Lingfield pub premises at Lingfield Drive overnight on Friday [31 May 2013]. Local Neighbourhood Policing Teams attended and the graffiti has been removed by Leeds City Council. Increased patrols have been deployed in the area. Police and partner agencies remain vigilant and will be continuing to monitor events and engage with communities in Leeds over the coming weeks.”<sup>89</sup>

- 2.25 A fire caused ‘extensive damage’ at an Islamic centre in Muswell Hill on 5 June 2013, causing the building to partially collapse. The fire was being treated as ‘suspicious’ after the letters ‘EDL’ were found painted onto the side of the building. The Metropolitan Police were investigating any connection between the graffiti and the fire.

Two men were charged in connection with the arson attack and further information is being sought from the police in connection with this incident.<sup>90</sup>

- 2.26 Garry Abbot, 45, was arrested for smashing a window at Huntingdon Islamic Education and Prayer Centre on 30 May 2013. Following his release on bail, he later

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<sup>84</sup> *The Voice*, 29 May 2013

<sup>85</sup> *BBC News*, 31 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-22729252>]

<sup>86</sup> *Asian Image*, 31 May 2013

<sup>87</sup> *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 4 June 2013

<sup>88</sup> See incident 3.63

<sup>89</sup> Freedom of Information request, West Yorkshire police, *reference 2014127/2713*

<sup>90</sup> *BBC News*, 5 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-22785074>]



returned to the mosque on 2 June 2013 where he was heard shouting obscenities outside the centre.

Abbot pleaded guilty to racial or religious aggravated criminal damage but denied a charge of religious aggravated harassment.<sup>91</sup>

Abbott was sentenced to two weeks imprisonment for each offence on 26 July 2013.<sup>92</sup>

- 2.27 The front door of a Muslim woman's home in East Grinstead was vandalised with the words "Dead Muslim" daubed in permanent ink. Njaimah Jawara, the mother of a British Muslim soldier, was made aware of the graffiti on her front door by her neighbour who spotted it while she was away.

Police suspect Jawara was targeted because of her religion.<sup>93</sup> Police issued an appeal for witnesses to the incident but no information is available in connection with this incident and Sussex Police were unresponsive to an FOI request that we submitted seeking further information.

- 2.28 A pig's head was left on the driveway of Shafique Rehman's home in Bordesley Green, Birmingham on 20 October 2012. A brick was also thrown through the lounge window of the victim's home and paint stripper poured over the victim's car.

Ehtisham Badar was found guilty of religiously aggravated harassment, two charges of religiously aggravated damaging property and threatening to damage property.

Judge Phillip Parker QC stressed when passing sentence "You left a severed pig's head on the drive. You are Muslim. They are Muslim. You knew that was particularly offensive and that is the religious aggravation of the offence."

Badar was given a suspended sentence of 15 months and ordered to pay £2,217 compensation and carry out 200 hours' unpaid work.<sup>94</sup>

- 2.29 Two boys were treated for smoke inhalation after a fire was started by intruders at an Islamic boarding school in Chislehurst, Kent. The Darul Uloom was set alight on the night of 8 June 2013 and all 128 pupils and staff had to be evacuated from the building.

Two 17-year-olds and two 18-year-olds were detained at a police station in connection with the fire<sup>95</sup>. Another 18-year-old boy was also arrested on suspicion of arson with intent. They were all released on bail to return in August 2013.

Kent police pursued enquiries, including stopping and questioning more than 1,000 drivers passing through the Chislehurst area, however, no further information is available regarding the ensuing investigation or any criminal charges in connection with this incident.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *Hunts Post*, 5 June 2013

<sup>92</sup> *Hunts Post*, 7 August 2013

<sup>93</sup> *East Grinstead Courier and Observer*, 6 June 2013

<sup>94</sup> *Birmingham Mail*, 13 June 2013

<sup>95</sup> *The Guardian*, 9 June 2013

<sup>96</sup> *Bromley Times*, 17 June 2013

- 2.30 A slice of bacon in an envelope was posted through the letterbox of a mosque in Maidenhead which staff discovered on the morning of 10 June 2013.

The words "England till I die" were also found spray-painted onto tarmac on the driveway to the mosque on 8 June 2013.<sup>97</sup>

Lee Hunt, 26, and Gary Nuth, 22, were both charged with two counts of racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage, one count of criminal damage and one count of theft.

Nuth was sentenced to a 12 month community order of 270 hours of unpaid work. He was also given a 12 months' probation order and ordered to pay £150 in compensation, costs of £500 and a victim surcharge of £60.<sup>98</sup>

Hunt was found guilty and ordered to complete 300 hours of unpaid work within 12 months and to pay £750 costs, £300 compensation and a £60 victim surcharge.<sup>99</sup>

- 2.31 A swastika was daubed on the front door of a proposed mosque in Worcester Park on 4 June 2013.<sup>100</sup>

Plans were submitted to Sutton Council to convert the derelict Bank Chamber building into a mosque but it was rejected in 2010 on grounds that it would increase traffic in the area.

The incident in June 2013 followed the submission of a new planning application in May 2013 for a car-free mosque to the local council.

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 2.32 A former serviceman attempted to set fire to a mosque in Denbighshire on 25 May 2013.

John Parkin, 27, was refused entry into a nightclub in Rhyl after telling staff "I just need a bottle of strong alcohol to burn down the mosque." Parkin purchased a bottle of beer from a shop instead.

CCTV operators had been alerted by the club's staff of Parkin's remarks and police officers arrived when Parkin was on the grounds of the mosque. He was monitored on CCTV as he put tissue into the bottle of beer and tried to set it alight.

Parkin admitted to threatening to burn down the mosque and a charge of religiously aggravated disorderly behaviour. He was sentenced to 18 months and given an indefinite criminal anti-social behaviour order banning him from entering any mosque.<sup>101</sup>

- 2.33 A 17 year old was arrested for vandalising a bin outside the Oadby Islamic Centre in Leicester. The letters "EDL" were sprayed or written onto a charity clothes bin and discovered on 10 June 2013.

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<sup>97</sup> *Maidenhead Advertiser*, 11 June 2013

<sup>98</sup> *Maidenhead Advertiser*, 1 November 2013

<sup>99</sup> *BBC News*, 22 November 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-25054808>]

<sup>100</sup> *Surrey Comet*, 11 June 2013

<sup>101</sup> *BBC News*, 20 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-22989321>]

The teenager previously scrawled “EDL” on the windows of the centre and on the same charity clothes bin on May 13.

The youth was found guilty of two counts of racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage and given a 12 month rehabilitation order with supervision. He was made to wear an electronic tag for two months and a curfew between 9pm and 7am imposed.<sup>102</sup>

- 2.34 Racist graffiti including swastikas and the letters “EDL” were sprayed on to a mosque in Redditch, Worcestershire, which was undergoing refurbishment works. The mosque was previously attacked by an arsonist who set fire to the premises in January 2012.<sup>103</sup>

Paint was taken from builders cabins on the site and used to graffiti the walls and at least half a dozen windows in the early hours of 26 June 2013. The vandals were also reported to have forced entry through a gate before breaking into the main building.

Syed Hussein, a staff member at UK Paving, which was doing the groundwork on the site, said that the vandals had broken part of the front gate and the door of the mosque but the extent of the damage was not established.<sup>104</sup>

Although theft was suspected to be the primary motive of the incident, Superintendent Kevin Purcell said the monetary motive did not minimise “the seriousness of the hate crime which also took place”.<sup>105</sup>

Although police released an appeal for witnesses no further information is available in connection with the incident.<sup>106</sup>

West Mercia police responded to an FOI request we submitted stating that no arrests has been made in connection with the crime and that the offence ‘is currently undetected’.<sup>107</sup>

- 2.35 The Dorset Islamic Cultural Centre was attacked on 23 May 2013 with several windows smashed a day after the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich, South London.

Jeremy Rochester, 34, used a stick to smash six windows with encouragement from Michael Manyweathers, 49, and Trevor Mullins, 38. Robert Mullins, 35, drove them to the mosque and sat waiting for them in the car.

All four pleaded guilty to racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage. They were sentenced to four months and ordered to pay £150 each in compensation.

Judge John Harrow sentencing the men said “*Smashing a window is not of itself a major crime... It is, however, the racial element in the aftermath of that tragedy and*

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<sup>102</sup> *Leicester Mercury*, 12 October 2013

<sup>103</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 2.4 pg. 14.

<sup>104</sup> *Redditch Standard*, 26 June 2013

<sup>105</sup> *West Mercia Police*, 26 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.westmercia.police.uk/news/news-articles/tools-worth-thousands-stolen-during-redditch-mosque-attack.html>]

<sup>106</sup> *West Mercia Police*, 26 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.westmercia.police.uk/news/news-articles/witness-plea-after-racist-attack-on-mosque-at-redditch.html>]

<sup>107</sup> Freedom of Information Request, West Mercia Police, *reference 5573/14*

*the tense atmosphere in the country at the time that puts this in a more serious category. What you did frightened and possibly insulted the local Islamic community, who probably felt insecure enough as it was. And there was a danger that extremists might be encouraged by your example.*"<sup>108</sup>

- 2.36 Four Muslim graves were desecrated with racist graffiti at Christchurch Cemetery in Newport, Wales in June 2013.

White paint was used to scrawl "Lee Rigby murder", "white power" and the initials of the British National Party (BNP), the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the National Front (NF) on the Muslim gravestones. Swastikas were also drawn on the headstones.<sup>109</sup>

Gwent police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests were made in connection with this crime. Gwent police have issued appeals for information via local press, Gwent police internet. The incident was also publicised in the national press; Daily Telegraph, Daily Star and BBC News.<sup>110</sup>

- 2.37 Sophia Ditta and her family found four pigs' heads dumped outside their family home in Bradford on 14 June 2013.

One pig's head was placed by the family's front door and another by their back door. A further two rotting pigs' heads were found in the bushes in their garden.<sup>111</sup>

The family discovered that another Asian family found a pig's head on their doorstep at around the same time as they.

Police confirmed that an investigation was launched and the incident was being treated as a racially motivated hate crime.<sup>112</sup>

West Yorkshire Police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests have been made in connection with the incident and following investigation, the matter has been finalised pending any further information coming to light.<sup>113</sup>

- 2.38 A suspect package was left at the Al Rahma mosque in Liverpool on the night of 30 June 2013.

A man came into the mosque with a locked metal suitcase and expressed he wanted to become a Muslim. He then ran off leaving the suitcase behind after telling the mosque administrator Mohamed Mansur "Before that I need to go home".

No explosive materials were found at the scene after an army bomb disposal squad carried out two controlled explosions.

A 22-year-old Somalian was cautioned and released following the incident.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> *Bournemouth Echo*, 28 June 2013

<sup>109</sup> *South Wales Argus*, 30 June 2013

<sup>110</sup> Freedom of Information request, Gwent police, *reference 2014/17161*

<sup>111</sup> *Telegraph & Argus*, 1 July 2013

<sup>112</sup> *Yorkshire Post*, 1 July 2013

<sup>113</sup> Freedom of Information request, West Yorkshire police, *reference 2014127/2713*

<sup>114</sup> *Liverpool Echo*, 2 July 2013

- 2.39 Racist graffiti was daubed in white paint on one of the walls of the Cradley Heath Central Mosque and Islamic Centre on 1 July 2013.

The graffiti referred to the far right group, English Defence League.<sup>115</sup>

Information regarding any arrests in connection with the incident is being sought from the local police force.

- 2.40 “No mosque here” was sprayed onto the wall on the side of a former bingo hall in Basildon in July 2013.

There have been no plans submitted to convert the hall into an Islamic place of worship. It was speculated that far right groups may have triggered a rumour because they have organised protests outside the building and in Pitsea Market.<sup>116</sup>

No further information is available in connection with the incident and Essex Police were unresponsive to our FOI request.

- 2.41 The Fife Islamic Centre in Kirkcaldy was daubed with the words “Muslims will perish by JC” on 8 or 9 June 2013. Several cars were also vandalised with red paint.<sup>117</sup>

The cost of the damage was estimated at hundreds of pounds.

Although the police issued an appeal for witnesses to the incident, no further information is available regarding any ensuing investigation.<sup>118</sup>

Police Scotland responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that the incident remains an ‘undetected crime’ and that no individual has been charged. The incident is ‘still regarded as an open enquiry’ and is ‘being reviewed regularly and will remain so till concluded’.<sup>119</sup>

- 2.42 A man was reported to have thrown stones at a mosque in Bletchley in the early hours of the morning on 21 July 2013. Occupants of the mosque were also threatened by the man.

