

# An Introduction: Prevent and Channel

Safeguarding people from radicalisation, extremism and terrorism...



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# WHAT IS PREVENT?

Prevent is the safeguarding strand of the UK's wider counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST:

- Prevent aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism of any form
- Prevent safeguards people and communities from the threat of terrorism
- Prevent provides early intervention and personalised support to divert people away from terrorism

## The 3 main objectives of the Prevent strategy:

1. To tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.
2. To safeguard and support those that are most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention and offering support.
3. Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

There is no magic recipe to Prevent. It requires the combined effort of communities and organisations who work in partnership to ensure terrorism does not occur or flourish within our communities.



## CONTEST – COuNter Terrorism Strategy

The UK faces up to the challenges of terrorism through CONTEST – the UK's counter-terrorism strategy. The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk of terrorism to the UK.

The framework for CONTEST consists of the four "P"s:

- Prevent:** To stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- Pursue:** To stop terrorist attacks
- Protect:** To strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare:** To mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

# WHAT IS CHANNEL AND HOW DOES IT SUPPORT PREVENT?

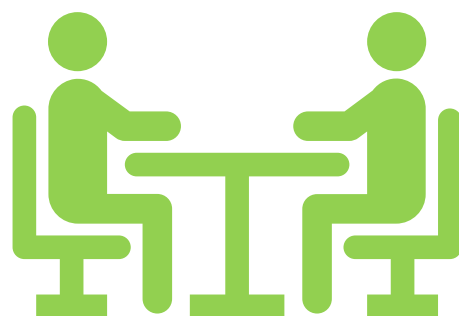
## What is Channel?

Channel is the multi-agency safeguarding panel which supports Prevent.

In Sandwell, it is led by the Local Authority and meets monthly. It is a programme which focuses on **supporting** people at an early stage who **could** be drawn into terrorism. It ensures people of **any** age, faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those wanting them to embrace terrorism or any illegal extremist activity.

It is a **confidential** and **voluntary** process that allows individuals to have the final say of accepting support or not. The type of support you receive is decided by **yourself** and **partners** who will work **with** you. There are many options, including support with education, employment, housing, mental health and any other necessary challenges. Ideological support is also common, which may include discussion with credible ideological experts and faith leaders.

Individuals who are referred to Prevent, or receive support from Channel, are **not** criminalised and will **not** receive a criminal record unless a criminal offence is committed. Prevent works in the non-criminal stage and is focused on safeguarding and supporting individuals, families and communities.



# THE REFERRAL PROCESS

## What should you do if you have a concern?

If you have a concern about an individual or situation, share it by making a referral. If you feel that there is an immediate danger of a crime being committed, please dial 999.

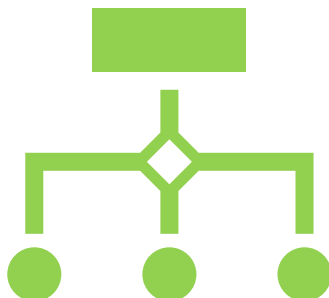
If the risk relates to an adult over 18, please submit the information to both **CTU\_GATEWAY@westmidlands.police.uk** and **prevent\_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk**.

If a risk relates to a child under 18, please submit any information to **Access\_Team@sandwellchildrenstrust.org** and **prevent\_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk**.

## What happens next?

Once a referral has been made, the case will be assessed to see if it is warranted. If a risk has been realised, then a Vulnerability Assessment Form will be filled out and information sharing will take place between Channel members. The case will then be presented to the Channel panel where members will discuss and agree on the most appropriate and effective intervention/support plan for the individual.

If the individual/family consents to the intervention, then the panel will continue to oversee the process. If the individual/family declines intervention, then the case is referred to the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU).



# DEFINITIONS

## Radicalisation

Radicalisation is defined as the **process** by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. This is the same as the grooming process, where vulnerabilities are exploited for the gain of the perpetrator. The radicalisation (and grooming) process can happen over a long period of time or over a few days or weeks, depending on the vulnerabilities and the perpetrator's methods. For example, children or adults that are extremely vulnerable may be radicalised/groomed quicker than others. Some perpetrators will offer money, fancy things, stability, status etc. But there are also well educated and mature people that have been radicalised.

Radicalisation can happen in person, online – through gaming and social media, and some people have self-radicalised by being influenced by watching videos of extremist leaders and reading extreme literature.

If you would like more information or have any questions, contact [prevent\\_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:prevent_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk) with your query.

## Extremism:

Extremism is defined as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

## Terrorism

Terrorism is an action or threat designed to influence the government or intimidate the public. Its purpose is to advance a political, religious or ideological cause. The current UK definition of terrorism is given in the Terrorism Act 2006.

# SIGNS OF RADICALISATION

## The signs

There are no single signs to identifying someone who is in the process of being radicalised. However, there are some traits that could indicate possible exposure to radicalising influences.

Radicalisation has no set time limit and can happen over both short and long periods of time. Some individuals may be triggered by a specific incident or news item, some may be self-radicalised over the internet, while others may be radicalised by a local community group. There is no set process.

The following behaviours listed are intended as a guide and **do not** necessarily mean that someone is in the process of being radicalised:

### Vulnerabilities:

**Transitional time of life**

**Influenced by a group**

**Need for belonging**

**Mental health issues**

**Desire for political change**

**Desire for status and excitement**

### Behaviours

**Promoting extremist values**

**Violence towards others**

**Possession of weapons**

**Increased secretiveness**

**Isolating themselves from family and friends**

**Possession of extremist literature**



# THE CURRENT CLIMATE AND CONTEST

## The current threat

The current level of threat from terrorism in the UK is “substantial” - the threat was downgraded from “severe” in the beginning of 2022. Despite this, a “substantial” level of threat still indicates that an attack is considered “likely”.

The UK is currently facing several different terrorist threats, ranging from right-wing terrorism, Daesh and Al-Qaida-inspired terrorism, and lone actors with no specific ideologies.

Online spaces are being used more frequently to spread sophisticated propaganda designed to radicalise, recruit and inspire those who are vulnerable. Those vulnerable to radicalisation may also be incited to provide information that may help enable future terrorist attacks. Since 2010, over 310,000 pieces of illegal terrorist material has been removed from the internet by the Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU).



# HOW TO CONTACT PREVENT

If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the local Prevent team:

**Sandwell MBC Prevent team:**  
[Prevent\\_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Prevent_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk)

You can contact the confidential **Anti-Terrorism hotline** on **0800 789 321** to report an immediate threat to life or property, or call the police on **101 or 999** in an **emergency**.

## Further Information:

For further information, search for:

- [Let's Talk About It](#)
- [Contest 2018](#)
- [Channel Guidance](#)
- [Educate Against Hate](#)
- [Sandwell Council website – Prevent](#)

