

# ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS **2023**



Jews are the  
scum of the earth



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Placard comparing Israel with Nazis, London, November



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## Executive Summary

- **CST recorded 4,103 antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2023, the highest total ever reported to CST in a single calendar year. This is an increase of 147% from the 1,662 anti-Jewish hate incidents recorded by CST in 2022, and is 81% higher than the previous annual record of 2,261 incidents, reported in 2021.** CST recorded 1,684 antisemitic incidents in 2020, and 1,813 in 2019.<sup>1</sup>
- This record total is due to the sheer volume of antisemitism perpetrated across the UK following Hamas' attack on Israel on 7 October 2023. **Of the 4,103 instances of anti-Jewish hate reported, 2,699 (66%) occurred on or after 7 October. This figure alone exceeds any previous annual antisemitic incident total recorded by CST,** and marks a rise of 589% from the 392 instances of antisemitism reported to CST over the same time period in 2022.
- 1,330 instances of antisemitism were reported to CST in October 2023, more than the three previous highest monthly totals combined: May 2021 (661 incidents), July 2014 (317 incidents), and January 2009 (289 incidents). **November and December's incident counts of 931 and 477 respectively make them the second- and fourth-worst months for antisemitism in the UK ever recorded by CST.**
- **The previous record monthly totals in 2021, 2014 and 2009 reflected spikes in anti-Jewish hate observed at times when Israel was at war during those years.** While that is also true of the unprecedented surge in

antisemitism reported in 2023, there is one key difference: this time, antisemitic incidents skyrocketed in the immediate aftermath of a terror attack responsible for the highest Jewish death toll on any day since the Holocaust, before Israel had coordinated any substantive military response.

- The speed at which antisemites mobilised in the UK following Hamas' attack shows that, initially at least, the significant increase in anti-Jewish hate was, if anything, a celebration of Hamas' massacre by people whose own hatred was emboldened and, in their minds, legitimised by the brutality enacted on civilians in southern Israel. The first incident inspired by Hamas' attack was reported to CST at 12:55pm on 7 October, when a vehicle drove past a synagogue in Hertfordshire with a Palestinian flag attached, windows wound down and an occupant shaking their fist in the air towards the synagogue. By the morning of 9 October, "*Free Palestine*" graffiti was sprayed on a bridge in Golders Green, in the heart of one of London's largest Jewish communities. In total, 31 antisemitic incidents were reported to CST on 7 October. **This figure rose further over the coming days, peaking on 11 October with 80 cases of anti-Jewish hate reported – the highest incident total for any single day ever recorded by CST.** The week immediately following the Hamas attack on 7 October saw 416 antisemitic incidents reported to CST, higher than any subsequent week: again **indicating that it was the Hamas terror attack, rather than Israel's military response in Gaza, that sparked most of the antisemitism in this country.** Between 1 January and 6 October, CST had recorded an average of

<sup>1</sup> 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.

five antisemitic incidents per day. From 7 October to 31 December, CST recorded an average of 31 antisemitic incidents per day.

- **CST recorded over 100 anti-Jewish hate incidents per month for the second consecutive year, averaging 152 incidents in the nine months prior to Hamas' attack on Israel;** a period without a significant trigger event impacting antisemitism levels. This is higher than the monthly average of 139 incidents reported in 2022 and **indicates that antisemitic incidents were already increasing in 2023 compared to the previous year,** prior to 7 October. It perpetuates the pattern of historically high antisemitic incident totals recorded in the last eight years. Since April 2016, monthly totals have only dipped below 100 on four occasions,<sup>2</sup> whereas they exceeded 100

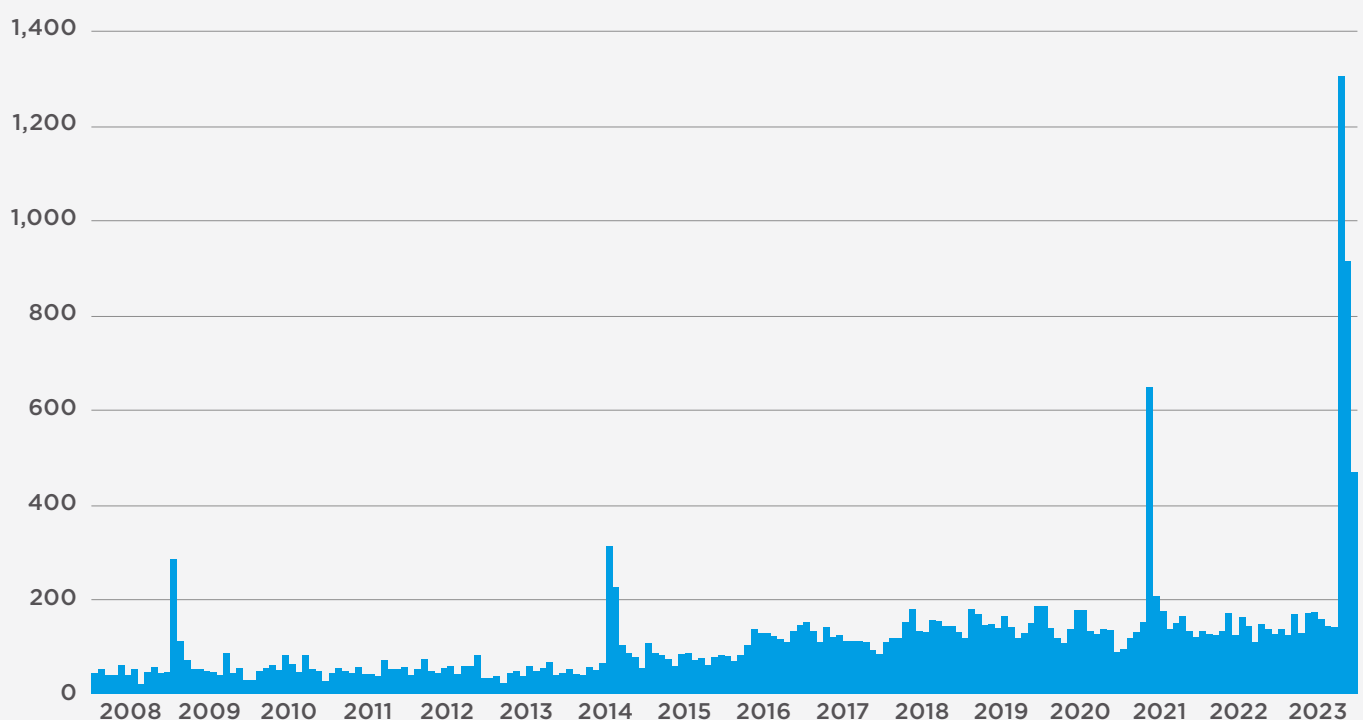
2 Two of these – December 2020 and January 2021 – coincided with national lockdowns enforced as part of the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

just six times between January 2006 and March 2016.<sup>3</sup>

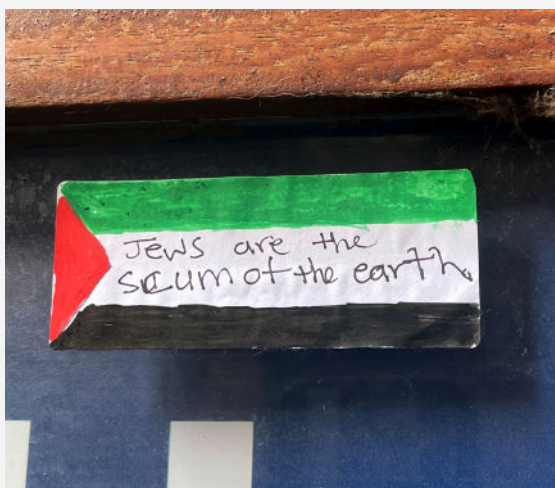
- The most frequent form of antisemitic rhetoric used in antisemitic incidents throughout the year either **referenced or was linked to Israel, Palestine, the Hamas terror attack or the subsequent war.** This discourse was present in 1,774 (43%) of the 4,103 cases reported to CST, rising from the 246 recorded in 2022 – a year without a significant trigger event in the region. Between 1 January and 6 October, just 262 (19%) of the 1,404 reports of anti-Jewish hate included Israel-related antisemitism. Between 7 October and 31 December, it was present in 1,512 (56%) of the 2,699 incidents recorded by CST – meaning that **85% of incidents that made**

3 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.

## NUMBER OF INCIDENTS | MONTH BY MONTH | 2008-2023



Anti-Jewish  
abuse on  
a sticker,  
London,  
October



**reference to the conflict in the Middle East happened on or after 7 October.**

It shows the reactionary nature of antisemitism which, while a deeply embedded hatred, emerges in accordance with the current social, cultural and political context. A total of 1,299 antisemitic incidents exhibited anti-Zionist motivation (compared to 149 in 2022) alongside antisemitic language or targeting, while the terms “Zionism” or “Zionist” were used on 260 occasions, often as euphemisms for “Jewishness” and “Jew”, or alongside other antisemitic language. In at least 427 instances, the phrase “Free Palestine” was employed in speech or writing. Although not an inherently antisemitic statement, in each of these cases it was targeted at Jewish people or institutions simply because they were Jewish, or formed part of a larger tirade including overtly anti-Jewish sentiments.

- **CST recorded 266 incidents in the category of Assault in 2023, an increase of 96% from the 136 incidents of this type reported in 2022, and the most ever recorded in a year.** They form 6% of the annual total, down from their proportion of 8% in the two previous years. None of these incidents was severe enough to be classed as Extreme Violence, compared to one incident in 2022.

- **Cases of Damage & Desecration of Jewish property rose by 146% from 74 incidents in 2022 to 182 in 2023, the highest ever annual figure in this category.** Forty-three of these involved damage done to the homes and vehicles of Jewish people, 14 to Jewish businesses and organisations, nine to synagogues, nine to Jewish schools, seven to public menorahs (candelabras used during the festival of Chanukah), and five to Jewish cemeteries.
- **There were 305 incidents reported to CST in the category of Threats in 2023,** which includes direct threats to people, institutions or property, rather than more general abuse containing non-specific threatening language. This signifies a rise of 196% from the 103 incidents of this type recorded in 2022, and is this category’s highest ever annual total.
- **CST recorded 3,328 incidents in the category of Abusive Behaviour in 2023, more than in any other year and an increase of 149% from the 1,339 instances of Abusive Behaviour reported in 2022.** This figure alone eclipses the incident total across all categories recorded in any preceding year, and forms 81% of all antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023.
- **There were 22 incidents reported to CST in the category of mass-produced antisemitic Literature in 2023, rising by 144% from the nine such incidents recorded in 2022.** Only in 2018 and 2014 has CST logged more cases of anti-Jewish hate in this category.
- Just as during previous wars involving Israel, **a sharp rise in school-related anti-Jewish hate was reported to CST. In 2023, there were 87 antisemitic incidents recorded at Jewish schools, compared to 20 in 2022.** An additional 111 incidents involved Jewish



schoolchildren away from school, often on their way to or from home, compared to 41 incidents of this type reported in 2022.

**One hundred and twenty-seven incidents involved Jewish schoolchildren or staff at non-faith schools, increasing from 37 in 2022.**

This constitutes a record annual total of 325 antisemitic incidents affecting people and property in the school sector, an increase of 232% from 98 such incidents recorded in 2022. Of these, 229 (70%) took place after 7 October.

- Connected to the increase in anti-Jewish hate reported in the school sector is the **worrying proportion of children perpetrating antisemitism**. Of the 2,086 incidents recorded where the offender or offenders' approximate age was provided to CST, **369 (18%) involved offenders exclusively under the age of 18, and ten involved mixed groups of adults and minors**. For comparison, 10% of perpetrators were children in 2020, rising to 18% in 2021, impacted by the return to in-person schooling after Covid-19 lockdowns, and the surge in school-related antisemitism when conflict in the Middle East escalated. This figure grew further to 20% in 2022.
- **In 373 (18%) of the 2,122 incidents in which the victim or victims' age was ascertained, the victims were exclusively under the age of 18.** A further 79 incidents affected mixed groups of adults and minors, meaning that children were amongst the victims in 21% of incidents. This phenomenon has also been rising since 2020, when the victims were children in just 8% of incidents, and 3% of cases targeted adults and minors combined. In 2021, 14% of incidents targeted victims younger than 18 years old and 4% targeted both adults and minors, while these numbers increased to 15% and 5% respectively in 2022.
- Anti-Jewish hate was also reported in record quantities within the sphere of higher education. **In 2023, CST recorded 182 antisemitic incidents in which the victims or offenders were students or academics, or which involved student unions, societies or other representative bodies. It is an increase of 203% from the 60 such incidents recorded in 2022,** when 28 happened on campus. Seventy-two of these 182 university-related incidents took place on campus or university property, and 110 away from campus, of which 77 were online. Of these 182 incidents, 148 (81%) occurred in the aftermath of 7 October, and 134 (74%) overtly referred to Israel and events in the Middle East over the course of the year.
- CST obtained a description of the ethnic appearance of the offender or offenders in 1,282 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported during 2023. Of these, **492 (38%) were described as white – North European; 31 (2%) as white – South European; 158 (12%) as black; 174 (14%) as South Asian; ten (1%) as Southeast Asian; finally, 417 (33%) were described as Arab or North African.** For comparison, in 2022, 51% were described as white – North European; 5% as white – South European; 16% as black; 10% as South Asian; less than 1% as Southeast Asian; and 18% as Arab or North African. It is unusual for a majority of incident offenders to be described as non-white, and there was a noticeable change in these descriptions after 7 October 2023 compared to the period up to that date. Between 1 January and 6 October, 53% were described as white – North European; 3% as white – South European; 15% as black; 11% as South Asian; 0% as Southeast Asian; and 18% as Arab or North African. These figures are broadly in line with 2022 and other years without an Israel-related trigger event. However, **between 7 October and 31 December, 30%**

were described as white – North European; 2% as white – South European; 11% as black; 15% as South Asian; 1% as Southeast Asian; and 41% as Arab or North African.

This change suggests that the surge in antisemitism following Hamas' 7 October attack came from parts of the population that does not normally make up the bulk of antisemitic incident perpetrators, with people of North African, Arab or South Asian appearance more highly represented than is usually the case. This matches similar shifts seen during conflicts in Israel in previous years.

- **CST recorded 1,282 cases of online antisemitism in 2023, more than in any previous year, and a 257% increase from the 359 online incidents reported in 2022. These form 31% of the total of 4,103 antisemitic incidents in 2023,** whereas in 2022 online incidents constituted 22% of the annual total. Of the 1,282 online incidents recorded in 2023, 704 occurred on X (formerly Twitter), a 249% rise from the 202 instances of anti-Jewish hate on X reported in 2022. As well as the impact of a trigger event in the Middle East, the increase on this platform coincided with the first full year of new ownership, during which time its policies for dealing with harmful content were amended.<sup>4 5 6</sup>

4 In January 2023, X 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 | X | The Guardian](#)

5 The Institute for Strategic Dialogue found a major and sustained spike in antisemitic posts on X 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 \(isdglobal.org\)](#)

6 X 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.](#)"

- **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.

- On X, antisemitism was more likely to display an ideological strand of antisemitic rhetoric beyond basic insult and abuse of Jews. **Among the 704 X-based incidents, 648 (92%) contained at least one specific discourse conveying a political, ideological or religious motivation on the part of the offender, or used conspiracy theories or stereotypes about Jewish people.** This was the case in 423 (73%) of the 578 reports of antisemitism that took place via other online services and platforms. **The most prevalent discourse on X – present in 458 incidents – referenced Israel, Palestine, Hamas or the war in the region, alongside anti-Jewish language, imagery or targeting, of which 397 were explicitly anti-Zionist.** There were 229 incidents on the platform that included allusions to Holocaust or Nazi-era themes, while conspiracy theories about Jewish power over various institutions and events were evident in 166 incidents.
- **Of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023, 2,631 (64%) involved at least one political, religious**



**and racist discourse, conspiracy theory or ideology; 233 (9%) of these 2,631 reports combined two or more.** The cohabitation of several narratives encapsulates the intricacy of contemporary anti-Jewish hate. This prejudice is drawn from numerous notions and tropes that are rooted in individual and collective psyche alike, where they lie dormant or very active indeed. These accepted 'truths' about Jews amount to an archive of reference points from which antisemites of opposing worldviews, value systems and walks of life can draw, and shape them accordingly.

