



Home Office

# PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP

## Government Consultation

This consultation begins on 15 March 2020

This consultation ends on 23:59 on 10 May 2020

## About this consultation

- To:** This consultation is open to the public and targeted at individuals, businesses and organisations in England and Wales with an interest in the security of places of worship and other faith related locations, including schools and community centres. It focuses on understanding what best practice already exists in protecting places of worship and what more could be done in the future.
- Duration:** From 15 March 2020 to 10 May 2020
- How to respond:** The consultation will be open until 10 May 2020. We will be unable to accept responses after this date.
- Wherever possible, please submit your consultation response online using the link on the consultation webpage:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>. You can also respond by post or request alternative formats such as a word processor version, Welsh, or an accessible version. Please see the 'Responding to this consultation' section of this document for further details.
- NatCen Social Research are responsible for the collation, processing and analysis of this consultation. For details on how and why we use the information you provide in your response, and how it will be looked after, please see the 'Data Information Document'. This document can be found on the consultation webpage:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>
- Response paper:** A summary of the response to this consultation will be published online at  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>.

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# Home Secretary Foreword

The United Kingdom enjoys a proud history of religious freedom. For centuries, followers of almost every faith have arrived on these shores and found a place of safety where they can worship in peace, free from the danger of persecution.

Places of worship have always been associated with sanctuary. Today, they are social centres and community hubs. They can offer food, education and a place to sleep. They are a lifeline for those struggling with life who require emotional support. They are an indispensable part of the lives of millions of people. Yet occasionally, these visible testaments to religious belief become targets for hatred.

Many will remember the first few months of 2019, which saw a string of horrendous attacks on places of worship across the globe. 20 people were murdered in a Catholic cathedral in the Philippines. 51 in a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand. More than 250 in churches in Sri Lanka.

In our own country, the Finsbury Park Mosque attack has been the highest profile of recent years, but across the UK places of worship have been targeted, from arson attacks on mosques to neo-Nazi graffiti daubed on synagogues.

These attacks do not go unchallenged. Alongside our extensive counter-terror policing efforts, local police, community and faith groups work hard to protect places of worship. The Government's Places of Worship Protective Security Funding scheme will provide some £1.6 million for 2019-20 for physical security measures for places of worship. This figure will be doubled to £3.2 million for 2020-21.

At times of international and domestic tension, places of worship and worshippers themselves can often feel vulnerable. People who are visibly identifiable with a particular religion are afraid of being subjected to verbal or even physical assaults. Places of worship are designed to be prominent, but this visibility makes them clear targets to those who wish them harm.

The sad truth is that people coming together for peaceful worship will always be a target for those who use violence to spread hatred and fear. Yet for many faiths, opening their doors and welcoming strangers is a cornerstone of their beliefs, and an expression of humanity that will never be shaken or cowed.

The Government's priority is to preserve open and free worship, offering every protection we can to faith leaders and religious institutions. We have launched this consultation to look at what is being done already, how well it is working, and how we can best enhance that protection in the future.

The United Kingdom, together in all its wonderful diversity, is stronger than any ideology. To be British is to have total freedom of religious expression – and places of worship are the repositories of that freedom. Those who try to sow fear, hatred and division should know that, while our places of worship still flourish, they will never win.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. Patel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Rt Hon Priti Patel MP**

**Home Secretary**

# Introduction

Freedom of worship is a cornerstone of British life. The Government is committed to supporting our faith groups so that they are able to worship free from fear or abuse.

Feedback from faith groups suggests there is growing concern about the security of places of worship including, but not limited to, churches, mosques, gurdwaras, synagogues and temples. This worry has been particularly acute following the horrific terrorist attacks on mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Immediately following these incidents, the then Home Secretary committed to consult on what more can and should be done to protect places of worship. There have been further attacks, including on churches in Sri Lanka and a synagogue in San Diego, making it more urgent to understand faith groups' views on the issue, and what further steps might be taken to improve security. An attempted attack on a synagogue in Halle, Germany in October 2019 during the Jewish holiest day of the year – Yom Kippur – has highlighted the importance of security measures. The locked doors prevented the attacker from entering the building and saved 80 people inside.

In launching this consultation, we recognise that no two religions are the same and the historical, cultural and theological differences also shape attitudes and practices towards security. We have heard clearly from faith groups that there is an important balance to be struck between worshipping openly and without fear and being provided adequate security measures to protect worshippers.

