Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People

Contents

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Executive summary

The original Prevent Strategy, launched by the previous Labour government in 2007, aimed to stop radicalisation, reduce support for terrorism and violent extremism and discourage people from becoming terrorists. The strategy had five central objectives, which were to:

- challenge violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices

- disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions where they are active

- support individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism[1]

- increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism

- address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting.

In 2008, under the original Prevent Strategy, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) secured resources from the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) at the Home Office to fund the development of programmes within youth offending teams (YOTs) and the secure estate to prevent at-risk young people[2] (primarily young Muslims) from becoming involved in Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism.[3] The money was directed towards YOTs located in areas which intelligence suggested were at the highest risk of violent extremism. For the most part, the projects were given responsibility for designing their own interventions within the parameters of the 2007 Prevent objectives and with the OSCT exercising high-level oversight.

The aims of this evaluation, which was commissioned[4] by the YJB, were to:

- collate and assess the existing evidence relating to preventing violent extremism (PVE)

- describe and evaluate the implementation of the funded PVE programmes within the youth justice system

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[1] Later changed to "support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists" (Home Office, 2009).

[2] 'At-risk young people' were defined by both the YOT age range (from 10 to 18 years old) and by more pragmatic concerns at the individual project level. Therefore, it was not unusual for the project staff to extend their programme provision to older youths where there was a perception of a persistent vulnerability and risk, or to make allowances for natural peer groups.

[3] 'Radicalisation' can be defined as the move towards active support for violent extremism, and, as such, it is a process of change which is downstream of, and prior to, violent extremism, although importantly it does not necessitate it. Therefore, a radicalised individual may not become involved in any violent action (and indeed could be opposed in principle to such action).

[4] The research was commissioned to run from February 2009 to February 2011.

- identify emerging good and promising practice by relating the findings of the process evaluation to the evidence identified in the literature review.

Methodology

The nature of the research questions called for a multi-method approach. Five strands of investigation were undertaken:

- a systematic review of the research literature, *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence* (YJB, 2012)

- interviews with practitioners across all 48 project sites during the early stages of project implementation

- the collection of 194 diary sheets to map project interventions and activity nationally

- an analysis of projects' quarterly throughput returns

- in-depth case studies conducted at 12 project sites.

Twelve case study sites were selected out of the 48 project sites for a more in-depth analysis on the basis of geographical spread and the delivery of distinctly different sets of interventions. They were visited over a four to five day period. Within these case studies, the research team examined the challenges and benefits of delivering the project and gathered a range of practitioners', stakeholders' and young people's views on the project. These were complemented with observations of programme sessions.

The evidence base

Explanations of violent extremism

The systematic review[5] of the literature conducted for this project confirmed that Islamic radicalisation and terrorism[6] emanates from a very heterogeneous

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[5] The aims of the systematic review were to examine the research literature on the process(es) of Al Qa'ida influenced radicalisation and violent extremism, particularly among young people, as well as the availability and effectiveness of interventions to prevent this.

[6] There is no precise or universally agreed definition of terrorism and it remains the subject of continued debate among policymakers and academics. The UK government defines terrorism as "... the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public, or a section of the public; made for the purposes of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause" (Terrorism Act 2000). However, this statement is problematic, not the least because it fails to specify the behaviour thus indicted, and when government does proscribe certain offences (such as possessing explosives), these already constitute offences under ordinary criminal law. Most scholarly work generally agrees that terrorism is best conceived as a set of strategies to achieve an outcome by non-state actors, as a war conducted outside the construct of the nation state. Acts of terrorism then fall under 'violent extremism', which is a broader based category encompassing a wider range of violence-related offences.

population that varies markedly in terms of education, family background, socio-economic status and income.

Several studies have identified potential risk factors for radicalisation, and, among these, political grievances (notably reaction to Western foreign policy) have a prominent role.[7] However, taken in isolation, these risk factors fail to reliably explain violent extremism; additional factors that appear to be pivotal in crossing the threshold into violent extremism include experiencing a crisis or trigger event, and the exposure to a network or movement. Once exposed to a radicalised network or group, the very dynamics of that group can act as a catalyst, spurring the individual into violent action.

The review confirmed that there remain serious limitations to much of the research base examining Islamic radicalisation. Few authors make systematic data analysis a feature of their studies (meaning that sampling errors and attributed bias cannot be discounted) and there is a scarcity of empirical data of any kind. This meant that there was little reliable evidence available to form the basis of assessments about whether particular types of PVE programmes are likely to be effective.

The literature review found only two psychometric scales that offered any relevance to measuring radicalisation as a psychological construct. These were:

- the Revised Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer and Hunsberger, 2004) that was intended to be an indicator of the fundamentalism that is generic to many religious beliefs[8]

- the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment (VERA) Tool[9] (Pressman, 2009) designed to assess the degree of risk of 'violent political extremism' among persons with either histories of extremist violence or convictions for terrorist-related offences. Pressman claims that the tool can also be used to detect religious extremism.

Interventions to address Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism

The review identified little in the way of programmes to specifically address Islamic radicalisation in the UK, although the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had undertaken a rapid evidence assessment of community interventions to prevent support for violent extremism (2010), the findings of which were incorporated into the systematic review.

The DCLG review advocated the adoption of measures that used education or training for capacity building and empowering young people, together with

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[7] For instance see: Abbas (2007, 2007); Abdullah (2007); Coolaset et al. (2008); Dittrich (2006); FoSIS (2005); Hamid (2007); Patel (2007); Saggar (2006) cited in Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2010); Taarnaby (2005).

[8] The original scale was tested on a range of faiths, including Muslims both in Canada and in Ghana, with convincing results. Validation of the scale with a sample of Muslims in Ghana (Hunsberger, Owusu, and Duck, 1999) found that the fundamentalism measure posted an alpha of .87 and correlated .78 with hostility toward homosexuals; and rendered strong associations with right-wing authoritarianism (.62 to .82) (Altemeyer and Hunsberger, 2004:49).

[9] Strictly speaking, the VERA tool is not a formal test or scale that produces a 'risk score' but rather what Pressman calls a "structured professional judgement tool" to aid professional assessments of violent extremism.

interventions that challenged ideology that focused on theology. These interventions were most successful when delivered through targeted outreach work that focused attention directly on the relevant communities. Transferable lessons from de-radicalisation programmes tackling right-wing radicalisation[10] included the need for those engaging with radicalised individuals to carry authority and legitimacy and to be equipped with appropriate ideological knowledge.

The national picture

Project implementation

Interviews conducted during 2009 and 2010 with project practitioners (n=71) revealed that they were knowledgeable about the PVE agenda and were able to identify a range of factors that they believed contributed to violent extremism. These included aspects of British foreign policy, alienation, negative messages emanating from the media, theology/religion, and issues of identity and age. These reflected many of the factors identified in the literature review.

Challenges with the implementation of the programme identified across the projects included:

- a difficulty in grasping what interventions and activities should be delivered under PVE, and for whom they should be delivered

- an unrealistic and hurried timeframe for implementation which created problems for managers in terms of recruitment and retention of staff

- negative reactions from the local community, partner agencies and other practitioners regarding the Prevent Strategy and its predominant focus on Muslims.

Project activity

Project interventions focused mainly on young Muslim males. Several projects included work with mixed groups, but only a minority of projects ran interventions with female-only groups. Practically all of the projects included a focus on the themes of dialogue and debate, identity and belonging, personal social education and supporting multicultural values. The overwhelming majority of the 48 YJB PVE projects worked with young people within the Criminal Justice System, sometimes exclusively so. Reflecting this, reducing offending for volume crime was a priority for the majority of projects. Interventions that were less prevalent across the programme included those aiming to support families or to build the resilience of communities, and interventions providing in-depth theological education and discussion that aimed to support moderate interpretations of Islam. Twenty-six projects implemented at least some interventions which had specific relevance to PVE. In the other 22 projects, interventions closely resembled more general youth inclusion/engagement programmes or community cohesion work and would have looked little different had the objective to prevent violent extremism been removed.

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[10] 'Right-wing radicalisation' was not defined by the authors, however, the programmes that were examined in the rapid evidence assessment targeted members of neo-fascist and extreme nationalist groups.

The majority of interventions were delivered through constructive activities, structured workshops, and discussion groups. Only six projects utilised outreach workers in the delivery of their projects. Views were mixed as to whether projects were reaching the young people at greatest risk from violent extremism, with several practitioners questioning whether YOTs were in the best position to identify such young people. Many suggested that schools, youth clubs and community organisations were perhaps better placed to conduct this task.

Among the case studies a number of projects implemented innovative approaches that were atypical of the wider programme. These included:

- the in-depth needs assessments conducted in a North West YOT prior to the selection of appropriate interventions

- the utilisation of outreach workers and strong links to community networks that were witnessed across eight of the case studies, but were not replicated across the national programme

- family support interventions which were implemented in one YOT in the East Midlands, and one YOT in Yorkshire

- community conferences and celebration events hosted in South East, South West, and London YOTs.

The in-depth case studies identified a range of influences that can impact upon project implementation. These included:

- the extent to which projects understood the central concepts of PVE

- the support available to projects within local communities and more particularly, support from religious institutions

- the setting for delivering interventions to young people (for example, undertaking work within the secure estate versus community-based projects)

- access to relevant training and support

- the extent to which the projects had the ability to recruit those young people most vulnerable to violent extremism.

For the majority of the 48 project sites, monitoring and evaluation were largely based upon feedback from the young people and in-house monitoring of the progress of their interventions. Only three of the projects attempted to measure change in young people's attitudes pre- and post-project.

There were clear contrasts between projects that were run from the secure estate and those administered in the community by YOTs and voluntary organisations. As would be expected, these varied, not only in the young people that they reached, but also in the types of interventions that were run and the style and mode of delivery.

Several projects made a case for tackling right-wing extremism. Such decisions resulted, in part, from terminological confusion and the conflation of the terms 'violent extremism' and 'extremism'.

Implications

The report discusses 18 implications under four themes: programme delivery; targeting and focus of PVE activity; programme development and activity; and monitoring and development. These are outlined below.

Programme delivery

- Steps should be taken to move towards a position where PVE projects are delivered through community-based organisations that have a proven track record of delivering PVE-style interventions.

- Only targeted PVE interventions should continue to be delivered in the secure estate.

- PVE interventions in the secure estate should be restricted to those young people most at risk of succumbing to radicalisation, identified through a combination of PVE-specific risk factors.

- Where cases are identified of young people who show signs of radicalisation in the secure estate for children and young people, staff should ensure that PVE work constitutes a core resettlement activity. In such cases, PVE should constitute an additional eighth[11] resettlement pathway, allowing for a systematic PVE-focused follow-up on release.

Targeting and focus of PVE activity

- PVE should focus on preventing Islamic-inspired *violent* extremism rather than other forms of 'extremism', as this is where the current threat lies in the UK.

- Young people should not be referred for PVE interventions on the basis of background offending risk factors, but on a combination of specific PVE-related risk factors (for example, perception of injustice, hatred towards an out-group, frustration, persecution, identity confusion).

- A national assessment and monitoring tool should be developed specifically for selecting young people to participate in PVE interventions and in order to monitor their progress.

Programme development

- Web-based toolkits should be (potentially) developed to disseminate information about promising practice in tackling violent extremism. This should include the hosting of materials that have been developed specifically to tackle violent extremism, and that can be downloaded and shared, and the facility for practitioners to share their experiences in online networking forums.

- It is suggested that:

  o interventions should be developed that challenge extremist ideology through debate and discussion around theology; these should be delivered in an informal setting through community-led debates

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[11] In addition to the existing seven YJB Resettlement Pathways: www.resettlementuk.com/UserFiles/Files/p_p9Oa4N.pdf

- o interventions should be adopted that incorporate detached outreach work with young people

- o PVE projects should prioritise interventions that help develop critical thinking skills among young people at risk. These give young people the ability to think independently and equip them with the cognitive tools needed to reflect critically upon extremist narratives and where necessary, challenge them directly.

- Work undertaken within PVE projects should maintain a focus on the key objectives of the Prevent Strategy and be clearly distinguishable from other social policy goals such as community cohesion.

- Projects should pay careful attention to the local context prior to making a decision regarding the naming of projects and interventions, and the language used to describe interventions.

- Facilitators and project staff more generally should have a high level of PVE knowledge and competence. Projects need to prioritise the recruitment of highly skilled and knowledgeable staff, and/or the training of staff to equip them with relevant skills and knowledge.

Monitoring and evaluation
- It is suggested that:

- o the capture of consistent data on PVE interventions (aim, description, category, date, duration, setting, number of attendees), linked to information about the young people participating in them, should be a core requirement of all PVE projects

- o the monitoring databases for PVE projects should contain a facility to record and/or comment upon a young person's level of risk in relation to violent extremism.

- For the purposes of monitoring, operational definitions should be produced for key terms such as 'alienation', 'identity', 'attitudes' and 'belonging', together with clear criteria by which each can be recognised for the purposes of classifying interventions and activities.

- Projects should be required to allocate young people to particular types of interventions by assigning a priority level to each young person.

- Projects should be given clear guidance on how they can self-evaluate the effectiveness and impact of their PVE interventions.

- It is suggested that in any future roll-out of PVE-style programmes:

- o projects should be provided with up to six months lead-in time between the awarding of funding and project start dates, to enable them to fully develop their programmes

- o the progress of projects be closely monitored in order to identify struggling or failing projects and implement timely supportive action

- o there should be a suitable period of consultation with projects in advance of any shift in the direction of policy, or change in the priority groups being targeted for PVE projects.

- Consideration should be given to the production of a best practice manual for designing, delivering, managing and monitoring PVE projects. This should include:

  - o a specification of the knowledge, experience, skills and competencies required for working in this highly sensitive and complex field, together with a list of tasks (a 'job' description)

  - o best practice in identifying young people at risk, including training materials on how to recognise, engage with and recruit young people at risk of radicalisation

  - o a synopsis of the context, mechanisms and manifestation of radicalisation and violent extremism and the relevance of these for identifying and delivering PVE interventions

  - o promising practice in tackling PVE from existing projects, with web links to materials that have been developed specifically for PVE that can be downloaded and shared

  - o the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of effective facilitation specifically in relation to PVE work

  - o the core data requirements for monitoring and tracking the delivery of interventions coterminous with changes in young people's circumstances, risk levels and perceptions

  - o guidance on how to communicate with local communities in respect of PVE projects and strengthen relationships.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a national process evaluation funded by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) of projects aimed at preventing violent extremism (PVE) among young people.[12] The programmes were delivered across youth offending teams (YOTs) and the secure estate for children and young people in an effort to reach those young people[13] who are most at risk of becoming involved in violent extremism.

The policy context

The Prevent Strategy

The first Prevent Strategy was launched in 2007 by the previous Labour government. It constituted one of the four components of CONTEST, the UK's wider counterterrorism strategy (the other three components were Pursue, Protect and Prepare). Since its publication there have been a number of revisions to the strategy, culminating in its comprehensive review by the coalition government published in June 2011. While this review introduced some substantial changes to the Prevent Strategy[14] (discussed further below) and recalibrated the policy, the programme evaluated in this report was guided by the earlier 2007 incarnation of the strategy.

The key strands of Prevent were outlined in the document *Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery* (Home Office, 2008)*.* The strategy was led by the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office and delivered by a number of departments and agencies, all of which had specific policy interests. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) contributed to the delivery of all elements of the strategy and led the community-based response to violent extremism.

The 2007 Prevent Strategy aimed to stop radicalisation, reduce support for terrorism and violent extremism and discourage people from becoming terrorists. The strategy contained the following five objectives:

1. Challenge the violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices.

2. Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions where they are active.

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[12] The views, conclusions, and implications presented in this report are those of the authors and are not representative of YJB or Home Office policy unless explicitly stated.

[13] The young people were predominantly aged 10 to 17 years old. However, provision could be extended to older youths where there was a perception of a persistent vulnerability and risk, or to make allowances for natural peer groups.

[14] Provisional findings from this report were fed into the new Prevent Strategy (June 2011) introduced by the coalition government.

3. Support individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism.[15]

4. Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism.

5. Address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting.

In addition, there were two main themes:

- develop understanding, analysis and evaluation

- strategic communications.

The Prevent Strategy maintained a clear focus on Al Qa'ida-inspired terrorism, which had been identified as the most significant terrorist threat to the UK (Home Office, 2008). This was reiterated in the updated guidance for practitioners published in August 2009:

> *Prevent is part of the Government's strategy to counter the threat from international terrorism. The Government recognises and takes seriously the threats from other forms of violent extremism, in particular from violent far right groups, though it judges that these threats are not at present as great as the threat from international terrorism* (Home Office, 2009).

Despite this guidance, discourse surrounding the agenda, including comments made by then Labour government ministers, pointed to greater flexibility in including the activity of the 'extreme far right' in Prevent activity. One of the Labour government ministers formerly responsible for policy around PVE, John Denham, stated that the Prevent Strategy had been re-thought in response to "constructive criticism" from councils and other bodies. Speaking at a conference of the Local Government Association in November 2009, he said that "Councils have to be as vigilant about the far right as they are against terrorism".[16] Thus, while the strategy maintained a clear focus on Islamic-inspired violent extremism, there had been some mixed messages regarding the extent to which projects funded by Prevent should incorporate a focus on other forms of violent extremism (i.e. right-wing extremism), and the conditions under which it was appropriate for them to do so.

The PVE Pathfinder Fund

The PVE Pathfinder Fund, launched in February 2007, represented the first stream of funding under the Prevent Strategy. In 2007/08 the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund allocated £6m across 70 local authorities[17] with Muslim populations of 5% or more. This initiative provided programmes of action to tackle violent extremism at a local level. These were aimed at Muslim communities in general, and, within those communities, at those most at risk of recruitment or 'grooming' by extremists, or at those "justifying or glorifying violent extremist ideologies and terrorism" (DCLG, 2007:7). Further to the initial Pathfinder funding, a £45m programme was announced by the Labour government for 2008–11 to include all local authorities with a minimum of 4,000 Muslims within their population. This

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[15] Later changed to "support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists" (Home Office, 2009).

[16] See: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/8351659.stm

[17] From a total of 433 local authorities in England.

funding was extended to schools, YOTs and young offender institutions (YOIs), police forces, and further and higher education institutions, with the latter viewed as a key recruiting ground for Islamist extremists.

Background to the YJB Prevent programme

On 14 November 2007, in a wide-ranging security statement in the House of Commons, the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, announced the involvement of the youth justice system as a key element in the Prevent strand of the counter terrorism strategy. This strand was to provide a broad package of community-based measures to win the 'hearts and minds' of local people and to work with communities to marginalise and isolate extremists. Furthermore, young people in the Criminal Justice System were seen as among the most vulnerable to extremist influences. Consequently, the Prevent Strategy was to include a YJB programme to address objective 3: to "support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists."

Following on from this announcement, in 2007, the YJB received approximately £8.3m from the OSCT to fund the development of programmes within the youth justice system to prevent those most at risk from becoming involved in violent extremism. This YJB funding stream (known as the Preventing Violent Extremism programme) ran from late 2008 to September 2010 and is the subject of this evaluation report.

The YJB programme had four main aims:

- national training and support for selected youth justice staff to counter violent extremism

- addressing objective 3 of the Prevent Strategy by expanding existing programmes for vulnerable young people in communities where extreme views are prevalent

- undertaking initiatives in secure establishments for young people at risk of extremism

- initiating new schemes to develop an evidence base of 'what works' in PVE among young people.

The OSCT and YJB used lists that they already had to identify 50 local authorities that intelligence suggested were at the highest risk of violent extremism. Towards the end of 2007 the YJB approached the YOTs in those areas and asked them to bid for PVE programme funding. For the most part, the projects were given responsibility for designing their own interventions within the parameters of the 2007 Prevent objectives and with the OSCT exercising high-level oversight. Not all YOTs were successful: some of the 50 did not apply at this stage and came onto the programme in early 2009.

The coalition government's review of the Prevent Strategy

The coalition government announced a review of the Prevent Strategy in November 2010. The review was motivated by the concern that the original Prevent Strategy had a number of serious failings. The review aimed to:

- look at the purpose and scope of the Prevent Strategy, its overlap and links with other areas of government policy and its delivery at local level

- examine the role of institutions – such as prisons, higher and further education institutions, schools and mosques – in the delivery of the Prevent Strategy

- consider the role of other Prevent delivery partners, including the police and other statutory bodies

- consider how activity on Prevent in the UK can be more joined up with work overseas

- examine monitoring and evaluation structures to ensure effectiveness and value for money

- make observations for a revised Prevent Strategy.

The strategy document was subsequently published by the coalition government in June 2011.

In short, the new Prevent Strategy aims to address what was considered to be a lack of proper focus and clarity (including insufficient scrutiny of the monitoring and evaluation of the funded programmes) in the original strategy. The new approach also provides clearer guidelines in selecting partnerships groups, withdrawing funding from any group seen as failing to support 'essential British values' such as respect for human rights, democracy, equality before the law and full participation in society. Finally, the new strategy incorporates a broader definition of extremism, having in its sights all forms of extremist ideology, including 'non-violent ideas' that can be viewed as underpinning a terrorist ideology.

Clearly this new strategy constitutes a significant policy change from the original Prevent Strategy and carries a number of implications for how the coalition government will now judge the value of PVE programmes.

Aims and objectives of the PVE evaluation

The aims of this process evaluation are to:

- collate and assess the existing evidence[18] relating to preventing violent extremism (published as a separate document and discussed in Chapter 3)

- describe and evaluate the implementation of the 48 funded PVE programmes within the youth justice system

- identify emerging, good, and promising practice by relating the findings of the process evaluation to the evidence identified in the literature review.

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[18] The systematic review of the research evidence was international in scope but limited to English language publications.

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- study the available evidence about the process of radicalisation and the types and availability of interventions to prevent violent extremism

- identify the range of different interventions developed and implemented to prevent violent extremism across the YJB programme

- provide a profile of the characteristics of young people engaged in the projects

- describe the implementation and delivery of the individual projects developed for PVE within a sample of programmes (i.e. the 12 case studies)

- collate available evidence of attitude or behavioural change

- explore the relationship between the characteristics of the young person, the assessment undertaken, and the intervention delivered

- explore young people's views of their attitudes and beliefs and their perception of the effectiveness of the interventions

- explore practitioners' and stakeholders' levels of confidence and perception of effectiveness of the individual interventions

- identify any emerging good and promising practice.

Structure of the report

Following a description of the methods employed in this evaluation in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 briefly discusses findings from a systematic review of the literature on the "process(es) of radicalisation" (particularly among young people) and the availability of interventions to prevent Islamic radicalisation (YJB, 2012).

Chapters 4 and 5 refer to the 48 PVE programmes that we evaluated and the 12 detailed case studies. We describe the development and implementation of projects, classify the nature and type of interventions implemented across the programmes, and provide a profile of the characteristics of those young people participating in the projects. Because the case studies provided the most in-depth view of any of the projects, evidence from them has largely been presented in text boxes to distinguish it from the wider national data.

Chapter 6 reports the views and experiences of a sample of young people who participated in interventions within PVE programmes. Finally, Chapter 7 presents the key findings and identifies 18 'implications' for practice.

2. Methodology

A multi-modal research methodology was used in undertaking this process evaluation. Figure 2.1 details the different research methods adopted, the data sources that were utilised and the sequence in which methods were implemented. A more comprehensive discussion of the research methodology is provided in Appendix 1.