- In years when events involving Israel prompt a spike in anti-Jewish hate in the UK, antisemitic anti-Israel discourse typically replaces Holocaust-related rhetoric as the most common in the incidents reported to CST. As stated above, **language referencing Israel, Palestine, Hamas or the conflict in the Middle East was present in 1,774 antisemitic incidents, alongside anti-Jewish language or targeting. In contrast, there were 955 antisemitic incidents in 2023 in which the offender made reference to Hitler, the Nazis, or the Holocaust.** This is an increase from the 469 such incidents reported in 2022, when it was the most common type of discourse. Among these 955 incidents, there were 70 instances of Holocaust denial, compared to 19 in 2022, and 184 of Holocaust celebration, rising from 80 in the previous year. One hundred and eighteen (64%) of these 184 incidents that glorified or celebrated the Holocaust occurred after 7 October and followed two distinctive trends. The first glorified Hamas' act of terror as a repeat of the Nazis' extermination of the Jews during the Holocaust, while the second narrative of this type lamented Hitler's failure to eliminate world Jewry entirely,

in the context of Israel's existence and response to the 7 October terror attack. On eight occasions, the perpetrator simultaneously denied and glorified the Holocaust, perfectly capturing the twisted confusion of narratives that often blend in the minds of antisemites. There were 149 instances displaying explicit far-right ideological motivation, rising from the 99 incidents presenting these extremist beliefs in 2022. There were 243 incidents wherein the offender directly compared Israel with the Nazis, thereby bridging Holocaust- and Israel-related discourses (and counted amongst the totals for each), rising from 32 such incidents reported in 2022.

- **One hundred and twenty-two antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023 contained discourse relating to Islam and Muslims, over four times the 27 reported in 2022,** while 83 showed evidence of Islamist extremist ideology, significantly higher than the eight such incidents recorded in 2022. Once again, these increases indicate how events in the Middle East alter the volume and content of antisemitic expression in the UK: 79 of the 83 Islamist incidents occurred post 7 October, most of which expressed endorsement of Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel.



Swastika inside a Star of David, Devon, November

**In 48 incidents, another religious ideology was present, compared to 31 in 2022.**

- Conspiracy theories were evident in 319 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported in 2023, more than double the 162 incidents of this kind recorded in 2022.** From these, 262 spoke of malign Jewish power over global politics, media, finance and other walks of life, compared to 139 in 2022. Thirty-two involved falsehoods regarding religious rituals and practices such as Blood Libel, a rise from 16 in 2022. Twenty-four of these happened after 7 October, projecting the centuries-old trope of Blood Libel onto Israel and the wider Jewish community, demonstrating how antisemites continually find ways to apply historic antisemitic ideas within a supposed anti-Israel context. Nine incidents aimed to propagate conspiratorial myths about the origins of Jewishness with the intention of undermining any notion of modern Jewish identity, six of which sought to erase any Jewish connection with Israel, higher than the three such incidents reported in 2022.
- There were 56 incidents in which specific aspects of Judaism were attacked or deliberately mischaracterised to antisemitic ends,** more than the 32 cases of this kind recorded in 2022. Of these, 19 focused on religious traditions (compared to 15 in 2022); 19 manipulated ideas and stories taken from religious scripture (over the 13 reported in 2022); while 18 targeted religious holy books (four in 2022). On 168 occasions, anti-Jewish hate was expressed through stereotypes, dehumanising language or caricatures, double the 88 instances in 2022. There were ten examples of antisemitic abuse about specific ethnic groups that exist within the wider Jewish world; a discourse absent from every incident in 2022.

- In 2023, CST recorded 48 incidents connected to specific political parties or their supporters.** Forty-five of these were linked to the Labour Party; an increase from 2022, when 35 incidents were Labour Party-related.<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that these are incidents related to events in, or arguments about, the Labour Party, and should not be treated as a measure of incidents perpetrated by Labour Party members (which CST is not in a position to assess). Thirty-four of these 45 instances of anti-Jewish hate also made reference to the Middle East. There were two antisemitic incidents associated with the Conservative Party (down from three in 2022), and one linked simultaneously to both the Scottish Liberal Democrats and Scottish Labour Party.
- In 2023, 2,410 antisemitic incidents were reported to have taken place in Greater London, rising by 161% from 2022's total of 923 London-based incidents. CST recorded 555 antisemitic incidents in Greater Manchester, an increase of 163% from the 211 incidents in the corresponding area in 2022.** In both cases, these are **record annual totals for anti-Jewish hate incidents in these locations,** and their combined contribution to the overall figure is 72%, slightly higher than 68% in each of the two preceding years. These communal hubs are home to the largest Jewish populations in the UK, which remain the principal targets of antisemitism.

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<sup>7</sup> These include antisemitic incidents reported to CST occurring within the Labour Party, directed towards Labour politicians and members, spouted by Labour politicians and members (or both), or antisemitic incidents where online offenders displayed clear signs of affiliation to/support of the Labour Party in their abuse or their social media profiles. Finally, an incident is also considered Labour Party-related for these purposes if antisemitic views appear to be motivated by arguments over alleged antisemitism in Labour: for example, if antisemitic abuse is directed at a former Labour politician after they have left the party.

- Within Greater London, 864 antisemitic incidents occurred in Barnet, the local authority with the largest Jewish community in the UK. There were 323 instances of antisemitism recorded in Westminster, 220 in Hackney, 188 in Camden and 95 in Haringey. Of Greater Manchester's incidents, 169 happened in Bury, 167 in the City of Manchester, 121 in Salford, 25 in Stockport and 16 in Trafford.
- Incident totals in Westminster rank higher than in previous years. It is the capital's political hub and was the location of many of the anti-Israel demonstrations post 7 October. While many of their attendees were there in peaceful protest, these marches attracted individuals who were reported for antisemitic placards or hate speech. It was also the site of many of the vigils for Hamas' victims, which were sometimes targeted by passers-by with anti-Jewish activity. **In total, at least 44 of the Westminster-based incidents took place at, or on the way to or from, anti-Israel protests or vigils for the hostages,** and two occurred at public Menorah lightings.
- It is expected that antisemitism mostly takes place in the areas where Jewish life is most visible and deeply established, but it occurs all across the UK. **For the first time ever, CST recorded an antisemitic incident in every single police region in the UK in 2023.** This hatred exists and is articulated in all parts of the country, regardless of proximity to Jewish life. When Israel is in the news, antisemitism does not only find expression in greater volume, but also in corners of the UK where it may otherwise go unvoiced.
- Apart from Greater London and Greater Manchester, the police regions with the highest levels of reported antisemitism in 2023 were **Hertfordshire with 112 incidents (up from 59 in 2022), Essex with 75 (11 in 2022), West Yorkshire with 75 (48 in 2022), Scotland with 68 (34 in 2022), and West Midlands with 63 (20 in 2022).**
- Apart from boroughs in Greater London and Greater Manchester, the towns and cities within police regions where antisemitism was most frequently reported were **Leeds in West Yorkshire (59 incidents), Borehamwood & Elstree in Hertfordshire (55 incidents), Birmingham in West Midlands (50 incidents), Brighton & Hove in Sussex (39 incidents), and Gateshead in Northumbria (38 incidents).**
- **There were 960 incidents reported to CST in 2023 in which the victims were ordinary Jewish individuals in public.** In at least 408 of these, they were visibly Jewish on account of their traditional clothing, Jewish school uniforms, or jewellery and insignia bearing religious symbols. In 2022, this was true of 467 and 200 incidents respectively.
- **One hundred and fifty-five antisemitic incidents in 2023 targeted synagogues, including buildings, congregants and staff while on location.** Congregants on their way to or from prayers were victims in a further 49, compared to 56 and 28 incidents respectively in 2022. **This net rise of 143% in incidents affecting synagogues and the people travelling to, from, or already inside them can be attributed to the aftermath of 7 October.** Synagogues represented an easy, visible and symbolic target for those seeking a direction for their anti-Jewish hate in the wake of Hamas' terror attack, and 126 (62%) of these incidents occurred after that event. Jewish cemeteries or graves were desecrated in an additional five incidents, compared to four in 2022.
- **Twenty-three incidents were related to places of work, rising from 15 such**

**incidents reported in 2022**, while Jewish businesses and organisations (including one youth movement) were targeted on 497 occasions, an increase from 132 in 2022. **Between October and December, CST and other communal organisations received a flurry of online hate in response to statements addressing Hamas' attack on Israel and the subsequent rise in antisemitic incident levels in the UK.**

Of these 497 incidents targeting Jewish organisations or businesses, 354 (71%) occurred on or after 7 October, 328 (66%) were related to the Middle East, and 80 contained allegations of disproportionate Jewish influence in the world.

- **CST recorded 143 instances wherein antisemitic abuse was aimed at an individual of public prominence, almost double the 73 incidents of this nature reported in 2022.** Thirty-six of these incidents contained theories about Jewish power, while 101 referenced Israel or Middle Eastern affairs. These figures demonstrate how public figures and institutions in the UK, Jewish and non-Jewish, are held accountable for alleged Israeli actions – or, in some cases, how Israel supposedly controls public figures and institutions in the UK – all of whom are perceived by antisemites to be complicit in a global Jewish conspiracy.
- There were 153 incidents that took place at residential properties, an increase from 135 incidents of this kind in 2022. Meanwhile, in **211 cases, the victim and offender had a prior relationship of some kind. It is a rise from the 167 such incidents reported in 2022 and exhibits one of the ways that anti-Jewish hate, triggered by events in the Middle East, manifests itself in the UK.** In these cases, offenders turned on a Jewish person they knew – classmates, work colleagues, neighbours and friends – as

proxy targets for their feelings about Israel.

- There were **40 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023 that took place in the context of professional football.**<sup>8</sup> It is a fall from the 56 such incidents recorded in 2022. However, incidents in the context of amateur football rose, from four in 2022 to 18 in 2023.
- **CST received a description of the victim or victims' gender in 2,118 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023.** Of these, 1,188 (56%) were male; 788 (37%) were female; in 141 incidents (7%), the victims were mixed groups of males and females; in one incident, the victims were a mixed group of females and people who identify as non-binary.
- The victim or victims' age was ascertained in 2,121 of the antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023. Of these, **1,669 (79%) involved adult victims, of which 32 were over the age of 65; 373 (18%) involved victims who were minors; in 79 instances (3%), mixed groups of adults and minors were attacked.**
- CST will ask incident victims or witnesses if they can describe the person, or people, who committed the incident they are reporting. Interactions between perpetrators and victims may be crude and brief, leaving little reliable information, and while it is often possible to receive reports regarding the apparent appearance or motivation of incident offenders, this is not absolute proof of the offenders' actual ethnic or religious identity, nor of their motivation. In addition, many incidents do not involve face-to-face contact between offender and victim, so there is

<sup>8</sup> These include antisemitic abuse that took place inside and outside stadia; stickers and graffiti related to football clubs and supporter groups; online comments regarding football; and anti-Jewish replies to football clubs posting about Jewish holidays on social media.



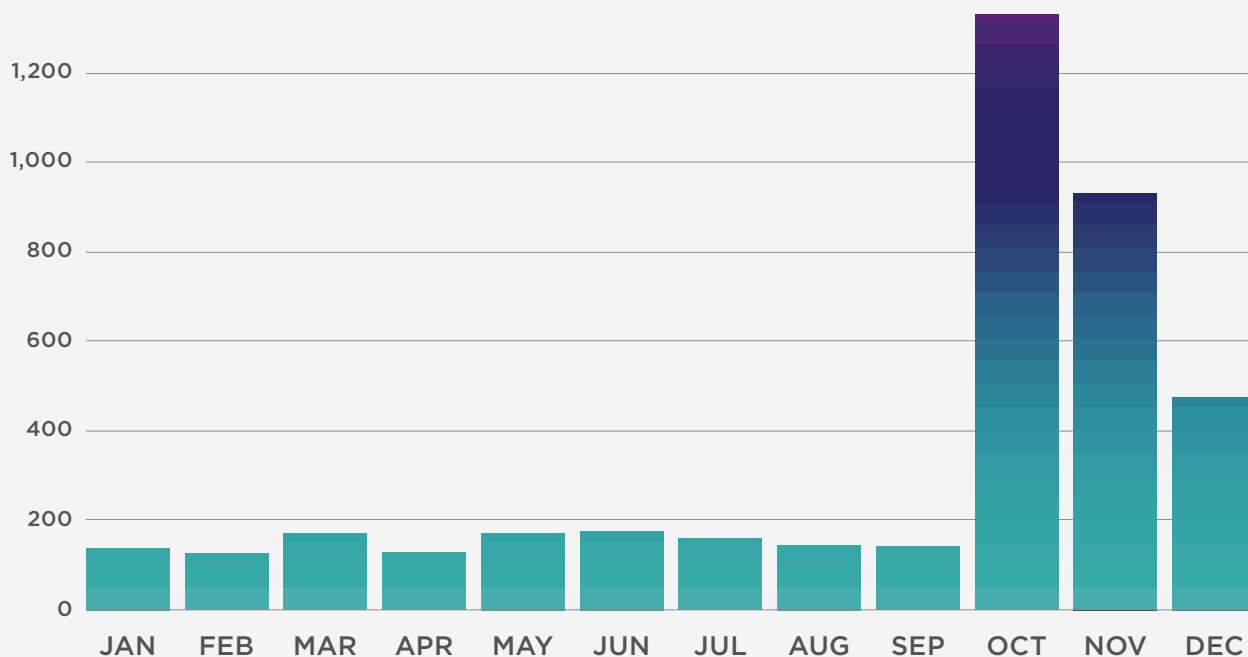
no physical description of the offender. With these caveats, CST does provide data regarding the ethnic appearance, age and gender of incident offenders.

- A description of the gender of the offender or offenders was provided to CST in 2,170 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023. Of these, the offenders were described as **male in 1,674 incidents (77% of incidents where the offender's gender was obtained, compared to 82% in 2022); female in 441 incidents (20%, compared to 16% in 2022); and mixed groups of males and females in 55 incidents (3%, up from 2% in 2022).**
- In 2,086 of the 4,103 reports of antisemitism in 2023, the approximate age of the offender or offenders was given. Among these, **1,707 (82%) involved adult offenders, 20 of which involved adults described to be over the age of 65; in 369 cases (18%), the perpetrators were minors; there were ten instances where the offenders were a**

#### **mix of adults and children.**

- In addition to the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023, a further 2,185 potential incidents were reported to CST that are not included among this report's statistics as, upon investigation, they did not evidence antisemitic motivation, language or targeting. Many of these incidents involve suspicious activity or possible hostile reconnaissance at Jewish locations, and they play an important role in CST's provision of protection to the Jewish community. It is the highest number of non-antisemitic incidents that CST has ever recorded in a year, rising from 621 in 2022, conveying the general increase in anti-Israel (but not antisemitic) rhetoric in response to 7 October and subsequent war. It also reflects a Jewish community that has felt a heightened sense of uncertainty and fear, and was therefore more inclined to report any perceived hostile activity.

## NUMBER OF INCIDENTS | MONTH BY MONTH | 2023



# Introduction

## Community Security Trust

Community Security Trust (CST) is a UK charity that advises and represents the Jewish community on matters of antisemitism, terrorism, policing and security. CST received charitable status in 1994 and is recognised by government and the police as a best practice model of a minority-community security organisation.

CST provides security advice and training for Jewish schools, synagogues and Jewish communal organisations and gives assistance to those bodies that are affected by antisemitism. CST also assists and supports individual members of the Jewish community who have been affected by antisemitism and antisemitic incidents. All this work is provided at no charge.

An essential part of CST's work involves representing the Jewish community to police, legislative and policymaking bodies and providing people inside and outside the Jewish community with information to combat antisemitism.

CST has recorded antisemitic incidents in the United Kingdom since 1984.

## Definition of antisemitic incidents

The statistics in CST's annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report* include antisemitic hate crimes and antisemitic non-crime hate incidents. CST defines an antisemitic incident as any malicious act aimed at Jewish people, organisations or property, where there is evidence that the act has antisemitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are (or are believed to be) Jewish. This is a narrower definition than that used by the criminal justice system, which defines an antisemitic hate incident as "Any

*non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's race/religion or perceived race/religion."*<sup>9</sup>

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism is a useful guide in identifying the different types of antisemitic language that may be used in an incident.

Antisemitic incidents can take several forms, including physical attacks on people or property, verbal or written abuse, hate mail (including antisemitic emails), antisemitic leaflets and posters, or abuse and comments on social media. CST does not include the general activities of antisemitic organisations in its statistics. CST does not record as incidents antisemitic material that is permanently hosted on websites or that is published by mainstream media, nor does CST trawl social media platforms to look for antisemitic comments. CST will, however, record antisemitic comments or posts from internet forums or transmitted via social media, if they have been reported to CST by a member of the public who fulfils the role of a victim or witness; if the comment shows evidence of antisemitic content, motivation or targeting; and if the offender is based in the UK or has directly targeted a UK-based victim.<sup>10</sup>

## Reporting antisemitic incidents

Antisemitic incidents are reported to CST in several ways, most commonly by telephone, email, via the CST website, via CST's social media platforms, by post or in person to CST staff and volunteers. CST staff have

<sup>9</sup> [Hate Crime Definitions](#)

<sup>10</sup> Antisemitic expressions that fall outside this definition of an antisemitic incident can be found in CST's annual [Antisemitic Discourse Report](#) available on the CST website.

undergone specialist training in order to provide the best possible response to incident victims and witnesses who contact CST.