We want to understand how places of worship can be better protected from being targeted because of their faith. This would include both the places of worship themselves as well as people inside and around them. There are of course wider issues about people being targeted because of their religious faith outside places of worship which are considered in detail as part of the Hate Crime Action Plan<sup>1</sup>.

This consultation is open across England and Wales as hate crime is a matter handled by the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It is important to remember that everyone, including government, police, worshippers and the general public, should play a role in the protection of places of worship. Feedback from faith organisations has stressed the importance of the police working closely with the places of worship and other local partners. The Home Office has also created a package of schemes designed to tackle hate crime targeting places of worship. The Places of Worship Protective Security Funding scheme, now in its fourth year, provides physical measures including alarms, lighting CCTV cameras and fences to places of worship. Funding available in year four was doubled from £800,000 to £1.6 million following the Christchurch attack, and will be doubled again to £3.2 million next year (2020/21). The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hate-crime-action-plan-2016>

Home Office will also be launching a new security training programme across all faiths later this year, which will sit alongside the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme. This will ensure best practice in protecting places of worship is shared and implemented.

Jewish groups also receive funding (£14 million in 2018-19) from the government to provide additional security for schools and communal buildings, and a small amount of this is spent on synagogues. This is administrated through CST and it was created to ensure the safety of the Jewish groups from credible terrorist threats. This scheme commenced in 2010 where the Department for Education recognised the financial burden of security on the Jewish groups - the latter of which had already been employing commercial security guards and developing voluntary security structures at schools, and had also pledged to pay for security guarding at Grant Maintained schools.

In 2015, the funding for protective security at Jewish schools and sensitive Jewish locations was increased by the Home Office after several deadly attacks against Jewish locations (including in Toulouse, Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen), a significant increase in antisemitic incidents in the UK, and as a result of the police raising the threat assessment for the UK Jewish groups.

This consultation is aimed at improving these schemes, as well as providing the government with evidence on what more needs to be done to provide greater security for our places of worship – each with their own unique identities and issues. It aims to gather views from diverse members of faith groups including religious leaders, representatives of governing bodies, worshippers and individuals of faith who do not currently use a place of worship. We are keen to hear from underrepresented groups (such as women) as well as draw from new and innovative ideas on how we can understand the problems faced by faith groups and tackle hate crime more effectively.

## Questions on Demographics

These first few questions in the consultation will be about the capacity in which you are responding to the consultation and also about some personal characteristics. This information will be used to support analysis and to help us to understand who is responding to this consultation and the context of their answers.

Individuals will not be identifiable in any analysis produced. Please refer to the 'Data Information Document' for more information on how your data will be used.

**Q1. Please select in what capacity you are responding to this consultation. Please select any that apply.**

**Q2. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us which organisation you are representing.**

**Q3. If you are responding in a professional capacity, which faiths do you engage with as part of this role?**

**Q4. What is your age?**

**Q5. What is your sex?**

**Q6. Which region do you live in?**

**Q7. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?**

**Q8.**

**a. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more?**

**b. (if yes to question 8a) Does your condition or illness do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?**

**Q9. What is your religion?**

For the purpose of this consultation, a place of worship is defined as a location used specifically either temporarily or permanently to perform acts of devotion, prayer, or religious study.

**Q10.**

**a. If you personally attend a place of worship, on average, how often do you attend?**

**b. (if attend a place of worship at question 10a) Which best describes where your place of worship is located?**



- c. (if attend a place of worship at question 10a) **Which region is your place of worship in?**
- d. (if attend a place of worship at question 10a) **Please estimate the number of individuals who attend your place of worship or associated faith community centre in an average week.**

## Section 1: Scale and Prevalence

The questions in this section are designed to understand more about the prevalence, scale and personal experiences related to hate crime. This will allow us to build upon our existing understanding of the problem, and current evidence gaps, as outlined below.

Places of worship are central public locations around which faith groups congregate. It is important that the people who use them feel appropriately equipped to prevent and respond to crimes that might be committed against the institution or its attendees. This includes the appropriate ways to prevent crimes (for example, appropriate security measures), and knowing when to report and who to report to.

The police and Crown Prosecution Service define and record hate crime as “any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.”

