

Antisemitic Incidents



January-June 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- CST recorded **803 antisemitic incidents** across the UK in the first half of 2023, the **sixth-highest total reported to CST in the first six months of any year**. This is a decrease of 2% from the 823 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in the January-to-June period of 2022, which was the fourth-highest half-year figure reported to CST. CST recorded 1,371 antisemitic incidents in the first six months of 2021, 875 from January to June 2020, and 911 in the first half of 2019.¹
- For the second consecutive year, and the sixth time in the last seven years, **more than 100 antisemitic incidents were recorded in each month** from January to June. Without any single trigger event prompting a spike in 2023, this consistently high volume of reported anti-Jewish hate is now typical of the levels recorded in the UK: levels that were unprecedented prior to 2017. Between January 2006 and March 2016, monthly totals exceeding 100 incidents were reported to CST on just six occasions.²
- There were **210 online incidents** reported to CST in the first half of 2023, 26% of the 803 instances of anti-Jewish hate recorded. This is an increase of 37% from the 153 online incidents reported from January to June 2022, which formed 19% of the overall incident figure. Of the 210 online incidents recorded

this year, **134 (64%) occurred on Twitter**, a 79% increase from the 75 incidents on Twitter recorded in the first six months of 2022 (49% of the online incidents for that period). Comparing these two periods, during which Twitter changed ownership and its policies for dealing with harmful content were amended, indicates that both the amount of reported online antisemitism on Twitter and its proportional contribution to the overall online incident total have risen.^{3 4 5}

- This total for online incidents is only indicative, as the actual amount of antisemitic content that is generated and disseminated on online platforms is much larger. In some cases, social media has been used as a tool for coordinated campaigns of antisemitic harassment, threats and abuse directed at Jewish public figures and other individuals. Where this is the case, CST will record a coordinated campaign as a single incident, even if it involves multiple tweets, posts, messages or comments. **CST does not trawl the internet looking for online incidents** to log and will only record online incidents that are reported to CST by a victim, witness or other third party, and where either the offender or the victim is based in the UK.

1 The incident totals for past years and months in this report may differ from those previously published by CST, due to the late reporting of some incidents to CST by incident victims, witnesses or other sources. Figures published in this report are also subject to change for the same reason.

2 On five of these six occasions when a monthly total surpassed 100, it was mainly due to reactions to Israel-related conflicts. The outlier of this group, January 2015, was the month of an anti-Jewish terrorist attack in Paris.

3 In January 2023, Twitter failed to remove a series of antisemitic tweets reported to them by HateAid, despite contravening their moderation policies: [Twitter faces legal challenge after failing to remove reported hate tweets](#) | [Twitter](#) | [The Guardian](#)

4 The Institute for Strategic Dialogue found a major and sustained spike in antisemitic posts on Twitter since the company's takeover, with the volume of English-language antisemitic tweets more than doubling: [Antisemitism on Twitter Before and After Elon Musk's Acquisition - ISD \(isdglobal.org\)](#)

5 Twitter maintains that *"the number of user impressions of anti-Semitic slurs has gone down since Twitter's acquisition, both in total and on a per Tweet basis."*

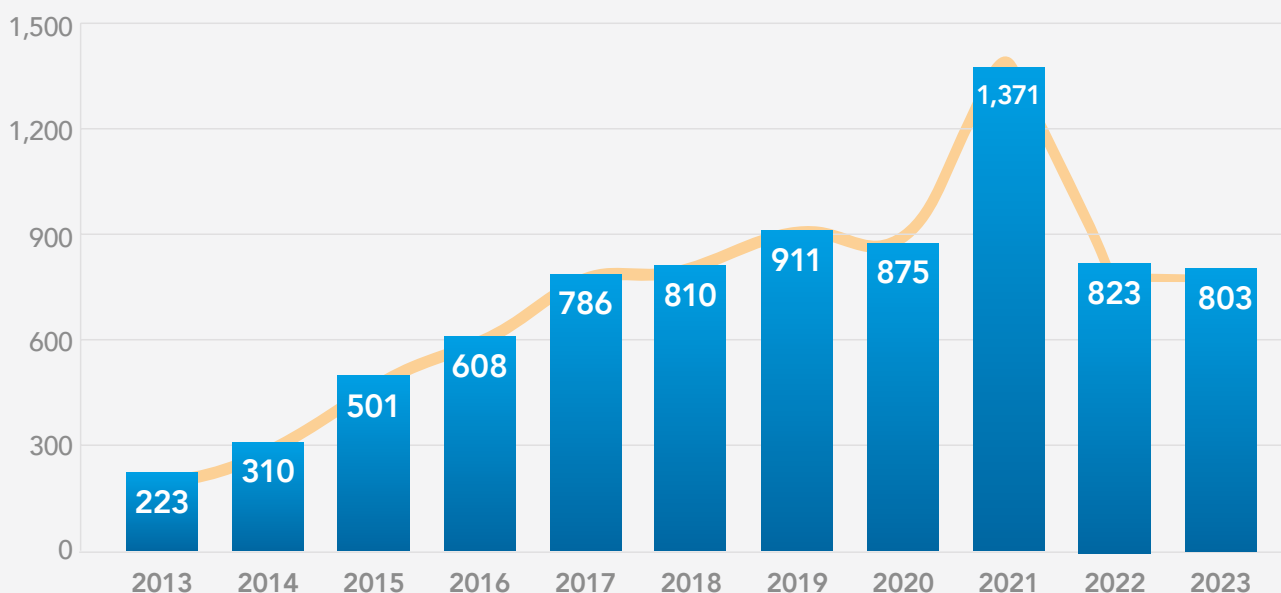
Cover image: Desecrated gravestones at a Jewish cemetery, Manchester, April

- **Almost every instance of antisemitism recorded on Twitter contained an extremist or conspiracist narrative or motive.** Among the 134 Twitter-based antisemitic incidents reported, 129 (96%) contained at least one specific discourse that conveyed a political, ideological or religious motivation on the part of the offender, or used widespread conspiracy theories or stereotypes about Jewish people. This was the case in just 47 (62%) of the 76 antisemitic incidents reported on other online platforms.
- **On Twitter, the most prevalent rhetoric – present in 62 incidents – referenced Israel, Palestine and the conflict in the region,** alongside anti-Jewish language, imagery or targeting, of which 48 were explicitly anti-Zionist. There were 55 incidents on Twitter that included allusions to the Holocaust or Nazi-era themes, while 54 employed conspiracy theories about Jewish power and influence over various institutions.
- Of the 415 incidents recorded where the offender or offenders' approximate age

was provided, 103 (25%) involved offenders under the age of 18. This is the **highest percentage of child offenders reported in the first six months of a year since 2015** (when 33% of offenders were described as minors), and it perpetuates the concerning trend of increased proportional participation of minors in anti-Jewish activity since 2021. For reference, 9% of offenders were children between January and June 2020, rising to 15% over the same period in 2021, impacted by the return to in-person schooling and the upswing in school-related antisemitic incidents when conflict in the Middle East escalated. This figure grew further to 22% in the first six months of 2022.

- **Of the 103 incidents perpetrated by minors, 52 (50%) showed evidence of at least one political, religious, or racist discourse, conspiracy theory or ideology, compared to 55% across all age groups.** This language fluctuates in ways that are influenced by events in the wider world. The increase in incidents involving minors in May 2021 came during intensified

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS, JANUARY-JUNE, 2013-2023



hostilities between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, and the way that schoolchildren expressed anger over that conflict was often directed in an antisemitic way at Jewish classmates and teachers. In contrast, in the first half of 2023, with the proportion of child antisemitic incident offenders at a relative high, the discourse has shifted. Whereas 12 incidents perpetrated by minors involved references to Israel, Palestine and the situation in the Middle East, 37 made reference to Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, or used discourse and imagery associated with that period in history.

- Similarly, the proportion of antisemitic incidents that targeted children remained elevated. **In 88 (20%) of the 451 cases in which the victim or victims' age was ascertained, the victims were exclusively under the age of 18.** A further 28 incidents affected mixed groups of adults and minors, meaning that children were amongst the victims in 26% of incidents. This phenomenon has also been on the rise since the first half of 2020, when the victims were children in just 9% of incidents, and 3% of cases targeted adults and minors combined. In the first six months of 2021 15% of incidents targeted victims younger than 18 years old and 4% targeted both adults and minors, while these numbers increased to 16% and 5% respectively in the first six months of 2022.
- Not only did the number and proportion of children involved in antisemitic incidents increase, but so did the volume of anti-Jewish hate reported in a school-related context. CST recorded 16 antisemitic incidents at Jewish schools from January to June 2023. A further 30 incidents involved Jewish schoolchildren away from school, often on their way to or from home, visibly Jewish by virtue of their uniform. Twenty-one incidents involved Jewish schoolchildren or staff at non-faith schools, forming a total of **67 cases of antisemitism affecting people and buildings in the school sector.** This constitutes a rise of 29% from the 52 such

incidents reported in the first half of 2022. This figure, as well as the weighting of the different types of school-related incidents, is in keeping with the norms observed during six-month periods that are not impacted by national lockdowns or war involving Israel.

- **CST recorded 74 incidents in the category of Assault** in the first six months of 2023, a small decrease from the 75 incidents of this type reported between January and June 2022. None of these violent incidents were severe enough to be classified as Extreme Violence (meaning a threat to life or Grievous Bodily Harm). They constitute 9% of the overall figure, equal to their proportional contribution over the same timeframe last year. This percentage is consistent with those observed in periods unaffected by pandemic-related restrictions. Worryingly, although the proportion of assault offenders under the age of 18 dropped from 43% in the first half of 2022 to 35% (where a description of the perpetrator's age was given) between January and June 2023, the percentage of child victims rose, from 39% to 41%. It is a trend that has curved upwards in recent years: in the first half of 2020, 22% of assault victims were minors, increasing to 34% from January to June 2021.



Damaged plaque, Brighton, February

- **Cases of Damage & Desecration to Jewish property fell by 43%, from 30 incidents in the first half of 2022 to 17 between January and June 2023.**

Eight of these involved damage done to the homes and vehicles of Jewish people, three to Jewish schools, two to synagogues, one to a Jewish organisation, one to a Jewish cemetery, one to a kosher food aisle at a supermarket, and a blue plaque commemorating a notable Jewish individual.