Incidents can be reported to CST by the victim, a witness, or by someone acting on their behalf. In 2001, CST was accorded 'Third Party Reporting' status by the police, which allows CST to report antisemitic incidents to the police and to act as a go-between for victims who are unable or unwilling to report to the police directly. CST works closely with police services and specialist units in monitoring and investigating antisemitic incidents. CST regularly exchanges anonymised antisemitic incident reports with police forces around the United Kingdom under a national Information Sharing Agreement that was signed with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and with individual police constabularies.<sup>11</sup>

It is likely that many, and perhaps even most, antisemitic incidents are not reported either to CST or to the police. A 2018 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights found that only 21% of British Jews who had experienced antisemitic harassment over the previous five years had reported it to the police or to any other organisation.<sup>12</sup> However, the Home Office's latest report on hate crime in England and Wales acknowledges that a combination of a genuine rise in hate crime and growing public awareness of what it means – as well as police accuracy in correctly recording them – is leading to a higher number of reports than when they started collating data in 2013.<sup>13</sup>

If an incident is reported to CST but shows no evidence of antisemitic motivation, language or targeting, then it will not be recorded as antisemitic and will not be included in CST's annual antisemitic incident total. In 2023, CST received 2,185 reports of potential incidents that fit this description, up by 252% from the 621 such incidents recorded in 2022. Many of these potential incidents involve suspicious activity or possible hostile reconnaissance at Jewish locations; criminal assaults on or theft from Jewish people that do not show antisemitic motivation; or anti-Israel activity which did not involve the use of antisemitic language or imagery and was directed at pro-Israel campaigners, rather than being directed at Jewish people, buildings or organisations chosen solely because they were Jewish. This rise is the result of the substantial increase in public expressions of anti-Israel sentiment following 7 October, and the Jewish community's generally heightened sense of distress and unease following Hamas' attack on Israel, leading to more reports of any activity perceived as potentially hostile but not meeting CST's criteria for an antisemitic incident. These reports still play an important role in CST's provision of security protection to the Jewish community.

CST always prioritises the wishes and needs of incident victims, both individuals and the heads of Jewish organisations or communal buildings. CST especially treats the issue of victim confidentiality as a top priority. If an incident victim chooses to remain anonymous or wishes there to be no publicity about an incident, CST will respect their request as far as possible.

<sup>11</sup> [www.report-it.org.uk/files/cst\\_isa\\_2024.pdf](http://www.report-it.org.uk/files/cst_isa_2024.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism/Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU \(Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023 second edition - GOV.UK \(London: Home Office, 2023\)](#)

## The CST Incidents Department

The Incidents Department at CST is dedicated to supporting victims of anti-Jewish hate and responding to potential acts of hostility to the Jewish community in the UK. CST is absolutely committed to fulfilling this mission, however challenging external events may make this task.

On the morning of 7 October, everyone at CST was braced for what was to come. This was not an unfounded anxiety, but one rooted in sorry experience: every time there is an aggravation in the conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Jewish community in the UK bears the brunt of the anti-Israel response in the country.

CST's first Security Bulletin to synagogues, security officers and other Jewish locations was sent out by 8am on the morning of 7 October.

On this occasion, the anxiety was amplified by collective grief and a very visceral fear. More Jewish people had just been murdered than on any single day since the Holocaust. Others had been raped, kidnapped, and the sheer scale of Hamas' destruction unfolded day by day. Israel was at war, and its enemies abroad were sure to target Jews, because they always do.

The CST Incidents Department was prepared. It drafted CST staff from other departments, who selflessly set aside time from their own increased workloads to answer phones that seemed to never stop ringing, listen to reporters and give them the assistance and reassurance they sought, and log incidents onto the database so that CST could best monitor the developing situation in real time. The scale of this was unprecedented: on Monday 16 October the landline phone system in CST's

London office handled 17,000 calls in a single day (including incoming, outgoing and internal calls). CST's wonderful volunteers stepped up, giving up their weekends to be in the office, take calls, analyse incidents, and make sure the community always had somebody to speak to. The Incidents Department expanded from six full-time staff across the London and Manchester offices, to nine. This was absolutely

necessary in order to continue providing a quality service amidst the rising tide of incident reports.

All this took place while every other part of CST's operation had to meet similar dramatic increases in their workload. CST's security department put on extra patrols and provided

increased security at community locations. The research department investigated a vast increase in threats to the community and online expressions of support for terrorism. More positive was the welcome surge in people registering to join CST as volunteer security officers, or donating money to help fund our work.

Between 1 January and 6 October 2023, CST recorded 1,404 antisemitic incidents, and 586 incidents that were not antisemitic but required further investigation or follow-up. Together, this comes to seven new incidents and potential incidents per day. Between 7 October and 31 December, CST recorded 2,699 antisemitic incidents, and 1,599 incidents that were not classed as antisemitic. Together, this comes to 50 new incidents and potential incidents per day that need triaging and response, from callbacks to police liaison, personal safety briefings to simple victim support. In essence, the demands on the Incidents Department increased six-fold in the

**Israel was at war,  
and its enemies  
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always do.**



wake of the Hamas attack. Every single person who contributed a moment of their time to helping the team has ensured that our Jewish community has received the support and protection for which they rely on CST.

It is easy, in the above paragraph and throughout this report, to allow these unprecedented and unfathomably high numbers to cloud the enduring human impact of anti-Jewish hate. Behind every single incident in this report is a person who was affected enough to feel the need to report it and who may still feel the trauma from that experience. CST aims to support them with personal security advice, assistance in reporting to police or other agencies,

accompanying witnesses and victims to court, and supporting them in any way they need. Our specialist schools and campus teams assist young people who experience antisemitism in those settings, while our psychological support volunteers, made up of professional psychologists and psychiatrists, are available to provide specialist support for those who need it.



*"KILL JEWS"*  
graffiti,  
London,  
November

# Antisemitic Incidents in the United Kingdom, 2023

CST recorded 4,103 antisemitic incidents across the UK in 2023, the highest figure that CST has ever recorded in a single calendar year. This constitutes a rise of 147% from the 1,662 incidents reported to CST in 2022, and is 81% higher than the previous record total of 2,261, reported in 2021. The number of antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023 was truly unprecedented. Not only is this the first time that CST has recorded over 4,000 antisemitic incidents in a single year; no previous annual total has ever even come close to 3,000 incidents. CST received 1,684 reports of anti-Jewish hate in 2020, and 1,813 in 2019.

## Figures, trends & context

The record total of 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023 is the result of the spike in anti-Jewish hate observed across the UK in the aftermath of Hamas' terror attack on Israel on 7 October. Of the 4,103 cases of antisemitism recorded, 2,699 (66%) occurred on or after 7 October, a figure that on its own eclipses any annual antisemitic incident total reported to CST. For comparison, CST recorded 392 instances of antisemitism between 7 October and 31 December 2022. Taking these two periods alone, the increase in anti-Jewish hate incidents after 7 October constitutes a like-for-like rise of 589% in anti-Jewish hate.

Almost a third of the annual total, 1,330 incidents, were recorded in the month of October. This is the highest monthly figure ever reported to CST and is more than the three previous highest monthly totals combined. These were May 2021, with 661 incidents; July 2014, with 317 incidents; and January 2009, with 289 incidents. Just as

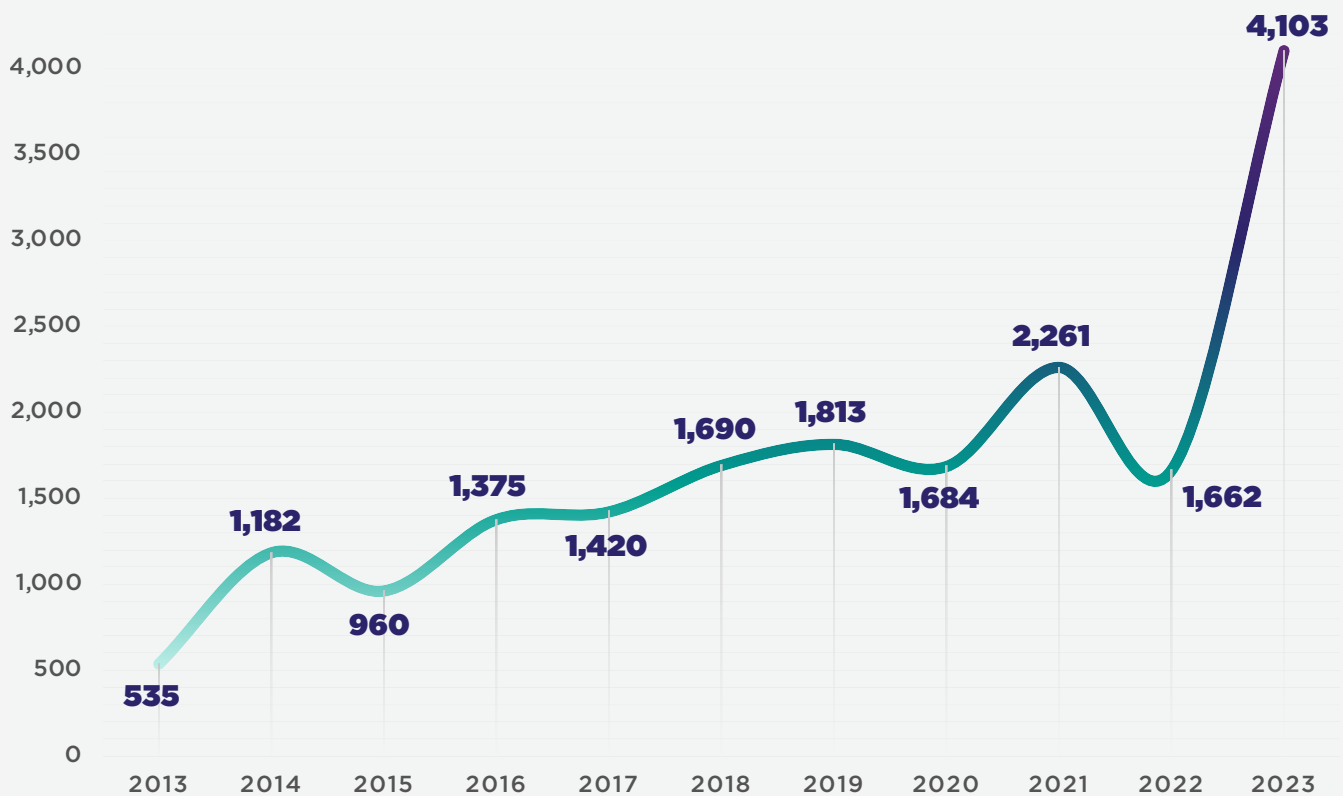
in October 2023, on each of these previous occasions these spikes occurred when Israel was at war. The 931 antisemitic incidents reported in November 2023 and the 477 incidents recorded in December constitute the second- and fourth-highest monthly totals in the UK on record.

While this showcases how trigger events involving Israel typically spark a surge in the volume of antisemitism in the UK, there is a key difference in the upswing witnessed in 2023. Anti-Jewish hate rose sharply and immediately following a terror attack that claimed more Jewish lives on any day since the Holocaust. It started as soon as news of the Hamas attack became known and before Israel's military response in Gaza.

CST recorded the first antisemitic incident motivated by Hamas' attack at 12:55pm on 7 October, when a vehicle drove past a synagogue in Hertfordshire with a Palestinian flag affixed to it, an occupant shaking their fist towards the synagogue through the open window. On 8 October, anti-Israel demonstrations were coordinated in the UK, and police patrols increased in London after videos emerged of people glorifying Hamas' actions.<sup>14</sup> By 9 October, "Free Palestine" had been sprayed on the side of a bridge in Golders Green, in the centre of one of London's biggest and most deeply established Jewish communities. There were 31 antisemitic incidents reported on CST on 7 October, a figure that rose over the following days and peaked on 11 October, when 80 instances of anti-Jewish hate were recorded – the highest

<sup>14</sup> [Israel attack: London police patrols increase amid celebration claims - BBC News](#)

## NUMBER OF INCIDENTS | 2013-2023



incident total on a single day ever reported to CST. In the week after Hamas' attack on Israel, CST recorded 416 antisemitic incidents, more than in any subsequent week. Rather than the daily and weekly incident counts increasing as Israel's response gathered momentum and Palestinian casualties rose in Gaza, they peaked in the weeks immediately following 7 October and slowly declined thereafter. All of this suggests that the most significant spike in antisemitism that CST has ever observed in the UK was inspired by Hamas' massacre of Israeli civilians, rather than Israel's military response in Gaza. Between 1 January and 6 October, CST had recorded an average of five antisemitic incidents per day. From 7 October to 31 December, CST recorded an average of 31 antisemitic incidents per day.

The different nature and scale of the reaction to the Hamas terror attack, when compared to previous antisemitic reactions to wars

in Gaza and Israel, can be seen by looking at the most recent previous such conflict in May 2021. During that period, the two weeks of conflict from 10 May to 23 May 2021 saw 482 antisemitic incidents reported to CST. However, in the two weeks following 7 October, CST recorded 787 antisemitic incidents in the UK – despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that unlike in 2021 this conflict began with a mass terror attack on Israel that left 1,200 Israelis dead and over 240 kidnapped as hostages.

For the second year in a row, over 100 antisemitic incidents were reported to CST every month. Prior to 7 October, an average of 152 cases of anti-Jewish hate were reported to CST, compared to a monthly average of 139 incidents recorded in 2022. This indicates that antisemitic incidents were already on the rise before Hamas' attack on Israel. It sustains the trend of historically high antisemitic

incident totals reported over the last eight years. Monthly figures surpassing 100 incidents were recorded on just six occasions between January 2006 and March 2016: five of these coincided with the intensification of conflicts involving Israel, while the other (January 2015) was a month when an anti-Jewish terror attack took place in Paris. Since April 2016, fewer than 100 incidents have been recorded in just four months, two of which (December 2020 and January 2021) corresponded with a national lockdown as Covid-19 cases increased across the UK.

Of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023, 1,282 happened online, constituting 31% of the annual total. This is the highest ever figure for online incidents, rising by 257% from 2022, when 359 online incidents formed 22% of the overall yearly figure. The rise in volume and proportion from 2022 is striking.

Of the 1,282 online instances of anti-Jewish hate recorded in 2023, 704 (55%) took place on X, a growth of 249% from the 202 incidents hosted on the platform in 2022. Taking into account the ramifications of Hamas' attack and subsequent war with Israel for antisemitism levels in the UK, the increase on X also coincided with the first full year of new ownership. Since changing hands, the organisation has adopted a different approach to the moderation of hateful content hosted on the site.

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, the significant volume of antisemitism

**Too often, they are allowed to do so without meaningful censure and punishment, and their anti-Jewish hate is preserved online with potential for global reach.**

reported on X compared to other platforms aligns with the conclusions of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, whose research reveals that English-language anti-Jewish posts more than doubled in the period between Elon Musk's takeover of X and February 2023.<sup>15</sup> Musk has confirmed that the company's new policy for tackling hate speech is to allow more of it to remain on the platform but

limit its visibility ("*freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach*").<sup>16</sup> Although not an unreasonable position to hold in theory, the strategy does not appear to be working in practice, as the increased number of reports made to CST that contravene X's hateful conduct policy suggests that Jewish users of the site are still viewing antisemitic content.<sup>17</sup> As a greater quantity of antisemitic posts are propagated and allowed to stay up on X, it may be becoming a more appealing place for the congregation, interaction and affirmation of antisemites, knowing that they are less likely to be held accountable by the platform hosting their prejudice.

15 [Antisemitism on Twitter - Institute of Strategic Dialogue](#)

16 [Elon Musk on X: "New Twitter policy is freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach. Negative/hate tweets will be max deboosted & demonetized, so no ads or other revenue to Twitter. You won't find the tweet unless you specifically seek it out, which is no different from rest of Internet." / X](#)

17 [X's policy on hateful conduct | X Help \(twitter.com\)](#)



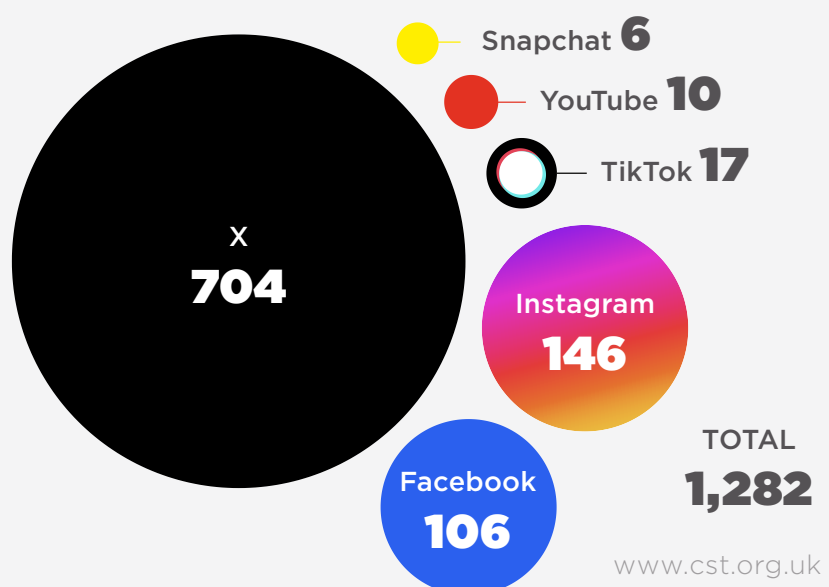
Among the 704 antisemitic incidents recorded on X in 2023, 648 (92%) were loaded with at least one specific discourse of a political, ideological or religious nature, or circulated conspiracy theories or tropes about Jews. Of the 578 instances of antisemitism that took place on other online services and platforms, 423 (73%) contained one of these narratives. On X, the most predominant rhetoric – seen in 458 incidents – referenced Israel, Palestine, Hamas and the war in the Middle East, alongside anti-Jewish language, imagery or targeting. Three hundred and ninety-seven of these were overtly anti-Zionist. Meanwhile, 229 incidents on X alluded to Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, or employed references associated with the era of Nazi rule. Counted among the figures for these two strands are 97 occasions wherein comparisons between Israel, Israeli politicians or Jews and Nazis were made. In 166 cases, X users spouted conspiracy theories regarding Jewish influence over various affairs, people, industries and walks of life.