### Overall Trends

Using available evidence, we understand the long-term trends around all forms of hate crime are improving – victimisation has fallen, and reporting has risen over the past decade. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated there were an average of 184,000 incidents of hate crime a year between 2015/16 and 2017/18. This estimate is 40% lower than the yearly estimates for 2007/08 to 2008/09.

In 2018/19, there were 103,379 hate crime offences recorded by the police in England and Wales, an increase of 10% compared with the previous year. There were increases in all five centrally monitored strands of police recorded hate crime. Religious hate crimes increased by 3% (to 8,566 offences).

This continues a longer-term trend considered to be driven by general improvements in police recording practices, more victims coming forward to report and better police understanding of hate crime - but also due to spikes in hate crime following incidents like terrorist attacks.

### Prevalence by Victim

In 2018/19, the police recorded a religion of the targeted victim in 87% religious hate crimes. Of these, 47% of religious hate crimes were targeted against Muslims (3,530 offences). A further 18% were targeted against Jews (1,326 offences). In 17% of offences, the religion was recorded as not known.

Based on data from the CSEW for 2015/16 to 2017/18, it is estimated that there were 39,000 incidents of religiously motivated hate crime per year (Appendix Table 3.01). This total was split fairly evenly between personal crimes (23,000 incidents) and household crimes (16,000).

From these combined surveys, it is estimated that 0.1% of adults were victims of a religiously motivated hate crime in the 12 months prior to interview. The 2015/16 to 2017/18 CSEW showed that Muslim adults were the most likely to be a victim of religiously motivated hate crime (0.8%).

Adults with an Asian ethnic group were more likely to be victims of a religiously motivated hate crime than adults of White ethnic group (0.5% and less than 0.1% respectively, 2015/16 to 2017/18 CSEW).

### Locations

Under the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme, the Home Office have previously provided security measures to places of worship only. However, in 2019/20 the scheme has been extended to invite bids from associated faith community centres (this is defined as a community centre run by a place of worship or near a place of worship that is faith based, and where regular worship takes place). This decision was made in recognition of the fact that community centres are also used as places of worship, and these may be equally vulnerable.

During this discussion we need to consider what other places are more vulnerable and may be targeted due to their association with a faith and what level of security and support is desired.

Stakeholders have discussed a wide range of sites with links to faith groups as potentially vulnerable. These include schools, childcare centres, old age homes, sports centres and community centres not used for worship but for wider community engagement. There is a particular concern raised around faith schools being a target due to the large concentrations of vulnerable people at any one time.

However, due to limited research it is difficult to say if organisations such as youth clubs, old age homes and schools are additionally vulnerable if they are linked to a particular faith when compared to secular organisations.

### Outside of buildings

We recognise that it would be impossible to fully protect all worshippers on their way to or from their place of worship. However, there is concern that individuals are more vulnerable at these times, particularly if they are walking in traditional dress or carrying items which makes their religious identity more obvious. This may include Jews walking to and from synagogues on the sabbath when they cannot drive, or Sikh groups transporting holy scriptures from a Gurdwara for special services in people's homes.

## PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION

There are various steps places of worship could already take in protecting their worshippers even when they are not at places of worship, including awareness training and improved engagement with local law enforcement.

Additionally, many faiths may have large celebrations outdoors. Being outside of a place of worship may leave them feeling additionally vulnerable without the protection that a physical structure can provide.

### Reporting of hate crime

It is important for all members of places of worship and the general public to feel empowered and informed enough to report hate crime. It is difficult to develop a full understanding of the nature, distribution and prevalence of hate crime with the limited data available. It is also difficult to establish a clear picture of the motivations for offending. Although the Crime Survey for England and Wales provides us with a high-level understanding of trends in hate crime victimisation, the data it provides does not cover detailed differences in experiences between groups.

Underreporting of hate crime means that police data does not represent the full extent of the problem. More specifically, data does not allow us to easily identify offences specifically aimed at the place of worship itself; for example, criminal damage such as graffiti may be classed as anti-social behaviour – making it difficult to estimate just how vulnerable these locations are.

There are a number of charities that offer specialist support if an individual does not want to report a crime directly to the police. This support may include translation services or even emotional support if there is discomfort in reporting to the police. They can report crimes on an individual's behalf or advise individuals on responding to incidences which may not necessarily meet the police threshold for a criminal offence. In addition, some third-party reporting may gather individual statistics for their particular religion.