- **There were 44 incidents reported to CST in the category of Threats** in the first six months of 2023, which include direct threats to people, institutions or property, as opposed to general abuse containing non-specific threatening language. This marks a fall of 15% from the 52 incidents of this kind reported from January to June 2022.
- **CST recorded 666 incidents in the category of Abusive Behaviour** in the first half of 2023, a small rise from the 662 instances of Abusive Behaviour recorded across the same period in 2022. Eighty-three per cent of all antisemitic incidents reported between January and June 2023 were in this category.
- **There were two incidents reported to CST in the category of mass-produced antisemitic Literature** during the first six months of 2023, slightly fewer than the four such incidents recorded across the same timeframe in 2022.
- From January to June 2023, there were **17 antisemitic incidents in which the victims or offenders were students or academics, or which involved student unions or other student bodies.** Of these, 11 took place on campus or university property. This is a drop of 35% from the 26 such incidents recorded in the first six months of 2022, when nine occurred on campus. The Holocaust or Nazi-era language and imagery were referenced in eight of these 17 incidents,

while Israel, Palestine or conflict in the region were alluded to in six university-related cases of anti-Jewish hate. This is similar to the pattern of the previous year, with these two discourses being the most common in university-related spaces between January and June 2022; while in the first half of 2021 it was Israel-associated rhetoric that dominated the 84 antisemitic incidents reported in the higher education sphere during that period.

- **In 247 incidents – 31% of the overall total of 803 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in the first six months of 2023 – the offender or offenders employed Holocaust-related discourse and iconography.** CST recorded 135 cases of anti-Jewish hate that used Israel-related rhetoric, making up 17% of the half-year figure. Of all the various possibilities for antisemitic discourse, these were the two most frequently used. This is ordinary for a timeframe without any major intensification of war in the Middle East, when these would still usually be the two most prominent discourses, only with the order reversed.
- The fact that they are also the two most common racist discourses among child and university-based offenders may be instructive when considering their enduring popularity. The trauma of the Holocaust holds such a uniquely painful place for many Jewish people, and can be easily weaponised to further this pain, whether in the depiction of a swastika, the gesture of a Nazi salute, or the shouting of “Heil Hitler”. A perpetrator who chooses to do these things may be a neo-Nazi who subscribes to far-right extremist beliefs, or they may just understand the potential of this coded language and imagery to upset Jewish people. Similarly, somebody who screams “Free Palestine” at a visibly Jewish person on the street may hold deep-seated anti-Zionist views, or they may simply see it as an accessible shorthand with which to cause offence – especially if Israel has been in the news at that time.

Both provide easy gateways to the expression of anti-Jewish hate. It is possible to see how they become the discourses of choice in school and university environments, where young offenders can abuse Jews without engaging with or caring about the complexities and significance of their words and actions.

- **Twenty-nine antisemitic incidents recorded during the first six months of 2023 targeted synagogues, including buildings, congregants and staff at synagogue premises. A further 16 targeted congregants on their way to or from prayers,** compared to 21 and 13 incidents respectively during the first half of 2022. This is a net increase of 32% in incidents affecting synagogues and the people travelling to, from, or already inside them. Twelve of these instances of anti-Jewish hate involved the perpetrator phoning a synagogue and verbally abusing the call receiver or leaving an offensive voicemail.
- **Four hundred and forty-seven antisemitic incidents were reported to have taken place in Greater London** in the first six months of 2023, falling by 4% from 2022's total of 468 across the same timeframe. **CST recorded 132 antisemitic incidents in Greater Manchester** between January and June 2023, an increase of 29% from the 102 incidents reported in the corresponding



Far-right sticker, Salford, February

area and period last year. Greater London and Greater Manchester's combined proportional contribution to the UK's half-year total has risen, from 69% in the first half of 2022 to 72% from January to June 2023, reinforcing the fact that antisemitism in the UK is most concentrated in the areas that are home to the largest Jewish populations, irrespective of the many different regions throughout the country where antisemitism happens.

- Of the 447 incidents recorded across Greater London in the first six months of 2023, 159 took place in Barnet, the local authority that is home to the biggest Jewish population in the UK. There were 60 instances of anti-Jewish hate reported to have occurred in Hackney, 52 in Westminster, 29 in Haringey and 21 in Camden.
- Of Greater Manchester's 132 antisemitic incidents recorded for January to June 2023, 37 happened in the City of Manchester, 35 in Salford, 33 in Bury, seven in Oldham and five in Trafford.
- While it is expected that the majority of incidents take place in the areas where Jewish life is most visible and established, **anti-Jewish hate manifested across the UK, with incidents reported in all police regions bar Cumbria, Humberside, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, West Mercia and Wiltshire.** This reemphasises a truth of contemporary antisemitism: it exists in most parts of the country and finds expression regardless of proximity to Jewish communities.
- This geographical spread can, in part, be explained by the number of online incidents reported. In these cases, the offender does not need to be close to Jewish people for their hatred to reach its target. It is also partly a result of improvements in the reporting of incidents. CST's social media footprint has also grown, making it easier for the public to report online and offline antisemitism, wherever it may occur.



Antisemitic graffiti, Seaford, February

CST enjoys a strong partnership with the police and benefits from data-sharing agreements with different constabularies around the UK.

This has contributed to the depth of CST's understanding of where and how anti-Jewish hate takes place in the country. Two hundred and seventy-three (34%) of the 803 antisemitic incidents reported to CST from January to June 2023 were received from the police. Of these 273 reports, 155 came from the Metropolitan Police Service, 74 from Greater Manchester Police, 14 from North Wales Police, eight from Durham Police, four from Cambridgeshire Police, four from Northumbria Police, four from Staffordshire Police, and ten from other police services around the UK.

- After Greater London and Greater Manchester, the police regions with the highest half-year recorded antisemitic incident totals were Hertfordshire (24 incidents, compared to 30 in the first half of 2022); Wales (19, increasing from five in the first six months of 2022); Northumbria (15 incidents, down from 21 between January and June 2022); West Yorkshire (14 incidents, compared to 19 in the same timeframe in 2022); and Scotland (14 incidents, up from ten in the first six months of 2022).

- Apart from Greater London and Greater Manchester's boroughs, the towns and cities with the highest number of recorded antisemitic incidents from January to June 2023 were Leeds in West Yorkshire (11 incidents); Gateshead in Northumbria (nine incidents); Liverpool in Merseyside (nine incidents); Borehamwood & Elstree in Hertfordshire (eight incidents); Birmingham in West Midlands (eight incidents); and Brighton & Hove in Sussex (eight incidents).
- In addition to the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first six months of 2023, a further **328 potential incidents were reported to CST that are not included among the report's statistics as, upon further investigation, they did not evidence antisemitic language, motivation or targeting.** Many of these potential incidents involve suspicious activity or possible hostile reconnaissance at Jewish locations, and they play an important role in informing CST's provision of protection to the Jewish community. CST recorded 276 such incidents between January and June 2022.



Swastika drawn on a car, Birmingham, March

ANTISEMITIC INCIDENT NUMBERS

CST recorded 803 antisemitic incidents across the UK in the first six months of 2023, the sixth-highest total ever reported to CST in the January-to-June period of any year.

This total constitutes a decrease of 2% from the 823 antisemitic incidents reported in the first half of 2022, which was the fourth-highest ever total recorded by CST between January and June. CST received 1,371 reports of antisemitic incidents in the first six months of 2021 (which was an all-time record), 875 in the first half of 2020, and 911 from January to June 2019.

In addition to the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first six months of 2023, a further 328 possible incidents were reported to CST that are not among the statistics analysed in this report because, upon examination, they did not evidence antisemitic motivation, language or targeting. These other reports, forming 29% of the 1,131 potential incidents recorded by CST, involved suspicious activity or possible hostile reconnaissance at Jewish locations, non-antisemitic crime affecting Jewish people or property, or anti-Israel activity that did not meet CST's threshold for classification as antisemitic. Although not included in this report's data, they are important in CST's provision of protection to the Jewish community. Most required further investigation or a security-related response.

The half-year total of 803 incidents is a significant one. Once again, for the sixth time in the last seven years, CST recorded over 100 instances of anti-Jewish hate in every month from January to June. The only month to break this pattern was January 2021, when 95 incidents were reported during a month impacted by national lockdown and a then-high point in confirmed Covid-19 cases and deaths.⁶ What followed was

⁶ [The United Kingdom: WHO Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Dashboard With Vaccination Data | WHO Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Dashboard With Vaccination Data](#)

the highest-ever number of anti-Jewish hate incidents that CST has recorded in a six-month timeframe, with 1,371 reported in the first half of 2021: a record total sparked by antisemitic reactions to the conflict in Israel and Gaza in May of that year. Between January and June 2023, no single event triggered a particularly noticeable spike in the volume of antisemitism recorded: the lowest monthly total was observed in February, with 112 incidents, and the highest was in June, with 155 incidents. The difference is not as extreme as those reported in previous years, indicating that these consistently high averages are just the reality of contemporary anti-Jewish hate in the UK, a baseline raised far above the figures typically observed prior to the last seven years. To put this into further context, monthly totals surpassing 100 incidents were only reported to CST on six occasions between January 2006 and March 2016, five of which were prompted by antisemitic responses to previous escalations of violence in Israel and Palestine.

The total of 803 incidents includes 210 occasions – 26% of the overall six-monthly figure – where the abuse occurred online. This is an increase of 37% from the 153 online incidents recorded in the first half of 2022, which constituted 19% of the January-to-June total. It is the fifth-highest number of online incidents reported to CST in the first six months of a year, and the rise in volume and proportion from the corresponding period in 2022 is striking.

Of the 210 online cases of anti-Jewish hate recorded, 134 (64%) took place on Twitter, a growth of 79% from the 75 incidents hosted on the platform in the first half of 2022, which only made up 49% of online incidents reported over that timeframe. Comparing the two periods, online incidents rose by 57, and Twitter incidents by 59. It is therefore not an exaggeration to say that the increase in reported online antisemitism is due to the rise in anti-Jewish hate speech found on Twitter. As is widely known, the

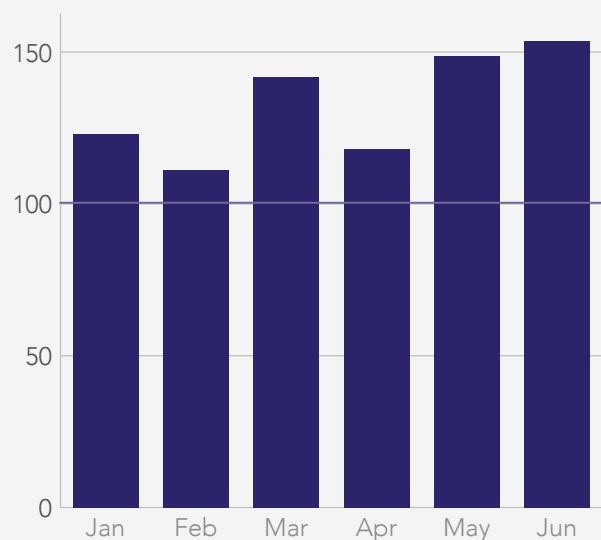
ownership of Twitter has changed hands since the first six months of 2022, and this brought with it a different approach to the moderation of hateful content on Twitter by comparison to last year. It should be noted that CST only logs online incidents if they have been reported to CST by the victim or a witness, and if either the victim or the offender is based in the UK. Therefore, these figures are a reflection of the amount of antisemitism that Jewish people in the UK are seeing and reporting to CST, rather than an overall quantitative estimate; nevertheless it aligns, for example, with the findings of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, whose research shows that English-language antisemitic tweets more than doubled on the platform in the period from Twitter's takeover up to February 2023.⁷ Twitter's new owner, Elon Musk, has stated that the platform's new policy for tackling harmful content is to allow more of it to remain on the platform but limit its visibility ("freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach"⁸). While this is, in theory, not an unreasonable position to hold, the data in our report suggest that this approach is not working.⁹ As a consequence, not only may more antisemitic posts be slipping through the net, but Twitter may be becoming a more attractive environment for antisemites to congregate, interact and encourage each other's prejudice, knowing that they are less likely to be held accountable for their words.

