



Victim Support Scotland

Hate Crime Toolkit



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA



Contents

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ What is hate crime?
- ◆ How can I report hate crime?
- ◆ What can I expect?
- ◆ Advice for professionals
- ◆ Helpful organisations
- ◆ Get involved with Victim Support Scotland
- ◆ What can I do if I witness a hate crime?
- ◆ Coping with hate crime
- ◆ Support available



Welcome to Victim Support Scotland and Police Scotland's Hate Crime Toolkit.

This resource has been designed to help raise awareness around hate crime in Scotland, the support that is available as well as some coping strategies you may find useful, should you experience a hate crime.

It has been created by Victim Support Scotland, in partnership with Police Scotland as a go-to resource for everyone who may be affected or involved following a hate crime or hate incident.

Victim Support Scotland is an agency independent of Police Scotland and will not share any of your personal details without your consent.

To find out more about hate crime and how to report it, please visit:

<https://victimsupport.scot/information-support/crime-information/crime-types/hate-crime/>

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/campaigns/2022/hate-crime/>



Between April and December 2021, there were 5,375 reported hate crimes in Scotland. This was up 5.5% on the five year average of 5,096 and slightly higher than the year before 5,365.

Race-related hate continues to make up the majority of hate crime reported at just under 60% of the total, while those reporting they were targeted because of their sexual orientation accounted for over 22% of reports.

What is hate crime?

Hate crime is the term used to describe a situation where a crime has been committed and the victim, or any person, believes the person committing the crime was motivated by a prejudice or hatred towards a protected group.

Victims of hate crime are often targeted because of who they are or because someone thinks they belong to a certain group. Experience shows that being targeted either wholly or partly due to a personal characteristic can have a devastating impact upon the victims, their families, wider communities and in some situations have a corrosive effect on community cohesion.

Police Scotland and the Scottish Government define hate crime as “Any crime which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and ill-will towards a social group.”



Police Scotland and the Scottish Government define hate crime as

“Any crime which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and ill-will towards a social group.”

There are currently five social groups protected under hate crime legislation:

- Disability or presumed disability (any disability including physical disability, learning disability and mental health).
- Race or presumed race (any racial group, ethnic background or national origin, including countries within the UK and Gypsy / Traveller groups).
- Religion or presumed religion (any religious group, including those who have no faith).
- Sexual orientation or presumed sexual orientation.
- Transgender identity or presumed transgender identity

What are hate incidents?

Police Scotland defines a hate incident, different to a hate crime, as

“Any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and ill-will towards a social group but which does not constitute a criminal offence”.

Hate incidents can feel like crimes to people who experience them and can often escalate to crimes or tension in a community.

If you have been targeted because of your disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity or because you are perceived to be from one of these social groups but a crime has not been committed, Police Scotland would assess whether it is appropriate to record a hate incident. The purpose of this is to ensure Police Scotland can monitor escalation of behaviour and the impact on individuals and communities.

If you are not sure if something is a hate crime or hate incident please still report it to the police.

Examples of hate crimes:

The following list is not exhaustive, but includes some of the most common types of behaviours which when motivated by malice and ill will towards a protected group, would be considered a hate crime.

- Physical assault on the victim or their family or carer.
- Damage to property, offensive graffiti and fire-raising.
- Threats – including offensive letters, abusive telephone calls, groups congregating to intimidate and making malicious complaints.
- Verbal abuse or insults – offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures, dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes, bullying at school and verbal slurs.
- Online abuse - The same hate crime laws apply about anything that is published online either on a website or through social media.



Where can hate crime happen?

Hate crime can happen anywhere. It could be in your home, workplace, in school, on public transport, in social situations and even online.

The internet has changed the way in which we communicate with many positive outcomes. Yet, it can also enable people to spread hate on a much larger scale. Hate crime can happen online through texts, emails, websites and social media.

What can you do?

It can be difficult to know if something that happens to you is a hate crime. If you experience or witness a situation you think may be a crime and you perceive it to be based on a dislike or hatred towards a protected group, you can report it to Police Scotland who will decide if a hate crime has been committed.

If you are unsure about reporting to the police, you can contact Victim Support Scotland to discuss your concerns, your options for reporting an incident and access support and information whether you choose to report or not. Please see our How to Report a Hate Crime section on page 8

It is important to make a record of the incidents you experience, as it may seem like a one-off but it may happen more regularly and gathering evidence will help if you decide to report.