A 22 year old man was arrested in relation to the incident on suspicion of a racially aggravated public order offence.<sup>120</sup>

The man was released on police bail until August 18, thereafter extended to September 29.<sup>121</sup>

Thames Valley police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no further action was taken against the suspect.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *Express & Star*, 2 July 2013

<sup>116</sup> *Southend Echo*, 10 July 2013

<sup>117</sup> *Herald Scotland*, 11 July 2013

<sup>118</sup> *Scotland Police*, 10 July 2013 [available at: <http://www.scotland.police.uk/whats-happening/news/2013/july/177834/>]

<sup>119</sup> Freedom of Information request, Police Scotland, *reference IM-FOI-2014-1797*

<sup>120</sup> *Milton Keynes News*, 22 July 2013

<sup>121</sup> *The Muslim News*, 30 August 2013

<sup>122</sup> Freedom of Information request, Thames Valley Police, *reference HQ/PA/002392/14*

- 2.43 A mosque in Gillingham was damaged on 22 May 2013. The door of the mosque was urinated on and the doorframe, windows, shelves, a money box and a bookcase were all damaged.<sup>123</sup>

Andrew Grindlay was charged with religiously aggravated criminal damage and burglary. He was found not guilty by a jury in October 2013.<sup>124</sup>

- 2.44 On June 18 2013, two former EDL members bought lager, vodka and a petrol can of fuel from a garage before using the fuel to set fire to the Masjid-E-Noor in Gloucester. The blaze resulted in £3,200 of damage to the premises.

The fire was spotted by a passing motorist who sounded the alarm. Neighbours from houses opposite the mosque tried to put out the flames with buckets of water.

Clive Ceronne, 37, and Ashley Juggins, 20, both admitted to carrying out an arson attack on a mosque in Gloucester.

Ceronne was sentenced to four and a half years and Juggins received a three and a half years sentence.<sup>125</sup>

- 2.45 Racist slogans were daubed in red paint on Torquay's Islamic Centre. The incident was investigated as part of a police inquiry into racist graffiti attacks in Brixham and Torquay between July 2012 and January 2013.

Slogans daubed in the areas included "Die Ragheads", "Pakis go home", "BNP for life" and the letters KT [Knights Templar].<sup>126</sup>

The letters KT were further sprayed onto 72 buildings, signs or cars in the Torbay area.

Threatening notes were also sent to mosques, including establishments in Brighton and Plymouth in what was described as a 'campaign of hate'.

John Roddy, 20, and Tobias Ruth, 19, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to cause criminal damage and to send articles containing threats which were intended to stir up religious or sexual orientation hatred.

Roddy also admitted to an offence under the Terrorism Act of possessing information likely to be useful to a terrorism.

Roddy was sentenced to 23 months in prison, suspended for two years, and ordered to receive supervision.

Ruth was jailed for 33 months in September 2013.<sup>127</sup>

- 2.46 The Harlow Islamic Centre in Essex was targeted in an arson attack which took place in the early hours of the morning on 26 August 2013.

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<sup>123</sup> *Kent Online*, 22 July 2013

<sup>124</sup> *Kent Online*, 30 October 2013 [available at: <http://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/mosque-attack-in-gillingham-8096/>]

<sup>125</sup> *Gloucestershire Echo*, 21 November 2013

<sup>126</sup> *Western Morning News*, 24 August 2013

<sup>127</sup> *BBC News*, 20 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-24174507>] and *Plymouth Herald*, 21 September 2013.

Police officers suspect the Centre was sprayed with insulation foam around the doors and windows before being set alight.<sup>128</sup>

An appeal for witnesses was issued by Essex police but no further information is available in connection with the incident.<sup>129</sup>

- 2.47 A 22 year old man smashed four windows at the St Anne's Islamic Centre in Tonna, Wales, on 13 September 2013. The attacker went on to assault a man and a woman who were woken up by the noise.<sup>130</sup>

Steven Davies, 22 was sentenced to 22 months' imprisonment after admitting religiously aggravated criminal damage and assault.<sup>131</sup>

- 2.48 The St Anne's Islamic Centre in Tonna, Wales, was also attacked in a further incident on 10 August 2013 when the windows of the mosque were smashed.<sup>132</sup> Further information is being sought from the police in connection with the incident.

- 2.49 A Nazi-sympathiser who plotted to blow up two mosques in Liverpool was charged with engaging in conduct in the preparation of terrorist acts.<sup>133</sup>

Ian Forman, 41, experimented with explosives, created a shopping list with prices of bomb components and labelled two mosques, the Wirral Islamic Centre and the Penny Lane mosque, as 'target 1' and 'target 2' respectively. Forman also made an anti-Islam video which was uploaded onto YouTube and titled "Mosques lighting up the sky to keep us warm in the winter".

Forman was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.<sup>134</sup>

- 2.50 An arson attack on the Al Hira Educational Centre in Luton on the morning of 4 October 2013 was reported after a petrol can was found outside the building.

Bedfordshire Police released CCTV image of a man who was shown pouring engine oil along the pavement leading to the mosque and trying to enter a building through an open window.<sup>135</sup> No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 2.51 A 29 year old man was accused of throwing a pig's head inside a mosque in Blackpool during prayer time on 24 May 2013.

Andrew Warner was charged with racially aggravated threatening behaviour. He was bailed on condition that he must not go within 50 metres of any mosque.

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<sup>128</sup> *BBC News*, 26 August 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-23840637>]

<sup>129</sup> *Essex Police*, October 2013 [available at: [http://www.essex.police.uk/news\\_features/homepage\\_latest\\_news/harlow\\_islamic\\_centre\\_fire\\_upd.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/news_features/homepage_latest_news/harlow_islamic_centre_fire_upd.aspx)]

<sup>130</sup> *Wales Online*, 14 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/man-assault-charge-after-alleged-5938346>]

<sup>131</sup> *BBC News*, 26 February 2014 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-west-wales-26358464>]

<sup>132</sup> *South Wales Evening Post*, 10 August 2013

<sup>133</sup> *BBC News*, 27 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-24303563>]

<sup>134</sup> *Wirral Globe*, 1 May 2014

<sup>135</sup> *Luton Dunstable*, 29 October 2013

He was due to appear in court on 20 February 2014.<sup>136</sup> No further information is available in connection to the trial or sentencing in this case.

- 2.52 Two men were caught on camera making petrol bombs at home and travelling with them to the Grimsby Islamic Cultural Centre before throwing them at the doors while people were inside. The incident happened on 26 May 2013, days after the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London.<sup>137</sup>

Stuart Harness, 34, inadvertently filmed himself and Gavin Humphries, 37, bringing petrol into his house, building petrol bombs and leaving his home with them. They were also caught on camera throwing two petrol bombs each at the Islamic centre.

Daniel Cressey, 25, drove the two men to the mosque and stood trial for aiding and abetting.

Harness and Humphries were sentenced to six years' imprisonment after pleading guilty to arson. Daniel Cressey was jailed for six years after being found guilty of aiding and abetting.<sup>138</sup>

Judge Barry passing sentence said the offences were 'religiously aggravated' stating that the men "deliberately targeted a particular religious group in an act of retribution".

- 2.53 A pig's head was stuck on a fence outside the Madani Academy, an Islamic primary school in Portsmouth between 1 and 3 December 2013.<sup>139</sup>

The Muslim school was the target of an English Defence League demonstration days after the incident with the far right group staging a protest outside the school gates on 6 December and holding placards reading "terrorists are being radicalised here".<sup>140</sup>

Police confirmed that an investigation was launched into the pig's head incident and an appeal issued for witnesses however, no further information is available in connection with the incident.

- 2.54 The main entrance of a mosque in Chelmsford was damaged in the early hours of 24 November 2013 when a copy of the Qur'an from inside the mosque was also stolen.

Liam King, 22, was charged with criminal damage and burglary. His trial was adjourned until June 30 2014.<sup>141</sup>

No further information is available relating to trial and sentencing in connection with the incident.

- 2.55 Michael Piggan, an Asperger's Syndrome sufferer, appeared in court on charges of planning a terror attack in Loughborough including a planned attack on a mosque.

In video footage shown in court, Piggan said *"Hello great people of the United Kingdom, we are the URA, we support the EDL and the Knights Templar. We are*

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<sup>136</sup> *Blackpool Gazette*, 25 October 2013

<sup>137</sup> *The Independent*, 28 May 2013

<sup>138</sup> *The Guardian*, 20 December 2013

<sup>139</sup> *The Portsmouth News*, 14 December 2013

<sup>140</sup> *The Portsmouth News*, 4 December 2013

<sup>141</sup> *Essex Chronicle*, 9 April 2014



*against the Muslim invasion of our country. If you are looking at us... we will kill you, yeah – we are willing to take arms to fight for this country.”*

The court was also shown footage of Piggins practicing with petrol bomb and talking about testing bombs.

The police found the Mujahideen Poisons Handbook in his bedroom along with a notebook in which he wrote “F\*\*\* Islam – born in England, live in England, die in England”. Inside then notebook, he also wrote that he was a supporter of the EDL and in opposition to the “Islamic invasion of Europe.”

Piggins admitted to three charges of possessing explosives.<sup>142</sup>

A jury failed to reach verdicts on two offences for possession of articles for a purpose connected with terrorism as well as possession of a document likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism.

He was ordered to be held in a secure hospital under the Mental Health Act.<sup>143</sup>

- 2.56 The East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre in Tower Hamlets were contacted by police about a possible bomb threat at noon on 25 September 2013.

The entire complex was evacuated as staff assisted the police in checking for any suspicious packages. The premises were declared safe an hour later, before the early afternoon prayers.<sup>144</sup>

English Defence League supporters responded to the East London Mosque’s announcement of the bomb threat by posting comments on the far right group’s Facebook page stating “soak it in bacon grease and set it on fire!” and “spread pig blood everywhere and leave some pig skulls inside also.”<sup>145</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 2.57 A pig’s head was found on the steps of Moorgate Mosque in Rotherham on 21 August 2013.

Two male teenagers, aged 16 and 17, were arrested and appeared in court on 23 August on suspicion of causing racially aggravated harassment.<sup>146</sup>

Both were consequently released on unconditional bail and were expected to return to court on separate dates in September and October, respectively.<sup>147</sup>

Further information relating to trial and sentencing is not available in connection with this incident.

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<sup>142</sup> *BBC News*, 20 March 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-26655738>]

<sup>143</sup> *The Guardian*, 4 July 2014

<sup>144</sup> *East London Mosque*, 25 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk/news/bomb-threat/>]

<sup>145</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 25 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/east-london-mosque-evacuated-after-bomb-threat/>]

<sup>146</sup> *Sheffield Telegraph*, 24 August 2013

<sup>147</sup> *Rotherham Advertiser*, 31 August 2013

2.58 A 58 year old man who walked into the Hastings Mosque, East Sussex, late at night on 18 August 2012 and threw a number of shoes into the street and further harassed a Muslim family was fined £200 in July 2013 for harassment.<sup>148</sup>

2.59 An 85 year old woman, Audrey Rose, hurled abuse at Muslims while waiting for a bus outside a mosque in Gillingham on 24 May 2013.

She hurled abuse at a man trying to cross the road to get into the mosque for the Friday prayers.

After being told thrice by a police officer to desist, she was arrested and charged with racially aggravated harassment.

Rose admitted to the offence in court in July 2013 and was given a six month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £50 court costs.<sup>149</sup>

2.60 Several men who broke into and burgled the Sajedeen mosque in Blackburn along with other mosques in the vicinity between 16 and 17 June 2012 were tried and sentenced in 2013.

The intruders broken in through the rear of the building and stole a large metal safe, irreplaceable marriage registers and the mosque's original constitution.

Ringleaders Liam and Sean Cumberland, 27 and 32 respectively, broke into two mosques. Darren Darrani, 31, broke into six mosques during the same period.

Other mosques that were raided included two mosques in Blackburn, the Ibrahim Mosque in Burnley and Grimshaw Street Mosque in Accrington. A number of businesses and restaurants were also burgled.

Judge Cornwall considered the possibility of the burglaries being motivated by 'religious or racial hatred' but the aggravated element was denied by the offenders.

Liam Cumberland, Sean Cumberland, Darren Darani, Darren Jeal, 42, Stuart Ainsworth, 40, Carl Cumberland, 31, and James O'Neill all admitted conspiracy to burgle.

Liam and Sean Cumberland were each jailed for five years.

Darren Jeal was sentenced to four years' imprisonment; Darren Darani was sentenced to 40 months; Carl Cumberland was sentenced to 34 months; James O'Neill was given an eight-month prison term suspended for 18 months.

Stuart Ainsworth's case was adjourned after he was admitted to hospital with heart problems.

Ronald Straker, 51, was also jailed for 27 months after admitting to burglary, theft and handling stolen goods.

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<sup>148</sup> *Hastings & St Leonards Observer*, 19 July 2013

<sup>149</sup> *Kent Online*, 16 July 2013 [available at: <http://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/pensioner-admits-racist-abuse-3427/>]

Shaun Lever, 43, was given a two-year supervision order after admitting handling stolen goods.<sup>150</sup>

- 2.61 A mosque in Holmanleaze, Maidenhead, was vandalised with the outer panel of a double glazed window and the fire exit damaged on the morning of 23 May 2013.

