Challenging Hateful Extremism

Our Vision for Challenging Hateful Extremism

Our vision is one where together we uphold our democratic way of life in a peaceful, plural and inclusive society that opposes intolerance;

where people exercise individual liberty and take personal responsibility for promoting equal citizenship, recognising the harm extremist behaviours cause to everyone;

and where our communities and institutions robustly challenge and resist hateful extremism and support those affected by it.

Foreword

Hateful extremism demands a response. From inspiring terrorist attacks, to hateful extremist groups engaging in persistent hostility, we are grappling with what is a global challenge.

However, extremism, and how we counter it, is a complex and contested policy area. The debate is often polarised and abusive; not helped by the overuse of the E-word. This is particularly evident in these politically febrile times.

This climate makes serious discussions about extremism challenging. And yet it is vital that we have those discussions.

I have worked in the field of counter extremism for over ten years. I know what it's like to challenge extremism. It's demanding work and there's little support. I also know how it feels to be a victim, targeted by extremists.

When I took on the role as Lead Commissioner, I was acutely aware that we lack the clarity, the language and the consensus to effectively counter this harmful phenomenon.

Our country has a robust response in place to counter terrorism. In 2015 the Government recognised the need to counter extremism outside of terrorism and launched the first Counter Extremism Strategy. Having

reviewed the Strategy and its delivery it is my view that the current response is insufficient and too broad.

If we are to be successful in reducing the extremist threat in our country, we must focus on challenging hateful extremism. My report shows the destructive effect hateful extremism is having on the lives of individuals, our communities and wider society.

Counter extremism policy over the years has also been characterised by a top-down approach. The voices of the wider public, victims and counter extremism practitioners have been missing. That is why I have invested in extensive engagement, meeting thousands of people across England and Wales. It is clear that victims of extremism have not been acknowledged or protected and continue to be targeted by extremists. Counter-extremists experience frightening levels of hostility alongside a lack of support and funding. Social division caused by hateful extremists is fracturing our communities.

What I heard was informative, shocking and worrying. Some of the stories have left me heartbroken. People, young and old, have cried as they described how extremists targeted them because of their sexuality, their gender, their race or religious identity. Taking a victim centred approach is essential in any counter extremism strategy.

We must not allow extremists to normalise their hatred in our country.

There is a fear that countering extremism can undermine civil liberties and in particular, freedom of expression. As a human rights campaigner I recognise these concerns. Authoritarian regimes have used 'counter terrorism' and 'counter extremism' to silence dissent and criticism.

There is no doubt in my mind: we must continue to protect and preserve freedom of expression. This includes offensive, critical and shocking speech.

In this report I propose a new approach to counter extremism. A rights-based and proportionate response to ensure that checks and balances are in place when countering extremism.

But extremism itself is a human rights issue – this isn't acknowledged enough. Hateful extremists seek to restrict individual liberties and curtail the fundamental freedoms that define our country. Time and again I have seen how extremist activity has contributed to a climate of censorship and fear, limiting freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief and undermining the universality and indivisibility of human rights.

Our country has a long tradition of championing rights; from Magna Carta in 1215 to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998. Hateful extremism stands in stark contrast to the rights and freedoms that we enjoy.

It is precisely for this reason I have spent so much of my life challenging extremism and will continue to do so as Lead Commissioner.

I want to see a strengthened Commission for Countering Extremism to help defend our plural, tolerant and broad-minded society.

My Commission has begun the job of examining the existence of hateful extremism and the negative consequences to our society.

We will continue to drive the whole society response we need. We need to conduct more research, to gather more evidence about the impact on victims and to develop evidence-based interventions.

But above all, we need brave, bold and consistent leadership both within Government and across civil society.

I would like to thank the many people who have contributed their experience, their evidence and their wisdom to this work.

I am particularly grateful to my Expert Group for the independent challenge and advice they provided as I delivered this work and prepared this report.

Together, we must build a whole society response to help those who are vulnerable to extremism while challenging those who actively seek to divide and undermine our country.
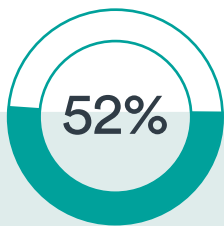
Sara Khan
Lead Commissioner

EXTREMISM IN ENGLAND AND WALES

73% of people are **concerned** about rising **extremism**

2018 saw the biggest **Far Right** marches in a generation.

52% of the respondents to a first-of-its kind call for evidence have witnessed extremism in some way.

75% Three quarters of the public respondents find the Government's current definition of extremism **"very unhelpful"** or **"unhelpful"**

59% Of the public respondents who said they had witnessed extremism, Islamist extremism (59%) was the most common.

56% of the public and **73%** of practitioners agreed that **"a lot more"** should be done to counter extremism online.

Over **3/4** of those countering extremism face some degree of **abuse** for the work they do.

Prosecutions for inciting hatred are as high as they have ever been since statistics first began in 2010. Recorded religious hate crime has increased over twice as fast as other forms since 2015.

When asked who has a role to play, practitioner respondents' top choice was **social media**; **tech companies** and the public respondents chose **faith groups** and **leaders**.

Executive Summary

Hateful extremism threatens our ability to live well together. From inspiring violence to the incitement of active hatred and hostility targeted at those perceived to be a threat to their world-view, hateful extremists are having a devastating impact on victims and threatening the social fabric of our country.

Extremism requires an urgent and effective response. Our country's response to violent extremism and terrorism is robust and effective. However violent extremism requires a different strategy to hateful extremism. Our evidence shows that a significant gap exists in our response to hateful extremism.

Our ability to counter extremism outside of terrorism has been hampered by a lack of consensus: on what we mean by extremism, on what our response should look like and on what role Government and civil society should play.

Launched last year, the Commission has held the most extensive national conversation on extremism.

The Commission has met thousands of people including those critical of counter extremism (CE). We received nearly 3,000 submissions to our first ever public consultation, visited over 20 towns and cities, held 16 roundtables, reviewed hundreds of pages of Government documents and commissioned 19 academic papers.

Drawing on this wide range of evidence and having reviewed the Government's Counter-Extremism Strategy and definition of 2015, this report proposes a bold new approach focussed on hateful extremism. We need to develop a set of diverse yet robust and proportionate responses to it.

At the same time, protecting democratic debate and freedom of expression is vital. This includes defending speech and actions which can be offensive, shocking, dissenting and critical; or advocates for conservative religious beliefs. This is why we are taking a rights-based approach to challenging hateful extremism.

Describing Hateful Extremism

The experiences of the public, victims and front-line counter extremists have often been missing from the debate; yet it is their voices which are vital in shaping counter extremism policy. We heard moving stories from victims and from all kinds of people and places about the serious and long-lasting harms of extremism. We have identified these harms for the first time, which will enable further research.

Many people are affected – over half of respondents to our public consultation had witnessed extremism, with one in five having witnessed it in their local area. Extremism is not confined to a single race, religion or ideology. Concerns were raised about the growing threat of the Far Right, Far

Left, Islamist and other forms of religious fundamentalisms; and animal rights extremism.

The concerns people told us about that are harmful and lie outside democratic debate fall into three categories: terrorism and violent extremism, hateful extremism and the restriction of rights and freedoms.

It is our view that across this spectrum, countering hateful extremism requires the greatest attention and focus if we are to be successful in reducing the extremist threat. While some good work is currently being undertaken the current response to hateful extremism, unlike terrorism and violent extremism, is in our view insufficient.

Our research proposes that hateful extremism consists of a framework of behaviours, beliefs and harms. It stands in stark contrast to pluralism and Britain's human rights, equality laws and norms.

Our summary of hateful extremism is:

- Behaviours that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence;

- And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group;

- And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society.

What Does Hateful Extremism Look Like?

Hateful, hostile and supremacist beliefs are increasingly visible in our country today. The Far Right's narratives of a racial or cultural threat to "natives" from "aliens" have been making their way into the mainstream. As are Islamists' ideas for defending a single communal Muslim identity against the West's corrupting influence. And the Far Left's conflation of anti-imperialism and antisemitism.

Surveys show the public view Muslims negatively and as a distinctly different group, and that up to a third hold at least one antisemitic view. As we are clear, beliefs on their own are not hateful extremism. Hateful behaviours drawing on these beliefs that may cause harm, especially to others, are.

Prosecutions for inciting hatred are as high as they have ever been since statistics first began in 2010. All the convictions for stirring up hatred last year included an anti-Muslim component. Recorded religious hate crime has increased over twice as fast as other forms since 2015.

We are aware of at least seven convictions of members or ex-members of National Action for inciting racial hatred, with most of the offences being committed after proscription. Far Right agitators convince their supporters that instead of amplifying hatred they are merely "telling the truth" about Muslims. Anti-Muslim Far Right and Sikh activists have worked together to promote narratives about the threat Muslims pose to non-Muslim women. While at the same time Islamists are telling Muslims that they should not associate with "worse than animals" non-Muslims.

And these messages reach large audiences. Far Right agitators' videos on social media can receive over half a million views. Up to four thousand people attend rallies headlined by Far Right leaders.

The persistent hatred directed at individual members of these hated groups is becoming more obvious. We heard harrowing tales of abuse levelled at Jewish MPs – in a country where at least 170,000 antisemitic web searches are made every year. Ahmadi Muslim children are abused at school, and a British Urdu newspaper printed encouragement for a boycott of Ahmadi business, because of their faith. Farmers are targeted for filling our plates. And even those who seek to bring communities together are targeted to reinforce messages of separation between Jews and Muslims.

Alongside these are those who equivocate or make a moral case for violence, including failing to condemn violence against minorities or women. One of CAGE's senior leaders described suicide bombing as "a price worth paying". National Action tweeted after Jo Cox's murder "only 649 to go".

Victims and practitioners told us about hundreds of harms. From how their communities are driven apart. How victims suffer abuse and harassment at the hands of extremists for expressing their own beliefs. Counter extremists themselves told us how intimidation and abuse was having a chilling effect on their willingness to speak out, as well as on their mental health and well-being. We have heard how basic freedoms, our democracy and the economic prosperity of businesses and towns are impacted.

But hateful extremism doesn't happen in isolation. As our case studies show, hateful extremists exploit local, democratic tensions or promote the restriction of others' rights and freedoms. It is important to be clear about the behaviours we are dealing with when countering hateful extremism and the tools we are using to tackle them.

Taking a Rights-Based Approach to Countering Hateful Extremism

We propose taking a rights-based approach to counter extremism which balances competing rights and ensures a proportionate response. Previous attempts to introduce CE legislation in 2015 failed because they did not do this.

So far, there has been little discussion of the victims of extremism and their experiences; how extremists target them and the resulting abuse, harassment and denigration of their rights. This affected their families and had a chilling effect on their willingness to speak out. A victim centred approach needs to be part and parcel of a counter extremism strategy.

Human rights law explicitly prevents totalitarian, extremist groups from exploiting human rights to weaken the very ideals and values of a democratic society. Existing legislation captures some hateful extremist behaviours, such as incitement to racial and religious hatred.

We have not yet heard a strong case for more powers to directly counter extremism. But we have heard, and we believe, that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently. We will continue to review this.

Delivering the New Approach

Building a language, description and understanding of hateful extremism as the Commission has done is the first step in addressing the problems it causes.

Developing an evidence-based approach which effectively counters hateful extremist narratives both online and offline requires serious investment and research. We are putting forward a number of recommendations for both Government and civil society.

The Commission's work in future will focus on countering hateful extremism. We believe our plural, tolerant and broad-minded society needs a Commission to lead the vital work of countering hateful extremism, delivering pioneering research and developing more effective counter extremism interventions. We will be asking the Government to put the Commission on a statutory basis, accountable to Parliament. As an independent body, the Commission should hold government and civil society to account.

Above all countering extremism requires stronger leadership from across society. This is the whole of society response we want to see. Too many people in public life are stoking the fires of extremism; online and in our communities. Or are failing to respond consistently to hateful extremism.

We want to see more visible leadership and policies against hateful extremism from political parties and all others in public life. Public bodies need to recognise victims of extremism and to provide support to them. We want to see civil society groups challenge extremists and their hateful ideologies. We want to see faith leaders call out the extremists from the communities they belong to. We want to see social media companies pro-actively rise to the challenge, rather than being reactive. Going beyond take-down and developing more innovative ways to encourage positive behaviour online.

Yet often countering extremism and defending our society results not in thanks and support, but abuse, harassment and intimidation. Government must do more to support those performing this vital role.

To drive government's work forward, we are calling on the Home Secretary to chair a hateful extremism task force that meets regularly. Based on the serious violence task force this should bring together leaders from across Government, regulators and civil society to oversee development of the new strategy and to respond to extremist incidents.

We are a wonderfully diverse country made up different races, political opinion, sexualities, religions and beliefs. The protection of individual liberties and our wider fundamental freedoms is part and parcel of who we are as a country. Together we can and must play our part in defending and preserving our democratic values from those who seek to undermine them. Inaction is quite simply not an option; hateful extremism demands a response.

OUR VISION

Our vision is one where together we uphold our democratic way of life in a peaceful, plural and inclusive society that opposes intolerance.

OUR WORK

Engagement	Call for Evidence	Academic Work	Government Data

WE HEARD ABOUT

Democratic Debate

Including behaviours that are offensive, dissenting, critical, or ultra-religiously conservative.

Restriction of rights and freedoms

Behaviours that result in the restriction of freedoms or democractic values.

Hateful extremism

Behaviours that are actively hateful or incite hatred towards an identified out-group for the survival of an in-group.

Terrorism and violent extremism

Behaviours that involve the use of terrorism or serious violence.

REQUIRED RESPONSE

Protect and encourage debate. Better challenge of incivility.

Government and civil society must promote equality and protect victims against discrimination.

Proportionate response through existing legal powers and more effective responses by civil society including counter narratives.

Strong powers in place, must be clearly distinct from other counter extremism work.

CHALLENGING HATEFUL EXTREMISM

We are calling for a focus on challenging hateful extremism

We summarise hateful extremism as:

- Behaviours that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence;

- And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group;

- And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society.

We need a whole society response:

- Better understanding of hateful extremism's harms and impact on victims

- More effective Interventions based on evidence and directly challenging hateful extremism

- Mobilising and supporting leadership to stand up consistently to hateful extremism alongside a statutory Commission

The Commission will:

- Produce a working definition of hateful extremism by Spring 2020

- Put in place a small and dedicated new network and recruit 2 additional commissioners.

- Review existing Government legislation to better protect victims

- Build a toolbox of innovative and established interventions to challenge hateful extremism.

Summary of Recommendations

Our core recommendation is to focus on tackling hateful extremism.

We currently summarise hateful extremism as:

- Behaviours that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence;

- And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group;

- And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society.

Government's new counter extremism strategy should focus on hateful extremism and be based on the content and recommendations of this report. It should be victim-centred and rights-based, and start from a positive vision for our plural, tolerant and inclusive country.

All our evidence suggests that the best and most effective work to counter extremism happens on the ground, led by people from the communities they belong to. This is why a whole of society response is so important – because everyone can and must play a role.

Focus on Tackling Hateful Extremism

Too many people feel unsure about what is or isn't extremism. **Better understanding** of hateful extremism must start with a definition. This will allow us to understand victims' experiences better. It will also allow us to more readily identify hateful extremism when it is occurring.

Yet even when it is recognised, as our report shows, our interventions are not effective enough. We need to understand what works to challenge hateful extremism when it happens. We must try new and innovative approaches. And we must do more to challenge hateful extremist ideologies, narratives and beliefs.

Delivering **more effective interventions** to counter extremism requires a commitment that is matched across Government and civil society to work together and support others doing this work. Especially in the face of abuse by hateful extremists. We have heard and we believe that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently.

This needs better leadership in defence of our society and communities. Extremists suppress those who stand up to them. This makes **mobilising and supporting leadership** vital but challenging. Leadership is the primary role of the Commission.

Leadership in Government needs to improve, and we are recommending a new task force chaired by the Home Secretary, similar to the serious violence task force, with involvement of those in civil society who are already working on extremism. The role of civil society is also crucial, and we also want to see a much broader range of organisations, including human rights organisations, take responsibility to counter hateful extremism.

Future Work of the Commission

A strong, independent Commission for Countering Extremism is needed to step up our work to counter hateful extremism, to introduce new and innovative approaches, and to provide increased oversight and transparency of counter hateful extremism work, including through the new strategy. A strengthened Commission can capitalise on our unique position between Government and civil society, providing the authoritative insight on the state of hateful extremism across England and Wales. We are already discussing this with Government.

The Commission should be placed on a statutory basis to guarantee independence. This has been raised frequently during our national conversation. In addition, the Commission needs information sharing powers with specific government bodies to enable us to provide policy makers with the best information.

While the legislative process takes place, the Commission will deliver its ambitious work programme. We will produce an annual report starting next year. We are asking Government to help us recruit two additional commissioners to bring wider skills and experience to specific areas of work. Our work programme includes:

- Leading a small and dedicated network of counter extremism organisations to identify emerging issues and put in place interventions, as well as further professionalise counter extremism. This will also support the proposed task force.

- Pioneering research that develops and tests a full, working definition of hateful extremism in time for the new counter extremism strategy in 2020. Alongside this we will review existing legislation that addresses hateful extremism and can protect victims and counter extremists from abuse. In addition, we will research the impact of extremism on victims and help those supporting them.

- Catalogue existing expertise and practice and trial new and innovative interventions, to develop a new toolbox of measures to counter extremism.

- Focus efforts to counter hateful extremist narratives online and offline, including by holding a summit to discuss the health and best practice of this work.

Recommendations for Government

The new counter extremism strategy should be based on hateful extremism and the recommendations in this report.

- The Home Secretary should chair a counter hateful extremism task force, modelled on the serious violence task force, that regularly brings together leading figures inside and outside government. This task force should oversee development of the new strategy and respond to extremism incidents, including those identified by the Commission's new network.

- Government should be clearer on the difference between work to counter terrorism and to counter hateful extremism. At the same time, work to build resilience in communities against those who seek to restrict the rights and opportunities of others, particularly women and young people, should move to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and receive more funding.

- Government should deliver its commitment to set out who it will or will not engage and why, with clear guidance on how organisations and individuals can regain this status.

- Government must also do more to support and protect those organisations and individuals who are countering extremism from abuse, harassment and intimidation. This includes enforcing harassment laws evenly across different communities.

- In addition, there are specific recommendations on unregulated schools, internet, the role of politicians, political parties and the media.

Recommendations for Civil and Wider Society

As part of the whole of society response, everyone has a role to play.

- Members of the public should continue to report, and where safe, challenge hatred and abuse wherever they see it.

- Everyone, especially national, local and faith leaders, must be consistent in their actions against all forms of extremism and not legitimise perpetrators of abuse, even unwittingly.

- Organisations already countering extremism must continue their efforts, and work with the Commission to build understanding and interventions against hateful extremism – backed by sustainable funding from charitable sources.

- Social media companies must reduce the hostile atmosphere on their platforms by enforcing laws and terms and conditions, as well as new work to build better conversations online.

- We also want to see more organisations taking part in counter extremism work. Human rights organisations must champion all human rights in line with Article 17 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), and we want more organisations to fund counter extremism alongside other work that also strengthens all the communities in our country.

An Inclusive, Peaceful and Plural Britain

Democratic debate is vital to our country. We are a wonderfully diverse country. Plural. Tolerant of views and beliefs we find disturbing or illiberal. Broad-minded and able to cope with people living in a huge range of ways.

Countering extremism is about standing up for all these things, and for each other – a positive and encouraging vision in stark contrast to those who want to divide us.

As a worker for Show Racism the Red Card told us, we need "an inclusive society where individuals are encouraged...[to] talk through positive solution[s]. An educated society where there are clear opportunities for all." This was echoed by many of those we spoke to.

Many responses to our call for evidence stated that Britain should be a place where individuals embrace each other's differences and celebrate diversity. One reminded us of the London Olympics which showcased our ability to celebrate diversity. But we don't just need a festival, instead a lasting national celebration of what we share, and our future together. At this particularly challenging time for our country, it is more important than ever to give the people of this country a positive and inclusive vision to rally around.

Instilling this sense of purpose, of pride and passion into work to counter extremism is vital. The Lead Commissioner's vision is how we are taking this core principle forward. It sits at the heart of all our recommendations.

Timeline of Key Events Referenced in our Report, 2003-2019

2003

Government launches its counter terrorism (CONTEST) strategy with four priorities: Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare

The Communications Act 2003 receives royal assent in July and criminalises messages that cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety or are grossly offensive to others

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 receives royal assent in November. It consolidates laws around anti-social behaviour and introduces a number of civil powers that can be used to tackle it, including Community Protection Notices

2004

Birmingham theatre cancels Behzti (Dishonour) by Sikh playwright following violent protests over scenes showing rape and murder in a temple

2005

7/7 bombings in central London kill 52 people and injure over 700

2006

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 receives royal assent in February. It creates new offences of stirring up hatred against persons on religious grounds

Terrorism Act 2006 receives royal assent in March. It creates new terrorism offences, including encouragement of terrorism and dissemination of terrorist publications

London gallery cancels exhibition by Indian artist following vandalism of the artist's nude painting of Hindu goddesses

2009

English Defence League founded as a street protest movement in response to an Al-Muhajiroun demonstration against soldiers returning from Iraq

2010

Home Secretary revokes TV cleric Zakir Naik's visa and excludes him from the UK, citing unacceptable behaviour, including making statements that are supportive of terrorists and promoting antisemitism

Equality Act 2010 receives royal assent in April to legally protect people from discrimination, replacing previous anti-discrimination laws

2011

Prime Minister David Cameron delivers a speech on radicalisation and Islamist extremism at the Munich Security Conference

Prevent review by Lord Carlile on behalf of the Coalition Government

2013

Government launches Extremism Taskforce in response to the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby and Mohammed Saleem

Trojan Horse letter alleges Islamist entryist plot in Birmingham schools

2015

CAGE research director Asim Qureshi refers to Mohammed Emwazi aka, Jihadi John as a "beautiful young man". Shortly afterwards, Amnesty International UK breaks ties with CAGE citing Qureshi's refusal to condemn the stoning of women.

Three schoolgirls from Bethnal Green leave for Syria in February. They are among more than 900 individuals who have travelled from the UK to engage with the conflict in Syria and Iraq to date

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 receives royal assent in February. It introduces the Prevent duty on a range of organisations to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism

Zack Davies sentenced to life imprisonment for attempting to murder Dr Sarandev Bhambra, a Sikh dentist, "as revenge for Fusilier Lee Rigby"

Government publishes its first Counter-Extremism Strategy

2016

Murder of Imam Jalal Uddin in Rochdale by ISIS supporter Mohammed Hussain Syeedy

Murder of Asad Shah in Glasgow by Tanveer Ahmed. Ahmed believed him to be a blasphemer

Murder of Jo Cox MP in Birstall, West Yorkshire by Thomas Mair, inspired by white supremacism

Lewisham Imam Shakeel Begg loses a libel case against BBC. The Court held that Begg is an "extremist speaker who espouses extremist Islamic positions"

The Government publishes Hate Crime Action Plan after a rise in hate crime following the referendum on membership of the European Union

National Action is the first extreme right-wing terrorist group to be proscribed as a terrorist organisation

Government publishes Casey Review

2017

Four fatal terrorist attacks. At Westminster Bridge, killing 5 people; at Manchester Arena, killing 22 people; at London Bridge and Borough Market killing 8 people; and at Finsbury Park killing one person

Stephen Yaxley-Lennon reports on local tensions in Sunderland on behalf of Rebel Media. Raising the profile of the protests, the video amasses over 200,000 views

The Sikh Channel broadcasts Misused Trust, a documentary which portrays Muslim men as sexually predatory towards Sikh women

Court of Appeal rules that Al-Hijrah school was unlawfully discriminating against both its male and female pupils' contrary to the Equality Act 2010

British Urdu newspaper the Nawa-i-Jang published an advertisement encouraging a boycott of an Ahmadi business.

2018

The Commission for Countering Extremism is launched

Paul Golding and Jayda Fransen of Britain First convicted of religiously aggravated harassment

David Parnham admits to sending Punish a Muslim Day letter to Muslim Parliamentarians. He pleaded guilty to several offences, including soliciting to murder and staging a bomb hoax

2019

Protests against LGBT+ equality being taught in primary schools in Birmingham begin

#MeattheVictims farm invasion while pigs were farrowing (giving birth) resulted in distress to the sows and the deaths of several piglets

Online Harms White Paper launched

YouTube restricts the accounts of Far Right figures such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon.

James Goddard pleads guilty to harassing Anna Soubry MP in connection with her support for Remain

Contents

Who We Are

The independent Commission for Countering Extremism was established in March 2018 to support society to challenge all forms of extremism and provide impartial advice to the Government on new policies. The Commission consists of a small secretariat, led by Lead Commissioner, Sara Khan, and the ethos of our work is engagement, impartiality and a commitment to evidence.

While the Commission has no remit on counter terrorism policies, including Prevent, or integration issues, we are mindful of the overlap between terrorism, extremism and cohesion.[1]

We recognise that there are international factors that contribute to hateful extremism in England and Wales. These require examination, but for this report we have focused specifically on extremism as it manifests in England and Wales.

The Commission has an Expert Group which has provided independent advice and challenge. A list of members is on the Commission's website. The views in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the Expert Group.

Engagement

Since our inception, we put engagement at the centre of our ethos. We visited 20 towns and cities and spoke to thousands of people from diverse backgrounds and professions. We spoke to local councils and law enforcement bodies, activists and organisers from a host of community groups, as well as residents and victims. We visited schools, youth groups, non-governmental organisations, churches, mosques, synagogues, sports clubs, art centres and small, medium and large businesses. We ran 16 roundtables and workshops with experts and activists, including those sceptical of counter extremism. A full breakdown of the Lead Commissioner's engagement is available on our website.

Impartiality

As an independent, non-statutory expert committee of the Home Office, we agreed a charter with the Home Office which put in writing our ability to work transparently and independently of government.[2]

We are free to determine our own methodologies and the content of our work. Where justified, we acknowledge the good work Government has carried out under the

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[1] Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Charter for the Commission for Countering Extremism* (accessed: 9 September 2019). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charter-for-the-commission-for-countering-extremism/charter-for-the-commission-for-countering-extremism>

[2] Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Charter for the Commission for Countering Extremism*, (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charter-for-the-commission-for-countering-extremism>

Counter-Extremism Strategy and beyond, and likewise we criticise the Government when it has fallen short.

We have sought to gather powerful stories from those impacted by extremism. We have shown willingness to meet with anyone who was open to engage constructively on the issue of extremism, including those who have not been supportive of counter extremism.

Evidence

We are committed to an evidence-based approach. We began our evidence gathering by commissioning YouGov to undertake an attitudinal survey which found that a clear majority of respondents are concerned about rising extremism.

We reviewed academic literature on extremism and found that much of the research focused on violent extremism with insufficient analysis of the harms of extremism of violence and terrorism. We found little academic research on other types of extremism such as Far Left and animal rights extremism.

We published these findings in our Terms of Reference.[3] We have since sought to gather evidence from different sources in a variety of ways, including continuing to engage widely and through three key strands:

Call For Evidence
Between November 2018 and January 2019, we ran an open call for evidence to encourage the public and those that work in

counter extremism to share their views and experiences of extremism. We received 2,824 responses through an online questionnaire including 244 submitted by practitioners or on behalf of an organisation.[4]

Through our call for evidence we found that:[5]

- More than half (52%) of respondents had witnessed extremism in some way. Of these almost half (45%) said they had seen it online and two-fifths (39%) said they had seen it in their local area.

- Of the public respondents who said they had witnessed extremism, Islamist extremism (59%) was the most common, followed by Far Right (37%) and Far Left (29%) extremism. Practitioner respondents by contrast had witnessed more Far Right (68%) than Islamist (64%) extremism.

- Eighty-three percent of practitioner respondents were concerned that extremism is causing harm to our wider society and democracy.

- The public and practitioners agreed that "a lot more" should be done online to counter extremism (56% and 73% respectively). When asked who has a role to play, practitioner respondents' top choice was social media and technology companies and the public respondents chose faith groups and leaders.

- Three quarters (75%) of the public respondents find the Government's current definition of extremism "very unhelpful"

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3 Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Study into Extremism Terms of Reference*, (accessed: 19 July 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742176/Terms_of_Reference_into_Extremism_Study.pdf>

4 We received 78 additional documents via the online questionnaire and 12 written responses by post. In addition, we received 43 submissions outside of the survey format from practitioners and organisations by email. Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. *Statistical Summary of responses from our Call for Evidence*, Home Office, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819185/Call_For_Evidence_Summary.pdf>

5 Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. *Statistical Summary of responses from our Call for Evidence*, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819185/Call_For_Evidence_Summary.pdf>

or "unhelpful". Just over half (55%) of practitioners found it either "very helpful" or "helpful".

We commissioned the Policy Institute at King's College London to analyse responses to identify firstly areas of consensus and disagreement about extremism among respondents overall, and secondly the views on the harms caused by extremism from those who work in the field. We also commissioned NatCen Social Research to conduct focus groups to explore public perceptions of extremism.

Academic Papers

To build our understanding of extremism we commissioned nearly 30 academics to write papers. They covered a range of topics including, the influence of social media on extremism on and offline; the extent to which Far Right and Islamist ideologies have entered mainstream public and political life and explorations of the links between extremism and terrorism through the lens of UK-based Islamist and Far Right groups, Al-Muhajiroun (ALM) and National Action. Many of these papers have been published on GOV.UK.

Through this work we wanted to understand how extremism manifests across the spectrum, what allows extremism to flourish and how we can better tackle it. Earlier this year, authors presented their findings for discussion with the Lead Commissioner, our Expert Group and fellow contributors. Findings from the papers have helped inform our understanding of extremism, and we hope will prove a useful form of academic insight for the public and practitioners.

Government Data and Wider Research

As set out in our Terms of Reference, we aimed to identify what works in counter extremism. To do this we analysed data from across 10 different Government departments, independent regulators and reviewed relevant literature from academic bodies and thinktanks. We found that there is currently no single measure of extremism and as a result have used data available on a variety of proxy indicators identified through our initial review of academic literature, such as hate crime,[6] to get a sense of the scale of extremism in the UK.

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[6] Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Study into Extremism Terms of Reference*, pp.9-10, (accessed: 23 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing. service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742176/Terms_of_Reference_into_Extremism_Study.pdf>; Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Annexes to Commission for Countering Extremism Terms of Reference*, pp. 12-13, (accessed: 23 August 2019) <https:// assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742178/Terms_of_Reference_into_Extremism_Study_ Annex.pdf>

Wales

This report was commissioned by the Government of the United Kingdom and covers England and Wales. The Commission has engaged with the Welsh Government and gathered evidence from the public and community organisations in Wales. However, there are parts of this report that apply to England only, for example those that discuss education, for which power is devolved to the Welsh Government. There will be further conversations following publication with the Welsh Government as to how it can be used in a Welsh context.

2018

1 We launched as an independent body in March and started work on a report into extremism.

2 We began by conducting polling of the public's views on extremism and reviewed academic literature.

3 During the year we toured the country, visiting 16 towns and cities across England and Wales.

4 We also held ten roundtables and workshops with experts, activists and critics.

5 In September we published a terms of reference setting out themes for the report: understanding, scale, objectives and tactics, harms and the response.

6 In November we launched a public call for evidence.

2019

7

2824

The call for evidence closed in January and received almost 2824 responses. We then worked with academics to analyse the findings.

8

In April we commissioned 29 academics to write 19 papers on extremism.

9

We gathered data from 10 Government departments and regulators.

10

We assessed the current response to extremism, including the Government's 2015 Counter-Extremism Strategy.

11

In 2019 we visited cities across the UK. The Lead Commissioner spoke at events for councillors, the media, faith leaders and extremism experts.

12

Over the summer we published academic papers and statistics from the call for evidence. In September we published our report and recommendations.

Part One: What Extremism Looks Like in England and Wales

Over the last 18 months the Commission has conducted research and engaged widely. We took a broad, bottom-up approach to understand what extremism looks like to a wide range of people, so we can work towards an improved understanding.

Research we commissioned into the public understanding of extremism found an emerging consensus that extremism involves three things: a set of **beliefs** and a set of **behaviours** (that enact or are drawn from those beliefs) that cause or are likely to cause **harms**.

Our evidence shows that large numbers of people are either affected by extremism or are worried about its effects on wider society. Yet some of the examples we were given include behaviours that we judge to be dissenting or offensive and are legitimate. These are part of **democratic debate** and must be protected.

Behaviours that lie outside democratic debate fall into three categories: **terrorism and violent extremism**, **hateful extremism** and the **restriction of rights and freedoms**. It is our view that countering hateful extremism requires the greatest attention and focus if we are to be successful in reducing the extremist threat.

Our Approach to Classifying Extremism

Through our wide engagement and evidence gathering several themes have emerged, which form the basis of our analysis of the problem.

People used the word "extremism" to describe many things – most of them hateful or harmful but sometimes it is used as shorthand simply for "things I don't like".

Creating an inclusive culture in our country means accepting that things we don't like can have the same rights as the things we do. This is the heart of our democracy, and the democratic debate that accompanies it.

Alongside examples of criminal and harmful behaviour, we heard about pro-social activities – such as forms of protest, strategies for campaigning or generating support for ideas and recruiting people. Work to counter extremism must protect these activities as well as stop the harm that results when the debate turns hateful.

At the same time, when activities contribute to harm, this doesn't mean they should go unchallenged. The rights-based approach that is at the heart of our recommendations means that where harm is happening, or likely to happen, we all have a duty to try to challenge it.

Extremist groups also engage in lawful behaviour, often to normalise and mainstream their hateful propaganda. Some Far Right and Islamist groups claim to be engaged in human rights activism or claim to be free speech defenders.

Freedom of speech is not the only right at risk. All these rights must be balanced proportionately when developing responses – sometimes we do restrict otherwise lawful behaviours when they contribute to harms.

Because of this, extremism is a contested concept.

There is no legal definition of extremism and throughout our engagement and evidence gathering people have told us that it means different things to them.

Our evidence also demonstrates a range of events and effects across society. Extremism is a spectrum, which manifests both violently and non-violently. And ranges from the activity of extremist groups, to structural factors, to individual vulnerabilities, that can contribute to extremism.

We need a better way to understand and talk about the breadth of people's experiences of extremism and their concerns about the harm it is having on individuals and on wider society.

Acknowledging debate and uncertainty, we judge that the framework of beliefs, behaviours and harms is a useful way to make sense of the complexity of extremism.

First, we believe it is useful to understand extremism as rooted in a set of beliefs which emphasise to varying degree separation, hostility and supremacy towards other social groups.

Social psychology research tells us that a person's identity is based on their group membership or memberships (e.g. gender, nationality, football team etc.) and that everybody divides the world into different social groups, in-groups that we identify with and out-groups that we don't.

Best expressed by academic J.M. Berger, it is the further belief that an out-group threatens an in-group and that the survival of "us" is predicated on hostility towards "them", that turns mainstream thought into extremist beliefs.[7] The extent to which attachment to an in-group and hostility towards an out-group are reciprocally related is the subject of much debate.[8]

Second, there must be an identifiable behaviour. One of the reasons extremism is a difficult issue is that the behaviours associated with it can range from illegal activities to lawful campaigning or protest.

For these beliefs and behaviours to be considered extremism they must also lead, or be likely to lead, to harm. This includes the marginalisation of groups (including groups with a protected characteristic) and it includes the longer-term damage that extremism causes to our social fabric and democracy.

While more work is required, we believe that identifying beliefs, behaviours and harms provides clarity and allows us to put in place a proportionate response to it.

Counter extremism work has often failed to engage the experiences of the public, victims and the expertise of counter-extremists.

Our approach to gathering evidence has brought out a breadth of life experiences and voices from victims, individuals and communities that have not been represented accurately in this debate before.

7   J.M. Berger. 2018. *Extremism*, London: MIT Press, p.44
8   Marilynn B. Brewer. 1999. 'The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love or Outgroup Hate?' *Journal of Social Issues*, 55 (3): 429-444, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00126>

The views of the practitioners and public who responded to our call for evidence reflect the complex nature of extremism, and the uncomfortable conversations it prompts. This includes the reality that extremist groups can engage in hateful behaviours directed at minority groups, which is not illegal or criminal.

We believe we can develop a more sophisticated approach to tackling the problem by being clearer about the different aspects that have been described to us.

Public Understanding of Extremism

To better understand the extent to which there is consensus among the public about the contested term 'extremism', we commissioned two pieces of work from the Policy Institute at King's College London and one from NatCen Social Research.

The Policy Institute at King's College London analysed our call for evidence data. Firstly, they coded all respondents' 100-word descriptions of extremism using methods drawn from grounded theory to identify re-occurring themes.[9] Secondly, they analysed practitioner responses to the question "What are the harms of extremism?"