- Keep any evidence you have and show it to the Police.
- Try to stay calm and not retaliate to the abuse.
- Keep emails, texts and messages.
- If possible, take a screenshot of any abusive posts or content.
- Check your privacy settings, only let people you know access your profile.
- Report online content to the social networking site. They have ways of dealing with this and may be able to remove the content and suspend or close the person's account.
- Learn how to block abusive social media users. Details of how to do this on some of the most popular social networking platforms can be found by clicking the icons below.



Keeping Safe

If something happens when you are out and you are feeling scared or vulnerable, you can use the Keep Safe Scotland network for support.

Keep Safe is a Police Scotland-led initiative that works with communities across Scotland, to create safe places for anyone feeling lost, scared or vulnerable when out in the community.

There are around 1000 Keep Safe places across Scotland. These are mapped out on the free Keep Safe Scotland phone app. You can also use this app to:

- Find your nearest Keep Safe place
- Plan your journey in advance
- Report hate crimes to Police Scotland

All Keep Safe places have been checked and approved by Police Scotland and are ordinary community places, such as cafes, shops, supermarkets, libraries etc.

You don't need to ask for help, unless you need to. You can use a Keep Safe place to just take a few minutes until you are ready to continue with your journey. Many people who use Keep Safe places have never needed to ask for help, but say that knowing the network is available has helped them to feel safer in their communities.

If you do need to ask for help, you can ask staff for assistance.

Keep Safe cards are also available free from iamme@renfrewshire.gov.uk. These hold information about who you are, any health concerns or communication requirements and also your emergency contacts.

They are useful to keep in your wallet, bag or phone case and can help assist you in an emergency. If you would like more information about Keep Safe, contact Police Scotland or www.iammescotland.co.uk.

Note – All Keep Safe places will display the below sticker in their window.



How can I report hate crime?

If you have experienced a hate crime or incident, please report it to Police Scotland. You can also report hate crimes or incidents even if it wasn't directed at you.

For example, you could be a friend, neighbour, family member, support worker or a passer-by.

You should tell the police if you think it happened because of disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. It may even be a combination of these things. This is important as it lets them know about hate crimes or hate incidents.

If something happens and you are not sure if it is a crime or not, report it to Police Scotland who will determine this.

Sometimes victims or witnesses of hate do not feel comfortable reporting the incident to the police.

They might be more comfortable reporting it to someone they know instead.

Police Scotland works in partnership with a number of organisations and groups, to take reports, known as third party reporting centres. Third party reporting centres could be Victim Support Scotland offices, housing associations or

voluntary groups. Staff have been trained to recognise hate crimes and help a victim or witness to submit a report to the police.

Third party reports can be made without giving your name. However, that might affect the investigation. Find your nearest Third Party Reporting Centre.

Police Scotland offers the following range of reporting options



In person at any police station

Keep Safe Scotland App

Through the British Transport Police



Completing a Hate Crime Reporting Form

At a Third Party Reporting Centre (including a Victim Support Scotland Office)

Use the 999 BSL service at <https://999bsl.co.uk>

What to expect

When reporting a hate crime or incident to Police Scotland you can ask to make an appointment to speak to an officer at a time and place that is convenient for you, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. In these circumstances the police would need to meet you as soon as possible.

This may be at home, in a private area of a police office or another place of your choosing. If you require an interpreter this will be arranged, this includes British Sign Language. Police Scotland can also arrange for additional support measures if you require them.

Police Scotland treats everyone who comes forward to report hate crime with dignity and respect. When providing your statement you can do this at your own pace and take breaks if desired. The officer noting your statement will offer you the chance to review your statement on their mobile device or notebook prior to asking you to sign it to confirm its accuracy.

Hate crimes are taken very seriously by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and Scottish Courts.

Usually, a charge will include wording to reflect that the offence was aggravated by prejudice. COPFS consider the case from all angles, including that of the victim, the wider community and the person accused of the crime.

If the person accused of committing the hate crime pleads guilty, it is unlikely that would have to go to court. If the accused person pleads not guilty, it is likely you will have to go to court as a witness and give evidence.