Aside from X, 150 of the 1,282 instances of online antisemitism recorded by CST in 2023 occurred on text or instant messaging services, including those associated with the social media platforms mentioned in this chapter; 146 took place on Instagram; 106 on Facebook; 62 via email; 17 on TikTok; ten on YouTube; six on Snapchat; five were abusive comments on online articles; two involved the hacking of Jewish websites and social media accounts with antisemitic material; two took place on Zoom; and 72 were on a range of other social media. The two reported instances of ‘Zoombombing’, combined with the four such incidents reported in 2022, marks a significant change from the two previous

years, when 19 and 16 were respectively recorded in 2020 and 2021. The rise and fall in incidents of this kind reflects the sudden reliance on videoconferencing platforms at the pandemic’s outset – of which antisemites quickly took advantage – and the normalising of in-person interactions over the past two years, which has decreased the need for video calls, and thus the opportunity for offenders to hijack online Jewish events.

Of the 1,282 online cases of anti-Jewish hate reported to CST in 2023, 1,190 fell into the category of Abusive Behaviour, while 82 were classed as Threats, eight as Literature and two as Damage & Desecration. In 214 of these posts and messages, the offender included antisemitic memes, images, graphics or cartoons. The virtual world provides antisemites with a forum for their hateful ideas, which they can share with other like-minded individuals to spread their prejudice far and wide, secure in their possible anonymity and physical distance from the targets of their abuse. Too often, they are allowed to do so without meaningful censure and punishment, and their anti-Jewish hate is preserved online with potential for global reach.

## INCIDENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS



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 unearthed, sifted and investigated by CST's researchers as

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, although sometimes, as in the aftermath of Hamas' terror attack on Israel, it is clear that there has been a genuine rise in anti-Jewish hate that is initiated by a specific set of circumstances. A less tangible factor behind 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, then antisemites might feel that they are far from alone in this prejudice, and be more likely, perhaps, to have confidence in sharing their own views.

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.

Placard invoking blood libel at a demonstration, London, November



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 usually difficult to gauge whether the pattern of historically high antisemitic incident figures observed by CST since 2016 is due

# Incident Categories

## Assault

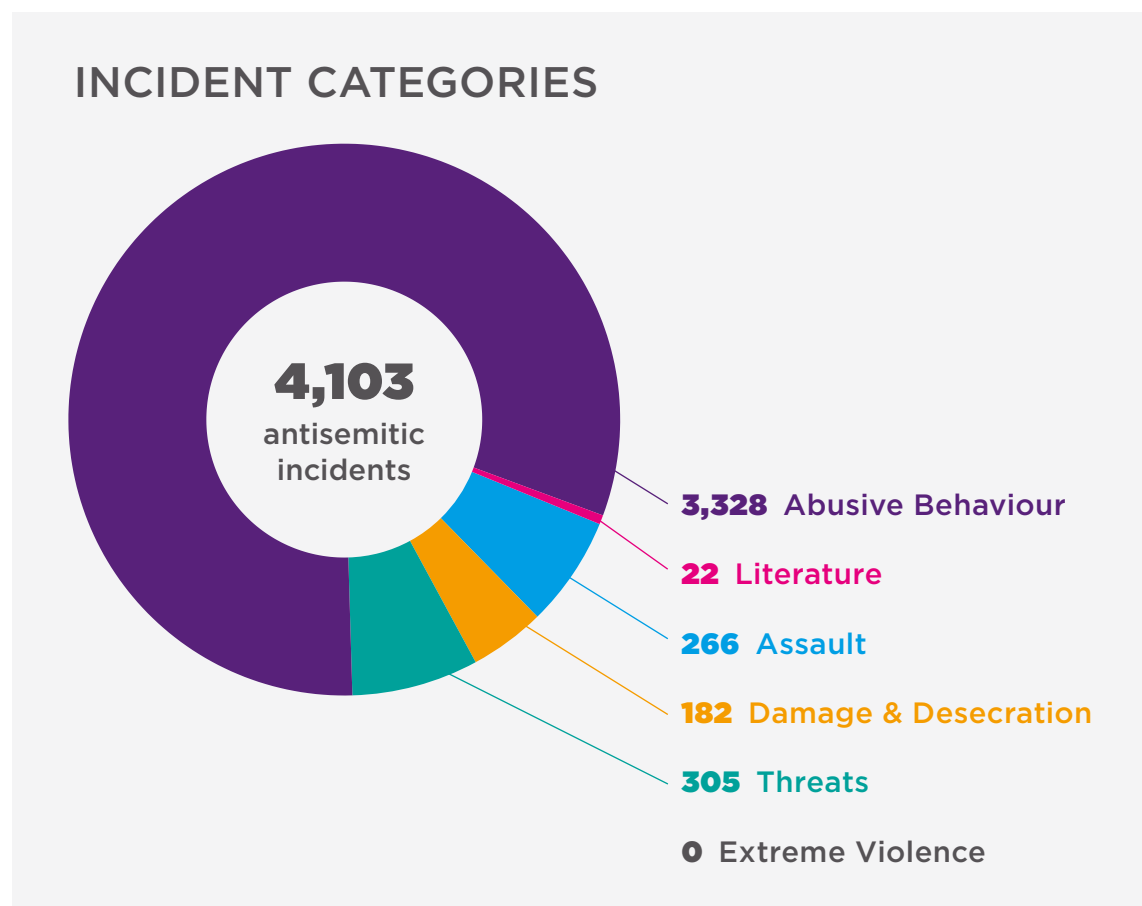
Incidents of Assault include any physical attack against a person or people, which does not pose a threat to their life or cause grievous bodily harm (GBH), but instead may be considered actual bodily harm (ABH) or common assault. This includes attempted assault, even if it fails, and spitting or throwing objects at Jews, including where the projectile misses its target.

CST recorded 266 incidents of Assault in 2023, an increase of 96% from the 136 assaults reported in 2022 and the highest ever annual total in this category. There were 174 assaults reported to CST in 2021, 97 in 2020, and 158 in 2019. In 58 of the attacks, stones, bricks, eggs, bottles or other objects were thrown at the victim, on 26 occasions from a passing vehicle; 53 involved punching or kicking the victim; in 36 cases, the victim was spat on; in 15 instances, the offender

stripped the victim of religious clothes or accessories; metal bars or other weapons were used to strike the victim in 13 cases; fake firearms were deployed in ten assaults, and vehicles were driven with the intention of harming pedestrians in a further ten; three attacks involved the use or threat of a knife. One hundred and twenty-two of these incidents were accompanied by verbal abuse,

and 25 contained an element of threatening language. None posed a serious enough risk of death to be classed as Extreme Violence, compared to one such incident in 2022.

Physical antisemitic attacks form 6% of the overall incident total, compared to 8% in 2022 and 2021. However, before 7 October 8% of antisemitic incidents recorded by CST fell into this category, consistent with the two years



prior. This suggests that the surge in anti-Jewish hate in the UK after Hamas' attack on Israel was expressed at a higher rate through verbal or written abuse – or threats and acts of vandalism – and proportionally less often through acts of violence.

Areas where Jewish populations are most sizeable, established and visible continue to be

the primary locations for physical antisemitic attacks. Of the 266 cases of Assault reported, exactly half – 133 incidents – occurred across just five boroughs: Barnet (56) and Hackney (41) in Greater London, Bury (17) and Salford (13) in Greater Manchester, and Gateshead (6) in Northumbria. These regions are home to some of the largest and most clearly identifiable Jewish communities in the UK.<sup>18</sup> The prominence of Jewish signifiers, individual or communal, correlates with the likelihood of antisemitic assault. These symbols may be perceived by the offender as a threat to what they interpret to be their own culture and territory, or as something so alien from their own lived experience that it becomes worthy of degradation. It may also provide perpetrators with a certainty of who and what they are attacking, and a gratification in maximising their target's public humiliation by stripping them of their markers of religious identity. Indeed, at least 98 (37%) of these 266 instances of violence targeted people who were identifiably Jewish, usually on account of

their religious insignia, traditional clothing or Jewish school uniform.

It is concerning that antisemitic violence has continued to involve minors in relatively high proportions.<sup>19</sup> While the percentage of Assault offenders and victims who were children (for incidents where CST obtained a description of their age) fell from 39% and 37% respectively in 2022 to 37% and 30% respectively in 2023, both figures remain higher than the proportion reported pre-2021, and is higher than the proportion of child offenders and victims across all incident types together. In 2020, children were offenders in 27% of incidents in the category of Assault where offender age was provided, and victims in 26% of the violent incidents where victim age was provided. In 2021, these figures rose to 33% for child offenders and 34% for child victims. Forty (15%) of the 266 cases of antisemitic Assault reported to CST in 2023 were perpetrated by children against children.

## CASE STUDY

### Assault in Central London

A visibly Jewish man was walking home from a Sabbath morning service in London, when a group of people attending a pro-Palestinian demonstration shouted, *"We are going to rape your mother, you dirty Jew"*. They approached him and began kicking out at him, saying, *"Allahu Akbar"* and calling him a *"filthy yahud"* [*"Jew"* in Arabic]. They then threatened to beat him up if he went to a particular train station in London.

<sup>18</sup> A further 16 and 14 incidents in this category took place in Westminster and the City of Manchester respectively. These are the political hubs of their cities with the highest annual footfall, where many demonstrations and vigils were held in response to Hamas' act of terror.

## Damage & Desecration of Jewish Property

This category includes any physical attack directed against Jewish-owned property, or property that is perceived to be connected to Jews, which is not life-threatening. This includes the daubing of antisemitic slogans or symbols (such as swastikas) – including fixing stickers and posters – on Jewish property; damage caused to property where it appears that the property has been specifically targeted because of its perceived Jewish connection, or where antisemitic expressions are made by the offender while causing the damage; and the hacking of Jewish websites and social media accounts with antisemitic material, or where the site has been targeted specifically because of its relevance to the

<sup>19</sup> These include attacks wherein mixed groups of adults and minors were targeted, as do all the figures in this paragraph.



Jewish community. As this type of incident is usually only seen after the act has been completed, it is often very difficult to get any information about the perpetrators.

There were 182 instances of Damage & Desecration of Jewish property recorded by CST in 2023, the most ever reported in a single year and an increase of 146% from 74 incidents of this type recorded in 2022. There were 82 antisemitic incidents recorded in this category in 2021, 74 in 2020, and 88 in 2019. Forty-three of these incidents saw damage done to the homes and vehicles of Jewish people, 14 to Jewish businesses and organisations, nine to synagogues, nine to Jewish schools, seven involved damage to public menorahs (candelabras used during the festival of Chanukah), and there were five desecrations of Jewish cemeteries.

In 48 of the 182 instances of Damage & Desecration, the offender used graffiti, daubing, stickers or posters of an antisemitic nature to deface the Jewish target, while eggs, stones, bricks, bottles or other projectiles were thrown at Jewish property to cause damage on 23 occasions (once from a passing vehicle). CST recorded 13 cases involving the destruction of a mezuzah (a Jewish prayer scroll affixed to a building's entrance), four in which the offender punched or kicked Jewish property, four where non-kosher foodstuffs were left at or on Jewish premises, and three involving the breaking of windows.

There were two cases wherein the offender spat at Jewish-owned property, one in which they used a metal bat, and one instance of a vehicle being driven into a building in order to damage it. CST recorded an additional two examples wherein Jewish websites and social media accounts were hacked. All included some element of anti-Jewish focus, language or imagery to be recorded among these figures by CST.

The most common kind of incident reported in this category, however, involved the desecration of posters of victims kidnapped and murdered by Hamas. This counts as Jewish property as it was Jewish people who printed and put them up, and the majority of the posters' subjects were Jewish too. CST recorded at least 53 incidents in which these posters were either ripped down or scrawled upon with antisemitic abuse.

## CASE STUDY

### Hostage poster defaced in London

In December, a poster of a baby kidnapped by Hamas was defaced with two swastikas.



## Threats

This category includes only direct antisemitic Threats, whether verbal or written. This would include potential improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that were designed to be hoaxes rather than IEDs that are intended to be viable.

CST recorded 305 direct antisemitic Threats in 2023, a record annual total, rising by 196% from the 103 incidents of this kind reported in 2022. The total of 305 direct antisemitic Threats is more than double the previous record for any year, when 143 Threats were recorded in 2021. There were 85 incidents in this category in 2020 and 99 in 2019.

Eighty-eight of the 305 Threats took place in public spaces, while 12 took place at the homes of Jewish individuals; 22 were aimed at Jewish businesses or organisations; 21 were directed at synagogues, and an additional four at congregants on their way to or from prayers; 15 occurred within the context of university education; 14 targeted Jewish schools, and a further four were made to Jewish schoolchildren on their way to or from their place of education; public figures were threatened in five incidents. Eighty-two of the incidents in this category involved written threats on online platforms, 23 were delivered via phone call or message, five via mail, and there were ten bomb threats made.<sup>20</sup>

## CASE STUDY

### Threatening letter sent to a Jewish school

In November, a threatening letter was sent to the headteacher of a Jewish school in Hertfordshire containing anti-Zionist, Islamist extremist rhetoric. It read:

DR [REDACTED]

BEWARE

Jihadi is being fought and you are going to have your throat slit by us, Jihadi Muslims because

—You are head of Jewish school, what a f—ker, how can you do this  
 —Y0u probably smoke and drink alcohol  
 —You eat no halal meat  
 —You aren't married  
 —you aren't Muslim  
 —we see you like music which is un Islamic  
 —you wear a tie and are western  
 —you are Jew lover

You f—ker JIHAD JIHAD JIHAD INTIFADA INTIFADA INTIFADA

BEHEADINGS AND INTIFADA

DR [REDACTED] WHAT A LOSER  
 FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEE WE SHALL BE FREE  
 YOU ZIONIST!

<sup>20</sup>This figure includes a bomb threat sent via email to several Jewish locations around the country simultaneously, which CST counts as a single incident.

## Abusive Behaviour

Within the umbrella of Abusive Behaviour falls a wide range of incident types, including everything encompassed by verbal and written antisemitic abuse other than direct threats. The category also includes antisemitic emails, text messages, social media posts and comments, as well as targeted antisemitic letters (that is, one-off letters aimed at and sent to a specific individual), irrespective of whether the recipient is Jewish. This is different from a mass mailing of antisemitic leaflets, pamphlets or group emails, which is dealt with by the separate Literature category. The verbal abuse can be face-to-face or via telephone calls and voicemail messages. Antisemitic graffiti on non-Jewish property is also included in this category.

There were 3,328 incidents reported to CST in the category of Abusive Behaviour in 2023, comprising 81% of the 4,103 total and signalling a rise of 149% from the 1,339 instances of Abusive Behaviour recorded in 2022. It is the highest annual figure ever reported in this category and is greater than the total number of antisemitic incidents in all categories combined for every other year on record. There were 1,849 incidents of Abusive Behaviour in 2021, 1,413 in 2020, and 1,449 in 2019.

In 666 of the Abusive Behaviour incidents reported in 2023 the victims were Jewish people in public, and were visibly Jewish in at least 275 of these. Jewish organisations or businesses were targets of 456 incidents in this category, while public figures – Jewish and non-Jewish – were subjected to antisemitic abuse on 137 occasions. Two hundred and fifty-eight of these incidents were related to the school sector, 146 to the university sector, and abuse was directed to synagogues or congregants travelling to or from their place of worship in 152 cases. On 95 occasions, victims

were harassed in their own homes, and in the workplace in 21 instances.

