

News story: Extremism Commissioner confirms plans for 2018

Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Sara Khan, has today (15 March) set out her plans to engage and consult, produce a comprehensive study and make recommendations to government.

The government has said countering extremism is one of the most significant and important challenges of our generation.

The move follows the formal launch of the Commission after [the Home Office published a charter](#) confirming how the government will work with the independent Commission, and laid a written ministerial statement.

Sara will spend the coming weeks sharing her plans with activists and frontline workers, community leaders and extremism experts in a series of meetings, visits and roundtables.

Commission plan for 2018:

- The Commission will be seeking input to its work from the full range of voices required to tackle a problem that affects so much of our society. This will include public consultation, discussions with government bodies, and insights from experts, academics and think tanks. The Commission will publish a regular update which will summarise its engagement activity.
- The Commission will produce a comprehensive study that exposes the scale and consequences of extremism in this country alongside the great work already being done to tackle it.
- The Commission will challenge the whole of society on what more can be done, and publish recommendations to the Home Secretary by the end of its first year on what the future structure and priorities of the Commission should be.

Sara has described 2018 as a 'watershed moment for extremism'.

Her comments follow a speech by outgoing Assistant Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police Mark Rowley in which he spelt out the "chronic threat" of extremist propaganda, which reaches "into our communities through sophisticated propaganda and subversive strategies creating and exploiting vulnerabilities that can ultimately lead to acts of violence and terrorism".

Sara's statement also reflects the impact of high profile cases, such as the trial of Finsbury Park attacker Darren Osborne and Ripple Road mosque

'teacher' Umar Haque, which demonstrate the frightening reach of extremist propaganda.

In his sentencing, the judge remarked that Osborne was rapidly radicalised over the internet, encountering and consuming material from those determined to spread hatred of Muslims. Umar Haque attempted to radicalise children at Ripple Road mosque by showing students videos of beheadings.

Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism Sara Khan said:

Extremism is a serious threat to all our communities and it requires a whole society response.

There are individuals and groups who have a bigoted 'us versus them' vision for this country. They pump out poisonous propaganda to turn communities against each other. They exploit grievances to promote isolation, provoke discrimination and sow the seeds of violence. They turn people away from the institutions set up to protect them.

This is a watershed moment for extremism. We have seen in recent high profile cases the frightening reach and influence of extremists and their propaganda. But at the same up and down the country brave individuals and groups are speaking out and fighting back.

I have been promoting human rights and exposing extremists for a decade. As activists will tell you, putting your head above the parapet to challenge extremism is often difficult and can be intimidating. But when we come together as diverse groups united by a commitment to tolerance and community we are stronger. That is my vision for this Commission.

On 24 January the Home Secretary revealed that Sara had been selected to lead the Commission for Countering Extremism.

This followed a commitment in the Queen's Speech last year to establish a commission "to support the government in stamping out extremist ideology in all its forms, both across society and on the internet, so it is denied a safe space to spread."