Small stones were found by the door of the building.<sup>151</sup>

No further information is available in connection with the incident.

- 2.62 The Ummah Halal Butchers in Blackburn was set on fire in the early hours of 21 April 2013.

Firefighters found smoke coming out of the front door. Six people in the flat above the butchers managed to escape unharmed after a passer-by saw smoke and alerted the fire brigade.

The owner of the butchers shop confirmed that there were two children, two men and two women sleeping upstairs at the time.<sup>152</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident and Lancashire Police were unresponsive to an FOI request.

- 2.63 A 31 year old man purchased bacon and sausages at a shop before throwing them over a fence and into the grounds of a Mosque and Islamic Centre in Cricklewood, north London in the early hours of the morning of 26 June 2013.

The offending items were brought to the attention of the police after a worshipper arrived at the mosque and found the meat.

Alexis Garner, who has a history of mental issues, admitted two charges of using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, in a religious or racially aggravated manner. He was given a 12 month conditional discharge and was ordered to pay a £15 surcharge.<sup>153</sup>

- 2.64 Several arrests were made at a far right demonstration at the site of a new mosque in Sunderland on 6 October 2012.

The site was formerly a council transport depot and proposals were submitted by the Pakistan Islamic Centre to convert the premises into a mosque in 2011. The council received almost 700 letters of objection in addition to a petition of more than 1, 400 signatures opposing the application but the Sunderland City Council approved it in August 2012.

Trials of the 13 arrested men proceeded in 2013. Several of the men people were charged with aggravated public order offences. They were all banned from attending future demonstrations in Sunderland.

Ronald Wood, 39, pleaded guilty to causing racial or religious aggravated harassment, alarm or distress. He was fined £110.

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<sup>150</sup> *Lancashire Telegraph*, 2 July 2013

<sup>151</sup> *Royal Borough Observer*, 23 May 2013

<sup>152</sup> *Lancashire Telegraph*, 22 April 2013

<sup>153</sup> *Harrow Observer*, 10 July 2013

Stephen Brown, 32, admitted causing fear or provocation of violence in a racially aggravated manner. He was expected to be sentenced after an assessment by the Probation Service.<sup>154</sup>

Gary Bigger, 41, was also charged with racial or religious aggravated harassment, alarm or distress and bailed until May 2013.

A 17-year-old male youth was charged with racial or religious aggravated harassment, alarm, or distress and will appear at Sunderland Magistrates Court on 21 March 2013.

Shaun Bunting, 34, admitted disorderly conduct and was fined £133.

Dean Spence, 23, pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct and was fined £73.

Anthony Farrer, 37, admitted disorderly conduct. He was given a six-month discharge and ordered to pay £100 costs.

Darren Stoke, 21, admitted causing fear or provocation of violence. His sentencing was adjourned until May after an assessment by the Probation Service.

An 18-year-old male teenager was given a caution for fear or provocation of violence.

William Smith, 44, and Simon Biggs, 47, were charged with causing fear or provocation of violence and both were expected to stand trial in May 2013.

Dean Spence, 23, admitted disorderly conduct and subsequently fined £73.

Warren Faulkener, 41, denied causing fear or provocation of violence and being in possession of cocaine on 21 March 2013. He was expected to reappear in court on 16 May 2013.<sup>155</sup>

Further information regarding the outcome of court hearings for the remaining suspects needs to be sourced.

- 2.65 Three windows at the UK Islamic Mission mosque in Westcliff, Essex were smashed on 15 December 2012.

Two men were wanted for questioning in connection with the incident. An appeal for witnesses by Essex police was reported in the local press in February 2013.<sup>156</sup>

No further information is available in connection with the incident.

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<sup>154</sup> *Sunderland Echo*, 19 March 2013

<sup>155</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 21 March 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/infidels-leader-in-court-over-millfield-mosque-demonstration/>]

<sup>156</sup> *Southend Standard*, 1 February 2013

### 3. Verbal abuse and hate speech

- 3.1. A man who tore pages from his copy of the Qur'an at a bookstall in Leicester City Centre was charged with religiously aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress by demonstrating hostility based on membership of a particular group on 12 May 2012.

Peter Crawford tore pages from his own copy of the Qur'an next to a stall run by the Islamic Information Centre in the city centre of Leicester. He also threw the book on the ground and shouted "Your religion is a load of b\*\*\*cks."

A jury was unable to reach a unanimous or majority verdict in the case and the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed with a retrial.<sup>157</sup>

- 3.2. A member of the Thanet division of the English Defence League, Gary Field, posted disparaging messages on his Facebook directed towards Muslims including a comment which could be construed as 'threatening'.

Some of the posts on his page included "Islam is evil"; "There be (sic) blood shed if muzzrats moved into my street it wont be mine"; and "kick Islam out of England".<sup>158</sup>

Following media coverage of the postings, Field resigned from the far right group in January 2013.

- 3.3. A Premier League striker, Demba Ba, was racially abused on Facebook in January 2013. A 39 year old man was arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated harassment for posting offensive remarks about the football player.

The post included swear words aimed at Ba. The man was later bailed pending further inquiries.<sup>159</sup> No further information is available in connection with the incident.

- 3.4. A former Conservative councillor on Enfield Council, Chris Joannides, was suspended by the local and national party after posting an offensive comment on Facebook likening black bin bags to a Muslim woman's children.

A photograph of a Muslim woman in a burqa with her child walking past refuse sacks on the side of the pavement was posted by Joannides with the comment "I saw her standing there and I told her she had three beautiful children. It was an honest mistake!"

Joannides was suspended as councillor by the Enfield Conservative Group leader Michael Lavender in February 2013.<sup>160</sup> The Conservative Party later expelled Joannides from the party for 12 months and refused to endorse his candidacy in the May 2014 London Borough elections.<sup>161</sup>

- 3.5. Approximately 20 racist comments were posted on the Essex Police force's Facebook page within hours of an appeal made by detectives on 1 February 2013 regarding an incident of vandalism at Southend Mosque that took place in December 2012.

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<sup>157</sup> *Leicester Mercury*, 11 January 2013

<sup>158</sup> *Isle of Thanet Gazette*, 14 January 2013

<sup>159</sup> *BBC News*, 30 January 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-21267809>]

<sup>160</sup> *Enfield Advertiser*, 6 February 2013

<sup>161</sup> *Daily Mail*, 5 March 2014

A spokesman for Essex Police said “it got to a point on Monday whereby the whole conversation on Facebook had become defiled” which caused the appeal to be suspended.<sup>162</sup>

No further information is available about any criminal proceedings arising from the offending postings.

- 3.6. Two men and a woman burst into the Nasir Mosque in Hartlepool and shouted racial abuse on the evening of 5 February 2013.

They entered the mosque through the main entrance and caused a disturbance by shouting during prayer time. When asked to leave, the group became racially abusive towards worshippers.<sup>163</sup>

No further information is available in connection with the incident.

- 3.7. A London Underground train engineer, Martin Aitken, insulted Muslims, Asians and disabled people in a series of offensive posts on his Facebook page.

On 7 February 2013, he posted the comment: “I just saw a muslim with three lions on his shirt. I f\*\*\*\*\*g love longleat Safari Park.”

A day later, another post stated: “Muslims of Britain. If you; obeyed the law, accepted our values, integrated into society, abandoned terrorism, spoke English in public, made more of an effort with personal hygiene, charged the same price in your shops as the rest of the retailers, didn’t burn poppies...then we wouldn’t hate you... as much.”

In an further post, he wrote “I know a p\*\*i whose name is Jim. I love 2 lob tomatoes at him. tomatoes are soft & don’t hurt the skin, but these fuckers do cos theyre stil (sic) in the tin...”

A spokesman for Transport for London confirmed that an investigation was launched into the comments.<sup>164</sup> Aitken was subsequently suspended from duty on 18 February 2013 but no further information is available in relation to the internal investigation or any ensuing criminal charges.<sup>165</sup>

- 3.8. Co-founder of the English Defence League, Kevin Carroll, was arrested in January 2013 on suspicion of inciting racial hatred after a series of racist comments appeared on Facebook in December 2012.

The comments relate to a post under Carroll’s name describing Muslims as “all fukin backward savages, a devil spawned death cult worshipping all that is unholy and barbaric, pure evil”.<sup>166</sup>

The investigation was later dropped in April due to lack of evidence.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> *Yellow Advertiser*, 7 February 2013

<sup>163</sup> *Loonwatch*, 16 February 2013

<sup>164</sup> *Evening Standard*, 19 February 2013

<sup>165</sup> *Evening Standard*, 21 February 2013

<sup>166</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 12 December 2012 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/edl-leader-and-bedfordshire-police-commissioner-candidate-says-all-muslims-are-backward-savages/>]

<sup>167</sup> *Luton Today*, 1 April 2013

- 3.9. Marjorie Snowden, a councillor on West Dorset District Council was compelled to offer a formal apology and undergo training after making a series of offensive remarks during a council run equality and diversity course. A trainer complained to the Council that Snowden made remarks claiming “Muslims wanted the Holocaust Day banned” and further questioned why council members should be “interested in black history”.

Miss Bickle, a community development leader, stated that Cllr made several remarks which were clearly hostile to the Muslim community and bordering on religious hatred, identifying all Muslims as terrorists and adopting an ‘us and them’ attitude towards this community.”

A panel established by the West Dorset District Council ordered Mrs Snowden to take training on the code of conduct within 28 days, issue an apology and be censured for her behaviour. Snowden has subsequently apologised.<sup>168</sup>

- 3.10. An unidentified woman hurled racial abuse at a passenger on a London underground tube which was filmed by a fellow passenger and posted onto YouTube prompting an investigation by British Transport Police.<sup>169</sup>

The woman is seen repeatedly swearing at an Asian man sat next to her on the carriage “If your country is so good, f\*\*\* off back there”.

She also screamed ‘You come in this country you f\*\*\*ing mother f\*\*\*ers c\*\*\*. You want everything on a plate f\*\*\*ing c\*\*\* and expect us to take this. ‘You are all racist c\*\*\*s, you want to take over the world. You’re so thick you don’t even get it.’

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.11. A racist post appeared on the Facebook page of the High Wycombe branch of the Royal British Legion on 19 April 2013 prompting the club to refer the matter to the police.

In a statement, the vice chairman of the branch Kevin Taylor, said “As a branch, we find this type of racial hatred wholly at odds, particularly in light of the work this branch has undertaken with the Mayor [Cllr Chaudhary Shafique] and Wycombe Islamic Mission and Mosque Trust.

“The matter is currently being dealt with by the police as a race hate crime”.<sup>170</sup>

Thames Valley police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that no arrests or charges have been brought in connection with the incident.<sup>171</sup>

- 3.12. A British National Party activist, Anthony Bamber, was referred to the police after material he sent to three councillors in Lancashire ahead of the Lancashire County elections in May 2013 was deemed “very derogatory, very anti-Muslim” by local Muslim groups.

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<sup>168</sup> *Daily Mail*, 18 April 2013

<sup>169</sup> *Daily Mail*, 22 April 2013

<sup>170</sup> *Bucks Free Press*, 23 April 2013

<sup>171</sup> Freedom of Information request, Thames Valley Police, *reference HQ/PA/002392/14*

The pamphlets “demand[ed] that Muslims should be compensating communities for crimes against British people.”<sup>172</sup>

Bamber previously stood trial for inciting religious hatred after distributing leaflets demanding that Muslims pay compensation for the ‘heroin trade’. Bamber was acquitted in 2010.<sup>173</sup>

Bamber failed to win a seat in the Lancashire County elections gaining the least number of votes.

- 3.13. A UKIP councillor for Stourport, Eric Kitson, shared racist cartoons on Facebook including a cartoon of a Muslim being spit-roasted on a fire fuelled by copies of the Qur’an in May 2013.

In one of Kitson’s posts he referred to veiled Muslim women stating “Hang um all first then ask questions later”.<sup>174</sup>

Although Kitson resigned from the county council less than two weeks after winning a council seat in the 2 May local elections, and admitted to sharing offensive material, the Crown Prosecution Service confirmed that there was “insufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of securing a conviction”.

The CPS in its explanation stated: “The evidence in this case was sufficient to prove to a jury that Mr Kitson was posting these messages by copying them to his Facebook page. Whilst many will have found them wholly socially unacceptable, there was not sufficient evidence to show that they were either threatening or posted with an intent to stir up religious hatred.”<sup>175</sup>

- 3.14. Timothy Bingham, 43, was charged with making a hoax bomb threat made against mosques in Southampton.<sup>176</sup> Bingham made a call to the police giving false information in August 2012 but the police concluded the threat was not credible.<sup>177</sup>

Bingham was given a suspended sentence of 15 months imprisonment, ordered to complete 100 hours unpaid work and given a six month curfew in January 2013.<sup>178</sup>

- 3.15. A Facebook user in his 20s, admitted using words or carry out behaviour likely to stir up racial hatred after racist comments opposing plans to use a former register office in Shrewsbury for prayer meetings appeared on the social media site.