More information on how report Hate Crime can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-hate-crime>

### Questions

The following questions ask about perceptions and experiences of security concerns in and around places of worship. **Please note**, we will be unable to act on the reporting of crimes entered in this consultation. We encourage all crimes to be reported to either the local police or a third-party reporting organisation. For more information about how your data will be used, please refer to the 'Data Information Document'.

**Q11.**

**a. Please describe how safe it feels to attend your place of worship.**

For the purpose of this consultation, a place of worship is defined as a location used specifically either temporarily or permanently to perform acts of devotion, prayer, or religious study.

- b. (if option on scale selected at question 11a) **We would like to understand the reasons why people might or might not feel safe when attending their place of worship. Thinking of the answer you gave to the previous question, could you explain why you chose it?**

The next few questions are about hate crimes committed against places of worship.

A Hate Crime is defined as “any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived race; religion; sexual orientation; disability or transgender identity.”

**Please note**, we will be unable to act on the reporting of crimes entered in this consultation. We encourage all crimes to be reported to either the local police or a third-party reporting organisation. For more information about how your data will be used, please refer to the ‘Data Information Document’.

**Q12.**

- a. **Thinking about the place of worship you usually attend, are you aware of any hate crimes that have targeted it in the past five years?**
- b. (if yes to question 12a) **Please tell us more about these incidents, including why you consider them to be hate crimes, what happened, where, when, and any other details you think are relevant.**

**Q13.**

- a. **Thinking about other places of worship that you are familiar with but do not usually attend, are you aware of any hate crimes that have targeted them in the past five years?** This might include places of worship in your local area, ones you have visited in the past, or that friends or family attend.
- b. (if yes to question 13a) **Please tell us more about these incidents, including why you consider them to be hate crimes, what happened, where, when, and any other details you think are relevant.**

**Q14.**

- a. **In your opinion, have patterns of hate crime in and around places of worship changed at all over the past five years?** This could include changes in the frequency or type of hate crime experienced, or changes to the levels of concern about hate crime.
- b. (if yes to question 14a) **Please describe how you think patterns of hate crime have changed and any evidence you have seen of this.** Examples of evidence could include personal experiences, experiences of people you know, information in the media, or research.

## PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION

We would now like you to think about security concerns that may affect faith institutions more broadly.

### Q15.

- a. **In your opinion, are there any faith institutions other than places of worship (for example, community centres, old age homes, schools), where people may feel unsafe?**
- b. (if yes to question 15a) **Please outline these faith institutions and why people might feel unsafe there.**

**Q16. Thinking about any concerns about safety and/or hate crime incidents you may have already discussed, can you describe what impact they have had, if any?** Impacts could include, for example, emotional, financial, or changes in behaviour, and could include impacts on yourself, the place of worship/faith institution, or the wider community.

## Section 2: Faith Specific Needs

The aim of this section and its questions is to provide a full understanding of the different requirements of different faiths and their vulnerabilities. In addition to this we would like to understand who and when people within faith groups feel the most vulnerable. For example, we need to consider other places linked to faith groups which are more vulnerable and may be targeted. We need to look at how to prioritise security and support across these vulnerable locations.

An example of the differences within faiths is that historically, many faith groups have operated an open-door policy – welcoming both practising individuals and newcomers into their place of worship without barriers whilst others provide additional security measures including bag checks, security guards or door access cameras. The UK government continues to reiterate that it is important to strike the right balance between providing security and allowing places of worship to be open to the community as they see fit.

### Needs of Different Faith Groups

In designing any measures for faith groups, we are keen to understand the different needs of different groups more clearly.

The following provides some examples of specific security considerations and concerns we have heard from Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Hindu and Christian faith groups. However, we acknowledge that this will not be exhaustive, and may not hold true for all places of worship within a given faith group. Furthermore, there are several minority faiths who may be vulnerable to hate crime in and around their place of worship, including Jain and Buddhist worshippers whose needs we want to hear about. This consultation aims to encourage respondents to provide evidence of specific faith needs to provide as full a picture as possible.