Figure 2.1: Evaluation methodology and sequencing

Collection and analysis of project diary sheets

Stage 1
Scoping the evidence: Systematic review
- Design review protocol
- Retrieve and analyse 302 items
- Synthesis of evidence base

Stage 2
The national picture:
Identification of preventing violent extremism (PVE) programmes, allocation, assessment and implementation
- Site vists to 48 sites (in-depth interviews with project staff)
- Analysis of project documentation
- Analysis of Youth Justice Board (YJB) project data

Stage 3
Case studies of 12 project sites
- In-depth interviews with programme managers, practitioners and stakeholders (n=71)
- Interviews with young people (n=33)
- Observations of programme practice (n=36)
- Additional documentary analysis

Stage 1: Systematic review

A systematic review of the literature relating to the process of Al Qa'ida-influenced radicalisation was conducted.[19] This included a brief overview of PVE programmes and interventions. The review provided a theoretical basis for the research and assisted in the design of research instruments, for example, the interview schedules used for practitioners. The review maintained an explicit focus on Islamic radicalisation taking place in the West, although other forms of extremism were

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[19] *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence* (YJB, 2012).

included where transferable learning was identifiable. The review included published articles and grey literature[20] (in English) available predominantly from 1990 to 2010.

Stages 2 and 3: Fieldwork

Fieldwork was carried out between April 2009 and September 2010.[21] Stage 2 was conducted across 48 YOTs in the programme and began with an examination of bids and other project documentation. This desk-based research was followed up with face-to-face interviews with representatives from each of the YOTs participating in the programme.

Stage 3 comprised in-depth assessments of 12 case study projects. The case study sites were selected on the basis of geographical spread and the delivery of distinctly different sets of interventions. The evaluation of the case studies involved:

- interviews with project practitioners, managers and stakeholders to explore their perceptions and experiences of the programme and of the interventions being delivered

- interviews with young people participating in the project to understand their views, attitudes and beliefs, and to elicit their perceptions of the interventions' effectiveness

- non-participant observations of project interventions to provide insights into the interventions being implemented and to identify elements of good practice

- reviews of project documentation, including the original project bid, curricula outlines, evaluation reports, and session evaluation and recording sheets, to provide additional background material about specific interventions and how they were implemented.

Analysis of project activity data

The YJB requested that projects submit data returns to enable them to monitor the level and nature of programme activity. In order to record additional information not captured within the YJB throughput data, the research team asked all projects to complete a quarterly diary sheet. Analysis of the YJB data and diary sheets provided:

- a summary of the characteristics of young people participating in the project

- an outline of the range of different interventions delivered, including the objectives covered, the methods of delivery and the nature of targeting

- an indication of project activity and change over time.

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[20] Grey literature refers to materials that cannot be found easily through conventional channels such as publishers, e.g. conference proceedings, theses and dissertations, etc.

[21] This process evaluation and submission of the final report were completed in February 2011, five months after the YJB programme of funded projects had finished.

3. Systematic review of the literature: a note on the review findings

Introduction

A systematic review of the research literature[22] was undertaken to examine what is known about the process(es) of radicalisation (particularly among young people) and the availability and effectivene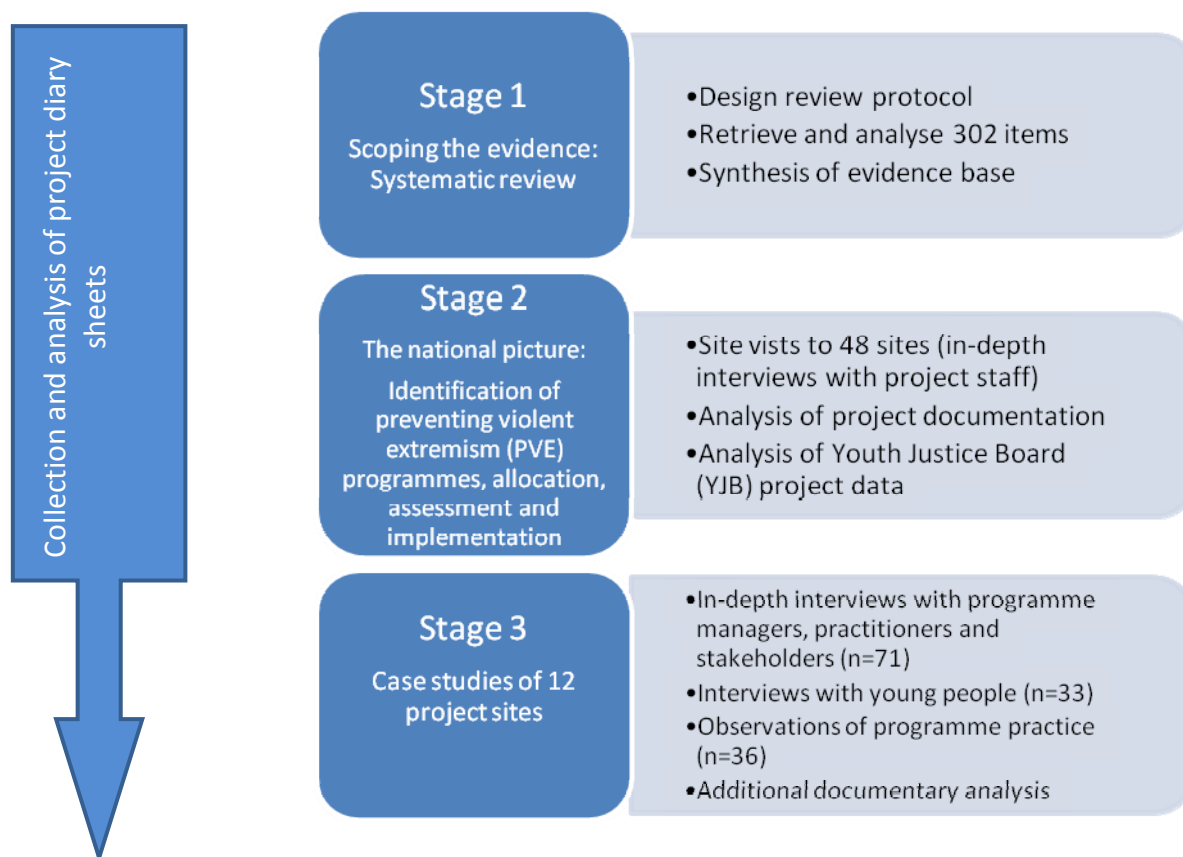ss of interventions to prevent Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism. This required identifying those factors, vulnerabilities and life events that appear to push or pull an individual across the threshold towards violent radicalisation. The full report containing the systematic review is published as a separate document by the YJB, *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence* (YJB, 2012). The key behavioural and attitudinal characteristics identified through the review are highlighted below.

It is important to note that since the completion of this report, three reviews were published by the Home Office in November 2011:

- *Al Qa'ida-Influenced Radicalisation: A Rapid Evidence Assessment Guided by Situational Action Theory* (Bouhana and Wikström, 2011)

- *Understanding Vulnerability and Resilience in Individuals to the Influence of Al Qa'ida Violent Extremism* (Munton et al, 2011)

- *Individual Disengagement from Al Qa'ida-Influenced Terrorist Groups* (Disley et al, 2011).

As these papers were not available at the time of writing, we have not integrated their findings, although the respective reviews are generally in line with our conclusions.

Synopsis of the review

Our review found that the evidence base for effective PVE interventions is very limited. More generally, there remain serious limitations to much of the research base examining violent radicalisation. Despite a prolific output of research, few studies contained empirical data or systematic data analysis. Furthermore, although a growing body of literature investigating the radicalisation process is emerging, the weight of that literature is focused upon terrorism rather than radicalisation. As such, the evidence is concerned with that smaller cohort of individuals who, once radicalised, go on to commit acts of violence in the pursuit of political or religious aims and objectives. This introduces a systematic bias in the literature, away from

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[22] The review of research literature was international in scope but limited to English language publications.

the radicalisation process which operates 'downstream' of terrorism, including radicalisation that does not lead to violence.

This meant that there was little reliable evidence for which types of PVE programmes are likely to be most effective, which in turn limits what we can say in designing interventions. Despite these limitations, the review findings highlighted some behavioural signs that indicate the crossing, or imminent crossing, of the threshold of radicalisation.

Behavioural and attitudinal characteristics

There has been a long and sustained research effort aimed at examining the behavioural characteristics of Islamic terrorists, which has proved to be largely unsuccessful in identifying who is 'at risk' of becoming radicalised to the point of committing a terrorist act. This is because Islamic radicalisation and terrorism emerges from a very heterogeneous group of people, varied in terms of education, family background, social class, income group and so on. There do appear to be some 'key vulnerabilities' or predisposing risk factors among this group, with a number of authors having identified characteristics (for example, Horgan, 2008; MI5 report cited in Travis, 2008; Sageman, 2004, 2008; Pressman, 2009; Bartlett, et al., 2010) although it should be stressed that these are only indicators.

While not an attempt to profile Islamic terrorists, Pressman (2009) provides analysis of risk factors drawn from known characteristics of those involved in offences related to violent extremism, and also from previous "structured professional judgement tools" assessing the risk of violence in adolescents and adults. As we would expect, these factors are in accordance with many of the key findings from our more substantive review of the literature.

We have collated and summarised 11 of these key predisposing risk factors for involvement with all forms of violent radicalisation from the literature (principally reported from Taylor and Horgan, 2006; Horgan, 2008; MI5 report cited in Travis, 2008; Pressman, 2006, 2009; Sageman, 2004, 2008; and Demos, 2010). These have been organised by attitudinal and behavioural characteristics, although it should be noted that they are not presented in any particular order of importance or weighting and this should **not** be considered to be an exhaustive list.

Attitudinal characteristics

- Having an 'emotional vulnerability' or being in some state of distress (with feelings of anger, alienation or disenfranchisement). This can be linked to feelings of being culturally uprooted, displaced or being socially and spiritually alienated and marginalised. It can also include searching for spiritual guidance.

- A sense of dissatisfaction or disillusionment with mainstream political or social protest as a method to produce political change.

- Identification with the suffering of Muslim victims globally (the Umma) or experience of personal victimisation, including racism.

- The conviction that violence against the state and its symbols can be morally justified (and such a conviction can be 'finely tuned' by a religious figure).

- Gaining rewards from membership of the group/movement (friendship, a sense of belonging, status, respect, authority over other members).

- The perception of personal marginalisation combined with the perception of Western double standards in foreign policy.

- A number of other 'non-religious' behaviours and attitudes, including coming into conflict with existing mosque authorities concerning the theological legitimacy of violence or an interest in literature about what one can or cannot do to 'kafir' (un-believers).[23]

Behavioural characteristics

- Having contact with people experiencing the same set of issues or having some involvement with terrorism through family or other immediate social ties.

- Experiencing a failure to achieve anything but low-grade jobs despite having a university education, along with the ensuing disaffection resulting from this.

- Travelling abroad for up to six months at a time and having contact with extremist networks overseas (particularly Pakistan) and being 'religiously naive'.

- Having a serious criminal past (most likely involving incarceration).

While the above provides a useful list of indicators, it needs to be remembered that these risk factors or 'vulnerabilities' do not operate in isolation. As Horgan (2008:85) has noted, none can adequately explain the process of radicalisation to violence by themselves. Instead, these attitudinal and behavioural characteristics need to be considered in combination as a useful framework (or "openness to socialisation into terrorism") for understanding the whole process towards violent activity and hence, the qualities specific to each individual's involvement. Furthermore, the research evidence suggests that these factors only appear 'potent' at the early stages of involvement, after which group influences become more significant. Once a person moves from intent to action, and towards belonging to a terrorist group, group dynamics, ideological control, leadership influences, etc. become salient (although the very small numbers of individuals who act alone are the exception to this). Individuals will necessarily experience these steps in different ways and their involvement in terrorism "will reflect a dynamic, though highly personalised, process of incremental assimilation and accommodation" (Horgan, 2008:85).

Programmes to address radicalisation

The review found only two existing UK programmes that aimed to address Islamic radicalisation, which were both outreach and engagement projects running in London (the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU), and the 'Street' Project). A teaching resource pack called 'Things Do Change', which had been developed in Calderdale, was also identified. In addition, the review drew heavily upon the DCLG's (2010) recent rapid evidence assessment of community interventions to prevent support for violent extremism.[24] The DCLG report clearly advocated the adoption of capacity

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[23] As defined in *Prevent Strategy* (Home Office, 2011).

[24] The DCLG review was international in scope but limited to English language sources.

building and the empowering of young people, and interventions that challenged ideology by focusing on theology, through education or training. These interventions were most successful when delivered through outreach work that focused attention on the relevant communities.[25] The Netherlands-based Slotervaart Project was identified as an exemplar of the outreach/community-based approach recommended by the DCLG authors.

The review also considered a number of de-radicalisation programmes operating in several Islamic countries, as well as programmes tackling right-wing radicalisation. These programmes provide some potential learning points for future UK programmes, chiefly around the need for those engaging with radicalised individuals to carry authority and legitimacy for recipients and to be equipped with profound ideological knowledge.

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[25] Successful interventions were defined by the DCLG authors as resulting in a reduction in participating individuals' support for violent extremism, or their support for violent extremism in the name of religion.

4. PVE project development and implementation

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of how local practitioners developed and implemented projects aimed at preventing violent extremism.[26] The chapter includes PVE practitioners' perceptions of violent extremism and its causes, their experiences of developing and implementing PVE projects and the challenges they encountered. It also includes a description of the most noticeable deviations and developments in project activity, comparing diary sheet records of project activity with the original proposals and in-depth interviews conducted in the early stages of the programmes.

Project development

Perceived causes of violent extremism

The literature review (YJB, 2012) covered the theorised causes of Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism in some detail, and highlighted a number of possible explanations operating at the psycho-social, economic, situational and group level. It was clear from the interviews that the practitioners involved in delivering interventions for PVE had given the causes of violent extremism some thought, and a number were well versed in the literature. Table 4.1 identifies what the interviewees (interviewed from 43 YOTs and five secure establishments)[27] perceived to be the main causes of violent extremism and ranks the causes by the frequency with which they were mentioned.

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[26] Throughout this report we have used an anonymised notation which refers to projects by their geographical region, with the exception of establishments within the secure estate for children and young people, which are simply numbered.

[27] In addition to the 48 YJB-funded PVE projects, an additional initiative in the East Midlands was established to provide a network of support to YOTs across two regions that did not receive funding from either the YJB or other funding streams. This consisted of a network of available individuals and programmes that YOTs could call upon. Early fieldwork saw the research team interview practitioners at the site (hence, Table 4.1 indicates total interviews as 49), although the initiative was not counted as a YJB project.

Table 4.1: Causes of violent extremism identified by interviewees

Suspected causes of violent extremism	No. of interviews referring to cause
Foreign policy	13
Alienation/isolation/exclusion/disaffection	12
Problems with self-identity	10
Age/maturation/stage in life/rebellion	10
Purpose/sense of belonging/excitement	9
Media/internet	7
Gangs/criminality	6
Theology/misunderstanding of Koran/inevitability of religious conflict	6
Racism/being a victim of racist crime	5
Socio-economic deprivation	5
Lacking a voice/disenfranchisement	4
Being in custody/care	4
Psychological explanations	2
Other (one each of social injustice, lack of self-esteem)	2
Total number of interviews	**49**

The most commonly cited cause was the impact of government foreign policy, in particular the involvement of British troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the political situation in the Middle East more generally. Perceived grievances about the West's role in Muslim countries was seen as an important trigger for young people who were deemed vulnerable to radicalisation, although it was also recognised that this was a factor over which they, as practitioners, had no influence:

> *The grievances* [about Iraq] *and I think what hasn't helped is the reluctance at the centre to admit that there was a grievance.*

The second most frequently cited explanation was a sense of alienation from mainstream British society, personal isolation, or feelings of exclusion. Ten interviewees linked the absence of a stable sense of identity to increased

vulnerability to recruitment into violent extremism. Related to this was the suggestion that age and lack of maturity is a vulnerability factor in itself:

> *I think a young person's mind is vulnerable to indoctrination, if there is a key change or a key challenge in their life potentially people can prey on that.*

The media in general, and the internet in particular, was cited as an aggravating factor by interviewees. The role of the media was seen as twofold: firstly, it could stoke anger among Muslims either by portraying them in a negative light, or by bringing to their attention the plight of Muslims suffering in other parts of the world. Secondly, the internet was believed to facilitate the grooming of those vulnerable to radicalisation, by providing uncensored messages and a sense of anonymity in what is viewed.[28]

A number of interviewees thought there was a crossover between risk factors for violent extremism and more general risk factors for offending. Similarly, practitioners suggested that gang involvement could increase vulnerability to violent extremism.[29] It was thought that because gangs can offer a sense of belonging, security and support while also reinforcing and exacerbating pro-criminal attitudes, they could also act to promote violent extremism.

Young people in custody were believed to be at risk of recruitment into violent extremism due to aspects of the prison environment or characteristics of the inmates themselves. Two practitioners commented on what they perceived as a growing trend towards conversions to Islam among young people in custody. While the reasons for these ranged from a desire to get better food and conditions through to security from being in a group, it was believed that converts were also at greater risk of radicalisation.

Although we have discussed the issues raised by interviewees in isolation, it should be noted that most interviewees put forward a range of potential causes driving radicalisation rather than just one. Many of the factors mentioned in this section are interrelated. Young people seeking a sense of self may also perceive themselves to be disenfranchised and excluded from mainstream society, with membership of a new group being a reaction to these perceived difficulties.

While the large majority of interviewees felt able to set out a range of factors they saw as specifically related to violent extremism, one thought that violent extremism defied causal explanation:

> *They should stop acting as if there was a simple solution; they should stop presenting it as if, if we get this right programme we can solve the problem … it's not possible to say that x, y and z makes someone a violent extremist.*

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[28] In reality this anonymity is false, as all internet service providers are required by law to record and retain all web browsing records and personal communications data under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

[29] Participation in gangs makes a person more vulnerable to engaging in other types of violent activity, although participation is rarely driven by religious or ideological concerns (see Munton, et al., (2011) *Understanding Vulnerability and Resilience in Individuals to the Influence of Al Qa'ida Violent Extremism: A Rapid Evidence Assessment to Inform Policy and Practice in Preventing Violent Extremism*, Occasional Paper 98, Office for Security and Counter Terrorism).

The Prevent Strategy

Interviewees were asked their views of the Prevent Strategy. It should be noted that these comments refer to the strategy at the time of the interviews (early 2009), and the strategy has subsequently been revised.

It was apparent that the majority of the practitioners interviewed across the 49 project sites were well informed about the Prevent Strategy. For some this was because they had been involved with PVE initiatives predating the YJB funding, for example, the Pathfinder funded schemes which ran from 2007. Most, however, had only recently been involved in PVE, and had gained their knowledge from preparing bids for funding and from training they had received while in post. Practitioners often held strong views about the Prevent Strategy and took this opportunity to raise a number of issues. It should be noted that most of those interviewed accepted the need for a policy to reduce the risk of violent extremism. Two saw as an advantage the fact that it has meant that links were now being developed with Muslim communities following years of neglect:

> One of the big advantages is that it has got people talking again because I think, this is a personal view…but I think just our industry, social work, probation, whatever, has just been hind bound for the last 10 to 15 years on political correctness. We have lost the ability, we have stopped asking questions for fear of upsetting people, for fear of looking stupid, for fear of whatever and so all the investigation work we could have been doing, I think we have just lost it and it's just … and now what this has done, it's just actually got everybody back talking again.

Other practitioners welcomed the additional investment that the strategy represented for communities which were deprived and often overlooked: "I think it is fantastic that the government is investing in groups, in ethnic minority groups".

However, most of the comments about PVE were critical, or at best expressed mixed views. The very title of the initiative – Preventing Violent Extremism – was seen by some practitioners to be unhelpful, and it was clear that many felt uncomfortable with the label. As a result they were careful how they described the intervention to young people (and sometimes even to colleagues and partners in the community), and couched it in terms of community cohesion, youth inclusion or reducing social disadvantage:

> I think the title is very stigmatising…my belief is I'm not preventing violent terrorists at all, they're just young people, disadvantaged young people, who are no different from other groups. Why not call it community cohesion, why a negative?

The main concern expressed was that PVE, at least as it was originally conceived, had the appearance of focusing exclusively on Muslims and Al Qa'ida-inspired terrorism, and a number of interviewees thought that this was discriminatory and potentially counter-productive:

> One of the areas we were keen to explore on the basis of evidence was emerging messages about the threat from the extreme right in terms of radicalisation, and we were told quite clearly that that was not within scope. So it is somewhat disappointing now to find 18 months down the road that the

government view now is that it is in scope, after we've had two BNP councillors elected in the sub region.

I think it was a massive own goal saying this is simply an Islamic problem which they are now back-tracking on … they are now trying to pull that back round.

As eluded to in the above quotes and detailed in the Introduction, the tone of the policy shifted in response to these concerns, from an initial expectation that YOTs would focus predominantly (but not exclusively) on Islamic extremists to an acknowledgement that in certain areas there may be other types of violent extremism (for example, the far right) which could legitimately be tackled under the Prevent Strategy. While this flexibility has been welcomed by those working on PVE, interviewees felt that the communication of these changes could have been improved. PVE is a policy area spanning multiple government departments, generating numerous initiatives at a grass roots level, of which the YJB strand was just one part (albeit one of the largest in terms of grass roots programmes). Therefore, the YJB was in the position of funding and helping to implement one aspect of PVE practice, without being responsible for the overall policy, and this may have been one reason why some interviewees felt that there had been a lack of adequate and timely information[30] about policy changes made higher up, and their impact on the ground:

The weakness is that the direction was not clear…there is still no clear definition in terms of what actually is the strategic aim of the YJB re PVE, and what it is that they actually want to see us deliver.

I think one of the weaknesses is a lack of information about the national agenda…often we have heard about things off the cuff through other people.

Given the time-limited nature of these projects, their strategic importance, and the need for managers to plan ahead, it was vital that projects were informed as quickly as practical of any substantive changes which impacted on project delivery. The YJB did take a number of steps to address these concerns, including conducting visits to projects in conjunction with the OSCT to improve lines of communication, and organising a national conference on PVE to clarify policy, and a national seminar designed to share emerging practice.

As the interviewees have noted, the PVE programme is controversial and has the potential to be divisive. Although some YOTs were initially reluctant to be involved, all began to work on the agenda, although in some cases this meant rebranding the work as 'community cohesion' or 'violence reduction'.

Project development: deciding what to do

When explaining the rationale for their programme of interventions, interviewees tended to refer back to what they saw as the causes of violent extremism. For example, interviewees who saw violent extremism as linked to gangs, racial conflict, incarceration or social exclusion, typically designed new interventions or adapted existing ones aimed at these risk factors. A couple of interviewees stated they did not want to "reinvent the wheel" and so went along with "what we use generally" or

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[30] For example, it took several months to reach the decision to extend the projects by a further six months.

"common sense". Mentoring was said by one interviewee to have been chosen because it had been shown to be effective in tackling offending more generally, and that he thought it would also work with PVE. Nevertheless, the majority of projects felt that they had an insufficiently detailed understanding of PVE. They, therefore, found it difficult to determine what PVE actually meant and what its parameters were, what activities represented suitable interventions, or how to identify which local young people were vulnerable.

A minority of projects said their interventions had been developed solely for use with PVE and were based on theory, not on any other interventions. By far the majority, however, referred to other programmes which had run at their YOT or at another organisation for other purposes, and which had been adapted for use with PVE. These included existing gang work and programmes for racially motivated offenders.

Only a handful of projects had utilised external advice or consultancy to develop their interventions. Respondents for a few schemes commented that their team had liaised with workers at other projects to help generate ideas for their own interventions. At least two schemes consulted young people prior to the start of the programme to ascertain what activities interested them.

Evidence from the case studies: deciding what to do

Practitioners demonstrated a variety of different understandings of the term 'violent extremism', some of which derived from confusion and misunderstanding of policy. Perhaps the most telling example of this was a senior practitioner at young offender institution (YOI) 1, who, when explaining the term to a group of newly arrived young people, defined violent extremism as quite simply, 'extreme violence'. This definition widens the problem space to include anyone susceptible to using a high level of violence and therefore, is capable of inculcating a large number of the young people within the secure estate. A more profitable approach would have involved considering a young person's history of violence or exposure to violence as merely one marker among a number of other potential risk factors of violent extremism in making a judgement concerning the suitability of referral (see Pressman, 2009).