This means you will have to tell the court what you know about the crime. Anyone who gives evidence in court must first promise to tell the truth. You can give this promise in a way that fits with your religion, language or culture. Victim Support Scotland can also provide you with support and information throughout the criminal justice process, including accessing your rights as a victim or witness.

Victim Support Scotland is here to make sure you can access your rights as a victim or witness when interacting with the criminal justice system.

Victim and witness rights are set out in the Scottish Government's Victims' Code for Scotland, which includes the right to:

- ◆ A minimum standard of service – to be treated fairly and equally
- ◆ Information – how you'll be updated about your case and what you can ask about
- ◆ Participation – being understood, understanding what's happening and telling the court how a crime has affected you
- ◆ Protection – feeling safe and protected from intimidation
- ◆ Support – whether you report the crime to the police or not
- ◆ Compensation and expenses – such as travel expenses, loss of earnings or compensation if you were injured
- ◆ Complain – if you're unhappy about how an organisation has treated you

What can I do if I witness a hate crime?

Witnessing Hate Crime can be an extremely distressing event, especially if you know the person being victimised.

If you witness a hate crime it is important to remain calm. If it is safe to do so, assure the victim that you are there and provide some comfort to show your support. This could be something subtle such as keeping eye contact, reassuring body language or sitting/standing near to them if safe to.

If anyone is in immediate danger, contact Police Scotland on 999. To report a non-emergency Hate Crime to Police Scotland call 101. There are many ways to report a Hate Crime (please see page 7). If you wish to remain anonymous, you don't have to disclose your name or any personal information to report a hate crime that you have witnessed, although this may affect the investigation.

Support available

No one expects to be a victim of crime, but it can happen to anyone. Victim Support Scotland provides information, emotional support and practical assistance to people affected by crime, including victims, witnesses and their families and friends.

Our support workers and volunteers are available to victims of crime and witnesses in person, over the phone and in the courts throughout Scotland. We support you no matter who you are, and no matter what the crime.

You can access our services regardless of whether you have reported the crime or not to the police. Our services are free, independent and confidential.

Third Party Reporting

If you feel more comfortable reporting an incident to someone in your community who you are more comfortable with, you can make an appointment with one of Victim Support Scotland's third party reporting centres and tell us about the crime.

We work in partnership with Police Scotland to ensure you can report a hate crime in a welcoming, supportive and confidential setting. Our third-party reporting centre staff have been trained to assist you to submit a report to the police and can make the report on your behalf.

Police Scotland also work in partnership with a number of other agencies who offer Third Party Reporting facilities. Details can be found [here](#).

The criminal justice system can be confusing, and we can provide you with practical advice and information to make this process easier.

- We will take the time to listen to you
- We won't judge you
- We will provide you with support in whatever way best suits you
- We will explain your rights in a way you can understand

Coping with hate crime

Everyone reacts differently to being the victim of crime. How you react depends on lots of different things — such as the crime itself, your past experiences, and the support you have around you. Experiencing any form of hate crime can be particularly frightening as you have been targeted because of who you are, or who your attacker thinks you are – so it can be very personal.

The main thing is to understand that any changes in how you feel could be a result of the traumatic experience you've been through.

Victim Support Scotland's support volunteers are available in every community across Scotland to provide tailored support to your individual circumstances; this may include advocacy, emotional and practical support and information to anyone affected by crime at any time.

Support is provided by telephone, email, webchat or in person at a time and place convenient to you. We can also provide information and access to additional agencies if required.



After you experience a crime you may find that:

You feel angry, upset or experience other strong emotions

Some people are surprised at just how emotional they feel after a crime. These strong emotions can make you feel even more unsettled and confused. A lot of people feel angry, upset or afraid after experiencing crime, but people will react in different ways.

You blame yourself thinking you should have done things differently

Many victims blame themselves or feel too embarrassed to come forward and get help – it's important to remember it's not your fault.

Things suddenly fall apart for you

Sometimes people feel quite normal for a while and then things may suddenly start to fall apart.

You show physical symptoms

Others might have physical symptoms, such as lack of sleep or feeling ill.

