



# Prevention of Extremism and Radicalisation

## Referral Process

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Contact: Paul Kinsella, [pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk)

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## 1. Introduction

The UK faces a range of terrorist threats. The most serious currently is from ISIS, the Islamic State extremists behind the creation of a modern caliphate, their affiliates and like-minded organisations. However, terrorists associated with the extreme right also pose an increasing threat to our safety and security. All terrorist groups which seek to radicalise and recruit people to their cause pose a threat: whilst the percentage of people who are prepared to actively support violent extremism in the UK is very small, it still poses a threat to our sense of safety, well-being and damages cohesion.

The extent of the issue in the UK is demonstrated by the following national statistics;

In the year ending 31 March 2019, a total of 5,738 individuals were referred to Prevent. This is the lowest number of referrals within a year since the last time that comparable data was available (year ending March 2016, previous low of 6,093 in the year ending March 2017).

The Education sector accounted for the highest number of referrals (1,887; 33%).

As in previous years, most individuals referred were male (4,991; 87%), and the majority of referrals were for people aged 20 years or under (3,343; 58%).

The number of individuals discussed at a Channel panel (1,320) and adopted as a Channel case (561) were the highest recorded compared with previous years (previous high for discussed at panel, 1,306 in the year ending March 2018;

for Channel cases, 378 in years ending March 2016 and 2018).

Of the 561 Channel cases, the most common were cases referred because of concerns about right-wing radicalisation (254; 45%), followed by Islamist radicalisation (210; 37%).

## 2. The National Prevent Strategy and the Prevent and Channel Duties

2.1 The National Prevent Strategy (Updated April 2019), which is driven by section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is part of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy called CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent Strategy within CONTEST is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent is one of the four elements of ['CONTEST', the government's counter-terrorism strategy](#). These are:

- **Pursue** is about detecting and disrupting threats of terrorism. It is targeted at those who have committed or who are planning to commit a crime
- **Protect** is concerned with strengthening the country's infrastructure from an attack
- **Prepare** focuses on areas of the infrastructure where an attack cannot be stopped and the aim is to reduce the impact of an attack by preparing to respond effectively
- **Prevent** is an early intervention process and operates in the "pre-criminal space" It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The basis of Prevent is simple: it is about keeping our communities safe from extremists. It does not carry a pre-conceived idea of who the extremists are, or their message. However it has to be responsive to the prevailing national and international situation.

2.2 The Prevent Duty: Section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The duty does not confer new functions on any specified authority. The term "due regard" means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

2.3 The Channel Duty: Sections 36-41 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 sets out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. In England and Wales this duty is

discharged by the Channel programme. As part of this duty, these specified authorities and other key partners protect individuals by adopting a multi-agency approach (the Channel Panel) which will:

- a. identify individuals at risk;
  - b. assess the nature and extent of that risk;
- and
- c. Develop the most appropriate support plan for individuals concerned.

Source: [Channel Duty Guidance April 2015.pdf](#)

### 3. Worcestershire's Prevent Aim and Objectives

*Our aim is to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and to support local communities and institutions to challenge and reject the message of extremism*

Worcestershire is judged to be at low risk, but it is important not to be complacent – the West Midlands which borders us is second in risk to London and our communities live and work across our political and geographic boundaries.

Maintaining a level of trust between public sector organisations and communities is a significant factor in understanding the issues facing those communities. Together we need to promote strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

Terrorism is a low threat in Worcestershire. The highest risk is from 'lone actors', who are particularly difficult to both detect and identify. In such cases, the internet and social media have proven to be powerful tools for extremists to radicalise individuals. There is a particular concern that young people may be vulnerable to a range of risks as they pass through adolescence and may be influenced by older people or via the internet, including ideas and issues around their identity. Working with schools and colleges on the Prevent agenda will therefore be particularly important.

#### 3.1 Our Objectives

Our objectives are:

- Embedding Prevent into the mainstream by supporting key services and institutions and
- Building long term resilience within communities.

## 4. Individual Concerns (The Channel Duty)

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard people from violent extremism and/or terrorism. Channel works in a similar way to other safeguarding partnerships, such as case conferences for children in need.

