



Response Date:20/12/2024

2024/1119 - Abuse linked to faith or belief

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

For context, this request is related to crimes of abuse linked to faith or belief as defined by the Metropolitan Police in the link below (the Met's definition is specially about children whereas I am looking at cases involving children and/or adults) - <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/faith-based-abuse>. It states: "Abuse linked to faith or belief is where concerns for a (person's) welfare have been identified, and could be caused by, a belief in witchcraft, spirit or demonic possession, ritual or satanic abuse features; or when practices linked to faith or belief are harmful to a (person)."

Abuse linked to faith or belief is also defined here in this government national action plan - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

For each calendar year 2021, 2022, 2023 and for the period 1st January 2024 to 28th November 2024, please could you tell me:

1) The number of cases of abuse linked to faith or belief (as defined above) that have been reported

None.

2) A brief description of each case and the outcome if known (i.e. arrest, charge, on bail, no further action, etc)

N/A.

3) The number of crime reports where the term "witch", or "witchcraft", or "demon", or "exorcism" is mentioned in the MO field of the crime report

Offences recorded 01/01/21 to 28/11/24 with keywords "witch/witchcraft", "demon" or "exorcism" in the occurrence summary:

Calendar Year	HO Code	HO Description	Outcome	Offender/Victim Relationship	Victim Age	Summary
2021	195/94	Harassment	15. Police Named Suspect, Victim Supports but Evidential Difficulties	Acquaintance	25	Victim is reporting ongoing harassment from offender, on this occasion the offender has sent the victim a message stating "happy Halloween you witch"
2021	008/72	Malicious Comms - Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety	16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	Parent (incl. step/adopted)	31	...The suspect has further posted the callers birthname accompanied by images of "Three Witches" (Siblings and Mother)
2021	125/12	Harassment, alarm or distress (Sec 5)	16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	Parent (incl. step/adopted)	31	...The suspect has further posted the callers birthname accompanied by images of "Three Witches" (Siblings and Mother)
2021	008/72	Malicious Comms - Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety	15. Police Named Suspect, Victim Supports but Evidential Difficulties	Acquaintance	25	Victim is reporting ongoing harassment from offender, on this occasion the offender has sent the victim a message stating "happy Halloween you witch"
2022	125/11	Fear or provocation of violence (Sec 4)	16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	Acquaintance	12	...The same Suspect has then banged on the callers door and witched the electricity to the house off.
2022	149/00A	Other criminal damage to a residence (Under £5000.00 damage)	16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	Acquaintance	37	...The same Suspect has then banged on the callers door and witched the electricity to the house off.
2022	125/09	Causing intentional	15. Police Named Suspect,	Acquaintance	56	...SHE HAS JUST PASSED THE

		harassment, alarm or distress (Sec 4A)	Victim Supports but Evidential Difficulties			LADY IN THE STREET, SHE HAS THEN SHOUTED ACROSS THE ROAD 'YOU ARE A WITCH'
2023	195/94	Harassment	16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	Not known/No current suspect	73	IP has reported ongoing issues with a neighbour who has parked in front of her window deliberately to annoy the IP, states the neighbour has called her a witch previously.

4) A brief description of each reported crime from your answer to question 3) and the outcome if known (i.e. arrest, charge, on bail, no further action, etc)

Please see the answer to Q3.

Please note: two of the occurrences have been returned because of typos and should read Switched, not witched.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 16/12/2024