We asked NatCen to conduct focus groups in several locations in England and Wales to better explore public perceptions of extremism and its consequences.

The public's understanding is nuanced, and three key findings emerge:

• First, while most respondents agree that extremism is difficult to define, a definition is mostly agreed to be possible. The Government definition has little buy-in from the public and an improved definition would provide greater clarity.

• Second, the Policy Institute found an emerging public consensus that extremism involves a set of behaviours and a set of beliefs.[10] This is supported by NatCen, finding broad agreement with the view that extremism involves views or actions that fall outside accepted norms, and which spread hate, cause harm or both.[11]

• Third, regarding the boundaries of what constitutes extremism, the public broadly agree that the holding of beliefs alone is not extremism. The clearest areas of disagreement are when behaviours move from illegal to morally undesirable, hateful or harmful.[12]

These conclusions need further testing. Analysis of the call for evidence is limited by the fact that it draws on a self-selected sample of respondents that was not representative of the population of England and Wales.

Second, we cannot base a prescriptive framework on this analysis alone. Extremism remains too contested a subject, and, individually, many of the behaviours, beliefs and harms in the typologies developed by the

9   L.A. Strauss and Glaser. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research.* Chicago: Aldine Publishing
10 The Policy Institute. 2019. 'Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, p. 9, (forthcoming)
11 Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p. 4, (forthcoming)
12 The Policy Institute. 2019. 'Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, pp. 21-22, (forthcoming); Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, pp. 10-11, (forthcoming)

Policy Institute remain conceptually broad. As such, they capture many behaviours, beliefs and harms that are not extremist and are, instead, invaluable facets of a functioning liberal democracy. We took this into account in our approach to categorising problematic behaviours in this chapter.

Existing Definitions Of Extremism

The Policy Institute looked at the views of respondents on the Government's definition of extremism.[13] Overall, practitioner respondents were more likely to be positive about it than public respondents. Around half (55%) of practitioner respondents who answered the question felt that the Government's definition was either "helpful" or "very helpful", whereas three quarters (75%) of the members of the public that responded said it was either "unhelpful" or "very unhelpful".[14]

We asked NatCen to explore the Government's definition and another definition drawn from social identity theory in small focus groups.[15] Focus groups, participants were not enthusiastic about either definition. Regarding the Government's definition, they felt that the concept of shared values was confusing as it was unclear who shared those values in a multicultural society. The additional mention of the armed forces was thought to be problematic by

some participants. Nor were they approving of the social identity definition because they felt it is possible to have extremism that is not a reaction to a threat to one social group by another, perceived or otherwise. It was also felt to be too abstract to be widely understood, whereas the Government definition was easier to understand.[16]

Focus group participants tended to talk about extremism as views and behaviours that "fall outside accepted norms", broadly in line with the Government's definition. Younger participants used the words terrorism and extremism interchangeably and often this was limited to Islamist inspired terrorism or violent Islamist extremism. This could be driven in part by the current threat of Islamist terrorism and increased coverage by the media.

However, there are reasons to be positive about better defining extremism. The Policy Institute found that only 5% of call for evidence respondents felt that extremism was impossible to define.[17] Some NatCen focus group participants felt that the different definitions "served a purpose" and that elements of both could be combined to develop an improved definition.[18]

[13] The definition used in the question was derived from the 2015 Government Counter-Extremism Strategy: "Extremism is 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". See: Home Office. 2015. *Counter Extremism Strategy* (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf>

[14] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 1: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, fig. 4 on p.10, (forthcoming)

[15] The government definition understands extremism as beliefs and actions that fall outside of mainstream or moderate values; the social psychological definition understands extremism as a response to threats (perceived or otherwise) to an identified social group by another social group. See J.M. Berger. 2018. *Extremism*, London: MIT Press, p.24

[16] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, pp.5-6, (forthcoming)

[17] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 1: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, p.9, (forthcoming)

[18] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p.7, (forthcoming)

Beliefs, Behaviours and Harms

The Policy Institute identified broad agreement among respondents to our call for evidence that extremism involves behaviours and beliefs; and from practitioner responses, developed a typology of six harms caused by extremism. Separately, NatCen explored similar ideas within small focus groups.

Beliefs

The Policy Institute identified over 80 different themes that were underscored by beliefs, which they grouped into four overarching categories:

(1) Beliefs that advocate the restriction of other people's beliefs, freedoms and/ or democracy (mentioned by 31% of respondents);

(2) Beliefs that mobilise ideology to support and/or justify harmful behaviour (31%);

(3) Beliefs that are beyond commonly accepted mainstream societal and political norms (23%);

(4) Beliefs that support for use or threat of violence (7%)[19]

We do not consider holding one (or more) of these four beliefs makes someone an extremist. These are the beliefs that emerged repeatedly among the descriptions of extremism provided by respondents. Categories 2 and 3 in particular are conceptually broad, encompassing almost any ideology (including political, religious or social agendas) and what is outside mainstream norms is subjective.

Respondents who described extremism as involving the restriction of other people's beliefs, freedoms and/or democracy were roughly as likely to be members of the public as they were practitioners (31% and 22% respectively). But practitioner respondents were much more likely than public respondents to describe extremism in terms of beliefs based on mobilising ideology (including political, religious or social agendas) (70% and 27% respectively). Practitioner respondents were also twice as likely as public respondents to see extremism as consisting of something outside of mainstream norms (43% and 20% respectively).[20]

NatCen focus group participants agreed that thinking anti-social thoughts alone could not be extremist, although they also agreed that prejudicial views had no place in modern society. Only when such thoughts are articulated in opposition to other religions, political beliefs or cultures did participants begin to see the potential for harm, although they remained reluctant to call this extremism unless it was a group that was exhibiting this behaviour collectively.[21] Participants also raised concerns about being labelled an extremist for vocalising some tenets of their faith.[22]

Behaviours

Respondents mentioned more than 100 different behaviours in their descriptions of extremism. Some mentioned illegal behaviours (e.g. terrorism, violence), while others described hateful actions or the

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[19] Figures for beliefs are based on mentions out of the total number of respondents (n=2,835) or respondent subtotals: public (n=2,580) and practitioner (n=255)

[20] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 1: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, pp.18-20, (forthcoming)

[21] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p.11, (forthcoming)

[22] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p.8, (forthcoming)

suppression of other people's rights. The Policy Institute grouped these different behaviours into four overarching categories:

(1) Use of violence (mentioned by 77% of respondents);

(2) Inciting violence (43%);

(3) Attempted denial of rights, freedoms or democracy (41%); or

(4) Hatred, harassment or persecution of others (30%)[23]

We do not believe that engaging in one (or more) of these behaviours makes someone an extremist. These are the behaviours that respondents to our call for evidence repeatedly described in their definitions of extremism.

Roughly the same proportion of public and practitioner respondents mentioned violence (77% and 74% respectively). On other categories the views of practitioners and the public diverged. References to inciting violence were much more likely to come from public respondents (45%) than from practitioner respondents (16%). By contrast, two thirds (65%) of practitioners spoke about extremism involving attempts to deny the rights of others and freedoms, compared to just over a third (38%) of public respondents who mentioned this. Half (51%) of practitioners mentioned hatred, harassment, persecution; only about one quarter (27%) of public respondents did so.[24]

NatCen research participants also identified hate as a key component of extremism, considering aggressive and threatening acts against people or property of symbolic value to be extremist when motivated by hatred or dislike of other groups.[25] Furthermore, they associated the labelling of an act as "extremist" as contingent on the impact it had on the intended target or victim.[26]

Actions perceived to be threatening or intended to intimidate and change victim behaviour were also considered extreme. Participants felt that peers who verbally supported or agreed with an individual's violent behaviour could be categorised as extreme. NatCen research participants differentiated between behaviours that were "extreme" and those that were "extremist", although they weren't always clear on the meaning behind these labels. Participants categorised some behaviours as "extreme" (e.g. hate crime and child sexual exploitation) which they did not necessarily associate with "extremism".

Harms

Both the NatCen and the Policy Institute work found broad consensus that, to be classified as "extremism", behaviours that draw on beliefs should also be judged to cause or be likely to cause harm.

The Policy Institute identified more than 150 individual harm types from practitioners' responses to the call for evidence. Using these responses, they created six overarching categories of harm:

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[23] Figures for behaviours are based on mentions out of the total number of respondents (n=2,835) or respondent subtotals: public (n=2,580) and practitioner (n=255)

[24] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 1: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, pp.3-15, (forthcoming)

[25] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p.11, (forthcoming)

[26] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, p.11-12, (forthcoming)

(1) social division and intolerance (mentioned by 87% of practitioner respondents);

(2) crime, violence and harassment (78%);

(3) mental health and wellbeing (46%);

(4) censorship and restriction of freedom (42%);

(5) delegitimising authority/undermining democracy (36%); and

(6) economic harms (11%)[27]

We also asked the Policy Institute to attempt to determine whether these harms could be associated with certain environments or targets. Although the sample size is too small to produce reliable findings, there was a notable uniformity of harms across different environments and among different targets, which may suggest that extremism is having an impact across the whole of society.[28]

When discussing the harms of extremism, some NatCen participants identified feelings of anxiety, discomfort, fear of crime or fear of reprisals for how they are dressed or behaving in public. Other participants, by contrast, thought that this bar was too low and that describing thoughts and actions that do not contravene the law as extremism could be counter-productive. It could inadvertently blur the boundaries of extremism, make communities over-sensitised to offensive opinion and have the effect of denying victims the support that they need.[29]

This is the first serious attempt we are aware of to categorise the harms of extremism. However, it requires further work, including on exploring causal relationships between behaviours and harms and focusing on the harms of hateful extremism.

Boundaries of Extremism

We wanted to better understand what agreement there is on the boundaries of extremism. Despite consensus on the idea that extremism involves beliefs and behaviours, the Policy Institute found that disagreement increases as behaviours move away from illegality (e.g. around terrorism and violence) and towards illegitimacy and immorality (e.g. viewing or treating other groups as inferior).[30]

It is on this spectrum that identifying what constitutes extremism is particularly difficult. Key themes emerged around whether "extremism" is a relative matter and whether it should or should not be tied to social norms. Over half (57%) of respondents felt that the term extremism is vague or subjective or that it is difficult to define without restricting free speech. A similar proportion (56%), seemingly motivated by a desire to protect democratic debate, felt that disagreeing with other people's beliefs or expressing ideas that go against the mainstream should not be considered extremism.[31]

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[27] Figures for harms are based on mentions out of the total number of practitioner respondents (n=278) to the following questions: Q78. Can you describe the harms caused by extremism?; Q79. If you said "yes" or "not sure", how would you describe these harms?; Q83. Have you seen evidence of extremism online causing harm?; and Q87. Does extremism cause harm to society and its institutions more widely e.g. to democracy?.

[28] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 2: Tactics and Harms', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, pp. 10-13, (forthcoming)

[29] Merili Pullerits, Caroline Turley, Shivonne Gates and Jeffrey DeMarco. 2019. 'Public Perceptions of Extremism Interim Summary Report', *NatCen Social Research*, pp.12-13, (forthcoming)

[30] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'An Analysis of the Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence, Report 1: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, pp.20-21, (forthcoming)

[31] The Policy Institute. 2019. 'Commission for Countering Extremism: Public Understanding of Extremism', *The Policy Institute,* King's College London, slides 26-30, (unpublished presentation)

These views reflect long-standing concerns about the focus of counter extremism work and its possible impact on freedom of speech, on dissent, protest and deeply-held beliefs.

Taken together, the research supports our approach that holding unreasonable or even offensive opinions must not be viewed as extremism in-and-of itself. It is only when individuals engage in behaviours that draw on those beliefs in ways that cause or have the potential to cause harm that it becomes problematic.

Introducing Hateful Extremism

Leaving aside democratic debate, our approach is to consider the concerns people told us about as falling into three categories:

Restriction of rights and freedoms
Behaviours that result in the restriction of freedoms or democratic values

Hateful extremism
Behaviours that are actively hateful or incite hatred towards an identified out-group for the survival of an in-group

Terrorism and violent extremism
Behaviours that involve the use of terrorism or serious violence

It is our view that countering hateful extremism requires the greatest attention and focus if we are to be successful in reducing the extremist threat.

Hateful extremism consists of a range of behaviours that are actively hateful.

We have heard repeated accounts of how extremism in all its forms is underpinned by an implacable hostility towards another group or groups in society or towards everything associated with a different worldview.

The behaviours of extremists are often framed with reference to this other group or worldview. From Neo-Nazis who don't want their so called 'pure bloodline' to be 'polluted' by non-whites,[32] to Islamists who, disavowing all perceived non-Islamic systems of governance, believe the secular West is the source of all ills affecting Muslims.[33]

This hatred is deep and all-encompassing. Using social identity theory, J.M. Berger expresses this as "the belief that an in-group's success or survival can never be separated from the need for hostile action against an out-group".[34]

Inherent in this worldview is the belief that members of a social group must behave in a certain way, and hostility towards those who do not is justified to defend the in-group. We heard many examples of this hatred, including from Muslims working to challenge Islamist extremism experiencing abuse and being labelled as "Islamophobes".

We are also concerned that some groups and individuals publicly espouse views in ways that intimate or come close to endorsing violence, while staying on the right side of the law or being plausibly or deniable. For many, this is part of what makes extremism so insidious.

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[32] See, for example, Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.8, (accessed: 14 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816698/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action.pdf>
[33] Usama Hasan, David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations', (forthcoming)
[34] J.M. Berger. 2018. *Extremism*, London: MIT Press, p.44

We currently summarise hateful extremism as:

- Behaviours that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence;

- And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group;

- And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society.

Terrorism is the ultimate expression of extremism. Our evidence confirms it is what most members of the public think of first when talking about extremism.[35]

This category encompasses terrorism attacks and offences, including activities that are not directly violent, such as facilitating or encouraging terrorism. It also includes ideological or sectarian violence that are not typically considered as terrorism and credible threats of serious violence.

The beliefs that drive terrorism and violence can be varied, but all draw on an ideological or supremacist view of the world or society. Indiscriminate terrorism is designed to bring about change by causing terror among the whole population. That which is directed against more specific groups is targeted but is still motivated by a desire to change their behaviour.

The relationship between extremism and behaviours that restrict the rights and freedoms of others is complex.

Extremism can cause the restriction of rights and freedoms. We have heard about a collection of behaviours that infringes on the rights of others, especially minority groups, out of a desire to control a community narrative.

Some victims have described this behaviour as a form of extremism and we heard that some of this is caused by those who hold the same hateful or supremacist beliefs that can motivate hateful extremism and terrorism.

We are, however, concerned about the impact of behaviours in this category on minority rights and wider democracy. A democratic society is defined by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) as one that requires "pluralism, tolerance and broad-mindedness".[36] We judge that extremists undermine these concepts and the people who practice them.

The counter extremism sector should pay attention to behaviours in this category; we judge that understanding the potential overlap better is a valuable area for further work.

We have set out at a high level the three different categories of behaviours that we have identified as either forms of extremism or potentially related. The rest of this part of the report sets out the evidence we have gathered, what these categories look like and the amount of clarity we have on the scale of the issues identified.

[35] Commission for Countering Extremism. 2018. *Annexes to Commission for Countering Extremism Terms of Reference,* p.11, (accessed: 14 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742178/Terms_of_Reference_into_Extremism_Study_Annex.pdf>; Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. *Statistical summary of responses from our Call for Evidence*, p.21 (accessed: 14 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819185/Call_For_Evidence_Summary.pdf>

[36] Handyside v UK (5493/72, A/24, [1976] 1 EHRR 737) ECHR 5

Hateful Extremism

This category encompasses: (1) inciting or amplifying hatred towards other groups; or (2) engaging in active or persistent hatred, harassment or intimidation of individual members or groups; or (3) equivocating or making the moral case for violence against other groups.[37]

Inciting or Amplifying Hatred Towards Other Groups

We have heard how hateful behaviours of the Far Right range from those inspired by the white supremacy of National Action, that consciously sees its roots in a legacy of British fascism, to the explicitly racial ethnopluralism of groups like Generation Identity and the anti-establishment and anti-Muslim beliefs of the street-based movement the English Defence League (EDL).[38]

Research we commissioned showed that some Far Right groups favour controversial public activities, such as protests, demonstrations and rallies, to attract media attention or to agitate for changes to legislation. Dr Chris Allen's paper on National Action described the group's hateful publicity stunts such as putting bananas in the mouth and hands of Nelson Mandela's statue in Westminster's Parliament Square and performing Seig Heil salutes in Buchenwald concentration camp.[39] Dr Benjamin Lee noted the EDL's use of street protest as awareness raising designed to influence lawmakers, and described how the group rejected becoming a political party in favour of remaining a single-issue protest group.[40]

We have heard that the Far Right seeks to "change the boundaries of acceptable public debate".[41] Dr Joe Mulhall's paper argues that the emergence of street movements such as the EDL breaks with the biologically racist politics of the traditional Far Right,[42] framing activism instead as protecting their native culture from outside aggression in the form of 'Islamisation'.[43] While the EDL initially described itself as a human rights organisation,[44] many commentators argue that the reality of its demonstrations shows

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[37] The boundaries of extremism are not always clear and what constitutes hateful extremism is a matter of debate. Discussion of an individual or group in the context of hateful extremism does not mean that they are regarded necessarily by the Commission as hateful extremists.

[38] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', pp.3,5,19, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>

[39] Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.11, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816698/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action.pdf>

[40] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', p.8, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>

[41] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', p.9 (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>

[42] Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.4, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[43] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', p.5, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>; Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', pp.4-5 (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[44] English Defence League. 2012. 'Mission Statement', July 2012, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <http://www.englishdefenceleague.org.uk/mission-statement/>

that the group identified Muslims as an out-group that threatened the values of its non-Muslim in-group.[45]

Since the EDL's demise, former leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (aka Tommy Robinson) has continued to espouse this Islamisation threat narrative. For example through his citizen journalism covering child sexual exploitation trials with majority Asian Muslim defendants and a "Free

Tommy" demonstration in June 2018, after his conviction for contempt of court during one of these trials, which attracted 15,000 people.[46] Dr Mulhall's research showed that Yaxley-Lennon's supporters characterised his imprisonment as punishment for "telling the truth" about Islam and Muslims.[47] While Yaxley-Lennon campaigns for free speech and against political correctness, he also uses hateful anti-Muslim language while doing so.

Far Right

The Far Right is not defined by a single ideology or narrative. It consists of several groups and individuals with different ideologies, aims and ways of operating, ranging from the radical (democratic) right to the extreme (anti-democratic) right. It is made up of political parties, street and protest movements, and pressure groups.

We commissioned Dr Lee to provide an overview of the Far Right. His working definition of the Far Right as a "container term for political groups and actors sharing a narrative of racial and/or cultural threat to a 'native' group arising from perceived 'alien' groups within a society"[48] relies on a perceived threat to a defined in-group.

Dr Lee described three ideologies that help us understand some of the beliefs that underpin Far Right organisations.[49] Ascribing a belief system to a group is challenging and there is a disconnect between how groups view themselves against how others view them. The application of these ideologies is used for illustrative purposes:

- *Radical right populism* – Groups in this category subscribe to an ideology which combines nativism, authoritarianism and populism. Populism has been used to describe anti-Muslim protest groups. Groups such as the EDL claim to promote the concerns of "ordinary people" against a liberal elite establishment and political class that "silence" issues that matter to them.[50]

[45] George Kassimeris and Leonie Jackson. 2014. 'The Ideology and Discourse of the English Defence League', p.2, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/31846/3/__nas01_librhome_librsh3_Desktop_The%20ideology%20and%20discourse%20of%20the%20English%20Defence%20League.pdf>; cited in
Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.6, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[46] Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.8, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[47] Tommy Robinson is facing a charge of telling the truth about rape gangs in the UK' cited in Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.8, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[48] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', p.18, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>

[49] Benjamin Lee. 2019. Presentation to the Lead Commissioner 2019. See: Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. Research at Commission for Countering Extremism (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/commission-for-countering-extremism/about/research>

[50] Hilary Pilkington. 2016 *Loud and proud: Passion and politics in the English Defence League*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Far Right continued...

- *Neo-Fascism* – Groups in this category advocate the need to defend the identity and culture of white Europeans (ethnopluralism) from what is called the "great replacement" by immigration and Islamisation. In the UK, these ideas are demonstrated by groups such as Generation Identity.

- *Neo-Nazism* – Groups in this category believe in the continuation of the fascist Nazi project, focusing on white supremacism and territorial separation. In the UK, several groups use Nazi symbols and rhetoric such as Combat 18 and National Action.

As the Far Right is fluid and entire ideologies may not be adopted, looking at the narratives they use can also be helpful. Dr Lee identified:

- *Anti-minority narratives* – targeting specific minority groups that are deemed to threaten majority groups;

- *Demographic threat* – that a combination of immigration and birth rates will result in the so-called native population becoming a minority in the near future;

- *Collapse* – that some type of ethnic or cultural strife is an inevitable result of the growing threat presented by minority groups;

- *Conspiracism* – the belief that a small group of actors are working towards some malevolent end, e.g. antisemitic conspiracy theories about a Jewish elite controlling world events;

- *Anti-elite narratives* – the belief that the current political and social leadership (framed as "Jewish-controlled", "globalists", "the left" or "cultural Marxists") bears responsibility for the current or coming crisis and that they are the victims of government oppression; and

- *Historical revisionism* – the belief that key historical events such as the Holocaust have been distorted in the interests of suppressing Far Right ideology.

These narratives have been used by key Far Right groups and individuals. They are powerful, compelling and can often be hidden by clever rhetoric.

We have also heard that amplifying hatred against Muslims is not the sole preserve of the Far Right. Research we commissioned into Sikh activism by Dr Jagbir Jhutti-Johal and Sunny Hundal explored how a hard-line minority of Sikh activists and some Far Right activists have formed a broad alliance against Muslims. They show that this is not new: after 9/11, the BNP and Sikh activists distributed material that referred to Islam as a threat to Britain; and between 2009 and 2012 the EDL reached out to Sikhs and Hindus.[51]

In 2017, Yaxley-Lennon met with the group Sikh Youth UK ostensibly to discuss the issue of sexual grooming, and attended a screening of the group's film Misused Trust, which portrays Muslim men as sexually predatory

[51] Jagbir Jhutti-Johal and Sunny Hundal. 2018. 'The changing nature of activism amongst Sikhs in the UK today', p.16, (accessed: 3 September 2019) (forthcoming)

towards Sikh women.[52] We judge that the promotion of conversion narratives by anti-Muslim Sikhs and the Far Right has the effect of amplifying hatred against Muslims by indiscriminately characterising Muslim men as a threat to Sikh or white women.

Dr Jhutti-Johal's paper concludes that perceptions of a threat from outside the community, such as sexual grooming, are driven predominantly by Sikh culture and patriarchy rather than religion.[53] Sikh activists who speak out against this association with Far Right elements are sometimes labelled as "enemies" or "betrayers" and feel "bullied into silence".[54]

Disinformation

The Government defines disinformation as "the deliberate creation and sharing of false and/or manipulated information that is intended to deceive and mislead audiences, either for the purposes of causing harm, or for political, personal or financial gain". Misinformation refers to "the inadvertent sharing of false information".'[55]

We have seen how extremists actively spread disinformation to shape public attitudes in line with their ideological worldview. As one practitioner said in our call for evidence:

"Extremists use gaps and conflation in evidence, half-truths and 'fake news', pre-existing fears and stigma, social and economic isolation and other factors in exploiting more vulnerable or more ignorant people around them or across the internet."

Extremism thrives in an environment where alternative sources of news promote hateful worldviews and denigrate the mainstream media. The way people use the internet and social media to display or share information has increased the visibility and acceptability of such online sources.

In a 2019 report on disinformation, the Digital Culture, Media and Sport Committee states: "[Disinformation] has a polarising effect and reduces the common ground on which reasoned debate, based on objective facts, can take place. Much has been said about the coarsening of public debate, but when these factors are brought to bear directly in election campaigns then the very fabric of our democracy is threatened."[56]

In the long run, disinformation may negatively affect how people perceive facts and events, which can have the effect of shifting societal norms. This is concerning, and we address the current state of the response to this rapidly evolving phenomenon in Part Three.

[52] In a statement released through the Sikh Press Association, Sikh Youth UK played down links with Yaxley-Lennon. See: Sikh Press Association. 2017 'Responses to Independent Sikh Youth UK article', 20 October 2017, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.sikhpa.com/responses-to-independent-sikh-youth-uk-article/>; Adam Lusher. 2017. 'Influential Sikh youth group associating with far-right EDL founder Tommy Robinson', *The Independent*, 16 October 2017, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/sikh-youth-uk-muslim-film-university-tommy-robinson-edl-sex-groomers-islamophobia-racism-a8002526.html>

[53] Jagbir Jhutti-Johal and Sunny Hundal. 2018. 'The changing nature of activism amongst Sikhs in the UK today', p.23, (accessed: 3 September 2019) (forthcoming)

[54] Jagbir Jhutti-Johal and Sunny Hundal. 2018. 'The changing nature of activism amongst Sikhs in the UK today', p.18, (accessed: 3 September 2019) (forthcoming)

[55] Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2018. *Disinformation and 'fake news': Interim Report: Government response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2017-19*, p.2, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/1630/1630.pdf>

[56] Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. 2019. *Disinformation and 'fake news': Final Report*, p.5, (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/1791/1791.pdf>

We have heard about Islamists amplifying hatred of non-Muslims. Research we commissioned on the extent to which Islamists have entered the mainstream by Sheikh Dr Usama Hasan evidenced Islamist preachers inciting hatred towards non-Muslims. For example, some preachers described non-Muslims as "worse than animals" and warned against being friends with or behaving like non-Muslims.[57] The paper argued that Salafi-Islamist speakers and organisations in the UK have publicly promoted sectarian, bigoted and misogynistic views – including denigrating non-Muslims – while being given mainstream platforms by elements of civil society and the charitable sector, political support and charitable funding.[58]

Active or Persistent Hatred, Harassment or Intimidation of Individual Members of Other Groups

We are concerned when hatred of others manifests as harassment or intimidation of members of other groups and the impact this can have on individuals.

One prominent example on the Far Right is the 2014 antisemitic campaign launched against Luciana Berger MP and others. The antisemitism Policy Trust told us that, during the trial of Joshua Bonehill-Paine (convicted for racially-aggravated harassment) victims submitted statements detailing the significant impact that the campaign had had on their mental health.[59]

[57]   Dr Khalid Fikry. 2013. 'Q&A with Sheikh Khalid Fikry: Issue of Khilafah', Youtube, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZPFJ98fnuY>; Murtaza Khan. 2016. 'Al Walaa wal Baraa by Sheikh Khalid Fikry'. Youtube. (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lb2BU1owc4w> cited in Usama Hasan, David Toube and Khan, Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations Annex B', p.3, (forthcoming)
[58]   Usama Hasan, David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations' (forthcoming)
[59]   Call for Evidence

Far Left

Research we commissioned by Dr Daniel Allington examined the relationship between revolutionary far left ideology and sympathy for violent extremism.[60] The paper identified three ideological tendencies common across the Far Left: (1) Vanguardism, the belief in mass uprising of the workers through the intervention of an elite leadership of revolutionaries; (2) Anti-imperialism, rooted in early twentieth century antisemitic theory that criticised the influence of "international" (meaning Jewish) financiers (that can manifest today as opposition to the US and its allies, especially Israel and the UK; and (3) Anti-fascism, while at times a form of counter extremism, can lead to violence and hostility against people considered right-wing.[61]

By analysing survey data, the paper found that participants who express strong agreement with "revolutionary workerist" ideas (i.e. the narrative that the current capitalist social order is bad and that the workers should rise up and replace capitalism with a new system) are far more likely to express sympathy with violent extremist tactics than those who express strong disagreement. The paper also found a positive relationship between sympathy for violent extremism and the holding of an anti-imperialist geopolitical outlook.

We are concerned by Far Left hateful extremism in our country. The persistent abuse and hatred directed at Jews (including left-wing Jewish politicians) and Muslims (such as those who work in counter extremism) from elements on the left is unacceptable and must be challenged. More research is required on Far Left extremism in this country and greater efforts made to counter activists who engage in Far Left hateful extremism.

Responding to our call for evidence the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK told us about their persecution by the *Khatme Nubuwwat*, a Pakistan-based movement that has exported its ideology overseas and is now "spreading hatred against the community" in the UK. Some leaders and supporters of the movement have openly condoned the killing of and infliction of physical violence upon Ahmadis. Muslim-oriented satellite television programmes broadcast in the UK have encouraged hatred by calling Ahmadis *wajibul qatl* (deserving of death).[62]

In 2010, worshippers at the Tooting Islamic Centre were urged not to socialise with or frequent businesses run by Ahmadiyya Muslims during a Khatme Nubuwwat conference.[63] In 2017, a British Urdu newspaper published an advertisement stating: "Shezan is a company owned by Qadianis [a derogatory name for the

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[60] Daniel Allington, Siobhan McAndrew, David Hirsh. 2019. 'Violent extremist tactics and the ideology of the sectarian far left', pp.1-45, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818862/Allington-McAndrew-Hirsh-2019-Jul-19.pdf>

[61] Daniel Allington, Siobhan McAndrew. David Hirsh. 2019. 'Violent extremist tactics and the ideology of the sectarian far left', pp.2-4, (accessed 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818862/Allington-McAndrew-Hirsh-2019-Jul-19.pdf>

[62] See Ofcom's investigation of a programme in which an Islamic scholar states that the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community would be an acceptable target for murder here: Ofcom. 2012. 'Ofcom Broadcast Bulletin', Issue number 205, p.4, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/45613/obb205.pdf>

[63] Omar Oakes. 2010. 'Worshippers told at Tooting Islamic Centre to boycott Ahmadiyya shops", *Wimbledon Guardian*, 14 October 2010, <https://www.wimbledonguardian.co.uk/news/8451539.worshippers-told-at-tooting-islamic-centre-to-boycott-ahmadiyya-shops/>; Omar Oakes. 2010. 'Sadiq Khan full interview on the Ahmadiyya hate campaign', *Wimbledon Times*, 25 November 2010, <https://www.wimbledonguardian.co.uk/news/8688323.sadiq-khan-full-interview-on-the-ahmadiyya-hate-campaign/>

Ahmadiyya]. In order to uphold the honour of your faith, boycott it completely. You should not buy these products and persuade others to do the same."[64] The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK also described Ahmadi children at primary school being bullied and labelled non-Muslims by fellow students.[65]

We have heard about the abuse directed towards people for choosing to leave Islam. Faith to Faithless described how their "workers, speakers, and advocates are attacked on social media on a daily basis" and stressed the negative effects it can have on their mental health and wellbeing.

We are also concerned by the hateful manner with which some Islamists abuse and intimidate Muslims who work to counter Islamist extremism. This can involve characterising them as bad Muslims – or even apostates – for 'selling out' their perceived group loyalty. Secular Bangladeshi bloggers have described it as "deeply upsetting" when they are accused of being anti-Islam for opposing the influence of Islamist groups in their local area. We found that the advocacy group CAGE has described Muslim activists with whom it disagrees as 'native informants' and 'Uncle Toms', terms

which we judge to be racist and hateful.[66] Staff from another organisation, MEND, have posted hostile messages on Twitter relating to several politically and socially liberal Muslims, especially those involved in counter extremism work.[67] One MEND tweet labels some Muslims groups as "Uncle Toms";[68] and the public messaging of MEND's founder describes civil society groups involved in counter extremism as "government stooges".[69] During a 2016 libel case brought by Imam Shakeel Begg of Lewisham Islamic Centre against the BBC for alleging he was an extremist, the judge found that Begg had called Muslims who co-operate with counter terrorism authorities "collaborators".[70]

We are also concerned about the negative impact on community cohesion of some Muslim activists putting pressure on Muslims and Muslim organisations not to work with Jews and Jewish organisations.

Mitzvah Day is a Jewish charity that brings together people of different faiths and none for an annual day of social action. Yet organisers have told us that their work, "can – and increasingly has –provoked extremists to disrupt our work, in order to breed division, fear and mistrust of people who are different

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[64] BBC. 2017. 'This is only one small part of it', 6 October 2017, (accessed: 20 August 2018) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05j6c91>

[65] Call for Evidence

[66] For example, in a tweet of 12 June 2019 CAGE labelled an activist of Somali heritage a "native informant" for saying that she was bored of non-Muslim women in the West defending the Burqa (accessed 5 September 2019) <https://twitter.com/UK_CAGE/status/1138865147102015489>; in a tweet of 3 September 2017, CAGE called Faith Matters, which was founded by a Muslim and coordinates TellMAMA, representative of the "native informant" industry (accessed: 5 September) <https://twitter.com/UK_CAGE/status/904369173274513413>; in a reply to a tweet of 15 May 2019, CAGE called the chair of the Islam and Liberty network a "native informant" for criticising the APPG on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://twitter.com/UK_CAGE/status/1129110317416558592>; CAGE replied to a tweet on 20 October 2018, calling then Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, a "Poor uncle Tom" (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://twitter.com/UK_CAGE/status/1053706236020121600>

[67] In a *Dispatches* documentary of March 2018, a member of MEND's staff called Sara Khan, Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism, an "oreo". See: Channel 4. 2018. *Dispatches: Who speaks for the Muslim community?* aired 26 March 2018. MEND issued a rebuttal document in which they say that the speaker "accepts that the wording she used was wrong", before repeating "concerns" about PREVENT and the Commissioner. MEND. 2018. 'Channel 4 Dispatches asks: "Who speaks for British Muslims?" MEND responds: Muslims speak for themselves', 27 March 2018, (accessed: 18 September 2019) <https://www.mend.org.uk/news/channel-4-dispatches-asks-speaks-british-muslims-mend-responds-muslims-speak/>

[68] On 24 March 2015, the official MEND account called "Muslim groups" that journalist, Andrew Gilligan had not "attacked... sell-outs and Uncle Toms'", (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://twitter.com/mendcommunity/status/580484732338757632>

[69] In an open letter on the appointment of Amber Rudd MP as Home Secretary in 2017, MEND CEO Sufyan Ismail urged her to "Deal with legitimate Muslim organisations, not government stooges", Sufyan Ismail. 2017. 'Dear Amber Rudd: Here are 10 ways you can give Muslims the full protection they deserve', *Middle East Eye*, 28 June 2017, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/dear-amber-rudd-here-are-10-ways-you-can-give-muslims-full-protection-they-deserve>

[70] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)

(particularly Jews)", and that they are worried about the impact this will have on their ability to find Muslim partner organisations in the future.

After a widely publicised event in 2018 bringing Jews and Muslims together to cook chicken soup for homeless people in East London, the website 5Pillars published an article in line with the Islamist view that Muslims should question the legitimacy of Israel's existence as a matter of faith. The author, Roshan Salih, wrote that, "the promotion of interfaith is a deliberate tactic [of pro-Israel organisations] to firmly establish Israel as a *fait accompli*, to neuter criticism of it and to divide groups which could pose a threat to it" and tried to name and shame several Muslim organisations for working with Jewish groups.[71] Mitzvah Day also received criticism from some Jewish groups.[72]

Organisers told us that Muslim organisations "become wary" of working with Jewish ones "for fear of reprisals like these". That such organisations may be intimidated is therefore not only hateful to the individuals involved but it serves as an insidious threat to any future engagement. Reducing positive social activism such as Mitzvah Day corrodes trust between communities and, in the longer-term, damages civil society's capacity to challenge intolerance and effect positive social change.

Faith groups also face threats from the Far Right. Civil society group Faith Matters told us that based on their interpretation of comments made by Yaxley-Lennon in an online video in March 2019, they felt compelled to move offices for their staff's safety. This incurred additional costs and negatively impacted the mental health and wellbeing of members of staff.

Islamism

Like many faiths, Islam is the overarching term for a plurality of denominations with their own distinct beliefs and practices.

Islamism is a separate political ideology based on a binary worldview that pits the Muslim nation (or ummah), which is deserving of the loyalty of all Muslims, against non-Islam and non-Muslims, towards which Muslims must show enmity.[73] Islamists see the division as necessary so that the ummah can strive towards the establishment of an Islamic state (Caliphate) that implements a literalist interpretation of Sharia law.

Islamism in the UK started with two Twentieth Century movements – the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East and the Jamaat-e-Islami in South Asia. Adherents have mostly given up on achieving a Sharia-governed Caliphate in the West. Lorenzo Vidino argues that many revivalist Islamist groups now have three main aims: (1) mainstream their religious and political ideology; (2) gain political influence; and (3) support Islamist causes at home and abroad.[74] Research we commissioned by Dr Damon Perry found that most mainstream Islamist groups now focus on promoting their politicised interpretation of Islam as a communal identity and way of life.[75]

[71] Roshan Salih. 2018. 'Why are Muslim organisations getting so cosy with Zionists?', *5Pillars UK*, November 2018, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://5pillarsuk.com/2018/11/20/why-muslim-organisations-are-getting-cosy-with-zionists/>

[72] Cnaan Liphshiz. 2018. 'London group with alleged ties to Hamas cooks chicken soup with local Jews', *Times of Israel*, 23 November 2018, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/london-group-with-alleged-ties-to-hamas-cooks-chicken-soup-with-local-jews/>

[73] Usama Hasan. David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations', p.7 (forthcoming)

[74] Lorenzo Vidino. 2015. 'The Muslim Brotherhood in the United Kingdom', *George Washington University*, p.14, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191/f/downloads/MB%20in%20the%20UK.pdf>

[75] Damon Perry. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism in Britain: Educating for the Islamic revival' (forthcoming)

Islamism continued...