There was a noticeable tendency among some respondents to slip from talking about 'violent extremism' to discussing 'extremism', or even prejudicial thinking, and for these terms to be used interchangeably. Certainly the term extremism was used by some project staff as an inclusive category, one which was not restricted to the internalisation of a political or religious ideology that justified or advocated violence –the essence of what violent extremism means. For instance, there were several projects that defined young people who were attracted to certain policies of the British National Party (BNP) as being 'extremists', and hence suitable for inclusion into a PVE intervention. The updated guidance (Home Office, 2009) emphasised the resort to violence as a defining feature of violent extremism, so it is therefore doubtful whether affiliation to a non-proscribed political party or political movement should, by itself, constitute an area of concern and intervention, whereas affiliation to some other violent far-right groups (for example,

Combat 18 or Blood & Honour) certainly would.

At North East YOT 2, the YOT Training and Development Officer argued that the national portrayal of the PVE agenda had caused the YOT and partner agency staff to focus solely on Muslim communities, when other right-wing extremism was of a greater concern within the area. However, the project's original bid did not make a case for tackling (violent or otherwise) right-wing extremism, rather, it raised concerns over local levels of prejudices towards some minority groups and resulting 'community tensions'. The activities implemented aimed to address the proposal's original concerns through 'conflict avoidance' training and, as such, should more properly be seen as a community cohesion intervention.

In practical terms, the lack of clarity and understanding of violent extremism led to several projects implementing activities with minimal PVE content.

Project implementation

Project initiation

The intended application procedure and timetable for the YJB PVE Programme (YJB, 2008) stated that applications would be submitted by 30 June 2008, with successful applicants operational from 1 August 2008. This timescale, dictated by the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT), provided successful applicants with, at most, one month between the confirmation of funding and implementing interventions. This timetable proved to be unrealistic, with the majority of projects falling at least five months behind the originally planned starting date. As can be seen from Table 4.2, of 48 projects, only six were operational in 2008. The first quarter of 2009 saw 18 projects begin operation, with a further six starting in the second quarter, 11 in the third and three in the final quarter of 2009.

Table 4.2: Estimated start of projects

Date of start	Number of projects	Percentage of projects
Late 2008	6	12.5
January to March 2009	18	37.5
April to June 2009	6	12.5
July to September 2009	11	22.9
October to December 2009	3	6.2
January to March 2010	1	2.5
Unable to determine	3	6.2
Total	**48**	**100**

Over half of the practitioners interviewed stated that they had not been given sufficient time to develop and implement their programme. Participants argued that the timeframe did not allow for the necessary project set-up activities, most notably, the time required to recruit suitable staff to deliver the programme. The problems created by the short timeframe were compounded by the fact that in many cases, YOTs received confirmation of funding several months later than anticipated. Several projects reported that it was early, or even mid-2009 before they were sure of their funding. The reasons for the delays in confirming funding included the complicated relationship between the OSCT, as the sponsor funding body, and the YJB as the delivery partner, and also delays in obtaining ministerial approval for the initiative. In addition, several projects were requested to revise their bid in light of YJB comments or concerns. For example, the Yorkshire YOT 4 project reported that their initial bid had failed and that they were still in the process of preparing a new bid for submission to the YJB at the end of 2009. Their project became operational in the first quarter of 2010.

It is important to recognise the potentially damaging consequences that delays in funding, or lack of forward planning can have on projects. The expectation of almost immediate delivery was seen as unrealistic and an obstacle to effective project planning, especially given the nature of the interventions being funded, as one interviewee commented:

> I think the timeframe is tricky enough when you've got something everybody understands and isn't contentious, but when you've got something nobody understands and is wildly contentious; it's really quite a challenge.

The result of working to an unrealistic timetable was to push back project start dates by as much as eight months. The YJB and the OSCT recognised this problem and in April 2009 extended the PVE Programme to September 2010, allowing most projects to run for a 24-month period as was originally intended. It was estimated that 10 of the projects operated for the full seven quarters of the programme, and 16 operated for six months. Four projects appear to have been only operational across two quarters or less.[31]

Recruitment and retention of staff

As mentioned above, one explanation for delayed starts across a number of projects was the time required to recruit suitable staff, particularly as recruitment procedures included the need to conduct relevant checks:

> They were really tight deadlines when we put the bid in, the work was supposed to start within two weeks of when the funding was agreed, which just seems madness. It took us six months just to get the post out for recruitment.

The research team's use of diary sheets confirmed that many schemes did not begin recruiting staff or filling positions until late into 2009 and that projects experienced difficulties finding suitably experienced individuals. The fact that recruitment could take so long, combined with the relatively short funding period (initially 18 months)

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[31] It should be noted that projects may have operated for longer periods while failing to return activity data to the YJB or the research team.

meant that, in practice, staff were being offered contracts of 12 months or less, acting as a disincentive to higher quality applicants. In at least one case, the YOT had to resort to using more expensive agency staff.

<div style="background-color:purple;color:white;padding:8px">Evidence from the case studies: recruitment and retention of staff</div>

The case study sites also experienced problems with recruitment and retention, and negative views towards the PVE policy were found to have added to this in some sites. London YOT 10 spent most of 2009 recruiting and training mentors but towards the end of the year it became apparent that they had not recruited a sufficient number of Muslim males to fulfil the needs of the young people referred to them. The YOT manager attributed difficulties in recruitment to the negative press coverage that the Prevent Strategy had received nationally, as well as potential applicants' objection to the delivery of the project by a criminal justice agency. Similarly, the South West YOT 2 project co-ordinator recounted how a number of influential project staff, who had been passionate about Muslim youth work, had left because of their opposition to the PVE agenda (although a different explanation had been offered by a senior YOT manager referring to "poor team working").

Resources

Over three-quarters of the interviewees were satisfied with the funding they had received. This is not surprising given that, by and large, those applying for funding knew how much was available (around £150,000 per scheme), and reported that they had scaled the intervention accordingly. Respondents from nine of the 48 schemes felt that the level of funding was not sufficient.

Revisions to initial plans

Diary sheets indicated that 15 projects (of 48) had delivered, or were in the process of delivering, all of the activities mentioned during the initial interview, or were delivering activities that seemed to satisfy all of the scheme's original aims. At eight schemes there were certain activities that were mentioned during the initial interview that were not referred to in the diary sheets. Seven interviewees reported changes to some of the content of the interventions from that planned in the bid, although in most cases these were minor. For example, one secure training centre (STC) which had planned to commission de-radicalisation mentoring alongside its other activities, found that there was no need for such a specialised activity as they did not have any high-risk cases. Staff in two of the STCs altered their interventions following feedback from the young people to the pilot versions of the intervention. In one case, a board game used to explore religion, was dropped because it was "too obviously about religion" and did not interest the young people, and in the other, the didactic approach was criticised, leading to a change in the programme to include more interactive activities. Another project, based in a YOT, changed the focus from citizenship to ideology, as a result of reading research in this area.

In a couple of cases, a decision had been taken to widen the geographical areas to be covered by the initiative. In three YOTs and one secure establishment, the

community partners originally named in the bid pulled out, or were later deemed unsuitable (following police vetting procedures), and in these cases new arrangements were made. Respondents from four schemes said that the number of young people they were working with had been scaled down from that envisaged in the bid, because the actual level of referrals was lower than expected. Finally, a change in the target audience was mentioned by two projects. In one case, the YOT found itself working more with young people from the community than had been planned, and in the other, work planned to take place in schools was refocused on youth clubs.

Difficulties with the implementation of their original plans led at least two projects to rethink and reformulate their strategies. For example, East Midlands YOT 4 discovered that one of its proposed activities was already being conducted elsewhere in the city. The YOT did not appear to resolve this and other problems, and the project ceased to operate in the first quarter of 2010.

Partnership working and community involvement

Most projects relied, to some extent, on other agencies or organisations either for delivery of services or for referrals of young people. Organisations named included local schools, mosques and community groups, as well as agencies such as youth services, the police and local councils. Interviewees in 12 schemes mentioned that they had linked up with youth services to deliver PVE programmes. Projects explained that youth services were in a better position to identify those young people who might be at risk of radicalisation but who were not YOT clients. Another advantage of working with youth services was the access this provided to youth clubs, enabling services to be targeted at specific geographical areas. A smaller number of YOTs employed specialist community agencies with expertise in PVE to deliver the project.

In a number of areas, the local community organisations had been commissioned to carry out all, or the bulk of, the work. Around half of the projects reported that the wider community were broadly 'supportive' of the project. However, a number experienced difficulties getting the community involved: in at least two cases community organisations which YOTs had hoped to work with were unwilling to participate because they believed the PVE agenda to be discriminatory:

> *This is money we've found difficult to spend, because it is associated with a government agenda that people aren't happy with.*

In another case, concern was raised by community members in some quarters as to what would happen to the information collected by the project. In formulating their programme of interventions, some projects consciously avoided referring to PVE, or labelling their activities as PVE due to the negative connotations of the terminology to members of the community and other practitioners:

> *We are not openly branding this work as prevent violent extremism, because we see that being much more linked to vulnerability… the questions the community would ask if we brand it as prevent, 'how have you determined that my child is at risk, what have you based that on, where are the notes kept on that?'.*

Community reactions to the case study projects presented the main challenges in their delivery, particularly when attempting to secure the involvement of Muslim young people, but also in retaining staff. Some of these difficulties were anticipated by projects and in-house training exercises among staff were used to good effect in alleviating some staff concerns over PVE, while also 'selling' the wider benefits of the projects.

Gaining the support of local mosques and schools for the PVE projects could also prove to be a challenge. Where difficulties were experienced with some mosques (although by no means all mosques in the project areas), respondents reported a general unwillingness by the mosque leadership to discuss violent extremism. Practitioners believed that the mosque leaderships feared giving a false impression that a problem might exist, or that some Imams feared deportation. Several projects reported an element of competition arising, with some individual mosques busily trying to engage and work with local young people in an effort to draw them away from PVE programmes, rather than working in partnership with these projects.

Referral and recruitment of young people

Practitioners commented that the most common method of referring young people to interventions was via the YOT, and often through the youth justice system. This was supported by the throughput data. Referrals were also made by staff at the STC, schools, the police and community organisations. Referrals were often made because the young person had displayed concerning behaviour or expressed concerning attitudes during the normal supervision process, as illustrated by the quotes below:

> *Well there isn't a tick box or anything as such, but it's a conversation…we aim to notice through our work with young people if they are picking up the wrong messages.*

> *I'll give you an example of one young person who was referred because as part of a session with his original supervising officer he was discussing about how Americans treated Muslims and how they deserved to be blown up, so that automatically goes to a Tier 2.*

The success of this type of approach is crucially dependent on staff having sufficient training and confidence to determine whether changes in behaviour or attitudes are symptomatic of a slide into radicalisation, or a positive expression of faith. The following quote highlights the dilemma that practitioners face:

> *If somebody has been working, let's say with Imran, and Imran might have been coming in for a year on a particular order and he's always been wearing Western, for want of a better word, dress, not visiting the mosque, suddenly comes in, in full sort of Muslim garb and then he was praying five times a day, he's only eating certain types of food, tells you in the same conversation that he's isolated, that he's not talking to his mum and dad anymore and he's ditched*

his girlfriend, are those things evidence of he's found faith, and he's turned the corner and that will be a positive aspect of his intervention plan because this is where he is focusing his time and attention there, or are those things risk factors, are they problems, is something else going on, becoming more vulnerable because of something? That's where your staff do need to know that stuff because otherwise… .

In nine schemes, the main criterion for assessment was the offence for which the young person had been convicted. Referral offences included those that were racially motivated, gang-related offences and those directly related to violent extremism. One intervention was available to any YOT client who was on an order of sufficient length (in this case three months) to enable the intervention to be completed.

As noted above, a number of projects commented that the number of referrals they had received had been lower than anticipated. Diary sheets indicated that a few schemes undertook work to promote awareness of the PVE project and increase the number of appropriate referrals. Such efforts included 'road shows' and posters displayed at relevant agencies. Another project met with schools and community organisations but found that many individuals lacked knowledge of the PVE agenda and were wary of Muslim-focused youth work.

The projects also ran interventions that were open to all (universal). These, by definition, did not have strict criteria for referral. Participants in these interventions were attracted through advertisements, flyers (distributed at schools, mosques and community centres), word of mouth and, in a few projects, via social networking sites. Universal interventions were commonly delivered to existing groups, youth clubs, school year groups, and young people known to the YOTs or within the secure estate. Therefore, although universal, these interventions tended to have some restrictions on eligibility, usually based on where the intervention was to be delivered. Other interventions had a geographical remit, being open to young people residing in a particular area of the town or city, usually chosen because of a high level of racial tension, or a high Asian and/or Muslim population.

All five of the secure establishments had universal provision for all their trainees, and most also had targeted interventions for those trainees deemed to be particularly vulnerable. The two quotes below illustrate the range of factors typically taken into account for non-universal programmes:

First thing is we are working with everybody who is serving a custodial sentence…we consider them as vulnerable … . But in general we are working with young people who have got Muslim [sic] as their faith, young people who express an interest in Islam … . We also work with young people whose offences were related to being, for example, racist, or expressed racist views.

We have a sort of profile of the sort of young person who we think we want to get to, so it is about the troubles about identities, sense of grievance, interested in theological debates… .

Reaching those most at risk?

Practitioners were asked whether they thought their intervention was effective in reaching those young people most at risk of becoming involved in violent extremism. Only a minority of interviewees answered positively, and most of these were a

qualified 'yes' (for example, "I'm hoping that yes it will be"). A small number said that they did not think the intervention was likely to reach those young people most at risk, although they did not say why. Others thought it was too soon to say, while one thought it impossible to say, due to the lack of certainty about risk factors:

I don't actually know if anyone has a clear idea of which young people would fit into that category, so I can't answer that question.

A small number of interviewees argued that because YOTs work with YOT clients, they are not in a position to identify young people at risk in the wider youth population:

It's only about 3% of young people [in this YOT area] *who get a reprimand, final warning or conviction each year; it's a significantly small number. I think there is a risk…there isn't any evidence at the moment that indicates that YOT young people are involved in violent extremism.*

It was suggested that schools, youth clubs and community organisations were better placed than YOTs to identify those young people vulnerable to violent extremism.

It was interesting that, at the time of this fieldwork, none of the interviewees said that they had received referrals of young people who were considered **already** radicalised or indicated some involvement in acts of violent extremism. It is hard to know how to interpret this, and there are at least three possibilities:

- it could simply be the case that there are currently no young people posing such a high level of risk in the areas under study (although since these areas were chosen precisely because they were believed to be at the highest risk nationally, this would appear unlikely)

- it may be that high-risk young people are being dealt with elsewhere in the system, although if this were the case, it would be expected that YOTs would at least have knowledge of these cases; furthermore, this would question the necessity of a tiered approach

- it may be that YOTs are not, in fact, picking up the highest risk young people.

This third possibility is obviously a concern, and one interviewee suggested that those who were involved in violent extremism may be more secretive about their views than those lower in risk (the 'false moderate problem'), and thus, harder to detect. Another practitioner commented on the difficulty of getting any meaningful dialogue with young people they suspected might already be radicalised:

You can't start to have a conversation with someone who's thought enough about their Muslim identity to be taking it to the extremes that we think they are by going to [radical mosque] *… . If you go up to someone at this stage and say, 'I'm from a PVE group and we are interested in what you're doing and, and why you're going down this route', which is perhaps the way you might open the conversation, they very easily, as they do, because my youth workers have been confronted by people from* [radical group]*, they say, 'I'm not interested in what you have to say. I don't want to talk to you. I never want to see you again. I am an extremist; what are you going to do about it?' And then they walk away. So it seems like a conversation you almost can't have.*

Evidence from the case studies: referral and recruitment of young people

By the time of the later case study fieldwork, nine of the 12 case study projects reported that they had worked with 'extremist' young people, although this was usually restricted to only one or a few specific cases occurring over nearly the entire lifetime of the project. Within this subset there was a small number who appeared to be radicalised (although not to the point of acting on these beliefs), with individuals displaying a clear set of attitudinal and behavioural characteristics. The exception to this was one staff respondent in London YOT 10 that spoke of there being eight 'extreme cases', although these may not be directly comparable as practitioners definitions of 'extremist' may vary despite their working to the same policy guidance.

In contrast to this small cohort of apparently radicalised young people, many of the project bids had highlighted concerns that young people were being recruited into extremist organisations, or more broadly, were vulnerable to this (predominantly Islamic extremist groups). If this were an accurate reflection of what was occurring, we would have anticipated higher numbers of young people displaying these beliefs (and hence, occupying Tier 3 of the Prevent pyramid: 'moving towards extremism').[32] As with the national picture, either the supporting evidence base marshalled in the original bids was inaccurate (radicalisation was not taking place to the degree or extent believed) or the projects' success at recruiting the most at risk individuals was marginal to the true numbers, or projects were not identifying 'false moderates'.

The case study project employing the most sophisticated screening instrument (the Safe Spaces: Young Person's Need Assessment Inventory) in North West YOT 2 reported more cases that were indicating concerns (as indicated by higher scores), although the project also employed a number of peer outreach workers as well as receiving referrals from different agencies, with the YOT as the main referral agency. These outreach workers worked with specific groups including asylum seekers and Somalian young people. Outreach work was made more important as a means of trying to counteract what one practitioner termed as a fundamental problem with agency referrals, that the most at-risk young people were suspicious of agencies and did not trust the Prevent Strategy. The practitioner noted that, possibly because the strategy was not seen as legitimate, community self-policing to stop radicalisation was not occurring.

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[32] This refers to the ACPO tiered model of intervention to address Prevent (Audit Commission, 2008). Please see *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence* (YJB, 2012) for a more detailed discussion of the Prevent pyramid.

Training

As part of its support for the projects, the YJB commissioned PVE training for staff in YOTs, secure establishments and relevant partner organisations. This comprised three levels of training. The Level 1 training was delivered over one day with a largely classroom-based approach and provided an introduction to Islam and the Prevent Strategy. Levels 2 and 3 of the training were run over two consecutive days and provided more in-depth sessions covering practical issues in working with young people and PVE. Levels 2 and 3 were more interactive, with opportunities for debate and dialogue.

Interviews and diary sheet returns indicated that staff from the majority of projects had attended the Level 1 training. Overall, responses to the training were positive and practitioners welcomed the provision of consistent, national training. However, there were conflicting views as to whether the training attempted to do too much, or too little. This can perhaps be explained by the pre-existing differences in levels of knowledge about Islam, with some of the Muslim staff interviewed finding the session superficial. Levels 2 and 3 were well received, partly due to the opportunities they gave for debate, but also for the networking which such events allow.

Level 1 was available to up to 20 staff per project, with an average of 12 members of staff from each project attending. Places on Levels 2 and 3 were limited to just two per project, with senior project staff generally attending. Several interviewees thought this limit of two attendees was unduly restrictive. The restriction on numbers may have been due to an assumption that staff who attended would then go back and 'cascade down' the training to their colleagues, and this was certainly what some interviewees were led to believe. At STC 2, the PVE co-worker disseminated Level 2 training to other staff members via regular one-hour training slots. However, other respondents reported that this was not a role with which they felt comfortable:

> *I think what they want us to do is probably cascade that down. I am not sure I am the best person to cascade it down because I am not sure that I could answer all the questions that my staff will have for me.*

In addition to the YJB training, diary sheets indicated that staff members from several schemes had attended various other training courses. The topics of external courses attended included: PVE, multicultural awareness and diversity, Islamic theology and supporting parents and communities. These courses were most frequently delivered by third sector agencies, followed by the police and local councils. A small number of projects also delivered their own formal training programmes, to their own staff and to relevant partners. For example, the London YOT 10 project co-ordinator delivered Somali cultural awareness workshops and in West Midlands YOT 1 the project leader delivered training to staff on 'building relationships and rapport' and on the 'Jihadi mindset'. The Yorkshire YOT 3 project provided training to staff members at a local authority children's home on group work theory and practice to enable them to deliver a strand of the programme. There was also evidence that projects provided training on a more informal basis to workers as and when required.

Evidence from the case studies: PVE training

Representatives from all the case studies commented on the challenging, complex and ever-changing nature of PVE, making the need for training particularly important. Most respondents felt that training needs were largely met by the three tiered training sessions provided by the YJB. While the training helped practitioners to understanding the radicalisation process, the majority of interviewees requested more opportunities to refresh and update their knowledge.

A key benefit of training had been the opportunity to network with other PVE practitioners, although interviewees argued that these opportunities came too late and too infrequently.

Respondents from five case studies highlighted the need to ensure that an awareness of violent extremism permeated more widely throughout their organisation and with partner agencies; it was argued that all staff who had contact with young people, however limited, needed to have an understanding of young people's cultural needs and the ability to identify concerns. Consequently, the majority of projects supplemented the YJB training with their own in-house provision.

One practitioner bemoaned the lack of a web portal, arguing that this would have been an ideal medium through which practitioners could have shared information and discussed problems. Interviewees from a further three projects were disappointed that the training did not provide more information on promising practice or interventions 'to take away', with one stating that the sessions provided "more guidance than training".

Support for projects

Practitioners were asked whether there was any other support that they would like from the YJB. Around a third said they were satisfied with the level of support and did not require any further help. The most common suggestion was for the YJB to organise a practitioner forum, for projects to come together, to share good practice, discuss emerging issues around PVE and to be informed of changes in policy. The YJB subsequently organised a national seminar on PVE at the end of the programme.

The data collection requirements of the YJB were commented on by two interviewees, one arguing that it was too onerous, while the other thought it too simplistic to meaningfully capture the nuances of the work they were conducting. One interviewee had concerns about what happens to the data on young people submitted to the YJB and sought reassurance that it was only being used for research purposes and not for 'intelligence gathering'.

Some interviewees noted the dearth of proven effective resources on the market, both for low-level preventive work, and for those already showing signs of radicalisation:

It's simple things we need, like five myths about the Koran or certain verses out of the Koran that can be used to dispel some of the myths, things like where it says to kill yourself is a sin against God.

We've got the factors we can work with, ETE [education, training and employment]*, substance, mental health, we can work with all that, but when it comes specifically around de-radicalisation there's hardly anything out there for that in my opinion.*

Finally, it was notable that four of the five secure establishments expressed dissatisfaction with the level of support they had received from the YJB and one YOT thought the YJB could have done more to facilitate building relations with the local YOI.

Evaluation and monitoring

The absence of an existing evidence base raises the importance of taking steps to measure the impact of projects. Indeed, in the guidance notes, applicants were encouraged to build in a "strong evaluation of projects, interventions and actions" so that evidence of emerging good practice could be produced. Some interviewees questioned whether it would be possible or even advisable, to try to measure change in extremist attitudes:

I don't think it can be evaluated formally, because it links with thought processes … I don't know what level of belief the young people had ... the other thing we don't want to do is open up a can of worms. What I don't want to do is get young people to start thinking about terrorism, we can actually be seen as glorifying it, promoting it so we're very careful how we do it that's my concern. The second concern is that it's a mindset, how do you evaluate a mindset?

I think you have just got to accept that some of this is just sowing seeds and you are not really sure when it will germinate, if it will, and it might be off in the future and its certainly not measurable, much of it is not directly measurable [over the lifetime of the project].

Responses from interviews and diary sheets indicated that the most frequent method for measuring change was asking young people to complete written feedback forms. Although these are useful in assessing whether a young person enjoyed a particular session, they are not designed to measure changes in relevant attitudes. The second most frequent form of evaluation was the completion, by session facilitators, of evaluation reports to record details of how well the session ran and practitioners' perceptions of the young persons' progression. Twelve projects implemented pre- and post-intervention measures. These measures involved young people completing questionnaires or taking part in interviews at the start and end of the programme to assess what they had learnt or whether their attitudes had changed. It appeared that all but one scheme conducted these evaluations themselves.

