Nottinghamshire Counter Terrorism Priorities for 2023

Counter Terrorism Policing East Midlands has produced this 'Official'-level document to give a brief overview of the identified terrorism risk in your local area. This includes extracts from the full Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) document, and encompasses the four strands of the CONTEST strategy; Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare.

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Overview

The Counter Terrorism Local Priorities for 2023 in **Nottinghamshire** are:
- AQ/ISIS Inspired Terrorism
- Extreme Right Wing Terrorism
- Online Extremism
- Self-Initiated Terrorists (S-ITs).

Referrals into Nottinghamshire Prevent have decreased by 15% on the previous year. Education provided the majority of these referrals (37% in total), closely followed by policing.

The highest number of referrals were received from Nottingham town, followed by Broxtowe and Mansfield.

Across all ideologies, the online space continues to be the main methodology used by individuals investigated by Nottinghamshire Police during the CTLP period.

Nationally, Prevent referrals decreased 8% on the previous year. East Midlands Prevent are identifying high rates of complex needs within casework. Deteriorating mental health, neurological and developmental issues account for three quarters of these complex needs.

Self-Initiated Terrorism remains the most dominant threat to the UK due to the lack of preparation or skill required, and the ease of access to weapons such as knives and vehicles.

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Neurodiversity and Prevent

Both Nationally and Regionally, Pursue and Prevent have dealt with an increase in individuals with traits linked to neurodiversity.

The reason for this is unclear at present, however this could be due to a raised awareness of conditions and thus an increase in reporting as opposed to an increase in incidence of neurodiversity.

The challenging circumstances and grievances within society, exacerbated by COVID 19, can be exploited by terrorists to promote their brand of extremism.

The collective impact of these factors may make the most vulnerable in society, particularly those with mental health issues and children, more vulnerable to extremist influences.

Although there is currently no evidence to support a direct causal link between mental ill health or neurodiversity and an individual's terrorist threat or vulnerability to radicalisation, further work is needed.

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AQ/ISIS Inspired Terrorism

Only 7% of Nottinghamshire referrals were related to AQ/ISIS Inspired Terrorism, despite this ideology remaining the largest threat to CT Policing across the UK.

All Prevent referrals related to males who reside in Nottingham. Referrals came from Policing, Education and Local Government sectors.

During this CTLP period 42% of investigations relate to Islamist terrorism. This is a decrease of 16% compared to last year's CTLP period.

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The most significant risk and threat is from individuals radicalising themselves online or those who currently hold extremist views that share them within the online space which in turn can radicalise or encourage others to partake in acts of terror.

Terrorist groups overseas play an important role in driving the threat in the UK. This is achieved primarily by inspiring wouldbe attackers (self-initiated terrorists) through their ideologies and extremist media rather than a directed group attack.

Self-initiated Terrorists (S-ITs) are the most dominant CT threat to the UK. They are individuals who plan attacks independently of a terrorist network.

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Extreme Right Wing Terrorism

ERWT is the predominant ideology recorded within Nottinghamshire Prevent referrals.

80% of referred individuals were influenced through online methods. Many reports were related to an interest, support or possessing material relating to Nazism, racist behaviour and possession of ERWT material on devices.

ERWT activity in the East Midlands is predominantly online. It often involves young people inspired by conspiracies and racist stereotypes about ethnic minorities, who believe that violent action to protect white people is justified.

There is a small number of organised groups, although there are relatively large volumes of extreme views and weapons making instructions shared online.

Most ERWT investigations in the last 12 months have examined individuals collecting and sharing these high-risk documents.

In Prevent cases where a subject has an identified radicalising factor, 'Online' is the dominant factor in 47% of cases. A significant proportion of subjects are below the age of 25 (85%) and ERWT is the dominant ideology within the casework.

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ERWT Prevent concerns have been identified in all districts across the county. The themes present this year are the sharing of material online, posting extremist views or showing support for ERWT groups.