Among the 134 Twitter-based antisemitic incidents reported in the first half of 2023, 129 (96%) were loaded with at least one specific discourse that demonstrated the offender's political, ideological or religious motivation, or disseminated well-established conspiracy theories or tropes about Jewish people. Of these, the most predominant rhetoric – observed in 62 incidents – was related to Israel, Palestine and the

Middle East, 48 of which were overtly anti-Zionist. Fifty-five incidents on Twitter referenced Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, or contained language and imagery associated with the era of Nazi rule, while Twitter users spouted conspiracy theories about Jewish control over various aspects of life on 54 occasions. This is a reversal from instances of spoken verbal abuse, where Holocaust-related rhetoric was used in 55 cases, while Israel-related discourse was present in 44. It possibly shows that language associated with the period of Nazi rule – in some cases motivated by alignment with far-right ideology – is more likely to be used in in-person, street-level outbursts, whereas antisemitic comments about Israel are perhaps more common online, where longer-form arguments about the Middle East take place.

Aside from Twitter, 28 of the 210 instances of online antisemitism reported to CST occurred through text or instant messaging services; 11 took place on Facebook; eight via email; six on YouTube; three on Instagram; three on TikTok; one was recorded on Snapchat; one on Zoom; and 15 happened on a range of other social media. The single 'Zoombombing' reported, together with the two such cases recorded

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS,
JANUARY-JUNE 2023



⁷ <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/anti-semitism-on-twitter-before-and-after-elon-musks-acquisition/>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/elonmusk/status/1593673339826212864>

⁹ [Twitter's policy on hateful conduct | Twitter Help](#)

from January to June 2022, marks a substantial change from the two previous years. When the pandemic broke out in 2020, the sudden reliance on videoconferencing for communication offered antisemites a new method of sharing their hate, and CST recorded ten incidents of video calls hijacked with anti-Jewish content in the first half of 2020, rising to 13 such incidents in the same timeframe in 2021. The drop since then is reflective of the extent to which in-person interactions have become normalised again, decreasing the reliance on videoconferencing and, consequently, the opportunity for perpetrators to 'Zoombomb' Jewish events.

One hundred and ninety-nine of the 210 online cases of anti-Jewish hate reported in the first six months of 2023 fell into the category of Abusive Behaviour, while nine were classed as Threats and two as antisemitic Literature. In 32 of these posts, the offender included antisemitic memes, images, graphics or cartoons. The online world gives antisemites the space to convene, affirm their shared worldview, and spread ideas of a political, ideological and extremist nature, simple and nuanced, with the security of possible anonymity and physical distance from the targets of their abuse. They do so too often without meaningful reproach or ramifications for the offenders, with the potential to simultaneously preserve their hatred and broadcast it globally at the touch of a button.

CST records each specific targeted campaign as a single incident, because to record each piece of antisemitic online content as a separate incident would be unsustainable and cause extreme variations in CST's incident totals, obstructing clear analysis of offline incidents. It is also worth bearing in mind that the number of online incidents in this report reflects the number of reports received by CST from victims, witnesses or other third parties, and does not include the vast amount of antisemitic material sifted and investigated by CST's researchers as part of its wider work protecting the Jewish community from potential attack. Given the vast array of material posted and the variety of platforms across which it is circulated, an accurate

figure for the actual amount of antisemitic content on social media would be impossible to quantify. Instead, this total highlights that online platforms continue to be a fertile ground for public expressions of antisemitism, sometimes culminating in coordinated campaigns against Jewish public figures and institutions.

It is difficult to gauge whether the pattern of historically high antisemitic incident figures observed by CST since 2016 is due to more incidents taking place in the UK, or the fact that people feel more comfortable, able and aware to report incidents to CST. The answer is likely to be a combination of both. A less tangible aspect of the general increase observed is the possible impact that the prevalence of media coverage and public debate about antisemitism may inadvertently have on actual hate actors. If there is a perception that the taboo against articulating hostility about or towards Jewish people is weakening, if antisemites begin to realise that their prejudice is shared and communicated by others, then they may be more likely to feel emboldened in expressing their own anti-Jewish hatred.

Despite improvements in reporting, it is expected that antisemitic hate crimes and hate incidents are underreported, especially where the victims are minors or the incident is considered of 'lesser' impact by the victim. The statistics contained in this report should therefore be seen as indicative of general trends, rather than absolute measures of the number of incidents that took place. Answering why antisemitic incidents take place is not simple. Victim or witness evidence for what may have been a brief, traumatic experience can be vague and disjointed. Many incidents do not have a specific victim and the offender is often unknown, but it is still possible to analyse the data contained in the individual reports received by CST, and the picture they show is complex. In short, there is no single profile of an antisemitic incident victim or offender, nor is there a single explanation as to why antisemitism persists in modern society.

[Antisemitic or anti-Israel?](#)

CST is often asked about the difference between antisemitic incidents and anti-Israel activity, and how this distinction is made in the categorisation of incidents. The distinction between the two can be subtle and the subject of much debate. Clearly, it would not be acceptable to define all anti-Israel activity as antisemitic. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that contemporary antisemitism can occur in the context of, or be accompanied by, extreme feelings over the Israel/Palestine conflict, and that hostility towards Israel may be expressed via, or motivated by, anti-Jewish rhetoric, stereotypes and conspiracy theories. Discourse relating to the conflict is used by antisemitic incident offenders to abuse Jews, and anti-Israel discourse can sometimes repeat, or echo, antisemitic language and imagery. For example, the terms “Zionist” and “Zionism” will often be used in arguments about Israel and the Middle East; sometimes they are used accurately and legitimately, and at other times they are deployed in an antisemitic way. CST must distinguish between the occasions when these terms are used in a purely political sense, and the times when they are abused as euphemisms for “Jewishness” and “Jews”. Similarly, the phrases “Zionist Lobby” and “Israel Lobby”, when they are deployed indiscriminately as a label for Jewish organisations and individuals regardless of whether they engage in political lobbying in support of Israel, walk the line between the conspiracy theory that Jews have a disproportionate political power and influence, and the antisemitic trope that Jews are not to be trusted. Drawing out these distinctions, and deciding on where the dividing lines lie, is one of the most difficult areas of CST’s work in recording and analysing hate crime.

Sometimes the targeting of a particular incident can suggest an intention to intimidate or harass Jews on the part of the offender. For example, if anti-Israel posters or graffiti appear to have been deliberately placed close to a synagogue or other Jewish building, or in an area with a large Jewish population, then they are more likely to be classified as an antisemitic incident than if they are placed in a more general or neutral

location. If anti-Israel material is sent unsolicited to a synagogue or other clearly Jewish venue at random then it may well be recorded as an antisemitic incident (because the synagogue was targeted on the basis of it being Jewish and the offender has failed to distinguish between a place of worship and pro-Israel political activity). Similarly, if cars draped in Palestinian flags are deliberately driven through the heart of Jewish communities, or shouts of “Free Palestine”, or comments and questions demanding an opinion on the Middle East are directed at Jewish people – simply because they are perceived to be Jewish – it will also be considered an antisemitic incident.

If, however, anti-Israel material (containing no antisemitic language) is sent unsolicited to specifically pro-Israel organisations, then this incident would not be classified as antisemitic. Similarly, if a Jewish individual or group engaging in public pro-Israel advocacy subsequently receives anti-Israel material, comments or questions, this would most likely not be classified as antisemitic (unless, again, it contains antisemitic language).

The political discourse used in an incident may also be the reason why the incident is accepted or rejected as antisemitic. In particular, incidents that equate Israel to Nazi Germany would normally be recorded as antisemitic because the comparison is so deeply hurtful and abusive, using Israel’s self-definition as a Jewish state as the basis for the insult. However, language that compares Israel to, for example, apartheid South Africa, would not normally be recorded as an



Banner at an anti-Israel protest, London, March

antisemitic incident by CST. While the charge that Israel practises apartheid upsets many Jews, it does not contain the same visceral capacity to offend as the comparison with Nazism, which carries particular meaning for Jews because of the Holocaust; nor does it play on Israel's Jewishness as a way of causing hurt.

CST recorded 135 antisemitic incidents that referenced or were related to Israel, Palestine and the situation in the Middle East. Seventy-eight antisemitic incidents evidenced anti-Zionist

motivation alongside the antisemitism, while the terms "Zionist" or "Zionism" were employed in 44. In 21 cases, the offender made a direct comparison between Israel and the Nazis. Irrespective of whether or not anti-Israel incidents are classified as antisemitic by CST, they are still relevant to CST's security work as they may involve threats and abuse directed at Jewish people or organisations who work with – or in support of – Israel, and therefore have an impact on the safety of the UK Jewish community.

INCIDENT CATEGORIES¹⁰

Assault

CST recorded 74 incidents in the category of Assault during the first half of 2023, a marginal fall from the 75 incidents of this kind reported in the first six months of 2022. In both periods, none of these antisemitic attacks were severe enough to be classed as Extreme Violence. There were 91 assaults reported to CST from January to June 2021 (two of which were Extreme Violence), 53 in the first half of 2020 (one of which was Extreme Violence), and 85 in the first six months of 2019. In 20 incidents in the first half of 2023, the offender threw eggs, stones, bricks, bottles or other objects at the victim, and 11 of these projectiles were launched from a passing vehicle; in 15 instances, the assault involved punching or kicking the victim; in six cases, the victim was spat at; in five attacks, the perpetrator stripped the victim of religious clothes or accessories; on five occasions, a miscellaneous weapon was used; in three instances, the offender fired a non-lethal gun at the victim; in two further cases, a vehicle was used to physically endanger pedestrians; in one assault, sticks or metal bars were the weapon of choice; finally, one incident involved a knife. Thirty-eight of these attacks were accompanied

by verbal abuse, and nine contained an element of threatening language.

The 74 assaults on Jewish people form 9% of the antisemitic incident total, equal to the percentage of incidents involving violence reported in the first half of 2022 and a typical figure for periods not impacted by lockdown-related regulations. For comparison, the half-year proportion of assaults was 6% in 2020 and 7% in 2021, when Covid-19 restrictions minimised the opportunity for physical confrontations in public.