Changes to a young person's offending behaviour were mentioned less frequently as indicators of project success, although, the monitoring of changes to *Asset* and/or *Onset* scores was mentioned by six projects. One interviewee commented that *Asset* was too generic to be able to identify changes in attitudes pertinent to violent extremism. Interviewees in several projects referred to outputs rather than outcomes as measures of success. These ranged from simply measuring the numbers of young people involved over the lifetime of the project (as one said "bums on seats"),

to improvements in young people's access to education, accommodation or engagement in positive activities (factors which can make a person more vulnerable or resistant to Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism or other types of violence).

<div style="background-color:purple;color:white;font-weight:bold;padding:8px">Evidence from the case studies: evaluation and monitoring</div>

Only three of the 12 case study projects commissioned external evaluations. The Yorkshire YOT 3 project undertook the most extensive investigations at the programme level, with four of the core YOT Prevent programmes being independently examined.[33] Overall the findings were generally positive for all these programmes, highlighting a range of beneficial effects for participants (although only two programme evaluations used any pre- and post-intervention measures).[34] One unexpected finding for the last of these programmes showed three course participants displaying lower pro-social attitudes at the end of the course than at the beginning, although there appeared to be mitigating reasons for this.

Positive provisional findings were also found for the South West YOT 2 project. The evaluation found that their Muslim Youth Development Model (MYDM) significantly contributed to driving emerging national PVE best practice and the distance travelled by young people.[35] However, there had been some substantial missing data which required scaling down the scope of the original methodology and this consideration does detract from the robustness of these provisional findings.[36]

Psychologists at the STC 2 project were in the process of developing an attitudinal survey instrument, one capable of assessing any significant short-term change in young people's attitudes towards violence and extremism. However, delays were experienced and the instrument had yet to progress beyond the early piloting stage.

The most sophisticated attempt to measure the impact of interventions had been undertaken by the North West YOT 2 project. They had designed and developed a psychometric instrument (the Safe Spaces Inventory) with academics at Queen's University, Belfast, and with the assistance of additional funding from the OSCT. These efforts were notable because the Safe Spaces Inventory was designed as both a diagnostic instrument **and** an assessment tool. The instrument sets out to identify the levels of risk that each individual is exposed to, thereby indicating the types of interventions

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[33] Manby, M. (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2010a, 2010b).

[34] The Eyberg Child Behaviour Inventory measuring parents' views of problem behaviour in children for the Parenting Programme and an attitudinal questionnaire measuring pro-social attitudes and prejudice for the Diversity Programme.

[35] A draft copy of the interim report was obtained for this case study (Whelan, 2010).

[36] It was reported that some aspects of the project monitoring data (the individual feedback sheets from the young people) had not always been routinely distributed and collected.

[37] At the time of fieldwork, the inventory was still being refined (in its fifth version) and was also in the process of being validated among a cohort of some 500 young people.

that can best support them, and allows a measure of any impact the programme has.[37]

With the possible exception of North West YOT 2, projects struggled to assess outcomes in a robust fashion. In part, this demonstrates the size and complexity of the task, one requiring a substantial investment in developing a reliable and valid measurement tool. As yet it is too early to determine the extent to which the most sophisticated attempt – the Safe Spaces psychometric instrument – does indeed reliably measure Islamic radicalisation and programme impact.

Perceptions of project success

Although most interviews were conducted during the early stages of implementation,[38] practitioners were asked if there had been any positive or negative responses to the intervention or unexpected outcomes, whether from young people, the wider community or colleagues. The majority of respondents (19 of 26 answering the question) thought that their intervention was working to tackle the causes of violent extremism, or had at least started to do so:

> *I think instead of the young person sat in front of the internet in their bedroom getting wound up about these things,* [this] *provides an opportunity to discuss these things and to place the arguments in context and a chance to express themselves and also give them some expectation and hope about the possibility of doing something through the normal political process.*

The remaining respondents either thought it too soon to say whether the intervention was addressing the causes, or thought that it was not possible to say due to the lack of certainty around the risk factors for violent extremism:

> *Because we don't know what the risk factors are in this agenda, we're not working to a set of risk factors that have been* [validated] *so it's even harder than your normal preventative work because you don't even know if you are reducing those factors because you don't know what the right ones are.*

All of the interview respondents agreed that the risk of violent extremism could not realistically be countered by means of one project delivered through a YOT or secure establishment. It was felt that a wider and more holistic approach was needed. In particular, it was felt that the help of other agencies and the wider community was essential, not only to identify young people at risk, but also to deliver more effective support to young people, as the following quote indicates:

> *No programme is enough. What it can do is counter more negative influences, give a pathway into something that's positive, but then you've got to support it with a range of other incentives like ETE.*

One of the interviewees referred to the time-limited nature of the projects, and argued that if the risks of violent extremism are to be reduced over a sustained

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[38] All projects were visited in the early stages of implementation in mid-2009 in order to capture any obstacles to implementation.

period of time, then funding for the YOTs and other agencies needs to be ongoing and not cease after two years.

Four projects took the opportunity to comment on the success of their programmes. For example, one respondent commented that the young people had become increasingly involved in the group sessions and demonstrated that they were able to appreciate how each session was relevant to their own lives. Another respondent claimed that young people had received a lot of support and information and many had acquired routes into mainstream employment or education. The practitioners interviewed reported that the reaction of young people themselves to the interventions was mainly positive, and while some had initially held reservations, staff had been able to overcome these through explaining the purpose of the project to them, or by involving them in its design, as the following quote illustrates:

> *Yeah, the young people have been very positive. The first group started off, 'why us, why just Muslims', then when* [name] *spoke to them about why do you think and they came up with 'we get blamed for everything', and they've really welcomed it, and they can't get rid of them on a Saturday. The families have welcomed it; it's good that they are seeing the community is vulnerable to it.*

Another gave her impressionistic assessment of how the young people on her project had progressed:

> *There's definitely been a change in my young people, and not because they were potential terrorists but because they were just feeling very disempowered, feeling like 'no one listens to me', you know, 'what's the point', to now they are doing good community work, they are employable. I asked one young person what was his biggest achievement. In year one, it was being alive, in year two, he's talking about going to university and he's got paid work. There's definitely been a change of attitude, in themselves, there's definitely not been a change in their attitude towards the government, even police, actually they changed their attitude to the police, they want to work together, they want to break the barriers. They are advising police now, so that's kind of empowered them.*

The views and experiences of young people taking part in the projects will be explored further in Chapter 6.

Evidence from the case studies: perceptions of project success

Those case studies that addressed PVE in the most direct manner tended to have the greatest confidence that their interventions were directly preventing young people from becoming radicalised or sympathetic to radicalised groups. These projects were able to cite specific examples of young people with extremist views who had come to their attention and more intensive work had been undertaken with them.

Several projects pointed to the numbers of young people on their programme, and high levels of referral and participation as an indicator of success. Practitioners from five projects commented that the success of their approach lay in reaching young people who were not engaging in any other activities or youth services, building trust and providing an opportunity to speak to

someone they may not otherwise have spoken to.

Other case study practitioners pointed to outcomes that they believed would make young people less vulnerable to radicalisation. This included increasing awareness of religious issues, building self confidence, raising aspirations and addressing discriminatory attitudes which, prior to the project, would otherwise have gone unaddressed. Practitioners in North East YOT 2 highlighted positive changes in attitudes, with participants demonstrating an increased understanding of prejudices including racism and homophobia. Practitioners believed they had provided young people with the necessary skills to equip them to communicate and debate, to reach their own decisions and resist extremist views. Two projects also reported successes in terms of reducing reconvictions.

Projects engaging peer mentors and youth leaders believed their approach not only to be successful, but also to be of greater longevity, with young people acting to support their more vulnerable peers in the community. Similarly, East Midlands YOT 3 and South East YOT 2 reported that their work with families had led to greater resilience within the wider community.

Half of the case studies believed their success was partly in building partnership relationships and in heightening awareness of PVE across a wide range of partner agencies, thereby increasing the potential of identifying a young person expressing attitudes of concern and intervening early on. Interviewees from East Midlands YOT 3 and South West YOT 2 commented that their project had increased the prominence of PVE on local agendas, and provided a structure to support community and charity-based organisations that were already concerned about violent extremism.

Respondents also identified the elements of their projects that they believed had been instrumental in their success. These included the knowledge, leadership and diplomacy of project managers, the motivation of staff and volunteers, the credibility of the speakers used, and the importance of highly skilled facilitation.

Summary

This chapter explored the views of practitioners around PVE, as well as recounting information about the delivery and implementation of interventions. Most interviewees were knowledgeable about the PVE agenda, and had given the issues it raises some consideration. A number were concerned about the apparent initial focus on Muslims, and the potential stigma attached to the 'preventing violent extremism' label. Changes to the policy to encompass other kinds of extremism and to de-emphasise the PVE name were, therefore, welcomed, but could have been communicated more systematically.

The practitioners we interviewed identified a range of factors that they believed contribute to violent extremism. These included British foreign policy, alienation, the media, theology/religion, issues of identity and age. Many interviewees put forward a combination of potential causes rather than just one. Most practitioners thought that

the interventions they used addressed the causes of violent extremism which they had identified, but most did not believe that the intervention on its own was sufficient to tackle violent extremism. This was explained by interviewees in terms of the complexity or intractability of extremist views, or the influence of factors such as foreign policy and the media, over which they had little control. Interviewees had mixed views regarding whether or not their project was reaching the young people at greatest risk from violent extremism, with some questioning whether YOTs were in the best position to identify such young people. It was suggested that schools, youth clubs and community organisations were perhaps better placed to conduct this task.

The original timescale for this programme was unrealistic, resulting in slippage, and this, combined with delays in confirming funding for projects, was the main reason for the problems managers faced, for example, in terms of recruitment and retention of staff. Partners and funding bodies need to be aware of the importance of developing realistic and achievable timeframes, and of the requirements for successfully implementing projects.

In only three projects was any 'tailored' attempt made to measure change in relevant attitudes. In the remaining projects, monitoring and evaluation was largely based upon feedback from the young people and attempts, in-house, to monitor and assess the progress of their interventions.

It should be noted that many of the problems described are not new, and are indeed predictable. A hurried bidding process, a lack of direction regarding programme content, inadequate procedures for monitoring and evaluation and delays in implementation have been documented in evaluations of similar initiatives dating back to 1998 (Wilcox, 2003). It is to be hoped that at least some of these lessons will be recalled by policymakers when planning the next policy initiative.

5. Preventing Violent Extremism programme content and delivery

This chapter provides an overview of the Preventing Violent Extremism project implementation across the 48 projects in the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Prevent programme, and is enhanced by findings from the case studies. While Chapter 4 focused upon the early stages of project development, we now examine the actual content of programmes and the nature of their delivery. The chapter also provides a basic profile of the young people participating in the projects. The chapter combines data from YJB throughput returns, diary sheets, and interviews with project practitioners. This chapter describes project activity over a 21-month period (throughput data was available for 15 months – 71% of the total period – and diary sheet data for all 21 months). It is important to note that the numbers in the following section should be taken as indicative rather than definitive, because although the findings were triangulated as far as possible using a range of data sets, none of the sources was without its limitations.

Project activity

Figure 5.1: Project throughput and diary sheet data returns by quarter
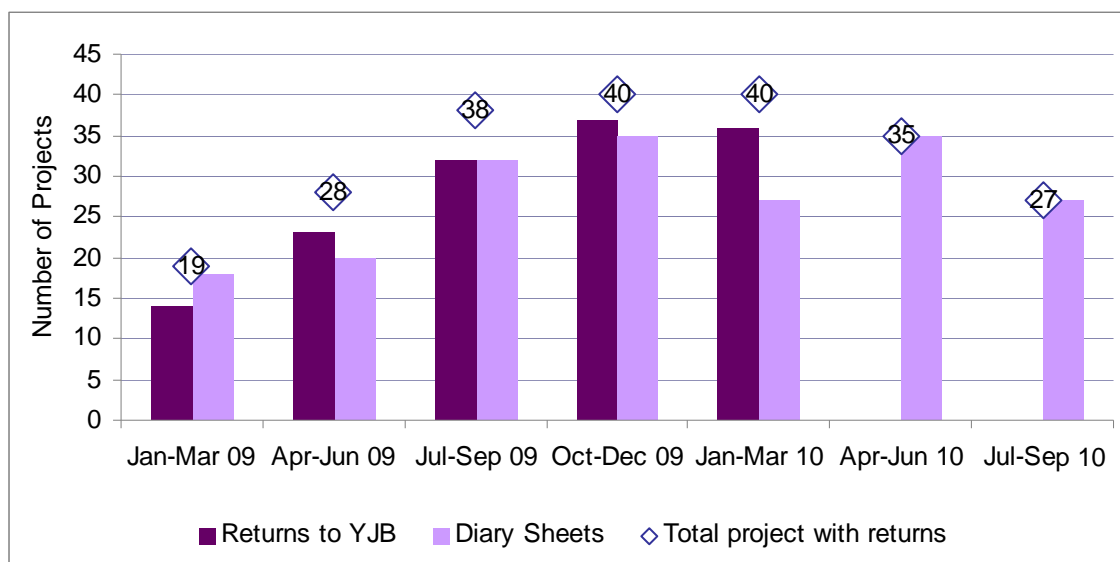
Figure 5.1 shows the number of projects in each quarterly period that submitted throughput data to the YJB and diary sheet returns to the research team (see Appendix 1 for a description of these data collection tools). The total number of projects submitting something each quarter (either throughput data or diary sheets) is indicated by the number that appears above the bars.

The data suggests that the number of projects reporting activity increased during the reporting period. The small number of projects reporting activities in the first quarter

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(January to March 2009) supports findings from the interviews that reported a number of projects experiencing delays to the start of their programmes. The graph demonstrates a steady climb of project activity throughout 2009. Throughput data was not available for the latter quarters of 2010, but the diary sheets suggest that project activity continued, with some tailing off in intensity towards the end of the monitoring period. A number of projects ceased operation in the second and third quarters of 2010 due to the cessation of funding (including East Midlands youth offending team (YOT) 4, South West YOT 1 and Yorkshire YOT 5).

Project content and programme objectives

This section outlines the activity of the projects by examining the interventions that were implemented and mapping them to the broader Prevent Strategy objectives. A classification of intervention themes was devised for the purposes of this evaluation (see Appendix 1). The YJB throughput returns, diary sheet returns, interview data and case study fieldwork were used to identify which of the themes were being covered by the projects.

The YJB Prevent programme was designed to address objective 3 of the Prevent Strategy: "to support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists". Therefore, it was expected that the majority of project activity would relate to this objective and this section examines and classifies the range of activities that were implemented to this end. However, the analysis also identified activities which extended to two additional Prevent Strategy objectives, namely: "to challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices", and "to increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism". The programme also included activities that indirectly addressed the fifth Prevent objective: "to address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting". Table 5.1 presents the classification of intervention themes and maps them to the objectives of the Prevent Strategy.

Table 5.1: Classification of intervention themes mapped to Prevent Strategy objectives
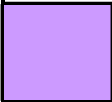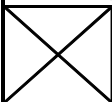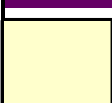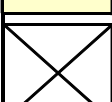
	Prevent Strategy objectives	New categorisation of project intervention themes
	1. Challenge the violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices	Multicultural awareness
		Theology
	2. Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institution where they are active	-
YJB Prevent programme	3. Support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists	Identity and belonging Personal and social education Constructive activities Offending reduction Support networks: families
	4. Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism	Resilience of communities
	5. Address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting	(Indirectly) Identity and belonging
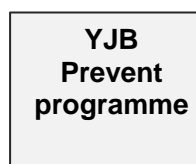
It was possible to extract data on intervention themes covered for 43 of the 48 projects and the results are summarised in Figure 5.2. This figure highlights that the majority of projects covered a broad mix of the eight themes. The figure also indicates, as would be expected, that the predominant focus of the projects was on Prevent Strategy objective 3: "to support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists". However, project activity extended beyond this objective, and included interventions that addressed additional national priorities.

Figure 5.2: Project content in 43 PVE programmes: intervention themes
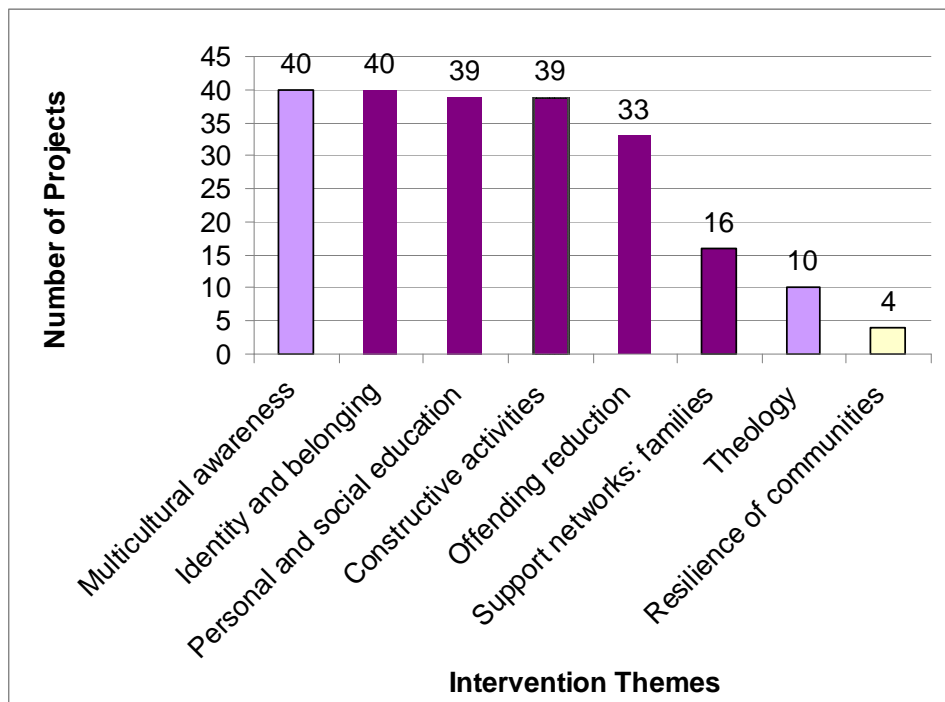
	Prevent Strategy Objectives
	1. To challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices
	2. Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the places where they operate (not addressed directly by any of the interventions in the YJB programme)
	3. Support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists
	4. Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism
	5. Address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting (addressed indirectly by the identity and belonging intervention theme)

Increasing multicultural awareness

Interventions in the multicultural awareness theme were included in 40 projects. These interventions tended to be universal and aimed to increase participants' understanding of other cultures, religions and ethnicities, to increase interaction between young people from different backgrounds and to promote cultural tolerance. Often these interventions were delivered through constructive activities designed to bring young people into contact with people from other backgrounds and faiths. A number of interviewees said that they made use of packs developed by Calderdale YOT, specifically 'Things do Change' and 'Discrimination by Diversity'. The former was produced with the aim of encouraging tolerance and community cohesion, while the latter was used both as a general diversity awareness programme, and as a resource for use with racially motivated offenders. While such packs have their merits, it could be argued that they have only limited relevance to the variety of causes of violent extremism set out elsewhere in this report. Interventions with this theme can be mapped to the Prevent Strategy objective of challenging the ideology behind violent extremism and supporting mainstream voices.

Identity and belonging

The theme of identity and belonging was covered by 40 projects, as noted in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.2. This theme can be mapped to both the third and fifth Prevent Strategy objectives. Interventions in this theme included activities to foster citizenship and offer young people opportunities to engage in society in meaningful and legitimate ways. In countering feelings of isolation and alienation, these interventions aimed both to increase young people's sense of inclusion, but also to remove some of the grievances they may hold and which extremist ideologues can exploit. These interventions were generally delivered via debates or discussions on broadly political issues and one-to-one sessions where the focus would be on exploring the young person's difficulties with personal identity in terms of religion, nationality, discrimination or racism. A smaller number of projects aimed to integrate young people more effectively into the community and wider political and social life by teaching them about the democratic process and encouraging their participation in it.

Personal and social education

Interventions in the personal and social education theme were delivered in 39 projects. These interventions included topics such as conflict avoidance and the teaching of thinking skills. A number of interventions sought to give young people the skills to critically question what the media says. Educational approaches were common within the secure estate.

Constructive activities

Constructive activities, including sports, arts, media and leisure pursuits, were delivered in 39 projects. Activities had a dual purpose of engaging young people while also addressing the other objectives discussed in this section. Examples of constructive activities across the programme included participation in Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes, residential weekends, archery, visits to the Houses of Parliament and the Imperial War Museum. Performance arts, through for example, theatre, dance and DVD production, were also used to explore the topic of violent extremism. The particular aims of these activities were varied, but included widening

young people's horizons by bringing them into contact with people from other backgrounds and faiths, and equipping them with new skills. There was also a recognition that fun activities could be used as a 'carrot' to encourage young people's engagement in other more discursive activities:

> *So what we actually did was they would play a couple of matches, then we would have a 40-minute workshop, then we would play the other matches in that league, so they couldn't go away and just come back, they had to take part in the workshops as part of playing in the league…*

Offending reduction

Offending behaviour was addressed in 33 projects. As discussed in Chapter 4, a small number of the interviewees considered the risk factors of violent radicalisation to be equivalent to the risk factors of offending. Nine projects included targeted work looking at racially motivated offending, the causes of which were seen by some as closely related to violent extremism. Being in a gang was seen as another key risk factor and nine projects based interventions on existing ones designed to tackle gangs and violence. The following quote is from an interviewee in one of the secure training centres (STCs) in the sample:

> *The reasons we've taken a gang sort of approach is we have got a large gang population here, and we generally have a lot of young people coming from London boroughs, and that is our largest issue. I think that's one of the ways we can target violent extremism through gang violence and looking at the factors underlying gang involvement, because a lot of them underlie the factors involved in violent extremism itself.*

Support networks: families

It was recognised that improving the home situation of young people through support for parents is a protective factor when it comes to offending generally. PVE-specific parenting interventions were delivered across 16 projects. Work with parents ranged from simply providing them with information about violent extremism, to organising parenting forums (for example, for Somali or Asian parents) through to intensive mentoring and support:

> *The parenting programme is hosted by Muslim heritage centre, facilitated by an Islamic psychotherapist, working with parents who identified that their children were vulnerable … it's called Islamic parenting and is based around religion.*

Evidence from the case studies: an example of support for families

Yorkshire YOT 3 implemented a parenting programme to empower parents to better support children who may be vulnerable to recruitment into extremist groups or causes. The intervention was appropriately located in an area where concerns had been voiced over fundamentalist Islamic teaching and controversial cultural and religious practices. The session was well structured, well paced and very well facilitated. PVE issues were carefully interwoven into the session in recognition of community suspicions regarding formal agencies and the Prevent Strategy. In response to these community concerns, the programme did not make explicit mention of violent extremism during the

session or brand itself with the PVE label. However, the small numbers attending (only three mothers, each with very young children) would have dissipated the impact of the intervention.

Theology

Interventions which aimed to support moderate interpretations of Islam were less frequent than the broader interventions aiming to foster multicultural awareness (a distinction has been made between the projects that included religious beliefs as part of wider awareness, and projects that offered focused religious education). These more theological interventions were identified in 10 projects. A lack of understanding or misinterpretation of Islam was believed, by some, to be one of the main risk factors for radicalisation, and it was, therefore, seen as important to provide young people with accurate information:

> *We want to help Muslim young people understand their own beliefs and what the Koran actually says, before somebody else comes in and influences them. So we are giving them the tools to be able to say, 'well hang on, that's not what my faith actually says'.*

> *We are fortunate that we are working with a British born Imam who's understanding British culture as well as a clear understanding of what the Koran says … he has put together a workshop that we are using with young people looking at terrorism and violent extremism and what the Koran says about that.*

Resilience of communities

A small number of projects, namely South East YOT 2, London YOT 11, Yorkshire YOT 3 and London YOT 3, addressed the Prevent Strategy objective 4 "to increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism" by running community events including festivals, celebration events and conferences. The apparently small number of projects engaged in this activity may reflect the nature of the data available, particularly the throughput data in which the unit of analysis is the young person.