Among the 3,328 instances of Abusive Behaviour, 1,372 involved spoken abuse and 1,137 written abuse, while 189 contained generally threatening or intimidating language without making a direct threat to the victim. There were 408 cases of antisemitic graffiti, daubing, posters or stickers on non-Jewish property, of which 277 included depictions of swastikas or other references to Hitler, the Nazis or the Holocaust; 89 were related to Israel, and 40 combined both discourses. On 259 occasions, anti-Jewish images, memes or cartoons were used to cause offence. Three hundred and thirty-seven incidents in this category involved offensive shouts or gestures in public, of which 258 emanated from passing vehicles. Eighty-four abusive phone calls or voice messages were made, and there were 36 examples of individual hate mail that are not believed to have been mass-produced and circulated.

Of the 3,328 incidents in this category, 1,190 occurred online, constituting 36% of the category's total. In total across all categories there were 1,282 online incidents reported, the most ever recorded in a calendar year, rising from 359 in 2022 (of which 340 were classed as Abusive Behaviour). This increase is a stark reminder of how fundamental the growing number of social media and instant messaging services is to the production, dissemination and amplification of contemporary hate speech. Here, anti-Jewish hate can be cultivated, expressed and affirmed by those who share it. Abuse can instantly be projected globally, whether indiscriminate or targeted, under a cloak of anonymity. As long as those responsible for the content on these platforms do not prioritise the task of moderating the hate hosted on their sites, whether in the name of free speech or through outright

indifference, antisemitism will naturally fester on these channels.

Virtual anti-Jewish hate does have consequences in the non-virtual world. Every antisemitic post, comment, message, meme and video carries with it the capacity to incite in-person action. Every antisemitic post, comment, message, meme and video further dilutes the taboo against verbalising hatred towards Jewish people. If this is enabled and encouraged by the inaction of the online spaces where they are published, then antisemitism will manifest more freely in both the online and offline worlds. In light of the Hamas attack on Israel, this relationship is evident in the immediate proliferation of online discussion, information and misinformation, the rapid spread of inflammatory, extreme anger over the topic, and the parallel eruption of anti-Jewish hate incidents across the UK.

## CASE STUDY

### Antisemitic comments in a London barbershop

In November, a Jewish man was having a haircut in London when he overheard an antisemitic conversation between two other customers. One of them said, *"Maybe Hitler was right, he knew what he knew,"* to which the other replied, *"Definitely. That's why he left some of them, so we could see."*

## Literature

This category covers mass-produced antisemitic literature that is distributed in multiple quantities. This can involve a single mass mailing or repeated individual mailings, but it must involve the multiple use of the same piece of literature in order to fall into this category. This is different from one-off cases of hate mail targeted at individual people or organisations, which would come under the category of either Abusive Behaviour or Threats. This category includes literature that is antisemitic in itself, irrespective of whether or not the recipient is Jewish, and cases where Jews are specifically targeted with malicious material, even if the content itself is not antisemitic. This would include, for instance, the mass mailing of neo-Nazi literature targeted at Jewish organisations or homes, even if the literature did not mention Jews. This category also includes antisemitic emails that are sent to groups of recipients. The statistics for this category give no indication of the extent of distribution. A single mass mailing of antisemitic literature is only counted as one incident, although it could involve material being sent to dozens of recipients. Thus, the number of incidents reflects the number of offenders and their actions, rather than the number of victims.

There were 22 incidents reported to CST of antisemitic Literature in 2023, a 144% rise from nine such incidents recorded in 2022 and the third-highest total ever logged in this category. CST recorded ten instances of Literature distribution in 2021, 12 in 2020, and 18 in 2019.

In five of the antisemitic incidents recorded in this category in 2023, the offender spammed various accounts on X and Instagram with identical abusive comments; five incidents were reports of identical posters in Birmingham and Manchester equating Zionism to Nazism; four incidents, all reported by Kent police, involved antisemitic material posted to addresses in the area throughout March; in two cases, Jewish organisations were

spammed with identical antisemitic emails; one incident involved posters comparing Israel to Nazis being handed around at a pro-Palestinian demonstration in London; another describes a spate of antisemitic posters inciting violence against Jews in Waltham Forest; there was one example of a mass-produced evangelical leaflet sent to a synagogue in Scotland; in one case, an anti-Israel email including stereotypes about Jewish people was sent out by a tutoring company to every contact in its mailing list; one report was made about Holocaust-related antisemitic content included on a university reading list; and there was one instance of a leaflet promoting halal cat food that contained a trope about Jewish greed.

## CASE STUDY

### Antisemitic pet food leaflet in Manchester

In December, CST received reports of a leaflet promoting halal cat food posted to homes in Greater Manchester. It contained antisemitic messaging [middle column, central paragraph]





## 7 October & Anti-Jewish Hate

The driving force behind the 147% rise in cases of anti-Jewish hate reported to CST in 2023, and the record annual total of 4,103 incidents, is the sheer volume of antisemitism recorded in the aftermath of Hamas' terror attack on Israel. This trigger event had a seismic effect on antisemitic incident levels in the UK that outweighs the impact of previous wars involving Israel, and the impact was instant. Thirty-one instances of anti-Jewish hate were reported on 7 October,

the day of Hamas' attack, whereas CST had recorded an average of five incidents per day between 1 January and 6 October. Over the following week there were 416 antisemitic incidents reported to CST, peaking at 80 incidents on 11 October – the highest total for any single day ever recorded by CST. The

total of 1,330 incidents recorded in the month of October exceeds the three previous highest monthly totals combined. These occurred in May 2021 (661 incidents), July 2014 (317 incidents) and January 2009 (289 incidents), all of which were the result of antisemitic reactions in the UK to previous Israel-related conflicts. The 931 antisemitic incidents reported in November 2023 and the 477 in December make them the second- and fourth-worst months for antisemitism in the UK ever recorded by CST.

In the week after Hamas' attack on Israel, CST recorded 416 antisemitic incidents, more than in any subsequent week. Rather than the daily and weekly incident counts increasing as Israel's military response gathered momentum

and Palestinian casualties rose in Gaza, they peaked in the days and weeks immediately following 7 October and slowly declined thereafter, although always remaining elevated from their norm before the Hamas attack occurred. This suggests that many of the incidents were in fact motivated by reactions to Hamas' massacre, rather than by reactions to Israel's military response which had yet to take hold. Between 7 October

and 31 December, CST recorded 2,699 antisemitic incidents, averaging 31 per day, 66% of the overall annual total. The different nature and scale of the reaction to the Hamas terror attack, when compared to previous antisemitic reactions to wars in Gaza and Israel, can be seen by looking at the most recent

previous such conflict in May 2021. During that period, the two weeks of conflict from 10 May to 23 May 2021 saw 482 antisemitic incidents reported to CST. However, in the two weeks following 7 October, CST recorded 787 antisemitic incidents in the UK – despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that unlike in 2021 this conflict began with a mass terror attack on Israel that left 1,200 Israelis dead and over 240 kidnapped as hostages.

Certain trends started to emerge immediately, which would come to define the main themes of antisemitism observed in the UK in 2023.

The subject of Israel, Palestine, Hamas and the war became the single most dominant discourse recorded in antisemitic incidents.

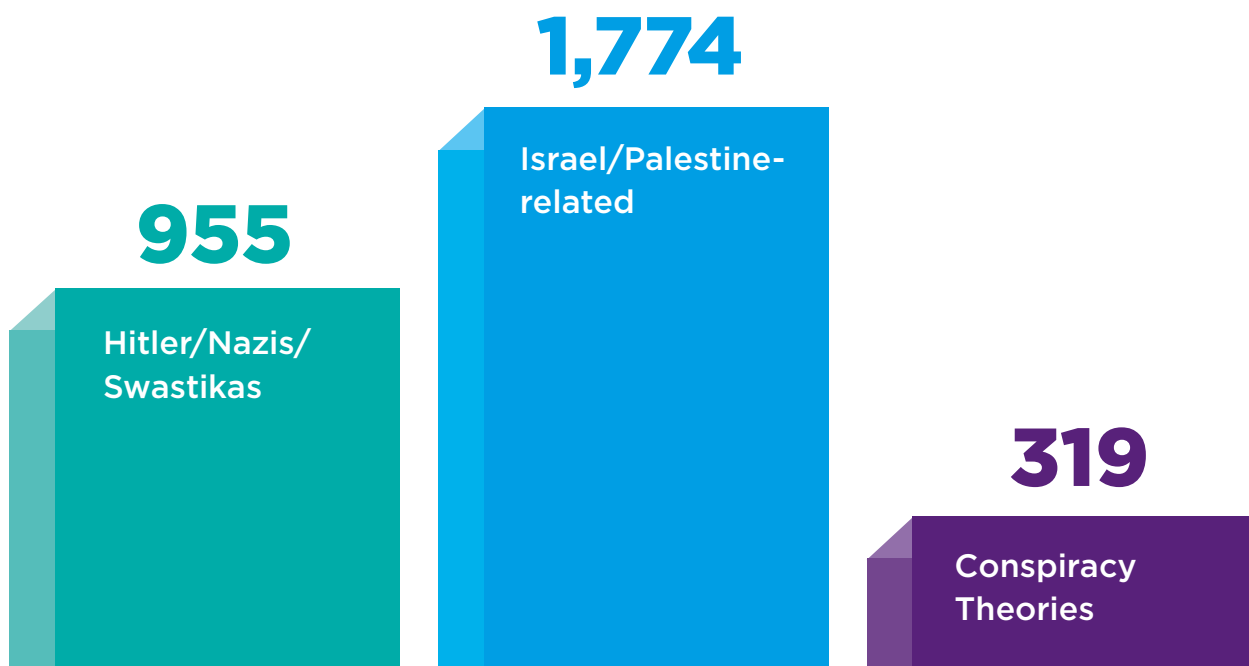
**This trigger event had a seismic effect on antisemitic incident levels in the UK that outweighs the impact of previous wars involving Israel, and the impact was instant.**

There were 1,774 antisemitic incidents reported to CST that alluded to the Middle East throughout 2023. Between 1 January and 6 October, just 262 (19%) of the 1,404 reports of anti-Jewish hate included Israel-related antisemitism. Between 7 October and 31 December, it was present in 1,512 (56%) of the 2,699 incidents recorded by CST. In 1,299 instances, there was explicit anti-Zionist motivation, of which 1,124 (91%) occurred on or after 7 October. The words “*Zionism*” or “*Zionist*” were used in 260 cases, of which 164 (63%) took place on or after 7 October. In 243 incidents, the offender drew comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany, of which 195 (80%) happened on or after 7 October.

The phrase “*Free Palestine*” formed part of anti-Jewish abuse or targeting in at least 427 incidents, of which 383 (90%) occurred on or after 7 October. These two words are not, in and of themselves, antisemitic, and these incidents are only included in these statistics if they involved Jewish people, organisations and locations being singled out for threats and abuse because they are Jewish, or if there is additional antisemitic language used. It is a phrase that, through this usage, has

become a formalised, almost anthemic slogan of anti-Jewish abuse, which offenders know will offend or intimidate their target. In other cases, it is shouted as a kneejerk reaction to the presence of Jewish people among those who cannot contain their hatred of Israel, and see no reason to distinguish between Jews in the UK and the nation they despise. This emphasises the way in which events in the region shape the quantity and content of anti-Jewish hate speech in the UK. Israel captures public attention and becomes the main vessel through which this prejudice is expressed, and Jewish people are targeted as its proxy by those who blur the line between Israel and Jews. In periods without significant trigger events in the Middle East, Holocaust-related narratives are usually the prevalent rhetoric strands found in antisemitic incidents in the UK.

The 7 October attack also prompted record annual antisemitic incident totals in the sphere of education. In 2023, CST recorded 325 incidents affecting people and property in the school sector, rising by 232% from 98 incidents reported in 2022. Of these 325 cases, 229 (71%) occurred between 7



October and the end of the year. University-related incidents were similarly affected. CST recorded 182 instances of anti-Jewish hate within the context of higher education, an increase of 203% from 60 such incidents in 2022. Of these, 148 (81%) happened post-7 October, and 134 (74%) over the course of the year made explicit references to Israel and the Middle East in addition to antisemitic language or targeting.

Jewish communal organisations and businesses became increasingly attractive targets for antisemitism following the Hamas terror attack. In 2023, 143 anti-Jewish hate incidents targeted these institutions prior to 7 October. After that date, offenders directed a flurry of online hate at CST and other communal organisations that published statements addressing Hamas' act of terror or the rising antisemitic incident levels in the UK. Between the Hamas attack and the year's end, Jewish establishments were victims in 354 incidents, and a record 497 incidents were reported across the whole of the year, an increase of 277% from the 132 such cases in 2022. Of these 497 incidents, 328 (66%) were related to the Middle East, 268 (76%) of which happened on or after 7 October.

An increase of 96% was reported in the volume of anti-Jewish hate directed at public figures, who were victims in 143 incidents in 2023 compared to 73 in 2022. Whereas just 45 occurred pre-7 October, 98 (69%) of these occurred between 7 October and 31 December. Of the 143 cases of antisemitism targeting people of prominence, 36 included theories about Jewish control, while 101 referenced Israel or Middle Eastern affairs.

These figures, and their significant surge in the aftermath of the Hamas attack, demonstrate how public figures, politicians and institutions in the UK, Jewish and non-

Jewish, are held accountable for alleged Israeli actions – or, in some cases, people express conspiracy theories claiming that Israel supposedly influences and buys the complicity of public figures and institutions in the UK – all of whom are perceived by antisemites to be collaborators in a global Jewish conspiracy.

Before the Hamas attack, CST recorded 78 antisemitic incidents affecting synagogues, staff and congregants either at the location or travelling to or from their place of worship. From 7 October to 31 December, 126 instances of anti-Jewish hate were reported targeting people and buildings in this sector, 75 of which contained discourse explicitly relating to Israel and Palestine. It is worth emphasising that a synagogue is a place of Jewish prayer and communal activity, and the most visible symbol of a Jewish presence in any neighbourhood. As such, an attack on a synagogue is not a political statement against Israel, but an assault on Jewish life in the United Kingdom. These figures combined to a record annual total of 204 cases of anti-Jewish hate affecting synagogues and the people travelling to, from, or already inside them, an increase of 143% from 84 such incidents reported in 2022.

The events of 7 October and subsequent war also impacted where antisemitism manifested. CST recorded 323 antisemitic incidents in Westminster in 2023, making it the London borough with the second-highest total for reports of anti-Jewish hate, only behind Barnet – the local authority with the largest Jewish community in the UK. It is a substantial rise of 389% from the 66 Westminster-based incidents recorded in 2022. Of the 323 incidents reported in Westminster, CST recorded just 86 prior to 7 October, while 237 (73%) happened after Hamas' terror attack, of which 164 (69%) contained discourse

referencing the Middle East. Westminster is the capital's political hub and the location of many of the anti-Israel demonstrations post-7 October. While many of their attendees were there in peaceful protest, these marches attracted individuals who were reported for antisemitic placards or hate speech. It was also the site of many of the vigils for Hamas' victims, which were sometimes targeted by passers-by with anti-Jewish behaviour. In total, at least 44 of the Westminster-based incidents took place at, or on the way to or from, anti-Israel protests or vigils for the hostages and other victims of Hamas terrorism. For comparison, 599 (69%) of Barnet's incidents occurred on or after 7 October, of which 350 (58%) contained Israel-related discourse. Although Barnet's numerical total and proportional rise after the Hamas attack is still high, Westminster's political and geographical significance influences the content of the incidents recorded in the area, and the sharpness of the increase observed when there is a trigger event in the Middle East.

As well as affecting the places where anti-Jewish hate took place, the reaction to the Hamas attack had an effect on its form. Before 7 October, the 116 antisemitic incidents that fell into the category of Assault formed 8% of the 1,404 incidents recorded, consistent with their proportion of the figures reported in 2022 and 2021. Of the 2,699 reports of anti-Jewish hate made on or after 7 October, 150 – or 6% – were classed as Assault. This swing was big enough to impact the annual

percentage of this category: the 266 physical attacks on British Jews recorded throughout the whole of 2023 constitute 6% of the 4,103 annual total. This suggests that the surge in anti-Jewish hate in the UK after Hamas' attack on Israel was expressed at a higher rate through verbal or written abuse – or threats and acts of vandalism – and proportionally less often through acts of violence.



"SS IDF" daubed on a synagogue, Sussex, October

The rise in anti-Jewish hate following Hamas' attack had a significant influence on the data recorded by CST pertaining to offender ethnicity. CST will ask incident victims or witnesses if they can describe the person, or people, who committed the incident they are reporting. Interactions between perpetrators and victims may be crude and brief, leaving little reliable information, and while it is often possible to receive reports regarding the apparent appearance or motivation of incident offenders, this is not absolute proof of the offenders' actual ethnic or religious identity, nor of their motivation. With that caveat in mind, CST obtained a description

of the ethnic appearance of the offender or offenders in 1,282 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported during 2023, and they changed markedly on 7 October. Between 1 January and 6 October, 53% were described as white – North European; 3% as white – South European; 15% as black; 11% as South Asian; 0% as Southeast Asian; and 18% as Arab or North African. However, between 7 October and 31 December, 30% were described as white – North European; 2% as white – South European; 11% as black; 15% as South Asian; 1% as Southeast Asian; and 41% as Arab or North African. In years without an Israel-related trigger event, approximately 55-60% of antisemitic incident perpetrators are consistently described to CST as being of white appearance, whereas the data repeatedly shows that this changes in periods of Middle East conflict. This suggests that the large surge in anti-Jewish hate incidents during this period involves perpetrators who are not usually represented in carrying out antisemitic hate incidents, but who become active in response to conflicts involving Israel.