A small number of groups no longer espouse Islamist ideals.[76] However, analysis by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change of the social media output in 2018 of five Muslim activist groups[77] led researchers to conclude that many of the groups shared key narratives with the proscribed Salafi-Islamist group ALM to a greater or lesser degree.[78] Some of these groups have enjoyed at least some acceptance in the mainstream.[79]

Islamist groups range from non-violent movements to overtly violent groups.[80] Some extremist groups (al-Qaeda, Daesh) are clearly beyond the pale, because their Salafi-Islamist ideology is predicated on an understanding that violent *jihad* between Islam and unbelief, between Muslims and non-Muslims, is necessary.[81] In this extreme understanding, the Islamist concept of loyalty and enmity (*al-wala' wal-bara'*) requires followers to repudiate and destroy unbelievers and the 'wrong' Muslims.[82] In the UK, this promotion or sanctioning of violence (including against those considered to be apostates) has largely been associated with high-profile extremist clerics such as Abu Hamza or Anjem Choudary,[83] and Daesh propaganda online. We want to see more research examining how hateful Islamist extremism may contribute to creating a climate or an environment conducive to violence or may lead to a normalisation of hatred towards others.

One commonality among Islamist movements is their claim to authenticity and normative Islamic practice.[84] This can lead to the view that Muslims are – or should be treated as – a communal-faith bloc that must be promoted and protected. This can come at the cost of other Islamic traditions or other identities. It can create hostility towards others and, when acted upon, can impinge the rights of others, particularly those Muslims who do not share this Islamist interpretation and who are judged as deficient in faith.

Finally, we heard of prolonged campaigns of abuse and intimidation against some farmers and their families. Activists have intimidated and harassed farmers on social media as well as on or near their property. Farm invasions are another tactic used, for example #MeattheVictims bussed 200 people to a farm in March 2019 where pigs were

[76] Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Office, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Home office and David Cameron. 2015. *Muslim Brotherhood review: main findings*, p.8, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf>

[77] Identified as groups that "UK authorities have criticised for promoting problematic or extreme views, although they do not advocate violence" they are: CAGE; Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain; the Islamic Human Rights Commission; the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK (MPACUK); and Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND). Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. 2018. 'Narratives of Division: The Spectrum of Islamist Worldviews in the UK', p.7, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://institute.global/news/narratives-division-islamist-worldviews>

[78] These narratives are: victimisation; opposition between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims; opposition between Islam and the West; delegitimisation of secular government; the centrality of Islam in politics, and the justification of violence. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. 2018. 'Narratives of Division: The Spectrum of Islamist Worldviews in the UK', p.20, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://institute.global/news/narratives-division-islamist-worldviews>

[79] Usama Hasan. David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations', pp.1-27 (forthcoming)

[80] Kim Knott. 2018. 'Muslims and Islam in the UK: A research Synthesis', *CREST*, p. 50, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/british-muslims-full-report/>

[81] Matthew Wilkinson. 2019. *The Genealogy of Terror*, London: Routledge, p.73

[82] The founder of Jamaat-e-Islami, Abdul ala Maududi, popularised the idea that Muslims who are not helping to establish an Islamic state are deficient in their faith and are eternal enemies. For a discussion of this concept and Maududi's influence on Islamist thinking see Matthew Wilkinson. 2019. *The Genealogy of Terror*, London: Routledge, chapter 6

[83] Kim Knott. 2018. 'Muslims and Islam in the UK: A research Synthesis', *CREST*, p. 56, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/british-muslims-full-report/>

[84] Sophie Gilliat-Ray. 2010. *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, p.59, cited in Kim Knott. 2018. 'Muslims and Islam in the UK: A research Synthesis', *CREST*, p. 50, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/british-muslims-full-report/>

giving birth which resulted in distress to the sows and allegedly the deaths of piglets.[85] We understand much less about what leads the activists involved to adopt behaviours such as these. Farmers' representatives told us, however, of the considerable impact on farmers and their families' mental wellbeing, particularly when campaigns go on over many months. Campaigns also harm farmers financially as it impacts their businesses and requires additional spending on security for farm buildings.[86]

Equivocating or Making the Moral Case for Violence Against Other Groups.

There is uncertainty about when and how individuals move from hateful extremism to engage in serious violence and terrorism. The potential overlap between these two categories is important and we are concerned about the ways in which individuals and groups equivocate on the use of violence and make statements which make the moral case for violence.

We have seen Islamist equivocation about violence manifest in several ways. First, making the moral case for violence against perceived enemies of Islam. Preachers such as Haitham al-Haddad[87] and Indian preacher Zakir Naik (excluded from the UK in 2010)[88] have characterised Muslims who leave their faith as a "threat" and committing "treason" respectively, before making the case for capital punishment.

Second, expressing solidarity with those seen as at the forefront of jihad. CAGE has supported convicted terrorists and the group has published or invited al-Qaeda ideologues to speak at its events.[89] Senior leaders have advocated supporting violent jihad overseas. When asked about an al-Qaeda affiliate's truck bombing in Syria, CAGE advocacy

[85] Helena Horton. 2019. 'Vegans accused of killing piglets by accident after storming farm to cuddle them', *The Telegraph*, 6 March 2019, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/03/06/vegans-accused-killing-piglets-accident-storming-farm-cuddle/>

[86] Call for Evidence

[87] Usama Hasan, David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations', p.7 (forthcoming)

[88] Naik said: "If a Muslim becomes a non-Muslim and propagates his/her new religion then, it is as good as treason. There is a 'death penalty' in Islam for such a person. Punishment is death." Zakir Naik v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2010] EWHC 2825. Naik repeated this position in 2012 on his English and Urdu language television channel Peace TV. Ofcom 'Broadcast bulletin', Issue Number 218, 19 November 2012, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/47665/obb218.pdf>

[89] Aafia Siddiqui was sentenced to 86 years' imprisonment in 2010 for inter alia the attempted murder of US nationals and officials in Afghanistan, but CAGE has campaigned for Siddiqui and has, as recently as last year published material in support of her. See: CAGE.2018. 'CAGE Calls on Imran Khan to seek the return of Aafia Siddiqui, cease cooperation on drone strikes and locate the forcibly disappeared', 24 August 2018, (accessed: 27 August 2019) <https://www.cage.ngo/cage-calls-on-imran-khan-to-seek-the-return-of-aafia-siddiqui-cease-cooperation-on-drone-strikes-and-locate-the-forcibly-disappeared> Other examples include support to Djamel Beghal (sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in 2005 for terrorist conspiracy); CAGE published a very supportive report in 2011 as part of their Fabricating Terrorism series. See: CAGE. 2011. 'Djamel Beghal: British and French complicity in torture', 12 October 2011, (accessed: 27 August 2019) <https://www.cage.ngo/djamel-beghal-british-and-french-complicity-in-torture>. CAGE also gave a supportive interview to Abu Hamza in 2008, two years after his incarceration for 11 terrorist offences in the UK and while he was wanted in the US for further terrorist offences. See: CAGE. 'Interview with Abu Hamza', 6 June, (accessed: 28 August 2019) <https://web.archive.org/web/20150304222510/www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/interviews/item/140-interview-with-abu-hamza>. CAGE has campaigned for Munir Farooqi, who was convicted in 2011 for inter alia preparing acts of terrorism and soliciting to murder after trying to radicalise two undercover police officers; CAGE's reports have portrayed Farooqi as a victim of entrapment. See: CAGE. 2014 'Munir Farooqi', 23 January 2014, (accessed: 27 August 2019) <https://www.cage.ngo/munir-farooqi-2>. In 2009 CAGE planned to play a video lecture by al-Qaeda ideologue, Anwar al Awlaki, to speak at an event in Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall, although officials blocked this. CAGE made a video of the lecture available online. By 2009 Awlaki had published online audio recordings of Constants on the path of jihad, which was a text penned by Al-Qaeda in Arabia operative, Yusuf al-Ayeri. See: J.M. Berger. 2011. 'The Myth of Anwar al-Awlaki', *Foreign Policy*, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/08/10/the-myth-of-anwar-al-awlaki/>. CAGE invited AQ ideologue, Abu Qatada, to speak at an event in 2015 via video link. See: CST.2016. 'Abu Qatada: No Longer in Britain, but still preaching jihad and antisemitism', 29 February 2016 (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2016/02/29/abu-qatada-no-longer-in-britain-but-still-preaching-jihad-and-antisemitism>

director Adnan Siddiqque told the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2015 that suicide bombings are "a price worth paying".[90]

Lewisham Imam Shakeel Begg was found by a high court in 2016 to have made public statements that promoted and encouraged violent jihad by praising "the virtues and 'good deeds' of these jihadis who have travelled to conflict zones and engaged in armed struggle in the name of Islam".[91] The judge held that Begg, when addressing an annual dinner for CAGE on 21 August 2010, "encouraged religious violence".[92] He used the term "jihad in the sense exclusively of fighting physically the enemies of Islam".[93]

Third, refusing to condemn terrorist tactics in certain scenarios. The Government's Muslim Brotherhood Review found that some UK-based groups with links to the Muslim Brotherhood Jamaat-e-Islami network praised or equivocated on the use of violence by organisations e.g. Hamas.[94] In addition, it found that some UK groups have not "openly nor consistently refuted the literature of Brotherhood member Sayyid Qutb, a key

jihadist ideologue whose writing is known to have inspired people (including in this country) to engage in terrorism".[95]

Fourth, refusing to condemn inhumane and degrading violence against women. For example, while being questioned by the BBC about his description of Daesh executioner Mohammed Emwazi as a "beautiful young man" in 2015, CAGE research director Asim Qureshi refused to condemn the extreme positions of Haitham al-Haddad, a cleric he had described as a mentor. These included female genital mutilation (FGM) and the stoning to death of adulterous women,[96] described as "torture and degrading treatment" by Amnesty International.[97]

We have heard about the Far Right intimating support for violence. Prior to proscription, for example, National Action ran outdoor training camps where ideology and use of violence was discussed and self-defence taught.[98] On the day Jo Cox MP was killed, National Action activist Jack Coulson tweeted that her murderer Thomas Mair was "a hero, we need more people like him to butcher the

[90] Home Affairs Select Committee. 2015. 'Bethnal Green Academy, Inspire and Cage questioned on countering extremism', Parliamentary Session 2015-6, 2 hours 34 minutes and 20 seconds, (accessed: 28 August 2019) <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2015/151113-countering-extremism-evidence/>
[91] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[92] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[93] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[94] Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Office, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Home office and David Cameron. 2015. *Muslim Brotherhood review: main findings*, p.9, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf>
[95] Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Office, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Home office and David Cameron. 2015. *Muslim Brotherhood review: main findings*, pp.5 and 8, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486932/Muslim_Brotherhood_Review_Main_Findings.pdf>
[96] BBC This Week. 2015. Cage quizzed on claims about security service jailings (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0610blb>
[97] Amnesty International. 2015. Cage quizzed on claims about security service jailings 'Amnesty International responds to questions about Cage', (accessed: 29 August 2019) <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-international-responds-questions-about-cage>
[98] Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.12, (accessed: 29 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/827232/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action_Post_Publication_Revisions.pdf>

race traitors".[99] The group's Twitter account celebrated the murder by posting "Only 649 MPs to go #WhiteJihad".[100]

Scale of Hateful Extremism[101]

There are currently no measures of hateful extremism. We have identified several proxy indicators that we have used to help us understand the scale of this phenomenon. These are data on offences involving stirring up hatred on the grounds of protected characteristics, hate crime data and social media sanctions.

Looking specifically at data on stirring up hatred based on race, religion or sexual orientation is a good proxy measure for hateful extremism. These powers are rarely used due to the very high threshold. They also require the consent of the Attorney

General, in addition to the consent of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), adding further complexity to the ability to prosecute individuals on these grounds. The CPS define stirring up hatred as, "a hatred that manifests itself in such a way that public order might be affected".[102] The CPS acknowledges that it must "balance the rights of an individual to freedom of speech and expression against the duty of the state to act proportionately in the interests of public safety, to prevent disorder and crime".[103]

Prosecutions of these types of offenses are broken down into racial hatred and religious hatred. Using the data available, it shows that of the convictions made under the Public Order Act 1986, most convictions in 2017/18 were for stirring up religious hatred against Muslims.

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99 Michael Black. 2017. 'Pipe bomb was start of Bradford teenager's 'all out race war', court told' *Telegraph and Argus*, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/15028718.pipe-bomb-was-start-of-bradford-teenagers-all-out-race-war-court-told/> cited in Graham Macklin. 2019. 'The Evolution of Extreme-Right Terrorism and Efforts to Counter it in the United Kingdom', *CTC Sentinel – Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, vol. 12, no. 1, January 2019, pp.15-20, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2019/01/CTC-SENTINEL-012019.pdf>

100 The Home Office included the tweet in their rationale for proscribing National Action as an example of the group's violent language that "condones or glorifies those who have used extreme violence for political or ideological ends". Home Office. 2013. *Proscribed Terrorist Organisations*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>

101 The boundaries of extremism are not always clear and what constitutes hateful extremism is a matter of debate. Discussion of an individual or group in the context of hateful extremism does not mean that they are regarded necessarily by the Commission as hateful extremists.

102 Crown Prosecution Service. 2016. *Hate Crime What is it and how to support victims and witnesses*, p.7, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/Hate-Crime-what-it-is-and-how-to-support-victims-and-witnesses.pdf>

103 Crown Prosecution Service. 2017-18. *Hate Crime Annual Report*, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/cps-hate-crime-report-2018.pdf>

Table 1: Prosecutions and Convictions for Stirring Up Hatred[104]

Year	Prosecuted	Convicted	Grounds for conviction		
			Sexual Orientation	**Racial**	**Religious**
17-18	9	8	0	3	8 (three double charged)
16-17	4	4	0	0	0
15-16	1	1	0	1	0
14-15	1	1	0	0	1
13-14	1	1	0	1	0
12-13	0	0	0	0	0
11-12	17	13	10	6	1

Police recorded hate crime figures are published by the Home Office annually. The results of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) are published by the Office for National Statistics. The CSEW, which is generally considered to be a more accurate measure of crime, suggests that the average annual number of hate crimes has fallen by 40% between 2007/8 (307,000) and 2017/8 (184,000).[105] By contrast, police recorded hate crime shows all hate crime going up.[106] In the case of all hate crime and race hate crime, the number of reports has more than doubled since 2012/3.

In the case of religiously motivated hate crime, it has increased by more than a factor of five. The police estimate that 52% of police recorded religious hate incidents were against Muslims and 12% against Jews.[107] This increase is judged by experts to be largely due to an increase in reporting.

Separate surveys of victims show that hate crimes are more likely to have an emotional and psychological impact than the average for all crime. Forty percent of hate crime victims felt a loss of confidence or vulnerability after the crime as opposed to 18% of victims of all crime, and 36% of them suffered from anxiety or panic attacks compared to 13% of victims of all crime.[108]

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[104] Crown Prosecution Service. 2011-2018. *Hate Crime Annual Reports*, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/hate-crime-reports> In 2011/12, numbers of convictions were not broken down by characteristic, so we have instead included the number of prosecutions broken down by characteristic.

[105] CSEW is considered to be more robust than police reporting but estimates that it still only captures around half of hate crime. House of Commons Briefing Paper. 2019. *Hate Crime Statistics*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8537#fullreport>

[106] Police recording has improved since January 2014, when the ONS assessed police recorded data as not meeting the requirements to be designated as National Statistics. Home Office. 2018. *Hate crime, England and Wales*, (accessed: 21 August 2018) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748598/hate-crime-1718-hosb2018.pdf>

[107] Home Office. 2018. *Hate crime, England and Wales*, 2017/8, (accessed: 21 August 2018) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748598/hate-crime-1718-hosb2018.pdf>

[108] House of Commons Briefing Paper. 2019. *Hate Crime Statistics*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8537#fullreport>

The problem with hate crime as an indicator of extremism is not all hate crime is a consequence of hateful extremism but is instead motivated by prejudice or ignorance combined with circumstantial factors such as alcohol.[109] Hate crime data does not currently record whether there is an extremist element or motivation to any given crime.

The increases in reported hate crime are mirrored in the reporting of civil society groups, the Community Security Trust (CST) and TellMAMA. CST publishes statistics on the number of antisemitic incidents reported to them.[110] They have seen more than a three-fold increase in the number of incidents since 2007. 2018 was the third year in a row that the CST has recorded a record high in antisemitic incidents.[111] TellMAMA has seen reports of anti-Muslim incidents reported to them have almost doubled since 2012/3.[112] Both organisations record a high level of detail about each incident, including the perceived gender and ethnicity of perpetrators.

Table 2: Hate crimes recorded by the police, 2012 to 2017/18[113]

Year	Number	Race	Religion
2017-8	94,098	71,251	8,336
2016-7	80,393	62,685	5,949
2015-6	62,518	49,419	4,400
2014-5	52,465	42,862	3,293
2013-4	44,577	37,575	2,264
2012-3	42,255	35,845	1,572

[109] Mark A. Walters and Rupert Brown with Susann Wiedlitzka. 2016. 'Causes and motivations of hate crime', EHRC, Research report 102, p.27, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-102-causes-and-motivations-of-hate-crime.pdf>

[110] Community Security Trust. 2018. 'Antisemitic Incidents', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/2/9/Incidents%20Report%202018%20-%20web.1549538710.pdf>

[111] Community Security Trust. 2018. 'Antisemitic Incidents', p.9, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/2/9/Incidents%20Report%202018%20-%20web.1549538710.pdf>

[112] TellMAMA. 2018. 'Interim Report 2018: Gendered Anti-Muslim Hatred and Islamophobia', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://tellmamauk.org/gendered-anti-muslim-hatred-and-islamophobia-street-based-aggression-in-cases-reported-to-tell-mama-is-alarming/>

[113] Home Office. 2018. *Hate crime, England and Wales*, 2017/8, p.12, (accessed: 21 August 2018) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748598/hate-crime-1718-hosb2018.pdf>

Table 3: CST: Reports of antisemitic incident figures 2007-2018[114]

Year	Number
2018	1,652
2017	1,420
2016	1,375
2015	960
2014	1,182
2013	535
2012	650
2011	609
2010	646
2009	931
2008	546
2007	561

Table 4: TellMAMA: Reports of anti-Muslim incidents 2013-2018[115]

Year (TellMAMA)	Number
2018	1,072
2017	1,201
2016	953
2015	801
March 2014 – March 2015	548
May 2013 – Feb 2014	734
April 2012 – April 2013	584

Social media provides platforms for individuals and groups to express and share ideas. In recent years, social media companies have come under increasing pressure to respond to the abuse of these platforms which can incite or amplify hatred of others. As a result, we have seen Twitter, Facebook and YouTube all take a tougher stance on hate speech. Notably, Yaxley-Lennon was removed from Facebook in 2019 where he reportedly had over 1 million followers.[116] Concerns remain, however, over the ease with which people who are persistently no-platformed can return under a different, and sometimes barely altered, name.[117]

In the two reporting periods for which there is comparable data – January-June and July-December 2018 – Twitter sanctioned between 285,393 and 250,806 accounts respectively for hate conduct.[118] In the last quarter of 2017, Facebook actioned 1.6m pieces of content for hateful speech, rising steadily to 4.0m pieces of content in the first quarter of 2019.[119] The number of YouTube channels removed for being hateful or abusive has risen significantly from 1,713 in the fourth quarter of 2018 to 17,818 in the second quarter of 2019.[120] There are insufficient data points to draw conclusions about any long-term trends.

[114] CST. 2018. 'Antisemitic Incidents', p.42, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/2/9/Incidents%20Report%202018%20-%20web.1549538710.pdf>

[115] TellMAMA. 'Annual Reports 2013-2018', (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://tellmamauk.org/category/reports/>

[116] Lizzie Dearden. 2019. 'Tommy Robinson permanently banned by Facebook and Instagram', *The Independent*, 26 February 2019, (Accessed: 30 August 2019) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/tommy-robinson-facebook-ban-instagram-permanent-far-right-edl-racism-a8797451.html>

[117] Sunder Katwala. 2019. 'Racist abuse in the real world is in decline, so why not on Twitter?', *The Guardian*, 25 August 2019, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/aug/25/racist-abuse-in-the-real-world-is-in-decline-so-why-not-on-twitter>

[118] Twitter. 2019. 'Twitter Rules Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparency.twitter.com/en/twitter-rules-enforcement.html>

[119] Facebook. 2019. 'Community Standards Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparency.facebook.com/community-standards-enforcement#terrorist-propaganda>

[120] Channels removed if three strikes against Community Guidelines are accrued within 90 days. YouTube. 2019. 'Community Guidelines Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparencyreport.google.com/youtube-policy/removals>

We are also concerned about the proliferation of conspiracy theories, including online, and the potential impact on radicalising people's attitudes and behaviour towards others. Research by the Antisemitism Policy Trust and CST shows that interest in Rothschild conspiracy theories has increased 39% in the last three years and in months when online searches for the Rothschilds increase, antisemitic searches also increase.[121] Furthermore, in the UK alone, there are approximately 170,000 online antisemitic searches each year.[122] Based on polling in 2017, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research describe the 5% of the UK population who hold "a wide range of antisemitic attitudes" as antisemites. They also found nearly a third of the population overall hold at least one of the antisemitic attitudes they tested for, although these could be held at the same time as positive attitudes towards Jews.[123]

We are also concerned about negative attitudes towards Muslims in this country and the Far Right's move towards promoting anti-Muslim politics. In 2011, historian Paul Jackson posited that, "Muslims have become the most predominant scapegoats for the far right today", arguing that so-called cultural racism is seen as more acceptable.[124] In line with previous attitudinal surveys, polling commissioned for Dr Mulhall's paper showed that Muslims are seen as distinctly different from any other religious group and are seen more negatively by the public. One in 10 respondents had very strong negative views about Muslims, more than twice the proportion that see any other religious group in the same way. Twenty-nine percent of people polled believe that Islam is a threat to the British way of life and think that it is "incompatible".[125] More research is required to establish the cause and effect of Far Right anti-Muslim narratives and wider societal attitudes.

We have also found some data from various sources that estimate the numbers of attendees on events organised by or that featured Far Right speakers or groups. The Day for Freedom in May 2018 – a free speech rally which saw speeches from Yaxley-Lennon, social media figure Mark Meechan (fined £800 for posting a video online of his pet dog giving a Nazi salute)[126] and the then UKIP leader Gerard Batten – was estimated to have attracted between 2,000 and 4,000 attendees.[127]

Another source of data for hateful extremism comes from Prevent referrals, which provides information on the numbers of people referred to the Prevent Programme over concerns that they are at risk of radicalisation. The Home Office has published

[121] Antisemitism Policy Trust and CST. 2019. 'Hidden Hate: what Google searches tell us about antisemitism today', 11 January 2019, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2019/01/11/hidden-hate-what-google-searches-tell-us-about-antisemitism-today>

[122] Antisemitism Policy Trust and CST. 2019. 'Hidden Hate: what Google searches tell us about antisemitism today', 11 January 2019, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2019/01/11/hidden-hate-what-google-searches-tell-us-about-antisemitism-today>

[123] Institute for Jewish Policy Research. 2017. 'Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain', September 2017, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/7/4/JPR.2017.Antisemitism%20in%20contemporary%20Great%20Britain.pdf>

[124] Paul Jackson and Mark Feldman. 2011. 'The EDL: Britain's 'New Far Right' social movement'. *RNM Publications*, p.9, (accessed: 3 September 2019) http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/6015/7/Jackson20116015.pdf, cited in Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.15, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[125] Joe Mulhall. 2019. 'Modernising and mainstreaming: The contemporary British Far Right', p.14, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816694/Joe_Mulhall_-_Modernising_and_Mainstreaming_The_Contemporary_British_Far_Right.pdf>

[126] Judiciary of Scotland. 2018. 'PF v Mark Meechan', (accessed: 4 September 2019) <http://www.scotland-judiciary.org.uk/8/1962/PF-v-Mark-Meechan>

[127] Event attendance was at an estimated 2,000- 3,000 (*although organisers have claimed the number as 4,000-5,000*. HOPE not hate. 2018. '"Day For Freedom": A New Threat Emerges', 8 May 2018, (accessed: 1 August 2019) <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2018/05/08/day-freedom-new-threat-emerges/>

data on the numbers of Prevent referrals since 2015/6. The numbers of referrals have hovered between approximately 6,000 and 7,500 annually,[128] but with only three reports thus far, there is insufficient data to reveal a trend. However, the proportion of those that go on to receive support from Channel who were originally referred for concerns related to right-wing extremism has risen considerably. In 2015/16, 26% of those that received Channel support were initially referred for concerns to right-wing extremism; 69% of those that received Channel support were initially referred for concerns related to Islamist extremism.[129] In 2017/18, 44% of the people that received Channel support were initially referred for concerns related to right-wing extremism and 45% were initially referred for concerns related to Islamist extremism.[130]

What is missing when it comes to assessing the level of hateful extremism is any data about private events at which extremist views are advocated. In our case study of Lewisham and research we commissioned into the mainstreaming of Islamism, we found that speakers with histories of espousing problematic views often speak at semi-closed events.

Terrorism and Violent Extremism

This category encompasses (1) terrorism attacks and offences, including activities that are not directly violent such as facilitating or encouraging terrorism, (2) ideological or sectarian violence, and (3) credible threats of serious violence.

Terrorism Attacks and Offences

In the early 2000s Islamist terrorism supplanted Irish Republicanism as the dominant terror threat. Islamist ideologues in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s had been vocal supporters of international *jihad* against regimes perceived as corrupt in Muslim-majority and foreign invaders.[131] They preached in mosques or community centres, fundraised for militant groups overseas, and facilitated training and travel to conflict zones for young British Muslims.[132]

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[128] Home Office. 2018. *Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2017 to March 2018*, Home Office, 13 December 2018, (accessed on 4 September 2019) p16. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/763254/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2017-mar2018-hosb3118.pdf>; Home Office. 2016. *Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2015 to March 2016*, Home Office, 9 November 2017, (accessed 4 September 2019) p. 4. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677646/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2015-mar2016.pdf>

[129] Home Office. 2017. *Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2015 to March 2016*, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677646/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2015-mar2016.pdf>

[130] The number of people that received Channel support in 2017/8 was 394. See Home Office. 2018. *Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2017 to March 2018*, p.4 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/763254/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2017-mar2018-hosb3118.pdf>

[131] Senior Islamist clerics Egyptian-born Abu Hamza and Palestinian-Jordanian Abu Qatada moved to the UK in 1979 and 1993 respectively. For Abu Hamza see: BBC. 2015. 'Abu Hamza Profile', 9 January 2015, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11701269>; For Abu Qatada see: BBC. 2014. 'Profile: Abu Qatada', 9 January 2015, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-16584923>; Syrian-born Omar Bakri Mohammad, founder of the UK-based proscribed terrorist group al-Muhajiroun, arrived in the UK in 1986. For Omar Bakri Mohammad see: Josie Ensor and Raf Sanchez. 2016. 'Islamic State leaks reveal banned cleric Omar Bakri recruited British jihadists', *The Telegraph*, 10 March 2016, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/12190513/Islamic-State-leaks-reveals-banned-cleric-Omar-Bakri-recruited-British-jihadists.html> Jamaican-born Abdullah el-Faisal, a preacher who influenced one of the 7/7 bombers and who is now facing extradition to the US from Jamaica for recruiting for Daesh, arrived in the UK in 1992. See: Philip Johnston. 2007. 'July 7 preacher Abdullah El-Faisal deported', *The Telegraph*, 25 May 2007, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1552580/July-7-preacher-Abdullah-El-Faisal-deported.html>

[132] Lewis Herrington. 2015. 'British Islamic extremist terrorism: the declining significance of Al-Qaeda and Pakistan', *International Affairs*, 91:1, pp.17-35 (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_publication_docs/INTA91_1_02_Herrington.pdf>

We judge that the radicalising effects of these clerics continues to be felt within Muslim communities today.

Most of their activities were lawful, partly because there was no permanent legislation designed to prohibit them.[133] The Terrorism Act 2000 criminalised many of these non-violent activities, such as fundraising for terrorism, inciting terrorism overseas or weapons training.[134] The Act also gave the Home Secretary the power to proscribe organisations, and criminalised associating with proscribed organisations.

July 2005 saw the UK's deadliest terrorist attack when bombers killed 52 members of the public in London. Thereafter, several high-profile Islamist preachers were convicted for preaching sermons that solicited to murder and incited racial hatred against non-Muslims, Jews and Hindus.[135]

ALM supporters have carried out one-quarter of Islamist terrorism offences in the UK,[136] despite the group's proscription in 2006, under the names Al Ghurabaa and The Saved Sect, for glorifying terrorism. Research we commissioned by Dr Michael Kenney

charts ALM's activities, which range from deliberately provocative public acts, such as poppy-burning on Remembrance Day,[137] to the supporters carrying out the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in 2013.[138] By 2017, 29% of Kenney's interviewees were either implicated in terrorism in the UK or had left or attempted to leave the UK to join Daesh or other militant groups in Iraq and Syria, suggesting a high propensity for violence in the group's ranks.[139]

In the spring and summer of 2017, 35 people were killed in three Islamist attacks in London and Manchester.[140] To date, more than 900 individuals from the UK travelled to engage in the conflict in Syria and Iraq. Of these, 20% have been killed overseas and 40% have returned to the UK.[141]

Far Right terrorism has become more prominent.[142] Seven of the 22 foiled terrorist plots in the UK between March 2017 and September 2019 were inspired by Far Right ideologies.[143] There have been three fatal attacks: the murder of 82-year-old Mohammed Saleem Chaudhry in 2013, the murder of Jo Cox MP in 2016 and the Finsbury Park Mosque attack in 2017 that

[133] Clive Walker. 2016. 'Human Rights and Counterterrorism in the UK', (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/RuleOfLaw/NegativeEffectsTerrorism/Walker.pdf>

[134] Terrorism Act 2000, sections 15, 59 and 54 respectively

[135] Abdullah el-Faisal and Abu Hamza were convicted of soliciting murder and incitement to murder in 2003 and 2006 respectively. See: *The Guardian*. 2003. 'Muslim cleric guilty of soliciting murder', 24 February 2003, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2003/feb/24/race.world>; Duncan Gardham and George Jones. 2006. 'Muslim cleric jailed for inciting murder', *The Telegraph*, 8 February 2006, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1509938/Muslim-cleric-jailed-for-inciting-murder.html>

[136] Hannah Stuart. 2017. 'Islamist Terrorism: Analysis of Offences and Attacks in the UK (1998-2015)' *Henry Jackson Society*, p.1012, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Islamist-Terrorism-preview-1.pdf>

[137] Michael Kenney. 'What is to be done about al-Muhajiroun? Containing the emigrants in a democratic society' (forthcoming)

[138] Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament. 2014. *Report on the intelligence relating to the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby*, pp.16-17. (accessed: 5 September 2019) <http://isc.independent.gov.uk/committee-reports/special-reports>

[139] Michael Kenney. 'What is to be done about al-Muhajiroun? Containing the emigrants in a democratic society', p.13 (forthcoming)

[140] David Anderson QC. 2017. *Independent assessment of MI5 and Police Internal Reviews*, p.6, (accessed: 28 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664682/Attacks_in_London_and_Manchester_Open_Report.pdf>

[141] Home Office. 2019. *Fact sheet: Returnees from the conflict zone in Syria*, (accessed: 19 August 2019) <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/02/15/fact-sheet-returnees-from-the-conflict-zone-in-syria/>

[142] Seth Jacobson. 2019. 'Far-right terrorism threat is growing, say MI5 and police chiefs', *The Guardian*, 29 March 2019, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/mar/29/far-right-terrorism-threat-is-growing-say-mi5-and-police-chiefs>

[143] 'Metropolitan Police. 2019. 'Neil Basu leads Prevent conversation at ICT Summit', 9 September 2019, (accessed: 19 September 2019) <https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/neil-basu-leads-prevent-conversation-at-ict-summit/>

killed Makram Ali. Although not directed by a Far Right group, all three were influenced by Far Right ideology and propaganda.[144]

In December 2016, National Action became the first Far Right group to be proscribed.[145] Since then, there have been 11 convictions under terrorism legislation for membership of the group, alongside convictions for various other terrorism and non-terrorism offences committed by individuals still associating with the group. Activist Jack Renshaw pleaded guilty to preparing an act of terrorism and making threats to kill a police officer after his plot to murder Rosie Cooper MP and a police officer was discovered.[146]

National Action promote white supremacism, and, like ALM, their activities ranged from provocative demonstrations to direct action, violence and terrorism. The group often outwardly portrayed violence as necessary for self-defence against perceived threats.[147] Yet an internal document states "Every part of me wants war. There is no other way".[148]

Away from National Action, there is debate over the extent of Far Right groups' involvement in terrorism. So-called lone actor terrorists rarely receive material support from Far Right organisations but have instead been ideologically influenced by Far Right propaganda or had previous ties to groups.

Sources of data showing the scale of terrorism are limited. Home Office data shows that the number of people in prison for terrorism related activity has risen 74% from 126 in March 2010 to 223 in March 2019, with the number of those incarcerated for Extreme Right Wing Terrorism rising from 6 in December 2013, when figures were first released for this category, to 33 in March 2019.[149] Yet, this data tells us little about the scale of extremism overall. It says nothing of the networks of people or the environmental factors that lead would-be terrorists to harbour extremist beliefs.

Social media companies publish data on terrorist or violent content actioned and removed. The number of accounts sanctioned by Twitter for promoting terrorism has more than halved from July-December 2016 to July-December 2018 from 376,890 to 166,513.[150] The number of pieces of content actioned by Facebook for being terrorist propaganda (al-Qaeda, ISIS and their affiliates) has risen from 1.1m in the fourth quarter of 2017 to 6.4m in the first quarter of 2019.[151] The number of YouTube channels removed for the promotion of violence or violent extremism has also increased from 16,596 in the fourth quarter of 2018 to 18,831 in the second quarter of 2019, although these are insufficient reporting periods to

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[144] R v Pavlo Lapshyn (Central Criminal Court, 25 October 2013); R v Thomas Mair (Central Criminal Court, 23 November 2016); R v Darren Osbourne (Woolwich Crown Court, 2 February 2018).

[145] Home Office. 2016. *National Action becomes first extreme right-wing group to be banned in UK*, (accessed: 28 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-action-becomes-first-extreme-right-wing-group-to-be-banned-in-uk>

[146] Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.2, (accessed: 29 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/827232/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action_Post_Publication_Revisions.pdf>

[147] Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.7, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816698/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action.pdf>

[148] Daniel De Simone. 2018. 'National Action: The new parents and the neo-Nazi terror threat', *BBC*, 12 November 2018, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-45919730>

[149] Home Office, 2019. *Operation of Police Powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 statistics*, (accessed: 30 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/operation-of-police-powers-under-the-terrorism-act-2000>

[150] Twitter. 2019. 'Twitter Rules Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparency.twitter.com/en/twitter-rules-enforcement.html>

[151] Facebook. 2019. 'Community Standards Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparency.facebook.com/community-standards-enforcement#terrorist-propaganda>

draw firm conclusions.[152] Further details from companies and further analysis will be required to make a meaningful assessment of this data.

Ideological and Sectarian Violence

This category includes engaging in or inciting ideological and sectarian violence that are not typically considered terrorism.

Violence associated with the Far Right can arise spontaneously and manifest as hate crime. Such violence commonly occurs during protests (including against counter demonstrators), and can explicitly target minorities and political opponents. It may be triggered by high-profile events such as Islamist terrorism offences and the EU referendum.[153]

Sectarian violence includes events like the religiously motivated murders of Ahmadiyya shopkeeper Asad Shah and Imam Jalal Uddin. Shah was murdered by Bradford-based Tanveer Ahmed, who saw Shah's claim to be a prophet as blasphemous.[154] Imam Uddin's killer viewed his practice of taweez faith healing as black magic.[155] The perpetrators in both cases could not accept the legitimacy of their co-religionists' beliefs or practices and resorted to lethal violence to punish them. The Ahmadiyya community also told us about literature in mosques and in shop windows calling for Ahmadis to be killed.[156]

We also heard about violence towards secular people from those of a similar faith background. Muslim bloggers described being physically attacked during a protest in East London.[157] Some of those we spoke to are in hiding.