The man was arrested on 16 May 2013 and received a police caution.<sup>179</sup>

- 3.16. Chris Pain, the UK Independence Party’s East Midlands regional chairman was alleged to have posted offensive comments on Facebook in May 2013.

The Facebook posts contained the remarks:

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<sup>172</sup> *Lancashire Evening Post*, 25 April 2013

<sup>173</sup> *BBC News*, 21 June 2010. [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10371070>]

<sup>174</sup> *The Mirror*, 12 May 2013

<sup>175</sup> *Express and Star*, 5 July 2013

<sup>176</sup> ENGAGE OSCE Submission (2013) – incident reference 3.26 pp. 25-26.

<sup>177</sup> *BBC News*, 14 August 2012 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-19242699>]

<sup>178</sup> *BBC News*, 24 January 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-21182605>]

<sup>179</sup> *Asian Image*, 18 May 2013



“Have you noticed that if you rearrange the letters in ‘illegal immigrants’, and add just a few more letters, it spells, ‘Go home you free-loading, benefit-grabbing, resource-sucking, baby-making, non-English-speaking \*\*\*\*\* and take those other hairy-faced, sandal-wearing, bomb-making, camel-riding, goat-\*\*\*\*\*, raghead \*\*\*\*\* with you.’”<sup>180</sup>

Although Pain stepped down in June 2013 as the party’s regional chairman, the police confirmed that no further action would be pursued in connection with the incident due to insufficient evidence.<sup>181</sup>

- 3.17. A 33 year old man from Bolton was arrested on suspicion of inciting racial hatred after posting offensive comments on Facebook about the death Fusilier Lee Rigby in May 2013.

He was bailed until 20 June 2013, pending further inquiries<sup>182</sup>.

Greater Manchester Police responded to a Freedom of Information request to disclose that a 33 year old male was charged under S.127 of the Communications Act, 2003.<sup>183</sup>

- 3.18. Two men, aged 23 and 22 years old, were arrested in Bristol under the Public Order Act on suspicion of inciting racial and religious hatred.

The men were alleged to have posted offensive comments on Twitter about the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby. The police received complaints about the comments on the evening of 22 May 2013, the day of Fusilier Lee Rigby’s murder in Woolwich, south London.

Somerset Police confirmed that the “comments were directed against a section of our community”.

The men were released on bail, pending further inquiries. Somerset police confirmed their inquiry was continuing.<sup>184</sup>

Avon and Somerset police responded to a Freedom of Information request to state that details of this incident were passed to the Crown Prosecution Service and both men ‘were subsequently cautioned for publishing written material to stir up racial hatred’ contrary to sections 19(1) and 27(3) of the Public Order Act 1986.<sup>185</sup>

- 3.19. A columnist at the Spectator, Rod Liddle, referred to the two murderers of Lee Rigby as ‘black savages’ in a blog on 23 May 2013.

He wrote: “I was slightly puzzled by the early media reports of the appalling murder in Woolwich and particularly the wrangling over whether or not this could be called ‘a terrorist attack’.

“Does it make much difference? Two black savages hacked a man to death while shouting Allahu Akbar; that’s really all you need to know, isn’t it?”

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<sup>180</sup> *Daily Mirror*, 18 May 2013

<sup>181</sup> *BBC News*, 9 September 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-24018346>]

<sup>182</sup> *The Bolton News*, 24 May 2013

<sup>183</sup> Freedom of Information request, Greater Manchester police, *reference 2372/14*

<sup>184</sup> *The Independent*, 24 May 2013

<sup>185</sup> Freedom of Information request, Avon and Somerset police, *reference 928/14*

“In a sense calling it an act of terrorism somehow dignifies the barbarism.”

The article was later edited on the same day, referring to “two savages”.

Liddle also added an update stating: “To avoid the ludicrous phrase ‘men of Muslim appearance’ I originally used the word ‘black’ to describe the appearance of the knifemen. If anyone took that wrong way, I’m very sorry.”

Liddle is also reported to have apologised for referring to the two murderers as “black savages”.<sup>186</sup>

- 3.20. A 48 year old man posted a series of offensive messages on Facebook encouraging people to attack businesses run by Muslims.

David Lee put the posts up on his Facebook page on 23 May 2013, the day after the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London.

He wrote: “If just one person petrol bombed any local Muslim business in their area that would be the end of them in one day.

“F\*\*\* off you cheeky ungrateful s\*\*m. Allah is a coward just like you. Two can play your game you Allah a\*\*\* kissing s\*\*m.

“Take a petrol bomb to the whole shop, light a fire and watch it burn.”

Lee pleaded guilty to a single charge of improper use of a public electronic communications network. His sentencing was adjourned until June 2013.<sup>187</sup>

No further information is available in relation to sentence passed in this incident.

- 3.21. A former UKIP canvasser was alleged to have posted anti-Muslim comments and racist pictures on Facebook. The police questioned Tony Nixon, 66, in relation to Facebook posts that included jokes about destroying mosques, setting Muslims on fire and running people from Pakistan over with a bus.

One of the posts stated: “Instead of turning Ground Zero into a mosque why not turn some mosques into ground zero?”

Several offensive images were also posted including a photograph of pigs eating copies of the Qur’an.

He was arrested on suspicion of stirring up racial hatred under the Public Order Act in June 2013.

Although he was released on bail pending further inquiries, Nixon’s membership of UKIP was suspended.<sup>188</sup>

- 3.22. A series of anti-Muslim hate-fuelled posts appeared on the Facebook page of Alex Morrison, the manager of boxing champion Ricky Burns. The outburst appeared to have occurred on 23 May 2013, the day after the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London.

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<sup>186</sup> *Press Gazette*, 28 May 2013

<sup>187</sup> *Daily Mail*, 29 May 2013

<sup>188</sup> *The Northern Echo*, 6 June 2013

The post stated: “The radical Muslims are bringing about the end of our civilised world and we allow it and pay them benefits as well.

“I am not suggesting that we go out and start burning mosques but we should boycott their shops. The Sikhs and Hindus are good people but the other lot are filthy, conniving, cunning, deceitful scum.

“They treat their woman as inferior beings and say that ‘white’ girls are just for practice. It turns my stomach when I see a white girl swathed from head to foot like a Muslim with one of these pigs.”

The British Boxing Board of Control launched an internal investigation into the incident in June 2013.<sup>189</sup> No further information is available on the body’s investigation of the matter or any disciplinary action taken.

- 3.23. A 22 year old man was charged with making malicious comments on Facebook on 22 May 2013. Benjamin Flatters’ comments were regarded to be of a racist or anti-religious nature.

Prosecutors highlighted in one of the court hearings that the comments were directed at “either Muslims or Muslim extremists”.<sup>190</sup>

Flatters was sentenced to 14 days in prison after pleading guilty to the offence on 12 June 2013.<sup>191</sup>

- 3.24. A boxer threatened Muslims with acts of violence on Facebook on 22 May 2013.

Alongside a photo of himself wearing a balaclava and pointing a gun at the camera, 27 year old Tony Perrin posted the comment “I will do a lot worse than what took place yesterday and I have likeminded people behind me.

“You Muslims aren’t the only people that make explosives and your not the only people willing to commit acts of insane violence”.

He added: “never f\*\*\*ing surrender - revenge will be taken!”

He was charged under the Communications Act 2003 and admitted to posting a message that was grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.<sup>192</sup> Perrin was sentenced to four months’ imprisonment.<sup>193</sup>

- 3.25. A 24 year old woman posted racist comments on Facebook in June 2013.

Michaela Turner posted the comment: “Feeling like burning down some mosques in Portsmouth, anyone want to join me?”

She also shared other comments which were of a racist nature on her page.

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<sup>189</sup> *Daily Record*, 9 June 2013

<sup>190</sup> *Lincolnshire Echo*, 13 June 2013

<sup>191</sup> *BBC News*, 12 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-22878117>]

<sup>192</sup> *Daily Mail*, 12 June 2013

<sup>193</sup> *Croydon Guardian*, 13 June 2013

Turner pleaded guilty to an offence contrary to section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and was given a suspended sentence of 8 weeks.<sup>194</sup>

- 3.26. Two men were sentenced for threatening behaviour at a fast food restaurant in Newham on 23 May 2013.

Toni Latcal, 32, and Eugen-Aurelian Eugen-Beredei, 34, pleaded guilty to religiously aggravated threatening behaviour. Latcal also admitted a charge of causing criminal damage.

Latcal was given a 12 month community supervision order, ordered to pay a fine of £150 for criminal damage and further ordered to attend a diversity course. Eugen-Beredei was sentenced to a six month community order.<sup>195</sup>

- 3.27. A 26 year old footballer, Shaun Tuck, admitted to posting messages on Twitter encouraging violence against Muslims on 22 May 2013, the day of Fusilier Lee Rigby's murder in Woolwich, south London.

Tuck posted the comments:

*"All the mosques in England should be gassed or bombed, or stormed by 50 lads with machetes, swords the lot. And make a statement,"*

*"I'd be going through there (sic) door mate an taking there (sic) kids head off an killing whoever was in site!!"*

*"Go f\*\*king nuts!!! About time this country fought back. EDL are in Woolwich now!! What I'd give to be there with them now #flop #flop #flop #curryheadseverywhere."*

The presiding judge Miriam Shelvey observed that: "These tweets contains threats of violence to innocent persons, including children, who would be victims solely because of their religion."

Tuck pleaded guilty to an offence under the Communications Act 2003 and was imprisoned for 12 weeks.

- 3.28. A man pleaded guilty to posting offensive, indecent, obscene or menacing messages via a public communication network in May 2013 after posting a series of Facebook posts including a post that said "the mosque needs burning down".

Adam Rogers, 28, was given a suspended sentence of 16 weeks, a supervision requirement for 24 months and further ordered to pay £85 in costs and an £80 victim surcharge.<sup>196</sup>

- 3.29. A 25 year old man posted a message on Facebook about a mosque in Grimsby being burned down on 24 May 2013.

Terence Baker admitted to sending an offensive or menacing message and was sentenced to eight weeks' imprisonment.

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<sup>194</sup> *The Guardian*, 14 June 2013

<sup>195</sup> *BBC News*, 27 June 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-23074984>]

<sup>196</sup> *Hastings & St Leonards Observer*, 19 July 2013

At sentencing, District judge Daniel Curtis stated: “Your remarks are appalling, racist and anti-religious in relation to a religion you clearly do not understand.

“Your remarks could have stirred up even further racial hatred and religious hatred.”<sup>197</sup>

Indeed, a mosque in Grimsby was firebombed on 26 May 2013.

- 3.30. A 20 year old woman made a racist remark to a custody sergeant after being arrested on her way to an English Defence League demonstration on 20 July 2013 in Birmingham city centre.

Lianne Tyler told the police sergeant she was going “P\*\*\* bashing with the EDL”. Tyler also referred to a police officer as a “black c\*\*\*” twice.

Tyler pleaded guilty to offences of failing to disperse and racially aggravated public order. She was fined £50 for each offence but was deemed to have served her sentence through time spent in custody.<sup>198</sup>

- 3.31. A man was photographed revealing a tattoo of a mosque with ‘BOOM!’ written across it during an English Defence League demonstration in Birmingham’s city centre on 20 July 2013.

Shaun Reah, 39, was arrested on suspicion of using words or behaviour, or displaying written material with intent to stir up racial hatred.<sup>199</sup>

Further information relating to any charges is being sought from the police.

- 3.32. A 41 year old drunken man hurled racist abuse at two Muslim women on 25 May 2013 causing their young children some distress.

Mark Carr, a former navy serviceman, was heard by one of the women saying “f\*\*\* off, muslim b\*\*\*\*\*d” as he waved his hands. The second woman heard him say “f\*\*\* off and go back to your own country”.

Carr pleaded guilty to using racially aggravated threatening behaviour and causing racially aggravated distress.

He was sentenced on 25 July 2013 to a 12 month community order with 120 hours of unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay £85 costs, £500 to each of the women in compensation, and a £60 victim surcharge.<sup>200</sup>

- 3.33. A man was convicted of racially aggravated offences after threatening to burn down a mosque.

David Camp, 35, previously admitted to posting offensive anti-Islamic messages on Twitter between 1 April and 5 June 2013. He further admitted to three public order offences following a drunken outburst in Cambridge on 30 June during which he threatened to burn down a mosque.

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<sup>197</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 18 July 2013

<sup>198</sup> *Birmingham Mail*, 22 July 2013

<sup>199</sup> *Daily Mail*, 30 July 2013

<sup>200</sup> *Derbyshire Times*, 30 July 2013

He was sentenced to a 12 month supervision order with alcohol treatment requirement. A two year criminal anti-social behaviour order was also imposed banning him from going near a number of Islamic premises.<sup>201</sup>

- 3.34. A drunken woman and a man hurled racist abuse at staff in a takeaway shop in Cleethorpes on 4 July 2013.

