

Government sets out plans to protect public places from terrorist attacks

The government has today (26 February) set out its proposals on a new Protect Duty; a legal requirement for public places to ensure preparedness for and protection from terrorist attacks.

The Protect Duty delivers on a manifesto commitment to improve the safety and security of public venues and spaces, drawing on lessons learned from previous terrorist incidents.

The proposals have been championed by victims' groups, including the Martyn's Law campaign which was established by Figen Murray, who tragically lost her son, Martyn, in the Manchester Arena attack in 2017.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I have heard first hand from those who have sadly lost loved ones in horrific terror attacks, and thank them for their tireless work to ensure others do not share their tragedy.

This Government has already taken significant steps to amend our powers and strengthen the tools for dealing with the developing terrorist threats we face, and we will always take the strongest possible action to protect our national security.

That is why we want all organisations responsible for public venues and spaces to put public safety and security first.

Figen Murray, the mother of Martyn Hett, one of the 22 victims of the Manchester Arena attack said:

Today is a major stride towards making our country safer from terror attacks. I want to thank the government for taking this step. To make Martyn's Law a reality is of huge relief and I look forward to making a lasting difference with all of those who have supported it.

A spokesperson on behalf of the Counter Terrorism Policing Business Independent Advisory Group and Counter Terrorism Business Information Exchange said:

The Counter Terrorism Policing Business Independent Advisory Group and Counter Terrorism Business Information Exchange welcome this consultation initiative.

It is in the public interest for the Government and business to work together to ensure people are as protected as possible when visiting venues, retail areas and other publicly accessible spaces. This initiative gives us an opportunity to make sure that we are doing all we can to keep people safe.

We look forward to collaborating with the Government, in order to provide the public with the best possible protection against those who wish us harm.

The consultation will run for 18 weeks and will seek the views on:

- who the Duty should apply to;
- what it will require stakeholders to do;
- how compliance should work; and
- how the Government can support those in scope.

Whilst subject to consultation, the intention is that the Duty would apply to specified owners and operators of public venues, large organisations and those responsible for public spaces.

It would require those in scope to consider terrorist threats, and consider and implement appropriate and proportionate protective security and organisational preparedness measures.

The government also continues to engage with a range of businesses and industries to encourage them to adopt best practice, as well as working alongside Counter Terrorism Police and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) to extend the reach of appropriate advice, guidance and training across all sectors.

View [the full consultation](#).