A by-product of the rise in antisemitism that took place in school and university spaces, as well as at workplaces (23 incidents, compared to 15 in 2022) and the homes of Jewish people (153 incidents, up from 135 in 2022) was the number of reports wherein the victim and offender had some kind of relationship prior to the incident. This was the case on 211 occasions, rising from 167 in 2022. One hundred and seven (51%) of these ‘interpersonal’ incidents happened following Hamas’ attack on Israel, of which 69 (64%) contained discourse about events

in the region. They demonstrate how anti-Israel sentiment so often becomes antisemitic because offenders direct it at the nearest Jewish person they know, simply because they are Jewish. In the minds of these perpetrators, their Jewish classmates, colleagues,

neighbours and friends are either responsible for Israel’s alleged actions, or viable stand-ins as objects of their prejudice.

Hamas’ terror attack on Israel shaped every aspect of antisemitism in 2023, and its impact will be evident in every chapter in this report.

## Discourse relating to the conflict is used by antisemitic incident offenders to abuse Jews

### 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 difference between the two can be subtle and the subject of much debate. Clearly, it would not be acceptable to define all anti-Israel speech and action 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, antisemitic rhetoric 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 phrase “*Zionist Lobby*”, when it is reserved for Jewish organisations and individuals regardless of whether they have taken a public stance on Zionism, walks 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. 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 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 or is not considered 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, incidents that compare Israel to, for example, apartheid South Africa, would not normally be recorded as antisemitic incidents. While the charge that Israel practises apartheid upsets many, it does not contain the same visceral capacity to offend as the comparison with Nazism, which carries particular meaning for Jewish people because of the Holocaust; nor does it play on Israel’s Jewishness as a way of causing hurt.

CST recorded 1,774 antisemitic incidents that alluded or were related to Israel and the Middle East in 2023. Of these, 243 included a comparison between Israel and the Nazis, while the terms “*Zionism*” or “*Zionist*” were employed in 260 cases of anti-Jewish hate. There were 1,299 reports in which the offender demonstrated outright anti-Zionist motivation that went beyond more superficial discourse about the region or the conflict, alongside explicitly anti-Jewish comments or abuse aimed at unsuspecting Jewish people. 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 security of the UK Jewish community.

## 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 960 incidents reported to CST in 2023 in which the victims were ordinary Jewish individuals in public. In at least 408 of these, they were visibly Jewish on account of their traditional clothing, Jewish school uniforms, or jewellery and insignia bearing religious symbols. In 2022, this was true of 467 and 200 incidents respectively. There was an element of verbal abuse in 1,676 of the 4,103 incidents recorded by CST in 2023, 266 of which incorporated threatening language. On 397 occasions, anti-Jewish hate was shouted or expressed by random strangers in public, of which 303 instances were perpetrated by the occupant of a vehicle. All of this is broadly representative of the most common type of offline incident reported to CST: the random, unprovoked, verbal harassment of individuals 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.

This was especially true of incidents recorded after Hamas' attack on Israel and subsequent war in the region. Between 7 October and 31 December, CST recorded 561 instances of verbal abuse overtly motivated by events in the Middle East. In at least 270 of these, the phrase "*Free Palestine*" was shouted, and at least 227 targeted random Jewish people in public.

There were 87 antisemitic incidents recorded at Jewish schools in 2023, compared to 20

in 2022. An additional 111 incidents involved Jewish schoolchildren away from school premises, often on their way to or from home, compared to 41 in 2022. CST recorded 127 incidents involving Jewish schoolchildren or staff at non-faith schools, rising from the 37 such incidents in 2022. This results in a total of 325 incidents affecting people and buildings in the school sector, the highest number of incidents CST has ever recorded in this sector, and a sharp increase of 232% from the 98 such incidents reported in 2022.

Of these 325 incidents, 32 came under the category of Assault, 18 of which occurred off school premises; ten incidents were classed as Damage & Desecration of Jewish property; there were 25 direct Threats made; 258 incidents were classed as Abusive Behaviour. Two hundred and twenty-nine (70%) of these 325 school-related incidents took place after 7 October, of which 91 occurred at non-Jewish schools.

In most years, it would be unusual for more school-related antisemitic incidents to take place at mainstream (i.e. non-Jewish) schools than at Jewish faith schools, or on the commutes of Jewish schoolchildren to and from school each day. In 2022, for example, anti-Jewish hate affected children on their way to or from their place of education more often than it did at non-faith schools. However, this typically shifts when there is a significant trigger event involving Israel, and tensions in educational spaces where Jewish and non-Jewish teachers and pupils coexist are exacerbated. In 2023, several Jewish pupils and teachers contacted CST, fearful of returning to places of education and work that had become hostile. This perhaps reflects the anxieties of the wider Jewish community in the UK who, particularly in areas and institutions where they are a small minority, are vulnerable to a backlash whenever Israel is in the news.

A rise in anti-Jewish hate was also observed in higher education. In 2023, 182 antisemitic incidents affected Jewish students, academics, student unions or other student bodies, or were perpetrated by individuals involved in the university sector. This is an increase of 203% from the 60 such incidents recorded in 2022 and is the highest annual total of university-related antisemitic incidents CST has ever recorded. Of these 182 university-related incidents, five were classified as Assault, 13 as Damage & Desecration, 15 as Threats, 146 as Abusive Behaviour, and there were three instances of antisemitic Literature. Seventy-two of them took place on campus or university property (compared to 28 in 2022) and 110 away from campus, of which 77 were online. Of these 182 incidents, 134 (74%) made explicit references to Israel and the Middle East in addition to antisemitic language or targeting, and 148 (81%) occurred in the aftermath of 7 October.

The record totals of school- and university-related antisemitic incidents reported to CST are consistent with the previous upswing in antisemitism witnessed in the education sector in 2021, which similarly correlated to an escalation in conflict between Israel and Hamas. One potential explanation for this increase is the role these institutions play as spaces for young people to gather as part of a community and share a sense of belonging. It is possible that this craving for being part of a group is fulfilled by subscription to a cause, and partly galvanises such incidents. It may also be due to the close proximity of young Jews to people with antisemitic views on a daily basis, which is less common in other parts of society. However, the complexity of this geopolitical conflict, the relationship between words, actions and potential violence, and the connotations of Israel with Jews, are not always fully understood by some young people who are influenced by simplistic and antagonistic online content. While this generous interpretation does not excuse or

## VICTIM TYPES



In Public  
**960**



Visibly Jewish  
**408**



School-related  
**325**



University-related  
**182**



Synagogue-related  
**204**



Jewish Organisations  
**497**



Public Figures  
**143**



At Home  
**153**



At Work  
**23**

absolve the offenders of their responsibility, it does represent the role that these educational environments play as intensified microcosms of society more broadly.

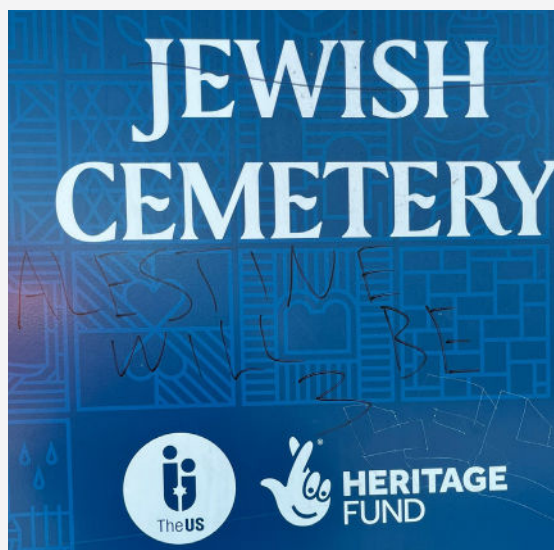
There were 155 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023 that targeted synagogues (including buildings, congregants and staff while at the location), exceeding 2022's total of 56 by 177%. A further 49 incidents saw congregants

or staff targeted on their way to or from prayer services, rising by 75% from the 28 such incidents reported to CST in 2022. This comprises a net increase of 143% in cases of anti-Jewish hate affecting synagogues and the people travelling to, from, or already inside them, from 84 in 2022 to 204 in 2023. As with figures in the educational sphere, this constitutes a record annual total for such incidents, trumping the 94 observed in 2021. This rise can be ascribed to 7 October and the following surge in anti-Jewish hate, when synagogues represented a visible target for those emboldened to voice their antisemitism by events in the Middle East. One hundred and

Twenty-three incidents were related to the workplace, rising by 53% from the 15 reports of this kind in 2022. Meanwhile, a record 497 incidents targeted Jewish businesses and organisations (including one youth movement), a rise of 277% from the 132 such cases in 2022. Following Hamas' attack on Israel, offenders directed a flurry of online hate at CST and other communal organisations that published statements addressing their act of terror or the rising antisemitic incident levels in the UK. Of these 497 incidents targeting Jewish organisations or businesses, 354 (71%) occurred on or after 7 October. Throughout the whole year, 328 (66%) were related to the Middle East, 268 (76%) of which happened on or after 7 October. In total, 80 (16%) of the incidents targeting Jewish organisations and businesses contained allegations of disproportionate Jewish power in the world.

An increase of 96% was reported in the volume of anti-Jewish hate directed at public figures, who were victims in 143 incidents in 2023 compared to 73 in 2022. Ninety-eight (69%) of these occurred between 7 October and 31 December. Of the 143 cases of antisemitism targeting people of prominence, 36 included theories about Jewish control, while 101 referenced Israel or Middle Eastern affairs. These figures demonstrate how public figures, politicians and institutions in the UK, Jewish and non-Jewish, are held accountable for alleged Israeli actions – or, in some cases, people express conspiracy theories claiming that Israel supposedly influences and buys the complicity of public figures and institutions in the UK – all of whom are perceived by antisemites to be collaborators in a global Jewish conspiracy. One hundred and thirty-six (95%) of the 143 incidents directed at people of public prominence were online, while this was the case in 382 (77%) of the 497 reports of antisemitism targeting Jewish

"PALESTINE  
WILL BE  
3 [FREE]"  
written on a  
sign for Jewish  
cemetery,  
London,  
October



twenty-six (62%) of these incidents occurred between 7 October and the end of the year, of which 75 contained discourse explicitly relating to Israel and Palestine. It is worth emphasising that a synagogue is a place of Jewish prayer and communal activity, and the most visible symbol of a Jewish presence in any neighbourhood. As such, an attack on a synagogue is not a political statement against Israel, but an assault on Jewish life in the United Kingdom. And from life, to death: a further five acts of anti-Jewish hate resulted in the damage of Jewish cemeteries and graves in 2023, compared to four in 2022.

organisations and businesses. The virtual presence of individuals and institutions in the public eye exposes them more to abuse than they might have been before the internet and social media provided an access point for antisemites to send their hatred directly to its target. The use of these platforms, and their centrality to modern life, has granted a new degree of public access to high-profile people and bodies, and is one of the reasons why these fora have become so popular as a means for spreading hate.

In 2023, 153 incidents reported to CST took place at people's residential property or affected their parked vehicles. It is a rise of 13% from the 135 incidents of this kind recorded in 2022. Forty-eight of these cases were perpetrated by a neighbour, forming part of the 211 instances wherein the victim and offender knew each other prior to the incident, an increase from 167 in 2022. This total, also influenced by the record totals observed in non-Jewish schools, universities and workplaces, is indicative of how the antisemitism that follows a trigger event in the Middle East affects the nature of personal relationships in the UK. In these examples, offenders turned on a Jewish person they knew and could access – classmates, colleagues, neighbours and friends – and directed abuse their way, standing in as proxy targets for their feelings about Israel. One hundred and seven (51%) of these 'interpersonal' incidents happened following Hamas' attack on Israel, of which 61 (57%) contained discourse about events in the region.

There were 40 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023 that were in some way related to professional football, falling by 29% from the 56 such incidents recorded in 2022. Of these, 14 involved racist abuse or graffiti inside a stadium, six were reports of anti-Jewish hate in a non-stadium environment,

and 20 were online incidents, five of which were anti-Jewish replies to football clubs or supporters' groups posting about Jewish holidays on social media. A further 18 incidents were reported in the context of amateur football, compared to four in 2022.

CST received a description of the victim or victims' gender in 2,118 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023. Of these, 1,188 (56%) were male; 788 (37%) were female; in 141 incidents (7%), the victims were mixed groups of males and females; in one incident, the victims were a mixed group of females and people who identify as non-binary.

The victim or victims' age was ascertained in 2,121 of the antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023. Of these, 1,669 (79%) targeted adult victims, of which 32 involved adults over the age of 65; 373 (18%) involved victims who were minors; in 79 instances (3%), mixed groups of adults and minors were attacked. It means that children were amongst the victims in 21% of incidents, the highest percentage since 2017, when 18% of incidents where the victim's age was known exclusively targeted minors and an additional 6% targeted mixed groups of children and adults. The proportion of anti-Jewish hate directed at minors has been on the rise since 2020, when the victims were children in just 8% of incidents, and 3% of cases targeted adults and minors together. In 2021, 14% of incidents targeted victims under 18 years old and 4% targeted both adults and minors, spurred by the spike in school-related antisemitism when Israel and Hamas' conflict escalated that year. These figures increased to 15% and 5% respectively in 2022. Within the context of record numbers of school-related incidents and the consistently high proportion of child offenders perpetrating anti-Jewish hate, it is worrying that minors are increasingly sought out as the target of antisemitic hate.



## 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. Many 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 1,282 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported in 2023. Of these, 492 (38%) were described as white – North European; 31 (2%) as white – South European; 158 (12%) as black; 174 (14%) as South Asian; ten (1%) as Southeast Asian; finally, 417 (33%) were described as Arab or North African. This means that in comparison to years without a significant trigger event in the Middle East, in 2023 a higher percentage of offenders than

normal were described as being of Arab, North African or South Asian origin. This contrast is evident when compared to the breakdown of offender ethnicities in 2022, when 51% were described as white – North European; 5% as white – South European; 16% as black; 10% as South Asian; less than 1% as Southeast Asian; and 18% as Arab or North African. Indeed, between 1 January and 6 October 2023, 53% were described as white – North European; 3% as white – South European; 15% as black; 11% as South Asian; 0% as Southeast Asian; and 18% as Arab or North African. A similar change in the relative proportions of incident offender ethnicities was also observed in 2021, when the last war between Israel and Hamas occurred. It is important to bear in mind that these details rely on the subjective judgement of witnesses and victims, made in what can be brief, disorienting encounters.

A description of the gender of the offender or offenders was obtained by CST in 2,170 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023. Of these, the offenders were described as male in 1,674 incidents (77% of incidents where the offender's gender was obtained, compared to 82% in 2022); female in 441 incidents (20%, a rise from 16% in 2022); and mixed groups of males and females in 55 incidents (3%, up from 2% in 2022).

In 2,086 of the 4,103 reports of antisemitism in 2023, the approximate age of the offender or offenders was provided. Among them, 1,707 (82%) involved adult offenders, 20 of which involved adults described as over the age of 65; in 369 cases (18%), the perpetrators were minors; and there were ten instances (less than 1%) in which the offenders were a mix of adults and minors.

This age distribution continues a worrying trend that began in 2021, when a high volume of anti-Jewish activity was reported in the school sector in response to intensified conflict between Israel and Hamas – coinciding with the re-opening of schools after lockdowns – and 18% of offenders were under 18. This rose further to 20% in 2022. By way of contrast, 10% of incident offenders were described as children in 2020.

This elevated percentage occurred within the context of the intensification of violence in the Middle East in 2021, persisted through 2022, and remained high in 2023 even before 7 October, suggesting that this pattern is not necessarily rooted in anger towards Israel. However, Hamas' attack and subsequent war clearly contributed to the sustained high proportion of child offenders reported to CST, with another upswing in school-related antisemitism recorded. In 145 (38%) of the 379 incidents involving child perpetrators

in 2023, the language or imagery used referenced or was related to Israel, Palestine and the Middle East, of which 76 were overtly anti-Zionist. Children used Holocaust-related rhetoric in 89 incidents. Conversely, in 2022, it was Holocaust-related language that was the preferred discourse among under-18s, being present in 68 cases of anti-Jewish hate perpetrated by minors that year, while the topic of Israel was only mentioned in 11 incidents. While the percentage of children committing antisemitic hate acts remains consistently high, perhaps pointing at a more general trend of growing extremist views among young people, its language appears susceptible to change according to the sociopolitical landscape of the wider world.