Evidence from the case studies: an example of supporting communities

South East YOT 2 hosted three community events with the aim of reaching out beyond the young people directly engaged in the project to the wider community. The events were challenging to organise and deliver, and required building the support and trust of heterogeneous Muslim communities in the area. These efforts were greatly aided by the two project co-ordinators being well respected members of their own Muslim communities, enabling them to draw upon existing social networks to support the project. These relationships meant that the community was predisposed to trust the intentions and motivations of the co-ordinators to a greater extent than would have been the case with an 'outsider'. All three of the events managed to attract high-profile and respected Islamic scholars and speakers, and were well attended by an audience who were clearly interested in the talks and engaged in the events.

Themes addressed across the programme

Figure 5.3 maps the number of young people involved in each theme across the programme period by quarter and reflects the extent to which the number of throughput returns increased steadily as the programme progressed. The graph reiterates the projects' delayed starts, followed by an increase in activity towards the end of 2009. The tailing off of activity within the second and third quarters of 2010 reflects both a tailing off of project activity and of data collection. The figure highlights the predominance, throughout the length of the programme, of interventions relating to identity and belonging, multicultural values and personal and social education.

Figure 5.3: Intervention themes addressed by the projects, by quarter
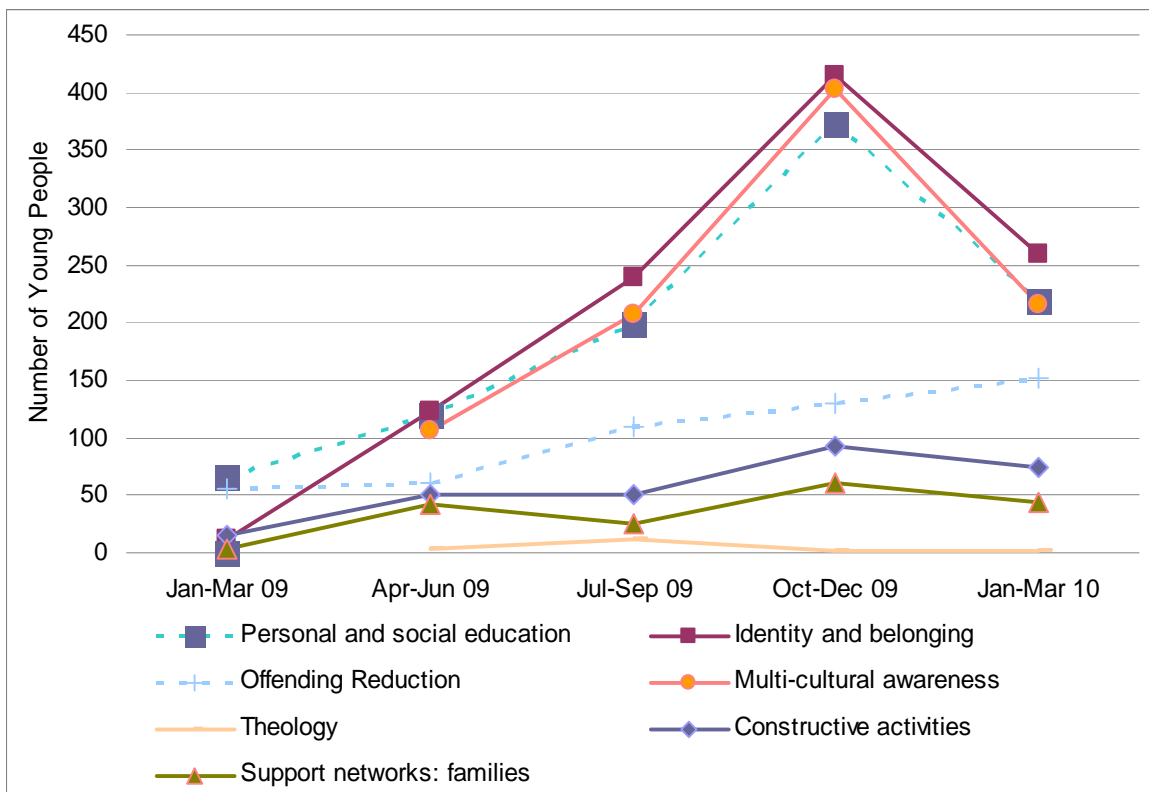
Although the main intervention themes have been discussed in isolation, most of the projects comprised more than one theme – typically five or six. Table 5.2 displays the distribution of intervention themes across the projects. Projects can be loosely grouped into clusters based on the themes that were implemented (indicated by the table shading). The table highlights that 13 projects covered almost all of the themes (six or seven). These multi-strand projects can be divided into those that included a focus on theology and those that did not (London YOT 2, West Midlands YOT 1, London YOT 13). The largest group of projects (23) covered four or five themes. Distinctions within this group can be made between those projects that did not include offending behaviour (three) and those that did (20), and between those that included constructive activities (11) and those that did not (12). A group of four projects implemented interventions around the core themes of identity and belonging, personal and social education, and multicultural values (an exception being STC North East YOT 1, which focused on offending reduction rather than

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identity and belonging). The activities of three projects included coverage of only one theme (London YOT 9, London YOT 3 and Yorkshire YOT 4).

The first column of Table 5.2 highlights the degree to which projects included activities relevant to PVE. This was a difficult assessment to make on the basis of interview data and monitoring information alone. The column distinguishes between two groups of projects:

- those that included no apparent interventions that focused on PVE or those that included PVE but only as a very minor adjustment to existing programmes

- those projects that included activities with a specific focus on PVE.

These two groups addressed the same key themes, but with a different level of focus toward PVE. For example, a PVE-specific intervention addressing theology would seek to support moderate interpretations of Islam and challenge any extremist interpretations, whereas a non-PVE specific intervention would focus more on the aim of building a general awareness of different religions. Similarly, a PVE-specific intervention addressing multicultural values could include interventions to directly challenge and debate extremist ideologies, or to consider and debate the contrasts between different world views. Meanwhile, a non-PVE specific intervention would focus on understanding others, encouraging tolerance, diversity and awareness of different cultures and lifestyles.

Approximately half of all projects listed in Table 5.2 (21) implemented at least some interventions with specific relevance to PVE. In the other 22 projects, interventions closely resembled youth inclusion and engagement programmes more generally, and would have looked little different had the objective to prevent violent extremism been taken away. The rationale behind these projects was to 'insulate' young people against extremism by addressing the background, distal causes of PVE.

Table 5.2: Intervention themes covered by the projects

Key

☐ No apparent PVE-specific content/PVE built into existing programmes

■ Dedicated programmes including a specific focus on PVE

Throughput returns were not available for five projects

Project#	PVE-focused	Constructive activities	Identity and belonging	Support networks: Families	Personal and social education	Multicultural values	Offending reduction	Theology	Community resilience
London YOT 9	☐					●			
Yorkshire YOT 4	☐				●				
London YOT 3	■		●						
London YOT 5	☐		●		●	●			
North East YOT 2	☐		●		●	●			
STC 4	☐				●	●	●		
Yorkshire YOT 6	■		●		●	●			
London YOT 12	☐	●	●		●	●			
Wales YOT 1	☐	●	●		●	●			●
London YOT 10	■	●	●			●			●
London YOT 8	☐		●		●	●	●		
South East YOT 3	☐		●		●	●	●		
Yorkshire YOT 2	☐		●	●	●	●	●		
London YOT 20	☐		●		●	●	●		
YOI 1	☐		●		●	●	●		
London YOT 16	■		●		●	●	●		
West Midlands YOT 3	■		●	●	●	●	●		
London YOT 19	■		●	●	●	●	●		
London YOT 17	■		●		●	●	●		
London YOT 7	■		●	●	●	●	●		
London YOT 14	■		●	●	●	●	●		
North West YOT	☐	●	●	●		●	●		

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Project[#]	PVE-focused	Constructive activities	Identity and belonging	Support networks: Families	Personal and social education	Multicultural values	Offending reduction	Theology	Community resilience
1									
West Midlands YOT 2	□	●	●		●	●	●		
Eastern YOT 1	□	●	●		●	●	●		
STC 1	□	●	●		●	●	●		
STC 3	□	●	●		●	●	●		
STC 2	■	●	●		●	●	●		
Eastern YOT 1	■	●	●		●	●	●		
South West YOT 2	■	●	●		●	●	●		
London YOT 18	■	●	●		●	●	●		
London YOT 2	□	●	●	●	●	●	●		
West Midlands YOT 1	■	●	●	●	●	●	●		
London YOT 13	■	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Yorkshire YOT 1	□	●	●		●	●	●	●	
South West YOT 1	□	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
East Midlands YOT 1	□	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Yorkshire YOT 3	□	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
London YOT 4	■	●	●		●	●	●	●	
North West YOT 2	■		●	●	●	●	●	●	
East Midlands YOT 3	■		●	●	●	●	●	●	
South East YOT 2	■	●	●		●	●		●	●
South East YOT 1	■	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
London YOT 11	■	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	

YOTs were asked to return throughput data on PVE activities in three categories which distinguished the cohorts of young people participating in the interventions, namely, targeted, preventative and universal interventions. Targeted PVE interventions worked with young people who were subject to court disposals. Preventative interventions included young people on pre-court disposals and those involved with Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs), Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) or other prevention programmes. Universal programmes were delivered to young people en masse, for example, groups of young people in the community or school year groups.

The use of the terms 'targeted', 'preventative' and 'universal' in the throughput data vary from the way in which they were often used by the practitioners, with practitioners sometimes using the terms interchangeably, and the terms often meaning different things to different people. For instance, the term targeted was often used in relation to interventions which targeted specific groups based on one or more risk factors, but was most commonly used when referring to interventions which focused on young people from Muslim backgrounds.

Of the 41 projects for which data was available in this area, 36 projects implemented at least one universal intervention, 22 projects implemented at least one targeted intervention and 18 implemented at least one preventative intervention. Table 5.3 shows that the majority of projects (24) implemented a mix of intervention levels, with 20 projects implementing universal interventions combined with preventative and/or targeted interventions.

Table 5.3: Intervention levels implemented by the projects

Intervention levels	Number of projects
Universal, preventative and targeted	11
Universal and preventative	4
Universal and targeted	7
Preventative and targeted	2
Subtotal mixed interventions	**24**
Universal	14
Targeted	2
Preventative	1
Total	**41**

Throughput returns for universal projects were recorded at the level of the intervention. As shall be seen in the following section, the majority of these interventions were delivered as group activities and the projects were asked to make

one return for each activity. This provided the number of young people that the projects worked with on each intervention in turn, but it is not possible to ascertain the number of young people engaged across interventions (i.e. receiving two or more interventions and which ones these were) or from one quarter to the next. Neither was it possible to determine whether or not activities were repeated with the same young people, extended to new participants, or some mixture of the two. As a consequence, it is not possible to estimate the number of young people brought into projects and worked with through universal interventions – representing a severe limitation to the data. The throughput data for targeted and preventative interventions was recorded at the level of the individual, and each young person had a unique reference number assigned to them.[39] This enabled a more detailed analysis of interventions to be carried out. As noted already, 28 projects returned data on preventative and/or targeted interventions. Across the 15-month period, for which throughput data was available, approximately 914 young people participated in these types of interventions, with an average of 33 young people per project.

In summary, it is clear that across the programme the vast majority of projects implemented a mixture of universal, preventative and targeted interventions, although there appears to have been some preference towards universal and targeted interventions.

Project implementation

Mode of delivery

Figure 5.4 summarises the main methods through which project interventions were delivered. Constructive activities were discussed above as a programme theme, but it should be recognised that these activities constitute both a method of delivery and an objective.

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[39] For some projects, a unique reference number was not given. Where the unique reference number was missing, a new unique reference was assigned based on the assumption that each case was a unique individual. The accuracy of this assumption will influence the accuracy of estimates of young person numbers.

Figure 5.4: Methods of delivering interventions
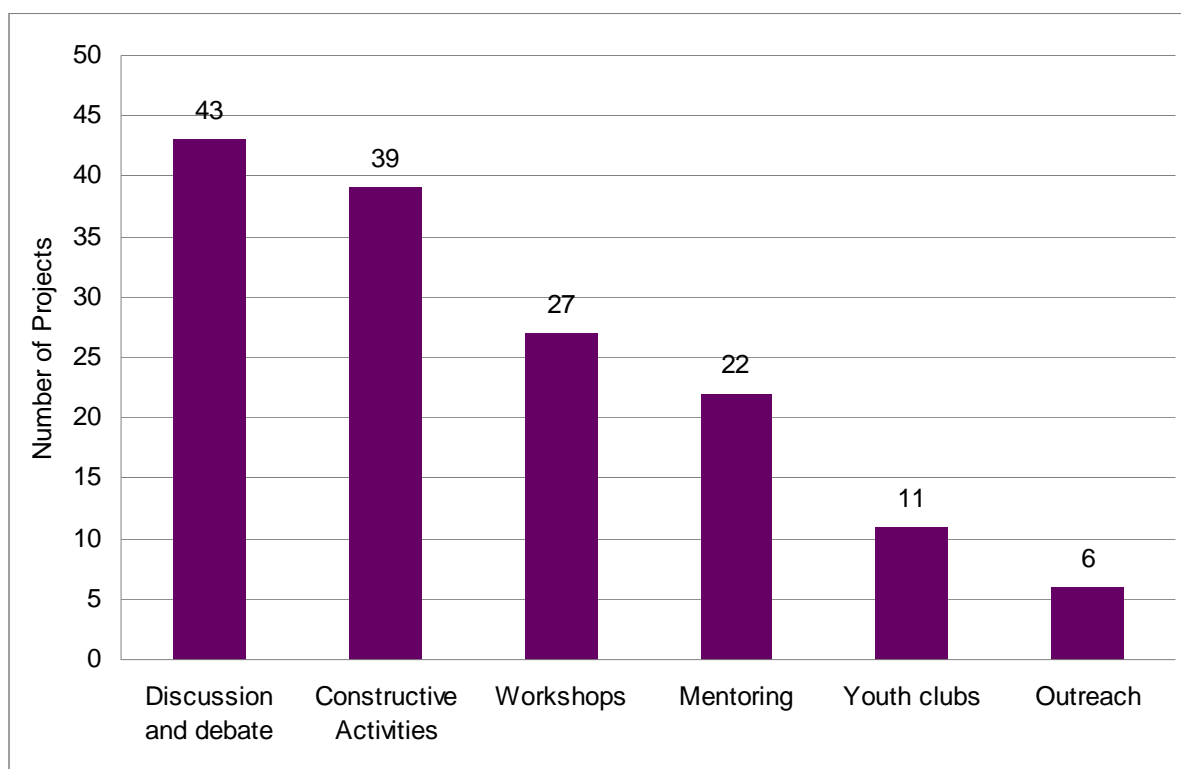
Opportunities for discussion and debate were included by the vast majority of projects (43). These interventions aimed to encourage young people to freely express their views and to debate differences of opinion. Project practitioners talked about providing 'safe spaces' where young people could talk about Gaza, Iraq or their experiences of being a Muslim in Britain.

Structured workshops, often with interactive educational content, were implemented in 27 projects. Mentoring programmes were delivered in 22 of the projects, although mentors were used in a wide variety of ways. Some projects used specialist mentors to work intensively with young people identified as high risk, while others used them in a more preventive manner. In one project, mentors were recruited from the Somali community to act as positive role models to Somali young people, while in others, young people themselves were being trained as mentors for their peers. The following quote describes the particular way that mentors were used to tackle extremist views:

> *What we call PVE is positive mentoring... so you need a mentor to help and support you, the mentor's role is not to go in and say 'I'm here to assess you on terrorism...' the idea is to befriend them get their trust... then start to break down some of the issues that they have. If they have extremist ideology, it would be, 'ok what is it about the ideology'. Right now we're looking at a very broad value-based approach.*

Eleven projects established youth clubs to engage with target groups of young people (although further additional projects utilised existing youth clubs to deliver interventions). Only six projects appear to have included outreach as a mechanism to deliver interventions.

Evidence from the case studies: mode of delivery and programme facilitation

The case studies provided an opportunity to examine how programmes were being delivered by the projects 'on the ground', with researchers observing a range of facilitation styles during the case study fieldwork. It was clear that strong facilitation was pivotal to the success of programmes employing group activities.

The strongest facilitators were observed at STC 2. From the very start of this session, the team of ex-offenders and ex-gang leaders secured a high level of rapport with the young people. The facilitators skilfully introduced searching questions and tested the explanations and justifications provided by the young people with regard to their previous offending and their progress at the STC more generally. No young person was allowed to simply coast through the session and none were allowed to dominate. Facilitators skilfully engaged with each participant, personalising the message and making it directly relevant to the circumstances of each participant.

Other strong facilitation was evident during discussion in the West Midlands YOT 1's Asian Boys' Group, which directly addressed PVE issues and aimed to challenge the perceptions and attitudes of the participants. The success of the activity hinged largely on the skills, motivation and knowledge of the facilitators. The session leader continually provoked responses from each of the participants, questioned their answers and sought further explanation, maintaining the intensity of the proceedings. This was conducted with humour and respect. All facilitators were skilled and persistent. The session only worked to its full potential because the expectation that all young people would participate was upheld.

Yorkshire YOT 3's citizenship sessions were carefully structured and based around high-quality teaching plans and stimulus materials. The sessions dealt with issues of tangential relevance to PVE, while one session addressed extremism more directly. With the exception of the first session observed (attended by a third sector 'observer') the style of facilitation was mechanical with staff failing to spark the interest of participants. Facilitators frequently failed to take time to reinforce key points, or ensure comprehension – a role adopted by the observer in the first session. Despite the aim of the session to 'create a safe environment' for young people to debate and question their views, young people were not generally forthcoming and the staff did not display the skills and determination required to ensure there was input and discussion from the participants.

Location of interventions

A variety of venues were used in delivering the programmes. Figure 5.5 shows the venues from which the interventions were delivered to young people, and reveals, for example, that 21 projects delivered at least one intervention to young people in custody (in recognition of the fact that, for a young person, being in custody

increased the risk of contact with extremists). It was suggested that forced conversions were taking place in some establishments. The nature of the work with young people in custody did not differ appreciably from that conducted in the community, and included activities such as mentoring, debates, theological discussions and the use of arts and media to motivate young people.

Similarly, 21 projects included interventions delivered within schools. Despite this, it is unclear exactly how many of these were successful, as several projects commented on the difficulties involved in trying to overcome schools' reluctance to collaborate with any initiative that might imply that the school had 'a problem' with violent extremism. Where the YOTs worked with schools, this tended to involve the delivery of universal, citizenship type classes. In a number of cases, schools were selected due to the problems they had experienced in terms of racial tension or conflict.

Figure 5.5: Location of intervention
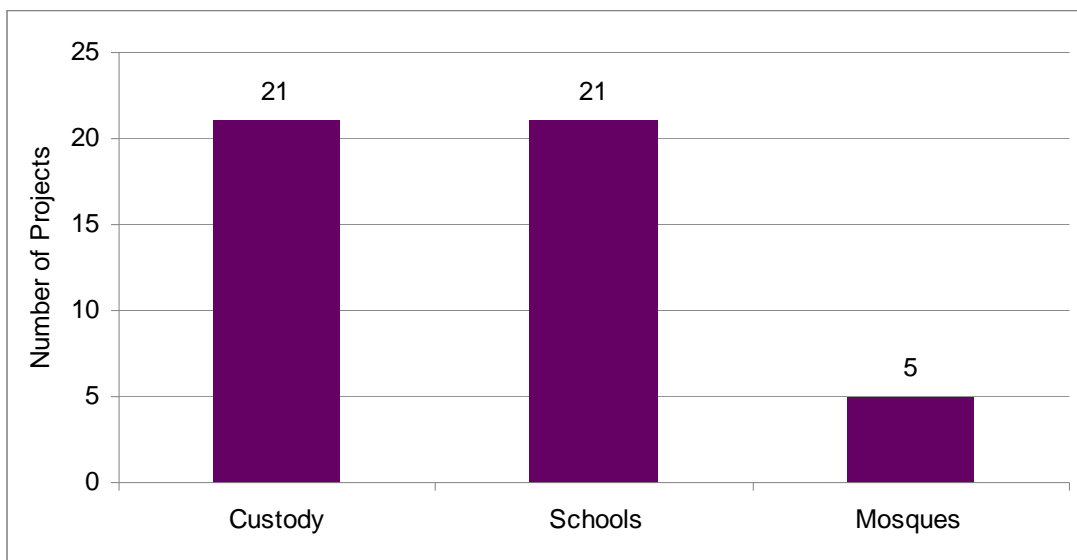
Evidence from the case studies: PVE programmes located within the secure estate

The case studies revealed a number of challenges to delivering PVE projects that were specific to working in the secure estate. The STC 2 project reported a high turnover of young people on programmes, with trainees not completing programmes due to finishing their statutory order or being transferred to another custodial establishment. These problems were exacerbated by the then contracted educational service provider refusing the project access to some of the educational facilities and establishing a divided work routine, resulting, at times, in mandatory educational provision taking precedence over PVE sessions. These problems were eased when the external education service provider was acquired by the private sector company running the institution.

Similar pressures on timetabling were reported by YOI 1, and were perhaps

due to the different offender characteristics of the establishment and security concerns in placing some young people together in group work sessions. Gaining security clearance for the PVE Imam also proved to be a lengthy procedure, taking a year before he was able to work in the YOI.

The South East 2 project's Islamic education classes within a YOI also suffered from operational problems, including insufficient operational staff to move inmates and clashes with other educational sessions, which contributed to long delays in sessions taking place, and at times, the total absence of attendees despite prior enrolment. The planned resettlement activities by the project also suffered some implementation failure. This was due to a combination of difficulties in accessing inmates to liaise with and offer the resettlement service to, and a lack of capacity by the YOI's own resettlement team. What further undermined the original scope of the resettlement support was the YOI's wide catchment area that extended far beyond the remit of the YOT and meant long journey times for the PVE staff.

Format of delivery

Projects implemented a mixture of one-to-one and group interventions. A number of interviewees commented on the difficulties of group work. While some were prepared to take the risk of exploring violent extremism through group work, others were firmly against the idea:

> *There are dangers in grouping people who come in to the system due to violent extremism because it's group behaviour that's the issue, like it is with gangs. It's aligning people with the same views and thoughts to include in a group together that is the problem even with gangs, individually individuals sometimes don't pose a risk but they do once they are in a gang situation.*

> *Making them safe places for young people to speak, you want the young person to speak freely, in order to do that, what they might say may be offensive, but does this hamper the debate, or do you try to capitalise on what is offensive, otherwise how do people learn?*

> *The challenge is if the person doing the facilitating doesn't understand the ideology, doesn't have a good understanding of the Koran, doesn't have a good understanding of the words of the prophet, these are the three key areas that you must know to challenge groups.*

Projects commonly employed a tiered (risk-based) approach in which the universal (Tier 1) element would generally be delivered to a group, while those on higher tiers might receive individualised support. The majority of universal programmes, therefore, were delivered to groups, although at least five projects appear to have delivered universal interventions as one-to-ones where the individual was not suitable for group work sessions (South West YOT 1, London YOT 11, Yorkshire YOT 3, London YOT 14 and West Midlands YOT 3). These interventions included informal drop-in centres, outreach work and work with young people on YISPs. All of the projects implementing targeted interventions included one-to-one work and 16 implemented group activities (with 12 implementing a combination).

During the interviews, practitioners were asked how many sessions a young person would typically be expected to attend, and over what period of time. The most common response to this question (14) was that the length of involvement was variable, for example, where YOTs or secure establishments offered more than one intervention, or had a tiered approach to delivery. Thus, those on a higher tier typically had a more intensive programme. Activities such as mentoring were described as lasting "for as long as it takes". The majority of young people (619 or 68%) participating on targeted and preventative interventions were involved with the projects in just one quarter of the projects' operation. Just fewer than 30% of participants were engaged over two or three quarters, and just over 3% were engaged with the projects over four or five quarters.