Rebecca Swan, 38, and Christopher Drury, 23, repeatedly chanted “EDL” and other racist abuse while pointing at staff inside the Topkapi takeaway shop in Cleethorpes. Swan and Drury also attacked Carlos Defreiates who tried to intervene and stop them from racially abusing the shop staff.

Swan pushed her finger into Defreiates chest and shouted "You are in England. You should live by my laws." She then slapped him across the neck as Drury hit him in the chest, causing Defreiates to fall to the ground.

Both admitted racially aggravated assault and Swan further admitted using racially aggravated threatening words or behaviour.

Swan was given a four-week curfew and ordered to pay £85 costs as well as £60 victims' surcharge. Drury was given a one-year conditional discharge and was ordered to pay £85 costs and a £15 surcharge.<sup>202</sup>

- 3.35. DVDs containing offensive Islamophobic material were sent to mosques and Muslim organisations in London in August 2013. The DVDS contained insults to the Prophet Mohammed, a pornographic film and news footage about extremism.

The DVD was sent to the An Noor Mosque in Acton, the Qalb Centre in Walthamstow, the Al Falah mosque in Leicester and the Muslim Media Forum.<sup>203</sup>

The Metropolitan Police who were in possession of two of the DVDs passed the material to the forensics team for investigation. No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.36. A Muslim woman was told to ‘get back to her own country’ on two separate occasions in Plymouth by a man in his late 40s or early 50s.

The first incident occurred on 5 September 2013 and the second incident took place on 8 September 2013 both in the Beaumont Park area of the city and within the vicinity of a mosque.

Despite the woman being white and British, police suspected the woman’s headscarf was the motivation bias behind the abuse.<sup>204</sup>

No further information is available in relation to the incident.

- 3.37. A drunken man hurled glasses and a bottle towards the car park of the Bangladesh Cultural Centre in Cleethorpes and swore about Muslims on 31 May 2013.

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<sup>201</sup> *Cambridge News*, 16 August 2013

<sup>202</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 24 August 2013

<sup>203</sup> *BBC News*, 27 August 2013

<sup>204</sup> *Plymouth Herald*, 21 September 2013

Leon Ramsey, 22, admitted using religiously aggravated threatening words or behaviour towards Azid Miah and other members of the nearby mosque on May 31.

He further admitted using threatening words or behaviour towards pub worker Samantha Clawson.

Ramsey was given a nine month supervision order, an order banning him from drinking for two years and ordered to pay £300 costs and as well as a £60 victims' surcharge.<sup>205</sup>

- 3.38. A 35-year-old woman posted on Facebook in October 2013 that she hoped some of the hundreds of people who drowned in a boat disaster off the coast of Italy were Muslims.

She posted 'News night tonight... Top headline. 200 Africans drown in boat disaster. What a shame, hopefully a few of them were Muslims.'

Although a Dorset Police spokesman confirmed the incident was being investigated, no further information is available.<sup>206</sup>

- 3.39. Football fans allegedly tore out pages from a copy of the Qur'an and ripped them to pieces during a club match at Middlesbrough Football Club on 7 December 2013.

A steward who noticed the fans scattering something resembling confetti asked what the book was. Mark Stephenson, 25, said "It's the Muslim bible: we hate Muslims."<sup>207</sup>

Another Birmingham steward also heard chants about Muslims and the Qur'an as the pages of it were passed around.

Mark Stephenson, 25, was ordered to pay £235 after pleading guilty to causing racial or religiously aggravated harassment, alarm or distress.<sup>208</sup>

Julie Phillips, 50, and Gemma Parkin, 18, were found guilty of committing a religiously aggravated public order offence in May 2014. Phillips was fined £300 and ordered to pay court costs of £400 and a victim surcharge of £30. Parkin was fined £200 and ordered to pay £420 in court costs.<sup>209</sup>

Middlesbrough Football Club further confirmed that the three had been banned for life. Another two supporters were banned for 12 months and a sixth fan was suspended while he remains out of the country. The club was unable to disclose the fans' identities.<sup>210</sup>

- 3.40. An arson attack on a proposed mosque in Bristol was advocated in comments posted on the webpage of the English Defence League Bristol Division on 4 December 2013.

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<sup>205</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 5 October 2013

<sup>206</sup> *Daily Mail*, 9 October 2013

<sup>207</sup> *The Guardian*, 28 February 2014

<sup>208</sup> *Daily Mail*, 28 February 2013

<sup>209</sup> *Daily Mail*, 1 May 2013

<sup>210</sup> *Gazette Life*, 24 July 2014

The incident followed the submission of a planning application by the AsSahaba Centre to convert a former comedy club into an Islamic community centre. The proposal received 27 written objections, including from a number of EDL supporters.

The online posts, reportedly made by non-members of the far right group, urged that the proposed Islamic place of worship be burned down.

Another comment on the EDL's Bristol division Facebook page suggested that a "pig's head will stop it" from being opened because Muslims do not eat pork.<sup>211</sup>

Avon and Somerset police spokesman, Martin Dunscomber, confirmed the police were investigating the incident.<sup>212</sup>

- 3.41. During an English Defence League demonstration in Walsall on 29 September 2012, the police saw pages from the Qur'an and a Pakistani flag being burnt by protestors.<sup>213</sup>

Abusive and racist chants, such as "Muslim killers off our streets" and "Our Walsall will not be part of Pakistan" were heard from EDL supporters. Placards reading "Blood on your hands" were also brandished at the protest.

A number of demonstrators were arrested and imprisoned for violent disorder for what was described as an 'orgy of violence'.<sup>214</sup>

Leslie Silk, 37, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment.

Dean Lidster, 44, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 28 months imprisonment.

Christopher Jelley, 28, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 22 months imprisonment.

Richard Schulz, 38, pleaded guilty on 12 November 2013. He was sentenced to 45 months imprisonment.

Kirk Jones, 28, pleaded guilty on 7 October 2013. He was sentenced to 33 months imprisonment.

Dean Smith, 33, pleaded guilty on 12 December 2013. He was sentenced to 27 months imprisonment.

Peter Kirkham, 30, pleaded guilty on 12 November 2013. He was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment.

Mark Baker, 44, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 21 months imprisonment.

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<sup>211</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 11 December 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/edl-threatens-to-burn-down-proposed-mosque-in-bristol/>]

<sup>212</sup> *The Bristol Post*, 13 December 2013

<sup>213</sup> *Birmingham Mail*, 16 December 2013

<sup>214</sup> *Birmingham Mail*, 19 December 2013



John Cureton, 48, pleaded guilty on 7 October 2013. He was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

Kirk Reeves, 40, pleaded guilty on 13 May 2013. He was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment.

Nicholas Cooper, 28, pleaded guilty on 7 October 2013. He was sentenced to 27 months imprisonment.

Mark Conroy, 36, pleaded guilty on 5 June 2013. He was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment.

Craig Forward, 38, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 25 months imprisonment.

Gareth Ballan, 28, pleaded guilty on 12 November 2013. He was sentenced to 27 months on 31 January 2014.<sup>215</sup>

Samuel Phipps, 18, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 16 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years, and 200 hours of voluntary work.

Stephen Bennet, 23, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment.

Myles Smith, 39, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.

Stephen Currien, 30, pleaded guilty on 24 July 2013. He was sentenced to 28 months imprisonment.

Ben Banfield, 35, pleaded guilty on 9 April 2013. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment.

Lee Coxshall, 34, pleaded guilty on 2 December 2013. He was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years.

Jack Lambert, 25, pleaded guilty on 24 July 2013. He was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment.

Jack Clark, 22, pleaded guilty on 2 December 2013. He was sentenced to 16 months imprisonment.

Darren Davies, 49, pleaded guilty on 15 July 2013. He was sentenced to 22 months imprisonment.

Douglas Ralston, 53, pleaded guilty on 19 July 2013. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment.

Lee Rogers, 26, pleaded guilty on 15 July 2013. He was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment.

Gary Lycett, 55, pleaded guilty on 15 July 2013. He was sentenced to 26 months imprisonment.

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<sup>215</sup> *Express & Star*, 1 February 2014

Alan Turnbull, 32, pleaded guilty on 24 July 2013. He was sentenced to 26 months imprisonment.

Neil McDiarmid, 50, pleaded guilty on 2 December 2013. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment.

Ronald Hatton, 59, pleaded guilty on 6 September 2013. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years, and ordered to carry out 200 hours unpaid work.

Christopher Boyall, 31, pleaded guilty on 29 October 2013. He was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment.

Duncan Smith, 43, pleaded guilty on 24 July 2013. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years, and was ordered to carry out 200 hours unpaid work.

A 17-year-old, unnamed for legal reasons, was given 8 months detention and a training order, after being found guilty of violent disorder.

Michael Thomas, 49, pleaded guilty on 24 July 2013. He was sentenced to 28 months imprisonment.

A 16-year-old, unnamed for legal reasons, was found guilty of violent disorder and given a 12 month referral order, and ordered to pay £85 costs.

Kyle Kirkbride, 25, convicted of public order offences, was fined £280 and ordered to pay costs of £85 as well as compensation of £15.

Adam Brady, 18, convicted of a public order offence, was given a final warning.

Peter Jelley, 25, was convicted of a public order offence for gesturing and shouting at a line of police.<sup>216</sup> He was sentenced to 20 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay costs of £85

Jack Beasley, 24, was convicted of a public order offence for using threatening words or behaviour with the intent to cause fear or provoke unlawful violence. He was sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay costs of £250. The District Judge, Michael Morris, stated: "It is clear you have hatred for certain members of the community."<sup>217</sup>

John Sharpe, 46, convicted of a public order offence, was fined £100, ordered to pay costs of £85, and compensation of £150.

- 3.42. Three men appeared in court after being arrested at a Scottish Defence League (SDL) anti-mosque rally in Dumfries in May 2013. The rally was held to protest against plans to expand the use of a local mosque.

Ahead of the protest, the SDL exploited objections raised by a local couple regarding the mosque extension application to promote their protest.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> *Express & Star*, 7 February 2013

<sup>217</sup> *Express & Star*, 10 July 2013

<sup>218</sup> *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 8 May 2013

John Banks, 55, David Kyle, 29, and Josh Wood, 29, were charged with public order offences for behaving in a threatening or abusive manner. Banks and Kyle denied the charges.

Wood, who wore a badge displaying religious hatred, admitted to the charge.

Banks and Kyle were expected to stand trial in December 2013 and sentencing for Josh Wood was deferred until July 2013.<sup>219</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.43. A former BNP election candidate, David Child, allegedly posted racist, anti-Muslim and homophobic messages on Twitter between 17 and 19 July 2013.

Twitter user @DaveWPWW, which purportedly stands for White Pride Worldwide, posted several hate-filled messages including “smash the smelly muzzies” and “I really hate jews, muzzies and niggers”.<sup>220</sup>

The account used to be called David Child @BNP\_activist during the 2012 Grove by-election, as well as David Child@NF\_activist. It was deleted after the local paper contacted the account to find out who was behind it.<sup>221</sup>

David Child’s mother denied that her son posted the tweets and reportedly complained to the police that he had been impersonated. No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.44. A Wolverhampton-based English Defence League supporter posted threats to kill Muslims on his Facebook page in August 2013.

Darren Bird posted “Grrrr HOW LONG DO YOU THINK ILL GET FOR TAKING A FEW MUSSIES OUT ?????. THINKING OF USING DIMINISHED RESPONSIBILITY, OR ACTED OUT OF CHARACTER, OR EVEN SELF DEFENCE.. OR MAY BECAUSE THERE INSULTING THE BIBLE, EVEN THOUGH I DONT BELIEVE IN IT... IT’S A GOOD DAY FOR A MUSSIE TO DIE, EVEN BETTER DAY BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE DOING IT.”

He added “SOMEONE HAS TO START THE WAR.. I AINT OFFERING, I JUST AINT WAITING TO BE ASKED... I HOPE ALLAH PAEDO HAS HAD HIS MORNING SHIT, CAYSE IM GOONA SHOVE A DIRTY MUSSIE RIGHT UO HIS \*\*\*\*ING ARSE”.

EDL News passed a full screenshot of the post to West Midlands Police for investigation.<sup>222</sup> No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.45. A former soldier from Livingston posted messages on Facebook urging others to murder Muslims on 22 May 2013, the day of Fusilier Lee Rigby’s murder in Woolwich, south London.

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<sup>219</sup> *BBC News*, 20 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-22602563>]

<sup>220</sup> *Kingston Unite Against Fascism*, 24 November 2013 [available at: <http://kingstonuaf.wordpress.com/2013/11/24/kingston-bnp-i-hate-jews-muzzies-and-niggers/>]

<sup>221</sup> *Surrey Comet*, 29 November 2013

<sup>222</sup> *EDL News*, 21 August 2013 [available at: <http://edlnews.co.uk/latestnews/1177-edl-member-darren-bird-threatens-to-start-race-war-by-killing-muslims>]

Paul Fisher, 28, encouraged people to “behead ragheads”. The post was subsequently deleted.