### Muslim groups

Muslim groups (who make up the largest religious minority with 3 million members in the UK), have described serious concerns about their security. This has been exacerbated by incidents, including the terrorist attack near Finsbury Park mosque in 2017. But police data also shows that Muslims are the most likely to report having been targeted for religiously motivated hate crime (approximately 47% of reported religious hate crimes targeted Muslims in 2018/2019).

As a result, some stakeholders have indicated that certain Muslim places of worship have stepped up security in recent years, with some developing security plans including the use of CCTV, gates, and evacuation and lockdown procedures.

## PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION

There are a number of customs within Muslim faith institutions that need specific consideration in relation to protection of worshippers. Examples that have been raised include:

- the custom that a worshipper will remove their shoes when entering a mosque, with implications for planning evacuations and emergency responses;
- the fact that men and women are often completely separated in different rooms and therefore appropriate security and communications should be dedicated to both areas, and;
- during the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan it is common for people to sleep in the mosque in order to dedicate their times to prayer. This means that the mosque has people in it 24 hours a day, presenting additional security considerations.

### Jewish groups

Jewish groups are notably different in their approach to security compared with other religions. Over several decades Jewish groups and the Community Security Trust (CST) have invested heavily in Jewish communal security, both in terms of money spent and staffing time.

Most synagogues and Jewish communal buildings will consider external security procedures and close their doors at sensitive times, along with ensuring adequate protective security measures such as high fencing, secure gates, and CCTV to prevent intruders gaining access and to deter attacks.

The CST is a charity that leads in securing Jewish groups. They run a voluntary security scheme where individuals are trained to take it upon themselves to provide security for their own local community. They have in excess of 2,500 volunteers who help provide security for approximately 300,000 Jewish people across the UK.

Jewish groups also receive funding (£14 million in 2018-19) from the government to provide additional security for schools and communal buildings, and a small amount of this is spent on synagogues. This is administered through CST and it was created to ensure the safety of the Jewish groups from credible terrorist threats. This scheme commenced in 2010 where the Department for Education recognised the financial burden of security on the Jewish groups - the latter of which had already been employing commercial security guards and developing voluntary security structures at schools, and had also pledged to pay for security guarding at Grant Maintained schools.

In 2015, the funding for protective security at Jewish schools and sensitive Jewish locations was increased by the Home Office after several deadly attacks against Jewish locations (including in Toulouse, Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen), a significant increase in antisemitic incidents in the UK, and as a result of the police raising the threat assessment for the UK Jewish groups.



## Sikh groups

There were approximately 430,000 Sikhs in the UK according to the 2011 census. As part of their worship, they operate community kitchens or “Langars” that provide food for worshippers as well as people from all backgrounds who may wish to partake in it. The Langar is freely provided by volunteers on a daily basis. This means that as part of their worship there are often large numbers of unknown individuals who access and make use of the Gurdwara. Faith representatives have told us they do not believe in turning people away from Gurdwaras unless they are a danger or specifically breaking the rules of Gurdwaras (for example coming in intoxicated or carrying tobacco or alcohol on their person).

Many Gurdwaras operate an open-door policy from just before dawn until late evening, which presents its own challenges. Many already have CCTV and security measures in place and a minority of locations have paid-for or volunteer security guards during very busy periods. In addition, many Gurdwaras also act as community centres with elderly or vulnerable members, often using them during the day. Many Gurdwaras have reported having their windows broken or individuals being racially abused when entering or leaving, which may have significant impact on these vulnerable individuals.

As with all forms of hate crime, we assess that the number of hate crimes against Sikh groups are under reported. However, stakeholders have also indicated concern that victimisation of the Sikh groups may also be less visible due to conflation of faith groups, resulting in Sikhs being the target of anti-Muslim motivated offences. Such offences will not necessarily be recorded as anti-Sikh by the police, making it more difficult to identify victimisation.

## Hindu groups

Hindu groups have described how their security measures not only need to protect the people and buildings but also the deities within them. Due to the belief that the deities reside within their temples, the destruction and damage of their places of worship can have an additional negative impact.

Some Hindu temples have suffered attacks around festival times, particularly Diwali, when it is known that the donation boxes would be full. There have been incidents where deities have been stolen on the basis that they contain precious metals and gems.

Although in such cases offences might be motivated by financial gain rather than hate, these crimes can be particularly distressing to Sikh groups due to the sacred status of the deities.

