

Grandmother who objected to gay march is accused of hate crime

By [Andrew Levy](#)

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After witnessing a gay pride march, committed Christian Pauline Howe wrote to the council to complain that the event had been allowed to go ahead.

But instead of a simple acknowledgement, she received a letter warning her she might be guilty of a hate crime and that the matter had been passed to police.

Two officers later turned up at the frightened grandmother's home and lectured her about her choice of words before telling her she would not be prosecuted.



Threatened with prosecution: Pensioner Pauline Howe was warned she might be guilty of a hate crime after complaining about a gay rally

Mrs Howe, 67, whose husband Peter is understood to be a Baptist minister, yesterday spoke of her shock at the visit and accused police of 'wasting resources' on her case rather than fighting crime.

'I've never been in any kind of trouble before so I was stunned to have two police officers knocking at my door,' she said.

'Their presence in my home made me feel threatened. It was a very unpleasant experience.

'The officers told me that my letter was thought to be an intention of hate but I was expressing views as a Christian.'

Mrs Howe's case has been taken up by the Christian Institute, which is looking into potential breaches of freedom of speech and religious rights under the Human Rights Act, either by [Norwich](#) City Council or Norfolk Police.

And homosexual equality pressure group Stonewall has branded the authorities' response 'disproportionate'.

Mrs Howe claims she was 'verbally abused' while distributing 'Christian leaflets' at the march in the centre of Norwich in July. She said someone 'whispered something in my ear and disappeared'. She fired off a letter to the council describing the march as a 'public display of

She wrote: 'It is shameful that this small but vociferous lobby should be allowed such a display unwarranted by the minimal number of homosexuals.'

Eighty-minute police interrogation for couple who dared to suggest displaying Christian literature next to gay leaflets in a town hall

A RETIRED couple were questioned at length by police after complaining about a council's gay rights campaign.

Two officers arrived at the home of the couple, who

Two officers arrived at the home of devout Christians Joe

They were interrogated for 30 minutes about 'homophobic' views expressed in a phone call and letter in which the couple asked if Christian literature could be displayed alongside gay rights leaflets.

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Joe and Helen Roberts: Officers told them their complaint was 'close to a hate crime'

The letter went on to describe homosexuals as 'sodomites', said homosexuality had 'contributed to the downfall of every empire' and added that 'gay sex was a major cause of sexually transmitted infections'.

She went on: 'The content of your letter has been assessed as potentially being hate related because of the views you expressed towards people of a certain sexual orientation.'

The two police officers later turned up at her home in Poringland, near Norwich, and informed her the contents of her letter had caused offence.

Christian Institute spokesman Mike Judge said yesterday: 'People must be free to express their beliefs - yes, even unpopular beliefs - to government bodies without fear of a knock at the door from police.'

Norfolk Police defended their treatment of Mrs Howe, saying: 'We investigate all alleged hate incidents. In this instance the individual

concerned was visited by officers, the comments discussed, and no further action was taken.'

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1222861/Pensioner-complained-gay-pride-march-warned-police-hate-crime.html#ixzz0W6MZBCQx>