Fisher pleaded guilty to conducting himself in a disorderly manner and committing a breach of the peace. He admitted that his message was “intended to incite others to carry out serious violence and kill others.”

He was ordered to carry out 270 hours of unpaid work and put under social work supervision.<sup>223</sup>

- 3.46. A 27 year old man made racist comments about a 14 year old Asian boy near Deans Mosque in Livingston on 9 May 2013.<sup>224</sup>

Garith Wood also abused another Asian, Abdu Raman Bismillah, calling him a “black b\*\*\*\*\*”. He further threatened to bomb the Livingston Sunni Islamic Centre and Mosque in his racist rant.

Wood admitted to two charges of acting in a racially aggravated manner and uttering racist comments. He was ordered to carry out 180 hours of unpaid work and was put under social work supervision for 12 months on 25 July 2013.<sup>225</sup>

- 3.47. 200 children were forced to flee the Hanifa Mosque in Lockwood, Huddersfield, after an anonymous caller phoned on 30 January 2013 to stating “I’ve put another pig’s head inside the mosque, you need to get everyone outside.”

The mosque was consequently evacuated as children were told the evacuation was a routine fire alarm practice. No item was found following a search of the premises.

The incident follows an earlier one involving the same month and in which a pig’s head was found on the spike of railings outside the mosque.

Christian Joseph St Hillaire admitted racially aggravated threatening behaviour. He was sentenced to 12 weeks on 28 November 2013. The sentence is to run concurrently with his 14 month sentence for physically assaulting a former partner.<sup>226</sup>

- 3.48. A man posted a comment on an open group forum on Facebook linked to the Grimsby division of the English Defence League, urging others to burn a mosque in Grimsby on 23 May 2013.

The post stated “Burn the mosque down the end of Legsby Avenue. That will tell the clowns in charge in this country that we ain’t taking this s\*\*\* and it will start a nationwide action going. Grimsby will be on the map big time then.”

It is noteworthy the mosque was indeed firebombed on 26 May 2013.<sup>227</sup>

Steven Ballard, 27, admitted sending an offensive or menacing message on 23 May 2013.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20 September 2013

<sup>224</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 28 June 2013

<sup>225</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 25 July 2013

<sup>226</sup> *The Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 29 November 2013

<sup>227</sup> See incident 2.51

<sup>228</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 20 June 2013

In July 2013, he was given a 12 week suspended prison sentence, a six month supervision order and further ordered to pay £85 costs and a government-imposed £80 victims' surcharge.<sup>229</sup>

- 3.49. A volunteer soldier, Mark Tonner, 36, posted a comment on Facebook encouraging others to commit acts of racist violence on 23 May 2013, the day after the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London.

Tonner wrote "Dean, you're in charge of Blackpool now. Get the boys together we need to paint the town red with Muslim blood."

Tonner pleaded guilty to sending an offensive message. He was consequently bailed for pre-sentence reports and was expected to be sentenced at a later date.<sup>230</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident. Lancashire Police was unresponsive to an FOI request.

- 3.50. Offensive material urging others to target a mosque in Grimsby was posted on an English Defence League Facebook site between 22 and 25 May 2013.

Matthew Tyson, 23, wrote: "What if we do beat \*\*\*\* out of them? It's all of us people on this page that gets our town and names heard and show the \*\*\*\*\* what true British is.

"I will show them how much us Brits want the scumbags out."

Referring to the Grimsby Islamic Culture Centre, which stands on the site of a former Methodist Church, Tyson wrote: "Target that place for start. A British church into a mosque. Now that's got my blood boiling."

He added: "That's all they say to me too, mate – you racist. No, we ain't racist. We're patriotic racists.

"The place needs burning. I'll go under cover down Weelsby mosque. LMAO."<sup>231</sup>

Although Magistrate Anthony Miller observed that Tyson's remarks "could have incited violence"<sup>232</sup>, the mosque was indeed firebombed a short while after the Facebook post appeared, on 26 May 2013.<sup>233</sup>

In July 2013, Tyson was given a 12-week curfew between 6am and 8pm and a 12 week prison sentence suspended for six months. The court further ordered the destruction of his laptop and smart phone.

- 3.51. A 33 year old man threatened to kill all Muslims during a racist tirade in Staveley, Cumbria during the early hours of 24 May 2013.

Police officers caught Peter Levers shouting at a taxi driver saying "Muslims, I'll kill them all". Levers had been binge drinking for 16 hours before the incident occurred.

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<sup>229</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 10 July 2013

<sup>230</sup> *Blackpool Gazette*, 7 July 2013

<sup>231</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 12 June 2013

<sup>232</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 8 July 2013

<sup>233</sup> See incident 2.51

Levers also asked police officers attending the scene to take him home because he wanted to get in a car with 'a white driver'.

Levers pleaded guilty to racially aggravated harassment on 24 June 2013 and was ordered to pay a fine of £120, a victim surcharge of £20 and £80 costs.<sup>234</sup>

- 3.52. A 25 year old man approached police officers in Cleethorpes on June 8 2013 and in an aggressive manner said "Why are you lot still patrolling the mosque?"

"They bomb our churches and you lot defend them. It's wrong."

Christopher Rodger later added "You wouldn't be stopping me if I was a Muslim or wearing a burqa. This is England. EDL. EDL."

Rodger admitted using religiously aggravated threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour. He was fined £110 and ordered to pay £85 costs and a government-imposed £20 victims' surcharge in July 2013.<sup>235</sup>

- 3.53. Alan Jesson, a former UKIP member elected as councillor in May 2013 for Spalding South in Lincolnshire, posted a series of anti-Muslim and racist posts on Facebook.

Comments that were uncovered by the media included:

"How true is it that the biggest threat to the UK way of life was Islam and its followers". In January 2013, he posted "mosques need banning until they adopt sexual equality and gay relationships and confirm to British culture."

He further proclaimed "I have a dream, as each day passes I hope and pray that one day soon Britain will be free of the corrupt EU and a day when the migrants are persuaded or forced to return to their countries of birth."

In November 2012, Jesson wrote in a further post, "No Mosques should be entertained in this country. Islam is anti Gay [sic] and anti women [sic]. It can never be part of English culture."<sup>236</sup>

Lincolnshire police launched an investigation into the comments.<sup>237</sup> Jesson was consequently expelled from UKIP in November 2013.<sup>238</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.54. A number of allegedly racist and offensive tweets were posted on Twitter by a user using the handle @edininfidel on or around 22 May 2013, the day of the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London.

The tweets stated:

"paki rapists of [sic] our streets edinburgh scotland [sic]".

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<sup>234</sup> *Derbyshire Times*, 2 July 2013

<sup>235</sup> *Grimsby Telegraph*, 2 July 2013

<sup>236</sup> *Huffington Post*, 21 May 2013

<sup>237</sup> *Lincolnshire Echo*, 23 May 2013

<sup>238</sup> *Spalding Guardian*, 6 November 2013

“lets [sic] start to take revenge burn the mosques kill the paki b\*\*\*\*ds kids fist [sic] stop them breeding”.

“time to start beheading muslim children lets [sic] drag them out of schools revenge fist [sic]”.

“just burn the place down make sure no one grasses”.<sup>239</sup>

Police confirmed they were investigating the tweets. The police also attempted to reassure faith groups and made visits to three mosques in Edinburgh following the appearance of the posts.<sup>240</sup>

Further information needs to be sought regarding the outcome of the police investigation.

- 3.55. A 40 year old man mocked the Muslim prayer ritual and hurled racial insults during a Help the Heroes fundraiser which turned disorderly on 25 May 2013 in Bristol.

Lee Cousins mocked the Muslim prayer ritual by getting down on his hands and knees in the road and shouting racial slurs involving Muslims and Allah.

Cousins pleaded guilty to causing racially or religiously aggravated harassment or alarm on 27 May 2013. He was fined £500 and further ordered to pay £85 costs and £15 victim surcharge.<sup>241</sup>

- 3.56. Racist threats posted on the Facebook page ‘True British Patriots’ against the Baitul Futuh Mosque in Morden, London in May 2013.

Users on the page called Muslims “f\*\*\*\*\* muzzies” and urged for the mosque to be burned to the ground. Posts were also made calling for mosques in Watford and Braintree to be burned.

Following a series of attacks on mosques in Gillingham, Kent<sup>242</sup>, and Bolton<sup>243</sup>, Steve Dungey wrote “We need more of this there is a mosque in morden south London burn it down.”

Dean Wyatt posed a question on Twitter with the handle ADWYATT90 asking “Anyone fancy doing the mosque in morden over?” He received a caution from the police and consequently issued an apology on Twitter on 23 May 2013.

However, he later tweeted “Police told me to write it.”<sup>244</sup>

- 3.57. During a protest outside the Jami Mosque in Southsea, Portsmouth, police arrested four people on 25 May 2013 for public order offences.

A 15-year-old boy, who used offensive language, was arrested for a racially-aggravated public order offence. Another man was also arrested for a similar offence.

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<sup>239</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 29 May 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/edinburgh-racist-messages-spark-twitter-hate-crime-probe/>]

<sup>240</sup> *The Scotsman*, 29 May 2013

<sup>241</sup> *The Bristol Post*, 28 May 2013

<sup>242</sup> See incident 2.43

<sup>243</sup> See incident 2.13

<sup>244</sup> *Your Local Guardian*, 29 May 2013

24-year-old man was arrested for a minor assault following a brawl.

A fourth man was arrested for refusing to leave a pub when police issued a dispersal order.<sup>245</sup>

Further information needs to be sought regarding prosecution and sentencing.

- 3.58. Internet ‘trolls’ posted abuse on Facebook in March 2013 after a priest at St John’s Episcopal Church in Aberdeen allowed Muslims to pray in the church.

The priest, Reverend Isaac Poobalan, invited Muslims from a neighbouring mosque to share the building after noticing that some Muslim worshippers were praying outside in the snow due to lack of space inside the mosque.

One of the Facebook users posted a comment stating the church was “sharing Christ’s table with Satan”.

Another predicted that there would be a “flood” of Muslims moving to Aberdeen to convert the church into a mosque and urged the priest to be given the “boot” before it was too late.

A third post stated “I would leave this so called “church”. Allah is Satan, and no God. They (the church) have nothing to say about persecuted Christians, but invite Satan in.

“We are dealing with evil people that bow down to Allah and lost their belief in Jesus a long time ago. Allah has no son.”<sup>246</sup>

Further information needs to be sought on whether the incident was investigated by Police Scotland and any ensuing criminal charges.

- 3.59. A BNP member was arrested after calling for the Swansea Mosque & Islamic Centre to be burnt down on Facebook on 3 March 2013.

Joshua Wren posted a photograph of the mosque on the social media site and wrote “Burn down this devil centre.”<sup>247</sup>

Wren was arrested and consequently released on bail pending further enquiries.<sup>248</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

- 3.60. A 20 year old man, from Swansea, posted on message on Twitter stating “Why don’ you f\*\*\* back to the desert, you c\*\*\*s” in January 2013.<sup>249</sup>

Ricky Lee Davies posted the message after watching a TV show about Muslim extremist groups and poppy burning.

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<sup>245</sup> *Portsmouth News*, 25 May 2013

<sup>246</sup> *Daily Mail*, 21 March 2013

<sup>247</sup> *Islamophobia Watch*, 4 March 2013 [available at: <http://www.islamophobiawatch.co.uk/bnp-member-calls-for-swanea-mosque-islamic-community-centre-to-be-burnt-down/>]

<sup>248</sup> *Hope Not Hate*, 8 March 2013 [available at: <http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/blog/insider/joshua-wren-arrested-2535/>]

<sup>249</sup> *Daily Mail*, 30 January 2013



Prosecutor Jonathan Coombs said the messages “would seem to be directed primarily at the Muslim community and Pakistani nationality”.

Davies admitted sending a grossly offensive message via a public communications network. He was sentenced to eight weeks, suspended for 12 months with a supervision requirement for 12 months. He was also ordered to carry out 150 hours of unpaid work and pay £85 costs.<sup>250</sup>

- 3.61. A printed, laminated notice containing racist language was pinned onto the front door of the Madina Mosque in Horsham between 17 and 18 January 2013.

The notice stated “Keep Britain for Christians and whites only”.<sup>251</sup>

The incident was reported to Sussex Police on 21 January and was being investigated as a hate crime. The police subsequently issued an appeal for witnesses.<sup>252</sup>

No further information is available in connection with this incident.