## Christian groups

In recent years, Daesh and other extremist organisations have been targeting Christians around the world, including the Christians within the Yazidi community. Sri Lanka’s Easter 2019 attacks were aimed at churches when they were at their busiest and therefore most vulnerable.

## PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION

In April 2019, the Bishop of Truro published an interim report on “Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians”. It states that Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world. The report concluded that in 2016, Christians were targeted in 144 countries – a rise from 125 in 2015 according to the Pew Research Centre. This persecution takes many forms and includes forced conversion, assaults, the disappearance of leaders, the bombing of churches and sexual violence, particularly against women.

Notwithstanding the international threat, in speaking with various Christian groups, we have heard that security concerns within the UK remain relatively small. We have heard that the larger cathedrals have security plans but that the most common concerns of smaller churches are theft and anti-social behaviour.

### Needs of Individuals in Faith Groups

From engagement with faith groups, we understand that different members often have specific needs. This might be because they are present at different times of day or use different parts of the institution. Other considerations include personal factors such as age, gender, health or language.

Some of these factors can mean that steps might need to be taken within faith institutions to ensure these groups are suitably protected. Examples include ensuring security measures cover appropriate hours and all vulnerable areas, that information is presented in an accessible format, and all individuals are able to exit safely and quickly.

If the place of worship is mainly used by older people, then additional support may be needed to address mobility issues. Separately, the presence of security guards may present additional issues; for example, preventing people with certain mental illnesses from having the confidence to enter a place of worship for fear of being questioned.

Similarly, women may have additional concerns for security than their male counterparts. Many religions have men and women sit separately in the places of worship, whether that be in a separate room or on opposite sides of the same room. In some groups there may also be separate social activities for women at times outside regular working hours for the place of worship. Women may also be more likely to access community centres reasons other than worship, for example for child centres and nurseries.

We have heard concerns from some groups that women’s areas may not always be as well protected as the men’s. Common problems often include inadequate night-time lighting and quick access to emergency exits or escape routes, particularly if they are in separate rooms or upstairs. Within the Muslim groups it has also been flagged that women may be more commonly targeted by hate crime offenders due to their faith being visible through their dress, adding to their sense of vulnerability.

## Questions

The aim of this section is to understand specific factors that need to be considered when addressing security needs in and around places of worship for different faith groups. In addition to this, we would like to understand which groups within a faith group might feel most vulnerable, and why.

### Q17.

- a. **Are there any faith specific needs you are aware of that need to be considered when protecting places of worship?** These may include religious or cultural practices or certain physical aspects for the places of worship such as removing shoes, multiple access points for worshippers, or separate spaces for men and women.
- b. (if option on scale selected at question 17a) **Please tell us more about the faith specific needs that should be considered when protecting places of worship.**

Certain groups within a faith might be more vulnerable than others when in and around a place of worship. This may include those who have difficulty accessing facilities or different parts of the building or who may be a more visible target for hate crime.

**Q18. Below are a number of groups which some people might consider to be more vulnerable than others when in or around their place of worship. Thinking about these groups within a faith group, please indicate how vulnerable you think each group is.** This could be within your own faith group or one you are familiar with.

- Women
- Men
- Older people
- Religious/faith leaders
- People with physical or mental health conditions or illnesses
- Minority gender identity or sexual orientation groups
- Ethnic minority groups

**Q19. Are there any other groups you think are vulnerable? Please list these groups.**

**Q20. If you think some groups are more vulnerable than others, please explain why you think they are particularly vulnerable and any specific needs they have. If your response relates to a specific faith group, please make it clear which faith you are referring to.**

## Section 3: Training and Sharing of Best Practice

Through this consultation we welcome views on how best to deliver security training, including ensuring access to guidance is consistent and to an appropriate standard. In addition, we are keen to hear views from faith groups on the most effective way to share their own knowledge and good practice, as well as learn from the experiences of others.

There are currently a number of organisations that conduct some form of security training. For example, the CST provides training not just for Jewish groups but has also provided talks to representatives of over 500 places of worship and have also supported other groups to develop training for their own faith groups. Earlier this year, the Home Office supported Faith Associates to run 22 security training workshops for Muslim groups prior to, and during the Ramadan period. This was in response to heightened anxieties for Muslims following Christchurch. Strengthening Faith Institutions, Tell MAMA and Faith in Action also hold training sessions covering mainly Muslim, Hindu and Sikh groups.