Consistent with previous years, these attacks predominantly occurred in the areas where the Jewish community is most established and populous. Of the 74 antisemitic incidents classed as Assault, 59 (80%) took place across just six boroughs: Barnet (25) and Hackney (17) in London, Bury (5), City of Manchester (4) and Salford (4) in Greater Manchester, and Gateshead (4) in Northumbria. These regions, and the visibility of the Jewish populations who reside there, remain the primary targets for anti-Jewish violence. Indeed, at least 42 (57%) of the 74 physical attacks reported were perpetrated against victims seen as visibly Jewish. It could be that the obvious markers of difference – the traditional dress and religious way of life – may be interpreted by the offender as a challenge

¹⁰ A full explanation of CST's antisemitic incident categories can be found in the leaflet [Categories of Antisemitic Incidents](#)

to what they perceive as their own culture and territory, or as something so distinct to their own lived experience that it becomes easier to dehumanise, degrade and desecrate. They may also find a certainty in who and what they are attacking, and a gratification in the opportunity for maximum public humiliation by stripping their targets of symbols of their identity.

It is concerning that antisemitic violence has, proportionally, increasingly targeted minors year on year for the past three years. While the percentage of Assault offenders who were minors (for incidents where CST obtained a description of the offender’s age) fell from 43% in the first half of 2022 to 34% of violent incidents in the same period in 2023, the victim was known to be a minor in 28 (41%) of the 68 incidents of Assault where CST obtained the victim or victims’ age.¹¹ This figure has been increasing since January to June 2020, when children were victims in eight

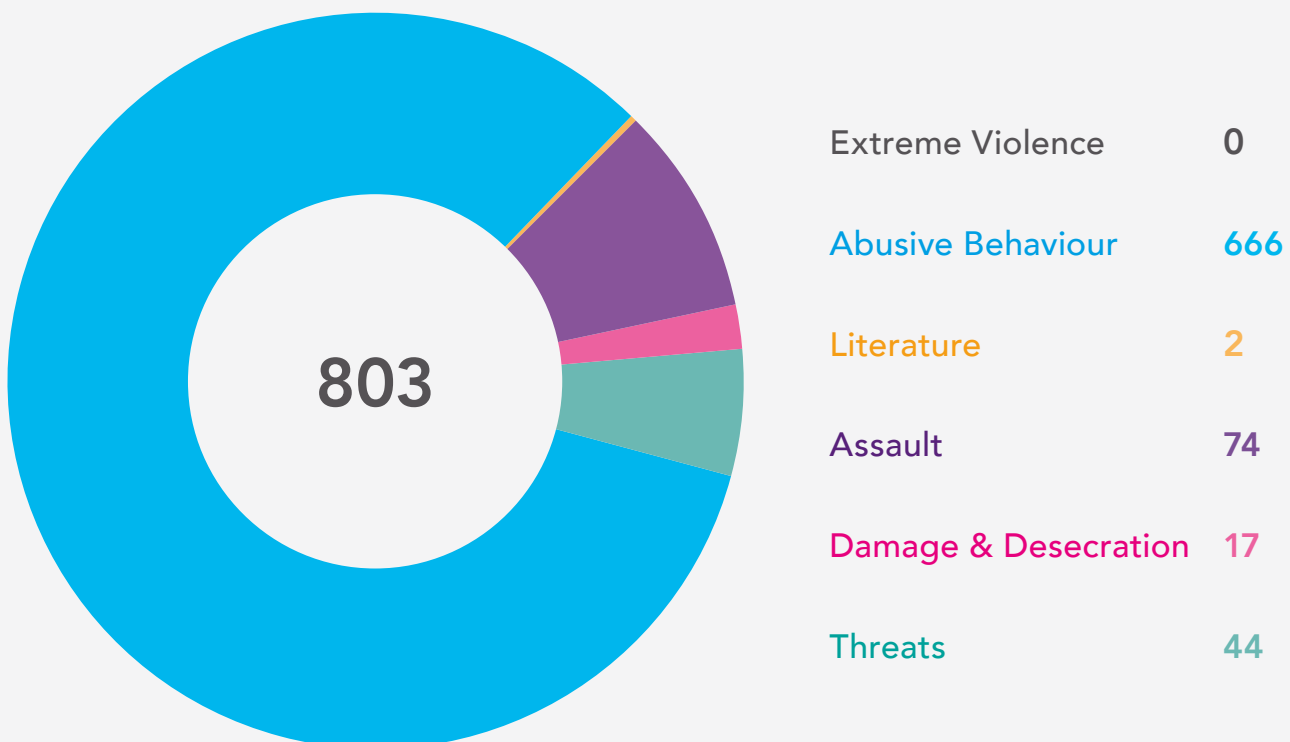
(22%) of the 36 incidents in the category of Assault where victim age was provided, rising to 27 (34%) of the 80 such incidents in the first half of 2021. Between January and June 2022, 23 (39%) of the 59 incidents in the category of Assault targeted minors. Sixteen of the 74 assaults reported to CST from January to June 2023 were perpetrated by children against children.

CASE STUDY

In April, two girls were leaving a gym in Barnet when they were accosted by a group of girls from another school. When one of the offenders caught sight of one of the victim’s Star of David necklace, they began to verbally abuse them, shouting, “Jews have such big noses”. The perpetrators proceeded to throw rocks at the victims, continuing to shout and swear at them as they fled the scene.

¹¹ These include attacks wherein mixed groups of adults and minors were targeted, as do all the figures in this paragraph.

ANTISEMITIC INCIDENT CATEGORIES



Damage & Desecration to Jewish Property

There were 17 instances of Damage & Desecration to Jewish Property recorded by CST in the first half of 2023, a fall of 43% from the 30 incidents of this kind reported across the corresponding timeframe in 2022. There were 59 incidents recorded in this category over the first six months of 2021, 33 between January and June 2020, and 39 in the first half of 2019. Eight of these saw damage done to the homes and vehicles of Jewish people, three to Jewish schools, two to synagogue buildings, one to a Jewish business, one to a kosher food aisle at a supermarket, one to a plaque commemorating a person's Judaism, and one involved the desecration of a Jewish cemetery.

In four of the 17 instances of Damage & Desecration, the offender used graffiti, daubing or stickers of an antisemitic nature to deface the Jewish target (three of which referenced Israel, Palestine and the Middle East) while four involved the destruction or theft of a mezuzah (a Jewish prayer scroll affixed to a building's entrance). CST recorded four cases of stones, bricks, bottles or other objects thrown to cause damage, one instance of non-kosher foodstuffs left on kosher food, and one involving the punching or kicking of Jewish property. On one occasion, a metal

bar was used to damage a Jewish home, and, in the same incident, a vehicle was deliberately driven into a vehicle owned by a Jewish person. All included some element of anti-Jewish focus, language or imagery to be recorded among these figures by CST.

Threats

CST recorded 44 direct antisemitic Threats between January and June 2023, a decrease of 15% from the 52 incidents of this sort reported in the first half of 2022. Eighty-seven incidents were recorded for this category in the first six months of 2021, 45 from January to June 2020, and 50 in the opening half of 2019.

Twenty-two of the 44 Threats were directed at victims in public spaces, while five targeted synagogues and one a congregant on their way to services; three were aimed at Jewish schools and one at a pupil at a non-Jewish school; two were made to Jewish people at their own homes, two to Jewish organisations and businesses, and one to a public figure. Nine of the incidents in this category were written on online platforms, four were delivered via phone call or message, and there were three bomb threats made. Five Threats were made by an offender who had a prior relationship with the victim.

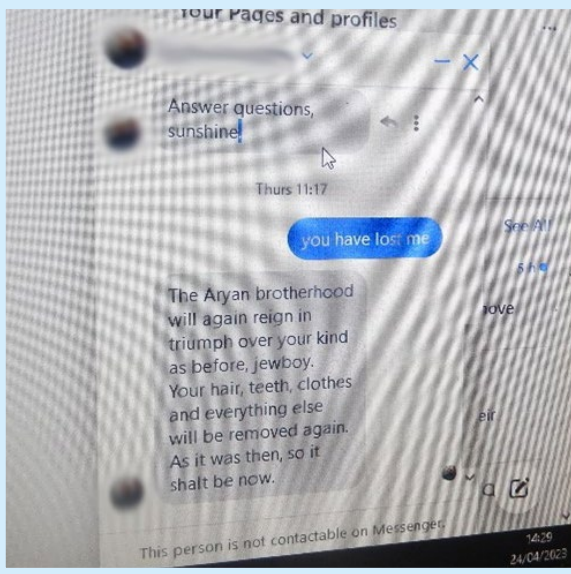
CASE STUDY

In April, CST received reports of vandalism at a Jewish cemetery in Manchester. Windows at the site were smashed, benches were moved around, and two gravestones were also damaged.



CASE STUDY

In April, a man who lives in Barnet received a threatening antisemitic message on Facebook messenger from someone unknown to him. The message contained far-right, neo-Nazi discourse: *“The Aryan brotherhood will again reign in triumph over your kind as before, jewboy. Your hair, teeth, clothes and everything else will be removed again. As it was then, so it shalt be now.”*



Abusive Behaviour

There were 666 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in the category of Abusive Behaviour in the first half of 2023, comprising 83% of the 803 reports of anti-Jewish incidents. It signals a small rise from the 662 instances of Abusive Behaviour recorded between January and June 2022. There were 1,129 counts of Abusive Behaviour in the first half of 2021, 739 from January to June 2020, and 727 over the same timeframe in 2019. The umbrella of Abusive Behaviour spans multiple incident modus operandi, including the full range of written and verbal abuse, the latter of which can be in-person or delivered through phone calls and voicemails. This category also includes antisemitic emails, text messages, direct messages, social media posts and comments, as well as targeted hate mail that is not produced and disseminated on a mass scale, and antisemitic damage to non-Jewish property.

In 171 of the Abusive Behaviour incidents reported, the victims were Jewish people in public, and visibly Jewish in at least 72 incidents. Jewish businesses or organisations were the target of 61 incidents in this category, while public figures – Jewish and non-Jewish – were subjected to antisemitism on 28 occasions. Fifty incidents in this category were related to the school sector and 17 to the university sector. In 32 instances, abuse was directed at synagogues and/or congregants travelling to or from their place of worship. Thirty-one Abusive Behaviour cases were directed at people while at home.

Among the 666 incidents in this category, 275 involved spoken abuse and 131 written abuse directed at a specific Jewish person, organisation or community, while 29 contained threatening language without making a direct threat to the victim. There were 117 instances of antisemitic graffiti, daubing, stickers or posters on non-Jewish property, of which 92 included the depiction of swastikas or other references to Hitler, the Nazis or the Holocaust. On 36 occasions, anti-Jewish images, memes or cartoons were used to cause offence. Sixty-two involved offensive shouts or gestures in public, 28 of which emanated from passing vehicles. Twenty-four abusive phone calls or voice messages were made, and there were 11 examples of individual hate mail that were not mass-produced and distributed.