You develop long-term problems such as depression or anxiety-related illness

While the short-term effects of crime can be severe, most people don't suffer any long-term harm. Occasionally, people do develop long-term problems, such as depression or anxiety related illnesses, and a few people have a severe, long-lasting reaction after a crime, known as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

However you've been affected, we can give you information and support to help you recover. We've outlined below some of the most common responses to Hate Crime and how you can start to overcome them. Remember if these feelings are persistent or getting worse you should go to your GP.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal and natural response to danger and threat that we have developed to minimise the potential for harm and increase the likelihood of survival. In other words, it is a way of keeping us safe. In fact, anxiety can be beneficial the majority of the time.

For example, if you came face to face with a tiger, anxiety tells your body to prepare to fight or run away! Anxiety about a job interview can make you prepare more and perhaps increase your chances of getting the job.

Anxiety becomes a problem when it is higher than it should be in that situation, lasts longer than it should or interferes with our ability to function in daily life.

You may find some of the following things useful in helping you manage your anxiety after crime:

- Do some physical exercise. This helps to distract us and reduces the amount of adrenaline in our bodies.
- Use your senses in the 'here and now' – focus on five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.
- When we get anxious, we tend to breathe more. This in turn increases feelings of anxiety further! Look to slow breathing down by finding a rectangle (e.g. a window, doorframe, ID card). As you move along the short edge (with your eyes or finger), take a breath in. Breathe out as you move along the long edge. Continue to do this for a number of minutes and this should help to regulate your breathing and reduce anxiety feelings.

Anxiety and suicidal thoughts

For some people, the intense negative emotions and the negative thinking associated with anxiety can be so overwhelming that they think about taking their own lives. These types of negative thoughts are common when people are struggling with anxiety. Many people have them but, just because we have these thoughts, it does not always mean we are going to act on them. It is important to remember that, even though it may seem like the pain and unhappiness may never come to an end, most difficulties are either temporary or you can learn to cope with them.

If you are having suicidal thoughts and you are concerned that you might act on them, talk to your GP as soon as possible for additional support and advice. If your GP surgery is closed then use the NHS 111 24-7 service, who will be able to help you get the specialist help you might need at that time. If you want someone to talk to about how you are feeling then you can call The Samaritans on 116 123.

The Samaritans offer a 24-7 telephone helpline.

SAMARITANS

Feeling Isolated

People or communities affected by hate crime may already feel excluded from mainstream society, and hate crime can deepen your feelings of isolation. You may feel alone, vulnerable and isolated because you are fearful of leaving the house or taking part in activities that you previously enjoyed.

You may experience a loss of feeling safe if your home or other important place, such as a Place of worship, is attacked. You may also fear for friends, children or other family members. All of this can have an impact on your confidence and self-esteem.

Victim Support Scotland are experienced in supporting people affected by crime because of their identity. Consistent support can help you to feel less isolated and boost your confidence, and your health and wellbeing by exploring your safety and ensuring you are informed at every stage.

They may be able to assist with practical solutions that may help you feel safer, such as, personal alarms or moving home.

Social isolation and reduced contact with others can be bad for your physical health, mental health, and happiness. Finding and maintaining a supportive social network can be an especially important part of staying well. Why not take a look at your social support network now and see who you can call on, or who is important in helping you to stay well.

Loss of Identity

Our identities are made up of various factors, usually things that are important to us like our ethnicity, values, beliefs, culture or even our hobbies. Hate crime is targeting somebody because of their identity. Sometimes people may be targeted because of one or more factors e.g. their ethnicity and their disability.

Some people who have experienced a hate crime will stay at home because the part of their identity that was targeted is visible and they fear repeat incidences. Others may try to hide part of their identity. Some examples of this are:-

- Not wearing religious clothing or symbols
- Not holding hands with your partner in public
- Not speaking in public in case people hear your accent
- Changing the way your dress or use makeup
- Not attending your place of worship
- Not attending certain leisure activities e.g. Social group for disabled people.

You may feel that all of this creates feelings of loss of your identity and sense of belonging. Everyone is different and therefore crime will affect people in different ways. Try to continue to carry out activities that strengthen your sense of identity in a way that feels safe to you.

For example this could be wearing an item of clothing or jewellery that signifies you, or watching documentaries about your identity.

Practicing positive statements to affirm your identity can be really helpful, e.g. "I deserve to be treated with dignity and respect".

Trouble sleeping

Many of us have trouble sleeping from time to time. At particularly stressful or exciting times in our lives – maybe the night before an interview or a family holiday – it can seem impossible to get a good night's rest.