Credible Threats of Serious Violence

During a roundtable with secular Muslim bloggers, one, who was named on a 2015 hitlist drawn up by an al Qaeda-inspired militant group in Bangladesh, described feeling imprisoned within their home and complained of a lack of support and understanding from the authorities.

Freedom of religion includes the right to leave a religion. Yet we spoke to people who described the hostility, abuse and threats they face for leaving their religion. Community group Faith to Faithless described how extremists threaten those leaving what they term high-control religions for the so-called crime of apostasy. This includes calls for them to be killed or punished. The Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain (CEMB) told us that Islamists had printed flyers with the names of those that CEMB work with and alongside calls for their murder.

The National Farmers' Union and the National Pig Association told us of campaigns of abuse against particular farmers. At least one campaign against animal farming has led to a farmer receiving death threats by letter and over the phone.

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[152] Channels removed if three strikes against Community Guidelines are accrued within 90 days. YouTube. 2019. 'Community Guidelines Enforcement', (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://transparencyreport.google.com/youtube-policy/removals>

[153] Benjamin Lee. 2019. 'Overview of the Far-Right', p.10, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816692/Ben_Lee_-_Overview_of_the_far_right.pdf>

[154] HM Advocate v Tanveer Ahmed (High Court in Glasgow, 9 August 2016). (accessed: 20 August 2019) <http://www.scotland-judiciary.org.uk/8/1639/HMA-v-Tanveer-Ahmed>

[155] BBC. 2016. Jalal Uddin murder: Syeedy guilty over Rochdale imam death', 16 September 2016, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-37388073>

[156] Call for Evidence

[157] Call for Evidence

Restriction of Rights and Freedoms

This category encompasses controlling behaviours based on perceived group membership that result in the suppression of rights and opportunities, including those designed to punish perceived transgression.

Most rights restriction is not extremist. We have seen two main types of rights restriction: (1) that related to the control of communities by religious fundamentalists and (2) that which threatens social fabric and democracy by inhibiting freedoms.

The Ahmadiyya community told us about the discrimination they suffer, from employment discrimination because of their faith to being effectively barred from taking a seat on a local Standing Council on Religious Education (SACRE) as fundamentalist Muslims threatened to withdraw.[158]

We have heard concerns about some people within religious communities condoning or permitting behaviours that restrict other members' rights, sometimes through coercion and intimidation. One activist described her experience of an Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community as living in "essentially a closed insular highly controlled community".[159] A call for evidence respondent who had left the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church equated the group's stringent rules, including a prohibition on attending university to "psychological torture".[160]

Fundamentalists can exert control over education and restrict children's rights to a balanced education that equips them with the skills to live outside of their community. We have heard that some children in some Ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities do not pursue secular education after the age of around 13. Ofsted expressed concern about boys being educated exclusively in yeshivas and leaving school without basic skills in maths and English.

Some of the only data we possess that suggests the scale of rights restriction is from the education sphere. Between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2018, Ofsted investigated 521 possible unregistered settings. They issued 80 warning notices to 71 settings. Consequently, 15 settings closed, 39 settings have changed their service to comply with the current legislation, nine settings have registered as independent schools and four settings are still under investigation. Four settings have had no further action taken.[161] The majority of these settings have no known links to extremist concerns.[162]

Many of these warning notices will have been issued for reasons other than the restriction of a child's right to education. However, we maintain that unregulated settings, that are not subject to the full scrutiny of other educational settings, are one of the most likely places in which a child's right to receive a rounded education will be denied.

Even in some regulated schools, Ofsted finds that a full curriculum is not being taught or inappropriate literature is available. Between September 2016 and July 2018, there were

[158] Call for Evidence
[159] Call for Evidence
[160] Call for Evidence
[161] Call for Evidence
[162] Call for Evidence

120 complaints at 106 different schools about extremism or radicalisation.[163] There are 24,323 schools in England in 2019.[164] At their most recent inspection, twenty-nine independent schools were recorded as failing one or more of the independent school standards around the teaching of Fundamental British Values (FBVs). For example, Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School in London had censored textbooks and stories to remove all reference to reproduction and romance.[165]

Pieces of inappropriate literature were found in 13 schools between November 2015 and January 2019. Inappropriate literature includes work that undermines the promotion of fundamental British values or which does not encourage respect for people with one or more protected characteristic.[166] One concerning excerpt from such literature found at the Lantern of Knowledge Secondary School condones the death penalty for adulterers: "A person who is married and commits adultery, and who either confesses or whose act is proven, pays for it with his life".[167]

Besides education, Southall Black Sisters told us that women's rights are regularly infringed by fundamentalists, who demand that intracommunity disputes are resolved through institutions that use narrow interpretations of religious jurisprudence and engage in practices which are discriminatory to women.[168]

Dr Jhutti-Johal and Hundal have demonstrated how Sikh elders attempt to stop sexual offences being reported to the police. Some of their female interviewees said a typical response to complaints of sexual abuse was "*kush kaina ni*" (don't say anything).[169] We judge that restrictive behaviours such as this, whether coming from a desire to protect a community's reputation or from a place of ignorance or misogyny, lead to women being denied recourse to justice and support from the state.

Many fundamentalists see the outside world as extremist for its commitment to secularism and cast themselves as the communities' protectors. To do this, they try to control the community narrative. We have heard that those speaking out or trying to leave fundamentalist communities are punished with social shunning, loss of contact with family and total ostracisation from the community's cultural and economic life.[170]

[163] Call for Evidence

[164] Department for Education. 2019. *Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2019*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812539/Schools_Pupils_and_their_Characteristics_2019_Main_Text.pdf>

[165] Call for Evidence; Ofsted. *Yesodey Hatorah School*. URN:100287, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/100287>; Rosemary Bennett. 2018. 'Faith school on probation for censoring Sherlock Holmes', *The Times*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/yesodey-hatorah-senior-girls-school-on-probation-for-censoring-sherlock-holmes-8xtt07c27>; The JC. 2018. 'Charedi school accused of censoring out 'homosexuals' from textbook hits back at critics', 11 March 2018, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.thejc.com/education/education-news/charedi-school-accused-of-censoring-out-homosexuals-from-textbook-hits-back-at-critics-1.460436>

[166] Call for Evidence

[167] Ofsted. *Lantern of Knowledge Secondary School,* URN: 132848, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/132848>

[168] Call for Evidence

[169] Jagbir Jhutti-Johal, Jagbir and Sunny Hundal. 2019. 'The changing nature of activism amongst among Sikhs in the UK today', p.12 (forthcoming)

[170] Call for Evidence

Religious Fundamentalism

Religion is an important and positive force in society: it unites communities, is central to charitable endeavours and service provision, and it fosters inclusivity and peace.

In contrast the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights describes fundamentalist movements as "political movements of the extreme right, which … manipulate religion, culture or ethnicity in order to achieve their political aims … in keeping with their theocratic visions and impose their interpretation of religious doctrine on others as law or public policy so as to consolidate social, economic and political power in a hegemonic and coercive manner".[171]

Fundamentalists consolidate their power using highly selective interpretations of scripture and the creation of a rigid social order based on an imagined utopian past. Fundamentalists impose their version of religion as the only valid one and stifle dissent by discrediting alternative interpretations of scripture and forbidding diversity in religious tradition or practice.[172]

Fundamentalists' preservation of power also often depends on controlling women's bodies, children's education, artistic expression and attacking dissenting intellectuals and human rights supporters.[173]

To be clear we do not believe that conservative religions are fundamentalist in nature. We have spoken to many people in deeply conservative religious communities whose experiences are positive.

Nor do we believe opposition to fundamentalism is anti-religious. We have spoken to many deeply religious people who are at the forefront of countering religious fundamentalism.[174]

Those that refuse to conform to fundamentalist dogma and champion human rights in the struggle against fundamentalism have often been targeted by fundamentalist campaigns to undermine them.[175] We have been concerned about reports of the punishment meted out to those believers who attempted to speak out or leave such highly controlling environments.

Rights restriction is not limited to religious communities. In 2017 the Committee for Standards in Public Life (CSPL) described how intimidation in public life presents a threat to the very nature of representative democracy in the UK.[176] A third (33%) of candidates in the 2017 general election had experienced inappropriate behaviour;

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[171] United Nations. Human Rights Council. 2017. 'Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights', A/HRC/34/56, p.3, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/007/43/PDF/G1700743.pdf?OpenElement>

[172] Stephen Cowden and Gita Sahgal. 2017. 'Why Fundamentalism', *Feminist Dissent*, Vol. 2, p.15-20 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://journals.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/feministdissent/article/view/35>

[173] United Nations, Human Rights Council. 2017. 'Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights', A/HRC/34/56, p.15, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/34/56>

[174] Call for Evidence

[175] United Nations, Human Rights Council. 2017. 'Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights', A/HRC/34/56, p.4, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/34/56>

[176] Committee on Standards in Public Life. 2017. 'Intimidation in Public Life A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life', p.13, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666927/6.3637_CO_v6_061217_Web3.1__2_.pdf>

over half (56%) were concerned about abuse and 31% were fearful of it.[177] The most concerning conclusions were about women and minorities: not a single female MP active on Twitter had been free from online intimidation, and ethnically black and Asian women (despite being only 11% of women in Parliament) received 35% more abusive tweets than white female MPs.[178] Parliamentary candidates responding to the CSPL's call for evidence said that intimidation was already dissuading individuals from standing for public offices, particularly those most at risk of receiving abuse – women, ethnic and religious minorities and LGBT+ candidates.

Five years ago, concerns about incivility in public life were not a significant worry. This has changed. A 2018 report by Policy Exchange evidenced the coarsening of public discourse and the real challenge that this is posing to widely-accepted democratic norms.[179] The report claims that "it is no longer enough... to disagree with one's political opponents; instead it has become necessary to insist that they do not belong in the same moral universe".[180]

Alongside incivility, we are also seeing evidence of growing hostility at an electoral level. The London School of Economics' UK Electoral Hostility Barometer showed that 31% of voters say they have personally experienced electoral hostility. During the 2019 European Parliament elections, the barometer found negative feelings towards opposing voters were widespread. Sixty six percent of people felt frustration towards people who vote for parties they dislike; 50% felt anger; 48% felt disgust; 44% contempt and 30% hatred.[181]

We do not yet understand the full extent of the relationship between rights restricting behaviour and hateful extremism. Further research is required.

[177] Committee on Standards in Public Life. 2017. 'Intimidation in Public Life A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life', pp.27 and 48, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666927/6.3637_CO_v6_061217_Web3.1__2_.pdf>

[178] Committee on Standards in Public Life. 2017. 'Intimidation in Public Life A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life', p.27, (accessed 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666927/6.3637_CO_v6_061217_Web3.1__2_.pdf>

[179] Trevor Phillips and Hannah Stuart. 2018. 'An age of incivility: understanding the new politics', *Policy Exchange* p.5, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/an-age-of-incivility/>

[180] Trevor Phillips and Hannah Stuart. 2018. 'An age of incivility: understanding the new politics', *Policy Exchange* p.7, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/an-age-of-incivility/>

[181] Michael Bruter. 2019. 'UK Electoral Hostility Barometer launched by EPO & Opinium', *LSE*. 28 May 2019 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <http://www.lse.ac.uk/News/Latest-news-from-LSE/2019/05-May-19/New-UK-Electoral-Hostility-Barometer-launched-by-EPO-and-Opinium>

Boundaries Between Categories

There is overlap between the categories. Individuals' and groups' behaviours can move between all three categories. People can exhibit behaviours from across the three categories as part of the same incident.

First, most groups that use violence and terrorism also use non-violent and often lawful methods to garner support and convey their message. National Action and ALM both used and supported violence, but these activities sat on the extreme end of a spectrum of behaviours ranging from terrorism and violence to deliberately provocative dawah (in ALM's case) and deeply offensive publicity stunts (in National Action's case).[182] A comprehensive response to extremism will address the combination of violent, non-violent, criminal and lawful behaviours that even the most unpalatable groups can pursue at the same time.

Second, lawful protests can escalate to violence. The cancellation of the play *Behzti* (Dishonour) halfway through its run in 2004 after protests by hard-line Sikhs who objected to the playwright depicting sexual abuse in a Gurdwara is an example of censorship and the stifling of democratic freedoms. The protests turned violent and the playwright received death threats and was temporarily assigned police protection.[183] A 2006 exhibition by an Indian modern artist in London closed for security reasons after two paintings were defaced.[184] This followed a campaign against the exhibition from Hindu groups who objected to the paintings "showing obscene images of Hindu Goddesses".[185] (These groups were not implicated, nor advocated for, the vandalism).[186]

Third, rights restricting behaviours designed to control communities can move into hateful extremism because of the level of intimidation involved. Southall Black Sisters described how hard-line Sikhs and Hindus have disrupted inter-faith marriage ceremonies. One wedding was disrupted by 55 members of Sikh Youth UK wearing the Sikh traditional ceremonial daggers, with one protester telling reporters that he objected to interfaith marriages within the Sikh community, because such marriages were not "a true interpretation of what it means to be Sikh".[187]

The boundary between rights restriction and hateful extremism specifically, requires further conceptual analysis. Some of the discrimination suffered by the Ahmadiyya community falls in this grey area. Above, we saw obvious examples of sectarian violence and hateful extremism against Ahmadiyya Muslims being perpetrated or encouraged. However, some discrimination

[182] Chris Allen. 2019. 'National Action: links between the far fight, extremism and terrorism', p.7 (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816698/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action.pdf>; Michael Kenney. 2019. 'What is to be done about al-Muhajiroun? Containing the emigrants in a democratic society' (forthcoming)

[183] Vikram Dodd and Tania Branigan. 2004. 'Writer in hiding as violence closes Sikh play', *The Guardian*, 21 December 2004, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2004/dec/21/religion.arts>

[184] Amit Roy. 2006. 'Vandals Close Exhibition' *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 May 2006, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1519725/Vandals-close-exhibition.html>

[185] Meghnad Desai. 2006. 'Closure threat to artistic freedom' (letter), *The Guardian*, 26 May 2006, (accessed: 4 September 2019) < https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/may/26/religion.uk>; (accessed: 8 September 2019) <http://www.hinduhumanrights.info/hhr-bio/>

[186] Edward Anderson. 2015. '"Neo-Hindutva': the Asia House M. F. Husain campaign and the mainstreaming of Hindu nationalist rhetoric in Britain', *Contemporary South Asia*, 23:1, 45-66, DOI: 10.1080/09584935.2014.1001721, pp. 45, 48, (accessed: 4 September 2019)

[187] Stephen Cowden and Gita Saghal. 2017. 'Why Fundamentalism', *Feminist Dissent*, Vol. 2, p.9, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://journals.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/feministdissent/article/view/35>

may arise because of strict adherence to a form of religious orthodoxy that rejects different sects.

This leads us to a general discussion about where religious fundamentalists' behaviours ought to be placed in our categories of extremism. Peter Clarke's 2014 report into the Trojan Horse found that schools were implementing a hard-line and politicised strand of Sunni Islam in Muslim-majority non-faith school by, for example, restricting music and art and segregating genders, a policy that was held by the Court of Appeal to breach equalities legislation in 2017.[188] Furthermore, Perry has more recently argued that organising education according to Islamist principles has restricted children's access to a balanced education by prohibiting the teaching of certain arts and humanities subjects.[189] While the behaviours described in Clarke's report and Perry's research would normally be categorised as rights restriction, Clarke's inquiry also found that children in the Birmingham schools concerned were learning to be intolerant of difference and diversity.[190] Actively hateful manifestations of this agenda included anti-Western, anti-Christian and anti-Jewish rhetoric, dividing the world into "us" and "them", with them including all non-Muslims and any Muslims who disagree and perceptions of a worldwide conspiracy against Muslims.[191]

In our evidence gathering, we have heard at length about the rights restricting behaviours of religious fundamentalists within communities, and we have also heard about how those who attempt to leave fundamentalist communities become the targets of sustained denigration.

[188] Peter Clarke. 2014. *Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the "Trojan Horse" letter*, p.48, (accessed: 21 August 2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340526/HC_576_accessible_-.pdf; HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills v The Interim Executive Board of Al-Hijrah School [2017] EWCA Civ 1426

[189] Damon Perry. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism in Britain: Educating for the Islamic revival', (forthcoming); and Peter Clarke. 2014. 'Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the "Trojan Horse" letter', para 4.11 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340526/HC_576_accessible_-.pdf>

[190] Peter Clarke. 2014. *Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the "Trojan Horse" letter*, p.11 (accessed: 21 August 2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340526/HC_576_accessible_-.pdf

[191] Peter Clarke. 2014. *Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the "Trojan Horse" letter*, pp.41-9 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340526/HC_576_accessible_-.pdf>

Drivers of Extremism

In this part of the report we have set out our approach to the many ways that hateful extremism, terrorism and rights restriction can manifest. Alongside this, we must consider the drivers of extremism, to help identify policy solutions.

'Drivers' of extremism is used rather than 'causes', because as a complex social phenomenon, it is not possible to say with confidence whether there are universal causes that are at the root of all extremism.

There has been significant academic research on this subject, however there is little consensus on any single motivating factor that drives extremism. J.M. Berger's critique highlights that most so-called structural drivers are disproven at scale and are only identifiable within small sample sizes, generally based on geography or identity.[192] It has also been pointed out that the answers to this question often depends on the discipline of the person answering it.[193]

We commissioned academics to address this subject for us. We found the argument of Dr Noemie Bouhana compelling and useful in helping to frame the discussion on drivers.

Bouhana argues that extremism is explained by a range of factors that interact in different ways in each case.[194] Typically, press reporting extremist and terrorist incidents emphasises the micro level profiling of the characteristics of the individuals involved. She argues this is understandable given the inescapable human-interest angle of such incidents, but an effective counter extremism strategy must also adopt a top-down 'systemic' perspective to stem the emergence of environments that foster extremism.[195]

As has been done in public health, criminology and recently in counter terrorism, counter extremism must recognise the importance of the interplay between individuals and their environments.

Understanding how an individual adopts extremist beliefs and behaviours requires an explanation of how they came to see extremist actions as acceptable and why a failure to self-regulate leaves them more likely to exhibit extremist behaviours in certain circumstances.

Bouhana used an S5 framework to answer these questions. The framework comprises five categories of factors that determine how "at risk" people are to extremism. These categories are:

- **Susceptibility** – This micro factor describes an individual's characteristics that make them susceptible to extremist influence. This does not suffice as an explanation for extremism. Many susceptible people are *not* drawn into extremism, and many who should *not* be susceptible *are*. These unexpected observations are explained by the framework's four other factors relating to context and environment.

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[192] J.M. Berger. 2018. *Extremism*, London: MIT Press, pp.114-115

[193] Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen. 2010. 'Violent Radicalization in Europe: What We Know and What We Do Not Know, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 33:9, pp.797-814

[194] Noémie Bouhana. 2019. 'The moral ecology of extremism: a systematic perspective', (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-moral-ecology-of-extremism-a-systemic-perspective>

[195] Lorne Dawson discusses a broadly similar ecology model; See: Lorne Dawson. 2017. 'Sketch of a social ecology model for explaining homegrown terrorist radicalisation', *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, The Hague 8, No.1, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/ICCT-Dawson-Social-Ecology-Model-of-Radicalisation-Jan2017-2.pdf>

- **Selection** – Social selection determines one's risk of exposure from access to particular environments or activities depending on, for example, their ethnicity, religion, or their residency in a certain neighbourhood. Sustained selection of and exposure to extremist environments explains, at least partially, why those with high susceptibility thresholds may nevertheless adopt extremist beliefs.

- **Settings** – Settings, or places, both virtual and real-world, in which extremists operate have four main features – cognitive, moral, attachment and social control.

- **Social ecology** – The existence of hotbeds of extremism that are varied in time and space suggests there are social ecological processes at work in certain contexts that encourage or allow permissive environments for extremists. The displacement of socially acceptable values (or moral rules) by "superior" extremist values and moral systems to guide behaviour is the essential process for the spread of extremism.

- **System** – At the highest whole-system level, counter extremist efforts should address factors that promote the emergence of environments in which extremist value systems are given prominence. Crucially, we must avoid drawing conclusions about the processes that matter at the system and social ecological levels from the micro-level characteristics of extremist individuals, and

focus on processes which relate to norms, governance, segregation and strains (or stresses).

This last point includes how extremists use "frame alignment" to popularise certain frames and certain moral systems by delocalising groups that they choose to act as moral anchors. In the past, friction between groups manifested at neighbourhood level as competitors lived nearby. However, globalisation means local groups are now aware of similar groups in distant places, such that sources of friction can extend far beyond perceived local competition to injustices felt by ideologically proximate, yet geographically distant, moral allies.

This process – the delocalisation of grievances – is the subject of Charlotte Heath-Kelly's paper on militancy in Cyprus in the 1950s and leftist Italian groups from 1969-1988.[196] Heath-Kelly argues that meso-level militant leaders managed to align local grievances with global political antagonisms such as decolonisation, Cold War bipolarity and struggles of cultural or national "purity" against globalisation. Doing so allowed local leaders to frame their diagnoses and prognoses for local struggles with centuries of history or by analogy to similarly oppressed people around the world, which had a strong mobilising effect.[197] More recently, frame alignment has been used by jihadists like al-Qaeda to mobilise fighters against the far enemy (the US and the West) as opposed to the near enemy (local regimes that were supported, largely through commerce in oil with the West). Frame alignment is

[196] Charlotte Heath-Kelly. 2019. 'Drivers of Extremism: Global Political Antagonisms reproduced in Cypriot and Italian Insurgencies', pp.1-18, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821804/Heath-Kelly-Drivers-of-Extremism.pdf>
[197] Charlotte Heath-Kelly. 2019. 'Drivers of Extremism: Global Political Antagonisms reproduced in Cypriot and Italian Insurgencies', pp.1-18, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821804/Heath-Kelly-Drivers-of-Extremism.pdf>

used by Far Right leaders, who connect local grievances to macro issues like the facilitation of migration by liberal elites.

The challenge remains to identify successful policy interventions that address these issues. We will discuss the current set of interventions in Part Three. The conclusion of much of this work is that interventions have a greater probability of working if they are very focused on the context, both in time and geography.

Part Two: Case Studies of Hateful Extremism

Recognising how hateful extremism manifests in our country or how local tensions in our towns and cities can be exploited by hateful extremists is necessary to help ensure the most appropriate response. The following three cases demonstrate some of these practical challenges including how people can engage in activity which is democratic and at the same time engage in hateful extremism. In some of these cases, the response taken was better than in others but what all three cases do demonstrate is the need for more effective interventions and response by both Government and civil society.

Birmingham

We met local authorities and headteachers to discuss the response to the 2014 Trojan Horse events, to see how responses to similar incidents could be improved in the future. Instead, we heard the threat of Islamist agitation in the area was constant and had recently intensified around the teaching of LGBT+ relationships content in primary schools.

Parkfield Community School uses a programme called No Outsiders (developed by the assistant Headteacher) in order to teach pupils about the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, in the context of their duty to promote British values and to prepare the pupils for life in modern Britain. The programme has been running for four years,[198] but parents began expressing concerns about it in January 2019, which were followed by protests outside Parkfield School and outside Anderton Park Primary School in March 2019.[199] The spreading of information by StopRSE in late

2018 about forthcoming statutory changes to relationships and sex education in 2020 was a key trigger for the protests.[200] Some of the protests' most active instigators do not have children at either school; they claimed to be motivated by their religious beliefs and speaking on behalf of parents.

In December 2017, Ofsted rated Anderton Park 'Good' and wrote "democracy, equality and the rule of law are central to the school's ethos".[201] Parkfield was inspected in February 2019. While inspectors found that a small minority of parents were not clear about the school's vision, policies and practices, they found no evidence that the PSHE education and equalities curriculum focused disproportionately on LGBT+ issues or that it was not taught in an age appropriate manner.[202] In March, Parkfield paused the No Outsiders programme pending consultation with parents, and Anderton Park was forced to close early before half term to protect children.[203] Birmingham City Council worked closely with Anderton Park to try to reach a resolution, including engagement sessions

[198] Eleanor Busby. 2019. 'LGBT+ lessons: Primary school reintroduces equality programme despite parent protests', *The Independent*, 3 July 2019, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/lgbt-lessons-school-protests-no-outsiders-birmingham-parkfield-community-a8986286.html>

[199] 'BBC. 2019. 'Parents protest over Birmingham school's LGBT equality teaching', 29 January 2019, (accessed: 19 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47040451>

[200] Nazia Parveen. 2019. 'Activist warning of "war on morality" wades into LGBT lessons row', *The Guardian*, 23 March 2019, (accessed: 19 August 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/23/lgbt-lessons-row-campaigner-dr-kate-godfrey-faussett-role-sparks-concern>

[201] Ofsted. 2017. *School Report Anderton Park Primary School,* p.1, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2749421>

[202] Ofsted. 2019. *Letter: No formal designation inspection of Parkfield Community School*, 5 March 2019, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50062382>

[203] Sima Kotecha. 2019. 'Birmingham LGBT lessons row school staff "distraught"' *BBC*, 25 March 2019, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47692617>; and BBC. 2019. 'Anderton Park school to close early amid protests', 23 May 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-48382358>

with parents by the headteacher. In May, a formal mediation at Anderton broke down.[204] In June, Birmingham City Council obtained an injunction prohibiting certain protesters from demonstrating outside Anderton Park,[205] which the protestors intend to appeal.[206] There is evidence of protests at other schools nationwide about the appropriateness of teaching primary age children about LGBT+ relationships.[207]

Behaviours

Democratic Debate

Schools have a duty to consult parents. Many parents sought to raise legitimate concerns about what they thought their children were being taught and did not engage in any hateful behaviour. Protesting and advocacy for a cause are integral to democracy. Protest, even if it enables the airing of offensive messages are legitimate in a democracy.

Rights Restriction

On 20 May, protestors claimed that hundreds of children were withdrawn from Anderton Park school.[208] Frequent protests impeded the children at both schools from accessing education with a rounded curriculum, including understanding of equality and diversity.

A senior member of staff at Anderton Park told us that some Muslim protesters threatened other Muslim parents that they will burn in hell for refusing to sign a petition against the teaching.[209] Parents that disagreed with the protests or support the teaching of LGBT+ content have been intimidated into silence. They were prevented by protestors from speaking to Ofsted inspectors at Parkfield School. At Anderton Park, parents had to enter school under false pretences to meet the head teacher or express their support for equalities teaching.[210]

Hateful Extremism

When granting a temporary injunction against some of the protestors, Justice Warby QC said that some of the protestors had gone beyond lawful limits. He highlighted some of the behaviours that went too far:

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[204] Freddie Whittaker. 2019. 'Birmingham LGBT protest mediation stalls as dispute escalates', *Schoolsweek*, 21 May 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019), <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/birmingham-lgbt-protest-mediation-stalls-as-dispute-escalates/>

[205] Birmingham City Council. 2019. 'Interim High Court Injunction: Anderton Park School', (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/13264/interim_high_court_injunction_anderton_park_school>

[206] Stephanie Balloo and Jane Haynes. 2019. 'Watch Shakeel Afsar vow injunction to ban protests against LGBT lessons won't stop them', *Birmingham Live*, 1 June 2019, (accessed: 29 August 2019) <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/watch-shakeel-afsar-vow-injunction-16363447>

[207] BBC. 2019. 'LGBT school lessons protests spread nationwide', 16 May 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-48294017>

[208] Sima Kotecha. 2019 'Birmingham LGBT lessons: Head teacher threatened', *BBC*, 20 May 2019, (accessed: 19 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-48339080>

[209] Sian Griffiths and Imran Ramzan. 2019. 'Supporters of Birmingham primary school's gay lessons warned they will 'burn in hell'', *The Times*, 24 March 2019, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/supporters-of-birmingham-primary-schools-gay-lessons-warned-they-will-burn-in-hell-mqz8lxb9z>

[210] Sara Khan interview with Head Teachers of Birmingham Schools, 14 March 2019, Birmingham

> **"Evidence discloses that allegations of paedophilia have been made during the protests, which appear to be entirely baseless. Some of the messages posted on social media are abusive, without any informational content (the Headteacher is described as a "piece of shit"). There is evidence of aggressive shouting and the use of "extremely intimidating" body language towards staff members in the street, and of protestors blocking the path as parents seek to take their children to the school. The use of a megaphone has evidently disrupted the school's ordinary activities."[211]**

Nationally, some religious leaders have condemned the tone of the protests and called for more constructive dialogue.[212] However, certain religious fundamentalists have exploited the issue to entrench social division. The news site, 5Pillars, published a video lecture by an Islamic scholar who said: "Any Muslim who promotes such haraam as being permissible cannot call themselves a Muslim as they take themselves outside of the religion."[213]

The Islamist group Hizb ut-Tahrir published an article that describes the protests as just one front in a battle between Muslims resisting the "neutralising" effects of a liberal order that "hollows" religions by cutting out what it deems intolerable and forcing conformity to liberal ideals. The article subsumes "No Outsiders" into a wider "assault on [conservative Muslim] society" by the "liberal agenda" and plays up tension between Muslims and "organs of the state" by mistakenly attributing the "No Outsiders" programme to the Government.[214] We were also told about false rumours spread on WhatsApp about the programme, alleging that children were being made to watch pornography, though we don't know who is responsible for those.

The Commission has seen a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Hizb ut-Tahrir. It was circulated, it claims, to prepare protesters to counter "arguments that legitimise LGBT" and prevent Muslim youth from questioning Islamic values. The deeply hate-filled presentation compares LGBT+ people to animals, paedophiles and zoophiles. It also implies that there should be a prohibition against LGBT+ similar to that against incest. Once again, the anti-LGBT+ protests are described in the context of confrontation between liberalism and Islam, and directs hatred against an outgroup, in this case the LGBT+ community.

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[211] Birmingham City Council v Shakeel Afsar [2019] EWHC 1560 (QB) (accessed: 2 September 2019)>

[212] Amra Bone has appealed for calm while agreeing with the key message that Islam says homosexuality is wrong. Jane Hayes. 2019. 'Sharia judge and respected Muslim scholar urges calm over Birmingham school protests', *Birmingham Live*, 24 May 2019, (accessed: 29 August 2019). <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/sharia-judge-respected-muslim-scholar-16325189>

[213] 5Pillars. 2019. 'Shaykh Tauqir Ishaq on the Islamic viewpoint on LGBT relations', (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://5pillarsuk.com/2019/05/27/video-shaykh-tauqir-ishaq-on-the-islamic-viewpoint-on-lgbt-relations/>

[214] Editor. 2019. 'LGBT: An assault on society', *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 5 April 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <http://www.hizb.org.uk/viewpoint/lgbt-an-assault-on-society/>

Beliefs

While people are entitled to hold religious beliefs about homosexuality being sinful, engaging in hateful and dehumanising language and behaviour towards LGBT+ people and those who support them is unacceptable. Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Elements of the protesting appear to be underpinned by a hatred of LGBT+ people and a conviction that it is not possible to reconcile Islam (and other faiths) with support for LGBT+ people. Islamist groups like Hizb ut-Tahrir are using this and exploiting the tensions in Birmingham to promote their belief that Western liberalism is a threat to Islam. Other religious groups are joining protests or making similar arguments, such as a vicar who described such classes as "state-sponsored child abuse".[215]

Harm

LGBT+ individuals, particularly Muslims, in the area have been targeted for abuse. In August 2019, the assistant headteacher at Parkfield and author of "No Outsiders", Andrew Moffat, said that he has "never experienced homophobia like I have in the last six months".[216] Muslim parents that support equalities teaching have been silenced. They have also been made to feel like their faith is being stigmatised. Public money has also been spent policing protests and pursuing an injunction. Community cohesion has suffered.

It is safe to assume that children's education is suffering, particularly those children that have been withdrawn from lessons or missed lessons because of, in the case of Anderton Park, the school's early closure before the holidays. Those children that continued to attend had to contend with inflammatory daily protests at the gate of their schools. Some children may have internalised offensive messages conveyed by the protesters. Headteachers we spoke to said that children had been chanting slogans in the corridors at school that they had heard from protesters.[217] The harm to any LGBT+ children at the school would be even greater.

The protests have negatively impacted on the teachers' wellbeing. At the height of the tension, Hazel Pulley, CEO of the Trust that runs Parkfield said "it's really upsetting at the moment for our staff; some of them are becoming ill... they've been shaking, losing weight and not wanting to eat food".[218]

[215] BBC. 2019. 'Wickersley LGBT row vicar steps down as school governor', 1 July 2019, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-48827031?intlink_from_url=&link_location=live-reporting-story>

[216] ITV. 2019. 'Protests over LGBT equality lessons coincide with huge spike in homophobic hate crimes', 6 August 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019), <https://www.itv.com/news/central/2019-08-06/protests-over-lgbt-equality-lessons-coincide-with-huge-spike-in-homophobic-hate-crimes-moffat-anderton-parkfield-primary/>

[217] Sara Khan interview with Head Teachers of Birmingham Schools, 14 March 2019, Birmingham.

[218] Ashley Preece. 2019. 'Parkfield School teachers 'shaking, losing weight and stressed' after parents protests over No Outsiders', *Birmingham Live*, 4 July 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/parkfield-school-teachers-shaking-losing-16030204>

Response

Political leaders' reactions have been mixed. Jess Phillips, MP for Birmingham Yardley, publicly clashed with one of the protest leaders outside Anderton Park, to defend the school's approach.[219] Local MP to Anderton Park, Roger Godsiff signalled support for the views of the protestors on the age-appropriateness of teaching about LGBT+ issues.[220]

There has been a widely held perception that local and central Government have failed to support headteachers by responding to recent protests and other issues quickly and resolutely. Birmingham City Council released a public statement[221] condemning the protests and eventually secured an injunction barring certain protesters from Anderton Park. The then Education Secretary publicly condemned the protests and expressed his support for teachers and school leaders in April.[222] Headteachers told us that they felt "totally isolated" by the lack of support.

We have heard from officials at the Department for Education (DfE) about efforts to calm tension and resolve the conflict through mediation. At Parkfield, MPs and the Regional Schools Commissioner worked since February to facilitate a consultation with parents. This culminated in the school announcing the relaunch of an amended equalities programme in July, although this again sparked anger from some parents.[223]

Less clear is whether substantial progress in mediating a resolution has been made at Anderton Park. Birmingham City Council was working closely with Anderton Park school to seek to find a resolution. We understand the school had been engaging with parents to provide detail on the LGBT+ teaching and resources. A formal mediation process was also instigated in May, however, despite the efforts of DfE and Birmingham City Council, this was discontinued in June having failed to reach a solution. [224] The school is currently covered by a High Court injunction barring protests, which will remain in force until a hearing in October.[225] We are aware of the helpful role that some civil society groups have played in mediation and supporting those feeling the effect of the protests, such as local LGBT+ groups and teachers.[226]

[219] Benjamin Kentish. 2019. 'Labour MP Jess Phillips in angry confrontation with anti-LBGT+ education protestor outside Birmingham school', *Independent*, 20 May 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/jess-philips-labour-mp-birmingham-video-lgbt-education-protest-muslim-community-anderton-park-a8922226.html>

[220] BBC. 2019. 'Birmingham LGBT lessons 'not age appropriate' says MP', 21 May 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-48347769>

[221] Birmingham City Council. 2019. 'Statement on Parkfield School protests', 7 March 2019, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/382/statement_on_parkfield_school_protests>

[222] Department for Education. 2019. *Education Secretary on Anderton Park protests*, 24 May 2019, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/05/24/education-secretary-on-anderton-park-protests/>

[223] BBC. 2019. 'LGBT schools row: Equality teaching to return to Parkfield School', 3 July 2019, (accessed: 19 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-48853462>

[224] Jane Haynes. 2019. "Cowardly Government" blamed for breakdown of Anderton Park protest peace talks', *Birmingham Mail*, 30 May 2019 (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/cowardly-government-blamed-breakdown-anderton-16351301>

[225] Birmingham City Council v Shakeel Afsar [2019] EWHC 1560 (QB)

[226] Southall Black Sisters. 2019. 'In defence of equality in Birmingham schools', 12 June 2019, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/news/defence-of-equality-in-birmingham-schools/>

Sunderland

Sunderland's combination of a small active group of Far Right supporters and high concentrations of asylum seekers in some areas has often created a tense atmosphere. We've heard that in the past, Far Right groups have targeted Sunderland, and protests outside mosques have been common.[227]

Tensions erupted in September 2016, when a woman alleged she had been gang raped by a group of Middle-Eastern men, reporting the claim on social media as well as to police.[228] Following an extensive police investigation, the CPS, lacking evidence to substantiate the claim, did not authorise the police to charge any suspects. Prominent Far Right figures took up the woman's cause, organising 13 marches in 13 months.[229] Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, in conjunction with the Canadian media group, Rebel Media, promoted the first campaign with one video amassing 100,000 views.[230] Rebel Media, supported by Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, also created an online petition with over 100,000 signatures, funded a large advertising board in the city centre and legal support via online donations. The Rebel Media-funded legal team accepted the CPS decision and the alleged victim withdrew her support from the campaign in October 2017.[231]

The issue was compounded in the first campaign by the alleged victim identifying herself on social media but not waiving the right to anonymity with the criminal justice agencies, who were limited in information they could disclose due to the on-going police investigation and CPS' right to review processes that took place. The established local press such as the Sunderland Echo could not report on the matters due to criminal justice reporting rules. This made social media disinformation, often emanating from outside the UK, impossible to counter for a considerable time.