Of the 666 instances of Abusive Behaviour, 199 occurred online, forming 30% of the category's total. These comprise the majority of the 210 online antisemitic incidents reported, a rise from the 153 online incidents recorded from January to June 2022, of which 145 were classified as Abusive Behaviour. This increase, largely prompted by the 79% upswing of incidents taking place on Twitter in the January-to-June period, is a reminder of the role that the growing number of social media and instant messaging platforms play in contemporary anti-Jewish hate. They give room for antisemites to cultivate and express their prejudice, and have that prejudice reaffirmed by those who share it. Antisemitic ideas and abuse can be shared

instantaneously, whether indiscriminate or with a specific target in mind, all under the cloak of anonymity should the perpetrator so choose. When those responsible for these virtual fora do not prioritise the task of moderating the hate hosted on their sites, in the name of free speech or any other perceived liberty they believe they are preserving, it is no surprise that antisemitism is given life on these channels.

The problem of anti-Jewish rhetoric online does have consequences in the offline world, with its capacity for global reach and potential to incite in-person action. If the taboo against verbalising intolerance, hostility or outright hatred towards Jewish people appears to be growing weaker – if it is enabled and encouraged by the insufficient action and relative indifference of online platforms themselves – then antisemitism will manifest more easily both in the virtual and non-virtual world. This is of acute concern as the proportion of child victims and offenders of antisemitic incidents increases.

CASE STUDY

In May at the Great North Run in Manchester, a Jewish man was subjected to verbal abuse. Upon completing the race, an unknown male approached the victim and shouted that he should go back to the gas chambers. Police arrested the man, who was already known to them. The offender was later sentenced to eight weeks in prison.

Literature

There were two incidents reported to CST in the category of mass-produced antisemitic Literature in the first half of 2023, a slight drop from the four such incidents reported between January and June 2022. CST recorded five instances of Literature distribution in the first half of 2021, five from January to June 2020, and ten in the corresponding period of 2019. Both of the incidents classed as Literature in the first half of 2023 involved identical antisemitic tweets sent to multiple Twitter accounts of Jewish people and organisations, thus meeting the mass-production criteria for this category.

CASE STUDY

In January, a Twitter user spammed several accounts based in Scotland, as well as the account of a leading Jewish organisation, in reply to tweets posted in April and May 2021 announcing a Jewish Manifesto for Scotland. These tweets are classed as Literature because they are copies of each other and sent to different accounts, thus qualifying as mass-produced. It read, *“WHAT THE ACTUAL FK. JEWS HAVE NO BUSINESS IN SCOTLANDS AFFAIRS. AWAY TO BIBIS HELL HOLE WITH THEM.”* [sic]



INCIDENT VICTIMS

The victims of antisemitic incidents come from the whole spectrum of the Jewish community: from strictly orthodox to liberal, reform and secular Jews; from the largest Jewish communities to small, isolated communities across the UK; from Jewish schoolchildren to Members of Parliament. Occasionally, antisemitism will also be directed at people who do not identify as Jewish.

There were 254 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in the first six months of 2023 in which the victims were ordinary Jewish individuals in public. On 123 occasions, they were visibly Jewish on account of their traditional clothing, Jewish school uniforms, or jewellery and insignia bearing religious symbols. There was an element of verbal abuse in 340 of the 803 incidents recorded by CST between January and June 2023, of which 54 incorporated threatening language. Antisemitic abuse was shouted or gestured in public in 74 instances, of which 34 were perpetrated by the occupant of a vehicle. These modus operandi are broadly indicative of the most common single type of offline incident reported to CST since the organisation began compiling statistics: the random, unprovoked, verbal harassment of strangers who are presumed for whatever reason to be Jewish, as they go about their daily lives in public spaces that often have a large footfall of Jewish people.

In the first half of 2023, there were 16 antisemitic incidents recorded at Jewish schools, compared to 13 from January to June 2022. A further 30 incidents involved Jewish schoolchildren away from school premises, often on their way to or from home, compared to 25 incidents of this type reported across the same period in 2022. CST recorded 21 incidents wherein the victims were schoolchildren or staff at non-faith schools, rising from the 14 such cases reported in the first six months of 2022. This constitutes a total of 67 incidents affecting people and buildings in the school sector, rising by 29% from the 52 such incidents recorded between January and

June 2022. These incidents contribute to the record-high half-year proportions of victims and perpetrators of anti-Jewish hate under the age of 18.

This total and the distribution between the different types of school-related incidents are typical of six-monthly periods that are not affected by pandemic-related restrictions or escalations of violence in the Middle East, similar to the first half of 2019, when 68 instances of anti-Jewish hate in the school sector were reported to CST. This dropped to just 20 incidents from January to June 2020, when Covid-19 forced the closure of schools across the country. The figure rose in the first six months of 2021 to 86 antisemitic incidents, reflecting the sheer volume of antisemitism reported in schools – particularly non-Jewish schools – in response to that year’s war involving Israel.

Of the 67 antisemitic incidents affecting schools, pupils and staff, ten came under the category of Assault (eight targeting schoolchildren on their way to or from school, and two attacking guards or community members standing at the school’s entrance); three incidents were classified as Damage & Desecration to Jewish property; four were direct Threats made (two to Jewish schools and two to Jewish pupils at non-faith schools); finally, there were 50 instances of Abusive Behaviour.

While school-related antisemitic incidents increased, they fell in the Higher Education sphere. In the first half of 2023, 17 antisemitic incidents impacted Jewish students, academics, student unions or other student bodies, or were perpetrated by people involved in the university sector. This is a decrease of 35% from the 26 incidents of this type reported between January and June 2022. Eleven of these incidents took place on campus or university property, compared to nine from January to June 2022. All 17 university-related incidents fell into the category of Abusive Behaviour. In eight of them,

references to Hitler, the Nazis or the Holocaust were made, while six contained rhetoric relating to Israel, Palestine or the Middle East. These two discourses were also the most prevalent in anti-Jewish hate incidents perpetrated by students in the first six months of 2022, while anti-Israel sentiment dominated campus-related antisemitism reported in the first half of 2021, when Israel’s conflict with Hamas escalated temporarily.

There were 29 antisemitic incidents recorded from January to June 2023 that targeted synagogues (including buildings, staff and congregants while at the location), rising from the 21 incidents of this type in the first half of 2022. An additional 16 incidents saw congregants or staff targeted on their way to or from prayer services, compared to 13 such incidents reported to CST in the first six months of 2022. This represents a 32% increase in instances of anti-Jewish hate impacting synagogues and the people travelling to, from, or already inside them, from 34 in the opening half of 2022 to 45 in the first six months of 2023. Five of these incidents were classed as Assault, while two involved the Damage & Desecration of synagogue property. There were six cases of direct Threats made to Jewish places of worship, and 32 incidents classified as Abusive Behaviour. Among the latter two categories, there were 12 occasions on which the offender made a telephone call to the location and verbally abused or threatened the call receiver or left an antisemitic voicemail.

CST recorded 41 incidents that took place at people’s residential property in the first half of

2023. This is a fall of 31% from the 59 incidents of this type that occurred in the first six months of 2022. Home-based incidents were more frequently reported over the January-to-June period in 2020 (69 incidents) and 2021 (94 incidents), when lockdown conditions were in place at various points and people across the country were forced to spend more time at home than they may have pre-pandemic. It is possible that local frustrations were heightened in these circumstances, and more regularly spilled over into words and acts of hate directed at those in closest proximity. It makes sense that, in the immediate post-pandemic landscape, with people generally spending less time at home than they were in the two years prior, antisemitic incidents in these settings have also diminished.

Having said that, 18 of the 40 reports of antisemitism affecting people at their place of residence were perpetrated by offenders known to the victim. These are 18 of 61 instances – 8% of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first half of 2023 – wherein the victim and offender had some kind of pre-existing relationship. This proportion is substantially higher than CST would usually have recorded before the Covid-19 outbreak: in the first half of 2019, the victim and perpetrator knew each other in just 3% of incidents, rising to 4% from January to June 2020. This increased again to 10% in the first six months of 2021 (sparked by the spike in incidents involving classmates at non-Jewish schools during heightened tensions in the Middle East). In the corresponding timeframe in 2022, this was the case for 9% of incidents.

VICTIMS where the age and gender are known



271
victims were **male**



146
victims were **female**



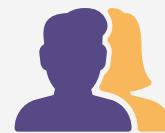
36
victims were **groups of males and females**



336
victims were **adults**



88
victims were **minors**



28
victims were **mixed age groups**

Nine antisemitic incidents were related to the workplace, up from six incidents of this nature reported in the first half of 2022. There were 66 incidents that targeted Jewish organisations and businesses, rising by 6% from the 62 such incidents recorded from January to June 2022. Fifty-four of these 66 instances of anti-Jewish hate took place online, and six via phone calls or voice messages. Meanwhile, prominent individuals or public figures were victims on 29 occasions, one fewer than the 30 instances of this kind of targeting in the first six months of 2022. Of these 29 incidents affecting high profile individuals, 27 took place online. Many will have involved a high number of abusive antisemitic messages from multiple accounts, all occurring in a single wave of hate (CST counts these as a single incident so that overall incident totals are not distorted). The high percentage of antisemitic incidents targeting Jewish businesses, organisations and people of prominence that occur on online platforms underlines the opportunity for attack that these targets' online presence provides. A social media footprint makes them more directly available to antisemites than they would otherwise be, and it is this access that makes these platforms so popular among people who wish to spread their prejudice. On 69 (73%) of the 95 occasions in which the victim was a Jewish institution or public figure, the antisemitism was posted on Twitter, compared to 33 (36%) of 92 instances from January to June 2022.

There were 18 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in the first half of 2023 that were in some way related to professional football, falling by 36% from the 28 such incidents recorded between January and June 2022. Of these, four involved racist abuse or graffiti inside a stadium, three were reports of anti-Jewish hate in a non-stadium environment, and 11 were online incidents, four of which were anti-Jewish replies to football clubs or supporters' groups posting about Jewish holidays on social media. A further six incidents were reported in the context of amateur football, whereas none were recorded over the same timeframe in 2022.

CST received a description of the victim or victims' gender in 453 of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first half of 2023. Of these, 271 (60%) were male; 146 (32%) were female; in 36 incidents (8%), the victims were mixed groups of males and females.

The victim or victims' age was ascertained in 451 of the 803 antisemitic incidents reported to CST from January to June 2023. Of these, 335 (74%) involved adult victims, of which 12 were over the age of 65; 88 (20%) involved victims who were minors; in 28 instances (6%), mixed groups of adults and minors were targeted. This signifies the highest proportion of antisemitic incidents with child victims that CST has recorded in the first six months of a year since 2016, when 21% of victims were minors. The percentage has significantly increased since January to June 2020, when victims were exclusively minors in 9% of incidents, and mixed groups of adults and minors in 3% of cases; these averages were roughly consistent with those observed in previous years. They rose significantly in the first half of 2021 to 15% and 4% respectively, linked to the upswing in school-related incidents during war in the Middle East. These proportions increased once more in the first six months of 2022, when children were targeted in 16% of incidents, and mixed groups of adults and minors were attacked in 5% of reports. This worrying upward trend, which began in the context of events in the Middle East but has continued regardless of circumstances in the region, indicates that perpetrators of anti-Jewish hate – of which a growing proportion are under the age of 18 themselves – are increasingly seeking out children as the object for their prejudice.