It can be the same after experiencing crime. We can feel like there's more to cope with and that everything running through our minds stops us sleeping well. It's draining and can have a knock-on effect in our daily lives.

Not feeling yourself?

Crime can have a significant impact on us. Normal everyday life is often disrupted and we can be left feeling not quite like ourselves. Just as we all have physical health, we also have mental health and it's important that we take the time to look after it, especially when something has happened that makes us feel more vulnerable.

Four in five people say their emotional wellbeing was affected after a crime, there are a number of things you can do that can make a real, positive difference to how you feel.

Difficulty managing anger

After being affected by crime, it is completely normal to experience many complex emotions. Anger is just one of them. Anger is a natural response to feeling attacked or treated unfairly, but it can be difficult to deal with, particularly if it is something you're not used to feeling.

It can feel explosive, or like it is simmering away in the background. Either way, it can be exhausting.

What is anger?

Everyone gets angry sometimes. It's a natural response to feeling attacked, threatened, or treated unfairly, so is often understandable after crime. The problem can be what we do with this emotion.

While anger can motivate us to change things or make them right, things can feel like they're beyond our control after crime. We can struggle to explain how we're feeling and can find ourselves shouting, becoming aggressive or withdrawing from others. It can feel like we're angry too often or for too long.

Finding your coping strategies

Nearly everyone has times in their life where they feel like they are struggling to cope. After you've been a victim of crime it's quite normal to feel that way at some point. You may have health or financial problems because of the crime. You may be struggling to get enough good quality sleep. It's normal to feel upset or angry. People often replay what has happened, dwelling on what they could or should have done, or the fact that it could have been even worse (and then feeling guilty).

All of this is normal and, for most people, over time you will find you are able to move on. However, to help in the short term, some people find it useful to identify simple coping strategies that work for them.

In therapeutic terms, this is a form of distraction, i.e. focusing on something else when your mind is preoccupied with unproductive anxious thoughts, as a way of breaking the cycle of negative thoughts. This has been proven to have benefits in managing stress. Doing something that makes you smile, uses your senses or connects you to others is likely to have a positive impact in lifting your mood, and helping you to cope and get on with your life.

Why write a diary?

Writing a diary is an example of something called reflective practice. That means it's more than just casual thinking and writing. It's thinking about things that have happened and how you felt; trying to make sense of situations and learning from them to help you cope with events in the future.

You can write about a positive or negative event in your diary. You could include what it means - or meant - to you, what you did as a result of it, and what you may have learned from the experience.

Mood diary

Keeping a mood diary is another tool that can help you to recognise the changes in your mood and what can be helpful for you. You can use symbols, emoji faces or just write in the box to express how you are feeling. Your Victim Support caseworker can help you with these diaries and give you templates to help make a start.

This is not an exhaustive list of how people feel after experiencing a hate crime. No matter how you are feeling it is valid and you have a right to feel like that.

My coping diary

It's important to recognise what works for you in terms of dealing with the stresses and strains in life, it may be useful to use your diary to reflect on:

- What was I feeling?
- What did I do to cope?
- How did it work?

Advice for professionals

This section is meant for professionals who are working with people who may have experienced, or may be at risk of experiencing, hate crimes. Follow the steps below if a client or colleague discloses that they have experienced a Hate Crime to you.

Listen

Active listening is always the most helpful response to a disclosure, whatever that disclosure may be. Don't tell the person how to feel or what they must do, instead let them have their own voice, acknowledge their feelings and their situation without judgement.

Take them seriously, be empathetic and listen and react without judgement. Hate Crimes are an attack against a person's core identity and can bring about a range of complex emotions. There is no right or wrong way for the person to be experiencing the situation.

Discuss options

Present options that could be available to the person, encouraging them to suggest solutions too. Discuss the different reporting options. Some people feel that they are ready to talk to the Police straight away, whilst others have personal barriers to approaching the Police.

Remember that someone can report Hate Crime to us anonymously or through a Third Party Reporting Centre who can take their report and pass it onto the Police on their behalf. Victim Support Scotland can also capture their report and hold it until they are ready to share it with the Police.