Following the attacks in Christchurch and Sri Lanka, feedback from some faith groups has suggested they have experienced heightened awareness of security issues and a lack of confidence, knowledge and experience to know who to turn to for advice. Private security firms can provide such advice; however, this can present complications such as prohibitive costs for faith institutions and a lack of consistency in quality and coverage of advice provided.

In March 2019, the former Home Secretary announced that the Home Office would be launching a new £5 million fund (over three years) for security training across all faiths. We welcome input on new or alternative models for delivering advice, completing site assessments, and sharing good practice between organisations. This could range from highly localised models, such as establishing a network of 'security champions' within faith groups, or more traditional and centralised approaches, such as providing training through a single organisation.

Engagement with stakeholders has indicated that some faith groups have developed systems of communication to enable them to share important information quickly, such as informing each other of security incidents. For example, many organisations have set up their own informal networks, including social media groups between leaders of different places of worship within the same faith and local area. Such systems have potential to be very valuable, such as giving neighbouring places of worship more advanced notice to activate emergency plans when there is a nearby incident. Networks may also have potential to facilitate sharing of best practice. We are keen to understand how such networks could be best used.

## Communication and training for worshippers

Faith leaders need to be aware of security and take responsibility for the security and safety of their members, including legal obligation to ensure the safety of individuals within their premises. However, it is also important for individuals within the faith groups to understand the role they too play in ensuring places of worship and their worshippers are safe and secure. Improved security awareness among attendees may not only help protect sites when in use, but also better equip members to ensure their safety in day to day life outside of the institution.

There are a number of organisations willing to provide training and we consider this to be positive, However, we recognise that any training system could not be directly emulated across different faiths, and each places of worship would need to take their own circumstances into consideration. In addition, there are a number of issues that need to be considered. For example, we have heard questions raised about whether resources are being directed to the most vulnerable, whether training may be inconsistent between organisations, and concerns that knowledge sharing amongst them is limited.

Furthermore, whilst training on personal security initially seems popular, we have heard concerns regarding the need to find appropriate delivery agents capable of gaining buy-in from senior leaders across any faith group. There is also concern that in the absence of capacity to provide more detailed and regular training and support to implement learning, the long-term benefits of training might be limited. Therefore, we are interested in understanding the value of in-depth and longer-term training programmes to help meet some of the issues outlined.

Training can be delivered using many different models, ranging from centralised workshop delivery to 'train a trainer' or remote learning models, all with varying advantages and disadvantages. For example, centrally delivered, face to face workshops can ensure consistency of quality and content, whilst maintaining opportunities to respond to specific questions and concerns. However, this is resource intensive, can be sensitive to delays if demand exceeds capacity, and relies on consistent engagement with potential implications for reach. On the other hand, provision of learning materials to support faith leaders in training their faith groups can be cost effective, quick, and benefit from building on trust in faith representatives, but may lead to inconsistency both in uptake and quality of delivery.

As discussed in the previous section, across all options there may be additional considerations for certain members of the faith groups. Examples include providing additional learning support for those who do not speak English as a first language in order to improve community cohesion, and ensuring information is easy to understand for children.

## Questions

Many places of worship and wider faith institutions take steps to protect their premises and the people who use it. For example, this may include organisations providing advice or training, knowledge sharing between institutions, installation of security measures, and incident reporting processes. In addition, there are a number of initiatives run by central government, including the Places of Worship Security Scheme delivered to reduce vulnerability to hate crime, and broader initiatives to reduce terrorist threats to crowded places (for example, 'Action Counters Terrorism' (ACT) advice and e-learning, and the 'Run, Hide, Tell' campaign).

### Q21.

- a. **Thinking about the last five years, are you aware of any steps taken or activities organised with the aim of protecting your place of worship, or a place of worship you are familiar with, and the people who use it?** This may include specific training, advice, or installation of physical safety and security measures.
- b. (if yes to question 21a) **Please outline what these steps or activities were, and any details on why they were delivered, how, and by whom.**
- c. (if yes to question 21a) **Were any of these steps or activities delivered with the aim of better protecting specific groups within the faith groups?**  
Examples might include tailored training for children or the elderly, or security lighting for specific entrances.
- d. (if yes to question 21c) **Please outline who these steps or activities were for, what they involved, and any further details on why they were delivered, how, and by whom.**

**Q22. What else would you like to see in the future for places of worship to address security concerns and protect the people who use them?** For example, this may include organisations providing advice or training, knowledge sharing between institutions, installation of physical security measures, and incident reporting processes. We are interested in any ideas you may have. Please include as much detail as possible on what, who and how this would be delivered.