A local group, Justice for Women and Children, formed in May 2018 after four more alleged rapes were reported. Two men were later convicted for the rape of a woman in their asylum-seeker hostel.[232]

Sunderland does not have support from the Home Office's counter extremism programmes.[233] We wanted to understand how the Council and other local services dealt with this situation.

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[227] Sara Khan interview with officials from local police force, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

[228] Information provided by Sunderland Council

[229] Sara Khan interview with officials from local police force, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

[230] Rebel Media, 2017. 'Tommy Robinson: 1,000 people march in Sunderland for Justice for Chelsey', YouTube [video file], 19 March 2017 (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=360-I-icASE>

[231] Rebel Media. 2017. *Update: What our lawyer says about Justice for Chelsey*, 2 November 2017 (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.therebel. media/justice_for_chelsey>

[232] 2018. "'A Despicable act' – police welcome verdict as two men convicted of raping woman in Sunderland", Northumbria Police, (accessed: 12 August 2019), <https://beta.northumbria.police.uk/latest-news/2018/december/a-despicable-act-police-welcome-verdict-as-two-men-convicted-of-raping-woman-in-sunderland/>; *Sunderland Echo*. 2018. 'Sunderland pair found guilty of raping woman at flag' 6 December 2018, (accessed: 9 September 2019), <https://www.sunderlandecho.com/news/sunderland-pair-found-guilty-of-raping-woman-at-flat-193998>

[233] Information provided by Sunderland Council

Behaviours

At their height the protests drew up to 1,000 participants, some with established Far Right connections but also many residents not usually connected to such activity.

Democratic Debate

The right to protest peacefully is a cornerstone of democracy, even if protests enable the promotion of views that are offensive or critical. Local people have a right to protest about concerns over how issues in their area are dealt with.

Hateful Extremism

However, a democratic process like protesting can turn into hateful extremism when protesters deliberately distort the truth to persuade their audience to adopt discriminatory and hateful attitudes. The marchers said they aimed to improve the safety of women and children locally. However their rhetoric targeted ethnic minorities despite nearly 85% of people convicted of sexual offences in 2018 in the Northumbria Police Force area being white.[234] We heard that the Justice for Women and Children campaign erroneously claimed that Asian men, Muslims and refugees were responsible for 90% of the rapes in Sunderland.[235]

Local councillors told us that, rather than draw attention to injustice, from the outset the protests whipped up anti-minority feeling.[236] We have seen social media posts by key figures in the protests promoting anti-Muslim rhetoric. Prominent Far-Right figures including Anne Marie Waters, Jayda Fransen and Stephen Yaxley-Lennon attended marches, and some used them to spread anti-minority and anti-Muslim agendas.[237] Anne Marie Waters said, when talking about Sunderland at a rally in Middlesbrough, "Islam teaches these men that women are nothing and that they can beat and abuse them at will. They come here en masse and they do the same to us."[238]

The protesters also intimidated those who opposed them. One local Muslim resident told us about how his personal details were publicised as punishment for organising a counter protest. Photographs of him at the march and his personal information appeared on social media alongside unfounded allegations that he was a "paedo" and a "rape enabler". He received numerous threats and his business was boycotted.[239]

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[234] Ministry of Justice data shows that in 2018 (where ethnicity was known), 11.7% of sexual offences dealt with in Northumbria Police Force's jurisdiction were committed by Asian people; 85.1% of those convicted in the same area for sex offences were white. There is no published data relating to immigration status. See Ministry of Justice, 2019. 'Court outcomes by Police Force Area data tool', Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2018, 16 May 2019 (accessed 3 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2018>
[235] Sara Khan interview with local councillors, 20 March 2019, Sunderland
[236] Sara Khan interview with local councillors, 20 March 2019, Sunderland
[237] BBC. 2018. 'Are we witnessing a new wave of far-right extremism?', Newsnight (accessed: 5 September 2019), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06w7qyq>
[238] For Britain. 2018. 'Anne Marie Waters – Justice for Women and Children – Middlesbrough', YouTube [video file], 8 September 2018, (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77smIHbyhSs>
[239] Sara Khan interview with residents, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

Beliefs

Many protesters were not motivated by hate; they had concerns about their safety and the safety of those in the community. However, Far Right agitators exploited these local grievances. Members of the movement had links to banned group National Action.[240] The shared belief of these figures and groups was their antipathy towards minorities, immigrants and particularly Muslims. Most of those involved share a pronounced prejudice against Muslims.

Harm

We were told that sections of the local white community which would not normally support the Far Right were "stirred up by activists".[241] By co-opting people in this way and promoting their narrative, those activists aggravated social division. Mistrust of the state was another consequence: Justice for Women and Girls claimed to provide support services for victims of sexual abuse, though they do not appear to have any expertise in this area. This could lead to victims not accessing existing qualified support.

We were also told that the protests had undone work by community groups to empower BAME women. Women stopped attending out of fear for their safety, or because they were prohibited by men in their communities.[242]

Response

While some small-scale protests continue with a focus on "yellow vests" and "free Tommy", the grievances about placement of asylum seekers are being resolved through resident engagement led by the City Council and it is agreed that tensions and the Far Right's external influence have been reduced. In September 2019 a leading campaigner was sentenced to 21 months imprisonment for inciting racial hatred during the marches.[243]

We commend the response of the local council and police. Having learnt from their response to the first campaign, as well as enforcing the law, they made a concerted effort to improve community engagement when the Justice for Women and Children campaign was at its height.

They staged public meetings between the police, council and residents to foster dialogue and counter some of the misinformation, as well as support victims.[244] They also drew up a memorandum of

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[240] BBC, 2018. 'Are we witnessing a new wave of far-right extremism?', *Newsnight* (accessed: 16 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06w7qyq>

[241] Sara Khan interview with local councillors, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

[242] Sara Khan interview with residents, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

[243] Karon Kelly. 2019. 'Billy Charlton jailed for 21 months for stirring up racial hatred during Sunderland marches', *Sunderland Echo*, 27 September 2019, (accessed: 30 September 2019) <https://www.sunderlandecho.com/news/crime/billy-charlton-jailed-21-months-stirring-racial-hatred-during-sunderland-marches-637690>

[244] Sara Khan interview with local councillors, 20 March 2019, Sunderland

understanding to put boundaries on the acceptability of protesters' behaviour and reduce the protests' volatility. According to a senior police officer, the MoU approach worked 'well'.

In addition, we praise the thoughtful approach taken by the Sunderland Echo to be a trusted voice putting verified information into the public domain locally.

Lewisham

In 2016, Shakeel Begg, imam at the Lewisham Islamic Centre (LIC), became the first individual called an "extremist" in a British court, having lost a defamation case after the BBC described him as espousing extremist Islamic views.[245]

During the trial, the BBC argued that their characterisation of Shakeel Begg was reasonable, because he had propounded extremist views in nine speeches or publications between 2006 and 2011. Mr Justice Haddon-Cave ruled that Begg had engaged in a "consistent pattern of behaviour" of espousing extremist views, concluding that Begg had encouraged "religious violence by telling Muslims that violence in support of Islam would constitute a man's greatest deed".[246]

Concerns had long been raised about Imam Begg's alleged extremism, including that the LIC attracted "a radical crowd and radical speakers" and that the killers of Lee Rigby in 2013 had worshipped there.[247] Their actions were publicly condemned by LIC.[248]

We have reviewed this case to understand the response to someone being ruled an "extremist" in court.

> ### *Behaviours*
>
> In the speeches and writings that the BBC relied on during the case, Begg was judged to be articulating Salafi-Islamist beliefs that were extreme and "regarded by the vast majority of the Muslim community as theologically extreme." We believe they fall within hateful extremism, because:
>
> - Begg made a series of speeches and publications that were actively hateful, including towards Jews, the Government and Muslims who work with Government;
>
> - His equivocation about violence, or his making the case for it. In numerous speeches he was judged to have expressed unity with the ummah by seeking to justify violent jihad internationally. As Identified by Dr Wilkinson, he "occasionally invoked martyrdom tropes by promising celestial rewards for participation in armed jihad".[249]

[245] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[246] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[247] Sam Marsden. 2013. 'Lee Rigby killers had links to Lewisham mosque that 'attracts radicals'', *The Telegraph*, 19 December 2013, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10518792/Lee-Rigby-killers-had-links-to-Lewisham-mosque-that-attracts-radicals.html>
[248] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2013. 'LIC'S Press Release on the Tragic Events in Woolwich', 22 May 2014, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/downloads/upload/22-05-13-pressreleases.pdf>
[249] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)

Beliefs

Mr Justice Haddon-Cave concluded – in line with research by Sheikh Dr Usama Hasan et al.[250] – that Begg's statements indicate belief in several principles or interpretations that are considered outside of mainstream Islamic thought. This includes (but is not limited to):

- An extremist Manichean 'Us' versus 'Them' worldview which divides the world into 'good' Muslims versus 'bad' Muslims or kafir (unbelievers);

- Encouraging Muslims to believe it was their individual religious duty to go off and fight "in the name of Allah"; and

- The Salafist-Islamist doctrine that the precepts of the Muslim faith negate and supersede all natural ties of family, kinship and nationhood.[251]

Harms

Imam Begg chose to make these hateful statements in public and to audiences that included young Muslims, who it is likely he would influence.[252] The Judge did not assess harm in the defamation case but noted that Begg's "position of power and influence as an Imam [could] plant the seed of Islamic extremism in a young mind".[253] We cannot say with certainty whether his speeches did instil in his audience a sympathy for religious violence or a hatred of non-Muslims, or to what extent they helped to popularise Islamist narratives.

Response

This judgment had little effect on Begg's career. We have seen no evidence that he has apologised for the behaviours or the potential harm they caused.[254] He remains a trustee of LIC.[255] As trustee of the mosque, he also had a role in the governance of Olive Tree Primary School until it closed.[256] He also remains head imam of the mosque and a lead figure in local interfaith work.[257] He also continues to be invited to address other organisations, for example, at a Muslim Council of Britain event in January 2018.[258]

[250] Usama Hasan, David Toube and Muna Khan. 2019. 'Mainstreaming Islamism: Islamist Institutions and Civil Society Organisations', (forthcoming)

[251] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)

[252] The Judge noted that the number of speeches "represent a consistent pattern of behaviour on the part of the Claimant of formenting extremist ideas and ideology before engaged and receptive Muslim audiences".

[253] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)

[254] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2018. 'Imam Shakeel responds to Dispatches on Channel 4', (accessed: 16 August 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/pressrelease/Imam%20Shakeel%20responds%20to%20Dispatches.pdf>

[255] Charity Commission. 2019. *Lewisham Islamic Centre: Date for financial year ending 31 August 2018* (accessed: 3 September 2019) <https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=285641&subid=0>

[256] The LIC was the proprietor of the school until its closure. See: Ofsted. 2019. *Olive Tree School: Inspection report 12 and 19 September 2017*, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2737941>

[257] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2019. 'Meet the Imams', (accessed: 2 September 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/about_the_imam.php>; For example, Imam Begg was a key part of the annual Peace Walk in 2018. See: Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2019. 'Lewisham Interfaith Peace Walk 2018', 10 July 2018, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/latestevent/LICNews-Lewisham%20Peace%20Walk%20%20-2018-07-10.pdf>

[258] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2018. 'LIC at MCBs' Ground-breaking Event: Our Mosque, Our Future', (accessed: 5 September 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/latestevent/MCB%20Our%20Mosque%20Event%20-%202018-01-23.pdf>

The LIC has repeatedly stressed their "unequivocal and unwavering continued support for Begg".[259] The mosque retains a significant local profile, hosting local councillors and MPs.[260]

Begg had held a number of positions on local boards, such as the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education and the Independent Advisory Group to Lewisham Police which advises on local issues, especially those relating to Muslim communities.[261] He voluntarily stepped down from posts on these boards following the judgment. We were able to identify some limited responses. In March 2017, for example, Citizens UK reported itself to the Charity Commission for inadvertently promoting extremism when it invited Begg to speak at a demonstration on child refugees outside Parliament.[262] After a 2017 article about Begg hosting school trips at the Lewisham Islamic Centre, Lewisham Council officials suggested to him that he transfer this responsibility onto a colleague.

However, the police and many faith and civil society groups in Lewisham have maintained their relationships with Begg and the LIC following the judgment.[263] This may be explained by Mr Justice Haddon-Cave's

conclusion that Begg was "something of a "Jekyll and Hyde" character. He appears to present one face to the general local and inter-faith community and another to particular Muslim and other receptive audiences."[264]

Lewisham Council officials told us that Begg retains a position on the Lewisham Interfaith Forum, and they were very positive about the role that he has played in this regard. They stressed that, when a terrorist incident occurred, Begg was usually the first to request and support a community response among local faith leaders. We judge that while this is positive, it does not counteract Begg's other public statements.

Senior officials at Lewisham Council told us that they considered that they had no role to play in sanctioning Begg, because of the requirement that they remain impartial and objective unless a criminal or safeguarding matter is brought to their attention. They had also considered how long ago some of the comments had been made and the fact that there were police officers who had had extensive prior involvement with Begg, and would be taking no further action.

[259] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2016. 'Imam Shakeel Begg Vs the BBC', 29 October 2016, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/pressrelease/Imam%20Shakeel%20Begg%20Vs%20BBC%20Trustees'%20Statement%20-%20October%2029th%202016.pdf>
[260] Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2019. 'It's back – Visit my Mosque Open Day', 5 May 2019, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/latestevent/LICNews-Visit%20My%20Mosque%202019%20-2019-03-05.pdf>
[261] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)
[262] Liam Kay. 2017. 'Citizens UK reports itself to regulator after criticism of link to controversial imam', *Third Sector*, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/citizens-uk-reports-itself-regulator-criticism-link-controversial-imam/governance/article/1428065>; Tom Wilson. 2017. 'Extremism in the Community: The Case of Shakeel Begg', *Henry Jackson Society*, p.19, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Shakeel-Begg-FINAL-PDF.pdf>
[263] For example, Imam Begg was a key part of the annual Peace Walk in 2018. See: Lewisham Islamic Centre. 2018. 'Lewisham Interfaith Peace Walk 2018', 10 July 2018, (accessed: 2 September 2019) <http://www.lewishamislamiccentre.com/documents/latestevent/LICNews-Lewisham%20Peace%20Walk%20-2018-07-10.pdf>
[264] Begg v BBC [2016] EWHC 2688 (QB)

Part Three: Assessing the Current Response

In October 2015, the Government published the first ever Counter-Extremism Strategy (CE Strategy).[265] It was ground breaking in the way it addressed extremism as a specific challenge outside of terrorism and focused overwhelmingly on the threat of Islamist and Far Right extremism.[266] Without citing research, it identified five harms of extremism: justifying violence, promoting hatred, encouraging isolation, rejecting democracy, and harmful and illegal cultural practices.

The CE Strategy based its understanding of extremism as defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy, and based the delivery of its work around this definition.

Despite the work delivered under the CE Strategy over the last four years, Islamist extremism continues to persist and concerns about a growth in Far Right extremism has led the Commission to question the effectiveness of the CE Strategy. As demonstrated in Part 1, there are other forms of extremism presenting across England and Wales including Far Left, animal rights and other forms of religious extremism.

This section of the report outlines in some detail our assessment of the delivery of the commitments made in the CE Strategy, and their effectiveness.

In summary we judge:

(1) The approach taken in the CE Strategy is unfocused, unnecessarily broad, and at times confusing. While there are some commitments that seek to address counter extremism, there are also other commitments which are in fact counter terrorism and integration initiatives. The Government included a very broad range of initiatives in the CE Strategy, from predominantly Prevent counter terrorism programmes, to the Casey Review into integration. This reflects a wider lack of clear boundaries in the Government's work in each of these areas. The lack of focus on counter extremism and what we describe as hateful extremism more specifically has, in our view, hampered efforts to reduce extremism in our country.

(2) The lack of distinction between counter terrorism and counter extremism could result in securitisation of work that is not related to terrorism and should be avoided. The Government needs to ensure there is greater clarity between the counter terrorism Prevent programme and the CE Strategy.

(3) The CE Strategy and delivery of work is based on the Government's definition of extremism. As outlined in Part 1, this definition has been shown to be unhelpful among public respondents to our call for evidence. While many practitioners recognise that the definition is useful, the definition, like the CE Strategy is too broad and needs to be focused on what we describe as hateful extremism.

[265] Home Office. 2015. *Counter-Extremism Strategy*, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf>
[266] Home Office. 2015. *Counter-Extremism Strategy*, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf>

(4) Government has delivered many of the commitments promised in the CE Strategy. They have shown us they have kept track of delivery against these commitments. But the CE Strategy did not set out how it would assess performance against its overall goal of countering extremism. There are no indicators or consistent metrics provided for understanding the scale of extremism locally or regionally, or for understanding how it might be changing. Government has failed to develop a consistent approach to understanding the effectiveness of its work. There is a clear requirement for an independent and transparent assessment of what has worked and what hasn't across the whole CE Strategy, and whether any of this is making a meaningful difference on reducing extremism across England and Wales.

(5) That partnership work with civil society groups as identified in the CE Strategy is important and should be invested in. The civil society groups funded by Building A Stronger Britain Together (BSBT) are delivering important work. The Commission has met many of these organisations across the country. However, because of the broad approach taken in the CE Strategy, some of the projects being funded by BSBT are more cohesion and integration based rather than countering extremism, and in particular hateful extremism. Both types of projects are invaluable in strengthening our communities, however, a future CE Strategy should fund projects that are focused on challenging hateful extremism if we are to have greater success in reducing the extremist threat.

The Government should continue to support BSBT funded cohesion projects but that should be led by MHCLG.

(6) As we evidence, despite the vital work of counter extremists and civil society organisations, the regular abuse they receive is deeply shocking and unacceptable. False and dangerous myths about the aims and objectives of the CE Strategy and counter extremism more widely are discouraging others from getting involved or in some cases dissuading current activists from continuing. The Government must do more to raise awareness of what the CE Strategy is about and to respond much more quickly to false information which can spread quickly online. They must also do more to provide support, in particular emotional support, to counter extremists.

(7) There has been a lack of recognition of victims of extremism in the current CE Strategy. A future CE Strategy should adopt a victim centred approach to ensure victims are receiving the help and support that they need.

(8) The CE Strategy rightly acknowledges the need to counter extremist ideology. Effective challenge of hateful extremist narratives and beliefs is one of the most important areas of work in countering extremism. Yet despite this, delivery of work addressing this key objective has been weak and insufficient. Greater focus on delivering this objective must be a key objective in any future strategy.

(9) The online threat picture has changed almost beyond recognition since the CE Strategy was written. The use of social media platforms and the internet is a key tool for extremists; the use of disinformation, conspiracy theories and misinformation online are everyday tactics which are reaching countless more people in an unprecedented way. We still do not understand the scale of this challenge or to what extent it is effective in mainstreaming extremist ideologies in the wider population. There is also a lack of research and work in understanding what we know to be effective in countering this growing problem. Greater focus needs to be emphasised on addressing this issue.

(10) The current CE Strategy requires a complete overhaul focusing on what we have identified as hateful extremism and to begin by working with the Commission to produce a working definition of hateful extremism.

Delivering the Counter-Extremism Strategy

The CE Strategy set out commitments for departments and regulators across Government in five areas:

- Increasing understanding of extremism;

- Countering extremist ideology;

- Building a partnership with all those opposed to extremism;

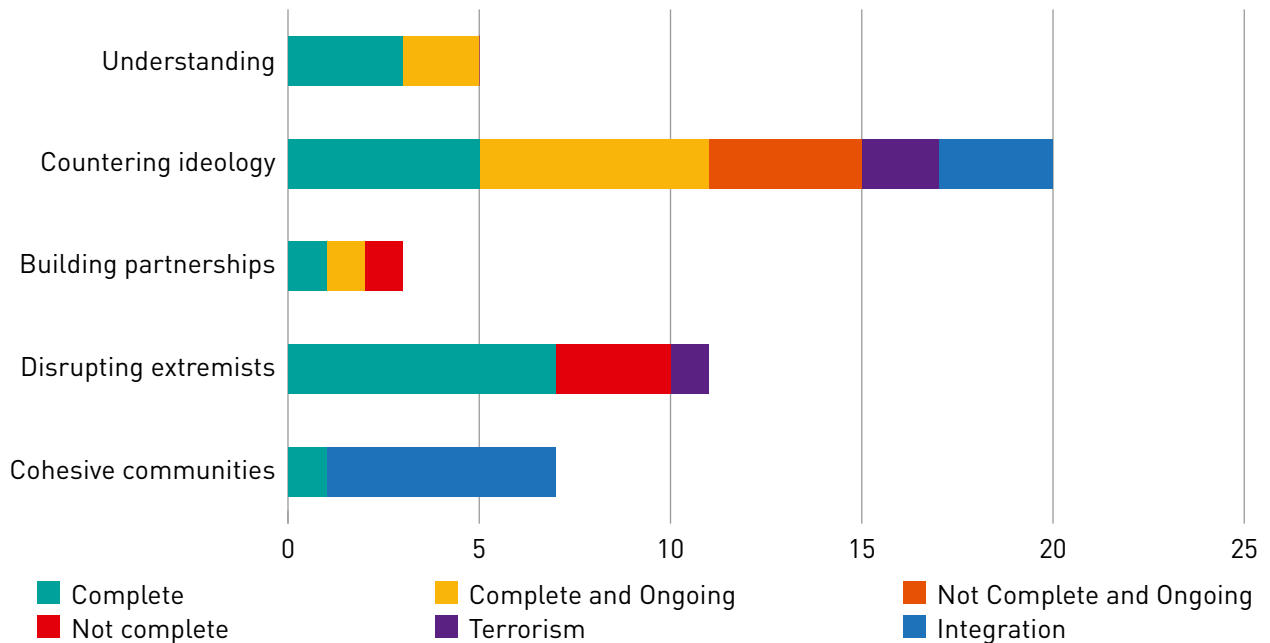- Disrupting extremists; and

- More cohesive communities.

We have carried out an assessment of each commitment in these five areas and decided whether it relates to countering extremism or not. Where they are related to countering extremism we have evaluated whether commitments have been delivered.

We have marked commitments as complete, ongoing with significant progress having been made (ongoing and complete), ongoing but still at early stages (ongoing and not complete), or not complete.
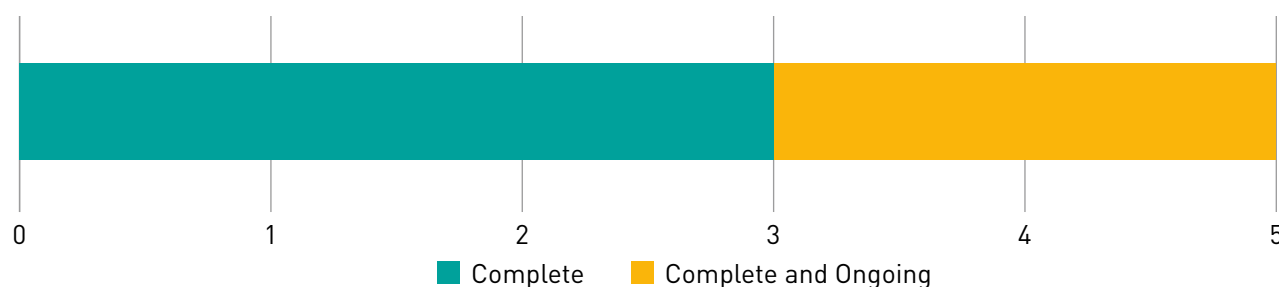
Good work has been done. Out of the 34 commitments in the CE Strategy that relate to extremism, we would judge that 26 are complete or complete and ongoing. In a further three cases flawed commitments have not been completed, and we judge that this is the most appropriate outcome.

Delivery of Commitments, by category

Understanding of Extremism

Increasing Understanding – Progress on Commitments

A horizontal bar chart with x-axis labeled 0 to 5. The bar is split into two segments: "Complete" (teal) from 0 to 3, and "Complete and Ongoing" (yellow/orange) from 3 to 5.

- Complete
- Complete and Ongoing

The commitments in this area included reviews on foreign funding of extremists, the extent to which Sharia law may be being misused, and entryism. These reviews have been completed and are being acted on.

The Charity Commission found different levels of understanding amongst charity trustees of their legal duties and responsibilities, and varying levels of control for protecting their charities from harm and abuse. Following the review, the Charity Commission introduced a requirement for charities to declare significant income received from overseas.[267] They have also published a Compliance Toolkit, (updated November 2018) which outlines how trustees can protect their charities from abuse.[268]

The entryism review's findings and any actions taken as a result were not made public. We judge that it could be more effective.

The Government also committed to strengthen the evidence base through commissioning research. It has set up the Extremism Analysis Unit, which acts as a central hub of knowledge on extremism for the whole of Government, operational partners and for regulatory bodies. Its work is valuable but its reports are not always being read by those who need to see them. It does not have access to a broad enough range of sources, especially experts on the ground.

Finally, the CE Strategy committed to develop a clear plan of international work to protect the UK from extremism. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has set out its objectives for the coming year on countering terrorism and violent extremism. Work is ongoing, however, the focus on terrorism, violent extremism and security means that the vast majority of the work is not related to hateful extremism.[269]

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[267] Charity Commission. 2018. *Commission listens to charities in making changes to the annual return for 2018*, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/commission-listens-to-charities-in-making-changes-to-the-annual-return-for-2018>

[268] Charity Commission. 2013. *Protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes*, (accessed: 5 September 2019). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-charities-from-abuse-forextremist-purposes>

[269] Foreign and Commonwealth Office. 2018. *Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: objectives 2018 to 2019*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/official-development-assistance-oda-fco-departmental-programme-spend-objectives-2018-to-2019/countering-terrorism-and-violent-extremism-objectives-2018-to-2019>

Countering Extremist Ideology

Countering Ideology – Progress on Commitments

Legend: Complete · Complete and Ongoing · Not Complete and Ongoing · Terrorism · Integration
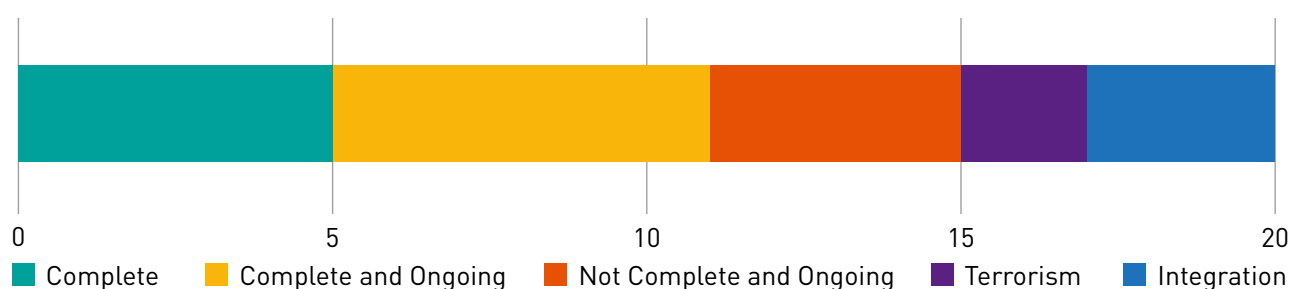
This is the largest and most important area of work. Government sought to make it more difficult for extremists to spread their ideologies through organisations such as schools, charities, hospitals and faith institutions. Of the 15 relevant commitments under this pillar, we judge that around three quarters are complete or complete and ongoing. Commitments on Prevent and Channel are also included in this category, but as they are counter terrorism programmes we have not assessed these.

Despite the title and making up the largest part of the CE Strategy, there has been little work to challenge the extremist ideologies and narratives central to hateful extremist movements. Nor have there been enough BSBT funded projects delivering this aim. The majority of commitments instead aim to strengthen institutions. We consider this to be a significant gap despite the CE Strategy's clear commitment to countering ideology. Dr Braddock notes that narratives are powerful tools "for effecting audience beliefs, attitudes and behaviours such that they do not align with extremist ideologies." However he further notes, as we have, the

limited work on 'the successful development of counter-narratives based on established communication theory'.[270]

Countering Extremism Online

Efforts to counter extremism online are included in the ideology category. We have responded on this subject to the consultation on the Online Harms White Paper. This is one area where the threat has utterly changed since 2015, so the commitments in the CE Strategy accordingly need a complete overhaul.

Indeed, as identified in the recent Online Harms White Paper, the current range of regulatory and voluntary initiatives "have not gone far enough or fast enough, or been consistent enough between different companies, to keep UK users safe".[271] This criticism has been echoed by the Home Affairs Committee and many safety bodies, particularly those focused on children and young people.

The anonymity provided by many platforms facilitates this, as explored by Imran Awan et al. in one of the papers we commissioned

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[270] Kurt Braddock. 2019. *Belief, Attitude, and Behavior Change: Leveraging Current Perspectives for Counter-Radicalization*, p.7, (accessed: 16 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821852/Braddock-Belief-Attitude-and-Behavior-Change.pdf>

[271] Department of Culture, Media and Sport and Home Office. 2019. *Online Harms White Paper*, p.6, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/793360/Online_Harms_White_Paper.pdf>

where they found that increased anonymity is associated with increased extremist and Islamophobic language.[272]

Harassment and malicious communication laws can be used to prosecute individuals for repeated online abuse, and occasionally for one-off instances, but do not cover the harms of the modern phenomenon of many individuals abusing a particular person online in a co-ordinated way. Police forces across the country have a mixed response in dealing with such incidents, especially online. There needs to be a much more consistent approach. This may also require online issues to be dealt with by a single force rather than multiple forces.

The targets of pile-ons can suffer severely without the threshold of harassment being legally met as those who are doing the targeting are only sending a single message. Victims told us the impact this had on them and on their mental health and wellbeing. It is the sheer volume of these messages which is where the problem arises.

Government, together with the police, has also been working with technology companies to limit access to terrorist content online. This grew out of longer-standing collaboration to remove content related to terrorism. The police Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit refers illegal terrorist content to companies on whose platforms it is found for removal. Around 300 companies globally have removed material that includes propaganda videos, pictures of executions,

and speeches calling for racial or religious violence. However, hateful extremist content, such as disinformation, conspiracy theories or abuse, is almost always legal and therefore requires a different approach.

We believe that work to take down the most harmful violent extremist content must continue, but it is not the right tool for most of extremism. Intermediate steps such as removing advertising from certain content, adding warnings or removing it from suggestions of future viewing can also be a helpful tools in striking the balance between freedom of speech and the harms of the narratives being promoted.[273] Our evidence shows that extremists use the internet to target vulnerable audiences for recruitment, to mainstream their beliefs and to abuse and intimidate their victims. More must be done to stop this.

Disinformation is another phenomenon that has grown since 2015. Some research has been done around how this can best be countered, such as the Royal Society for Public Health's research-based work to manage the risk of anti-vaccine campaigns,[274] but much more needs to be done to better understand what works.

Technology companies must continue their journey towards better understanding the negative impacts their technology can have, including from extremism and taking greater responsibility for them. This must result in concrete action that encourages wide debate on difficult subjects, while discouraging

[272] Imran Awan, Hollie Sutch and Pelham Carter. 2019. *Extremism Online – Analysis of extremist material on social media*, p.9 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821874/Awan-Sutch-Carter-Extremism-Online.pdf>

[273] An example is YouTube's recent action on Stephen Yaxley-Lennon's (aka Tommy Robinson) content. Jasmine Andersson. 2019. 'Tommy Robinson: Youtube cracks down on far right figure-but doesn't ban him', *iNews*, 2 April 2019, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://inews.co.uk/news/tommy-robinson-youtube-videos-restrictions-view-count-likes-comments/>

[274] Royal Society for Public Health. 2018. *Moving the needle: Promoting vaccination uptake across the life course*, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.rsph.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/3b82db00-a7ef-494c-85451e78ce18a779.pdf>

abuse and polarisation. Tech companies must ensure that their technologies have a built-in commitment to equality, and that their algorithms and systems do not give extremists the advantage from the start by feeding existing biases.[275]

The development of the Global Internet Forum for Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) to lead the cross-industry response to reduce the availability of terrorist content on the internet is a positive development, as are initiatives such as the UK Council for Internet Safety, which brings together tech companies, Government and experts, though this has not yet taken much action. Our engagement with members has suggested that this is focused on countering terrorism and not extremism.

BSBT supports its members online in a number of ways. This includes training on critical thinking, online messaging and developing counter narratives, tool kits, support to improve organisations' own websites and responses when tensions are high, for example after an attack. The evidence we have seen suggests that this work is focused on building the resilience and capability of civil society organisations rather than challenging ideology online.[276]

We have not seen evidence of an uplift in Government effort to match the mobilisation of extremists online. The response of social media companies in particular is variable and in our view insufficient. The Government, potentially through the new online harms regulator, needs to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the issues within internet technologies, widening its focus from content takedown to developing the whole ecosystem

in a way that encourages positive and healthy contributions to society.

> **The new regulator for online harms proposed by Government should ensure that the understanding of extremism it builds within its work is based on the approach set out in this report.**

Strengthening Institutions

Schools and Further Education

Educational institutions play a vital role in preparing children for life in modern Britain. It is important that councils, Regional Schools Commissioners, DfE and Ofsted build the resilience of educational institutions and act when things go wrong. The CE Strategy committed to enabling intervention in unregulated education settings, creating a database of school governors, and toughening missing pupil regulations.

The CE Strategy makes clear the role of the Prevent duty in countering extremism. However, there are risks from a measure introduced to safeguard children from vulnerability to terrorism being badged as countering extremism. It both risks unnecessarily securitising non-terrorism-related extremism concerns, while at the same time not supporting children who may be vulnerable to extremist views that are not related to serious violence.

This was on top of work schools were already doing to safeguard children from radicalisation. Following the Trojan Horse events in 2014, the DfE has changed the law and requirements on all schools, including independent schools, to protect pupils from

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[275] As explained in the DCMS Select Committee on Disinformation. See Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. 2019. *Disinformation and "fake news": Final report*, HC1791, 2017-9, p.12, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/1791/1791.pdf>
[276] Call for Evidence

the risks of extremism and radicalisation. This includes publishing departmental advice and guidance on the Prevent duty for schools and early years providers, requiring schools to actively promote FBVs and strengthening powers to take action against individual teachers or governors who undermine FBVs. The DfE also worked with Ofsted to strengthen their inspection frameworks so that inspectors were required to assess how effectively schools and colleges protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism, prepare them for life in modern Britain and promote FBVs.

It is important that children are taught equality, tolerance and democracy as part of them growing up to be full, equal, citizens of their country. Doing so can also be a bulwark against extremist narratives. The teaching of FBVs in schools is not part of the CE Strategy, though it is related. The 2011 Prevent Strategy required schools to "respect" FBVs. However, since 2014, schools have been obliged to have a clear strategy for actively promoting the FBVs of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The teaching of FBVs in schools has not been without controversy. In one of the academic papers that we commissioned, Drs Diane Webber and Alison Struthers, note that there has been:

a continuing stream of concern and negativity about teaching FBVs [that] has emanated from the press, the teaching profession and communal groups right across the religious spectrum, from secular to faith groups.[277]

In a comprehensive and independent evaluation of Prevent in schools, Dr Busher et al concluded that "very few respondents directly questioned the legitimacy of the duty or expressed wholesale opposition to it." Most people saw the need for the duty, often based on local experiences of children such as the Bethnal Green girls, and felt the safeguarding approach was a continuation of their professional practice.[278]

Research done into Prevent and counter extremism in further education colleges showed that Prevent was well aligned with other safeguarding activity but that teachers would find further training in having difficult conversations on these topics helpful.[279]

While some people have told us that the phrase FBVs can be contentious, there is agreement that children should learn the underlying values. Some schools manage the issue by teaching these values using a human rights framework. Nearly 5,000 UK schools are currently working towards UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award.[280]

As a resource, the Educate Against Hate website is more focused towards radicalisation to terrorism than extremism.[281]

[277] Diane Webber and Alison Struthers. 2019. *Critiquing Approaches to Countering Extremism: The Fundamental British Values Problem in English Formal Schooling* (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821846/Webber-Struthers-Critiquing-Approaches-to-Countering-Extremism.pdf>

[278] Joel Busher, Tufyal Choudhury, Paul Thomas and Gareth Harris. 2017. 'What the Prevent duty means for schools and colleges in England: An analysis of educationalists' experiences', *Aziz Foundation*, p.7, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <http://azizfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/What-the-Prevent-Duty-means-for-schools-and-colleges-in-England.pdf>

[279] Department for Education. 2018. *Prevent and counter-extremism in general further education colleges*, p.43, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-and-counter-extremism-in-general-further-education-colleges>

[280] Unicef. 'About the Rights Respecting Schools Award', (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rrsa/about-the-rrsa/>

[281] The Q and A section, for example, simply gives the government's definition. Educate against Hate. 2019. 'How do we define terrorism and extremism in the UK?', (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://educateagainsthate.com/parents/what-is-extremism/>

This is improving, with more recent blogs containing actionable suggestions to help teachers lead discussions on extremism.[282]

DfE operates a counter extremism helpline for concerns about extremism in schools and other organisations that work with children. This receives around 35 calls or emails a month, a small number of which are allegations of extremism, with a significant proportion of the remainder related to safeguarding concerns. The Department does not make clear the kind of support callers can expect, or the level of confidentiality with which their information would be treated, which may partly explain the low number of calls.[283] Where allegations of extremism are raised, action has been taken against teachers or governors, when appropriate.