In addition, Victim Support Scotland are able to provide ongoing emotional support through My Support Space, our Victim Care Officers and our Case Workers. We require victims to give their consent, once you have it you can pass their details to us and we'll make contact if that's what they prefer.

You

Don't forget that your professional judgement is important too and you may have dealt with other disclosures in your role. You don't need to know everything to be able to handle a disclosure well, active listening and knowledge of support services are key.

Contact VSS if you'd like information on internal training that we can deliver to staff and volunteers to build their knowledge in this area.

Helpful organisations

There are national and local organisations that we work in partnership with and which can provide specialist support depending on your needs.

General support after crime

NHS 24 - 111

Police Scotland

101 (non-emergency)

999 (emergency)

Citizens Advice - 0131 550 1000

Bereaved by crime

VSS Support for Families Bereaved by Crime service

0800 160 1985

Brake (bereaved by fatal road accidents)

0808 800 0401

Cruse Bereavement Care

0845 600 2227

Manda Centre

0808 8010 503

Bullying Helpline

0845 22 55 787

Domestic abuse

Abused Men in Scotland (AMIS)

0808 800 0024

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

0141 353 0859

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

0800 027 1234

Scottish Women's Aid

0800 027 1234

Refugee and migrant support

Migrant Help UK

0808 8010 503

Scottish Refugee Council

0141 248 9799

Stalking

Action Against Stalking

support@actionagainststalking.org

Trafficking

Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA)

0141 276 7724

CommsafetyTARA@glasgow.gov.uk

Childhood abuse

Bridge to Support

0131 243 0136

Children 1st

0800 28 22 33

Future Pathways

0808 164 2005

National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

0808 801 0331

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

Children affected by crime

Action for Children Scotland

0300 123 2112

Childline

0800 1111

Rape and sexual assault

Rape Crisis Scotland

080 88 01 03 02

LGBTI+ support

Akt

gethelp@akt.org.uk

Galop

020 7704 2040

LGBT Foundation

0345 3 30 30 30

LGBT helpline Scotland

0300 123 2523

LGBT Youth Scotland

info@lgbtyouth.org.uk

Mermaids

0808 801 0400

Stonewall Scotland

0800 0502020

Mental health support

Breathing Space

0800 83 85 87

Samaritans

116 123

SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health)

0141 530 1000

Support for older people

Age Scotland

Silverline 0800 470 80 90

General enquiries 0333 32 32 400

Support for people with disabilities

Capability Scotland

0800 377 7330

Enable Scotland

0300 0200 101

Support for people affected by homelessness

The Simon Community

0800 027 7466

Support for people with visual impairments

RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind)

0800 027 7466

How to Contact Victim Support Scotland (VSS)

Contacting us

If you want to access any of the support mentioned in this toolkit you can contact us in the following ways.

- Free support helpline: 0800 160 1985 (8am-8pm, Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat)
- Webchat service: see bottom right (8am-8pm, Mon-Fri, 9am – 1pm Sat)
- Website: www.victimsupport.scot

You can self refer through completing an online form, by clicking here.



facebook.com/VictimSupportSco



twitter.com/VSSScotland



linkedin.com/victim-support-scotland



instagram.com/victim_support_scotland

Get involved

Volunteers are crucial to the work of Victim Support Scotland. With the help of our excellent volunteers, we provide support in our local communities and courts to people affected by crime throughout Scotland.

Volunteering with us will give you the opportunity to directly support those affected by crime in your community and gain some valuable skills along the way. You can find out more about our work on our About us page.

Why volunteer with us?

Volunteering with us can be challenging, but also extremely rewarding. As a volunteer you will gain many benefits, such as:

- Supporting people when they most need it, helping them to recover from what can be a very distressing time in their life and empowering them to move forward
- Learning new skills and gaining experience of working within the criminal justice sector
- Gaining access to a range of training courses that are relevant to your volunteering role
- Positively affecting your community as a member of a team actively working to reduce the impact of crime
- Working with like-minded people with a passion for social justice

If you're interested in volunteering with us, visit victimsupport.scot for more information.

What our volunteers do

There are many varied volunteering roles with Victim Support Scotland, from front-line to administration to fundraising, and more.

Most of our volunteers directly support people affected by crime in the community and in the court environment. But our volunteering opportunities are far from limited to these, and we aim to offer volunteering options to fit the skills and experiences of anyone interested in supporting our organisation.