Channel is a pre-criminal process designed to support individuals at the earliest possible opportunity, before they become involved in illegal activity. It is a voluntary process allowing the individual to withdraw from the programme at any time.

The Worcestershire Channel Panel completed a self-assessment checklist in 2021 which contributed to the submission, to the Home Office, of an Annual Assurance Statement signed off by the CEO of WCC.

### 4.1 Who is Channel for?

Channel is aimed at individuals of any age at risk of exploitation by extremist or terrorist ideologues. Early intervention can prevent individuals being drawn into terrorist-related activity in a similar way to preventing them from getting involved in criminal activity such as drugs, knives or gangs.

Involvement in the Channel programme is both voluntary and confidential. Individuals may opt out of the intervention process should they wish to. If the individual receives support through Channel, it will not give them a criminal record.

### 4.2 Referrals

Referrals to Channel come from a wide range of partners including education, health, youth offending teams and social services through the usual adult or children's safeguarding process. They can also come from partner agencies and members of the public.

When referral forms are completed, they are passed directly to the police for deconfliction (Is the referral malicious, misguided or misinformed?) and, if appropriate,

referred for action to the Channel Panel meeting. This referral will, in the first instance, consist of a request (from W Mercia Police) that partners share any information about the individual that is relevant.

The Channel Panel is chaired by a WCC Advanced Public Health Practitioner and brings together a range of multi-agency partners to collectively assess the risks in relation to an individual and decide whether a support package is needed. The panel may include statutory and non-statutory partners, as well as lead safeguarding professionals.

If the panel feels that an individual who has been referred would benefit from support, a bespoke package of support will be tailored for that individual based on their particular needs and circumstances.

Participation in Channel is entirely voluntary, and a person will always be informed first if it is felt that they would benefit from Channel support. For children, parental consent is required before Channel support can be put in place. The process of obtaining consent is managed carefully by the Channel Panel.

### 4.3 What do I do if I have concerns?

#### Advice for employees of WCC

You may have attended the WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) Training, have completed the mandatory internal e-learning package:

<https://worcestershire.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=388>

or simply be concerned about how an individual is behaving.

In the first instance it is sensible, where possible, to triangulate your concerns by discussing with a colleague the behaviours you may be seeing.

If these continue to concern you, you should raise the concerns with your directorate's Prevent Lead. They can further consider the individual's behaviours and, if appropriate, assist you to complete a Prevent referral using the form on the same web page as this document.

The form, when completed, should be e-mailed to:

[ctu\\_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk](mailto:ctu_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk)

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If the referral is deemed suitable it will be circulated for information gathering and added to the agenda of the next channel meeting. If not, it may be referred back into the normal safeguarding process or treated as a non-safeguarding issue.

It should be noted that, any mainstream safeguarding concerns should be notified by the usual routes as a safeguarding referral.

### Advice for employees of other agencies

You may have attended the WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) Training, have completed the Home Office e-learning package:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

or simply be concerned about how an individual is behaving.

In the first instance it is sensible, where possible, to triangulate your concerns by discussing with a colleague the behaviours you may be seeing.

If these continue to concern you, you should raise the concerns with your organisation's Prevent Lead (usually the safeguarding lead). They can further consider the individual's behaviours and, if appropriate, assist you to complete a safeguarding referral, either through your existing referral pathway, or directly to the police at [ctu\\_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk](mailto:ctu_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk)

(See diagram at Appendix)

It should be noted that, any mainstream safeguarding concerns should be notified by the usual routes as a safeguarding referral.

### 4.4 What happens then?

Once a referral is made, the Prevent Team at West Mercia Police share it with partners to understand what each agency may know about the individual. These all search their records for further triangulation to determine whether the individual has raised any concerns in their own organisations.

The individual is then discussed at the next Channel Panel for consideration whether they are appropriate for intervention.