INCIDENT OFFENDERS

It is not always easy to ascertain the ethnicity, gender or age of antisemitic incident offenders. Many face-to-face incidents involve fleeting, nonverbal, public encounters in which the offenders may not be fully visible or leave the scene quickly. Victim and witness testimonies may be vague and disjointed, which is understandable given the nature of the ordeal that they have experienced. Some incidents do not involve face-to-face contact, and it is therefore not always possible to obtain a physical description of the perpetrator. Furthermore, those who commit antisemitic offences online may choose to completely anonymise themselves, which makes it almost impossible to garner any information about the person behind the abuse. On the other hand, if social media profiles are not anonymised, they can provide some personal details of offenders, such as a name, photograph or approximate location.

While it is possible to collect data regarding the ethnic appearance of incident offenders, this data is not direct evidence of the offenders' religious affiliations. The content of an antisemitic letter may reveal the motivation of the offender, but it would be a mistake to assume the ethnicity or religion of a hate mail sender solely on the basis of the discourse they employ.

CST received a description of the ethnic appearance of the offender or offenders in 281 of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first half of 2023. Of these, 133 (47%) were described as white – North European; nine (3%) as white –

South European; 49 (17%) as black; 35 (13%) as South Asian; finally, 55 (20%) were described as Arab or North African. This breakdown is roughly the norm for a period without an escalation of conflict involving Israel. When tensions in the Middle East rose in May and June 2021, a higher proportion of offenders of South Asian and Arab or North African origin were reported to CST. It is important to bear in mind that these details often rely on the subjective and often fleeting judgement of victims and witnesses.

A description of the gender of the offender or offenders was obtained by CST in 468 of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded in the first half of 2023. Of these, the offender was described as male in 392 incidents (84%); female in 68 incidents (14%); and mixed groups of males and females in eight incidents (2%).

In 415 of the 803 reports of anti-Jewish hate between January and June 2023, the approximate age of the offender or offenders was provided. Among them, 306 (74%) involved adult offenders between the ages of 18 and 65; in 103 cases (25%) the perpetrators were minors; on six occasions (1%) the offender was over the age of 65. The age distribution of offenders extends a worrying trend observed over the previous two years, regarding the high proportion of children perpetrating anti-Jewish activity. In the first half of 2021, when school-related antisemitic incidents surged in response to Israel's war with Hamas, 20% of offenders were under the age of 18. This rose

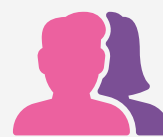
OFFENDERS where the age and gender are known



392
offenders were **male**



68
offenders were **female**



8
offenders were **groups of males and females**



312
offenders were **adults**



103
offenders were **minors**



0
offenders were **mixed age groups**

to 22% between January and June 2022, and again to 25% in the first six months of 2023. For comparison, the half-year percentage for child offenders was just 9% in 2020, which was at the time consistent with previous reported figures.

The fact that the proportional upswing in anti-Jewish hate perpetrated by a younger demographic has continued beyond the context of the intensification of violence in the Middle

East and the related incident spike in the school sector, implies that this is not necessarily rooted in anger towards Israel. In fact, children referenced Israel, Palestine and the Middle East in 12 incidents from January to June 2023, but used language, imagery or discourse related to Hitler, the Nazis and the Holocaust in 37 instances. This may suggest a wider pattern of growing antisemitic feeling and extremist views among people under 18 years old.

DISCOURSE, MOTIVES & IDEOLOGY

CST attempts to assess the number and pattern of antisemitic incidents that take place in the UK each year in which there is evidence of political, religious, or ideological discourse or motivation. CST also monitors the instances where conspiracy-fuelled sentiments are present. Stereotypical tropes about Jewish people's power, influence, and money – and exaggerating or inventing the tragedies of the Holocaust – can be especially prevalent in online expressions of antisemitism. It is common for two or more of these discourses to exist within the same incident, even if they would seem ideologically incompatible. Such apparent contradictions perfectly capture the multifaceted nature of contemporary anti-Jewish hate.

Historic, simplistic prejudices have been manipulated and deployed by such a vast array of social, religious, cultural and political forces over such a long period of time, that a much more complex and layered landscape of antisemitic language, imagery and references has emerged. Partly as a consequence of this, the use of a certain rhetoric does not necessarily evidence a specific motivation or allegiance: for example, a person who shouts "Heil Hitler" at a Jewish passer-by might align themselves with far-right extremist ideology, or they might simply know that this phrase will cause upset and offence to Jewish people.

It is concerning that, compared to the January-to-June period of 2022, more incidents involved a political, religious or ideological rhetoric or motive. In the first six months of 2023, CST recorded 445 incidents that contained at least one of the discourses, motivations or ideologies discussed in this chapter. This is 55% of the 803 total reports of antisemitism made to CST. It signals a rise in volume and proportion from the first half of 2022, when 395 (47%) of 823 anti-Jewish hate incidents showed evidence of at least one of these themes.

Politically motivated antisemitism

Of these 445 cases, 26 antisemitic incidents were connected to specific political parties or their supporters, or to issues in mainstream politics. Antisemitic incidents are classified as connected to specific political parties based on the offender's stated affiliation or support; because the abuse was targeted at, or expressed by, party members, activists or representatives; or because an incident appeared to be motivated by news stories related to that party. It is often not possible to ascertain whether the offenders are themselves party members or not; in many cases they have been expelled from their former party but continue to express antisemitism in relation to it (this is especially the case with the Labour Party). With those caveats in mind, 24 incidents were linked to the Labour Party, one to the Conservative Party, and one to both



the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrats. This is an increase from the 15 incidents associated with mainstream politics reported between January and June 2022, when 12 were Labour Party-related, one was Conservative Party-related and one was in connection with the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union. These figures are relatively standard for six-monthly periods since the issue of alleged antisemitism in the Labour Party has receded in prominence.

Antisemitism targeting customs and texts

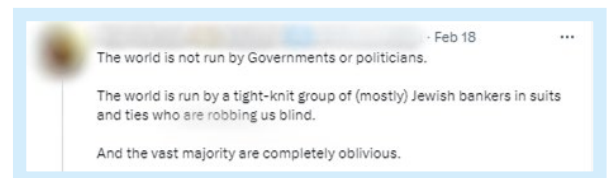
There were 14 incidents in which specific aspects of Judaism were attacked or purposely mischaracterised in an antisemitic way, up from eight such incidents reported from January to June 2022. Among these, seven manipulated ideas taken from religious scripture (more than the two recorded in the first half of 2022); six focused on religious traditions and practices (equal to the six in the first six months of 2022); and one singled out religious literature and holy books (whereas none of these were recorded between January and June 2022). In 45 cases, the offender employed anti-Jewish stereotypes, caricatures or dehumanising language and

imagery, rising from 38 such incidents over the same timeframe in 2022. There was one example of antisemitic abuse about specific ethnic groups that exist within the wider Jewish community, which did not feature in any incident in the first half of 2022.



Conspiracy theories

Antisemitic conspiracy theories were evident in 85 (11%) of the 803 incidents reported between January and June 2023, marking a rise from 70 in the opening six months of 2022. Of these, 79 alleged Jewish influence, nationally or globally, over politics, media, finance, migration and other walks of life (compared to 65 in the first half of 2022); three promoted falsehoods regarding religious rituals (just over the two recorded from January to June 2022); and two involved myths regarding the origins of Jewishness in attempts to undermine the legitimacy of any notion of modern Jewish identity (up from zero in the corresponding period in 2022).



Religiously-motivated antisemitism

CST recorded eight incidents containing discourse relating to Islam or Muslims alongside antisemitism, equal to the total reported in the first six months of 2022, while there was a slight reduction in those involving Islamist extremist ideology, with four recorded compared with five between January and June 2022. There was, however, a sharp increase in incidents demonstrating another religious ideology, from nine in the first half of 2022 to 20 over the same period in 2023, the majority of which appeared to be of evangelical Christian provenance.

Holocaust-related antisemitism

In 247 incidents – 31% of the 803 instances of antisemitism reported to CST in the first half of 2023 – the offender or offenders made reference to Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, and/or punctuated their abuse with a Nazi salute, the depiction of a swastika, or other related imagery. This is slightly higher than the 244 incidents using this rhetoric recorded in the first six months of 2022, which comprised 30% of the January-to-June total. In 27 of these incidents, the perpetrator denied either the scale of the Holocaust, facts of the Holocaust, or its having happened at all (rising from the eight such incidents recorded in the first half of 2022). Twenty-six incidents involved the celebration of the Holocaust, glorifying its architects and/or their ideas, or expressing a desire for the mass, industrialised extermination of Jewish people to happen again (falling from 37 in the opening six months of 2022). In 95 of these 247 instances of Nazi-related hate speech, abuse was graffitied, daubed, scratched, stuck or printed on public or private property, usually incorporating an illustration of a swastika. There were 47 cases wherein far-right motivation was evidenced, in

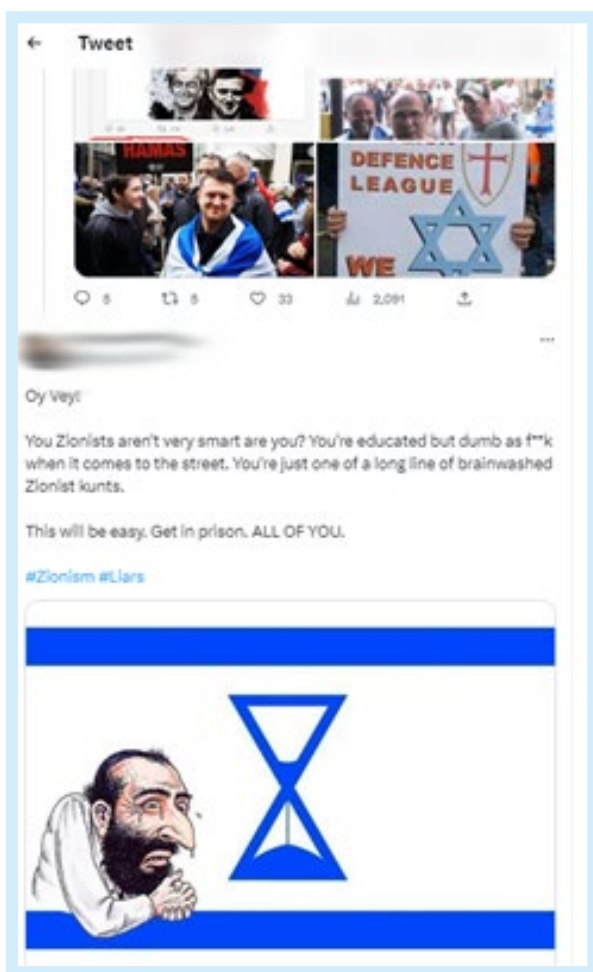
which the offender demonstrated a subscription to far-right extremist beliefs, falling marginally from 52 such incidents from January to June 2022. On 30 occasions, this alignment with far-right ideology was present alongside the use of Nazi-era references, compared to 41 across the corresponding period in 2022.