Profile of participants

Age

The interventions delivered by the PVE projects reached young people across all age groups from 8 to 18-year-olds. Universal interventions tended to engage young people between 13 and 18, with 16-year-olds the most frequent participating age group. The mean age of participants on targeted and preventative interventions was 16, with no difference between preventative and targeted interventions. There was no noticeable change in this throughout the life of the programme.

Gender

Project activities were predominantly targeted towards young males, although the majority of projects ran at least some interventions that included female participants. Universal interventions were most commonly delivered to male- only or mixed groups (30 projects delivered universal interventions to mixed groups, 24 to male only groups and only eight to females only). Where projects ran female-only interventions, these tended to represent only a small proportion of overall project activity. Participants engaged on preventative and targeted interventions were predominantly male (83.2%). The gender distribution of project participants remained consistent throughout the programme.

Ethnicity and religion

The YJB throughput data templates relating to universal interventions did not request information on ethnicity or religion. Diary sheet returns suggest that, of those projects implementing universal interventions, the majority worked with young people from a mixture of ethnic and religious backgrounds. The returns indicate that seven projects delivered all of their universal provision to mixed groups and 11 projects delivered a mixture of interventions, some targeted solely at Muslim young people and some targeted at mixed groups. In a further 11 projects, universal interventions were exclusively or predominantly targeted towards Muslim young people. Information on the ethnic backgrounds of the participants of universal interventions was less consistent: at least eight projects included universal interventions targeted towards young people from specific ethnic backgrounds, including Pakistani (two projects), Somali (three), South Asian (three) and Arab (one) backgrounds.

Figure 5.6: Ethnicity of young people engaged on targeted and preventative interventions
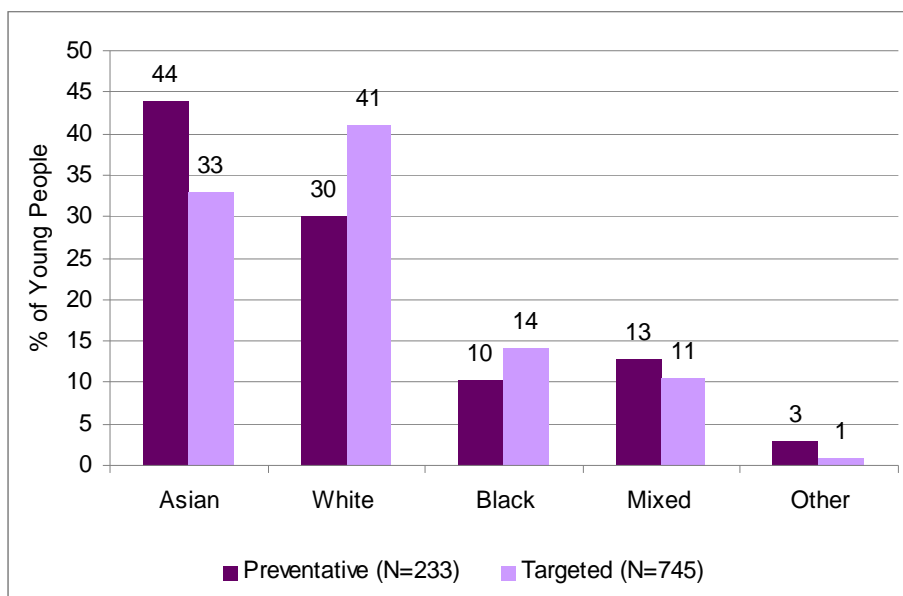
Figure 5.7: Religion of young people on targeted and preventative interventions
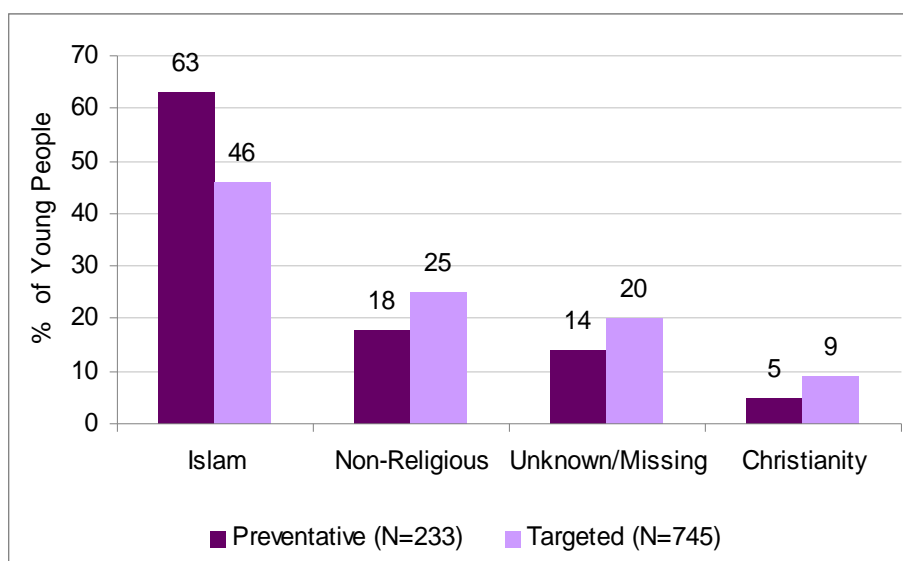
Throughput data was available on the ethnic backgrounds and religion of young people engaged with preventative and targeted interventions, and there are interesting contrasts between these two groups (see Figures 5.6 and 5.7). Of the 233 young people involved with preventative interventions, the largest single ethnic group was Asian (34%), with 30% of White ethnicity, 13% of Mixed ethnicity and 10% of Black ethnicity. The vast majority of young people involved with the preventative interventions stated their religion as Islam (64%), 18% stated they were not religious and 5% stated their religion was Christianity (the religion of the remaining 14% was

unknown). In contrast, of the 745 young people involved with targeted interventions, the largest single ethnic group was White (41%), with 33% of Asian ethnicity, 14% of Black ethnicity and 10% of Mixed ethnicities. A smaller proportion of young people on targeted interventions reported their religion as Islam (46%), 25% stated that they were not religious and 9% stated their religion as Christianity (the religion of 20% of cases was either unknown or missing).

Previous offences

As noted already, targeted interventions were predominantly geared towards young people already engaged with the Criminal Justice System who were subject to statutory orders.[40] Of the 745 young people on targeted interventions, most were subject to Referral Orders (34%), Detention and Training Orders (14%) and Supervision Orders including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes (14%). No order was recorded for 23% of young people. For young people subject to targeted interventions, the most frequently cited offences were violence against the person (18%) and robbery (14%). Other prominent offences were domestic burglary, drugs offences, and theft and handing. It is estimated that 22 (3%) of young people on the programme had committed racially aggravated offences. It was noted that three projects were implementing interventions developed for racially motivated offenders. This figure might be expected to be higher given that eight of the practitioners interviewed stated that the commission of a racially motivated offence would automatically result in referral to their PVE project. However, only a minority of practitioners believed that the holding of racist views was a potential cause of violent extremism, and there is little evidence in the literature to support a link between racism and violent extremism.

Information was available on previous offending for 38% of young people subject to preventative interventions. The most commonly committed offences were public order offences (9%), robbery (7%) and violence against the person (8%). Less than 1% of participants of preventative interventions (two young people) had committed racially aggravated offences. Only a quarter of participants involved in preventative interventions were subject to statutory orders. The most frequent order recorded against this group of young people was 'other' (13%) followed by Final Warning (4%).

Asset scores were recorded for 590 of the young people participating in targeted interventions. *Asset* is a structured assessment tool used by YOTs in England and Wales for all young people who have offended and have come into contact with the Criminal Justice System. *Asset* is composed of several composite measures; aggregating these measures provides a total ranging from 1 to 48. *Asset* scores of young people participating in targeted interventions ranged from 1 to 43, covering practically the whole range of possible scores. The average score was 17. Unsurprisingly, those young people engaged in targeted interventions in custodial settings exhibited the highest *Asset* scores.

Onset scores were available for 58 of the 233 young people engaged in preventative interventions. *Onset* is a referral and assessment framework that identifies if a young

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[40] A number of young people were recorded as being subject to more than one statutory order during the course of the programme. For the purpose of analysis, the order of greatest severity has been selected.

person would benefit from early intervention and it is used for all YJB prevention programmes, including YIPs and YISPs. Scores range from 0 to 45. As with the *Asset* scores, *Onset* scores ranged from 1 to 36, covering almost the entire range of possible scores. These scores demonstrated that projects were not specifically targeting young people at the greatest risk of offending or re-offending. This is despite that fact that several projects reported using *Asset* and *Onset* scores to identify individuals for referral to PVE interventions. However, as recognised by one interviewee, *Onset* and *Asset* scores are not sufficiently sensitive to identify specific attitudes pertinent to violent extremism. Therefore, it is feasible for a young person to display risk factors of concern in terms of PVE which would not be represented in their *Asset* or *Onset* score.

Summary

Practically all of the projects included a focus on four core themes: dialogue and debate; identity and belonging; personal and social education; and supporting multicultural values. Offending reduction was included by the majority of projects, which may reflect the perception of some practitioners that the risk factors of violent extremism were no different from the risk factors for involvement in mainstream offending and gang involvement. However, only a minority of practitioners expressed this view at interview, and the *Asset* and *Onset* scores of participants did not suggest that projects were targeting young people with the highest risk of offending/re-offending. Therefore, the inclusion of offending reduction may more likely reflect the nature of activities that are more normally conducted with the client group with which these projects were working, i.e. young people within the Criminal Justice System.

Less frequent across the programme were projects aiming to support families or to build the resilience of communities. While many projects included discussion and education aiming to increase young people's awareness of different religions, only a small number provided in-depth theological education and discussion that aimed to support moderate interpretations of Islam. Approximately half of the projects implemented at least some interventions which had specific relevance to PVE. In the other 22 projects, interventions closely resembled more general youth inclusion/engagement programmes and would have looked little different had the PVE objective been taken away.

The main focus of interventions was young Muslim males. Although projects also worked with mixed groups, only a minority of projects ran interventions with female-only groups. While many projects implemented tiered programmes with a mixture of universal, preventative and targeted interventions, there appears to have been some preference towards universal and targeted interventions. Only a minority of projects were working with young people who were known to hold extremist views. Interviewees were not confident that YOTs were best placed to identify these young people, believing that schools or youth services would be better placed to do so.

The most popular mode of delivering interventions was through constructive activities, workshops and discussion groups. Mentoring programmes were also common interventions across the programme. Only six projects utilised outreach workers in the delivery of their projects. This is disappointing given the evidence from

the systematic review which highlights outreach work as crucial to the success of PVE interventions, helping to overcome issues around trust and engagement.

6. Young people's views, experiences and concerns

Further insights into the projects were gained through interviewing young people who had attended sessions across the case studies. A total of 33 young people engaged in nine of the 12 case study projects participated in semi-structured interviews. It was not possible to interview young people at all of the case study sites due to the time constraints of the projects and availability of the young people themselves. Interviewees were made up of 21 males and 12 females aged 14–21, and all but three were Muslim.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face[41] and the majority were recorded and fully transcribed, with the exception of interviews with six young people, who requested that handwritten notes were taken instead. Young people were asked about their experiences of the project, peer relationships, views on violent extremism and the perceived effectiveness of the programme (see Appendix 2 for the full interview schedule).

Young people were generally selected for interview by a member of the PVE project team.[42] Interviews were not always conducted in ideal situations (i.e. a suitably private space). Interviews were typically conducted at the end of activities in the venue where they took place, such as a community centre, and lasted, on average, 30 minutes. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of all young people engaged in the projects, but nevertheless illustrate some interesting findings.

Experience of the project

On the whole, young people were very positive about their involvement in the projects, and spoke about the enjoyment they had taking part in activities, in particular sport, leisure and outward bound activities. Several of the young people commented that they would not ordinarily have the opportunity to participate in such activities. This was especially true for the young females whose more conservative upbringing meant they were not usually allowed to engage in activities outside the home, but parents had come to view the projects as a safe place for them to attend:

I'm an only daughter and for me to go anywhere I need my mum, my dad or my brothers and there is not many places you can go and have fun without your family members hanging along, it's nice for parents to feel safe and let their kids go somewhere completely free of any sort of harm.

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[41] Interviews were conducted during the later fieldwork stage of the evaluation during April to September 2010.

[42] Young people were generally selected on the basis of availability and willingness to participate.

A few young people referred to newly acquired skills (for example, music production skills) and a sense of achievement at completing a project. Most young people interviewed mentioned dispositional benefits arising as a result of participation in activities, including improved self-confidence, self-esteem and self-control, increased helpfulness and empathy:

> *Confidence, as before I was unspoken to people I didn't know, now I speak about how I feel and give my own opinion whereas before I didn't. I've learnt how to be a better person and how to help and advise others, that's good for me to know.*

The majority of young people spoke positively about meeting new people, in particular those from different ethnic and faith groups. This was a new experience for many of the interviewees. Some reported an increased awareness of similarities with those they had previously perceived to be very different, and others reported feeling better able to mix with those from different backgrounds.

Young people seldom identified any room for improvement, but when they did, this either related to creating more diverse groups so they had the opportunity to hear the views and experiences of those from different backgrounds, or, where the current group was more diverse, increased encouragement for those from different backgrounds to interact. As one young Somali person remarked:

> *It helped me to develop my confidence, I'd just started college and I'd stick with my own people kind of thing, my own Somali people, but in the youth club there are different kinds of people so I learnt to interact and engage with them, this helps me in college, to mix and make new friends.*

Less frequently, interviewees mentioned the benefits of meeting those from similar ethnic and faith groups, stating this was a valuable opportunity to discuss and learn more about their religion, particularly where others had experienced a more religious upbringing than themselves. For a few projects, interviewees reported that the content of the sessions had enabled them to achieve a deeper understanding of their faith, rituals and practice. Several young people also spoke positively about the opportunity to discuss conflict between their faith and Western values and some reported feeling more 'comfortable' with themselves as a result.

Members of the project team and session facilitators were often described as respectful, non-judgemental, empathetic or enthusiastic. Young people also commended some project workers for their knowledge of Islam, viewing this as an opportunity to seek information and advice:

> *When I first came I expected them to be a bit like teachers, 'do this' and 'don't do that', but they give you much more respect, when they need to have authority they do though, it's important to have a bit of both. They are more like your friend, they understand when you are upset, you can open up to them and they won't judge you and you won't get into trouble like at school.*

Several young people stated that participation in projects had provided them with a greater understanding of other perspectives and an increased appreciation of the importance of respecting them, and some described themselves as more open-minded or less judgemental:

> *I used to be so closed-minded, now I am really open. Before if someone said something I would strongly disagree, like 'what are you talking about?'. I would cuss them because of that, like 'you are weird'. Now I understand how different people have different views.*

For a few projects, interviewees stated that participation had made them less likely to offend or re-offend. Reasons for this included improved consequential thinking and greater awareness of alternatives to offending, an increased understanding of the moral arguments against offending, the availability of positive role models and alternative social circles, and a strengthened faith acting as a deterrent to offending.

Very few negative comments were made, and these tended to be restricted to offenders attending programmes as a condition of an order. At one project, young people reported feeling coerced into activities, and at some others, interviewees described the activities as disorganised, but this was attributed to young people arriving late.

Self and others

Most of the young people interviewed stated that their religion was very important to them, and many considered it more important than their nationality. Young people regarded their religion as a major component of their identity and stated that without it they would feel "lost" or "confused". A few interviewees reported that they would look to their religion for guidance when making decisions or when they encountered problems. The extent to which young people practised their religion varied from "on and off" or practising certain aspects to fully practising. Some of the young people who were not fully practising reported they felt this was permissible at their age.

Most of the young people reported that they had learnt about their religion from their parents. Several interviewees reported that there were aspects of their religion that they did not understand or would like more information on, but did not feel their family or peers had sufficient knowledge of Islam to help them and would instead approach the PVE project team, religious scholars or academic institutions.

When asked about the ethnic and faith backgrounds of their friends, young people varied from socialising only with those from their own background to having a very diverse group of friends. Young people often indicated that this reflected the demographic make-up of their local area as opposed to any conscious choice. Only one young person interviewed admitted to having any difficulties with other religious groups:

> *You know the Jews, well they are not Jews, they are Zionists, they are Jews but it is like they follow a different Torah, they have this mad image that they have to destroy Islam. If they disrespect my religion like that I find it hard to do anything but dislike them.*

Similarly, young people stated that some of their peers had a very diverse group of friends, whereas others tended to socialise with those from similar backgrounds; the latter was often attributed to a shared understanding making friendships easier. Young people reported very little conflict between young people in their local area, and when this did occur it seemed to arise as a result of personal disputes or

geographical rivalries rather than religious or cultural differences. Just a few young people reported experiencing religiously motivated bullying, often concerning their overtly religious attire:

> I get racism in the street because I am wearing different clothes, they say things like 'you are wearing your mum's dress' and they called out 'Jew' because they thought I was wearing a Jewish hat but it was a Muslim prayer cap.

Views on violent extremism

When young people were asked whether there was anything occurring in the world that made them angry and whether this affected their views of Britain, a few candidly admitted that these events held no importance for them. Several referred to wars taking place (primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan) and the associated fatalities, and a few referred to terrorist attacks in the West (mostly citing the World Trade Centre attack), although the degree of conviction with which young people spoke about these varied considerably. A few young people brought up topical issues in the news such as the fatalities from flooding in Pakistan, the burning of the Koran and expenditure on the World Cup stadium in South Africa, but again, the strength of young people's feelings about these occurrences was variable:

> Yeah, the war between Palestine and Israel, that war is so annoying, all of those people getting killed for no reason. I've been to so many protests, at first when I went to a protest I liked it, you can express yourself, but then a friend said what is the point in going to a protest if you are not going to be heard, I was like 'yeah but it's good to represent, show that you care', it was a massive demonstration and march.

Most young people reported that these events did not affect the way they viewed Britain, and some seemed to attribute this to the distance, lack of ties to the country concerned or absence of any direct impact upon them as individuals. A few young people reported that such events had contributed to a more favourable view of Britain, making them grateful to live in a country largely unaffected by conflict or natural disaster.

Several young people mentioned prejudice in the UK, including negative perceptions of Muslims and young people in general. Interviewees felt this was displayed by the police as well as the general public, and largely attributed it to biased media representations:

> …the media is printing an image at the moment, unfortunately it is probably a Muslim who has got some funny views about Islam that were not in his teaching…when people hear the word Islam the first thing that probably comes into their head is terrorism…when it is the IRA or anything they do not label them as that….

Several of the young people interviewed indicated that they had never heard the term 'violent extremism' or while they had heard it they were unsure what it meant. When pressed on this question, several had a literal understanding of the term as 'extreme violence', a couple made reference to groups of people behaving violently, and a couple thought it was a term used to define a violent response to conflict with

countries. Several broadly equated the term to terrorism and several credibly referred to individuals holding extreme views which lead to violence. Only a couple of young people attempted to tie an ideological/theological component into their explanation.

When asked about the relationship between religion and violence, the majority of young people unequivocally refuted any such connection. A few young people acknowledged some relationship, but believed this was due to individuals misinterpreting texts or being presented with misinformation – either intentionally or unintentionally. Indeed, misinterpretation or misinformation was seen to be the main cause of violent extremism. As one young person remarked:

> *They are really just people who are misguided, they have heard it from the wrong people, we call them Sheikhs or Imams, they are like priests basically, them priests they have something that is twisted in their head, something has not clicked in their brain, they are telling these people in order to go to heaven you have to blow yourself up. In my religion if you commit suicide you go to hell so that is a big contradiction.*

A few young people (somewhat misinterpreting the question) were of the opinion that the presence of different religions could lead to violence due to conflict between them, although they were not suggesting this justified violence.

Views on the programme effectiveness

With regard to the projects more directly targeting violent extremism, most of the young people interviewed stated that they thought that the project they had participated in could stop young people from becoming involved in violent extremism. Reasons given for this included:

- an increased appreciation of other people's beliefs and values

- the content of programmes undermining any justifications for violent extremism, improving young people's communication skills and thereby acting to diffuse any misinterpretations that might lead to violent extremism

- feeling better able to rebut advances from radical groups attempting to recruit young people

- providing a better understanding of Islam, which in itself was felt to discourage violent extremism.

One young person commented:

> *…religion education is the main thing I'd say, if they understand their religion more they can't say the religion tells you to do this. I think most people who do all this extremist stuff have some sort of hatred, they might just see something on the news and they don't really take the time to understand it…if you know what your religion says in the first place it would stop extremism.*

A number of suggestions were offered for preventing young people becoming involved in violent extremism, including encouraging the young person to return to

the source of the information they had most likely misinterpreted to gain a more accurate understanding, and raising awareness of the impact of violent extremism on victims.

Most young people were confident that they would be able to put what they had learnt into practice. For example, some stated that participation in the project had made them 'stop and think' more often, they had achieved greater self-control, or that the project sessions contained memorable messages. Interviewees generally felt unable to comment on whether other project participants would be able to use what they had learnt, due to individual differences.

7. Conclusions and implications

Introduction

As was demonstrated in the literature review, the prevention of violent extremism is by no means a precise science. The concept is vague and contentious, there is no overall consensus on the mechanisms by which it is generated or the risk factors with which it is associated, there are no tried and tested techniques by which it can be measured and there is a lack of robust evidence on what works in terms of its prevention.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the main thrust of the approaches that have been developed through the YJB programme nationally have been highly reliant on what appears to work in reducing criminal offending or alternatively have faded into community cohesion-related concerns. Faced with a paucity of evidence about risk factors for radicalisation and PVE-specific policy interventions, projects have tended to stick to what they are most comfortable and familiar with in meeting the challenges of the Prevent Strategy. This includes some, but by no means all, of the projects using existing offender risk factor assessment tools, such as *Asset* and *Onset*, to select young people most at risk of radicalisation and ultimately violent extremism, and engaging them through conventional youth work approaches, including the provision of leisure and sporting activities. Alongside these techniques, there are examples of the adoption of interventions that are clearly more tailored to addressing radicalisation, including, for example, debates and discussions about some of the grievances held by young Muslims (particularly discrimination and foreign policy) and the use of Islamic scholars to challenge some of the more extremist narratives used by militant groups.

There is also room for debate concerning which agencies are best placed to oversee and implement PVE projects and interventions. There are clear contrasts between projects that have been run from the secure estate and those administered in the community by YOTs and voluntary organisations. These vary, not only in the young people that they reach, but also in the types of interventions that are run and the style and mode of delivery.

At a more strategic level, the direction of travel has been inconsistent. It has by no means been clear to projects what the balance should be between prioritising and focusing upon Muslim extremism, countering the hatred and racism attributed to some right-wing groups, reinforcing a policy of multiculturalism and addressing the wider needs of young people in general.

The ability of projects to monitor and evaluate their performance in-house has not been strong, with little in the way of baseline data with which to track the progress of young people throughout their engagement with the projects. Some projects administered before and after questionnaires to assess young people, but these were the exceptions rather than the rule. Most simply did not have baseline data on their young people or evidence that could be used to assess the extent to which young people's attitudes, views, perceptions and lifestyles had changed in response

to project interventions. That said, measuring PVE work is far from a straightforward problem, and with hindsight it is probably unrealistic to expect the majority of projects to have devised a solution.

There have also been limitations in what could easily be deduced from the throughput data. Although some of this is fairly detailed and can be used to identify the characteristics of individuals recruited onto the projects, much of it is at an aggregate level and cannot be used to longitudinally track young people's exposure to policy interventions and activities. Importantly, there was no facility in the throughput data to record or comment upon a young person's level of vulnerability to violent extremism and therefore, no means of assessing the 'distance travelled'. The evaluation team's attempts to update project progress by requesting projects to complete diary sheets was not overly successful, partly due to wide variations in the comprehensiveness, consistency and quality of the information provided.

The observations from the study reflect these broader issues, and the implications they pose for policy and practice are examined below. They have been grouped together under five themes:

- programme delivery: who should deliver PVE?