Channel interventions are delivered through local partners and specialist agencies. The

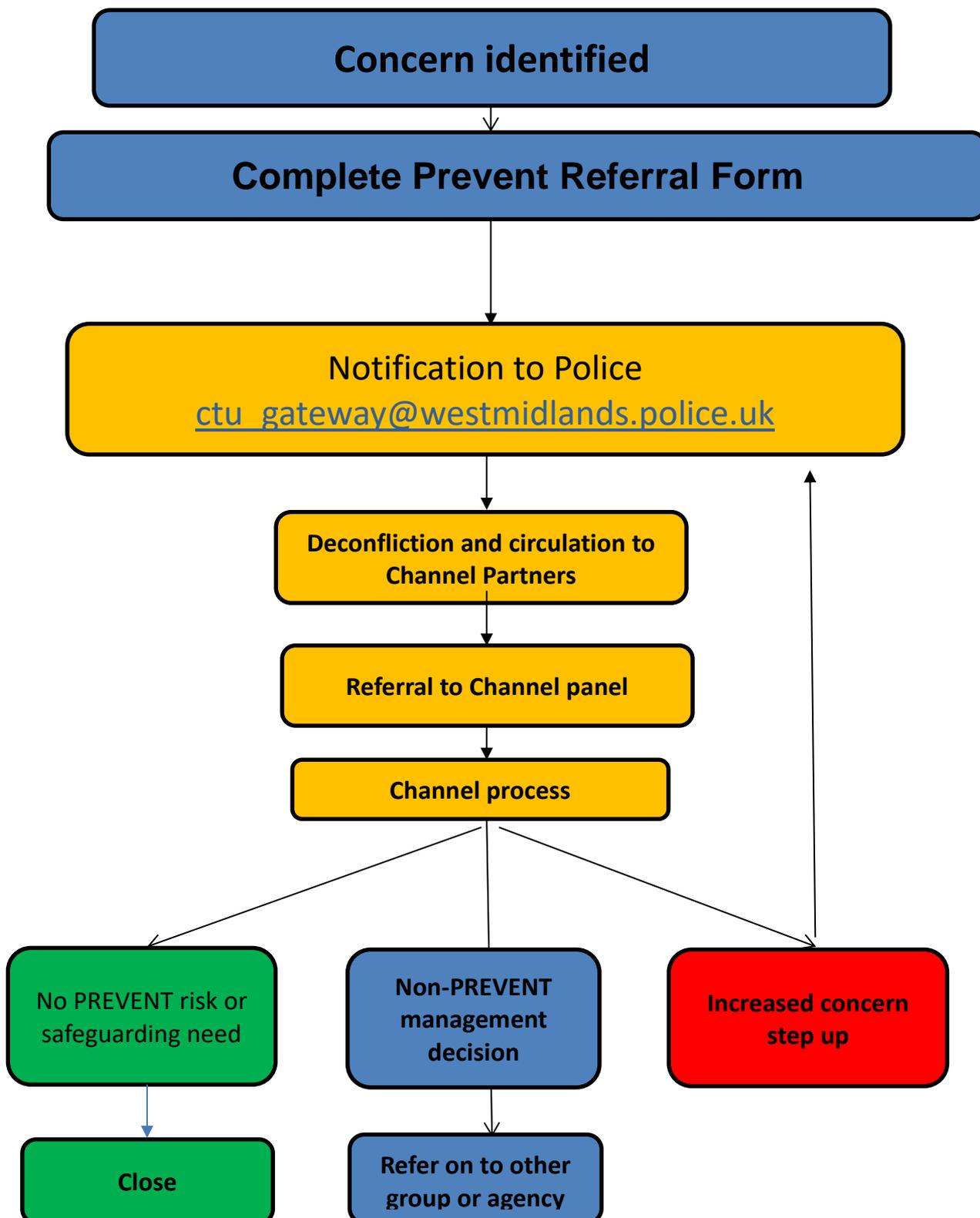
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support packages are designed to reduce a person’s vulnerabilities.

For example, support packages can focus on health, education, employment or housing, as well as putting in place specialist mentoring or faith guidance and broader diversionary activities such as sport.

The referrer will be updated as to the outcome of any process.

# Appendix: Graphic description of the process:



For further information contact the author of this briefing:  
[pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk)