

# Warrington Prevent Strategy

## 2020 – 2023



**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

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# Foreword

For quite some time, local authorities have been successfully delivering community cohesion initiatives. However there have been several high profile incidents, and several near misses, over recent years and we know the landscape of community cohesion has changed dramatically.

The challenge for local authorities, alongside and with our partners and residents, is to ensure that our communities are strong enough to stand up to the insidious threats of violent extremists while also continuing to improve community cohesion.

This Prevent strategy for Warrington demonstrates how the Local Authority will take a lead role alongside the Police and our other partners to identify, support and divert individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Violent extremism is not just a problem limited to any single community; it is an issue that we all must work together to address. Preventing violent extremism leaves no room for complacency or inaction.

I therefore welcome this Prevent Strategy for Warrington which outlines our local approach.



**Cllr Judith Guthrie**  
Cabinet member,  
environment and public protection

# What is Prevent?

The government's Prevent Strategy, originally formed in 2011 and updated in 2018, forms one element of the [Counter-terrorism Strategy \(CONTEST\)](#) and aims to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by preventing people from becoming influenced through extreme and radical ideology.

The counter-terrorism strategy is organised around 4 workstreams,

- 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

The aim of the [Prevent Strategy](#) is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism by focusing on the following three objectives;

- challenging **ideology** that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
- protecting vulnerable **individuals** from being drawn into terrorism through appropriate advice and support;
- supporting sectors and **institutions** where there is a risk of radicalisation.

Prevent recognises that people who are engaged in terrorist activities are often initially drawn into extremist narratives and beliefs and that these narratives (violent and non – violent) should be challenged to stop people moving from extremist groups or from extremism into terrorist related activity.

[The Counter Extremism Strategy 2015](#) defines **extremism** as; “the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of our armed forces as extremist.”

**Radicalisation** is as defined in the Prevent Strategy as “the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism”

The threat level for the UK is set by the [Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre \(JTAC\)](#). Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack:

- **LOW** means an attack is unlikely.
- **MODERATE** means an attack is possible, but not likely
- **SUBSTANTIAL** means an attack is a strong possibility
- **SEVERE** means an attack is highly likely
- **CRITICAL** means an attack is expected imminently

The Prevent strategy identifies four types of terrorism that the UK faces, these being:

- **International**, terrorist organisations operating in Syria and Iraq (Da’esh and Al Qa’ida and like-minded organisations).
- **Northern-Ireland** related
- **Extreme** right-wing
- **Other**, these are often small movements in reaction to a single issue, specific incident, or ideology

# The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

On 1st July 2015, the [Counter Terrorism and Security Act \(CTSA\) 2015](#) became statutory.

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory Prevent duty on specified authorities in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regards to the need to Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. See [Prevent Duty Guidance](#)

# 2020 – 2022 Warrington Prevent Action Plan

The Warrington Prevent Action Plan 2020 - 2023 (Appendix A) is informed by national and local priorities. The key themes of the action plan are:

1. To gather community intelligence to ensure community tensions are **identified** and **resolved** at the earliest opportunity
2. To challenge the **ideology** that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
3. To support and protect vulnerable **individuals** from being drawn into terrorism through appropriate advice and support
4. To support sectors and **institutions** where there is a risk of radicalisation.
5. To ensure effective **partnerships** are in place to support the delivery of the Prevent action plan in Warrington

# The Warrington Channel Panel

A key part of Prevent is “Channel”. Police work with Local Authority Channel Coordinators (LACC) and public bodies, including local councils, social workers, NHS staff, schools and the justice system to identify those at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess what the risk might be and then develop tailored support for those referred to them. This could range from mentoring to things like anger management or drug and alcohol programmes.

Not everyone referred to Channel will be deemed suitable for the programme. There is a filtering process in case the person isn’t really at risk of radicalisation, and to weed out referrals that are wrong or malicious. The process is about supporting individuals identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism at an early stage is a key part of Warrington’s approach to Prevent.

The Warrington Channel Panel is fundamental to this and is a voluntary safeguarding programme aimed at supporting those individuals identified as being vulnerable. As with other safeguarding practices Channel is reliant on a multi-agency response and multi-disciplinary work to minimise and manage the risk to an individual. It draws on existing collaboration between local authorities, the LACC, police, statutory partners and the local community and has three objectives:

- **Identify individuals at risk of being radicalisation or drawn into extremism**
- **Assess the nature and extent of the risk**
- **Develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned.**

Local authorities (via MASH or Adult Safeguarding/First Response) receive Prevent concerns and process them as an appointed body, this is to ensure that social care safeguarding concerns are not missed, that there is no delay on concerns being raised/information being shared, and that the information is going to Prevent also.