## OFFENDER DESCRIPTIONS

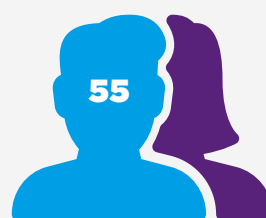
Where a description was obtained



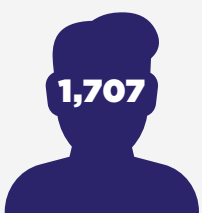
Described as  
male



Described as  
female



Described as mixed  
gender groups



Described as  
adults



Described as  
minors



Described as  
mixed age groups

## Discourse, Motivation & Ideology

CST attempts to assess the number of antisemitic incidents that take place in the UK each year within which there is evidence of political, religious, or ideological discourse or motivation. CST also monitors the number of instances where conspiracy-fuelled sentiments are present. Stereotypical tropes about the Jewish people's power, influence, and money – and claims that the tragedies of the Holocaust are exaggerated or invented – 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. In total, 2,631 (62%) of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023 included evidence of one or more political or ideological discourses or motivations. In 2022, they were present in 834 (50%) of 1,662 incidents. This increase in political language and motivations is another indicator of the impact of antisemitic reactions to the Hamas attack on Israel and subsequent war in Gaza.

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 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. Similarly, someone who shouts “*Free Palestine*” at people walking to synagogue may be a

staunch campaigner for Palestinian liberation, or perhaps they just consider it another weapon in their rhetorical arsenal to deploy against Jews.

### Israel-related antisemitism

In 2023, the discourse most frequently recorded in antisemitic incidents either referenced or was linked to Israel, Palestine, the Hamas terror attack or the subsequent war. This rhetoric was evident in 1,774 (43%) of the 4,103 incidents reported in 2023, a 621% rise from the 246 such cases in 2022, when there was no significant trigger event in the Middle East. Between 1 January and 6 October, 262 (19%) of the 1,404 reports of anti-Jewish hate included Israel-related antisemitism. Between 7 October and 31 December, it was present in 1,512 (56%) of the 2,699 incidents recorded by CST. On 1,299 occasions, anti-Zionist motivation was present alongside anti-Jewish language or targeting, up from 149 instances in 2022. Meanwhile, the words “*Zionism*” or “*Zionist*” were employed in 260 cases, either as euphemisms for “*Jewishness*” and “*Jew*” or alongside other antisemitic language, compared to 80 incidents of this kind in 2022. There were at least 427 instances wherein the phrase “*Free Palestine*” was used in speech or writing. CST does not consider this sentiment to be inherently antisemitic, but in these 427 incidents, it was directed at Jewish people or institutions purely because they were Jewish, or were part of a wider act that did include overtly anti-Jewish abuse.

### Holocaust-related antisemitism

In 955 incidents – 23% of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2023 – the offender or offenders alluded to Hitler, the Nazis, the Holocaust, used rhetoric associated with the period of Nazi rule, and/or punctuated

their abuse with a Nazi salute, the depiction of a swastika, or other related imagery. This is an increase of 104% from the 469 incidents employing these references in 2022, when this was the most prevalent narrative among antisemitic incidents; as it usually is during years when there is no Israel-related trigger event impacting the volume and content of anti-Jewish hate in the UK. Seventy of these 955 incidents contained the denial of either the scale of the Holocaust or its having happened at all, rising from 19 in 2022. In 184 of these 955 reports, the Holocaust, its perpetrators and/or their ideas were glorified, or the desire for a repeat mass-extinction of the Jews was expressed, rising from 80 in 2022. On eight occasions, the perpetrator simultaneously denied and glorified the Holocaust, a contradiction that encapsulates how confused and blurred antisemitic ideas can be in the minds of people who hate Jews. In 306 of these 955 incidents containing Nazi-related hate speech, the abuse was graffitied, daubed, scratched, stuck or printed on public or private property; in most of these instances, the vandalism incorporated the graphic of a swastika. There were 149 incidents wherein the perpetrator showed allegiance to extreme right-wing beliefs, increasing from 99 such incidents in 2022. On 101 occasions, this evidence of support for far-right ideology was present alongside the use of Nazi-era discourse. Meanwhile, there were 243 incidents in which a direct comparison was drawn between Israel and the Nazis, rising from 32 such cases in 2022. These are counted among both the totals for Israel- and Holocaust-related rhetoric, bridging the two most popular discourses employed by antisemites in 2023.

### Religiously motivated antisemitism

There were also increases observed in antisemitic incidents including discourse relating to Islam and Muslims, from 27

in 2022 to 122 in 2023, and in those where Islamist extremist ideology was present, rising from eight in 2022 to 83 in 2023. The significant difference between 2022 and 2023's totals for such incidents once again reflects how events in the Middle East change the volume and nature of anti-Jewish hate in the UK. An additional 48 instances of anti-Jewish hate featured another religious ideology, up from 31 in 2022.

### Conspiracy theories

Antisemitic conspiracy theories were present in 319 (8%) of the 4,103 incidents reported in 2023, marking an increase from the 162 such incidents recorded in 2022. Of these, 262 discussed Jewish power over global politics, media, finance and other industries (compared to 139 in 2022); 32 spread falsehoods about religious rituals and practices, such as Blood Libel (up from 16 in 2022); nine involved conspiratorial myths regarding the origins of Jews and Jewishness in attempts to undermine the legitimacy of any concept of modern Jewish identity, of which six also sought to dismiss the notion of a Jewish connection to Israel (triple the three incidents of this nature reported in 2022).



Online graphic containing multiple antisemitic conspiracy theories, August

### Antisemitism targeting customs and texts

Specific aspects of Judaism were attacked or deliberately mischaracterised for antisemitic purposes in 56 instances, more than the 32 such incidents recorded in 2022. Nineteen singled out religious traditions (an increase from 15 in 2022); a further 19 manipulated ideas and stories taken from religious scripture (compared to 13 reported in 2022); and 18 focused on religious literature (rising from four in 2022 that targeted specific Jewish holy books). In 168 cases the antisemitism was littered with anti-Jewish stereotypes, caricatures, or dehumanising language and imagery, more than twice the 88 such examples in 2022. Offenders reserved antisemitic abuse for specific ethnic groups that exist within the global Jewish population on ten occasions; this discourse did not feature in any antisemitic incident recorded the previous year.

### Politically motivated antisemitism

In 2023, CST recorded 48 incidents that were politically motivated or linked to specific political parties or their supporters, an increase from 40 reported in 2022. Two of these were connected to the Conservative Party (compared to three in 2022), one to both the Scottish Labour Party and Scottish Liberal Democrats simultaneously, and 45 to the Labour Party, rising from 35 in 2022. These were classed as such for the offender's expressed affiliation or support, because the abuse targeted party members or politicians, or because it appeared motivated by news stories and events related to Labour. It is often not possible to ascertain whether the offenders are themselves party members or not; in many cases they have never been members or have been expelled from their former party but continue to express antisemitism in relation to it. For example, of these 45 Labour Party-related incidents, 34

also made reference to the Middle East, often including criticism of Keir Starmer's position on Israel or abuse for the Jewish members of his family.

### Pandemic-related antisemitism

Antisemitic rhetoric alongside reference to Covid-19 was present in just 11 incidents in 2023, rising slightly from the eight reported in 2022. This discourse emerged at the pandemic's outset in 2020, when 40 incidents contained anti-Jewish conspiracy theories and death wishes that burgeoned with the spreading of the virus. This figure rose to 78 incidents in 2021, when the narrative evolved to equate lockdowns and the vaccine rollout to the persecution and genocide of Jews in the Holocaust. Its relative disappearance from antisemitic rhetoric in line with the reduction of the pandemic's impact on everyday life for most people is an indication of the mutability of modern-day antisemitism, a parasite that feeds on any current context and moves on when that context loses cultural relevance.<sup>21</sup>

### Ukraine-related antisemitism

A subject that came to prominence in 2022 was the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and CST recorded 16 antisemitic incidents that year that referenced or were inspired by that war. These included conspiracy theories accusing Jewish people of initiating and bankrolling the war, puppeteering both Russian and Ukrainian sides, attacks on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for his Jewish heritage, and praise for Vladimir Putin as a present-day incarnation of Hitler. In 2023, when coverage of this conflict was not as ubiquitous in the news or public conversation, this figure dropped to nine. All-but-one of these occurred before 7 October, when Hamas'

<sup>21</sup> These discourses have far from vanished. They remain abundant on fringe online platforms, as documented in CST's report, [Antisemitism in the Covid Conspiracy Movement](#)





attack and subsequent war with Israel gripped the public's consciousness and became the dominant vessel for anti-Jewish hate.

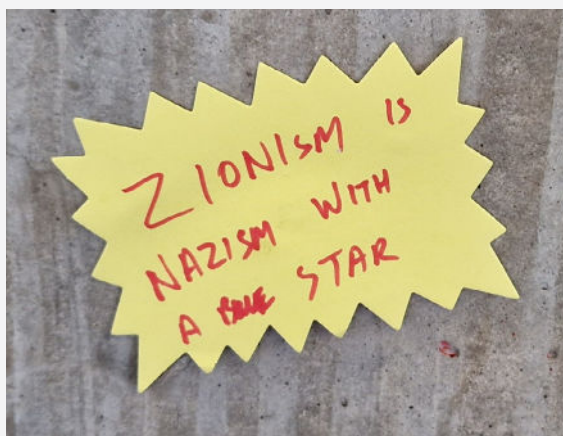
The speed with which discourse referencing Israel and the Middle East became the prevailing antisemitic narrative in 2023 after Hamas' terror attack not only illustrates how circumstances in the region have a unique power over the volume and content of anti-Jewish hate in the UK; it also perfectly demonstrates the opportunism of antisemitism, which latches onto the story of the day for its newest lease of life. Of the 1,774 antisemitic incidents related to the war between Israel and Hamas, 1,512 (86%) occurred on or after 7 October. This was the case in 1,124 (87%) of the 1,299 incidents involving anti-Zionist motivation alongside anti-Jewish language or targeting; 164 (63%) of the 260 incidents using the words "Zionists" or "Zionism"; 79 (99%) of the 83 Islamist incidents, most of which endorsed Hamas' act of terrorism; 105 (86%) of the 122 incidents mentioning Islam and Muslims; and 195 (80%) of the 243 incidents containing comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany. The immediate and significant spike in anti-Jewish hate regurgitating these ideas

illuminates the galvanising effect of a trigger event in the Middle East on antisemites elsewhere, who quickly mobilise, weaponise and take offensive action.

This opportunism also exposes the cognitive dissonance of contemporary antisemitism, where hatred of Jews acts as a unifying force, at once uniting people from disparate social and political circles and encouraging them to prioritise this over their (often extreme) differences. Of the 184 reports involving Holocaust glorification, 118 (64%) occurred in the wake of 7 October and followed two distinct patterns. The first celebrated Hamas' act of terror as an aspirational repeat of the Nazi genocide of the Jews during the Holocaust; the second lamented Hitler's failure to successfully wipe out world Jewry in its entirety, in the context of Israel's existence and response to the 7 October terror attack. Anti-Israel and anti-Zionist ideology is often assumed to be rooted in left-wing thought, but these examples demonstrate how those who sympathise with Nazi ideology can also co-opt this cause for their own antisemitic agendas. Perpetrators of anti-Jewish hate are willing to bend their politics and worldview to express their prejudice.

The outpouring of anti-Jewish hate in response to Hamas' attack and consequent war with Israel exposed another truth of modern-day antisemitism. Twenty-four (75%) of the 32 incidents propagating myths about Jewish religious practices occurred following 7 October and invoked the centuries-old Blood Libel trope in conversation about Israel and Jews around the world. The resurgence of this notion, which has circulated in England since the 12th century and declares that Jews consume the blood of non-Jewish infants in acts of ritual sacrifice, shows how historic antisemitic ideas consistently find new life when antisemites twist them to fit the present context.

Zionism equated with Nazism on a sticker, Manchester, December



Therein lies the complexity of contemporary anti-Jewish hate, and the difficulty in confronting it. The prejudice draws on numerous concepts, stereotypes and falsehoods that are so deeply embedded in the individual and societal consciousness, whether or not the perpetrator is even aware of their antisemitic connotations. Of the 2,631 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023 that contained at least one of the political, religious and racist discourses, conspiracy theories and ideologies discussed in this chapter, 233 (9%) combined two or more of them. Together, these narratives form a reference library of antisemitism, ready to be

deployed by antisemites across the political and social spectrum, who mould them according to their own agenda.

The impact of current affairs on the language of anti-Jewish hate is equally evident in incidents perpetrated by minors. In 2023, a worryingly high proportion of children continued to be reported as offenders of antisemitic incidents, in 379 (18%) of the 2,086 instances in which the approximate age of the perpetrator or perpetrators was provided to CST. It is even more alarming that 234 (62%) of these 379 cases featured at least one of the various discourses, motivations and ideologies outlined above, rising from 52% in 2022, and broadly in line with the proportion of all incidents that reflect ideological or political discourses and motivations. Of these incidents, 145 alluded to Israel, Palestine or Hamas' attack, of which 76 were overtly anti-Zionist; and children referenced the Holocaust, Nazis or Hitler in 89 incidents. It is a reversal from 2022, when Holocaust-related rhetoric was the discourse most used by minors, present in 68 incidents, and the subject of Israel and the Middle East was used in just 11 antisemitic incidents perpetrated by children.

Political ideologies, conspiracy theories and other antisemitism-related discourse is particularly present on social media. Of all the mainstream platforms, X hosted the highest percentage of these rhetorical strands, which were reported in 648 (92%) of the 704 X-based instances of antisemitism in 2023. Among the 578 cases of anti-Jewish hate that took place on other online services, they were evident in 423 cases (73%). While still a significant number, X seems to be the forum on which they abound most. When antisemitism, anti-Jewish incitement and extremist language are allowed and encouraged to thrive online, they do so in parallel offline.

## Geographical Locations

Of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023, 2,965 occurred in Greater London and Greater Manchester, the two UK cities where the largest Jewish populations reside.

In the former, 2,410 incidents were reported, more than in any other year, marking a rise of 161% from the 923 incidents recorded in 2022. Greater Manchester's figure of 555, also a record annual total for that city, is an increase of 163% from the 211 incidents in the same area in 2022.

CST recorded at least two antisemitic incidents in each of London's 33 Metropolitan Police boroughs. Of the 2,410 incidents reported across Greater London in 2023, 864 occurred in Barnet, the local authority that is home to the biggest Jewish community in the UK. There were 323 instances of anti-Jewish hate recorded in Westminster, 220 in Hackney, 188 in Camden and 95 in Haringey. Barnet, Hackney, Camden and Haringey are all areas where significant portions of London's Jewish community reside, so it is not surprising that a large portion of London's antisemitism continued to take place there, with incident totals respectively rising from 316, 114, 62 and 48 in 2022. The significant increase in Westminster-based incidents, from 66 in 2022 to 323 in 2023, is partly due to the various demonstrations that took place in Central London following Hamas' attack on Israel on 7 October. At least 44 antisemitic incidents were reported in Westminster, either at anti-Israel protests or in transit to or from them, and at vigils held for the victims of Hamas' atrocities. Of the 323 incidents recorded in Westminster, 237 (73%) happened following 7 October, of which 164 (69%) referenced the Middle East. For comparison, 599 (69%) of Barnet's incidents occurred on or after 7

October, of which 350 (58%) contained Israel-related discourse.

Within Greater London's statistics, 186 incidents were reported to have taken place on property that falls under the remit of British Transport Police. A further 103 were online incidents where either the victim or offender is understood to be based in London, but a more specific location could not be established.

Of Greater Manchester's 555 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2023, 169 happened in Bury, 167 in the City of Manchester, 121 in Salford, 25 in Stockport and 16 in Trafford. Within Greater Manchester's data, 12 of the recorded incidents happened on property under the jurisdiction of British Transport Police. An additional 17 were online incidents where either the victim or offender is known to be based in Manchester, but a more specific location could not be established.

Not only have Greater London and Greater Manchester's figures increased from 2022, but so have their combined proportion of the national incident total, from 68% in 2022 to 72% in 2023. This increase is likely to derive from the targeting of Jewish communities, institutions and people within the UK's most visible and established Jewish populations following 7 October. This is illustrated by the fact that 262 (86%) of the 303 cases of abusive antisemitic language or gestures from passing vehicles reported in 2023 occurred either in Greater London (156 incidents) or Greater Manchester (106 incidents). Of these 262 reports, 209 (79%) happened after Hamas' attack on Israel, of which 126 (60%) were explicitly motivated by events in the Middle East. These incidents involved offenders seeking out Jewish neighbourhoods, sometimes with Palestinian flags affixed

to their cars, and shouting pro-Palestinian chants, anti-Israel slogans or antisemitic threats, or gloating about Hamas' massacre at Jewish members of the public going about their daily lives. Greater London and Greater Manchester represented the areas of greatest opportunity for their hatred to reach its target.