As regulations governing schools continue to be tightened and compulsory RSE is brought in, we, alongside Ofsted and educational and counter extremism professionals are concerned that more parents may choose to place their children in unregulated settings.[284]

Despite the commitment in the CE Strategy, and significant work towards solving this issue, some children are still not receiving an adequate education. For example, a substantial number of Charedi Jewish boys in Hackney only receive education at unregistered yeshivas. Many boys leave these schools without even basic skills in mathematics and English.[285]

Case Study: provided by DfE (anonymised)[286]

The Department received a call on the Counter Extremism helpline alleging that a teacher had been sharing inappropriate posts on social media, many of which were antisemitic. In addition, an individual had viewed pornography using the teacher's school laptop.

The school was advised about processes in place to deal with matters of misconduct via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), under regulation 5(3) of the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012.

Following an internal disciplinary hearing, the teacher was initially dismissed from the school. Furthermore, following a professional conduct panel, the TRA banned the individual from teaching. The panel found that the individual had made offensive and racist comments. In addition, the panel found that someone had used his computer to access pornography, though they couldn't conclude this was the teacher in question. In line with current TRA procedures, the individual may be able to have the prohibition order lifted after a minimum of two years. This would only be possible following a recommendation by a professional conduct panel.

[282] Educate against Hate. 2019. 'Challenging Concerning Beliefs', (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://educateagainsthate.com/blog/posts/challenge-beliefs-holding-discussions-around-extremism/>.

[283] Department for Education. 2015. *Preventing extremism in the education and children's services sectors,* (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-extremism-in-schools-and-childrens-services/preventing-extremism-in-the-education-and-childrens-services-sectors>

[284] Call for Evidence

[285] Call for Evidence

[286] Call for Evidence

DfE has committed to tackle these issues:[287]

• They intend to legislate to require all independent education settings, where children attend full-time during the day to register, and to strengthen Ofsted's powers in relation to unregistered schools.[288] However, the legislation has not yet been introduced.

• This year, for the first time, local authorities have been encouraged to consider whether home education is in conflict with FBVs and whether it would equip a child for life beyond their community when assessing whether such education is suitable.[289]

• DfE consulted on how out-of-school settings[290] could be regulated in November 2015. The responses, published in April 2018, showed that nearly three quarters of those who responded, most of whom were faith groups, felt that settings should not be required to register or be inspected by Ofsted, with many saying "that registration of out-of-school settings with the local authority would be equivalent to state regulation of religion", and expressing concerns about Ofsted's neutrality.[291]

• Rather than pursuing regulation, the Department has instead put £3 million towards pilot schemes to work with local authorities to enhance safeguarding in out-of-school settings, test different approaches and develop an evidence base.[292] We look forward to the results of these pilots.

Progress has been made but it isn't happening fast enough. More needs to be done to protect children who are receiving education where they are not being prepared for life in modern Britain. We recommend that the DfE deliver legislation as soon as possible and work with the organisations that were concerned about regulation of Out-of-School settings to make sure that children are better protected.

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[287] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2018. *Integrated Communities Strategy: summary of consultation responses and government response*, pp.1-22, (accessed: 15 August 2019). <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/777160/Integrated_Communities_Strategy_Government_Response.pdf>

[288] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2018. *Integrated Communities Strategy: summary of consultation responses and government response*, p.11, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/778045/Integrated_Communities_Strategy_Govt_Action_Plan.pdf>

[289] Department for Education. 2019. *Elective home education*, pp.30-31, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791527/Elective_home_education_guidance_for_LAv2.0.pdf>

[290] The term 'out-of-school setting', covers any institution providing tuition, training or instruction to children aged under 19 in England that is not a school, college, 16-19 academy or registered childcare provider. Department for Education. 2018. *Out-of-school education settings: Report on the Call for Evidence conducted November 2015 to January 2016*, p.3, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698250/Out-of-school_education_settings-Report_on_the_call_for-evidence.pdf>

[291] Department for Education. 2018. *Out-of-school education settings: Report on the Call for Evidence conducted November 2015 to January 2016*, pp.4, 8, 9 and 11, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698250/Out-of-school_education_settings-Report_on_the_call_for-evidence.pdf>

[292] Department for Education. 2018. *Out-of-school education settings: Report on the Call for Evidence conducted November 2015 to January 2016*, p. 19, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698250/Out-of-school_education_settings-Report_on_the_call_for-evidence.pdf>; Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2018. *Integrated Communities Strategy: summary of consultation responses and government response*, p.12, (accessed: 4 September 2019), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/778045/Integrated_Communities_Strategy_Govt_Action_Plan.pdf>

Higher Education

The CE Strategy committed to monitor how universities are managing the risk of radicalisation. This is being done. Within universities, it is vital that free speech is championed. Indeed, they have particular legal duties for encouraging freedom of speech against which they must balance their other duties.[293] It is a complicated area which has been subject to legal challenge.[294] New guidance attempts to clarify institutions' rights and duties,[295] responding to concerns previously that a lack of understanding was leading some universities to be over-cautious in considering who could be invited to speak.[296]

The Office for Students' latest report "saw no cause, in the information being reported to us, for concern that the education sector or individual providers are not balancing their freedom of speech responsibilities with the Prevent duty."[297]

However, extremism in universities is not just about speakers. Concerns about the restriction of women or minorities' rights, and abuse and harassment, have been raised. The 2015 independent review commissioned by the University of Westminster following revelations that Mohammed Emwazi, aka Jihadi John, was one of their former students found problems beyond radicalisation into

terrorism. The review discovered that the Islamic Society was dominated by men with hostile and intimidatory attitudes to women, and that they were restricting the rights of Muslim female students. More worrying, it found that this behaviour was being tolerated by university officials who had not acted on concerns raised about the conduct of the Islamic Society for fear of appearing Islamophobic, even when those concerns were being raised by other Muslims.[298]

There is little understanding of how much of a problem rights restriction and hateful extremism might be more widely. Projects are taking place that support victims of hate crime and sexual harassment, train bystanders to intervene and foster dialogue between groups. These may be helpful in reducing the harms of rights restriction and hateful extremism.[299]

Local Authorities

As the Local Government Association told us:

"Councils have a core role to play in countering extremism and building cohesive and resilient communities. Working together with communities and partner agencies, councils are best placed to understand the complexities of local issues and what works in response.

[293] Under the Education (No.2) 1986 and the Human Rights Act 1998
[294] R (on the application of Butt) v Secretary of State for HD [2019] EWCA Civ 256
[295] Equality and Human Rights Commission. 2019. *Freedom of expression: a guide for higher education providers and students' unions in England and Wales*, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/freedom-expression-guide-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england>
[296] Joint Committee on Human Rights. 2018. *Freedom of Speech in Universities*, HC 589 HL paper 111, 2017-9, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201719/jtselect/jtrights/589/589.pdf>
[297] Office for Students. 2019. *Prevent monitoring accountability and data returns 2017-18: Evaluation report*, 21 June 2019 (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/prevent-monitoring-accountability-and-data-returns-2017-18-evaluation-report/>
[298] University of Westminster Independent Panel. 2015. *The University of Westminster: Diversity and Divergence*, pp.10-13 (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/sites/default/public-files/general-documents/Diversity-and-Divergence-Independent-Panel-Report.pdf>
[299] See list of projects here: Office for Students. *Student safety and wellbeing*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-wellbeing-and-protection/student-safety-and-wellbeing/what-are-the-projects/>

Extremism can have a huge impact on local areas and no areas are immune from its effects. The threats from extremism are constantly changing, presenting new and evolving challenges for local authorities. Understanding, responding and building resilience to extremism requires a dynamic, joined-up and long-term approach, both at local and national levels."[300]

Councils are often the first authorities to notice evolving extremism in their areas. Some areas receive central funding for counter extremism community coordinator posts, and these have been welcomed.

Throughout our engagement, we have found community coordinators knowledgeable, well linked in to their communities and making an important contribution.

In partnership with Luton and Leeds councils, the Local Government Association has created a Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism (SIGCE), which is developing resources that are available via an online knowledge hub tool. This is a really positive development. It has enabled experienced authorities to support those who are less equipped to deal with extremism. For example, they have established a Far Right Working Group to bring together community safety leads in areas where the Far Right has recently become more active.[301] We would like to see further support for this work, including better ways to gather and share

insight into the way extremism is manifesting in local areas.

The CE Strategy committed to providing guidance to Local Authorities on how to address extremism at the local level. We are concerned that, as demonstrated through our case studies and during our visits, that the level of guidance provided is not adequate. Local authorities have told us they need greater support and funding. We want to see more guidance on how to respond to extremism and what tools to use.

Charities

Charities can be used by extremists to collect money and to spread their ideologies. The Charity Commission for England and Wales sees extremism as a key risk to public trust and confidence in charities and provide resources and guidance to trustees to prevent it taking root. The CE strategy committed to regulatory oversight of charities at risk of extremist abuse, and to introduce a new power to disqualify individuals from being trustees of charities.

Last year the Charity Commission republished the Protecting Charities from Abuse for Extremist Purposes compliance toolkit for charity trustees,[302] which recommends ways for trustees to protect their charities from abuse. In addition, the CE Strategy committed to giving the Charity Commission further powers to issue official warnings and to disqualify individuals from trusteeship. The Charity Commission now

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[300] Local Government Association. 2019. *LGA submission to Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence*, p.6, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Commission%20for%20Countering%20Extremism%20Call%20for%20Evidence%20LGA%20response%20Jan%202019%20FINAL.pdf>

[301] Local Government Association. 2019. *LGA submission to Commission for Countering Extremism's Call for Evidence*, p.7, (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Commission%20for%20Countering%20Extremism%20Call%20for%20Evidence%20LGA%20response%20Jan%202019%20FINAL.pdf>

[302] Charity Commission. 2018. *Protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes*, Updated 19 November 2018, (accessed: 14 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-charities-from-abuse-for-extremist-purposes/chapter-5-protecting-charities-from-abuse-for-extremist-purposes#why-are-extremism-issues-relevant-to-my-charity>

has these powers and is using them. It has investigated and taken regulatory action to address abuse of charities and charitable funds linked to terrorist or extremist allegations or where proven abuse has occurred. However, concerns have been raised with us about the length of time that some of these investigations have been taking.

In 2018, the Charity Commission used its new power (section 84B of the Charities Act 2011) for the first time to direct the dissolution of the 1st Knight Military Charity after its investigation found that the charity's trustees had been found to be making "wholly offensive and inappropriate anti-Islamic comments" as well as selling offensive merchandise from the charity's shop (including merchandise depicting Nazi symbolism).[303]

NHS

The CE Strategy committed to review training on extremism and to strengthen the employment regulations for NHS staff. There is no specific resource for extremism in the NHS and therefore no way of measuring how effective the response is when it occurs as an issue. The only programmes related to extremism in the NHS are about terrorism. Measuring the NHS's response to radicalisation via the Prevent programme is the closest we can come to gauging the level of extremism, and whether the response to it is adequate.

There were 680 referrals made to Prevent from the health sector in the year 2017/18, out of 16.6m patients treated in hospitals that year.[304] Hospital staff receive Prevent training. At the end of January 2019, 81% of those requiring regular training had received it.[305] Regional Prevent Coordinators oversee this and provide support and advice when required.

Despite this training, we have heard anecdotal accounts from those in the health service of extremists preying on victims of terrorism. We have also heard about extremist material being put out in hospitals and people being pressured by their faith communities not to pursue certain courses of treatment. As these reports came from those dealing with these problems and we have heard no similar reports from the call for evidence, we don't believe these issues are widespread or are not being dealt with as they arise.

Prisons

In recent years the threat from extremism has increased and become harder to manage across Prisons and Probation, involving both prisoners convicted of Terrorism Act (TACT) offences and those who have been identified as a terrorism risk. Approximately 650 individuals are managed through the CT case management process at any one time in custody and in the community.[306] Extremism has manifested itself in various forms, the

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[303] Charity Commission. 2018. *Decision: 1st Knight Military Charity*, 4 September 2018, (accessed: 14 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-inquiry1st-knight-military-charity/1st-knight-military-charity>

[304] Number of Prevent referrals was provided to the Commission by the NHS. For Finished Admissions Episodes data, see NHS Digital. 2018. *Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity 2017-18*, 20 September 2018, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/hospital-admitted-patient-care-activity/2017-18>

[305] Figures provided to the Commission by the NHS. At end of Q3 2018-19, 81% of staff required to receive periodic Wrap (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training had received it within the required time period.

[306] HL Deb 2 July 2019, Vol 798, HL16558

most prominent being Islamist with an increasing Far Right cohort.[307]

The CE Strategy committed to reviewing Islamist extremism in prisons. A summary of this review, led by Ian Acheson, was published in August 2016.[308] Action has been taken on some of his recommendations.

The Joint Extremism Unit for Prison and Probation has created a clear system for identifying and removing literature that may promote extremism from prisons, including "material which is deemed to be: racially or religiously offensive; promoting or supporting acts of terrorism; promoting or supporting domestic extremism; and/or, violent or inciting acts of violence, such as gun catalogues, knife magazines, martial arts magazines."[309]

Since 2015, 31 titles have been deemed inappropriate for prisoner possession. The most common theme among the assessed texts is the promotion of religious or racial hatred, most often with a focus on promoting hatred of Jews and non-believers.[310]

Separation centres have been set up to reduce the risk of particular prisoners radicalising others. The Ministry of Justice is also piloting a one-year programme that trains prison chaplains to help draw offenders that pose a terrorism risk away from extremist ideology. The pilot is currently undergoing a six-month review.[311]

However, criminal justice professionals have expressed their concerns to us that people entering prison who previously did not hold extremist views were leaving prison with hard-line Far Right and Islamist extremist attitudes. They have also raised concerns about the management of former prisoners with extremist views when they are released back into communities.

Faith Institutions

Faith institutions play an important and unique role in countering extremist narrative and ideologies and helping build resilience to it. The CE Strategy committed to supporting faith institutions to establish strong governance and to review the training of faith leaders who work in public institutions. Despite their presence in the CE Strategy, on close examination we do not judge these commitments to be about countering extremism.

We have also spoken to faith leaders across the country who do want to do more to counter extremism and are requesting support and training on how to actively challenge extremism and engage with people at risk. Such programmes would be a welcome and vital initiative.

[307] Home Office. 2019. *Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Ace 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search, quarterly update to December 2018*, 7 March 2019, p.19, (accessed: 16 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/783893/police-powers-terrorism-dec2018-hosb0519.pdf>
[308] Ministry of Justice. 2016. *Summary of the main findings of the review of Islamist extremism in prisons, probations and youth justice*, 22 August 2016, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/islamist-extremism-in-prisons-probation-and-youth-justice/summary-of-the-main-findings-of-the-review-of-islamist-extremism-in-prisons-probation-and-youth-justice>
[309] Call for Evidence
[310] Call for Evidence
[311] Call for Evidence

Counter Extremism and the Prevent Strategy

Prevent has been one of four strands in the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy CONTEST since 2003. It aims to safeguard people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It does this by rehabilitating those already engaged in terrorism, intervening to safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation and responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism to tackle to causes of radicalisation.[312]

The Commission doesn't have a remit on terrorism, and therefore has not assessed CE Strategy commitments on Prevent. However, the potential overlap between Prevent and CE, especially in the area of tackling the causes of radicalisation, is an area of concern to us which needs addressing.

The 2015 CE Strategy did not seek to make a clear distinction between the two strands, as many of the actions proposed were either about or delivered through Prevent programmes. In CONTEST 2018, Government described the difference as:

> "Counter-radicalisation forms one part of a wider effort to counter broader extremist messages and behaviours. We have an effective Counter-Extremism Strategy to protect our communities from the wider social harms beyond terrorism caused by extremism."

Due to the similarity in beliefs between terrorists and hateful extremists, there is always a risk that groups and individuals can move between these categories, as we have seen with ALM and National Action. Government must continue to manage these risks and use proportionate measures to respond to the different behaviours and harms caused.

The lack of clarity in the Government's definition of extremism and the responsibilities between CONTEST and the CE Strategy has not helped. From our engagement on the ground, this (lack of) distinction is managed locally, if an area has both Prevent and CE support. Personal relationships and community ties often play a bigger role than Government's strategic intent. And this pragmatic approach is right.

When it comes to funding civil society organisations, it is more difficult. The Home Office currently manages the awarding of funding to avoid duplication. Yet public descriptions of Prevent projects such as London Tigers[313] and Equaliteach[314] often talk about extremism in a way that is similar to BSBT-funded examples contained in this report.

The CE Strategy also described the Prevent duty, introduced in 2015 through the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, as a counter extremism measure. This is confirmed through the guidance issued for practitioners. However, while Government is clear that the Prevent duty is a counter terrorism measure, in practice it is less clear-cut.

While the Commission has no remit on terrorism, we have identified a number of issues that we will be taking up with the Independent Reviewer of Prevent. We want the difference between counter terrorism and counter extremism to be clearer; and we want there to be proportionate responses to groups and individuals who act across both terrorism and hateful extremism.

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[312] Home Office. 2018. *Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST)*, 4 June 2018, CM9608, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf>

[313] Home Office. 2018. *Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST)*, 4 June 2018, CM9608, p.34, (accessed 4 September 2019) < https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf>

[314] Mayor of London. 2019. *A shared endeavour: Working in partnership to counter violent extremism in London*, June 2019, p.52, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cve_strategy_20_8_19.pdf>

Building a Partnership With All Those Opposed to Extremism

Building Partnerships – Progress on Commitments

0	1	2 3

■ Complete   ■ Complete and Ongoing   ■ Not Complete

In the CE Strategy, the Government recognised that people standing up in their own communities is often one of the most effective means of challenging extremism, and that those people require support. The CE Strategy promised a network to support these people. Government also promised to clearly set out who it would and would not engage with, to avoid inadvertently giving a platform to extremists. It also intended to build its relationship with broadcasters.

Only the network has been delivered. The BSBT Programme now has 234 member groups and 373 ongoing or completed projects.[315] There are five strands to BSBT:

- Grant-funded projects;

- In-kind support (to help existing projects expand their reach);

- The BSBT network (that allows practitioners to communicate with each other and share best practice);

- Community coordinators (who assist with funding bids from civil society groups and engage with the same) and

- Communications campaigns.

BSBT has three core aims:

(1) fewer people hold attitudes, beliefs and feelings that oppose shared values;
(2) increased sense of belonging and civic participation at the local level;
(3) more resilient communities.[316]

To date, four waves for applications for grant funding and in-kind support have been held. A number of communications campaigns have been run. The longest – Britain Helps and Safer Giving – have run for over three years. The shortest – targeted campaigns on FGM and hate crime – have run for around two months.

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[315] Call for Evidence
[316] Call for Evidence

BSBT Evaluation

Government has explained how it evaluates the BSBT programme. It engaged IPSOS Mori in 2017 to independently assess the impact of BSBT programme activity against BSBT key outcomes; understand the effectiveness of processes involved in delivering partnership support and establish 'what works' by identifying enablers and barriers to delivery.

There is existing guidance on how to measure the effectiveness of small, civil society projects. However, BSBT is one overarching programme that works by selecting smaller projects whose aims and objectives are best aligned with BSBT's aims. This has meant that so far it has been too methodologically complex to evaluate BSBT's performance.

This is compounded by the fact that the CE Strategy does not make clear what "success" looks like. Both micro and macro outcomes cannot be assessed without this and a baseline measurement. There are also ethical challenges in conducting randomised controlled trials, the gold standard of evaluating programmes.

In general, BSBT evaluates each of the strands of its work using a variable mixture of face-to-face interviews (both pre- and post-intervention where possible), surveys, focus groups and measures of outputs online, such as social media views, shares and sentiment analysis.

The localised media campaigns in Leeds and Newcastle, and the Leeds sports initiative had mixed results. The Leeds and Newcastle media campaigns appeared to show positive results, but in both cities a majority of people already felt they belonged to these cities and the campaigns were effectively reinforcing a positive sentiment. The sports initiative in Leeds yielded positive results in that it engaged young people and imparted critical thinking skills to them. However, it was not clear how the young people related those skills to challenging extremism and the initiative more generally did not explicitly cover situations where extremist views could be challenged.[317]

BSBT's approach has been enthusiastically received among many civil society organisations. At this stage we have not been able to independently assess individual BSBT projects due to timing. However, we have looked at the programme overall through their evaluation, and assessed performance against the goals they have set. In the first two rounds of funding, a majority of BSBT projects focused on integration related goals rather than actively challenging extremism. BSBT believes that it can be more effective to mix in work to challenge extremism, alongside activities such as drama and sports.

BSBT does not set up organisations from scratch, instead relying on community groups coming forward with proposed projects. This means that the types of projects they could fund are limited by the proposals received. It is encouraging to see more civil society groups engaging, as can be seen from the increasing number of applications BSBT have received for each successive wave of funding, a 276% increase between waves 2 and 3.[318]

Of the three objectives for projects to bid against, "fewer people holding attitudes, beliefs and feelings that oppose shared values" is most relevant to countering

317 Call for Evidence
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extremist ideologies based on the Government's definition. The third round of funding had the most groups yet delivering against this objective, with 54 of the 117 projects funded against this objective. Wave 4, for which bidding has recently closed, requires every project bidding to actively challenge extremism.[319]

We welcome this move. However, as BSBT have noted, they are constrained by only awarding funding to projects that bid. Given the lack of overall objective for the CE Strategy, and the difficulties in evaluating projects as a result, it remains likely that not all this work will directly counter extremist ideologies.

We visited many BSBT funded organisations and projects performing valuable work. But for the specific objective of challenging and countering hateful extremism, the experience of BSBT suggests it may be better to focus on a smaller number of organisations with the expertise to do it effectively.

The network of counter extremism community coordinators who run the programme in local areas are invaluable sources of support for local communities. As promised, the CE Co-ordinator network provides significant training and support for local civil society groups. As Dr Katherine Brown et al made clear, the lack of clear central objectives, however, can result in different practitioners having "strikingly vague" definitions of success.[320] This again is linked to the lack of a clear end-state in the CE Strategy.

> **More needs to be done to challenge extremist narratives at every level. Current programmes, including the Government's flagship Building a Stronger Britain Together programme, have not sufficiently focused on encouraging civil society to push back against extremists' hateful narratives. Although progress is being made, BSBT should focus on funding those organisations most willing and able to stand up to extremists.**

Civil society groups, in particular Muslim ones, across the country have told us that concerns about other peoples' reaction and possible abuse discourages them from proposing projects that actively challenge extremism. Organisations that have accepted funding from central Government under the Home Office's Prevent or BSBT programme have been targeted for abuse. It is partly for this reason that the Home Office does not publish or divulge the names of groups that receive Prevent funding for community projects, and although it does publish the names of groups that receive BSBT funding, it does not require those groups to publicise the funding they receive. Striking a balance between being transparent and protecting groups from abuse is deeply challenging for the Home Office.

One recent example is the Bradford Literature Festival (BLF). The BLF has been running since 2014 to "create a cultural and literary extravaganza celebrating the written and spoken word".[321] Although it was public knowledge that the BLF organisation

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[319] Call for Evidence; Home Office. 2019. Building A Stronger Britain Together, *Applying for Grant Support*, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/776249/BSBT_Call_4_Grant_Application_guidance.pdf>

[320] Katherine E Brown, Fiona de Londras and Jessica White. 2019. 'Embedding human rights in countering extremism: reflections from the field and proposals for change', p.3, (accessed: 5 Sept 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/embedding-human-rights-in-countering-extremism-reflections-from-the-field-and-proposals-for-change>

[321] Bradford Literature Festival. (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bradfordlitfest.co.uk/about/>

received BSBT funding for a specific project to empower local women, before the festival it was not widely known.

On 19 June performers and speakers due to appear at the BLF started withdrawing,[322] giving reasons including "that taking CE money in any circumstance legitimises the strategy of the state which approaches Muslims as criminal" and that the CE Strategy "relies on the premise that Muslims are predisposed to violence and therefore require monitoring and surveillance."[323] The organisers of the BLF, a South Asian Muslim-led organisation, stated this opinion was not one that they shared.[324]

We have seen no evidence that these or other claims of anti-Muslim bias are true and we believe it is a misrepresentation of the aims of the CE Strategy and of BSBT. Such false claims not only damage CE work but can help create a climate of hostility towards counter extremists.

Similarly, in January 2017, after a Home Office OSCT document – Local Delivery Best Practice Catalogue – was leaked the website 5Pillars published a list of those Muslim groups involved with the Government's "deceptive strategy". Their piece stated that Prevent "is widely considered to be a monitoring and spying exercise which targets the Muslim community".[325] 5Pillars published a similar piece in June 2019 focusing on community-based Muslim organisations receiving BSBT funding, describing the taking

of counter extremism money as "somewhat toxic within the Muslim community due to the nature of the Government's counter extremism policies, which many Muslims view as Islamophobic".[326]

This is inaccurate: we have met many Muslims over the period of 18 months who support counter extremism work but are not willing to publicly declare their support because of a fear of abuse.

Government Engagement Principles

Another commitment the CE Strategy made was to be clear about who Government would and would not work with in a series of principles for engagement. This has not been delivered.

In the absence of clear guidelines, mistakes are made, often by authorities who have the best intentions but lack the capacity to effectively distinguish between organisations, or the courage to challenge divisive narratives put to them by community leaders. Engaging inappropriately can give legitimacy to extremists and further harm their victims.

We have heard about examples where in an effort to engage communities, Government and local authorities reach out to self-appointed community leaders who espouse extremist views.[327] This legitimises these extremist voices while at the same time silencing and reducing the impact of the very people countering extremism in communities. It is crucial that local

[322] Maya Wolfe-Robinson. 2019. 'Six pull out of Bradford festival over counter-extremism funding', *The Guardian*, 20 June 2019, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jun/20/six-pull-out-bradford-literature-festival-counter-extremism-funding>

[323] Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan. 2019, Twitter. (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://twitter.com/thebrownhijabi/status/1141327385901617152>

[324] Bradford Literature Festival. 2019. 'Statement on withdrawal of speakers from this year's festival', 20 June 2019, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bradfordlitfest.co.uk/statement-withdrawal-speakers-years-festival/>

[325] 5Pillars. 2017. 'EXPOSED: The Muslim organisations that get Prevent funding', 3 January 2017, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://5pillarsuk.com/2017/01/03/exposed-the-muslim-organisations-that-get-prevent-funding/>

[326] 5Pillars. 2019. 'REVEALED: The Muslim organisations taking counter-extremism money', January 2019, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://5pillarsuk.com/2019/06/08/the-muslim-organisations-taking-counter-extremism-money/>

[327] Call for Evidence

authorities create spaces for better civic engagement with unheard voices and support victims. Individuals interact with the state in many ways and local authorities need to be agile in their approach to engagement.

However, the nature of work to counter extremism sometimes means engaging with extremists. This can help us understand and counter their beliefs and behaviours, and potentially persuade them to reform and make a more positive contribution to society. This must be carefully balanced against any perceived support or legitimisation.

As part of building a more effective partnership, Government should clearly set out who Government will and will not engage with, why, and the actions required by those who are not going to be engaged. Government should provide guidance to other public bodies to give clarity about when to engage, when to challenge, and when to de-platform.

Disrupting Extremists

Disrupting Extremists – Progress on Commitments
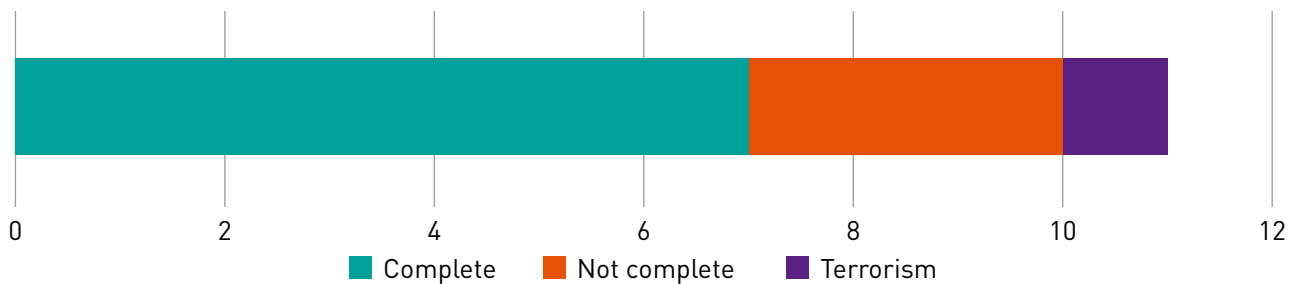
Part of the Government's response to extremism is actively disrupting the activities of specific extremist individuals or groups "who pose the greatest threat to others", with the aim of reducing their influence and ultimately the harm they cause. Its commitments were to clarify guidance on how immigration powers could be used, introduce an ability to suspend TV and radio licences where necessary, publish an Action Plan to address hate crime, enable employers to identify extremists and introduce new targeted powers, such as banning orders and disruption orders. Of these eleven commitments, we judge seven to have been delivered.

Proposed Legislation to Protect the Public

The clearest challenge to the CE Strategy was the failure of the proposed Counter Extremism Bill to introduce these powers. The Bill contained powers to "ban extremist organisations that promote hatred and draw people into extremism; restrict the harmful activities of the most dangerous extremist individuals; and restrict access to premises which are repeatedly used to support extremism". An "extremism community trigger" was also proposed as a legal duty to help ensure that police and local authorities took local concerns about extremism seriously.

An expansive campaign which included counter extremism organisations opposed the legislation on freedom of speech grounds. To date, the Government has not brought forward the legislation. Without a legal definition of extremism the proposed measures, as was made clear by many at the time, could have captured legitimate speech. The proposal that the Disclosure and Barring Service notify eligible employers if it has new information about extremism relevant to an employee also introduced a disproportionate risk of misuse.

Some mechanism to flag developing extremist incidents early so that support could be brought in could be helpful. However, we think that it was appropriate that the proposed Extremism Community Trigger was dropped as it could have been used maliciously by groups against each other.

In the absence of a legal definition and the powers proposed by the CE strategy, a wide range of other legal powers are used to challenge extremists where crimes have been committed. For hateful extremism these mainly comprise:

- The Public Order Act 1986 and the subsequent Crime and Disorder Act 1998 forms the basis of many hate crimes and targets offences around a person's race and religion.

- The Communications Act 2003 which criminalises messages that cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety, or are grossly offensive to others.

- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 which makes it an offense to incite hatred against a person or persons on the grounds of their religious belief or lack of religious belief.

- The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which consolidates laws around anti-social behaviour and introduced a number of civil powers that can be used to tackle it, including Community Protection Notices.

In every case, enforcing these laws requires balancing freedom of speech with people's other rights. Doing so can be difficult, and many of the victims of harassment and abuse that we spoke to feel that police and the CPS over-emphasise protecting freedom of speech at the cost of victims' safety and wellbeing.

Existing Powers

Hate Crime

A hate crime is considered by the police and the CPS to be "any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."[328] The perpetrator can receive an increased sentence if it can be proven in court that it was motivated by or demonstrated hatred. For example, Paul Golding and Jayda Fransen, leaders of Britain First, were jailed in March 2018 for religiously-aggravated harassment after harassing people, distributing leaflets and posting videos with Islamophobic messages during a rape trial at Canterbury Crown Court.[329]

Improving the response to hate crime was included in the CE Strategy. The Hate Crime Action Plan was launched in 2016 and refreshed in 2018. It includes the Places of Worship Scheme, which funds security measures for religious institutions, a public awareness campaign, funding for programmes to help young people challenge hate and better support for victims. This is all welcome, especially the support for victims, as people we have spoken to say that a poor response to a report of hate crime reduces their trust in the state and can be almost as distressing as the incident itself.[330]

Protected characteristics are not treated equally under hate crime laws, with greater protection for race, religion and sexual orientation than disability and gender identity (i.e. transgender). Age and sex are not protected under hate crime laws, so crimes motivated by misogyny, sexism or ageism are not considered hate crimes. Hate crime legislation (excluding incitement to racial or religious hatred) is currently under review by the Law Commission, though their consultation paper is not expected until 2020, and any changes made as a result may take years after that.[331]

Victims also described to us how they felt there was an inconsistency on how religious hate crime was interpreted. Faith to Faithless, a national support network for those leaving high-control or coercive religious groups, also told us that hate crime legislation should be in line with human rights law which stipulates "religion or belief." This would then result in hate crime including crime within religions, against those who hold non-religious beliefs or those who leave a religion.

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[328] Crown Prosecution Service. *Hate Crime*, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.cps.gov.uk/hate-crime>

[329] Crown Prosecution Service. *Leader and deputy leader of Britain First convicted of religiously-aggravated public order offences*, 7 March 2018, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.cps.gov.uk/south-east/news/leader-and-deputy-leader-britain-first-convicted-religiously-aggravated-public>

[330] Call for Evidence

[331] Law Commission. *Hate Crime: Current project status*, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>

Home Office Example of Exclusion Case

A non-visa national, who is not an EEA national, has been reported to be giving extremist speeches in the UK. The subject has allegedly travelled to the UK in the past, espousing a white nationalist rhetoric, and there has been moderate public backlash against the subject's presence in the UK. Upon reviewing the research there is clear evidence that the subject has indeed espoused extremist views and that these have resulted in a number of local disturbances. Police colleagues confirm that the subject's presence in the UK has led to heightened tensions and there have been incidents of violence at the events – however, it is not clear that the subject has personally committed a crime and they have not attempted to arrest or charge the subject. Reports also indicate that the subject intends to travel to the UK again in the near future.

In this case, the relevant assessment is to consider whether the subject's presence in the UK is non-conducive to the public good. On the basis of the information received, and with reference to the exclusions guidance and unacceptable behaviour policy, it is clear that the subject's presence in the UK has the capacity to heighten tensions and incite violence, and their presence is therefore non-conducive to the public good. It is likely that this case would be referred to the Home Secretary to consider excluding the subject.[332]

Immigration Powers

Foreign extremist speakers whose presence in the UK can be shown to be non-conducive to the public good can be prevented from entering. The power to exclude someone indefinitely is very rarely used: an average of 11 times a year between 2013 and 2018.[333]

Border Force can also refuse individuals access to the UK at the border, on similar grounds and do so for a diverse range of people. For example, in March 2018 Lauren Southern, a Canadian far right activist, was detained in Calais, France, and prevented from entering the UK.[334]

These measures send a very strong signal about what is not acceptable in the UK. However, activists' ability to reach UK audiences online are unaffected by these techniques. In addition, being excluded

from the UK can bolster the victimhood and censorship narratives of activists, which can add to their popularity.

Non-Statutory Disruption

Through non-statutory means, Government informs venues about the impact of the views and behaviour likely to be expressed at their premises. For example, in 2018 a Leicester theatre was one of a number of venues to cancel a planned talk by the antisemitic conspiracy theorist David Icke, after Leicester Council, police and campaign groups spoke to them. Leicester Council said "Leicester City Council and Leicestershire Police have a shared obligation to promote good community cohesion and work with licensed premises to reduce the likelihood of crime and disorder. We met with the venue to discuss this, and the venue decided to cancel

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[332] Call for Evidence

[333] Call for Evidence

[334] Maya Oppenheim. 2018. 'Lauren Southern: Far-right Canadian activist detained in Calais and banned from entering UK', *The Independent*, 13 March 2018, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-southern-far-right-canada-racist-calais-detain-uk-ban-enter-visa-a8254116.html>

the event."[335] Again, this disruption seems to have been largely successful, despite Mr Icke making a long video discussing it, but the fact that extremism is not mentioned in relation to the concerns is less helpful, though hard to avoid in the absence of a legal definition of "extremism".

The lack of independent oversight could lead to abuse.

