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## [Government proposes duty to protect public spaces from terror](#)

Security Minister James Brokenshire today (Monday 24 February 2019) announced plans to introduce a law which will require owners and operators of public spaces and venues to put in place measures to keep the public safe from a terrorist attack.

Delivering on the manifesto commitment to improve the safety and security of public venues and spaces, the new 'Protect Duty' will reflect lessons learned following the terrorist attacks in 2017, as well as more recent attacks. The proposals also follow discussions with victims' groups such as the Martyn's Law campaign, established by Figen Murray whose son was killed in the Manchester Arena attack.

The new law, to be consulted on in the spring, would require venue operators to consider the risk of a terrorist attack and take proportionate and reasonable measures to prepare for and protect the public from such an attack.

This could include increased physical security, having training in place, incident response plans and exercises for staff on what to do during an attack.

Security Minister James Brokenshire said:

Our first priority is keeping the public safe and preventing more families from suffering the heartbreak of losing a loved one.

The devastating attacks in 2017, and more recently at Fishmongers' Hall and Streatham, are stark reminders of the current threat we face. We are in complete agreement with campaigners such as Figen Murray on the importance of venues and public spaces having effective and proportionate protective security and preparedness measures to keep people safe.

Of course, it is important that this new law is proportionate. This public consultation will ensure we put in place a law that will help protect the public while not putting undue pressure on businesses.

Graham Williams, Chairman of industry body Revo's Safety and Security Committee said:

As owners of retail spaces, we take our responsibility for ensuring the safety of our customers and retailers very seriously and therefore welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Home Office on this initiative.

We look forward to contributing to this consultation on behalf of our industry.

Matt Maer, Director, Security and Resilience, Canary Wharf Group, said:

This legislation has the potential to make a significant impact on public security, improving the situation for people as they go about their daily lives.

Canary Wharf Group supports this initiative and look forward to assisting where we can in shaping this work.

The public consultation will be launched in spring and will seek views from a broad range of organisations including business, public authorities, the security industry and campaign groups to ensure the proposals remain proportionate for publicly accessible spaces and venues across the country.

The consultation will ask for views from business and the public sector on the proportionality, scope of the duty, and how it should be enforced.

The government also continues to engage with a range of organisations, including business and industry 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 advice, guidance and training across all sectors.

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## Longer trains and more seats for passengers across the Midlands

- £2.5 million new government funding agreed to deliver improvements for CrossCountry passengers
- longer trains will add more than 20,000 extra seats each week from May 2021 to support passengers
- investment will also expand seat and bike reservation service

Thousands of passengers will benefit from improvements on CrossCountry trains including over 20,000 extra seats a week, thanks to a £2.5 million government investment announced by the Rail Minister today (24 February 2020).

Passengers travelling from Birmingham to Nottingham, Leicester and Cardiff will start to see longer trains on some services from May 2020 delivering more than 5,000 more seats each week. A further 15,000 seats per week are planned to be in place from mid-2021, including to and from Cambridge and Stansted Airport to support the region's commuters, businesses and leisure travellers.

More customers are set to benefit as the Department for Transport (DfT) and CrossCountry finalise plans to deliver thousands more seats on long distance routes each week from December 2020. Longer trains will operate on some services on Mondays to Thursdays on the routes from Scotland, the North East and Manchester to the South West and the South Coast.

The £2.5 million new government funding was agreed by the DfT and CrossCountry to help tackle overcrowding. Work is underway on further improvements in the years to come when more rolling stock will be available, especially for longer distance routes that Cross Country serves.

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris, said:

Investing in transport is essential to levelling up the country, as we look to modernise our rail network and restructure the industry to put passengers at the heart of the railway.

But we want to fund benefits to address pressing needs and improve journeys for passengers in the short-term, as well as in the future.

More seats mean more people can travel, increasing access to opportunities and better connecting our regions.

Tom Joyner, CrossCountry's Managing Director, said:

We are delighted to now be able to get on and deliver these benefits for our customers, with improvements to the journey experience and 3 new community groups to bring our train services closer to the places we serve.

Most importantly, many of our trains have become increasingly busy as more and more people choose rail for their journeys.

This delivers the biggest increase in seats for our services in more than 13 years, helping customers enjoy a relaxing and comfortable journey every day. These improvements will deliver an immediate boost for rail users in the Midlands, with the promise of even more to come on other routes in the near future.

Investment will also be made to expand CrossCountry's seat reservation service to allow passengers to reserve a seat on most services to ensure they can travel in comfort for their journey, as well as to reserve a space for their bike. The investment will also improve communication and signage, pointing to places where luggage can be stored during a journey, both when travelling and as they board the train.

Three recently established Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) are also being supported. These are groups of committed and dedicated people who work with the rail industry and local authorities to promote the line and improve stations, train services, bus links and access. The CRPs for Worcestershire, Heart of England and Bolton will receive financial support to deliver initiatives to benefit local communities, stations and train services.

The funding from the government follows an agreement to extend the CrossCountry franchise last summer to October 2020.

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## [CMO for England announces four new cases of novel coronavirus](#)



Four further patients in England have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing

the total number of cases in the UK to thirteen.

The virus was passed on in the Diamond Princess cruise ship and the patients are being transferred from Arrowe Park to specialist NHS infection centres.

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## [PM unveils plans to mark 75 years since VE Day](#)

- Hundreds of veterans will take part in commemorations across the UK to mark 75 years since VE Day
- Churchill's famous victory speech will be broadcast across the country
- The Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight will perform a fly past over Buckingham Palace
- Veterans encouraged to register for The Royal British Legion's programme of events

On 8 May a day-long series of events will take place across the UK to commemorate the Allied Victory in Europe and give thanks to the Second World War generation and the sacrifices they made securing peace across the continent.