While it should be anticipated that the majority of antisemitic incidents happen in the areas most central to Jewish life, for the first time ever, CST recorded an antisemitic incident in every single police region in the UK in 2023. For comparison, in 2022 anti-Jewish hate was reported in all bar Gloucestershire, Lincolnshire,

Northamptonshire, Suffolk and Surrey. This broad geographical spread demonstrates how contemporary antisemitism is not confined to the parts of the country where large, visible Jewish communities exist. In a year when CST recorded more online cases of antisemitism than any prior year, it is

clear that social media and instant messaging platforms have become increasingly useful and used as a medium for hate speech, where antisemites can share their hatred irrespective of their proximity to Jewish people. CST's online footprint has grown with the popularity of these spaces, and with it, the opportunity for the public to report anti-Jewish hate.

CST's ever-deepening relationship with police services around the UK has also played a vital role in painting a more accurate landscape of antisemitism across the country. For example, the large increase witnessed in Essex (from 11 incidents in 2022 to 75 in 2023, of which

48 came via the police) is a product of this improved working relationship. The data-sharing agreements with many police forces, on top of all the other work that CST engages in with the police at all levels, are invaluable: in 2023, 1,178 (29%) of the 4,103 reports of anti-Jewish hate made to CST were received from the police.

Aside from London and Manchester, the police regions with the highest antisemitic incident totals in 2023 were Hertfordshire with 112 incidents (compared to 59 in 2022), Essex with 75 incidents (an increase from 11 in 2022), West Yorkshire with 75 incidents (up from 48

in 2022), Scotland with 68 (a rise from 34 in 2022), and West Midlands with 63 (increasing from 20 in 2022).

Apart from Greater London and Greater Manchester's boroughs, the towns and cities within police regions where antisemitism was most frequently reported were Leeds in West Yorkshire

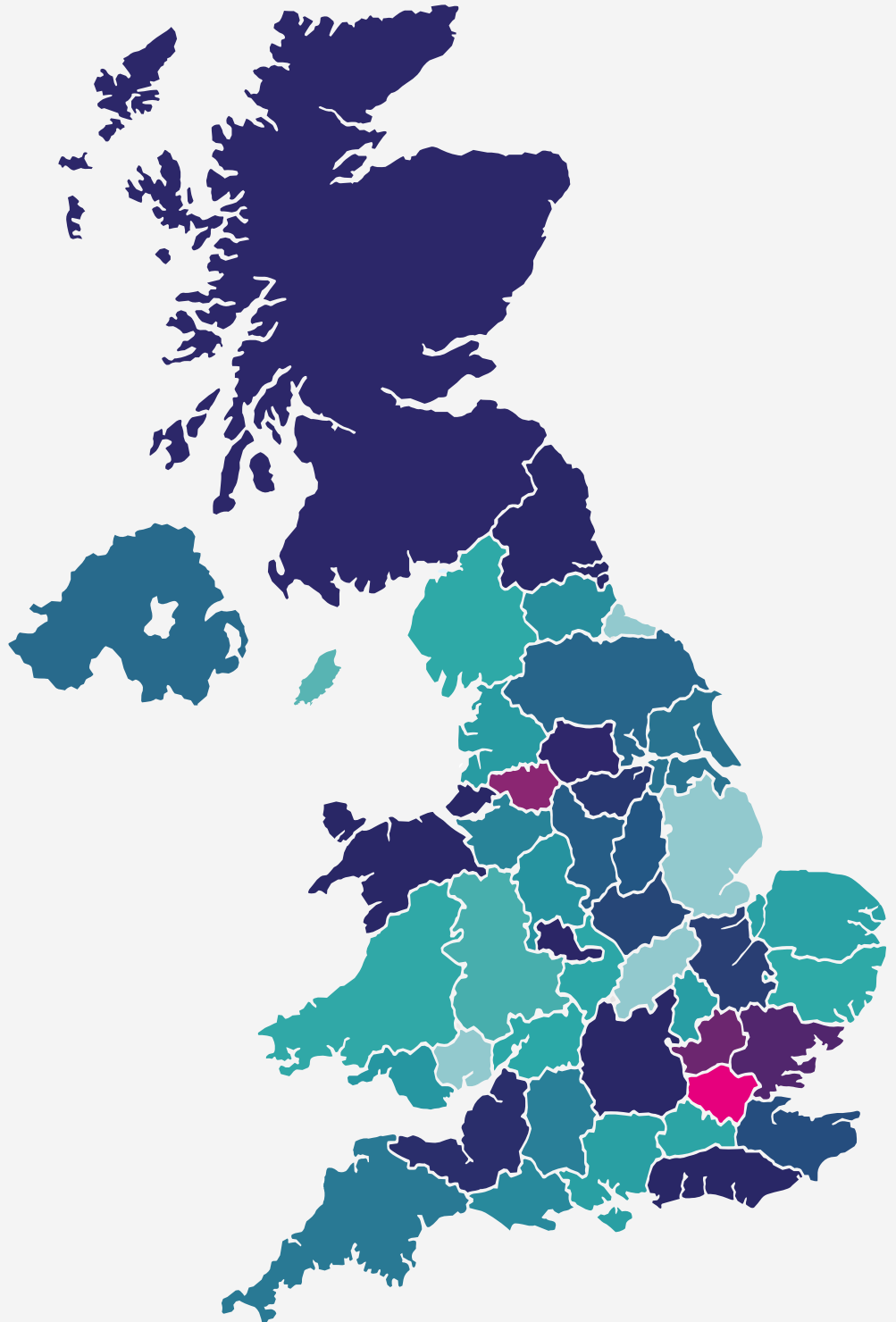
(59 incidents), Borehamwood & Elstree in Hertfordshire (55 incidents), Birmingham in West Midlands (50 incidents), Brighton & Hove in Sussex (39 incidents), and Gateshead in Northumbria (38 incidents).

Included within all the figures in this chapter are the 204 instances of antisemitism that took place on public transport or at public transport stations (91 on London buses, 83 on the London Underground, and 30 on other transport services), and 16 incidents where the victims were subjected to abuse in or from private taxis.

**...for the first time ever, CST recorded an antisemitic incident in every single police region in the UK in 2023.**

## INCIDENT LOCATIONS

Greater London	2,410
Greater Manchester	555
Hertfordshire	112
Essex	75
West Yorkshire	75
Scotland	68
West Midlands	63
Northumbria	57
Sussex	47
Thames Valley	47
North Wales	36
Merseyside	35
Avon & Somerset	33
South Yorkshire	32
Cambridgeshire	31
Leicestershire	30
Kent	27
Nottinghamshire	25
Derbyshire	24
North Yorkshire	22
Northern Ireland	21
Humberside	20
Devon & Cornwall	17
Wiltshire	17
Cheshire	16
Dorset	15
Durham	15
Staffordshire	14
South Wales	14
Lancashire	12
Bedfordshire	10
Hampshire	10
Norfolk	10
Surrey	7
Warwickshire	7
Gloucestershire	5
Dyfed Powys	5
Cumbria	4
Suffolk	3
West Mercia	3
Isle Of Man	3
Cleveland	2
Lincolnshire	2
Northamptonshire	2
Gwent	2
Jersey	1



In 62 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 collaboration continues to prove of immense value. In 2023, 1,177 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST were reported by the police. This comprises 29% of the total and is the highest number of incidents reported to CST by the police in any calendar year. Of these 1,177 reports, 669 came from the Metropolitan Police Service, 234 from Greater Manchester Police,

48 courtesy of Essex Police, 33 from North Wales Police, 27 via Northumbria Police, and 166 from other police services around the country. Some of these partnerships have existed for a long time, others are much more recently established, and it is thanks to the work invested in building and maintaining these relationships that the police are able to contribute so much to CST's understanding of where and how anti-Jewish hate is expressed in the UK.

In 2023, 1,154 of the 4,103 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST were reported by the victim, while 925 were reported by a witness to antisemitism, whether exhibited online or in a public space. In 273 cases, a friend, relative or support provider related details of the incident, accounting for 7% of all incidents reported to CST. This is similar to the percentages recorded in 2022 and 2021, which showed a sharp increase from 2020, when 3% of that year's total was reported from this source. It is indicative of the elevated proportion of child victims reported to CST in the last three years, with parents or schoolteachers often reporting on their behalf. In total, victims, witnesses and friends, relatives or support providers reported 57% of the antisemitic incidents recorded by CST in 2023, compared to 44% of 2022's incidents. This perhaps points to a community that has felt a greater deal of anxiety following Hamas' attack on Israel and surge in antisemitism across the UK, and thus a stronger motivation to report the anti-Jewish hate they experience, whether first or second hand.

CST staff reported 387 occurrences of antisemitism, which includes online abuse directed at or tagging CST social media accounts, rising from 139 such incidents

## INCIDENT REPORTERS



**1,177**  
Police



**1,154**  
Victims



**925**  
Witnesses



**387**  
CST Staff



**273**  
Friend/Relative/  
Support



**63**  
Security  
Guards

**CATCH**

**57**  
Group of Hate  
Crime Charities



**54**  
CST Volunteers

in 2022. Sixty-three antisemitic incidents were reported by security guards at Jewish premises, while 57 were forwarded by the Community Alliance To Combat Hate (CATCH), a partnership of community organisations in London to whom those who report hate crime to the police can be referred if they want specialist support. Fifty-four incidents came to CST's attention through CST volunteers, while six reports were made

by Manchester Shomrim, four by student chaplaincies or Chabad houses, two were recorded from media reports, and one from a hate crime partner in local government.

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.

## Information Collection & Suspicious Behaviour

One of the most important jobs CST does is to record and analyse incidents of potential hostile reconnaissance, categorised by CST as Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour around Jewish locations. Although these potential incidents are not included in CST's antisemitic incident statistics, they still form a vital part of CST's work as they relate directly to the security of the Jewish community.

The recent tragic history of antisemitic terrorism perpetrated in Israel by Hamas, as well as against global Jewish communities and at Jewish schools, synagogues, shops, museums and other buildings in Colleyville, Pittsburgh, Halle, San Diego, Copenhagen, Paris, Brussels, Toulouse, Kansas City, Mumbai and elsewhere attests to the importance of this work. Jewish communities have long been the targets of terrorists of different and varied political and religious motivations. Since the late 1960s, there have been over 400 terrorist attacks, attempted attacks and foiled terrorist plots against Diaspora Jewish communities and Israeli targets outside Israel. In the UK, several terrorist plots involving the aspiration to attack the Jewish community came to trial or were publicised via the media in recent years. It is well known that terrorist actors often collect information about their targets before launching an attack: identifying and preventing the gathering of

this kind of information is an integral part of CST's work in protecting the UK Jewish community from terrorism. To be effective in keeping the public safe, CST relies on information from the public as well as CST's own volunteers and from commercial guards, and CST encourages the Jewish community to report any suspicious activity to CST, as well as to the police.

CST works closely with the police to gather, record and investigate incidents of information collection and suspicious behaviour. CST does this to keep the Jewish

**...identifying and preventing the gathering of this kind of information is an integral part of CST's work in protecting the UK Jewish community from terrorism.**

community safe and allow it to carry on as normal. Cases of potential Information Collection and Suspicious Behaviour are not included in CST's antisemitic incident statistics, as the motivation for many of them cannot be determined and many may have innocent explanations. The vague and uncertain nature of many of these incidents means that they are easier to analyse if the two categories are combined,

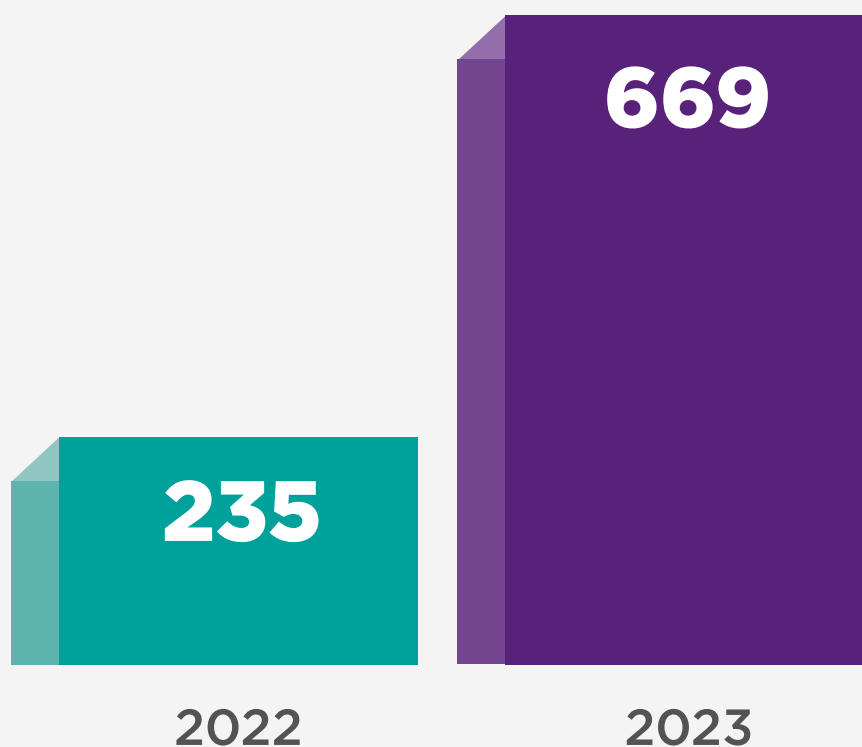
rather than treated separately. Taken together, there were 669 such incidents reported to CST in 2023, compared to the 235 incidents of this type reported to CST in 2022, which involved the filming or photography of Jewish buildings, and/or the attempted entry to Jewish premises. It is likely that this increase is a result of the overall increase in anti-Israel activity since 7 October, and the general unwanted



Swastika painted on an Israeli flag on a mural, London, October

attention given to the Jewish community ever since. These factors have intensified feelings of fear, uncertainty and anxiety among the community, and a heightened sense of alert has led to more reports of perceived hostile activity. Neither CST nor the police underestimate the threat posed to Jewish communities by various terrorist organisations and networks. Identifying and preventing the potential hostile reconnaissance of Jewish buildings or other potential terrorist targets is an important part of reducing the possibility of future terrorist attacks and is integral to the work of CST.

## NUMBER OF POTENTIAL INFORMATION COLLECTION & SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR REPORTS



## Annual Antisemitic Incident Figures

Some of the numbers in the tables may differ from those previously published by CST, due to the late reporting of incidents to CST by incident victims and witnesses, or the recategorisation of some incidents due to new information.

### Antisemitic incident figures by category, 2012–2023

Category	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Extreme Violence	2	0	1	4	0	0	2	1	3	3	1	0
Assault	67	69	80	83	109	149	124	158	97	174	136	266
Damage & Desecration	53	49	81	65	81	93	79	88	74	82	74	182
Threats	39	38	91	79	107	98	108	99	85	143	103	305
Abusive Behaviour	477	374	899	717	1,059	1,065	1,334	1,449	1,413	1,849	1,339	3,328
Literature	12	5	30	12	19	15	43	18	12	10	9	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,375</b>	<b>1,420</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>1,684</b>	<b>2,261</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>4,103</b>

### 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	110	119	188	95	135	139
February	52	38	43	88	69	135	120	182	142	119	128	127
March	75	23	39	83	82	111	120	171	119	132	125	171
April	48	44	58	75	105	143	153	147	109	154	135	130
May	44	48	51	60	140	121	182	150	138	661	173	173
June	54	37	66	86	131	125	134	142	179	210	127	176
July	59	59	317	87	131	113	133	167	181	177	165	160
August	42	48	229	72	123	114	158	144	134	139	146	146
September	60	54	105	76	118	113	156	119	128	151	112	143
October	60	67	87	61	112	110	146	131	140	167	150	1,330
November	83	40	78	79	135	94	146	152	136	135	138	931
December	34	44	56	84	148	86	132	189	90	121	128	477
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,375</b>	<b>1,420</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>1,684</b>	<b>2,261</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>4,103</b>



## Antisemitic incident figures, full breakdown, 2023

Month	Category	Extreme Violence	Assault	Damage & Desecration	Threats	Abusive Behaviour	Literature	MONTH TOTAL
January		0	12	2	7	117	1	<b>139</b>
February		0	8	3	8	108	0	<b>127</b>
March		0	19	6	9	133	4	<b>171</b>
April		0	15	4	8	102	1	<b>130</b>
May		0	13	3	6	151	0	<b>173</b>
June		0	16	3	15	142	0	<b>176</b>
July		0	16	3	13	126	2	<b>160</b>
August		0	8	5	4	127	2	<b>146</b>
September		0	8	2	7	126	0	<b>143</b>
October		0	75	76	128	1,048	3	<b>1,330</b>
November		0	48	54	69	756	4	<b>931</b>
December		0	28	21	31	392	5	<b>477</b>
<b>CATEGORY TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>3,328</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4,103</b>

## 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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[www.cst.org.uk](https://www.cst.org.uk)

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