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<sup>250</sup> *South Wales Evening Post*, 29 January 2013

<sup>251</sup> *The Argus*, 26 January 2013

<sup>252</sup> Sussex Police, 22 January 2013 [available at: <http://www.sussex.police.uk/whats-happening/latest/news-stories/2013/01/22/police-investigate-racist-notice-at-horsham-mosque>]

#### 4. Anti-Muslim public discourse

There have been several events in 2013 that have garnered widespread media attention about Islam and Muslims in Britain and Europe. Some debates are recurring ones which refuse to subside and which give rise to the same trenchant animosities as before; debates about Islamic dress and veiling, the anti-Muslim discourses of far right organisations and newly formed splinter groups and sex grooming scandals in which the actions of criminals of Asian descent are used to vilify entire racial and religious groups.

The heinous killing of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London on 22 May by two young Muslim converts brought the discussion about security, law and counter-terrorism back to the fore, if one can reasonably regard it as having receded at all after 7/7.

This section details events that have given rise to palpable concern over anti-Muslim public discourse in the UK and the negative impact on Muslims of the appraisal and practice of faith in the public square.

##### *Security, law and counter-terrorism*

The murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby led to the formation of a Taskforce on Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation, set up by the Prime Minister on 3 June 2013 with these stated objectives:

“[T]o ask serious questions on whether the rules on charities are too lax and whether they can allow extremists to prosper; whether we are doing enough to disrupt groups that incite hatred, violence or criminal damage; whether we are doing enough to deal with radicalisation on our university campuses, on the internet and in our prisons; whether we need to do more with informal education centres such as madrassahs to prevent radicalisation; and whether we do enough to help mosques to expel extremists and recruit imams who understand Britain. We will also look at new ways to support communities as they come together and take a united stand against all forms of extremism.”<sup>253</sup>

While the PM in his statement to the nation the day after Fusilier Rigby's murder unequivocally rejected any inference that the actions of Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale were in any reflective of Islam or of British Muslims, the work undertaken by the taskforce and its final report, published in December<sup>254</sup>, has been criticised for its 'afterthought' approach to tackling far right radicalisation and extremism.

In his statement on 23 May, the Prime Minister iterated that the brutal murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby was “a betrayal of Islam – and of the Muslim communities who give so much to our country” adding, “There is nothing in Islam that justifies this truly dreadful act.”<sup>255</sup>

Early indications of retaliatory attacks against British Muslims were confirmed by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, who in a weekly online webchat responded to a question about anti-Muslim attacks stating Islamophobic attacks in the capital rose eightfold in the two weeks after the murder.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> *Hansard* (HC), 3 June 2013, vol 563, cols 1234 to 1235

<sup>254</sup> *Tackling extremism in the UK: Report from the Prime Minister's Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism*. Cabinet Office, 2013.

<sup>255</sup> The Rt Hon David Cameron MP, Statement on Woolwich incident, 23 May 2013

<sup>256</sup> Crime reports up after Rigby murder, *Belfast Telegraph*, 3 July 2013

Reports from other parts of the UK also affirmed the rise in Islamophobia following Rigby's murder.<sup>257</sup>

**Insert newspaper images –**

**<http://iengage.uk.net/news/columnists-and-commentary-on-woolwich/>**

The most severe incidents involved the near total destruction the Somali Bravanese Centre in London's Muswell Hill, bombs which were placed at mosque sites in Tipton, Walsall and Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and the murder of Muslim pensioner, Mohammed Saleem Khan.

Despite these and other serious incidents, the issue of tackling far right extremism and radicalisation was only raised in the context of the Taskforce on Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation during a meeting with Muslims in Manchester in August 2013.<sup>258</sup>

Indeed, the Taskforce report makes scant mention of far right extremism and radicalisation and many of the recommendations proposed to dealing with the problem of extremism and radicalisation focuses on the 'Islamist extremism' variant alone.

Empirical analyses on both media reporting and policy debates about national security and counter-terrorism priorities have demonstrated the negative consequences on minority communities of the conflict-laden media paradigm on Islam and Muslims and public policy that discriminates against a single group portraying it as a 'suspect community'.<sup>259</sup> The collective burden of responsibility placed upon British Muslims for the actions of a deeply misguided few bear tangible consequences in the form of retaliatory attacks targeted Muslims.

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<sup>257</sup> Hate crimes double in South Wales after soldier Lee Rigby's death, *Wales Online*, 26 July 2013 [available at: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/hate-crimes-double-south-wales-5324408>]. Last accessed on 28 October 2014

<sup>258</sup> Cameron insists he condemns all forms of terrorism, *The Muslim News*, 10 August 2013

<sup>259</sup> Mary J Hickman, Lyn Thomas, Sara Silvestri and Henri Nickels, "Suspect communities"? *Counterterrorism Policy, the Press, and the impact on Irish and Muslim Communities in Britain.* London Metropolitan University, July 2011.

Official statements condemning the retaliatory attacks on Muslims were slow to emerge and the Government was criticised for its lackadaisical response to the fears expressed by Muslim communities over revenge attacks.<sup>260</sup>

The Muslim Council of Britain in a letter to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government called for a “coordinated national effort” to deal with extremism in all its guises to mitigate anti-Muslim attacks following terrorist incidents.<sup>261</sup> Indeed, in a blog post questioning the poor media coverage of the mosque bombing campaign in the West Midlands, Deputy Chief Constable Dave Thompson of West Midlands police force probed the reaction to incidents affecting British Muslims and asked whether another faith group experiencing the same would be treated with comparable disregard.

The events illustrate the important interplay between official statements, Government responses and media reporting on security threats and terrorist incidents to public discourses about minority groups in order to arrest the possibility of vengeful attacks on vulnerable communities.<sup>262</sup>

### *Veiling – call for a ‘national debate’*

The issue of face veiling arose last year in a number of contexts: a ban imposed by Birmingham Metropolitan College on students prohibiting the wearing of face veils on college premises and in classrooms; the absconding of terror suspect, Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed, from a west London mosque disguised in a burqa; and the trial of a Muslim woman charged with witness intimidation who wished to give evidence in court whilst wearing her face veil.

The incidents involve quite different issues of debate and gave rise to significant media commentary and interventions by politicians and Government on the subject.<sup>263</sup>

The ban imposed by Birmingham Metropolitan College was later reversed following a successful campaign by students at the College and supported by external student union officers. The issue nonetheless gave rise to a fulsome public debate about the place of veiling in Britain and the boundaries dividing the private and public sphere.

The issue of the public sphere and the practice of face veiling further arose in the case of a Muslim woman defendant charged with witness intimidation who wished to give court evidence while retaining her right to wear the niqab.

The escape of terror suspect Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed added to calls for a ban on the wearing of the face veil in the UK with one MP, Sir Gerald Howarth, putting it to the Home

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<sup>260</sup> David Cameron should have spoken out on mosque attacks, says Labour MP, *Express & Star*, 27 July 2013

<sup>261</sup> Muslim call for government action over mosque attacks, *BBC News*, 22 July 2013

<sup>262</sup> Government accused of ‘double standards’ in aftermath of Woolwich murder of Drummer Lee Rigby, *The Independent*, 28 July 2013

<sup>263</sup> Civilised society must not draw a veil over the niqab, *Daily Telegraph*, 14 September 2013; No one has a human right to hide from justice behind a veil, *Daily Mail*, 15 September 2013; My veil epiphany, *The Observer*, 15 September 2013; Fully veiled women hinder progressive Islam, *Independent on Sunday*, 15 September 2013; Veil is everything feminists hate . . . so why the silence?, *The Sun*, 16 September 2013; Feminism’ can’t force Muslim women to ditch the veil, *Daily Telegraph*, 16 September 2013; Veils shouldn’t be banned. Except sometimes, *The Times*, 17 September 2013; Spare us a ‘national debate’ on veils, *The Guardian*, 16 September 2013; Burkas cast a veil over us all – so ban them, *Daily Telegraph*, 18 September 2013; Britain needs ‘national debate’ about banning Muslim girls from wearing veils in public, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 September 2013; Ban the burka in our classrooms, says Boris: London Mayor tells radio phone-in that schools should have right to make pupils show faces to teachers, *Daily Mail*, 3 October 2013 and Sarah Wollaston: Veil debate should be wake-up call for feminism, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 September 2013

Secretary that burqas should be banned because “It is alien to our culture and has enabled this man to abscond.”<sup>264</sup>

A proposal to ban face veils in the UK, prompted by a Private Members Bill advanced by Phillip Hollobone MP, has been rejected by the Home Secretary who, last year, reiterated her position on the freedom of women who choose how to dress (in response to Sir Gerald’s question).<sup>265</sup>

The firm rejection over the introduction of any restrictions to the right to religious dress did not stem the vituperative media output in sections of the British press and among the commentariat in particular.

The popular tabloid newspaper, The Sun, advanced a ‘four point proposal’ on the niqab with a cover story which listed areas in which the face veil ought to be banned:

- ban the niqab, or face veil, in nearly all public buildings, including schools, courts, hospitals
- ban the niqab in airports, banks and secure areas
- let employers decide about their appropriateness in the workplace
- allow them to be worn in streets and parks

**Insert newspaper images -**

**<http://iengage.uk.net/news/more-on-the-niqab-the-suns-4-point-proposal/>**

A selection of remarks discussing and describing face veiling by columnists in the national dailies and in TV broadcasts are offered below:

*“[the niqab is] a barrier worn to repel”*

*“No one should have an exclusive monopoly on defining what being equal means, not least of all the state.”*

*“the triumph of a regressive view of human existence whose adherents use the rights and protections of a liberal society to destroy those very rights and protections, with the ultimate aim of imposing an intolerant vision on the world”*

*“niqab is symbolic of a strong desire not to integrate in Western society”*

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<sup>264</sup> *Hansard* (HC), 4 November 2013, volume 570, cols 27

<sup>265</sup> *Hansard* (HC), 4 November 2013, volume 570, cols 23-34

*“our cultural belief [is] that women should fully and equally participate in society...Women should be clear that the burka is a symbol not of liberation but of repression and segregation.”*

*“dragged back to the dark ages of superstition and repression.”*

*“There is something ludicrous about women [who wear niqab] talking about human rights”.*

Among important contributions to the raucous debate about face veiling were a column penned by a Muslim woman who wears a face veil, dispelling many of the popular misconceptions of why and whether it hinders career aspirations<sup>266</sup>, and a ‘FactCheck’ blog by Channel 4 News exploring empirical data on the number of British Muslim women who wear the face veil in order to verify the assertion, made by Anne Marie Waters of the National Secular Society, that “The number of women wearing the burka and niqab has exploded in Britain in recent decades”.<sup>267</sup>

The commentary and political debate about face veiling in the UK last year evinced many of the tropes that have characterised this debate in previous years: an exaggeration of the scale of the subject, with unverifiable data often used to project the idea of swathes of young British Muslim women adopting the face veil; a proprietary zeal over the question of ‘British culture’ with Muslim women who adopt the face veil being cast as outside the boundary of Britishness, British culture and British society because veiling is not something ‘we’ do; and disregard for the principles of liberal democracy which advance the protection of minorities against the ‘tyranny of the majority’ and base judgments on restrictions to individual liberty on the ‘harm principle’.<sup>268</sup>

The sometimes vitriolic tone in which the public debate about face veils has been conducted is highly relevant when we consider the disproportionate number of female victims of Islamophobic hate crime. Headscarves and face veils are a visible marker of religious identity and the direction and content of public debate on these issues engender a heightened vulnerability to hate crime among Muslim women.<sup>269</sup>

*Elections and the far right*

In the local elections in May 2013, the UK Independence Party fielded its largest number of candidates to date. In the previous year’s local elections, the National Front boasted a candidate base which was its largest in 30 years (35 candidates).

Of the 2,392 local council seats up for election in England and Wales, UKIP fielded 1,700 candidates. UKIP won 147 seats and increased its share of the vote to 25% in the election, a result the party leader, Nigel Farage, described as a ‘game-changer’.<sup>270</sup>

Other far right parties have seen a steady erosion of their voter base with the number of BNP candidates who contested seats in the 2013 elections falling to 105 candidates,

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<sup>266</sup> I wear the niqab, let me speak on my own behalf, *The Independent*, 18 September 2013

<sup>267</sup> Britain’s Niqab: unveiling the facts – FactCheck, *Channel 4 News* [available at: <http://blogs.channel4.com/factcheck/britains-niqab-unveiling-facts-factcheck/16232>]. Last accessed on 28 October 2013.

<sup>268</sup> Ban the burka? No, Muslim women need our protection, *Personal blog of Jacob Rees Mogg MP*, 13 November 2013. [available at: <http://www.jacobreesmogg.com/ban-the-burka-no-muslim-women-need-our-protection>]. Last accessed on 28 October 2013.

<sup>269</sup> Women targeted in rising tide of attacks on Muslims, *The Guardian*, 28 June 2014

<sup>270</sup> Local elections: Nigel Farage hails results as a ‘game changer’, *BBC News* 3 May 2013

compared to 130 fielded in 2012 and 465 candidates fielded the last time elections took place in the same districts in 2009.