Broadcasting

Ofcom is an independent regulator. It licenses a total of 2,000 television and radio services operating in the UK's jurisdiction. Ofcom was not tasked by Parliament to set standards around extremism, and therefore does not take any action on extremist content per se. Their Broadcasting Code does state that television and radio services must not contain material likely to encourage the commission of crime or to lead to disorder, and it was updated in 2016 to be clearer that hate speech, material that contains abusive or derogatory treatment of people, or material that may cause offence must be justified by the context.[336] Some extremist messages could be caught by this.

Ofcom assess and investigate programmes based on complaints received and their monitoring. In 2018, of 55,346 standards complaints assessed by Ofcom, 215 (0.4%) related to the rules mentioned above. These resulted in seven investigations and so far, four of these resulted in Ofcom deeming

that the code was breached, and sanctioning licence holders.[337]

The outcomes of all Ofcom investigations are published. For example:

- Iman Media UK Limited had their license revoked in 2017 following an Ofcom investigation into the broadcasting of a number of lectures by deceased Al-Qaeda cleric, Anwar al-Awlaki, during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan that year.[338]

- The investigation into the playing of *Pinky Pinky* on Kanshi Radio in 2016, a song which contained pejorative abuse of Muslim women, was deemed to have breached the code and resulted in a fine of £17,500.[339]

- Frances & Friends SonLife Broadcasting Network, 18 December 2015, where anti-Muslim hate and misleading statements were deemed to have breached the Code.[340] Ofcom directed the Licensee to broadcast a summary of the decision.

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[335] Jacob Jarvis. 2018. 'Why "sold out" talk by conspiracy theorist David Icke in Leicester was cancelled', *Leicestershire Live,* 9 March 2018, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/david-icke-conspiracy-leicester-cancelled-1321244>

[336] Call for Evidence and Ofcom. 2016. *Broadcasting Code Review Section Three: Crime*, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/77100/section_three_review.pdf>

[337] Call for Evidence

[338] Ofcom. 2017. *Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin*, Issue number 334, p.6 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/105611/Issue-334-of-Ofcoms-Broadcast-and-On-Demand-Bulletin.pdf>

[339] Ofcom. 2017. *Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin*, Issue number 334, p.6 (accessed: 21 August 2019) <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/105611/Issue-334-of-Ofcoms-Broadcast-and-On-Demand-Bulletin.pdf>

[340] Ofcom. 2016. *Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin*, Issue number 304, pp.18-35, (accessed: 15 August 2019), <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0035/49796/issue_304.pdf>

Cohesive Communities

Cohesive Communities – Progress on Commitments

Complete	Integration

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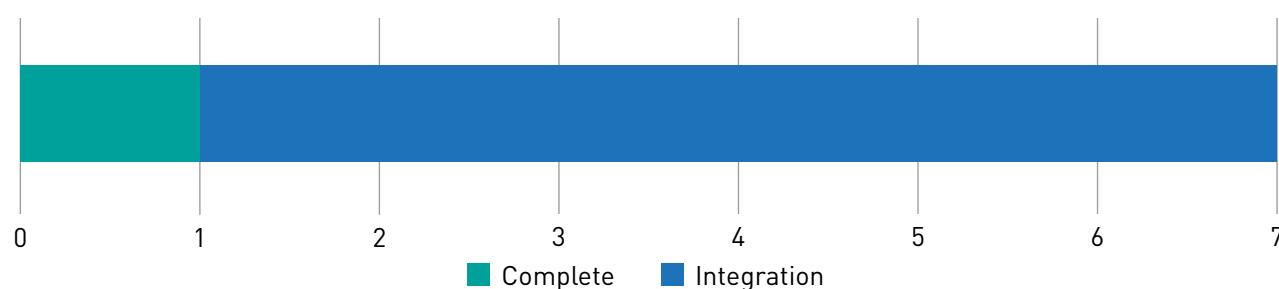
Cohesive communities are vitally important in allowing everyone to share the opportunities our country affords. It is agreed that in some circumstances segregation, or other structural factors, can contribute to extremism but they are not significantly more important than other factors.[341] Yet creating more cohesive communities should not depend on the need to counter extremism. We do not believe that work to build cohesive communities should be part of any future hateful extremism strategy. For this reason we have not assessed the CE Strategy's commitments related to cohesive communities. These include providing English language training, a review of integration and programmes to address it, and a range of measures to reduce honour-based abuse and other forms of violence against women.

In December 2016, Dame Louise Casey published her review into integration in Britain.[342]

Informed by the Casey Review, Government published the Integrated Communities

Strategy (ICS) green paper in March 2018.[343] The methods suggested for building cohesion included strengthening economic opportunity, ending illegal cultural practices, addressing barriers to people enjoying full rights, expanding take-up of the National Citizen Service in areas of high segregation, and English language training. The Integrated Communities Strategy did not set out to counter extremism.

The integration and cohesive communities work to develop a positive country and place to live must continue. Government must deliver recent promises to bring the country together post-Brexit and increase funding for the vital work being done by so many people in communities up and down the country. This should be a key focus for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

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[341] J.M. Berger. 2018. *Extremism*, pp. 103-120. London: MIT Press

[342] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. 2016. *The Casey Review: a review into opportunity and integration*, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf>

[343] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. 2018. *Integrated Communities Strategy: summary of consultation responses and government response*, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/777160/Integrated_Communities_Strategy_Government_Response.pdf>

Young People

Youth work is a longstanding and crucial element in enabling our young people to lead positive lives and build resilience. In every part of the country we visited, we heard from local authorities, community groups and national associations, such as UK Youth, about the negative effect of funding cuts on youth services, and the related increases in the risk of young people becoming involved in all kinds of anti-social activity, including, potentially, extremism. Many told us that BSBT was the only source of funding available for youth work. Other sources of funding for youth work must be made available as not all funding for youth work should come from a counter extremism fund.

The CE Strategy is silent on this, but did commit to expanding the National Citizen Service, a social action project that builds 16-17-year-olds' skills for work and life.[344] This programme, and other quality youth work are a crucial part of building a stronger country.

Violence Against Women and Girls

The CE Strategy included commitments on reducing the illegal cultural practices of honour-based violence, FGM and forced marriage (FM).[345] These are all behaviours by which the rights of people within communities, almost always women, are restricted. These practices must be stopped in our country and victims and survivors should be able to access specialist support.

These practices are rightly included in the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG), alongside other forms of violence such as domestic violence, rape and assault. Yet Government did not include those forms of VAWG in the current Counter-Extremism Strategy, instead only including those forms of violence which predominantly impact women from BAME communities.

Violence impacts women and girls from all backgrounds, faiths and cultures. Gender inequality is a consequence of wider political, cultural and societal factors. Government, led by the Government Equalities Office, is responsible for addressing such inequality, and "illegal cultural practices" should be tackled in that context. However, there are some hateful extremists, including Islamists, the Far Right and so-called Incels, who promote hatred and violence against women and girls as part of their ideologies.

> **The role of counter extremism in tackling these harms should be restricted to tackling this hateful propaganda when it is promoted by extremists. More research needs to be done into how hateful extremism can often be a gendered phenomenon across these different ideologies, and understanding better the scale of these movements across England and Wales.**

Countering Extremism in Wales

Wales agreed to adopt the 2015 Counter-Extremism Strategy and is receiving funding for elements of it, including the BSBT programme and Community Coordinators. Our research has covered Wales, with Welsh input to the call for evidence and NatCen focus groups, as well as engagement taking

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344 Home Office. 2015. *Counter-Extremism Strategy*, 19 October 2015, CM9149, p.38, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf>

345 Home Office. 2015. *Counter Extremism Strategy*, pp.37-39, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf>

place with Welsh Government, public bodies, and civil society.

Extremism in Wales is broadly similar to that in England, though different in scale. There were concerns about a small but troubling Islamist problem predominantly in the south. More widespread were concerns about many different strands of the Far Right. Wales has experienced Far Right terrorism, for example, with the attempted murder of a Sikh man by Zack Davies in response to the killing of Lee Rigby. More common is hateful extremism, such as the activities of individuals formerly associated with National Action.[346] Minority civil society groups told us prevalent racism was contributing to extremism in Wales.

The relationships between Government and communities in Wales are generally more trusting than in England. Ten of the 234 BSBT groups in the BSBT network deliver work in Wales.[347] We heard concerns that work was too focused on Cardiff, to the detriment of other vulnerable areas.

Many of the powers to tackle rights restriction and hateful extremism are devolved, particularly on education and integration. The Prevent duty applies to both England and Wales, as does the Equality and Human Rights Acts. Estyn, the body that inspects schools across Wales incorporated the wider Prevent duty into their inspection frameworks from 2015.[348]

Recognising the differences in the threat and response to extremism in Wales, we want to build on the good relationship we have. We will discuss with the Welsh Government what parts of our proposed research programme are most relevant to them. We will also continue to make sure that any trials of new interventions are suitable for Wales, and ensure they remain connected to our work to strengthen leadership in countering extremism across public bodies and civil society.

[346] Daniel de Simone. 2018. 'National Action: The new parents and the neo-Nazi terror threat', *BBC*, 12 November 2018, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-45919730>
[347] Call for Evidence
[348] Estyn. 2015. *Guidance for the inspection of all-age schools*, September 2015, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/guidance-inspection-all-age-schools>

What Is Civil and Wider Society Doing?

A whole range of positive activities and programmes have taken place across civil society. Charities and think-tanks have expanded their work to counter extremism. Since 2016, groups like CST and TellMAMA have raised the alarm on the growing problems of racial and religious hatred we are seeing online and offline.

Yet society and other non-government bodies can and need to do more to counter extremism. As Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu recently remarked, policing alone is not going to be sufficient to counter extremism; the work of civil society is vital in this regard.[349]

Abuse of Counter Extremists

Counter extremists often receive more abuse than support. Across the country people told us about the personal abuse they suffer, including racist and sexist abuse. Some have faced unacceptable vilification in an attempt to smear and silence counter extremists that they are "Islamophobic", a "native informant", "not a real Jew", "anti-Panthic", a "sell out", "an Uncle Tom" a "coconut" or that they are part of a state-led conspiracy, and much more. Some have been shunned by family and friends; had events shut down due to safety concerns, and, in some cases, people have been forced to move away from their local area for their own protection. Some have even received death and rape threats. This abuse dissuades people from

countering extremism. As one counter extremist said:

"The constant abuse also affects mental health, it can make one edgy or nervous going out in public especially with their family. It makes me feel it's not worth the fight."[350]

For example, this year a mosque in Golders Green was pressured into cancelling an exhibition about Albanian Muslims' support for Jews during the Holocaust. The exhibition was eventually hosted by Eton Road Mosque, which itself was the subject of protest and complaint for doing so. Mosque staff received phone calls intended to intimidate them into cancelling the event.[351]

In response to our call for evidence, we received several responses that talked of the challenges they felt in countering extremism. Southall Black Sisters described how one of their members had received misogynistic threats on social media for exposing Sikh fundamentalists that were seeking to disrupt inter-faith marriages. They also described how atheists, secularists and other dissidents (such as Bangladeshi bloggers) have been increasingly targeted for violence by fundamentalists.[352]

The CEMB, an organisation that represents former Muslims that have renounced Islam, told us that many Islamic Societies at universities across the country had refused to give CEMB members a platform, because the CEMB was, in their eyes, Islamophobic. One

[349] Vikram Dodd. 2019. 'Counter-terror chief says policing alone cannot beat extremism', *The Guardian*, 6 August 2019, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/aug/06/counter-terrorism-chief-calls-for-greater-social-inclusion>

[350] Counter Extremist Survey 2019

[351] Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. *Lead Commissioner Sara Khan on the work of the Commission*, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/lead-commissioner-sara-khan-on-the-work-of-the-commission>

[352] Call for Evidence

spokesperson that had been allowed to speak was violently threatened at the event[353].

We heard similar claims as we toured the country from councillors who, having publicly challenged extremism, had been labelled Islamophobic.

We ran an online survey to better understand the extent of such abuse and its impact. This was a short survey of nine questions, which could be completed anonymously. Respondents were recruited by email. We sent the survey to counter extremism practitioners we have engaged with, community coordinators and Prevent coordinators nationally; they were free to forward it on to others in the field. The survey ran for five days and received 83 responses, including from those who identified as working in civil society, education, integration, local government and counter terrorism. Given that the counter extremism field is comparatively small, we cannot exclude the possibility that respondents to this survey included some who had previously responded to our Call for Evidence.

Seventy-eight per cent (n=65) of overall respondents had experienced abuse, intimidation or harassment because of the work they do or for receiving government funding for countering extremism work.[354] Respondents were asked to select from a list of financial, physical or social consequences of this abuse. The impacts they described are significant. Of the 65 respondents who told us that they had experienced abuse, intimidation or harassment, over a third (36%) said that their relationships with family and friends

have been affected and 32% said they have been ostracised by their community. Just over half (51%) reported apprehension about speaking up online or in public, 45% reported suffered stress, anxiety or panic attacks and four in ten (40%) reported feeling a threat to their physical safety.

One respondent said:

"As a Muslim, I have been referred to as an MI5 agent, a snitch, and previous 'friends' have been less friendly with me. I think Muslims who work on CE/CT issues carry much more risk than other colleagues, due to the communities we work with"[355]

Another respondent told us:

"My work is affected as I am accused of being a spy, a sell-out, a coconut, a munafiq – religious hypocrite, and kuffar a non-believer. Mentally it impacts my well-being. Being British and Muslim should never be a test of loyalty to one or the other."

Respondents were asked whether they reported the abuse and to select from a list of reporting channels, including to the police and to social media companies. Of the 65 respondents who told us that they had experienced abuse, around seven in ten (71%) selected at least one of these channels. Of the 46 who experienced abuse and went on to report it, responses were mixed: with 22 reporting being satisfied with

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[353] Call for Evidence
[354] This includes two individuals who answered "no" to the question "Have you personally received abuse, intimidation or harassment because of your work countering extremism?", but answered "yes" to "Have you ever received abuse, intimidation or harassment because you have received government funding for delivering countering extremism work?".
[355] Counter Extremist Survey 2019

the response and 24 being dissatisfied'. One respondent said:

"Sometimes social media companies act appropriately, taking down accounts etc. However, increasingly, Jewish activists I interact with are having their social media accounts disabled – preventing us from speaking out and telling our history."

Another respondent told us:

"Last year, a work colleague endorsed tweets denouncing me and another colleague as racists and Islamophobes, who should be sacked from our posts [...]. The [organisation] was much more concerned with protecting the perpetrator than protecting us as victims."[356]

We heard similar stories everywhere we went about this toxic culture of abuse experienced by ethnic minorities from other ethnic minorities, usually within the same faith group, including with Jewish, Sikh and Muslim communities.

We judge that this vilification of faith groups who are engaged in delivering vital counter extremism work to be having a chilling effect on freedom of expression.

We are aware that it has caused some faith groups, in particular women's groups, to withdraw from this work entirely because of the abuse and harassment they have endured. We must do more to challenge those engaged in such behaviour and show support to those who are delivering much needed counter extremism work.

Civil Society

As with many social ills, such as racism or misogyny, individuals and communities speaking up against hate is indispensable. Whilst gathering evidence for this report, and particularly on our tour of the country, we have been impressed by the large number of courageous people that work to improve the resilience of their communities.

The Government can and should only do so much to counter extremism. Wider civil society has many roles to play, from setting social norms to responding to offensive yet lawful speech. Religious leaders should lead on developing religious counter-narratives.

For instance, some mosques in London, particularly the East London Mosque (ELM), have in the past been used as locations for talks and sermons given by homophobic Islamic preachers and speakers. In 2011 (and in the context of rising LGBT+ hate crime in Tower Hamlets), this led some activists (journalist Julie Bindel and Pride trustee Colm Howard-Lloyd) to urge the ELM to ban homophobic clerics.[357] Peter Tatchell has led the way on challenging homophobia within religious groups and we would like to see more organisations that campaign for human rights to follow suit.

Funding can also be a concern for counter extremist organisations. There is limited government funding. Funding from philanthropists is not generally forthcoming, possibly also due to the controversy and abuse that counter extremism projects can attract. We have spoken to many groups that are struggling for lack of funding and operating on a shoe-string.

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[356] Counter Extremist Survey 2019. Name of organisation removed for privacy reasons.

[357] Riazat Butt. 2011. 'Ban homophobic clerics from mosques, gay rights campaigners urge', *The Guardian*, 9 June 2011, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/09/gay-rights-london-mosques>

Challenging Youth Racism

Challenging Youth Racism is a project run jointly by Teesside University and Humankind. The project aims to challenge racism. We would like to see projects like this target hateful extremist narratives.[358]

The CYR team developed a combination of workshops and full-day racism awareness interventions in response to concerns around high levels of prejudice and discrimination and disproportionate levels of racially and religiously motivated hate crime within the North East of England. The project delivered sessions to over 7,500 young people aged 11-19 between July 2016 and June 2019. Interim results showed that 85% of participants in workshops had maintained or increased their acceptance of people of different religions, nationalities and/or skin colours; 91% of young people maintained or increased their understanding of how racist behaviour impacts people. In the full-day racism awareness programmes 73% of participants maintained or increased their willingness to challenge or report people responsible for racist behaviour.[359]

Yet, in the face of such obstacles, many civil society groups are doing great work to challenge extremism and associated problems in their communities.

We are concerned about actions by well-meaning individuals and groups within civil society that can undermine efforts to counter extremism. Some anti-racist organisations and human rights groups lend legitimacy and support to groups which engage in hateful extremist behaviours. Others make false or misleading claims about others.

Amnesty International engaged with Cageprisoners (now known as CAGE) for many years on the specific issue of UK complicity in torture overseas, due to CAGE's experience in that area, despite the well-known concerns that this report also identifies and were known at the time.[360] Their collaboration ended abruptly in 2015 after a CAGE spokesperson refused to condemn violence such as FGM and stoning.[361]

We accept that a certain level of pragmatism must guide the activities of non-governmental organisations that work in complex or contested areas. However, as Professor Chetan Bhatt notes, at issue was the deep extensive working alliance that had developed between Amnesty International, Begg and CAGE, raising the broader question about "the paucity of progressive human rights vision that enabled such alliances."[362]

Inaccurate allegations of extremism can be very damaging, to the person accused, the organisation making the accusation and the field of countering extremism. We are aware of both left wing and right wing think-tanks who have occasionally published inaccurate claims about certain Muslims.[363]

[358] Humankind. 'Challenging youth racism', (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://humankindcharity.org.uk/service/challenging-youth-racism>
[359] Humankind and Teesside University. 2019. 'Challenging Youth Racism: Project Report', pp.4-5, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/DocRepo/School%20of%20Social%20Sciences%20and%20Law/CYR_Report_2019.pdf>
[360] Economist. 2015. "A reputation risk", 5 March 2015, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.economist.com/britain/2015/03/05/a-reputation-at-risk>
[361] Amnesty International UK. 2017. 'Amnesty International responds to questions about Cage', 16 February 2017, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-international-responds-questions-about-cage>
[362] Chetan Bhatt. 2017. 'Human rights activism and salafi-jihadi violence', *The International Journal of Human Rights*, p.11, (accessed: 21 August 2019)
[363] Southern Poverty Law Centre, 'SPLC apology to Maajid Nawaz and the Quilliam Foundation', [video file] (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.splcenter.org/splc-statement-video>

Politicians

We have seen that politicians have, in recent years, been on the receiving end of significant amounts of abuse and hatred. This is deeply concerning and more needs to be done to address this problem.

We also want politicians to set high standards in calling out and challenging hateful extremism. We have seen brilliant examples of politicians supporting victims, confronting hateful extremists and supporting counter extremism work in their constituencies.

But we have also seen many examples of activity that is counter-productive to the achievement of our vision, from politicians, both nationally and locally.

We heard from victims how in some cases politicians would side with and support powerful and influential perpetrators of hateful extremism and rights restriction, often community or faith leaders.[364] This was often the case if such leaders held significant influence in minority communities and were able to encourage communities to vote for a particular politician.

We also heard from counter extremists who were exasperated with the lack of understanding demonstrated by politicians who would support or share platforms with extremists with no challenge. In some cases counter extremists have been working to counter the hatred advocated by such groups, only to find their local MP supporting or advocating for them. This undermines the work of counter extremism.

We have seen how some extremist groups often use the language of human rights and equality to present a veneer of respectability;

many actively seek out politicians to help provide legitimacy to their hateful cause. It is of great importance therefore that politicians recognise this and undertake greater due diligence.

More widely, all politicians and political parties should adopt zero tolerance policies to all forms of racism, intolerance and extremism. Actively calling out such hate is needed to help maintain social norms in our country. Equally, the impact of not calling out such hatred when it is presented can be just as harmful in weakening the social fabric of our society.

> **Firm leadership is required. It is crucial that politicians, at national and local level, challenge extremism when it arises, avoid giving legitimacy to those who spread hate, and listen to victims of hateful extremism. At the same time, we would call on politicians to use the word extremism with precision and care and not use it to casually label opponents. Overuse can create a climate of censorship, undermining pluralism and furthering hate – and make challenging hateful extremism more difficult.**

Media

A free press is vital for a healthy democracy. We need a print and broadcast media that investigates, interrogates and challenges fearlessly. The freedom to offend is a necessary part of that. The media should not be censored or self-censor out of fear of offending sensibilities.

Print and broadcast media play a vital role in our society by shining a light on extremism and the divisive tactics of extremists.

[364] Call for Evidence

Traditional media and online news outlets are subject to different regulatory standards. Despite the existence of industry regulators (Ofcom, IPSO and Impress, although IPSO is on a voluntary basis), the lack of a legal definition of extremism means that there is little guidance on reporting standards, nor is it contained in the objectives of Ofcom or IPSO.[365] Regulators told us that the right to freedom of expression and the journalistic duty to publish matters in the public interest were factors to consider in the balance

between giving extremists an unwarranted platform and legitimately reporting on and interrogating a wide range of views.

In some cases, the press does a very good job of reporting on the issues raised in this report in a balanced way. Examples include investigative reports exposing the finances behind Stephen Yaxley-Lennon[366], Andrew Neil's challenging of Asim Qureshi on claims made by CAGE[367] or the reporting on the resurgent activism of Hizb ut-Tahrir and their

[365] Call for Evidence

[366] Josh Halliday, Lois Beckett and Caelainn Barr. 2019. 'Revealed: the hidden global network behind Tommy Robinson', *The Guardian,* (accessed: 8 August 2019) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/dec/07/tommy-robinson-global-support-brexit-march>

[367] BBC. 2015. 'Cage quizzed on claims about security services, jailings and killings', *This Week*, 6 March 2015, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0610blb>

targeting of young people on campus and in communities.[368]

As part of our research for our case study in Sunderland, we met the managing editor of the Sunderland Echo. Sunderland has a recent history of Far Right marches and the Sunderland Echo has always made a point of refusing to give coverage to them out of an abhorrence of what they represented. However, when an issue arose that was so newsworthy that it made publication irresistible, the team at the Sunderland Echo considered how to report it very carefully. In the end they did not report, although they did publish some quotations from the campaigners. When they explained their thought process to us, we were impressed with the level of detail that their considerations went into. We are sure that many if not most journalists behave in a similar way prior to publication.

In some cases, however, media reporting is found to be inaccurate and misleading, particularly with respect to the portrayal of Muslims and Islam. Complaints have been upheld against articles that claimed "mosques fundraising for terror"[369] and that included a grossly inaccurate statistic about the number of British Muslims that sympathised with jihadis.[370] Sweeping statements, lazy stereotypes and loose reporting can demonise and misrepresent entire communities, unwittingly contribute

to xenophobia and play into the hands of extremists.

While the media need to ensure they don't portray a monolithic and stereotypical image of Muslims, equally they must not present Islamist activists as ordinary Muslims. We urge those that work in traditional media to ensure that they undertake due diligence on their sources and guests as rigorously as possible; check whether they are portraying individuals as spokespeople for entire groups, and that they are consistent in their reporting of extremist incidents.

We also call on the media to refrain from gratuitously republishing extremist propaganda or titillating detail about terrorist or extremist incidents that might inadvertently promote the beliefs or glorify the actions of those involved.

Extremists such as Anjem Choudhary were often given a platform by media and broadcasters. His organisation, the first UK-based proscribed Islamist group ALM deliberately engaged in provocative campaigns known as "media jihad" to gain notoriety. Whilst reporting on this behaviour was to be expected, excessive reporting can reinforce opposing extremist views. Former EDL organiser-turned-counter-extremist, Ivan Humble, said that it was "Anjem Choudhary on the talk shows, chat shows and newspapers" which led to him holding Far Right views. Humble complained that it was too often Choudhary that was the "go-to

[368] Neil Johnston 2018. 'Extremists Hizb ut-Tahrir targeting inner-city youth in Birmingham', *The Times*, 22 September 2018, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/extremists-hizb-ut-tahrir-targeting-inner-city-youth-in-birmingham-r2nfrfr08>; Sami Quadri and Courtney Bartlett. 2019. 'Oxford University suspends jihad-supporting student, 21, for trying to recruit for an extreme Islamist group', *Daily Mail*, 9 March 2019, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6787897/Oxford-University-suspends-jihad-supporting-student-trying-recruit-extreme-Islamist-group.html>

[369] IPSO. 2016. '11868-15 Versi v Daily Star on Sunday', 31 March 2016, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.ipso.co.uk/rulings-and-resolutionstatements/ruling/?id=11868-15>

[370] IPSO. 2016. '09324-15 Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) v The Sun', 17 February 2016, (accessed: 4 September 2019) <https://www.ipso.co.uk/rulings-and-resolution-statements/ruling/?id=09324-15>

Muslim" for the media even after the horrific murder of Lee Rigby in 2013.[371]

As the example of the Sunderland Echo showed, there is a delicate balance that must be struck by media organisations to report on such incidents. We do not suggest that they should stifle healthy debate by de-platforming all challenging individuals. Andrew Neil's interview with Asim Qureshi – testing the group's claims that some British people have been tortured and killed "on the whim of the British security agents" – shows how public platforms can be used to challenge narratives.[372]

Another example of problematic reporting is the difference in tone that some outlets use to describe different forms of extremism.

Media monitoring firm Signal A.I. showed that Islamist attackers are three times more likely to be called terrorists in the media than Far Right attackers.[373] Indeed, as the Quilliam Foundation pointed out in a 2016 article after the murder of Jo Cox MP, Thomas Mair was described completely differently from the murderers of Lee Rigby, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale.[374] He was portrayed as a loner and a "deeply disturbed man" who was "mentally ill", despite being found by a court to be fit to stand trial and being motivated "for the purpose of advancing a political cause – violent white supremacism".[375] We urge broadcasters and the press to show consistency when reporting Islamist and Far Right extremism.

[371] BBC Newsnight. 2018. 'Tommy Robinson: "You didn't expose abuse"', YouTube [video file], 11 October 2018, (accessed: 20 August 2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqjpna8aLBE>

[372] BBC. 2015. 'Cage quizzed on claims about security services, jailings and killings', *This Week*, 6 March 2015, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0610blb>

[373] Ben Moore. 2019. 'Lessons from Christchurch: How the media finally acknowledged far-right terrorism', *Signal AI*, 3 April 2019, (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://www.signal-ai.com/blog/lessons-from-christchurch-how-the-media-finally-acknowledged-far-right-terrorism>

[374] Haras Rafiq and Douglas Hamilton. 2016. 'Thomas Mair is just as much a terrorist as the men who murdered Lee Rigby', *The Telegraph*, 25 November 2016, (accessed: 15 August) <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/25/thomas-mair-just-much-terrorist-men-killed-lee-rigby/>

[375] Adam Sherwin 2017. 'John Humphrys criticised for saying Jo Cox killer Thomas Mair was not a terrorist', *iNews*, 6 March 2017 (accessed: 15 August 2019) <https://inews.co.uk/culture/radio/john-humphrys-criticised-saying-jo-cox-killer-thomas-mair-not-terrorist/>

Part Four: Introducing A Human Rights-Based Approach to Countering Extremism

> *"In my role as the Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism I see how extremism threatens and undermines human rights. As a long-standing human rights advocate who has been working to counter extremism for more than a decade, I have always been struck by how extremists of all persuasions and ideologies, have a fundamental opposition to human rights and equality. Their activism is based on othering; they seek to deny the human rights of others who they consider to be part of the out-group and engage in hatred towards them.*
>
> *Far right extremists often promote hostility of ethnic minorities, Jews, Muslims and others. Whether encouraging discrimination and advocating for such policies, or even calling for violence, such groups of people are considered to be sub-human or not worthy of the same human dignity as them. The very notion of human rights is rejected wholesale.*
>
> *We also see hatred and hostility by Islamist extremists: hatred towards non-Muslims, Jews and other Muslims. Women's rights and LGBTQ rights are despised. Freedom of expression, religion or belief and non-discrimination are rejected by extremists. Other similarities can be seen with extremists of all kinds.*
>
> *Countering extremism is a human rights issue, yet sadly this is something that is not recognised enough. This must change. If we care about protecting human rights, challenging extremists is a vital area of work, as the latter threaten these rights."* [376]
>
> - *Sara Khan, Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism, on the 70th anniversary of the UN adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10th Dec 2018*

During our work we have spoken to a range of human rights experts, including lawyers, NGOs and UN Special Rapporteurs, as well as having commissioned papers from two academics to look at the implementation of human rights in counter extremism.

A rights-based approach has long been a standing tradition and culture of our country. From Magna Carta in 1215, to our country's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the key role the UK played in the drafting of the European Convention on Human Rights to, more recently, the adoption of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010, the balancing of rights between individuals is vital in a democracy.

The UK also has human rights obligations under international law. The UK has signed and ratified seven UN human rights treaties and pledged to make sure its domestic laws and policies comply with them. The UK's compliance with these treaties is monitored by the Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Parliament and civil society.

Human rights organisations have predominately focused on the impact counter terrorism and counter extremism has had on other civil liberties. This is understandable when we have often seen how authoritarian countries seek to silence dissent and undermine human rights in the name of counter extremism and counter terrorism. It is vital that the framework of human rights

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[376] Sara Khan. 2018. 'Sara Khan: Extremists are undermining our human rights and we must challenge them', *Civil Society*, (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/voices/sara-khan-extremists-are-undermining-our-human-rights-we-must-challenge-them.html>

continues to ensure the checks and balances of Government policy, including counter extremism policy, are in place.

However, few human rights organisations have focused on protecting human rights as a consequence of extremist activity. Extremism itself and the need to counter it, is a human rights issue, yet sadly this is something that is not recognised enough. It is critical to not only focus on the security implications, but also the curtailment of a broad range of rights as a result of extremism. The protection of human rights also means challenging extremists as they seek to undermine these rights.

Article 17 of the European Convention on Human Rights[377], which has been incorporated into UK law through the Human Rights Act, prohibits the abuse or destruction of the rights and freedoms listed in the Convention. This Article has a very clear link with democracy. The general purpose of Article 17 is "to prevent totalitarian or extremist groups (who advocate totalitarian ideology and other political ideas incompatible with democracy) from exploiting in their own interests the principles enunciated by the Convention" and to provide "democracies with the means of combating acts and activities which destroy or unduly restrict fundamental rights and freedoms, whether those acts or activities are carried out by a 'State', 'a group' or an 'individual.'"[378]

There is extensive human rights case law and analysis on terrorism and violence, and on discrimination or the restriction of rights.

> **As we have now focused our attention and future work on hateful extremism, our first conclusion is that a fuller analysis of how equality and human rights law applies to hateful extremism is required.**

Human rights law and discourse on terrorism and violence is almost universally agreed around the fact that:

"Terrorism constitutes a serious threat to human rights and democracy. While action by states is necessary to prevent and effectively sanction terrorist acts, not all means are justifiable. There is a compelling duty for states to protect the general interest of public security and the rule of law without jeopardizing the core of human rights"[379]

"Terrorism has a direct impact on the enjoyment of a number of human rights, in particular the rights to life, liberty and physical integrity. Terrorist acts can destabilize Governments, undermine civil society, jeopardize peace and security, threaten social and economic development, and may especially negatively affect certain groups. All of these have a direct impact on the enjoyment of fundamental human rights."[380]

States are allowed under human rights law to use highly intrusive and coercive powers to investigate potential terrorists and to stop acts of terrorism from taking place. At the same time, this must be balanced with

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[377] European Convention on Human Rights. (accessed: 9 September) <https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf>

[378] European Court of Human Rights. 2019. *Guide on Article 17 of the European Convention of Human Rights: Prohibition on abuse of rights*, 1st Ed., 31 March 2019, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Guide_Art_17_ENG.pdf>

[379] Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Counter terrorism and human rights protection*, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/thematic-work/counter-terrorism>

[380] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2008. *Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-terrorism*, July 2008, Factsheet No. 32, p.7, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet32EN.pdf>

upholding the freedoms that the Government are seeking to protect. All UK counter terrorism legislation is debated and can be challenged.

"Governments have a responsibility to protect those within their jurisdiction from extremist attacks but must ensure that all counter terrorism measures respect human rights."[381]

One of the few policies in legislation that has a significant, direct counter extremism focus is the Prevent duty, contained in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This places a duty on certain public bodies to take measures to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

In Butt v Home Secretary, the Court of Appeal upheld the lawfulness of the Prevent Duty Guidance's mentions of non-violent extremism on the basis that the Guidance is only directed at non-violent extremism where it is of a kind such as to risk drawing people into terrorism.[382]

The Court of Appeal struck down a specific paragraph within the Higher Education Prevent Duty Guidance (paragraph 11), because in drafting and promulgating the Guidance the Secretary of State did not properly reflect the balance between the duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and the need to ensure freedom of speech in universities.

It should be noted, however, that this was not specifically a question of human rights law; it was a balancing of statutory obligations

in sections 26 and 31 of the CTSA 2015. The Court of Appeal did not find that Dr Butt's Article 10 freedom of speech rights were infringed as he failed to establish that the Guidance had had any concrete impact on him and thus he was not a 'victim' and entitled to bring such a claim under section 7(1) of the HRA 1998.

Despite the Court's finding that paragraph 11 of the Higher Education Prevent Duty Guidance potentially fettered freedom of speech in universities, Professor Fenwick observes that such a restriction of free speech in universities was probably not occurring in practice and that there are no strong grounds for the fear of a chilling effect.[383]

The restriction of freedom of expression as a consequence of counter extremism work has been a long concern. This was one of the concerns about the proposed Counter Extremism Bill in 2015. Freedom of expression, including views that may shock, disturb or offend the deeply held beliefs of others is a fundamental right protected under the Human Rights Act 1998. Any restrictions on freedom of expression must be clearly set out in law, necessary in a democratic society for a legitimate aim, and proportionate.

Freedom of expression, however, is a qualified right and may be limited in some circumstances; it does not for example protect statements that unlawfully discriminate against or harass, or incite violence or hatred against, other persons and groups, particularly by reference to their race, religious belief, gender or sexual orientation.

[381] Human Rights Watch, 'Terrorism/Counterterrorism' (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.hrw.org/topic/terrorism-counterterrorism>
[382] Butt v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2019] EWCA Civ 256
[383] Helen Fenwick. 2019. 'Critiquing approaches to countering extremism via certain preventive measures', p.9 (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/critiquing-approaches-to-countering-extremism-via-certain-preventive-measures>

Nor can anyone rely on the human right to freedom of expression to limit or undermine the human rights of others.[384]

A recent fact-sheet on the prohibition of abuse of rights as guaranteed under ECHR Article 17 provided by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) sets out that court's approach to issues where freedom of expression is balanced against other Convention rights.

This outlines two different approaches that the ECtHR takes to cases of incitement to hatred and freedom of expression:

The approach of exclusion from the protection of the Convention, provided for by Article 17 (prohibition of abuse of rights), where the comments in question amount to hate speech and negate the fundamental values of the Convention; and

The approach of setting restrictions on protection, provided for by Article 10, paragraph 2, of the Convention (this approach is adopted where the speech in question, although it is hate speech, is not apt to destroy the fundamental values of the Convention).[385]

The fact-sheet provides examples of cases where each approach has been taken. Cases where the court has considered the first approach to be most appropriate, from the details given in the fact-sheet, appear to fall within hateful extremism. These include hateful acts including promotion of propaganda motivated by deep-seated hostility towards other religions and races, to the promotion of totalitarian doctrines. Cases where they took the second approach are more divided between those which are likely to be hateful extremism, and those that aren't.