Social Care can look at the concerns from a Safeguarding point, and the form will also be sent to Prevent colleagues.

**Local Authority** – If the local authority identify Prevent concerns from for example a telephone call from the public, or Prevent concerns from information received from a Police MASH referral, Warrington local authority will then send the Prevent referral to the email address on the form, again any immediate Safeguarding issues should be highlighted to and dealt with by the appropriate professional, following the usual Warrington Council Local Authority process. (See attached Prevent referral form appendix xx)

**Partner agencies** – Such as Health, Education etc., should be sending the referral form to the local authority as all referrals of concern in respect of PREVENT that are generated from within Warrington Council Local Authority should in the first instance, directed to and recorded at Warrington Council Local Authority, highlighting any potential concerns. The concerns can then therefore be looked at from a Safeguarding perspective, but also be sent to the Prevent team. (See attached Prevent referral form appendix xx)

More information about Channel can be found at: [Channel Duty Guidance](#)

# What is the process for progressing a Channel/ Prevent referral?

**Prevent** is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and provides practical help to **prevent** individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.

## **Prevent Referral Process:**

All referrals of concern in respect of PREVENT should in the first instance, be directed to Prevent Police and Warrington Social Care Services, highlighting any potential concerns.

Send to: [prevent@merseyside.police.uk](mailto:prevent@merseyside.police.uk) and [childreferral@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:childreferral@warrington.gov.uk) (if concerns regarding a child)

[servicereception@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:servicereception@warrington.gov.uk) (if concerns regarding an adult)

- When received at Prevent Police, the Counter Terrorism Triage Team will immediately begin the relevant checks into the person.
- Upon receipt of a PREVENT referral at either Warrington Children's or Adult's first point of contact services, any immediate Safeguarding issues should be highlighted to and dealt with by the appropriate professional, following standard screening and assessment processes. There is no need for Social Care Services to conduct any checks with the MASH or partners with regards to the Terrorism or Domestic Extremism risk at this stage. For adults, where it is determined that the eligibility for adult care services is not met, the referral and outcome of the screening process will be logged.

## **What happens next?**

The referral will be assessed by North West Counter Terrorism Police officers and it may subsequently, be adopted as a multi-agency led case or it may be signposted out to other services or agencies if it does not meet threshold criteria.

If adopted as a multi-agency case, the LACC from the Merseyside & Cheshire Channel Team, will begin information gathering and it will be at this stage that they contact colleagues within the MASH and additional Warrington services to formulate the vulnerability assessment. The expected turn around to respond to information requests is 5 working days.

The case will then be discussed at a Channel Panel, a multi-agency meeting which will discuss and review the referral, gain consent for engagement and plan any appropriate bespoke support packages to reduce or mitigate vulnerabilities to radicalisation. This Panel will meet on a monthly basis to review the progress of the case, until such time as the individual is deemed to be no longer vulnerable to radicalisation or consent is withdrawn.

# Governance and Accountability

For Prevent the Warrington Community Safety Partnership (SSCP) will meet to oversee Warrington Council's approach. It will assess ongoing performance against the Action Plan and be directly accountable, reporting to the Council's Senior Leadership Team. Updates will be provided to Warrington Safeguarding Children Partnership and Warrington Safeguarding Adult Board at least annually.

Our Channel Multi-Agency Panels will hold operational responsibility for the same. The Chair of Warrington's panel is a member of the Council's Senior Leadership team, within the portfolio of the Director Children's Services.

If you become aware of an individual that you believe may meet the criteria for consideration and there is no known worker for the individual you have a duty to report your concerns (see pathways and referral documents at the end of this strategy).



## Links to National Documents

This document is aligned with, a number of National Acts, Strategies and Policies:-

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Contest (UK Counter Terrorism Strategy)
- National Prevent Strategy
- Prevent Duty for Specified Authorities
- Channel Duty Guidance 2015

## Links to Local Policies

There are a number of local documents that link to this approach. These include:

- Safeguarding Policies of both the adult and children's safeguarding boards
- Hate Crime Action Plan
- Children & Young Peoples Plan
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy

## Further Information

Should you or your teams require any verbal advice on completing the forms or general information regarding Prevent referrals – please contact:

prevent@merseyside.pnn.police.uk

If you have any questions whilst filling in the form, please call: 01606 362121 (Cheshire Police Prevent Team)