**Q23. Thinking about current initiatives and options for future provision, are there any types of support or activities that you think are not needed or would be unhelpful in addressing security concerns and protecting places of worship and the people who use them? Please explain what and why.**

**Q24. Thinking about the needs of any vulnerable groups referred to earlier in the consultation (for example, women, men, children, elderly), what more could be done to reduce their vulnerability and meet their specific needs?** For example, this may include tailored training, advice, or facilities. We are interested in any ideas you may have. Please include as much detail as possible.



## Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities

In this section we aim to consider who and what are responsibility for the safety of places of worship and the worshippers whose utilise them. When discussing faith security, it is important to bear in mind that everyone has their part to playing in keeping worshippers safe. There are numerous players involved in this process, ranging from institutions themselves to central government, local authorities, police, local and national charities, places of worship boards, religious leaders and individual worshippers, as well as the general public.

The relationship between the police and the community is a vital one for ensuring places of worship remain safe. This relationship has been limited in some faith groups. However, feedback from places of worship has indicated that a positive relationship can make a substantial difference. For example, strong relationships can help the police understand sensitive occasions when their presence is more likely to be required, such as during important holidays when more worshippers are around. In addition, the relationship may also provide the place of worship with the knowledge and the confidence to report crimes which enables the police and the local and national governments to better allocate resources.

The government already provides a significant amount of support for places of worship. This includes the schemes outlined in the introduction. The government also ensure legislation and policy are in place to protect people of faith, including the Equalities Act 2010 which sets out people's rights to not be discriminated against under seven protected characteristics including faith and belief (or no faith or belief).

### Questions

Many institutions have a role to play in protecting places of worship and faith institutions, and need to work together to ensure these premises and those who use them are safe.

**Q25. In your opinion, what do you think the roles of the following organisations should be? Please consider what you think these institutions currently do well and what they could do differently.**

- Places of worship and other faith institutions or networks
- Central Government, including the Home Office and/or the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Charities, police, local government, councils and other local organisations

## Section 5: Other Means to Improve Security

We are keen that this consultation gathers wide ranging views from faith groups and their representatives on what more could be done to improve security in and around faith institutions. In this final part of the consultation, respondents are asked to include any innovative proposals to improve security of faith institutions and their worshippers that have not already been expressed.

### Questions

**Q26. Please provide any additional ideas or comments on how to further protect places of worship and faith institutions and any specific needs faith groups may have.**



# Responding to this Consultation

The consultation will be open until 23:59 on 10 May 2020. We will be unable to accept responses after this date.

The consultation is being carried out by NatCen Social Research, on behalf of the Home Office. Responding to the consultation is entirely voluntary.

## Responding online

You can respond to this consultation online using the link to our online questionnaire available on the consultation webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>.

## Alternative ways to respond

Wherever possible, please submit your consultation response online using the link provided. If for exceptional reasons you are unable to use the online questionnaire, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible, you can download the 'Protecting Places of Worship Consultation Questionnaire' PDF document from the consultation webpage and post your written response to the following address:

Please send your response by 10 May 2020 to:

FAO Jeffrey DeMarco  
National Centre for Social Research  
35 Northampton Square  
London  
EC1V 0AX

Please contact the Tackling Hate Crime Team if you require further information or other formats of the questionnaire, such as a word processor version or Welsh, or to request an accessible version.

Faith Security Consultation, Tackling Hate Crime Team  
5th floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

**Email:** [faithsecurity.consultation@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:faithsecurity.consultation@homeoffice.gov.uk)

## How we will use the information you provide

Summary analysis will be published and shared with stakeholders. Individuals will not be identifiable in this analysis. For details on how and why we use the information you provide in your response, and how it will be looked after, please see the 'Data Information

## PROTECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION

Document'. This document can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>.

### Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Home Office using the above email or postal address.

### Publication of response

A paper summarising the response to this consultation will be published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protecting-places-of-worship-consultation>.



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