While more extreme far right parties, like the BNP and NF, are less of a credible political threat, the emergence of UKIP as a party of substance, if judged on electoral results in the 2013 elections, is a genuine cause for concern given the dalliance of some UKIP candidates with more extreme parties and the unsavoury remarks evincing anti-Muslim prejudice by others.

Among candidates whose prejudices have been covered by investigative reporters are these:

- Victoria Ayling, a UKIP councillor and prospective parliamentary candidate for Great Grimsby in the 2015 general election was recorded on video saying:

“We must ensure that those who should not be here should be repatriated: the illegals and failed asylum seekers and all those coming here should learn to speak English to integrate properly.”

“Multiculturalism does not work – Britishness does.”

“Maybe Britishness is waving the National Front a bit”. She added, “I just want to send the lot back but I can’t say that.”

Ayling’s remarks were defended by party leader, Farage, who claimed Ayling was the victim of ‘political attack’ by establishment forces that wished to bring the party into ‘disrepute’.<sup>271</sup>

- Chris Scotton, who was to stand for the party for the ward of Syston Ridgeway on Leicester county council, was suspended from the party and his candidacy revoked after reports of his choice of ‘friends’ on Facebook, including the English Defence League, came to light.

Scotton had ‘liked’ a series of ‘controversial organisations on Facebook with one regarding racism as “ethnic banter” and another group which talked about “losing a black friend in the dark”.<sup>272</sup>

- A party canvasser, Tony Nixon, was suspended from the party after details of his anti-Muslim Facebook posts and comments were uncovered. Nixon was found to have shared images of an offensive nature about Muslims, including one showing pigs eating copies of the Qur’an, posted the comment:

“Instead of turning Ground Zero into a mosque why not turn some mosques into ground zero?”<sup>273</sup>

- Cavan Vines, a UKIP councillor on Rotherham Council, was found to have posted various anti-Muslim comments on his blog. Vines posted the comments:

“Muslims go to war warring [sic] the same cloths as ordinary people who they hide behind they cover their faces, they hide behind women and children they set up

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<sup>271</sup> Ukip politician defends comments about sending all immigrants back home, *Daily Telegraph*, 8 December 2013

<sup>272</sup> UKIP leader Nigel Farage facing calls to kick out racists, *Daily Mirror*, 28 April 2013

<sup>273</sup> North Yorkshire Ukip canvasser suspended over racist comments and images, *Northern Echo*, 2 May 2013

rocket launches in school yards they use children to push wheel barrows into crowds and soldiers then detonate it killing innocent people SO WHO ARE THE COWARDS.”

“Its (sic) about time the Government and the Police stopped pandering to these so called British Muslims and other foreign nationals.”

- Misty Thackeray, deputy chairman of UKIP in Scotland “liked” a Facebook group claiming “paedophilia is part of Islamic tradition”.<sup>274</sup>
- UKIP councillor in Boston, Lincs, Tiggs Keywood- Wainwright, complained about mosques being built in the “quintessentially English” city of Cambridge saying “Is nowhere sacred for the Brits in Britain any more?”

“Bottom line is we have too many muslims in this country!”<sup>275</sup>

Candidates standing for UKIP in the 2013 elections who were uncovered to have political histories in more extreme far right parties included Robert Jay (National Front),<sup>276</sup> Martyn Heale (National Front)<sup>277</sup> and Susan Bowen (British National Party).<sup>278</sup>

UKIP’s constitution bars prospective party members from prior membership of far right groups stipulating:

“Membership is not available to anyone who is or has previously been a member of the British National Party, National Front, British Freedom Party, British People’s Party, English Defence League, Britain First or the UK First Party. Any applications made from people who are or have been members of these organisations will be refused, and any subscriptions collected will be refunded. By applying for membership you certify that you are not and have never been a member of any of these parties.”

Party leader, Nigel Farage, contended that the party did not have the apparatus in place to fully vet the 1,700 candidates it had selected to contest seats in the local elections saying “I have no doubt that among those 1,700 one or two people will have slipped through the net that we’d rather not have had.”

The importance of the responsibility of political parties to implement rigorous checks on applicants prior to candidate selection is evidenced in the details that emerged of those who had slipped through the net in 2013. While it is a fair to claim that the requisite apparatus did not exist to expedite candidate selection, it is urged that appropriate sanctions exist for those parties found not to have complied with race equality and anti-discrimination legislation in order to force compliance with the law and to improve internal party regulation.

A further incident occurring in 2013 and related to the local elections which raised again issues surrounding the disparity in legal protections on incitement to racial and religious

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<sup>274</sup> UKIP councillors' racist rants: More of Nigel Farage's troops exposed as bigots, *Sunday Mirror*, 18 May 2013

<sup>275</sup> UKIP councillors' racist rants: More of Nigel Farage's troops exposed as bigots, *Sunday Mirror*, 18 May 2013

<sup>276</sup> Will UKIP expel their councillor who 'still backs National Front policies'?, *Political Scrapbook*, 17 September 2013

<sup>277</sup> UKIP candidate Martyn Heale will not be asked to stand down despite once belonging to National Front, *Kent Messenger*, 30 April 2013

<sup>278</sup> Former BNP member disowned by Ukip, *The Guardian*, 24 April 2014



hatred was the resurfacing of leaflets distributed some years ago by BNP supporter Anthony Bamber 'blaming' Muslims for the heroin trade.<sup>279</sup>

The leaflets were first distributed in 2010 and were the subject of the first ever court case prosecuted under the 2006 Racial and Religious Hatred Act which introduced criminal offences on 'incitement'. Bamber, who was acquitted of the charges, re-distributed the leaflets during the 2013 local elections in which he stood as a BNP candidate for a seat on Lancashire County Council.<sup>280</sup>

The disparity in the protections ushered in under the 2006 Act rests on the limited scope of the legislation in relation to groups defined by religion and in the subjective test of proving 'intent' in the case of offences over incitement to religious hatred.

The offence of incitement to religious hatred, unlike racial hatred, does not cover 'insulting or abusive words or behaviour' only 'threatening words or behaviour', imposing one inequality in the protection afforded.

Furthermore, whereas incitement to racial hatred follows both subjective and objective assessments, that the accused (a) he intends thereby to stir up racial hatred, or (b) having regard to all the circumstances racial hatred is likely to be stirred up thereby, for offences prosecuted as incitement to religious hatred, the legal threshold must satisfy the subjective test only, that the accused 'intended' to stir up religious hatred.

Given the near impossibility of proving intent, the legislation does little to afford groups defined by religion the same legal protection enjoyed by groups defined by race. This inequality persists to create a number of obstacles to the successful prosecution of anti-Muslim hate speech.

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<sup>279</sup> Preston BNP activist 'distributed anti-Muslim leaflets', *BBC News* 14 June 2010

<sup>280</sup> 'Anti-Muslim' leaflets sent to Lancashire councillors, *Lancashire Evening Post*, 25 April 2013

## 5. Positive developments

A number of important positive developments in 2013 are worthy of mention for their contribution, present or future, to an improved environment for tackling Islamophobia and anti-Muslim prejudice.

Developments such as those in press regulation, our ongoing engagement with Police and Crime Commissioners, the publication of the Government's revised Hate Crime Strategy and a report by the Taskforce on Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation. Further positive developments include the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Electoral Conduct and the contributions, extant and prospective, of academic research widening the empirical evidence base of hate crime and victim experiences.

### *Press regulation and the cross-party Royal Charter*

Since the publication of the Leveson Inquiry report into The Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press in November 2012, the issue of reformed press regulation has been beset by many obstacles not least those arising from an obstinate press.

In October 2013, the cross party Royal Charter was finally adopted, overcoming months of delays and recriminations over the system of press regulation to be ushered in.

The cross party Royal Charter, though a compromise on the full list of recommendations proposed by Lord Justice Leveson, is favourably compliant with many of these recommendations and we have commended its adoption and the prospect it promises of an much enhanced system of regulation.

Among changes to the system of press regulation which, we believe, will have some positive impact on the overwhelmingly negative print media output on Islam and Muslims is the independence of the press regulatory body from the industry, the barring of extant media professionals from serving on the board of the regulatory body, the power of the regulator to 'direct' apologies (determining their place, size and prominence) and the introduction of a 'third party' complaints clause, albeit on condition of a public interest defence.

The last year, and information presented here, illustrates just how important the issue of press output is to the well-being, confidence and security of minority communities. A step toward better press regulation is an immensely important development.

### *Taskforce on Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation – hate crime*

This has been discussed at length elsewhere, suffice to add here is one aspect of the report which is to be commended for its contribution to tackling hate crime. The report commends work with police forces in England and Wales to "ensure that the extremist dimension of hate crimes is properly logged and taken into account when conducting their investigations."

While under-reporting of hate crime is a problem that needs remedying through partnerships between police forces and victims groups, the commitment to improve the recording of hate crime and documenting of bias motivations is to be strongly commended.

## *Police and Crime Commissioners*

In addition to the point noted above and the prospect of improved statutory response to recording of hate crime, we have been working with Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales since their election in November 2012 to advance a four key pledges.

One of key priorities in engaging PCCs and local policing has been the pledge on recording Islamophobia under a separate crime flag, similar to the practice adopted by the Metropolitan Police Service, to improve data collection on anti-Muslim hate crime. Appendix 1 details the police force areas we have approached and our ongoing progress in this area of work.

## *All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Electoral Conduct*

An Inquiry into Electoral Conduct was conducted in 2013 with the final report published in October.<sup>281</sup>

The terms of reference for the Inquiry were as follows:

- to inquire into the culture, practices and malpractices exhibited during election campaigns by electoral candidates and others with a particular focus on discriminatory behaviour
- to review whether the current law, regulations, political party and agency measures relating to electoral conduct are appropriate, well co-ordinated or require amendment and to make recommendations accordingly
- to uncover what models of good practice exist for assessing and addressing accusations of discriminatory behaviour during elections
- to make recommendations, rooted in best practice where possible, for cross-party frameworks to prevent and address accusations of discriminatory conduct

The report contained a number of recommendations which, given details presented here about election materials distributed during the local elections and electoral conduct by candidates for far right parties, merit specific mention:

We believe the CRE/EHRC guidance was an example of good practice and provided a timely reminder to Local Authorities and others of their responsibilities and the resources at hand to combat racial hatred. We recommend that the EHRC commits to publishing and promoting similar guidance annually.

We recommend that before its next set of revisions to the statutory guidance, the Electoral Commission extends and enhances the group of stakeholders they consult to include the EHRC and other experts in tackling racist discrimination. Given its pivotal role in elections, the Commission should be bold in setting out the expectations of not just the mechanics but the content of campaigns in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010

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<sup>281</sup> *Report of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Electoral Conduct*, October 2013

We recommend that in order to augment good practice the ACPO training conference and handheld guide include sections on public order with specific mention of racial discrimination and campaigning materials which might breach the Public Order and Racial and Religious Hatred Acts, expert input and advice can and should be sought where institutional expertise does not exist.

We recommend a pro-forma strategic communications plan be developed by ACPO for SPOCs in advance of elections, to include public facing announcements with details for reporting material in breach of the Public Order Act and links to useful partner websites such as the Electoral Commission and EHRC. This should include a social media strategy.

We advise parties to draw on expert knowledge and enhance the level of existing training on racism and discrimination.

We recommend that cross-party agreement be sought, under the auspices of the Equality and Human Rights Commission on a standardised framework for reporting discrimination during election campaigns. This would work in tandem with existing party disciplinary and police procedures

We further recommend that the police and Electoral Commission utilise existing resources, such as the excellent hate-crime reporting portal 'truevision' ([www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)) and other third-party reporting portals such as [electionleaflets.org](http://electionleaflets.org), allowing the referral of anonymised materials to the relevant authorities. We suggest that in the first instance, the relevant ACPO officers and the Electoral Commission seek to establish initial lines of communication with these groups to see if they can learn from or better use their systems.

The report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Electoral Conduct makes particular mention of 'racial hatred' in many areas and neglects explicit mention of other forms of bias and discrimination. We look forward to the implementation of these and other recommendations included in the report, and to the inclusion of religiously motivated bias in the recommendations advanced, as we approach the next British general election in which a far right party, UKIP, is projected to do considerably well.

#### *Academic research and widening the empirical evidence base*

Of note in the body of evidence offering a wider and deeper empirical base to understanding the scale of hate crime and its impact on victim groups are two significant research studies undertaken by researchers based at the universities of Leicester and Sussex.

The Hate Crime Project at Leicester University, now complete, has added further to the body of empirical evidence about hate crime. Notable among results established by the study are the huge problem of under-reporting and the psycho-social impact of hate crime on victims.

The study by researchers at Sussex University, ongoing, explores an underdeveloped area and investigates the indirect effect on victim groups of hate crime.

Policy interventions on hate crime are often hindered by low reporting rates which belie the true scale of the problem and tend to de-prioritise an important area of policy concern. It is hoped that as the strength of empirical data and analyses improves, better evidence-based policy interventions will follow suit.

## Appendix 1 – Police and Crime Commissioners regions and recording Islamophobia