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Online Extremism

Online remains the highest primary radical influence for subjects referred into Nottinghamshire Prevent. This is also reflective of regional figures.

57% of Nottinghamshire referrals have an identified radicalising influence of 'Online'. 83% of subjects are below the age of 25 and ERWT is the dominant ideology type within casework.

Recent activity shows an increase in young individuals within the county committing offences online, downloading or distributing terrorist material, and sometimes even attack planning.

People will often self-radicalise using online materials and may radicalise others by disseminating extremist material.

Some key signs of online radicalisation to look out for:
- Persistent and secretive online behaviour.
- Viewing extreme websites or content.
- Sharing hateful views or images online.
- Displaying messages that are racist or dehumanise others.
- Involvement in suspicious online groups or chat rooms.
- Use of the dark web.
- Making unusual travel plans.
- Researching weapons or explosives.
- Showing support for previous terrorist acts.
- Using hateful speech that indicates they have been brain-washed or radicalised.

If you have concerns that someone is heading down a path towards violent extremism, click here to make a Prevent referral.

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Self Initiated Terrorists

Self initiated terrorism is the greatest terrorist threat to the UK. It is likely that any attack in the UK will be conducted by a S-IT.
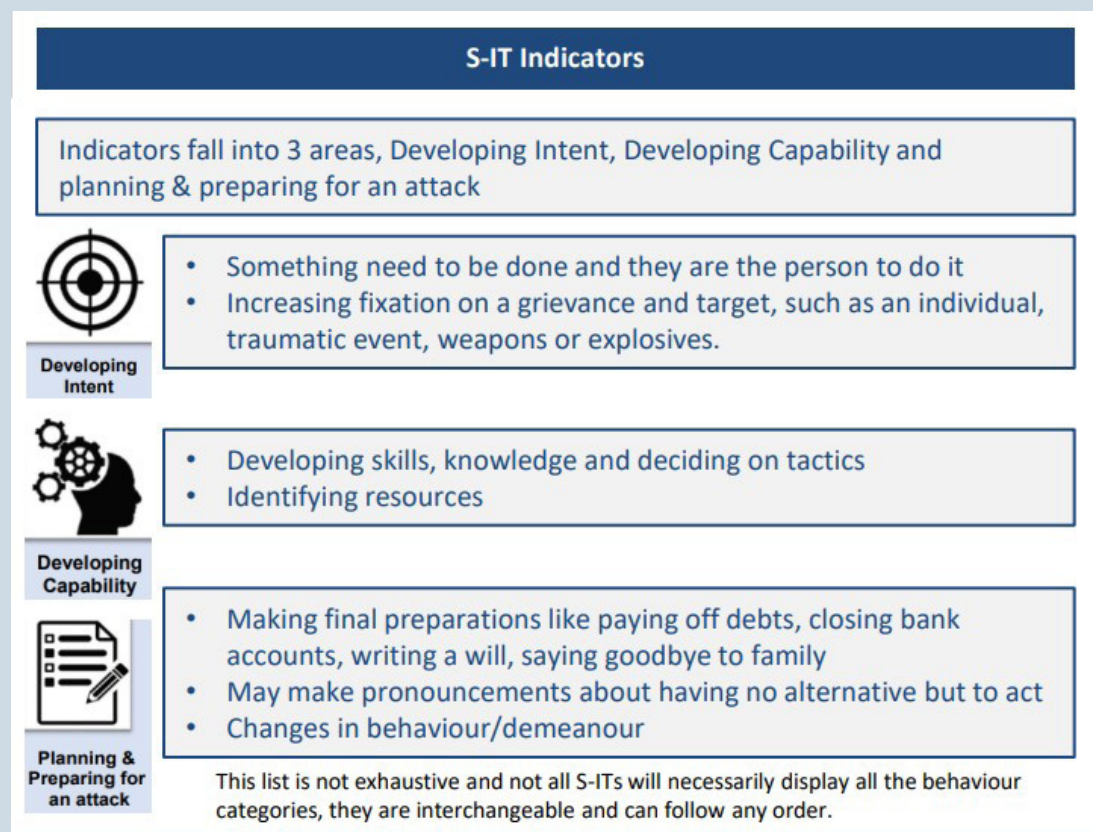
S-ITs are potential terrorists who act alone and are difficult to identify. Islamist terrorist groups overseas, most notably Al-Qaeda and ISIL, continue to pose a threat from inspiring would be attackers through radicalisation.