Separate to this, the ECtHR has considered one case that directly addresses an extremist group – the Islamist group Hizb ut-Tahrir. Under its Laws of Association, Germany's Federal Ministry of the Interior banned Hizb ut-Tahrir in 2003. In its summary of the case, the ECtHR said:

"Basing its decision on a number of publications attributed to the association, in particular articles published in a magazine, leaflets and information published on the association's website, the Ministry concluded that the association denied the State of Israel the right to exist and called for its destruction, as well as for the killing of Jews. The association advocated an "active Jihad", targeting Islamic States and their governments, calling for their overthrow. In the Ministry's view, the association was moreover not a political party, as it did not intend to stand for elections in Germany, and, as it pursued political rather than religious objectives, it was not to be considered a religious or philosophical community."[386]

The ECtHR fully upheld the German decision and made clear that in the court's opinion it was justified as Hizb ut-Tahrir was engaging

[384] Equality and Human Rights Commission. 2019. *Freedom of expression: a guide for higher education providers and students' unions in England and Wales*, (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/freedom-expression-guide-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england>

[385] European Court of Human Rights. 2019. *Hate speech – Factsheet,* p.1, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Hate_speech_ENG.pdf>

[386] European Court of Human Rights. 2012. *Complaint about prohibition of Islamic organisation's activities in Germany declared inadmissible*, 19 June 2012, ECHR 260, p.1, (accessed: 12 August 2019) <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-3990319-4641224&filename=003-3990319-4641224.pdf&TID=thkbhnilzk>

in "act[s] aimed at destroying...the rights and freedoms set forth in the Convention".[387] This case was made under German law and is not transferable to current British law.

All these cases suggest that human rights provide a space for responding firmly to those who are undermining the entire basis of human rights, not just specific rights.

Some groups like CAGE, for example, are often considered to be advocates for human rights.[388] They claim to believe in the "basic concepts of universal human dignity"[389] and advocate "against human rights abuses".[390]

In agreement with Professor Chetan Bhatt, however, it is our view that when CAGE's activism, beliefs and behaviours are examined closely, their claims to be standing up for the rule of law are exposed as a cover to legitimise their activism. This view is based on Professor Bhatt's evidence that CAGE is, "unmistakably an outgrowth of several UK sectarian ideological tendencies that have ranged from salafi-jihadi to political Islamist in orientation" and the group's "consistent support" for Salafi-Jihadi ideologues, including Anwar Al-Awlaki.[391]

Similarly, the English Defence League also claimed to be an anti-racist human rights organisation while in fact promoting Islamophobic narratives.[392]

As we have shown in Part One, senior leaders in these groups or the individuals they have supported or invited to speak have promoted hateful extremism by amplifying hatred towards others or equivocating about violence.[393]

The very notion of human rights, as identified by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is based on core values which include universality, equality, non-discrimination, indivisibility; and which are interdependent and interrelated. Human rights are based on the premise of the inherent dignity and equality of all human beings and so promoting one set of rights while undermining or violating the rights of others is antithetical to human rights principles.

We recognise that many organisations focus on a single human rights cause, for example children's rights, women's rights or LGBT+ rights, and do not expect such organisations to campaign on human rights issues outside their field. However it is the Commission's view that organisations that promote hateful extremist agendas - aimed at the destruction or restriction of others' rights and wider fundamental freedoms - should not be viewed as human rights defenders.

It is the Commission's view that organisations that promote hateful extremist agendas – aimed at the destruction or restriction of

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[387] European Court of Human Rights. 2012. *Complaint about prohibition of Islamic organisation's activities in Germany declared inadmissible*, 19 June 2012, ECHR 260, p.3, (accessed: 12 August 2019) < https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-3990319-4641224&filename=003-3990319-4641224.pdf&TID=thkbhnilzk>

[388] Henrietta McMicking. 2017. 'Cage: Important human rights group or apologists for terror?', *BBC*, 27 February 2015, (accessed: 9 September 2019) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31657333>

[389] CAGE. response to 'Is CAGE a human rights organisation like other well-known ones?', (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://www.cage.ngo/about-us>

[390] CAGE. response to 'Are CAGE apologists for extremism and terrorists?', (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://www.cage.ngo/about-us>

[391] Chetan Bhatt, 2017. 'Human rights activism and salafi-jihadi violence', p.12, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, (accessed: 21 August 2019) <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/80349/1/Bhatt_Human%20rights%20activism_2017.pdf>

[392] George Kassimeris and Leonie Jackson. 2014. *The Ideology and Discourse of the English Defence League*, British Journal of Politics and International Relations, p.1-17, <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/31846/3/__nas01_librhome_librsh3_Desktop_The%20ideology%20and%20discourse%20of%20the%20English%20Defence%20League.pdf>

[393] For the EDL see page 35; for CAGE see pages 44 and 45

rights of others and wider fundamental freedoms – should not be viewed as human rights defenders.

In their analysis of human rights law and hatred, the human rights and free speech campaign group Article 19 set out 4 clear categories – (1) behaviours that must be made unlawful, (2) those that can be made unlawful, (3) those that should not be made unlawful but should be challenged, and (4) those that are lawful and intolerant but yet must not be restricted.[394]

As outlined above, terrorist activity often falls under behaviour that must be made unlawful. We believe hateful extremism falls under both lawful and unlawful activity; where lawful, the role of civil society in challenging such hate speech and extremist narratives is vital.

However, responses to extremism cannot be made solely on the basis of freedom of expression. Proportionality demands a more thorough assessment of the activity of extremists and the harms and impact it is having on victims and on our society. We do not believe a full assessment has been made of the harms of extremism, whether lawful or not.

To date there has been little appreciation of victims of extremism and their experiences; how extremists target them and the resulting abuse, harassment and denigration of their rights. Extremist activity has itself often resulted in discrimination, incitement of hate, harassment, equivocation for violence, censorship and a chilling impact on freedom of expression and freedom of religion or

belief. Greater assessment of extremist activity needs to be undertaken, including the persistent nature and context of that activity and the intended audience and outcome to be able to judge more fairly whether current legislation is sufficient or insufficient in responding to hateful extremism.

The role of governments in countering extremist discourse is outlined by the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights. Governments must ensure there is a counterweight to fundamentalist and extremist discourses by publicly challenging them and guaranteeing education which strengthens respect of human rights, promotes understanding and tolerance.

States must:

"a) stop supporting directly or indirectly fundamentalist or extremist ideologies; b) protect all persons from any act of fundamentalist or extremist groups aimed at coercing them into specific identities, beliefs or practices; and c) design programmes aimed at creating conditions allowing all people to access, participate in and contribute to cultural life, without discrimination."[395]

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights who held expert workshops on the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred recognises the complexity of balancing freedom of expression and the prohibition of incitement to hatred. However, "states should ensure that the three-part test – legality, proportionality and necessity – for restrictions to freedom of expression also

[394] Article 19. 2015. 'Hate Speech Explained: A Toolkit', (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.article19.org/data/files/medialibrary/38231/%27HateSpeech%27-Explained---A-Toolkit-%282015-Edition%29.pdf>

[395] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2017. *Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights*, A/HRC/34/56, 16 January 2017, p.7, (accessed: 22 August 2019) <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/007/43/PDF/G1700743.pdf?OpenElement>

applies to cases of incitement to hatred."[396] Great analysis of the harms of extremism and current responses through the prism of proportionality and necessity is vital.

All these sources suggest that while there are complicated human rights issues to consider when countering extremism, there is a path through the debate by taking a rights-based approach. Activities that seek to undermine a liberal democratic society require a response. What must be balanced are the other rights that are infringed when that extremism is countered.

One weakness of human rights law that has been touched on by human rights experts we have spoken to is that as a state-centric mechanism, it predominantly covers the vertical relationship of an individual with the state. However, when non-state actors violate the rights of other non-state actors, i.e. the horizontal relationships between individuals, or between civil society bodies, the enforcement of these rights becomes more difficult. The application of human rights at this level needs to be addressed in both human rights theory and practice to ensure violations are not being experienced by victims at the hands of non-state actors.

[396] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2013. *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the expert workshops on the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred*, A/HRC/22/17/Add.4, 11 January 2013, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/SeminarRabat/Rabat_draft_outcome.pdf>

Part Five: Recommendations for Challenging Hateful Extremism

The work of countering extremism has often been viewed in a negative light. It involves difficult conversations with people we can find disagreeable, provocative and hateful. But our new approach keeps the good that we are trying to protect at its heart. Our democracy and the democratic debate that supports it. Our social cohesion. Our human rights principles.

We have seen evidence of a wide range of issues being called, or dealt with, under the broad term of extremism. The breadth of these issues, accompanied by a response that has at times not seemed coherent or proportionate, has held the field of countering extremism back.

Our core recommendation is to focus efforts outside of countering terrorism on tackling the hateful extremism that we have identified. Government has recognised the growing importance of countering extremism by promising to publish a new strategy.[397]

The problem of hateful extremism is widespread, and we have seen evidence of it being experienced across the country.[398] It causes a wide range of harms, many of which are not in the scope of the existing Counter-Extremism Strategy. The current response is overly broad and lacks coherence.

We currently summarise this hateful extremism as:

- Behaviours that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence;

- And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group;

- And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society.

Above all, the cost of not seeking to tackle it is too high. Individuals, our national society and all communities within it are affected in some way by the division, intolerance and hatred of extremists.

Yet to date, the experience of victims has not been recognised, and too many of those affected by hateful extremism told us that they did not receive support or an effective response.

We recognise that tackling extremism is complicated. We cannot ignore the potential risks created when any form of extremism is tackled badly or blindly. From the failed Counter Extremism Bill to the stigmatisation of individuals or even whole communities. This has often dissuaded key organisations from getting involved.

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[397] Then Home Secretary Sajid Javid, 'Confronting Extremism Together', Speech, 19 July 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/confronting-extremism-together>

[398] 52% of the public have witnessed extremism according to our call for evidence. Commission for Countering Extremism. 2019. *Statistical summary of responses from our Call for Evidence*, p.3, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extremism-in-england-and-wales-call-for-evidence>

Countering hateful extremism must be rooted in the positive, inclusive vision we have for our country. This is what a rights-based approach to countering hateful extremism must be based on. This approach will be a key principle of the Commission's work, and we recommend that the Government put this at the heart of its new strategy.

Focus On Tackling Hateful Extremism

Our review of the evidence and consultation with a wide range of experts has revealed the areas that future work on hateful extremism should cover.

Too many people feel unsure about what is or isn't extremism. Those that are sure often don't fully agree with each other, which results in debate on the differences instead of tackling the things we agree on.

Better understanding and research of hateful extremism must start with a better definition. This will allow increased shared understanding of the problem and better measures to understand its scale. Vitally, it will allow us to understand victims' experiences better, and put in place work to help them. It will also allow us to more readily identify when it is occurring, to generate a response.

Yet as we have seen, even when it does occur and is recognised, our interventions could be more effective. Our case studies show that when hateful extremism occurs, there is no ready toolbox of approaches to draw on, despite the long experience of many of those involved. This slows the response down and creates opportunities that extremists can exploit.

Delivering **more effective interventions** to counter extremism require a commitment that is matched across Government and civil society to work together and support each other. Especially in the face of abuse by hateful extremists. We have not yet heard a strong case for more powers to directly counter extremism. But we have heard and we believe that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently. We will continue to review this. Our first step will be to review existing legislation through the lens of hateful extremism, victims' experience of hateful extremism, and the abuse counter extremists suffer, including online.

We need to understand what works when hateful extremism is identified. We must try new and innovative approaches. We have already supported some of these such as Talking Our Way Out of Conflict (TOWOC – see box on page 131). And we must do more to challenge the hateful ideologies, narratives and beliefs that underpin many hateful extremists' behaviours.

The best catalyst for these improvements is for us to see better leadership in defence of our society and communities. Extremists threaten and suppress those who stand up to them. They are also effective at subverting existing power structures for the power they crave. And they exploit other causes to generate support for their own.

This makes **mobilising and supporting leadership** against hateful extremism vital but challenging.

Leadership is the primary role of the Commission. We have a unique position between Government and civil society; advising, assisting and holding both to account. This allows us to work more openly

than other public bodies, whilst retaining sight of Government work. To capitalise on this, the Commission needs to be strengthened through building its networks and its internal capability.

Leadership in Government needs to improve, and we are recommending a new task force chaired by the Home Secretary, with civil society and local government involvement. And we also want to see a much broader range of organisations to work with us and take responsibility to counter hateful extremism in a way that they have not before – from social media companies to human rights defenders.

Future of the Commission

Over the last 18 months the independent Commission has established a new role within countering extremism. Sitting between Government, civil society, academia and the rest of society, we have impartially intervened in ongoing events, challenged Government, politicians and extremists, and conducted the most thorough and open programme of evidence gathering into extremism, ever.

But there have been challenges. Our staff have received abuse and intimidation in the course of their job. We have sometimes struggled to access information and build the right capabilities to deliver. Our funding model is inflexible. And of course, we must ensure our independence, something that is vital for us to deliver. We are discussing all these with the Home Office.

To enable us to fully deliver this unique and independent role and our ambitious work programme we are recommending that the Home Secretary strengthen the Commission.

The Commission should be made statutory, with our independence enshrined in law as soon as possible. Hateful extremism is such a critical problem in our times that partisan politics should be set aside. Many people have told us that they value the role of the Commission for Countering Extremism but want to know that our work and conclusions are independent of Government and will not be swayed by the changing political landscape.

Our first 18 months have shown our commitment to this. A statutory basis will allow the Commission to be even more effective at delivering the Government's intent for an increased response to extremism. A statutory Commission should report directly to Parliament.

During our work, we have not yet heard a strong case for more powers to directly counter extremism. But we have heard and we believe that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently. We will continue to review this.

The Commission does need specific and limited statutory information sharing powers with public bodies. Policy makers need impartial evidence assessed by an independent Commission to make decisions about countering hateful extremism. We are grateful for the efforts of those hard-working public servants who have made significant efforts to help our research and supply us with evidence. But during our work we have encountered situations where gathering the right information from public bodies has been difficult, especially about ongoing extremism incidents.

Do We Need New Counter Extremism Powers?

In the 2015 CE Strategy the Government committed to bringing forward new powers to counter extremism. The intended purposes of the proposed powers were disruption orders against individuals, banning orders against groups and powers to close premises. The draft bill never emerged as a suitable definition of extremism could not be agreed. Government was heavily criticised for the proposal. We agreed to look at this issue again in our research.

Some people felt that there were examples of groups and individuals where it may have been better to intervene against behaviour before it reached the threshold of terrorism. The two examples we examine most in this report are ALM and National Action. Both groups grew out of less violent spaces, and carried out significant hateful extremist activity, both before and alongside the activities that got them proscribed. Little analysis was carried out of this hateful extremist activity.

However, this is a small sample on which to draw. In addition, without a sufficiently robust definition that makes clear the problems we are seeking to tackle, it is difficult to judge the proportionality of any potential powers. At this stage, no police or other law enforcement body has suggested that there is a clear gap in their powers to deal with these behaviours, as existing legislation continues to provide new avenues for taking action to stop hateful extremist activity and protect victims, as recent incidents highlighted in this report show.

What we have clearly heard from victims is that they do not think the authorities are using the existing powers consistently or sufficiently well. They attribute this to issues like a lack of understanding of hatred within and between minority communities, or a failure to recognise when conservative religion is used as a cover for harmful acts, or a fear of being called racist. Many felt that free speech was protected instead of their health and wellbeing. We are pleased that the Home Office is reviewing legislation against coercive control, as many examples of hateful extremism or restriction of rights and freedoms require a similar response to situations of nonphysical domestic abuse.

For these reasons, in our judgement we have not yet heard a strong case for more powers to directly counter extremism. But we have heard and we believe that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently. We will continue to review this, and that is why in our work programme we will review existing legislation through the lens of human rights, hateful extremism, victims' experience, and the abuse counter extremists suffer, including online.

While we urge the Government to place the Commission on statutory footing as soon as possible, we recognise that the legislative timetable may not allow this to happen right away. The work programme we set out below is based on the understanding that for the next 18 months the Commission's legal status is unlikely to change. There are steps we can take to enable the Commission to better counter hateful extremism before then.

We are committed to transparency. From next year we will produce an annual report on our own work, as well as wider progress in countering hateful extremism.

We want to recruit two further commissioners. They will work part-time, leading specific areas of our work programme. They will bring specific skills and experience related to the work, galvanising external engagement and driving change. These roles will be in addition to the continuing role of an independent Expert Group to challenge and support the Commission.

The Lead Commissioner will remain the visible leader of the Commission and will be accountable for delivery of the work programme. We will also work with the Home Office to review our existing governance structures.

Our Work Programme

Mobilising Better Leadership

The strengthened Commission will provide increased leadership across the whole of society. This leadership is built on our skills, knowledge and authority as experts. We also need to do more to leverage the expertise of the established organisations in the field, as well as benefiting from and learning professional skills from other similar fields such as conflict resolution and human rights. We intend to do more to foster this culture across counter extremism.

We will start by creating a small but powerful national network of organisations that are able to identify and respond to hateful extremist incidents and provide greater linkage between Government and civil society.

As with Sunderland or Birmingham, earlier identification of the full scope of the risk, coupled with a wider network of organisations able to deliver tailored support, may have helped reduce the longer-term

impact of extremism. We will use this network as the basis for our contribution to our recommended Home Secretary-chaired task force (more detail on page 132). This will be the core objective of one of the new commissioners.

Pioneering Research

Identifying incidents of hateful extremism is a crucial role for the Commission in creating better understanding of hateful extremism and its effects across society. We will provide authoritative insight into the state of hateful extremism in England and Wales.

Our first and most immediate piece of work is to generate a full, working definition of hateful extremism, to allow everyone to feel more confident in identifying and countering it. We will deliver this in time for the Government's new Counter-Extremism Strategy in 2020. This will be built on the description of hateful extremism set out in this report that is in large part the result of our public consultation and engagement.

We intend to undertake a series of workshops around the country to explore it in more detail, as well as testing it with operational organisations.

As we build our new network, and through the relationships we have established over the last 18 months, we also intend to start piloting information gathering to allow us to identify potential extremist incidents. When such an incident is identified, we will gather further information on all sides of the problem.

Studying these incidents will also allow us to be clearer on the impact of hateful extremism on victims. Victims will always be a priority for the Commission, and next year we intend

to conduct research on any additional steps victim-facing organisations need to take when dealing with victims of hateful extremism.

More Effective Interventions

Over the last 18 months, we have seen an increase in studies into what works in countering extremism.[399] These indicate that a more systematic approach to interventions and deciding when best to deploy them is required. We intend to start this right away, in consultation with others, in part through our new network but also through a new academic partnership we intend to establish.

In the limited time and budget we have had this year we have also supported those who are developing new and innovative approaches to countering extremism. This has been through commissioning academics and providing advice and guidance to often new or small organisations we have met. We intend to continue doing this and to make a small amount of money available for new or innovative approaches. We will work with other sources of funding to expand this pot.

We have, however, been very concerned about the lack of work that is directly countering hateful ideologies and beliefs. This work is among the hardest in countering extremism, and makes many people uncomfortable, as the concept of an ideology is often contested by those who hold them. As part of our work in fostering more effective interventions, we intend to hold a summit on how to better challenge hateful extremist narratives and beliefs online and offline and understand what the current state of best practice is.

All of this is not possible, however, without counter extremists willing to stand up for the society and values that we all want to see, that of a tolerant, plural and broad-minded society. Yet as we have set out, these people, despite performing a vital pro-social role, suffer from significant abuse, harassment and intimidation, that affects them, their family and friends. More must be done.

We intend to appoint one of the additional commissioners to conduct a review of the existing powers that can both reduce hateful extremism and protect victims and those seeking to counter it. This review will focus both on the legislation and on the enforcement of those powers. Anecdotally, the lack of confidence of victims and counter extremists in the systems for dealing with their abuse suggest that more can be done within existing legislation.

We have not yet heard a strong case for more powers to directly counter extremism. But we have heard and we believe that existing powers need to be applied better and more consistently. We will continue to review this, including how Article 17 of the ECHR is applied. In previous discussions on this subject, such as the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into counter extremism, which focused on the Prevent duty, little evidence appeared to be from the perspective of the victims of extremists, with just two of 11 witnesses being victim-focused.

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[399] For example: Jacob Davey, Jonathan Birdwell and Rebecca Skellet. 2018. 'Counter Conversations: A model for direct engagement with individuals showing signs of radicalisation', *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*, pp.1-32, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Counter-Conversations_FINAL.pdf>; William Echikson and Olivia Knodt. 2018. 'Germany's Netz DG: A key test for combatting online hate', *Counter Extremism Project*, November 2018, No. 2018/09, pp.1-27, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/CEP-CEPS_Germany%27s%20NetzDG_020119.pdf>; Steve Ballinger, Jill Rutter and Sunder Katwala. 2019. 'Calling out hatred and prejudice', *British Future*, pp.1-38, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <http://www.britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calling-out-hatred-report_online_new.pdf>

Talking Our Way Out Of Conflict (TOWOC)

Project to build dialogue between young people from 'Islamist' and 'Extreme Right' milieus.

Our funding allowed academics from the University of Manchester to extend their innovative TOWOC project.

TOWOC is a programme of mediated dialogue, involving two groups of three young people from 'Islamist' and 'extreme right' milieus. TOWOC originated out of participants' own desire for dialogue with "the other".

Based on intergroup contact theory, which has shown that contact between groups experiencing conflict can reduce anxiety about and prejudice towards "the other" and improve empathy and perspective taking across the group divide, the mediated dialogue promoted meaningful contact between groups that had previously imagined each other as hostile.

The intervention provided the space for the participants to exchange personal experiences, views and beliefs in a way that allowed them to see not only the differences but also the similarities between them.

During an exercise in the first session, one participant from the 'Islamist' milieu sang a recitation from the Quran, which had a powerful effect on one of the 'extreme right' participants. Whereas before the session he had seen the Qur'an as a text inspiring Islamist terrorism, afterwards he talked of how he had been moved by the "peaceful sound" of the recitation. In the second – more informal – session this 'extreme right' participant invited the young man who had recited from the Qur'an to visit Britain's first mosque, located in his home town – a powerful and symbolic act of welcoming.

This second dialogue, and subsequently a third, dialogue was facilitated following the spontaneous expression of a desire among participants to continue talking to each other. They had become comfortable enough with each other such that, as one of them put it:

"In the future we might walk down the same side of the road as opposed to crossing it to avoid one another" – TOWOC Participant

The mediated dialogue is not an intervention designed to change views but to facilitate openness, flexibility of thought and critical enquiry. However, to allow that open and constructive exchange of views, you first have to build trust between people. This is what another participant said he had gained from the dialogue process:

"If you can't change someone, fine. But if you can't build trust…I personally believe there is no hope at all" – TOWOC Participant

The mediated dialogue process is not without challenges – among them the criticism participants receive from their home milieus for engaging with the 'other'. However, the genuine commitment to it from both sides suggests its potential as an intervention that can stop extremist beliefs and behaviours becoming fixed in young people, and, as such, as a useful tool for countering extremism.

Recommendations for the Government

Mobilise Better Leadership

Government counter extremism efforts have suffered from a lack of consistent, strong internal leadership on the issue.

The 2013 PM-led Extremism Task Force was a high watermark in political leadership, with departments committed to updating the Prime Minister regularly. Yet currently, counter extremism is overseen by a joint Home and Communities Secretary chaired inter-ministerial group meeting that covers both extremism and integration.

Counter extremism needs to be seen as distinct from these other issues and needs its own structures to deal with it.

We recommend that the Home Secretary leads this through a task force she chairs, modelled on the existing serious violence task force. This counter extremism task force should be made up of a range of government bodies, civil society and victim-focused bodies. Its role should be to oversee development of the new counter extremism strategy, and to respond to extremism incidents identified through the Commission's new small and powerful network.

This increased involvement of a range of voices, and of opening up discussions on this subject will allow local government and civil society to bring their expertise and experience of tackling this problem on the ground, as well as adding much needed transparency to the development of the new strategy. As acknowledged in our discussion on human rights, the best and most effective role for Government in countering extremism is not fully understood, so the strategy should remain under review by this task force.

As part of building a more effective partnership with civil society, Government should clearly set out who Government will and will not engage with and why. It should also set out any actions that those who are not going to be engaged should take to return from this position. Government should provide guidance to other public bodies to give clarity about when to engage, when to challenge, and when to de-platform.

As set out on page 94, we want the difference between work to counter terrorism and counter extremism to be clearer; and we want there to be proportionate responses to groups and individuals who act across both terrorism and hateful extremism.

While not all rights restriction is a consequence of extremism, the denial or restriction of rights is both a grievance used by extremists to spread their messages, and a symptom of the hatred they can engender, especially against women and minorities, including minorities within minorities, such as LGBT+ religious people. Our evidence suggests that the restriction of rights is growing. Regardless of whether this is caused by extremism, structural drivers or by hate groups, the Government must do more to tackle it.

Better Understanding

The quality of information available to Ministers and central government on extremism, despite the work done since the 2015 CE Strategy, does not draw on a wide enough range of information. It is particularly lacking in the local, on-the-ground picture

that is often so important in understanding and responding to extremism. To tackle this, we recommend that:

- Each area that has an extremism community coordinator prepares an annual local profile of extremism in their local authorities' area.

- The Extremism Analysis Unit builds its contact among experts, frontline practitioners, victims and academics to ensure they are drawing on the widest and most up-to-date insight on extremism.

Work to counter extremism requires a more independent and transparent approach to evaluating what has worked and what hasn't, and what difference this work is making to extremism in the UK. Government should lead this by producing regular transparency reports.

More Effective Interventions

Although progress is being made, BSBT should focus on funding those organisations most willing and able to engage with and challenge extremists and extremist attitudes. Funding should also be provided on a more certain basis, with three-year funding agreements the norm.

In addition, the integration and cohesive communities work done by BSBT and other groups must continue but within MHCLG. Government must deliver on recent promises to bring the country together post-Brexit, and increase funding for the important work being done by so many people in communities up and down the country.

Counter extremism work is difficult, and leads to abuse, harassment and hostility, and that is one of the reasons why more people do not do it. Government must ensure

that those who do stand up for plurality and tolerance are protected, as well as doing more generally to protect public discourse which is increasingly polarised and toxic. Until the results of our review into legislation are published, we recommend that the Government does more to look after the mental and psychological wellbeing of those running and working for the counter extremism organisations it funds.

Hateful extremists also seek to shrink the space for democratic debate and counter extremism by spreading false and misleading disinformation. We recommend that the Government challenges disinformation about counter extremism work as quickly as possible, providing an online myth-busting resource to help correct the record.

As part of this stronger response to extremism online, the new regulator for online harms proposed by Government should ensure within its work it builds its understanding of extremism based on the approach set out in this report.

We have been particularly shocked by some of the evidence we have heard about problems in unregulated education. More needs to be done to protect children who are receiving education where they are not being prepared for life in modern Britain. We recommend that DfE deliver legislation as soon as possible and work with the organisations that were concerned about regulation of Out-of-School settings to make sure that children are better protected.

Civil and Wider Society

All our evidence suggests that the best and most effective work to counter extremism happens on the ground, led by people from

within their communities. This is why a whole of society response is so important – because everyone can play a role.

Most important is to be consistent in challenging all forms of hatred. All public bodies, politicians, local councils, and councillors must demonstrate and show this consistency in their actions, manifestos and engagement. All politicians and political parties should adopt zero tolerance policies to all forms of racism, intolerance and extremism. They must also engage with the full breadth and diversity of those communities, no matter how difficult this is, and not just with self-appointed gatekeepers or those with narrow interests who claim to represent the whole community. This is especially important in minority or "left-behind" communities.

Organisations Countering Extremism Already

There are organisations that have long been engaged in tackling hateful extremism. Organisations like HOPE not hate, Southall Black Sisters, Faith Matters, Community Security Trust, Quilliam, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue and others. Local government bodies often deliver counter extremism interventions. Academics are conducting increasingly sophisticated analysis of the problems and potential solutions. Businesses such as social media companies have had to grapple with its consequences on their platforms.

Their leadership is vital, despite the toll on them from the abuse and intimidation. We have already set out how Government can do more to support them. These organisations will be key contributors to our small and powerful new network.

Often, these groups are the first to identify new or emerging issues, and frequently are best placed to respond. Initiatives like the Local Government Association's SIGCE, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue networks, and through the BSBT programme these groups are being brought together to share their work and outcomes.

These organisations already provide vital understanding of the problems of extremism, and those we have discussed this with have been receptive to focusing on hateful extremism. We will continue to work with them to increase the priority of this work. Our new network will draw heavily on their understanding, and we hope they will also increase their focus on hateful extremism. This is particularly true of academics, whose research can provide us with the information and evidence we need on what the effects of extremism are and how best to tackle them.

Many of them deliver interventions on the ground. This must continue and be redoubled. Yet as we have seen, work is needed to make sure the most effective interventions are being put in place at the right time. Playing a full role in the Commission's work is important, as is sharing the results of any work openly and transparently.

The internet technology sector, especially Government and social media companies, needs to demonstrate a deeper understanding of all the ways extremism manifests online. Social media companies have a particularly important role. We have seen how their platforms are creating a hostile atmosphere that hateful extremists are exploiting.

We are clear that they need to do more to reduce this atmosphere. We have seen positive steps. For example, Twitter's introduction of a "quality filter" that hides "low quality" replies reduced complaints of abuse by 8%.[400] Other companies have sponsored programmes of work that are directly countering extremism and hate. Many of the large companies have programmes of work, most notably Google's €10m Europe-wide anti-hate and extremism fund.[401]

Yet social media companies, like many, struggle to be consistent. Far Right groups and individuals are tackled more robustly than other forms of hateful extremists, like Islamists.

We recommend that they improve how they apply the law and their own terms and conditions to take down the most hateful and violent content on their platforms. They should ensure that these standards are applied equally to all – whether that is extremism, hatred or dehumanisation.

But taking content off the internet is not enough. It is the behaviours and conversations that need to change in the long-term. We recommend that they work closely with the full range of other counter extremism organisations to understand and develop new ways of challenging extremism on their platforms. They should permanently ban those who are persistently hateful and abusive. They should be more open with the data they hold, in suitably controlled ways and with trusted partners. And we encourage them to work with us, the UKCIS and other partners to build better conversations online.

Wider Organisations and Entities

A whole of society response doesn't mean just focusing on the small but growing group who see tackling hateful extremism as a core role.

We want to expand the range of organisations taking part. For too long, human rights organisations have remained silent whilst the human rights of some groups are trampled on by extremists. Islamists have been particularly good at subverting this agenda, but the Far Right are now adopting this approach through their championing of free speech.

Championing human rights must be universal. As Article 17 of the ECHR makes clear, no rights should be used to diminish or override other rights. We want to see more human rights organisations get involved in countering extremism and we intend to work with leading human rights charities to bring HR principles into countering extremism more effectively, as well as embed an understanding of extremism in their work.

We also want to see more charitable funding for groups countering extremism. Private and charitable foundations are able to drive innovation in policy development in a way Government finds difficult. They are also keen to see real impact in local areas. Fostering the culture of countering extremism as a positive benefit to wider work in communities will encourage these foundations to step more into this space.

The media has incredible responsibility for setting the tone of public attitudes, especially on minorities. Sweeping statements,

[400] Del Harvey and David Gasca. 2018. 'Serving healthy conversation', Twitter blog, 15 May 2018, (accessed: 5 September 2019) <https://blog.twitter.com/official/en_us/topics/product/2018/Serving_Healthy_Conversation.html>; Call for Evidence
[401] Institute for Strategic Dialogue. 2019. 'Innovation Fund' (accessed: 13 August 2019) <https://www.isdglobal.org/innovation-fund>

lazy stereotypes and loose reporting can unwittingly contribute to xenophobia and play into the hands of extremists. Yet as we have demonstrated, the media can and often do play a vital role by shining a light on extremism and the divisive tactics of extremists. The role of the free press is vital in this regard.

An Inclusive, Peaceful and Plural Britain

We will always be clear that as radical, and challenging as this can be, and as offensive and religiously or culturally conservative as the views within it are, democratic debate is vital to our country. We are a wonderfully diverse country made up different races, political opinion, sexualities, religions and beliefs. We are tolerant of a wide range of beliefs, even ones we find disturbing or illiberal. And our society is broad-minded, being able to cope with people living their lives in a huge range of ways without excluding them. Countering extremism is about preserving and championing our ability to have these difficult debates.

Countering extremism is work that protects our plural, tolerant and broadminded society which make up our democracy. This includes the defence of our fundamental freedoms and human rights. All counter extremism work, including the new counter extremism strategy, should be based on this principle.

Instilling this sense of purpose, of pride and passion into work to counter extremism is vital. Countering extremism is about standing up for all these things, and for each other – a positive and encouraging mission in stark contrast too often dragged down by those who want to divide us.

And we have heard this from many of the people we have spoken to. When we asked people to tell us what the positive message we should be giving people is, these were some of the quotes we received:

"A positive vision for the country is one that values and respects the human rights of all its citizens and residents." Southall Black Sisters

"People are given the right to air their views without prejudice, especially as Muslims celebrate the history and involvement of other nations to UK's success." Community Engagement Coordinator

"An inclusive society where individuals are encouraged and supported to share ideas/grievances and talk through positive solution. An educated society where there are clear opportunities for all." A worker for Show Racism the Red Card

"Promoting debate and conversation." West Sussex County Council

Elsewhere, many responses signalled that any positive vision for the future should have human rights as its cornerstone, and it should stress the primacy of universal values of democracy, diversity, the rule of law, pluralism, equality, inclusivity and tolerance, some of which are of course mentioned in the current Government definition of extremism.

In more practical terms, in order to uphold these values, we need to ensure that people feel comfortable engaging in healthy debate by equipping them with the intellectual tools to critically evaluate ideas and disagree, without resorting to combative language that expressly intends to hurt, demean or embarrass others.

Many responses to our call for evidence stated that Britain should be a place where individuals embrace each other's differences and celebrate diversity. One went on to remind us of the 2005 London Olympics Bid and the 2012 London Olympics Opening Ceremony, two episodes in recent memory that showcased our ability to celebrate diversity. At this particularly challenging time for our country, it is more important than ever to give citizens something to rally around. Not just a festival, but a lasting national celebration of what we share, and our future together.

The Lead Commissioner's vision is how we are taking this core principle forward. It sits at the heart of all our recommendations.

Our Vision for Challenging Hateful Extremism

Our vision is one where together we uphold our democratic way of life in a peaceful, plural and inclusive society that opposes intolerance;

where people exercise individual liberty and take personal responsibility for promoting equal citizenship, recognising the harm extremist behaviours cause to everyone;

and where our communities and institutions robustly challenge and resist extremism and support those affected by it.

Commission for Countering Extremism

Our Work Programme

The Commission will now focus on the following priorities:

Pioneering Research

...providing authoritative insight on hateful extremism.

More Effective Interventions

...based on evidence and directly challenging hateful extremism.

Mobilising and Supporting Leadership

...to stand up consistently to hateful extremism alongside a statutory Commission.

March 2020

Producing a non-statutory **working definition** of hateful extremism for **Spring 2020.**

Ensure there is more support for victims and they are at the **heart** of this work.

Identify emerging situations where hateful extremism may occur.

Write an annual report on progress in tackling **hateful extremism**.

Develop and test a toolbox of innovative and established techniques **against** hateful extremism.

Reviewing implementation of public order, hate crime and harassment legislation to see how they can better **protect** victims of hateful extremism.

Determine how hateful extremism can best take account of **human rights** legislation and treaties.

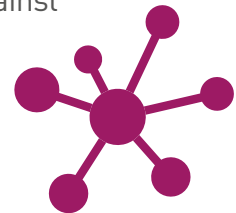Hold a **summit** on how to better challenge hateful extremism online and offline.

Strengthen the Commission so it continues to operate independently across Government and civil society, including with two additional commissioners.

Establish a small and dedicated **network** of civil society organisations who stand up against hateful extremism.

Support the Home Secretary's hateful extremism task force to respond to incidents and develop a new strategy to counter hateful extremism.

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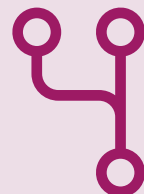
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the many people from across the breadth of England, Wales and beyond who have added their evidence, thoughts and insight to this report.

Most importantly, I would like to thank all the victims who came forward with their deeply affecting stories about how extremism has had an impact on their lives. I know how hard it can be to tell others about these experiences, and I am grateful to all those who did, whether in person or in writing. We have tried to do justice to these stories, but nothing compares to the words of the victim themselves.

It is not just victims who have provided invaluable evidence. Practitioners from civil society, national and local government have spent many hours of their time telling me about their work, and I never failed to be impressed by their dedication and enthusiasm to the difficult roles they perform. Public servants from across government, regulators and other public bodies worked hard to pull together the information that I requested. Having your work reviewed is never comfortable, so I am grateful for their forbearance. This is particularly true of the Home Office's Counter Extremism Unit. I'm grateful to NatCen Social Research and to the Policy Institute at King's College London for their important research and to the Woolf Institute for additional analysis.

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Finally I would like to thank Euan Neill, my Head of Secretariat, and all the members of our team for their work over the past 18 months. And to Policy Exchange for allowing Hannah Stuart to come and work in the Commission for a year. Whether joining me on the full journey, or contributing for a shorter period, they have all worked tirelessly to make my engagement, my research and my recommendations possible.

Sara Khan
Lead Commissioner