- how should PVE be targeted?

- programme development

- monitoring and evaluation

- programme management, sustainability and the future.

Programme delivery: who should deliver PVE?

Third sector delivery of PVE interventions

We have reflected at length about which organisations are best suited to manage projects and to work directly with young people to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. We have observed and researched projects operated directly by YOTs, projects delivered through subcontracting arrangements with third sector agencies and projects delivered through the secure estate. We have also consulted the research literature on the delivery of these programmes. The more successful case study projects tended to utilise, selectively, the services of appropriate third sector agencies. Projects that engaged third sector agencies during the project development phase to analyse the problem of violent extremism locally, also demonstrated a better grasp of the complexities of the problem and a clearer idea of how to proceed.

We would emphasise the importance of the relationship with the community. The involvement of individuals and/or community groups who are well positioned with the community adds greater credibility to the projects and a degree of trust that may otherwise be absent. This provides projects with a greater capacity to address Muslim anxiety, fearfulness and outright hostility to the PVE programme. While the involvement of individuals 'embedded' within the community offers no guarantees, if they have the right skills and background, they are often best placed to address the

most frequent challenges. Community-based organisations are also best placed to encourage, and increase the capacity of communities as guardians against violent extremism. The literature also suggests that informal community-based organisations have a valuable role to play. There are several advantages to this, in particular, the greater expertise that third sector agencies can sometimes have in PVE work and provision, together with the tendency for them to have closer links with and knowledge of the local Muslim communities. They are more likely to be trusted by those same communities and consequently, are better placed to work with them in this highly sensitive area.

Implication 1

Steps should be taken to move towards a position where PVE projects are delivered through community-based organisations that have a proven track record of delivering PVE-style interventions.

This suggestion is not without its caveats and qualifications and it is recognised that appropriate organisations might not exist in every community. It is the delivery rather than the management and oversight of projects that we are suggesting be devolved to community-based organisations. YOTs or any other bodies may still have a strategic role to play in the overall co-ordination of programmes. Great care would need to be exercised in selecting appropriate organisations to take on this delivery role. There would need to be probity and transparency in their selection and the organisations themselves would need to have a demonstrable track record and sufficient capacity to run interventions and projects. Careful vetting would be required to screen out any agencies that have relationships with organisations that support violence.

PVE in the secure estate

The secure estate for children and young people has been engaged to deliver PVE interventions partly as a result of evidence that adult prisons can act as incubators of violent extremism. In addition, a small number, but by no means all, of the risk factors for offending have also been identified as risk factors for violent radicalisation. There are far more influences on radicalisation that do not apply to conventional offending. While the evidence that young people are being radicalised within the secure estate is not strong, to entirely remove PVE interventions from the secure estate would be wrong on two counts: firstly, it would miss some young people who will have relevant risk factors and secondly, it would ignore the effect of secure establishments as incubators of violent extremism (i.e. the concentration effect).

Implication 2

Only targeted PVE interventions should continue to be delivered in the secure estate.

We believe that there is little point in conducting generic PVE work in the secure estate. It is inefficient to deliver universal PVE programmes as this acts to dissipate the impact of an intervention and results in attention and resources being wasted on individuals who are not sensibly 'at risk'. A more sophisticated approach to targeting is required – one which moves away from targeting based on one crude risk factor (offending) to an approach that assesses young people for a combination of risk factors that are pertinent and specific to violent radicalisation.

Implication 3

PVE interventions in the secure estate should be restricted to those young people most at risk of succumbing to radicalisation, identified through a combination of PVE-specific risk factors.

Adopting a more targeted approach may see a significant reduction in current PVE provision, with explorations of Islamic theology and teaching remaining in addition to those Tier 3 interventions aimed at de-radicalisation or disengagement from an extremist ideology.

Implication 4

Where cases are identified of young people who show signs of radicalisation in the secure estate for children and young people, staff should ensure that PVE work constitutes a core resettlement activity. In such cases, PVE should constitute an additional eighth[43] resettlement pathway, allowing for a systematic PVE-focused follow-up on release.

While any process of reintegration back into the community needs to be flexible and responsive to differences among young people and their personal problems, there is a requirement for 'through the gate' PVE provision for the transition back to the community for young people who have shown signs of radicalisation. Without this, there is a danger that gains made from earlier interventions will be lost.

How should PVE be targeted?

Decisions on where PVE projects should be located and who should be engaged by them have reflected assessments by government of the magnitude of the threat posed by different types of extremists in society, the socio-demographic composition of local populations and an assumption that socially disadvantaged young people, particularly young offenders, were at greatest risk of radicalisation.

These considerations have influenced the development of three different ways of targeting PVE work:

- by the brand of extremism to be targeted (Islamic or right-wing)

- by the areas considered to be at greatest risk of incubating violent extremism (for example, locations with high concentrations of Muslims/disadvantage)

- by the young people in those communities considered to be most vulnerable to radicalisation, who needed to be identified, targeted and brought on to projects.

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[43] In addition to the existing seven YJB Resettlement Pathways:
   www.resettlementuk.com/UserFiles/Files/p_p9Oa4N.pdf

What brand of extremism?

There was some confusion among projects as to whether Islamic-influenced violent extremism constituted the primary risk or whether other forms of extremism should be included as well. Several projects made a case for including right-wing extremism, either to pursue what they considered to be a more balanced approach and avoid perceptions of stigmatising the Muslim community, or because right-wing extremism was felt to be a pressing issue locally.

The decision to include right-wing extremism resulted, in part, from terminological confusion on behalf of some practitioners, and the conflation of the terms 'violent extremism' and 'extremism'. This elasticity of terminology has resulted in a widening of the problem space to those holding (or attracted to) some far-right views, rather than a more specific focus on those attracted or sympathetic to violent far-right groups. In times of limited resources, it is particularly important that policy interventions are tailored towards the most appropriate risks. This widening of the problem space acted to shift the focus away from the present threat of Islamic violent radicalisation and international terrorism. It is the judgement of the research team that this is a mistake.

Implication 5

PVE should focus on preventing Islamic-inspired violent extremism rather than other forms of 'extremism', as this is where the current threat lies in the UK.[44]

Identifying appropriate areas for PVE projects

The second form of targeting, namely, selecting appropriate areas for PVE projects, requires looking strategically at socio-demographic indicators to identify local authorities with relatively high concentrations of specific population groups. The 2011 Population Census will provide an opportunity to re-visit and update this analysis.

Identifying young people most vulnerable to violent extremism

The third form of targeting, identifying young people at risk within each community, potentially has the greatest impact on the success of PVE projects and their ability to influence outcomes. Guidance provided by the YJB for funding applications included the following rationale:

> *The young people with whom youth justice programmes engage are among the most socially excluded and are highly vulnerable to influence from those promoting violently extreme views, either in the community or in custodial establishments. There is evidence to suggest that young people from 16–24 are at a particular risk of being exploited. That is why the YJB is looking to fund*

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[44] It has recently been reported in the national press that, following the Norwegian shootings, the Prime Minister, David Cameron ordered a review of the scrutiny of a number of far-right groups by the security services and police, in part, to examine allegations made by Anders Behring Breivik of links between him and several UK far-right organisations. Breivik had made statements that he had contacts with senior members of the English Defence League and several right-wing groups in the UK, all of which, if true, may have implicated them in the atrocities. If this were indeed the case, it would indicate a level of threat from these organisations as yet unconsidered. The conclusions of Scotland Yard's investigations are not at this point known to the authors.

programmes that primarily focus on achieving objective 3 of the Strategy: supporting vulnerable individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism.

The implicit assumption behind this guidance is that the youth offending population is coterminous with that at risk of radicalisation. The perception that risk factors for violent extremism are linked to risk factors for offending is reflected in the number of projects that selected their cohort, exclusively or mainly, from within the Criminal Justice System. Within this group, there was also a high degree of overlap between PVE interventions and interventions designed to tackle gang-related offending. Risk factors in relation to offending by young people are not wholly interchangeable with vulnerability to violent extremism. A number of PVE risk factors are very different to those for conventional offending including, but by no means limited to, an attachment to an ideology justifying violence, perceptions of injustice and grievances, segregation from mainstream society, etc.

Implication 6

Young people should not be referred for PVE interventions on the basis of background offending risk factors, but on a combination of specific PVE-related risk factors (for example, perception of injustice, hatred towards an out-group, frustration, persecution, identity confusion).

Projects expressed a lack of confidence in both identifying and monitoring susceptibility to violent extremism in the absence of an adequate risk assessment tool. There is an urgent need to provide PVE projects with a means of both identifying those young people who are most susceptible to being radicalised, and having done so, being able to measure effectively the 'distance travelled' in reducing their vulnerability, and hence, the impact of the interventions to which they have been exposed. On both counts this is no easy feat.

Staff need to have sufficient training and confidence to be able to determine whether certain behaviours or attitudes are symptomatic of a slide into radicalisation, or a harmless expression of faith. There also needs to be continuous assessment of young people's progress, and this includes the ability to look for signs of change which may be positive or may be indicative of a young person being lured into the radicalisation process. The case studies have identified promising practice in this respect in the approach to assessment being piloted by North West YOT 2. This instrument may usefully provide one such prototype.

Implication 7

A national assessment and monitoring tool should be developed specifically for selecting young people to participate in PVE interventions and in order to monitor their progress.

Programme development

Many projects lacked a sufficiently clear understanding of radicalisation and the drivers of radicalisation which would allow them to design and develop appropriate PVE interventions. Many of the projects had difficulty in grasping what interventions and activities should be delivered under PVE, and for whom they should be delivered. Furthermore, many projects identified the need for tools and/or guides to inform effective practice for PVE. Practitioners also called for increased opportunities to share practice experiences with others in the field.

Implication 8

Web-based toolkits should be (potentially) developed to disseminate information about promising practice in tackling violent extremism. This should include the hosting of materials that have been developed specifically to tackle violent extremism, and that can be downloaded and shared, and the facility for practitioners to share their experiences in online networking forums.

It is important that third sector agencies are similarly encouraged (including being incentivised) to contribute to these efforts.

Interventions and project activity

Despite the difficulties that many of the projects had in understanding PVE and how it should be operationalised into interventions, the majority of projects had carried out a wide range of worthwhile activities.

A relatively large number of interventions were scrutinised as part of this process evaluation. The YJB's PVE programme aimed to address the third objective of the Prevent Strategy, "supporting individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists". Within this theme, projects most commonly addressed identity and belonging, personal and social education, constructive activities and offending reduction. The majority of projects also addressed the wider Prevent Strategy objective to "challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices" through interventions aiming to foster multicultural awareness, including increasing understanding of different religions. More in-depth theological interventions, which interrogated and debated the implications of religious doctrines or promoted moderate interpretations of Islam, were included by only 10 projects. A minority of projects extended their scope to the fourth Prevent objective "to increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism". This objective was addressed primarily through community events. The predominant focus on young people rather than on communities partly stems from YOTs being given responsibility for managing the project. The vast majority of project activity was delivered through discussion forums, constructive activities and structured workshops. Around half of the projects included mentoring and only six engaged outreach workers.

British foreign policy and 'single narratives' were perceived to be the main causes of violent extremism by practitioners; however, both of these factors are deemed to be outside of the control of YOTs and thus not amenable to project intervention. Alienation, isolation, exclusion, problems with self identity, age and maturation were also frequently cited by practitioners as causes of violent extremism. The emphasis, by practitioners, on what were essentially political grievances finds support in the scholarly literature. These grievances and perceived injustices, especially concerning British (and Western) foreign policy, and the perceived humiliation of Muslims in conflict zones, or "humiliation by proxy" were key explanatory factors driving the process of radicalisation. Grievances were addressed by the majority of projects via the provision of a "safe space to discuss them".

It was clear that programme work across the projects was still developing and work was needed to create long-term sustainability through building resilience in the wider community. In addition, fieldwork suggested that there was some doubt as to whether young people could freely express themselves in a 'safe space' to debate without fear of being subject to police surveillance and sanctions.

Given the fact that it is still very early days for the PVE programme and that a lot of the work remains experimental, it is not possible to state categorically which specific interventions will work effectively to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. On the other hand, it is possible to highlight interventions that look promising with regard to their likelihood of success and to discourage future programmes from funding those less likely to be effective. The observations below provide some examples of PVE approaches that projects should consider, together with those that are not strongly supported by evidence either from this evaluation or from the research literature (notably the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) report, 2010).

PVE interventions likely to be successful include those that:

- challenge extremist ideology, also incorporating a focus on theology

- build capacity or empower young people and are delivered through multi-agency working

- incorporate detached outreach work with young people.

Interventions less likely to succeed include those that are based within formal institutions, those that have compulsory attendance and those where young people cannot speak freely and openly. Many of the projects in this evaluation had elements of these less successful approaches.

Implication 9

It is suggested that:

a) interventions should be developed that challenge extremist ideology through debate and discussion around theology; these should be delivered in an informal setting through community-led debates

b) interventions should be adopted that incorporate detached outreach work with young people

c) PVE projects should prioritise interventions that help develop critical thinking skills among young people at risk. These give young people the ability to think independently and equip them with the cognitive tools needed to reflect critically upon extremist narratives and where necessary, challenge them directly.

The centrality of PVE to interventions

The extent to which PVE was central to the projects' focus varied across the schemes. Some projects incorporated PVE within a broader programme of conventional interventions tackling offending behaviour, seeking to foster youth inclusion or build community cohesion. This resulted in a more superficial and diluted treatment. The updated guidance for practitioners on the Prevent Strategy (Home Office, 2009) acknowledged the overlap between PVE and other local agendas, but stipulated that:

> *… although the community cohesion and safer neighbourhood agendas and Prevent overlap, they are not identical … In using the language of cohesion and safer neighbourhoods it is therefore also important for local partners to maintain a focus on the Prevent objectives set out here and to be clear with communities and organisations they may be funding what they are seeking to achieve.*

Implication 10

Work undertaken within PVE projects should maintain a focus on the key objectives of the Prevent Strategy and be clearly distinguishable from other social policy goals such as community cohesion.

Negative community reactions to PVE nationally presented one of the more significant challenges to project delivery. Negative reactions to the contentious nature of the Prevent Strategy were not restricted to young people and members of the community, as some practitioners, including YOT officers, were either ideologically opposed to the agenda in principle, viewing PVE as stigmatising the entire Muslim community, or sceptical that PVE programmes could offer any benefits to their own supervised young people. Some projects chose to overcome this problem by avoiding the use of PVE terminology in the description of their interventions, and in their communications with young people, the community and other agencies. However, other projects have succeeded, although not without difficulty, in delivering PVE interventions in a more open and candid way. These projects retained a specific focus while being frank with young people about what the aims of the project were and how they might benefit. In persuading wider agencies of the value of interventions, several projects were proactive in raising awareness about PVE and dispelling negative perceptions.

Implication 11

Projects should pay careful attention to the local context prior to making a decision regarding the naming of projects and interventions, and the language used to describe interventions.

Facilitation

It was clear from the observations of programme practice conducted for the case studies that strong facilitation was pivotal to the success of interventions. Effective

facilitation ensured that interest was maintained, engagement was high and learning was consolidated. Skilled and motivated facilitators could also secure the participation of compulsory attendees who were resistant to authority and the underlying messages that were being communicated. In all circumstances, facilitating sessions for young people is a demanding role, and facilitators needed to be highly skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated.

Implication 12

Facilitators and project staff more generally should have a high level of PVE knowledge and competence. Projects need to prioritise the recruitment of highly skilled and knowledgeable staff, and/or the training of staff to equip them with relevant skills and knowledge.

Monitoring and evaluation

During the course of the evaluation, a number of questions emerged about the need to monitor the evolution and development of projects over time, and the need to measure the progress of the young people attending the projects and any changes in their circumstances/susceptibility to radicalisation.

Key issues included information about the interventions that individual projects were running, their content, mode of delivery, timing and the duration and frequency of sessions. It was also important to establish who was involved in running them, the number of attendees and the means by which young people were recruited.

For the young people, it would have been beneficial from a monitoring perspective, to have had reliable baseline data on their needs, perceptions, lifestyle and vulnerabilities, cross-referenced with their socio-demographic characteristics, all of which could be revisited, periodically, to update baselines and document their progress through the projects. The reality was somewhat different.

Throughput data

Although some basic details about the types of interventions projects were implementing appeared in the throughput data supplied to the YJB, this alone was insufficient to pinpoint what was actually being delivered on the ground and by which means. Not all projects provided regular updates of their activities. Seven of the 48 projects (14%) did not provide any throughput data to the YJB throughout the duration of the evaluation. Although other projects did comply, they did not necessarily do so every quarter. It was also unclear whether the absence of a return reflected an absence of activity or a failure to report activity. Aside from the considerable gaps in the data, the structure of the database itself presented problems in monitoring the projects.

There was no facility to record the name or basic description of interventions, and, despite the availability of multiple choice descriptors, it was usually very difficult to determine what had actually been delivered. There was no straightforward way to identify discrete interventions in the data, or to calculate the number of young people who received just one, two or three or more targeted or preventative interventions broken down by type of intervention.

The database was focused on recording interventions with young people, and as a result, the extent to which community interventions were captured was not clear. Crucially, there was no facility within the data to record or comment upon a young person's level of risk regarding violent extremism.

The evaluation sought to fill in some of these gaps by capturing information on project activity and young people through various means. These included an initial series of interviews with staff at all 49 project sites to gain an insight into what was being provided and the underlying rationale for the interventions. This provided a snapshot of activity at a particular point in time.

In order to update the throughput data on project activity, diary sheets were designed by the evaluation team and sent out to all of the projects. These were intended to update project activity and enable the evaluation team to identify any changes to interventions on a quarterly basis. However, as with the throughput data, not every project complied and even where sheets were completed by projects, there were variations in both the quantity and quality of the data supplied.

Case studies were also undertaken in 12 of the projects and these were used to gain a more in-depth view of the types of activities that were delivered and the methods for engaging young people. This was achieved through interviewing project leaders, stakeholders and front line practitioners, non-participant observation of the sessions that were being run and interviews with young people participating in the projects. The latter were conducted to elicit their views and perceptions of the projects and their assessment of the relevance and usefulness of the activities and interventions.

The data capture instruments designed for the evaluation were used to gain a more in-depth insight and appreciation of the diversity of approaches that fell under the PVE umbrella and an assessment of how well projects were delivering their interventions. They were not designed to generate detailed and consistent longitudinal data on young people's exposure to interventions (i.e. which ones and how many they had experienced, how often and over what duration) or to monitor changes in perceptions and potential risk factors for radicalisation/violent extremism during their period of engagement.

In a programme such as PVE, it is particularly important to establish that baselines and updates on the interventions delivered to young people are recorded comprehensively and in a consistent way. This also applies to information about the number and characteristics of young people engaged by the projects. The structure, content and reporting frequency of the throughput data significantly limited the extent to which it could be used to generate baselines and track activities over time.

Implication 13

It is suggested that:

a) the capture of consistent data on PVE interventions (aim, description, category, date, duration, setting, number of attendees), linked to information about the young people participating in them, should be a core requirement of all PVE projects

b) the monitoring databases for PVE projects should contain a facility to record and/or comment upon a young person's level of risk in relation to violent extremism.

This data should be collected routinely and fed into the continuous monitoring of project progress, rather than just being captured through fieldwork conducted for evaluation exercises. This will be essential for any future assessment of the effectiveness and impact of policy on outcomes in this area. However, if this is to be attempted by the managing agency, or indeed, individual projects, there will be a need for support in recording project activity accurately and in being able to distinguish between the inputs that are delivered to young people.

Our experience in using the throughput data revealed the lack of a clear set of operational definitions and criteria that could be used reliably to place interventions into specific categories or types of intervention and to locate them with respect to the PVE objectives that they addressed (for example, issues such as 'alienation', 'attitudes', 'belonging', 'identity', 'injustice' and 'integration').

Close scrutiny of the throughput data suggested that some of these terms meant different things to different people, resulting in a lack of consistency between projects in allocating interventions to certain categories. This became apparent when comparing the throughput data to that collected by means of the diary sheets, and cross-referencing both of these with what was learnt about the projects through interviews and observation in the case study areas.

There is a need for more explicit definitions of the key concepts used in PVE work so that there is greater consistency across projects in categorising interventions by type and mapping them against PVE objectives.

Implication 14

For the purposes of monitoring, operational definitions should be produced for key terms such as 'alienation', 'identity', 'attitudes' and 'belonging', together with clear criteria by which each can be recognised for the purposes of classifying interventions and activities.

In a performance indicator culture, there is a tendency for practitioners, when invited to choose as many criteria as they see fit in describing their project, to tick as many boxes as possible to demonstrate productivity. The YJB's PVE data recording procedure, in respect of the identification of intervention types and PVE objectives, was not immune to this problem. Where projects had a distinctive focus, this was in danger of being masked by the overuse of tick box options.

Implication 15

Projects should be required to allocate young people to particular types of interventions by assigning a priority level to each young person.

The availability of robust data on the delivery of policy interventions and the characteristics of young people participating in them would greatly facilitate any future evaluations. This is particularly the case for measuring the impact of projects on outcomes conducted by individual projects. However, there will be a need for guidance on how to utilise data to self-assess project impacts. This leads to our next observation.

Implication 16

Projects should be given clear guidance on how they can self-evaluate the effectiveness and impact of their PVE interventions.

Programme management, sustainability and the future

Two of the most important lessons to draw from the early implementation of the PVE programme were:

- the need to allow sufficient time for appropriate interventions to be drawn up prior to projects going live

- the need for better communication and advance warning by government of any substantive changes in policy nuance, direction or approach likely to affect PVE.

PVE is a complex area of work where careful thought needs to be given to the selection of appropriate interventions, the selection and engagement with young people, mode of delivery, likely levels of community support and the monitoring of progress and outcomes. Hasty implementation puts all of this in jeopardy. Just allowing one month between submission of applications for funding and project start-ups in the initial phase of the programme was not conducive to best practice.

The evaluation also identified that several projects struggled with the complexity of PVE to such an extent that their implementation was significantly delayed, impeded, or in a minority of cases, did not get off the ground.

Implication 17

It is suggested that in any future roll-out of PVE-style programmes:

a) projects should be provided with up to six months lead-in time between the awarding of funding and project start dates, to enable them to fully develop their programmes

b) the progress of projects be closely monitored in order to identify struggling or failing projects and implement timely supportive action

c) there should be a suitable period of consultation with projects in advance of any shift in the direction of policy, or change in the priority groups being targeted for PVE projects.

We have made a series of observations on the assumption that PVE work will continue into the future. Against the background of extensive and far reaching cuts to public sector finance, it is neither sensible, nor appropriate, to be over-prescriptive about the agency or body that should take on the role of co-ordinating any future PVE programme. We are also aware of the recent review of Prevent undertaken by the coalition government, the findings of which were published in June 2011.

We have attempted to distil, from the numerous strands of this research, useful lessons for different stakeholders which we have converted into the above implications. A number of these highlight the need to produce more focused and instructive guidance to projects on how they can perform a number of functions, including:

- identifying the main thrust of their projects (for example, determining and justifying their focus on particular types of extremism)

- identifying young people at the greatest risk of radicalisation

- aligning interventions and activities both to project goals, and to address the vulnerability of the young people targeted

- project delivery

- developing positive relationships with local communities

- monitoring and evaluating progress and change in responses to interventions.

These areas for further development and improvement have been specified as a series of separate implications. However, there is a common thread running throughout all of these, and that is the need for more focused project advice, guidance and training. There is scope for producing a comprehensive manual covering a range of competencies that are required in devising, managing and implementing PVE interventions.

