**DUDLEY PREVENTING EXTREMISM STRATEGY 2017 - 2020**

**Introduction**

This document sets out our strategy for safeguarding Dudley’s communities through preventing extremism in the Dudley borough. Prevent activity has been taking place in Dudley since 2007, and that work continues to develop to reflect the local, national, and international issues that affect communities locally. Our strategic priorities in relation to Prevent are:

* Safeguarding individuals and communities from the risk of extremism by building resilience to extremist influences
* Supporting all partners to fulfil their legal duties in relation to preventing extremism

This strategy outlines:

* Why we need a prevent strategy
* What we are required to do
* How we deliver prevent
* Governance & oversight arrangements

**Why we need a Prevent strategy**

Prevent is part of the UK’s counter terrorism strategy, preventing people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. Although terrorism is nothing new, in recent years we have seen an increase in acts of terrorism being committed across the world, with the perpetrators of those atrocities justifying their actions on the basis of a wide range of extremist causes. The current threat level[[1]](#footnote-1) from international terrorism in the UK is severe which means that an attack is highly likely. This has been the case since August 2014 and there is very little prospect of this level of threat diminishing in the near future. In response the government introduced the Contest Strategy[[2]](#footnote-2), which is organised around 4 work streams:

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

Whilst activity relating to all of these work streams takes place as appropriate, this strategy is concerned with local work on the **Prevent** strand – and further government guidance about prevent is provided in the government’s Prevent Strategy.[[3]](#footnote-3) Terrorism is usually the result of extremist views, although not all extremism necessarily leads to acts of terrorism. HM Government defines extremism as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calls for death of members of the armed forces.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

There is also a correlation between extremist views and an increased risk of hate crime, prejudice, and fragmented communities, so it is a priority for all of us to work to prevent extremism where possible. The reality of the threat in Dudley is reinforced by the fact that the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism in the Home Office has identified Dudley as one of its “prevent priority” boroughs nationally.

**What we are required to do**

In Dudley a range of partners have been working together since 2007 to safeguard local communities from the risk of extremism leading to support for terrorism. This work is now underpinned by the Counter Terrorism & Security Act which gives the following specified authorities:

* Local Authorities
* Schools
* Higher Education
* Further Education
* The Health Sector
* Prisons & Probation
* Police

a legal duty to have *“due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”*. Whilst each of the above authorities retains responsibility for fulfilling its own legal duty we are committed to delivering in partnership because this enables us to most effectively safeguard our communities. This approach is reflected in the guidance issued by Government which states that specified authorities should:

* Work in partnership to agree risk and coordinate activity
* Incorporate the duty into existing policies so it becomes part of day to day work
* Develop an action plan to address identified risks
* Train frontline staff
* Make appropriate referrals to safeguard people from extremism
* Ensure that resources are not used to promote extremism
* Incorporate other agencies working with children (e.g. school clubs and groups, supplementary schools) into our safeguarding arrangements

The Prevent work that has been ongoing in Dudley since 2007 reflects this guidance and we intend to continue to deliver as described below.

**How we deliver Prevent**

We are committed to safeguarding communities through Prevent, and Dudley Safe & Sound have agreed to the fulfilling of our strategic priorities by meeting the following objectives:

* Improve staff awareness of prevent to facilitate appropriate safeguarding of vulnerable individuals
* Encourage and equip partners to support vulnerable individuals and make appropriate referrals into Channel
* Support schools and other educational settings in safeguarding students and fulfilling their statutory duties in respect of prevent
* Engage with businesses to ensure that customers are safeguarded & that their resources are not used to promote extremism
* Engage with voluntary and community organisations to ensure that members are safeguarded & that their resources are not used to promote extremism
* Engage with young people aged under 25 who are vulnerable to extremism in order to provide safeguarding support

These objectives reflect our strategic priorities and are based on an assessment of vulnerabilities which is informed by local knowledge from agencies and communities, and the counter terrorism local profile produced by the police. The objectives also form the overall structure of our delivery plan, and actions that enable us to meet these objectives are agreed annually by Dudley Prevent Delivery Group. Delivery against the actions in the plan is ongoing, with progress being formally monitored quarterly and actions reviewed and refreshed annually.

**Governance and oversight arrangements**

The Delivery Group is the partnership tasked with overseeing the work carried out locally to carry out the actions in the delivery plan and thereby safeguard communities from extremism. The group includes representation from voluntary and community groups as well as public services, and group members are accountable for the prevent activity carried out by the organisations that they represent. The work of the Delivery Group is overseen by the Community Cohesion Strategic Group, which in turn reports to the Safe and Sound Partnership. Adults and Children’s Safeguarding Boards are both actively represented within the prevent governance structure, in addition to which both boards are briefed as and when required to provide assurance that adequate safeguarding is in place.

**Summary**

The plan and structure outlined above provide a robust and adaptable framework which facilitates a dynamic and proactive approach to Prevent. Subject to annual review we will continue to use this approach to safeguard communities and fulfil our legal responsibilities.

1. As determined by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97995/strategy-contest.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (originally issued on 12th March 2015 and revised on 16th July 2015, paragraph 7 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)