Israel-related antisemitism

Among the 247 incidents involving Holocaust-related discourse were 21 occasions on which the perpetrator made a direct comparison between Israel and Nazi Germany, a small rise from 18 such parallels drawn in the first six months of 2022. These 21 incidents also form part of the 135 instances of antisemitism recorded in the first half of 2023 that referenced Israel, Palestine or the conflict in the Middle East. These 135 incidents constitute 17% of the 803 reports of anti-Jewish hate made to CST from January to June 2023, and a 27% increase from the same timeframe in 2022 when 106 (13%) of the 823 incidents contained this discourse. In 78 cases, explicitly anti-Zionist beliefs or motivation were apparent, while the terms “Zionism” or “Zionist” were used on 44 occasions, often as by-words for “Jewishness” and “Jew” (compared to 69 and 37 incidents respectively in the first six months of 2022). Allowing for natural variance between separate years, this data is usual for six-monthly periods without a trigger event in the Middle East.





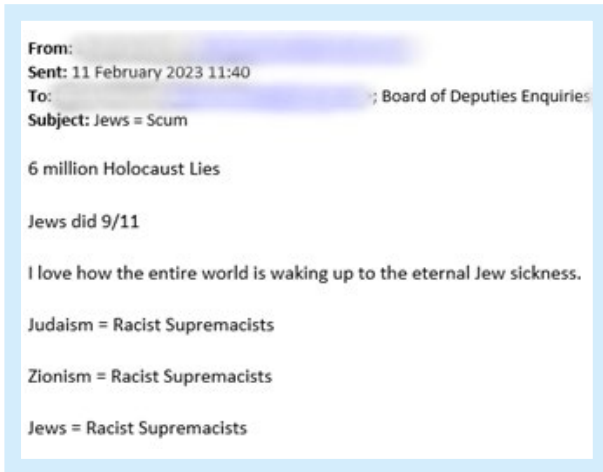
It is also consistent with previous analysis of antisemitism in the UK for Holocaust- and Israel-related discourses to be the two most prevalent narrative strands in anti-Jewish hate incidents reported to CST. Their popularity among younger offenders may help to explain the frequency of their use across all offender age groups. Of the 103 antisemitic incidents perpetrated by minors, 37 included Nazi-era references and 12 contained rhetoric about Israel and the Middle East, more than any other of the discourses discussed in this chapter. The same was true of the 17 antisemitic incidents that occurred in the university sector in the first half of 2023, where eight and six incidents involved these respective themes. The Holocaust is a unique and profound point of trauma for many Jewish people, and the potential to trigger this pain by easily and crudely weaponising its events, iconography and associated phrases is huge. Those who draw swastikas, make Nazi salutes or scream “*Heil Hitler*” to Jewish members of the public may be neo-Nazis who

are fully-fledged members of the far right, or they may merely appreciate the visceral upset they can cause to their targets by repeating this language and imagery. In a similar vein, those who shout “*Free Palestine*” at a visibly Jewish passers-by may be the staunchest anti-Israel campaigner with a track record of opposing Zionism, or they may understand its capacity as an easy signifier through which to convey their prejudice and cause hurt – particularly at times when Israel and Palestine are prominent in the news. Both offer accessible pathways to communicating anti-Jewish feelings. It is clear how these discourses may prevail in environments – such as schools and universities – where young people congregate, perhaps feeling the need to fit in with their peers, and can pick up these simple codes for abuse, without considering or caring to consider their deeper significance.



Multiple discourses

Of the 60 incidents to feature multiple discourses, Holocaust- and Israel-related rhetoric were also the most common combination, found together in 34 instances of antisemitism reported to CST from January to June 2023. This reemphasises the convenience of these two topics when choosing narratives through which to cause offence to Jewish people. Furthermore, it is a reminder of the multifaceted nature of



modern-day anti-Jewish hate, wherein offenders frequently weld together disparate references, ideas, tropes and worldviews, unified only by their relevance – perceived or otherwise – to the Jewish targets of their prejudice.

Pandemic-related discourse

It is a reflection of how deeply embedded the various antisemitic discourses, stereotypes and conspiracy theories unpacked in this chapter are in the collective consciousness that antisemites from across social, political, cultural and ideological spectra have continuously found new ways to repackage these familiar notions in response to whichever subjects are dominating public discourse. In turn, when these subjects no longer retain mainstream interest or publicity, reports of associated anti-Jewish hate diminish too. While still significant in number, antisemitic incidents motivated by anti-Israel sentiment have not reached the levels recorded from January to June 2021, when 786 such cases were recorded when conflict in the Middle East escalated. The same is true of the number of incidents reported related to Covid-19. In the first six months of 2020, at the time of the pandemic's outbreak, CST recorded 26 instances of antisemitism in which the perpetrator employed emerging anti-Jewish narratives pertaining to the virus. This total increased to 41 incidents in the first half of 2021, when discourse had evolved from holding Jewish people responsible for Covid-19 to the equation of lockdown regulations, vaccine rollouts and vaccine passports to the persecution and genocide of Jews in the



Holocaust. However, from January to June 2022 and 2023 – periods unaffected by restrictions on social activity – CST received just six and seven reports respectively wherein the offender used this rhetoric.

Ukraine-related discourse

Similarly, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 held great prominence in the news cycle last year, and subsequently, as is customary of anti-Jewish hate, a range of antisemitic discourse strands surfaced immediately. CST recorded 12 incidents in the first six months of 2022 where antisemitic references to the war in Ukraine were present, including accusations that Jewish people had caused the war and were now bankrolling it; assertions that Jewish people were pulling the strings at every level in the corridors of power on both Ukrainian and Russian sides; pro-Vladimir Putin and pro-Russian propaganda that championed the Russian President as a present-day incarnation of Hitler, and Russia of Nazi Germany; attacks on the "Zionist" Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for his Jewish heritage; and comparisons between Russia's aggression and Israel's actions in a way that placed emphasis on Israel's Jewishness. Contrast this with the opening half of 2023, when only two incidents pertaining to this war were reported. Although combat is ongoing, it has been for over a year, is no longer necessarily front and centre in news

coverage, and is not quite as ubiquitous in public conversation. Therefore, antisemites move on in search of the next big global event that can be twisted into a vehicle for their hateful agenda.

When it happens, these strands of discourse initially germinate and disperse on online platforms, and the role of online antisemitism in the trends observed in this report and the wider landscape of anti-Jewish hate, while ultimately uncountable, cannot be ignored. As stated above, since the first half of 2020 the proportion of incident offenders who are minors has been growing year on year. This was true of 25% of the 415 incidents reported from January to June 2023 wherein CST received a description of the perpetrator's perceived age. This is worrying enough in itself, but takes on an extra degree of concern when 50% of these incidents featured at least one of the diverse discourses, motivations and ideologies covered above. The rising proportion of perpetrators under the age of 18 has been observed in the context of rising online figures for anti-Jewish hate, particularly on Twitter.

In 129 (96%) of the 134 Twitter-based incidents recorded from January to June 2023, the offender employed or presented at least one of the antisemitic narratives, motives or worldviews outlined here. Of the 76 antisemitic incidents reported on other online platforms, 47 (62%) contained at least one of these extremist or conspiracist discourses. While not an insubstantial proportion, such narrative strands appear at a much higher rate among the anti-Jewish hate recorded on Twitter. The proliferation of extremist beliefs, conspiracy theories and imagery found on this and other social media may be having an influence on the growing percentage of anti-Jewish hate promulgated by children. This demographic spends a considerable amount of time on these virtual fora, and perhaps is especially susceptible to the anti-Jewish content that is able to thrive on them.

Of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in the opening six months of 2023, 579 occurred across the regions of Greater London and Greater Manchester; the UK cities where the largest Jewish populations reside.



Posters attached to a university campus toilet cistern, Bristol, April

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS

In the former, 447 incidents were reported, marking a fall of 4% from the 468 Greater London incidents recorded from January to June 2022. However, Greater Manchester's total of 132 incidents is an increase of 29% from the 102 that took place in the same area over the equivalent period in 2022. Only in 2021, when conflict in the Middle East triggered an unprecedented volume of reports of anti-Jewish hate across the UK, has a higher half-year figure been reported in Greater Manchester.

CST recorded at least one antisemitic incident in all but two of the 33 Metropolitan Police boroughs of London. Of the 447 incidents recorded across Greater London in the first six months of 2023, 159 occurred in Barnet, the local authority that is home to the biggest Jewish community in the UK. There were 60 instances of antisemitism reported to have taken place in Hackney, 52 in Westminster, 29 in Haringey and 21 in Camden. Significant portions of London's Jewish population live in Barnet, Hackney, Haringey and Camden, and so a significant portion of London's incidents typically happen in those places. A high volume of anti-Jewish hate is also regularly observed in Westminster. At the centre of the city, a high footfall flows through Westminster as many people from different walks of life pass through, including Jewish people and antisemites. Since January 2018, the Metropolitan Police has recorded more racist and religious hate crime in Westminster than in any other borough.¹² It also functions as a political centre, where many feel inclined to make their political viewpoints known, be it publicly in the form of protest or directly to Members of Parliament. In some instances, these opinions slip into anti-Jewish hate, or are expressed in an antisemitic way.

Within Greater London's statistics, 31 incidents were reported to have taken place on property

that falls under the jurisdiction of British Transport Police. A further 15 were online incidents where it is known that either the victim or offender was based in the capital, but a more specific location could not be established.

Of Greater Manchester's 132 antisemitic incidents recorded between January and June 2023, 37 happened in the City of Manchester, 35 in Salford, 33 in Bury, seven in Oldham and five in Trafford. Included in Greater Manchester's incident data are four incidents that occurred on property policed by British Transport Police, and one online incident where the offender is known to be based in the region, but it was not possible to pinpoint a specific location.

The combined proportional contribution of Greater London and Greater Manchester has grown, from 69% in the first six months of 2022 to 72% across the same timeframe in 2023. It serves as an illustration of the fact that, however wide the geographical spread of anti-Jewish hate reported to CST, it continues to manifest most often in the communal hubs of Jewish life.

In the first half of 2023, antisemitism was nevertheless recorded in every single UK police region apart from Cumbria, Humberside, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, West Mercia and Wiltshire. From January to June 2022, cases of anti-Jewish hate were recorded in all constabularies bar Gloucestershire, Humberside, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk and Surrey. This is a microcosm of modern-day antisemitism: while reports to CST come primarily from areas with large Jewish communities, antisemitism exists throughout the nation and its perpetrators will articulate their hatred, whether or not they are close to Jewish people or communities.