Implication 18

Consideration should be given to the production of a best practice manual for designing, delivering, managing and monitoring PVE projects. This should include:

a) a specification of the knowledge, experience, skills and competencies required for working in this highly sensitive and complex field, together with a list of tasks (a 'job' description)

b) best practice in identifying young people at risk, including training materials on how to recognise, engage with and recruit young people at risk of radicalisation

c) a synopsis of the context, mechanisms and manifestation of radicalisation and violent extremism, and the relevance of these for identifying and delivering PVE interventions

d) promising practice in tackling PVE from existing projects, with web links to materials that have been developed specifically for PVE that can be downloaded and shared

e) the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of effective facilitation specifically in relation to PVE work

f) the core data requirements for monitoring and tracking the delivery of interventions coterminous with changes in young people's circumstances, risk levels and perceptions

g) guidance on how to communicate with local communities in respect of PVE projects and strengthen relationships.

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Appendix 1: Research methodology

This research study used a multi-method approach, and in this appendix we provide a more comprehensive discussion of the five strands of investigation that were undertaken.

Systematic literature review

The first stage of the research involved a review of the literature relating to the process of radicalisation, concluding with a brief overview of interventions and programmes intended to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. There was an explicit focus on 'Islamic extremism' taking place in the West, although other forms of extremism were included where there was direct relevance to the radicalisation process or transferable learning from interventions or programmes.

The review included published articles and grey literature available predominantly from 1990 until July 2010.[45] The search was limited to English language literature and key search terms included 'radicalisation', 'extremism', 'religion', 'political', 'Islam', 'Jihad' and 'terrorism'.[46] The initial search returned 2,163 citations, which were assessed for their relevance to the research questions – the total number of articles for inclusion was reduced to 302. A quality assessment scale was employed, although a low score on the sophistication of the methodology adopted did not necessarily exclude a study. The review provided a theoretical basis for the research and assisted in the design of research instruments, for example, the interview schedules used for practitioners.

Initial practitioner interviews

The purpose of the initial practitioner interviews was to reflect the early stages of project implementation. In mid-2009, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from the 49 YOTs and secure establishments. Most interviews were conducted with just one practitioner present.[47] This was generally the PVE co-ordinator, but in some cases, the YOT manager was interviewed.

The majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face. Telephone interviews were conducted with 12 schemes that had either received late confirmation of funding or it had taken considerable time to arrange an interview. Interviews lasted approximately one hour, and all bar one were recorded and fully transcribed (on the one exception, contemporaneous notes were taken).

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[45] At the request of the YJB, the results of three rapid evidence assessments conducted in 2011 for the Department for Communities and Local Government (after completion of the literature search for the review) were included as a series of briefing notes detailing the headline findings.

[46] A full list of search terms can be found in the accompanying report *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Systematic Review of the Research Evidence.*

[47] In 15 interviews there were two or more practitioners present (one of these involved a focus group of 15).

Interviewees were asked to comment on the national PVE agenda, what they perceived to be the causes of violent extremism, project progress, challenges encountered, any evaluation and monitoring techniques employed, and early reactions to the project (see Appendix 2 for the full interview schedule).

Monitoring data

YJB throughput data

Projects were requested to submit data returns to the YJB in order to monitor the level and nature of programme activity. Data from these returns was available for five quarters between January 2009 and March 2010 (the end of the programme). Out of a total of 48 projects, 38 were able to submit some throughput data returns. For the five quarters between January 2009 and March 2010, 14, 23, 32, 37 and 36 projects returned data respectively. Data returns for targeted interventions (working with young people subject to court disposals) and preventative interventions (working with young people on pre-court disposals, Youth Inclusion and Support Panels or Youth Inclusion Programmes) were recorded at the level of the individual (i.e. one row of data for each young person). Universal interventions (programmes that were delivered to young people en masse) were recorded at the level of the intervention (i.e. one row of data for each activity). Fields within the throughput data included:

- socio-demographics of each young person: age, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender

- offending background: main offence, court outcomes and current offender intervention programmes or prevention programmes, *Asset* or *Onset* score

- format of intervention: one-to-one, group, family

- intervention type, which outlined the problems addressed: for example, anger management, victim awareness, offending behaviour, constructive pursuits, education and skills, careers, family support, health, housing, drugs and alcohol awareness

- PVE objectives covered (recorded from April 2009): alienation, attitudes, belonging, dialogue, identity, injustice, and integration

- nature of the referral.

Free text fields within the data files (for example, intervention type, key successes) were infrequently completed, but when they were, they often provided additional details with which a picture of an intervention or young person could be enhanced.

In order to maintain consistency with monitoring arrangements across YJB projects, the YJB's generic Intervention Framework was adopted as the throughput monitoring database for the PVE programme. Additional PVE-related variables were added to the database, including the option to select the relevant 'PVE objectives'. The YJB also encouraged projects to record additional PVE-specific information in free text fields. However, overall, the database was geared more towards capturing offending reduction interventions than those tailored more specifically towards PVE. Although the dataset contained *Asset* and *Onset* scores, there were no fields designed specifically to capture a young person's current level of risk of violent extremism.

Neither did the dataset provide an indication of the extent to which an intervention focused upon PVE (i.e. some indication of PVE dosage) or some combination of PVE risk factors, as opposed to other concerns such as community cohesion.

In both the universal and targeted/preventative data, it was not possible to link different records relating to the same intervention because of a combination of inconsistent labelling of interventions and, in many cases, the absence of any information whatsoever about the specific intervention. For example, it was not possible to ascertain whether two young people had attended the same intervention or whether a young person appearing in the data twice had received two different interventions, or indeed had had two occurrences of the same intervention (i.e. had attended two sessions).

Data collation and analysis

Prior to analysis, the data returns for each quarter were merged and this produced two separate data files: one containing data recorded at the level of the individual young person, pertaining to targeted and preventative interventions, and one containing intervention-level data pertaining to universal interventions.

Data pertaining to targeted and preventative interventions identified each young person by a unique identification number. This was either their Youth Justice Management Information System ID or an alternative reference number determined by the project. Some initial checks were conducted to verify the consistency of IDs (for example, whether different occurrences referred to a young person of the same age, gender and ethnicity). This identified some ID numbers that required cleaning, mainly where the same ID was entered on different occasions as upper and then lower case (both Excel and SPSS[48] are case-sensitive). This data cleaning increased the confidence with which different records in the data could be treated as pertaining to the same young person.

Once cleaned, the data was analysed using Excel and SPSS. Descriptive data analysis was conducted to produce profiles of the young people participating in the project, and cross-tabulations were created to examine the characteristics of young people and the interventions in which they participated by theme, quarter and project.

Diary sheets

The research team asked all projects to complete a diary sheet for the seven quarters from January 2009 – September 2010. Diary sheets required project staff to comment on project planning, resources utilised to deliver projects, training provision for staff, the recruitment process and characteristics of participants, project content, and any evaluation and monitoring that took place. A diary sheet template is available in Appendix 2. The 12 schemes acting as case studies were not required to submit diary sheets for the last two quarters, although some volunteered this information.

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[48] SPSS is a computer programme used for statistical analysis.

The purpose of the diary sheets was to:

- corroborate the information received during the practitioner interviews

- identify changes or developments in programme content over the course of the year

- provide basic quantitative information on the number and characteristics of young people engaged in the interventions.

Unfortunately, some schemes submitted diary sheets that covered more than one quarter, or part of one quarter and part of another, so it was necessary to approximate the diary sheets to the nearest quarter(s).

Despite frequent email reminders from both the YJB and the research team, just 194 (51.1%) diary sheets were returned. For quarters one to seven, 18, 20, 32, 35, 27, 35 and 27 diary sheets were submitted, respectively. Fifty schemes submitted one or more diary sheets, and 10 submitted all requested diary sheets. However, the diary sheets received were of varying degrees of quality and it was sometimes difficult to ascertain what project activity had occurred.

Developing a classification of intervention themes

The 48 projects in the programme each adopted a range of different approaches to addressing the overall aim of reducing violent extremism, and undertook diverse activities designed to achieve the intended outcomes. In order to map this diversity across the national programme, a classification of intervention themes was created by the evaluation team. The aim of this classification was to provide a more detailed picture of the rationale behind the interventions implemented by the projects.

A list of potential intervention themes was outlined in the YJB guidance to projects, such as alienation, belonging, self-identity, injustice, attitudes, integration, safe and open dialogue. However, this list did not include all of the themes that we identified, or that projects were working towards. For example, work with families or communities was difficult to classify using this list, as were activities around offending reduction. Furthermore, there was a high degree of overlap between categories (for example, 'alienation' appeared simply to be the reverse of 'belonging').

The activity types used in the mapping of PVE Pathfinder-funded projects (Kellard, Mitchell and Godfrey, 2008) highlighted some useful categories to include, such as education and constructive activities, but this classification conflated the methods of delivery with intervention aims (for example, the mapping of project activities within the Pathfinder Fund). A revised classification was devised by analysing the activities within the programme, identifying their core purpose and then assigning these to broader categories which we have termed 'intervention themes'. Table 5.1 presents the classification of intervention themes and maps them to the objectives of the Prevent Strategy. The new classification does not completely resolve the problems discussed above in that all the categories are linked in some way and, therefore, are not mutually exclusive, and with interventions utilising 'constructive activities' it is not possible to separate the objective from the methods/mode of delivery.

Interventions aiming to support multicultural awareness sought to increase participants' understanding of other cultures, religions and ethnicities, to increase interaction between young people from different backgrounds and to promote cultural tolerance. Theological interventions aimed to support moderate interpretations of Islam and counter extremist interpretations. A distinction has been made between the projects that included religious beliefs as part of widening awareness, and projects that offered focused religious education, guidance and debate concerning specific elements of religious doctrine. As shown in Table 5.1, multicultural values and theological interventions can be mapped to the first Prevent Strategy objective, namely, "to challenge the ideology behind violent extremism and support mainstream voices".

Interventions on the theme of identity and belonging were intended to counter feelings of exclusion, isolation and alienation and provide young people with an improved sense of identity, chiefly by fostering a sense of citizenship and offering young people opportunities to engage in society in meaningful and legitimate ways. Interventions within this theme can be mapped to the third and fifth objectives of the Prevent Strategy. These interventions supported individuals who were vulnerable to violent extremist recruitment and in doing so, they were able to address some of the grievances which radical ideologues utilise, namely, that Muslims are an excluded and suppressed group within British society.

Personal and social education, constructive activities, reducing offending behaviour and family support can all be regarded as interventions aiming to meet objective three of the Prevent Strategy, namely, "supporting individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment or who have already been recruited by violent extremists". Personal and social education interventions aimed to provide life skills to promote personal and social development. They included interventions that raised young people's awareness of the risk factors of violent extremism. Constructive activities represented enjoyable activities that encouraged young people to engage with the projects. Recreational, creative and cultural activities were utilised in a number of ways, including acting as a 'carrot' to attract young people to the project, providing a mechanism for building trust and engagement, and acting as learning activities designed to explore relevant issues. Offending behaviour reduction interventions aimed to address the risk factors of mainstream offenders. Family support interventions aimed to improve support networks for young people by increasing their capacity to identify and respond to young people at risk of violent extremism.

A final set of community interventions can be mapped to objective four of the Prevent Strategy, "to increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism".

The case studies

Following consultation with the YJB, 12 schemes were selected to act as in-depth case studies on the basis that they provided some geographical spread across England and Wales and were delivering distinctly different sets of interventions. Case studies consisted of 10 YOTs, one secure training centre (STC) and one young offender institution (YOI). The purpose of the case studies was to obtain more detailed information about project activity, explore the views and experiences of those involved with projects, and identify examples of innovative or promising practice.

Fieldwork at the case study sites was conducted over a seven-month period (March to September 2010). At each case study site, the research team aimed to conduct at least three observations of practice, as well as interview three respondents in each of the following categories: practitioners, stakeholders and young people (see Table 2.1). This was not possible at all sites as some schemes either did not have three practitioners or stakeholders, or there was a lull in programme delivery during the fieldwork period, or the circumstances of programme delivery meant that there was insufficient time or the lack of a suitably private space to interview young people.

Fieldwork was supplemented by analysis of assorted project documents and written materials, including the original project bid, curricula outlines, evaluation reports, and session evaluation and recording sheets.

Individual self-contained reports were compiled for each of the case study sites. Each case study report detailed the project activity undertaken at the site, the challenges faced by the project, a discussion of the effectiveness and success of the project, whether the project was successful in targeting those deemed most at risk of radicalisation and violent extremism, local governance arrangements and a discussion of funding and the future of the project. Most of the case study reports also included researchers' observations of programme practice undertaken at the project and participating young people's views and experiences of taking part in the programme. We provide some additional commentary on these methods here.

Observations of practice

Activities most explicitly connected to the PVE agenda and those with clear aims and objectives were prioritised for observation, typically workshops and discussion forums. It was considered inappropriate to observe one-to-one mentoring due to confidentiality issues, and sport and leisure activities were generally avoided. It was recognised that the observations did not reflect the project as a whole but, nevertheless, provided a valuable insight into the programmes and interventions on offer.

Researchers were required to complete an observation sheet (see Appendix 2) which elicited comments regarding the nature of the activities, organisation and preparation, number and characteristics of participants, facilitators' level of engagement with participants, the type of extremism addressed and the extent to which this was explicit, and any monitoring and evaluation that took place.

Table A.1: Number of interviews and observations conducted at each case study site

Case study site	Practitioners interviewed	Stakeholders interviewed	Young people interviewed	Observations of programme practice
London YOT 10	3	3	3	2
London YOT 11	2	3	6	2
North East YOT 2	3	3	4	2
East Midlands YOT 3	4	4	0	2
West Midlands YOT 1	5	0	3	4
Wales YOT 1	7	2	5	3
South West YOT 2	3	2	3	4
South East YOT 2	3	2	3	4
North West YOT 2	3	2	3	3
YOI 1	3	2	3	3
STC 2	3	2	0	3
Yorkshire YOT 3	4	4	0	4
Total	**43**	**29**	**33**	**36**

Practitioner and stakeholder interviews

Practitioners were considered to be those who were directly involved in the design and/or delivery of the project. Stakeholders were considered to be those who were not directly involved but who had a direct interest in the project or were otherwise aligned to it, for example police officers, community engagement officers and leaders from community organisations.

About three-quarters of interviews were conducted face-to-face; exceptions to this were interviews conducted by telephone where it was not possible for the research team and interviewee to schedule a mutually convenient time prior to the end of the fieldwork period. On average, interviews with practitioners and stakeholders lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours. All were recorded and transcribed.

Interviewees were asked to comment on community reactions to the PVE policy, challenges encountered in delivering the project, training and support needs of staff, governance arrangements, perceptions of effectiveness and success, funding issues and the future of the project (see Appendix 2 for the full interview schedule).

Interviews with young people

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of young people engaged in the programmes. Interviews lasted between 20 and 60 minutes and all were conducted face-to-face. The majority of interviews were recorded and fully transcribed; the exception to this was interviews with four young people who requested handwritten notes be taken instead. Interviewees comprised 21 males and 12 females aged between 14 and 21. All but three young people were Muslim and their nationalities were as follows: 18 Asian; six Somali; five White; one Moroccan; one Algerian; one Afghan; and one Albanian. Young people were asked about their experiences of the project, the perceived effectiveness of the project, their views on race, religion and current events, and where appropriate, their views on violent extremism (see Appendix 2 for the full interview schedule).

Appendix 2: Research tools and instruments

Interview schedule for practitioners (national projects)

1. What do you know about the national PVE agenda (prompt: what do you think are its main strengths and weaknesses)?

2. Are you aware of any incidents of, or arrests for, violent extremism in this YOT/Secure Estate area? (If yes, what form did they take?)

3. Can you describe the intervention/s that you use for VE within your YOT?

    What does the programme look like?

    How many sessions would a young person attend?

    How long do the sessions last?

    How long have they been used?

    Why use these particular interventions?

    Did you consider any alternative approaches (if yes, what were they?)

    Is the project developed solely for use with PVE, or developed from a

    generic intervention?

4. Where does your intervention come from and is there a theoretical basis for its use and effectiveness?

5. Do you feel that you had sufficient time to develop and implement the programme?

6. Has the programme been implemented as planned (e.g. any delays or modifications, if so, what were they/why?)

7. What do **you** see as the main cause of VE? (Has this view changed since you started using the programme?)

    Do you think this intervention addresses these factors?

8. What do you think are the main reasons that some young people get involved in violent extremism?

9. How is a young person assessed as suitable for inclusion on an intervention?

    (Prompt: nature of offence, what age range, ethnic group?)

10. Do you think the programme is effective in reaching those young people most at risk of involvement in VE? (If not, why)?

11. Do you think that the programme on its own is sufficient to deal with the problem of VE? (If not, what more is needed?)

12. Do you feel that you have sufficient resources in terms of staff, finances or managerial support to be able to deliver the intervention effectively?

13. Is the intervention ever delivered to a group? (What challenges does this pose?)

14. Have you received any additional training for working with young people at risk of VE? (Prompt: if so what did this involve?)

15. How confident do you feel in planning and carrying out work around PVE?

16. Do you think you need further training or support in order to be effective in working with PVE? (What form might this take?)

17. Is there anything else you would like the YJB to do to help you deliver PVE interventions?

18. Do you have links with any other agencies for the provision of the intervention/s?

19. Do all YOT staff deal with VE or only some? (Why?)

20. Are there any other agencies or organisations that you feel could become more involved in the provision of interventions? (If so, which?)

21. Are you aware of any other PVE activities being undertaken in this area (e.g. by the police, LA, schools, voluntary groups)?

22. Has the intervention ever been formally evaluated (if so, what were the results)?

23. How do you assess the potential impact of the intervention on the young person (e.g. Asset, YP feedback, measure attitude change)?

24. In your experience of delivering the intervention have you observed any unexpected outcomes? (What?)

25. Have there been any positive or negative responses to the programme from young people, parents or the community?

26. If you feel we have missed anything please feel free to comment.

Interview schedule for practitioners (case studies)

Please begin by providing an overview of the programme, in particular any recent developments that we may not be aware of.

Have you encountered any challenges in the delivery of the programme? (If so, what were they, what impact did they have on the programme, how were they overcome?)

Which aspects of the programme have worked best? (Why?)

Which aspects have not worked so well? (Why?)

To what extent is PVE the main focus of the programme and is this made clear to young people?

Are you happy with the level of resources for the programme?

Has the number of young people you have worked with been as high as you expected?

Have any training needs emerged during the delivery of the programme? (What were they, was it straightforward to fulfil them?)

Have any other agencies or organisations been involved in the delivery of the intervention? (If so, in what way was this beneficial? Did any difficulties arise?)

Do you think the programme has been effective in reaching the young people most at risk of involvement in violent extremism? (If not, why?)

How have you been assessing the impact of the intervention on the young person?

What kind of response has the programme received from young people, parents or the community?

What are the main lessons you have learned from the experience?

If you could start again, what would you do differently?

What will happen to the programme once YJB funding ceases?

If you feel we have missed anything please feel free to comment.

Interviewee consent form

University of
HUDDERSFIELD

Research to inform policy on preventing violent extremism

Agreement to participate

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected.

3. I understand that information from the interview will be treated in confidence and that no individual will be identified in research publications.

4. I agree to take part in the study.

_____

Your name   Date   Signature

_____

Name of researcher   Date   Signature

Stakeholder interview schedule (case studies)

Section A – The PVE Programme

1. Could you start by outlining your role and involvement in the (name of project)

2. Are you able to comment upon the local PVE Programme in relation to your activities?

Do you feel that the PVE Programme here is effective in its stated aims? (List the aims)

Are there any agencies that you feel could become more involved in the provision of interventions/programmes?

What has been the reaction of the wider community and media to the project?

Section B – Funding and effectiveness

3. Are you satisfied with the amount of funding the PVE Programme receives per annum? (If the answer is no ask how much they feel they need)

4. How are decisions made as to what the funding will be spent on? (Has this had any other influence on the decision making process?)

5. What do you feel the PVE Programme's main areas of success/effectiveness have been in the past 18 months?

6. What do you think would happen without the PVE Programme?

Section C – The PVE future

7. What do you think the future is for PVE ? (Prompt: do you think it will continue to be funded? Could it be expanded? Could its aims and objectives change?)

8. Are you happy for the PVE Programme to continue functioning as it is?

9. What would you like the PVE Programme to achieve in the next six months? (Is there anything else that you would like the programme to achieve above and beyond what it is already doing?)

Observation schedule

This schedule provides some prompts for the observation of sessions/events as part of the case studies.

PVE observation sheet   YOT/STC name……………..

Where session held	Date/time of observation
Researcher's name	Names of programme staff
Name of intervention	Other relevant information

1) Description of activity. Give a brief overview of the type of activity being observed

2) Intervention/programme details

One-off session or part of a sequence? (If sequence, where in the sequence did this session fit?)	
Group work, 1-2-1 or other	
Type of extremism addressed (e.g. AQ inspired, right wing, other)	

3) Background characteristics

Points of interests prior to session starting (among attendees/trainers/staff/other; organised/shambolic; suitable premises; etc.)	

4) Participants

Number of attendees (including adults)	

Background characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, other)	
Status of attendees (e.g. voluntary or coerced)	

5) PVE content of the programme

Degree to which PVE content explicit and apparent to attendees	
Degree to which PVE content is main focus of session	
Degree to which PVE content is age appropriate	

6) Level of engagement

Level of young person's interaction with facilitator (and other YP if present) 1 low – 5 high	
Non-verbal behaviour of young person/people (e.g. bored, interested, hostile, angry)	
Quality/type of facilitation (e.g. does facilitator predominate or allow YP to speak freely?)	
Degree to which YP freely express their views about VE/terrorism, etc.	

7) Effectiveness and monitoring

Any noticeable positive or negative changes in attitude, etc. among YP?	
Any other indicators of effectiveness?	
What went well?	
What did not go well?	
Describe any monitoring or evaluation (e.g. feedback forms)	
How did the session finish? (decisively, positive or negative note, etc.)	

8) Documentation

Which documents/materials (e.g. DVDs) were referred to or used?	
To what extent was the intervention reliant on these materials?	
Do we have copies of the materials?	

9) Any other observations (continue over)

Preventing Violent Extremism diary sheet

The YJB has recently commissioned the Applied Criminology Centre (ACC) at the University of Huddersfield to carry out a study into violent extremism and the provision of targeted interventions.

Substantial funding has been approved for the YJB to invest in existing youth justice programmes and to establish new initiatives to address the factors that put young people at risk of being drawn into criminality and violence motivated by extremism.

The ACC is carrying out a process and implementation study of the 51 projects which received funding. The research will scope the available literature about radicalisation and violent extremism and describe the range of models used by YOTs to address VE as well as studying the characteristics of young people taking part.

In order to describe and do justice to the work delivered by you and your team, the researchers will be undertaking interviews with YOT staff responsible for delivering the programmes. We also request you to complete this diary sheet as this will help us establish:

- The activities and processes involved in delivering the programme
- The recruitment of young people to the programme
- Additional training received
- Evaluation of the programme
- How the programme might be developed and improved.

How to complete the diary sheets
We appreciate that this task of completing the diary sheets may appear time consuming, but it will greatly help the research team understand exactly how your programme runs. If you have any queries, please contact xxxxx xxxxxx (details below).

1. If this is the first time you have completed this sheet, please detail activity from the start of the project to date.
2. After the first use, please complete the diary sheet every quarter (at the same time as the YJB quarterly returns).
3. Please return the diary sheets to the following address:

xxx

Name of YOT/SE	
Quarter & year:	(e.g. Jan-Mar 09)
	Please provide brief details of activity undertaken under the headings, or write n/a if not applicable.
Planning sessions (materials used, resources needed, number of staff involved)	
Recruitment of young people	
Activity offered e.g. cricket/football/mentoring/group discussion	
Other agencies involved, e.g. voluntary agencies	
How many young people attended?	
Where was project held?	
Background of young people	

Age of young people	
Gender (M/F/mix)	
Ethnicity/ies	
Religion/s	
Details of any monitoring or evaluation undertaken (e.g. pre and post survey, measure of attitude change)	
Delivering sessions (group or individual?)	
Training sessions attended by YOT staff (Who delivered them? Duration? How many attended?)	
Other activities not listed above	

General Comments

Please use the space below to add any other comments relating to the programme

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