Self-initiated Terrorists (S-ITs) are the most dominant CT threat to the UK. They are individuals who plan attacks independently of a terrorist network.

Attacks are often of low sophistication, not requiring much preparation, specialist skills or access to prohibited weapons.

The nature of individuals acting alone makes identification difficult, so early identification is key.

Please see this graphic for some of the key signs to look out for.

S-IT Indicators

Indicators fall into 3 areas, Developing Intent, Developing Capability and planning & preparing for an attack

Developing Intent
- Something need to be done and they are the person to do it
- Increasing fixation on a grievance and target, such as an individual, traumatic event, weapons or explosives.

Developing Capability
- Developing skills, knowledge and deciding on tactics
- Identifying resources

Planning & Preparing for an attack
- Making final preparations like paying off debts, closing bank accounts, writing a will, saying goodbye to family
- May make pronouncements about having no alternative but to act
- Changes in behaviour/demeanour

This list is not exhaustive and not all S-ITs will necessarily display all the behaviour categories, they are interchangeable and can follow any order.

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ProtectUK app

ProtectUK is the new one-stop-shop where you can learn the importance of counter terrorism and security through e-learning.

If you are starting on your security journey, the ACT Awareness e-learning package is a good place to start.

Continue your journey learning about the best practices to help counter terrorism and increase your security awareness. The award winning ACT E-learning or click below to see all other modules.

The app contains numerous useful videos, documents and guidance as well as contact details for NaCTSO and other key agencies.

For more information and to download the app, please visit The Protect UK website.

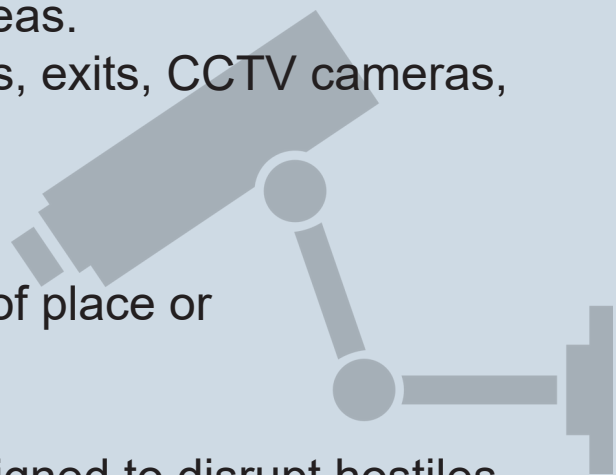Spot the signs of radicalisation: www.actearly.uk

Hostile reconnaissance

Budding terrorists conduct research as part of their attack planning.

Signs to look out for include:
- Loitering in restricted or non-public areas.
- Observing or photographing entrances, exits, CCTV cameras, security features or staff.
- Asking unusual questions.
- Hiding their faces or using a disguise.
- Vehicles retracing routes, parked out of place or abandoned.

Security-Minded communications is designed to disrupt hostiles and to make a hostile believe that if they were to choose your organisation or event as a place to attack, they will almost certainly fail.

Find out more on the CPNI website, and remember, in the rare event of a terrorist attack:

RUN HIDE TELL

RUN - to a place of safety. This is a better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then...

HIDE - Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can.

TELL - the police by calling 999 when it is safe to do so.

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