The Prime Minister is also backing The Royal British Legion's search for those from the Second World War generation who will take centre stage at the commemorations in London, culminating in a procession down the Mall. Applications are now open for veterans from the UK, Allied Forces and the Commonwealth, descendants, child evacuees and all those who contributed to the war effort – including those who served on the Home Front and in the emergency services – to take part in the events that will celebrate and give thanks for their role.

Other events include a Service of Remembrance and parade in Cardiff, a Veterans' parade and concert in Edinburgh, and the opportunity for street parties to take place in cities, towns and villages across the country, recreating the national outpouring of thanksgiving that took place 75 years ago.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The 75th anniversary of VE Day marks a historic moment for our great country to come together and reflect on the heroes of the Second World War.

No one will ever forget what they sacrificed in defending our

freedom and securing peace across Europe, and we will continue to honour those who contributed at home and abroad.

This programme of events gives the whole nation a chance to thank all those involved for everything they did – both for those alive today, and for future generations.

And by commemorating these moments, we can remember and remind ourselves of the fragility of peace, and the need for us all to collectively uphold this.

Commemorations will begin at Westminster Abbey with a Service of Thanksgiving attended by hundreds of veterans and representatives of the Second World War generation.

At 3pm, an extract from Sir Winston Churchill's victory speech will be broadcast in public spaces across the UK recreating the iconic moment the Prime Minister announced the end of the war. This will be part of Imperial War Museums' Voices of War, which includes a series of personal testimonies of people who experienced VE Day taken from the museums' sound archive.

Second World War veterans and individuals that contributed to the war effort will then take part in a procession down the Mall. Events will conclude in a fly past that will include the Red Arrows and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and other modern aircraft, followed by a tea party for veterans in St James's Park.

Throughout the weekend, part of St James's Park will be turned into 'Victory Park' where veterans and the public can experience themed events based on life in the UK during the Second World War. A nearby 'Military Village,' also situated in St James's Park, will provide an opportunity for the public to meet serving military personnel who will be there with a display of modern military equipment.

Culture Secretary [Oliver Dowden](#) said:

The VE Day anniversary events will allow the nation to come together and celebrate the greatest generation which saved our nation from tyranny.

Our nationwide programme will tell the stories of those who served in the Second World War at home and abroad, and honour their memories as we reflect on 75 years since the Allies restored peace in Europe.

Defence Secretary [Ben Wallace](#) said:

Members of the Armed Forces will be honoured to lead the nation in marking the 75th anniversary of the Victory in Europe in May. I

hope as many veterans as possible can take their rightful place at the heart of the commemorations in London. We will always remember the selflessness and sacrifice of those who served at home and overseas, both in Europe and further afield, and pay our respects to those who gave their lives. The anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day this year will commemorate the end of the war and remind us of the heavy price paid for peace.

Catherine Davies, Head of Remembrance for The Royal British Legion said:

To mark the anniversary of VE Day this year, the Legion is calling on communities across the UK to come together to honour the Second World War generation and recognise the scale of service and sacrifice made by those both at home and overseas.

We are inviting all those who contributed to victory in Europe who wish to attend these special commemorations to enter the ballot. In addition to events taking place in London it is equally as important for communities of all types across the UK to come together locally and put our Second World War generation at the heart of your events in recognition of their incredible achievements.

Last year the government announced the early May Bank Holiday would be moved to Friday 8 May so the public can take part in the nationwide commemorations and recreate the moment 75 years ago when the nation stopped to celebrate Victory in Europe.

In addition to a Bank Holiday, pub licensing hours will be extended until 1am on both Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May 2020.

In the coming weeks the Government will announce major plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, 15th August, which marked Victory Over Japan and the final end of the Second World War. Veterans of the Far East campaign will be at the heart of the commemorations as the nation thanks them for their service and sacrifice. Events will also pay tribute to the tens of thousands of service personnel from across the UK and the Commonwealth who fought and died in the war against Japan, including all those who were held as prisoners of war by the Japanese. A consultation will also be launched tomorrow (24 February) on extending licensing hours to mark the anniversary of VJ Day.

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- Details of exact timings and attendance will be released in due course.
- The Government is encouraging communities across the UK to add their events to <https://www.ve-vjday75.uk/>
- The Royal British Legion will host individuals from the Second World War generation, plus their companions, as VIPs throughout the events over 8-9 May in London. All those who contributed to Victory in Europe

including veterans from the UK, Allied Forces and the Commonwealth, former prisoners of war, descendants, child evacuees and those who served on the home front are invited to enter the ballot. All travel and accommodation is fully funded. Accommodation is being provided at the Hard Rock Hotel in Marble Arch and will be for use exclusively by the Legion's guests. The Legion's VIPs will be greeted on arrival in London at mainline railway stations by The Royal British Legion and by Armed Forces personnel. More information on how to apply is available at [www.rbl.org.uk/veday75](http://www.rbl.org.uk/veday75). Successful applicants will be drawn from a ballot.

- There is also an opportunity for veterans to apply simply to join the Parade on 8th May, which is being organised by the Ministry of Defence in conjunction with The Royal British Legion. More information on how to apply is available here. Again, successful applicants will be drawn from a ballot. \*Alongside Imperial War Museums' five branches and partner locations, IWM is also calling on all public venues and organisations interested in broadcasting Voices of War at 3pm on VE Day to register their interest via the [IWM website](#).
- On Friday 8 May, SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, presents VE Day 75 broadcast to cinemas nationwide live from a sold out Royal Albert Hall. Host Katherine Jenkins will be joined on stage by the Military Wives Choirs, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, Second World War veterans and a line-up of special guests for an inspiring and patriotic evening. Find more information and tickets on [SSAFA's website](#).