Online hate speech, and the role that virtual fora play in giving antisemites a platform for their prejudice, in part explains the broad

¹² [Monthly Crime Data New Cats | Tableau Public](#)

national spread of antisemitic incidents routinely reported to CST. Social media and instant messaging services grant a wider spread of offenders the opportunity to broadcast their anti-Jewish ideas and opinions beyond their immediate environment. In contemporary antisemitism, these spaces have made proximity to Jews an irrelevance in making their hatred heard. With online incidents becoming a regular and substantial feature of antisemitism, CST's own social media footprint has expanded across multiple platforms, widening the capacity for the public to report instances of both online and offline anti-Jewish hate.

Furthermore, the relationship and data-sharing agreements with police services spanning the UK have allowed CST to record incidents of antisemitism that otherwise may not have been reported. This collaboration and collation of information is of huge benefit, and plays a crucial role in deepening CST's understanding of the landscape of antisemitism in the country.

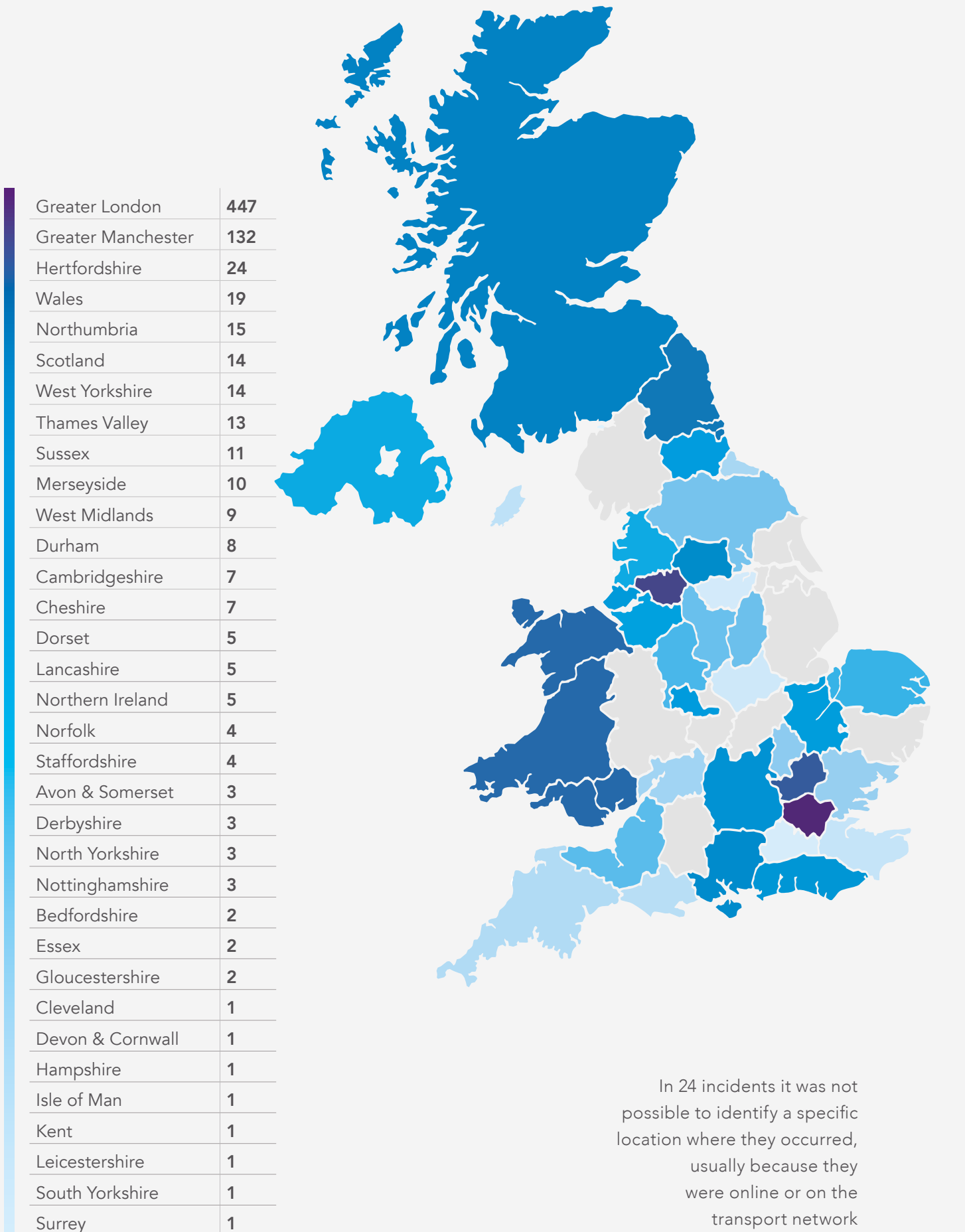
Further to Greater London and Greater Manchester, the police regions in which CST registered the highest six-monthly figures of reported antisemitic incidents were Hertfordshire with 24 incidents (compared to 30 in the first half of 2022); Wales with 19 (an

increase from five in the first six months of 2022); Northumbria with 15 (falling from 21 between January and June 2022); West Yorkshire with 14 (a decrease from 19 recorded in the same timeframe in 2022); and Scotland with 14 (rising from ten in the first half of 2022).

Aside from the boroughs in Greater London and Greater Manchester, the towns and cities where reported half-year antisemitic incident totals were highest were Leeds in West Yorkshire (11 incidents), Gateshead in Northumbria (nine incidents), Liverpool in Merseyside (nine incidents), Birmingham in West Midlands (eight incidents), Borehamwood & Elstree in Hertfordshire (eight incidents), and Brighton & Hove in Sussex (eight incidents).

Included within all the statistics in this chapter are 38 instances of antisemitism that took place on public transport or at public transport stations. Of these, 18 occurred on London buses, 13 on the London Underground, and seven on other transport services that fall under the authority of the British Transport Police. In addition to the 38 incidents on public transport, there were two occasions where the victims were in private taxis when subjected to abuse by their driver. Five of these 40 incidents were classed as Assault, four as Threats, and 31 as Abusive Behaviour.

INCIDENT LOCATIONS



In 24 incidents it was not possible to identify a specific location where they occurred, usually because they were online or on the transport network

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

Not every incident recorded by CST has an identifiable victim. Not every incident recorded by CST has an identifiable perpetrator; but every incident recorded by CST has a reporter. Antisemitic incidents are reported to CST in a number of ways, most commonly by telephone, email, the CST website, via CST's social media profiles, or in person to CST staff and volunteers. Incidents can be reported to CST by the victim, a witness, or an individual or organisation acting on their behalf. In 2001, CST was accorded third party reporting status by the police. CST has a national Information Sharing Agreement with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), and similar agreements with a number of regional forces, which allow CST to share antisemitic incident reports, fully anonymised to comply with data protection requirements, so that both CST and the police can glean as complete a picture as possible of the number and nature of reported antisemitic incidents. CST began sharing antisemitic incident data with Greater Manchester Police in 2011, followed by the Metropolitan Police Service in 2012. Now, using the national agreement, CST shares anonymised antisemitic incident data with several forces around the UK. Any duplicate incidents that are reported to both CST and the police are excluded from this process to ensure there is no 'double counting' of incidents.

This partnership continues to prove hugely valuable. From January to June 2023, 273 of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST were received from the police, totalling 34% of all the incidents reported to CST. Of these 273 reports, 155 came from the Metropolitan Police Service, 74 from Greater Manchester Police, 14 from North Wales Police, eight from Durham Police, four from Cambridgeshire Police, four from Northumbria Police, four from Staffordshire Police, and ten from other police services around the UK. Some of these relationships are long-standing, others are much more recently established, and it is a testament to the work

and time invested in developing and maintaining these collaborations that the police are able to contribute so much to CST's antisemitic incident data, informing the subsequent analysis of anti-Jewish hate in the UK.

In the first six months of 2023, 179 of the 803 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST were reported by the victim, while 155 were reported by a witness to antisemitism, whether exhibited in a public space or online. In 54 instances, a friend, relative or support provider related details of the incidents. This makes up 7% of the total reports, compared to 5% in the first half of 2022, 8% from January to June 2021, and just 2% over the same timeframe in 2020. The percentage increase of this source since 2020 highlights the proportional rise of anti-Jewish hate incidents targeting children, with parents or teachers often reporting to CST on behalf of the children involved. CST staff reported 82 cases of antisemitism, which includes online abuse directed at CST social media accounts, while 21 incidents were reported by security guards at Jewish locations. A further 21 incidents were forwarded by the Community Alliance To Combat Hate (CATCH), a partnership of community organisations in London to whom victims who report hate crime to the police can be referred if they want specialist support. Fourteen incidents came to CST's attention through CST volunteers, while three reports were made by Manchester Shomrim, and one was recorded from a media report.

Every single report helps CST better understand the nature and scale of antisemitism in the UK. Every single report better enables CST to protect, support and facilitate Jewish life.

ANTISEMITIC INCIDENT FIGURES, JANUARY–JUNE

Antisemitic incident figures by category, January–June 2012–2023

Category	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Extreme Violence	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Assault	34	29	22	45	45	80	62	85	52	89	75	74
Damage & Desecration	29	20	27	36	32	54	44	39	33	59	30	17
Threats	20	18	19	39	48	58	56	50	45	87	52	44
Abusive Behaviour	223	154	238	374	473	582	616	727	739	1,129	662	666
Literature	4	2	4	5	10	12	32	10	5	5	4	2
TOTAL	312	223	310	501	608	786	810	911	875	1,371	823	803

Antisemitic incident figures by month, 2012–2023

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	39	33	53	109	81	155	106	119	188	95	135	124
February	52	38	43	88	69	134	119	182	142	119	128	112
March	75	23	39	83	82	110	119	171	119	132	125	143
April	48	44	58	75	105	142	151	147	109	154	135	119
May	44	48	51	60	140	121	182	150	138	661	173	150
June	54	37	66	86	131	124	133	142	179	210	127	155
TOTAL	312	223	310	501	608	786	810	911	875	1,371	823	803

Antisemitic incident figures, full breakdown, 2023

Month	Category	Extreme Violence	Assault	Damage & Desecration	Threats	Abusive Behaviour	Literature	MONTH TOTAL
January		0	10	2	5	106	1	124
February		0	6	2	7	97	0	112
March		0	17	4	5	117	0	143
April		0	12	4	8	94	1	119
May		0	13	2	4	131	0	150
June		0	16	3	15	121	0	155
CATEGORY TOTAL		0	74	17	44	666	2	803

CST'S MISSION

- **Promote good relations** between British Jews and the rest of British society by working towards the elimination of racism, and antisemitism in particular.
- **Represent British Jews** on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security.
- **Facilitate Jewish life** by protecting Jews from the dangers of antisemitism, and antisemitic terrorism in particular.
- **Help those who are victims** of antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias.
- **Promote research** into racism, antisemitism and extremism; and to use this research for the benefit of both the Jewish community and society in general.
- **Speak responsibly** at all times, without exaggeration or political favour, on antisemitism and associated issues.



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