

Call for evidence launched to understand people's experiences of extremism and its impact on social cohesion

- Public urged to have their say in a major independent review into social cohesion and resilience to extremism
- Dame Sara Khan, Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience, gathering evidence for key report
- Review to examine measures to protect and support victims, how we can strengthen social cohesion and build resilience in society against extremism

Victims and communities are being urged to share their experiences as part of a major independent review into the impacts of extremism.

Dame Sara Khan, the government's Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience, today (7 April 2022) launched an 8 week call for evidence that will help examine the impact, harm, and response to extremism at a local level.

Dame Khan's review – commissioned by No.10 – aims to understand the breadth and depth of the impact on individuals, communities and social cohesion.

She wants to hear directly from those who have been targeted by extremists to understand the impact on their lives and the support they received. As well as representatives from local councils and civil society, members of the public are being asked to explain what has gone well and what more could be done. These responses will help her understand the impact extremism is having at a local level and what could be improved to protect and build up social cohesion.

Responses will help develop Sara's independent recommendations on how the government can better support and protect victims of extremism and those working to stamp it out, as well as communities that are affected.

Dame Sara Khan, Independent Adviser on Social Cohesion and Resilience, said:

As the former Counter-Extremism Commissioner I saw first-hand the impact of extremist and other divisive activity in our towns and cities. Too often, the response to those sowing hatred and division is slow and ineffective.

That is why I have been asked by the Prime Minister to examine what more is required to protect social cohesion and build resilience against extremism at a local level.

I will be seeking to hear from victims of extremism whose life-changing experiences are often unrecognised and from local authorities and communities who play an invaluable role. I will be taking an independent, impartial and evidence-based approach and I want to hear from all those who have experience of these issues. This public consultation will give everyone an opportunity to contribute.

Minister for Levelling Up Communities Kemi Badenoch said:

Our landmark Inclusive Britain strategy makes clear that we are a welcoming country whose strength lies within its communities. So, when people try to create divisions amongst us, we must be unwavering in our resolve to stay united.

By sharing your views, you will be helping ensure that our work to tackle extremism continues on the right track – so that risks in our communities are easily recognised and swiftly dealt with, and we can build resilience and promote social cohesion.

Our levelling up mission includes empowering communities – and this call to action is a great example of that ideal in action.

Brendan Cox, Co-Founder and Adviser, Together said:

I know first-hand the terrible impact extremism can have on individuals, families and our communities. This is a serious challenge for our society and it is vital we do more to respond to this threat. Sara's review examining how extremism impacts individuals, local communities and social cohesion is important and I encourage everyone to take part so she can build your views into her recommendations to the government.

Jo Broadwood, CEO, Belong – The Cohesion and Integration Network said:

Belong's own research has shown that local areas that prioritised social cohesion prior to and during the pandemic maintained stronger social connections, trust, neighbourliness and more positive attitudes towards others during the crisis. As such, actively attending to and maintaining social cohesion is a vital part of building social capital and supports communities and places to be resilient to the forces of division and polarisation, including violent extremism.

It is vital that we understand cohesion in this broader sense. We therefore welcome this call for evidence and encourage all those with a concern for building a more cohesive, inclusive society to

respond.

Nuclear energy: What you need to know

Why nuclear power?

In light of high global gas prices, we need to ensure Britain's future energy supply is bolstered by reliable, affordable, low carbon power that is generated in this country.

New nuclear is not only an important part of our plans to ensure greater energy independence, but to create high-quality jobs and drive economic growth.

Large-scale nuclear is a very low-carbon technology, which provides the reliable baseload power we need at scale from a very small land area; Hinkley Point C, for example, will power around 6 million homes from a just a quarter of a square mile.

Is nuclear power safe?

Yes. As confirmed by the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency, nuclear power plants 'are among the safest and most secure facilities in the world,' and nuclear power is one of the safest forms of energy generation.

For context, the annual radiation dose to an adult living beside a new nuclear plant is much less than taking one trans-Atlantic flight or eating 100g of Brazil nuts – neither of which have heavy radiation.

In the UK, we have a well-respected regulatory system which reflects international best practice, and an industry which places an extremely high value on safety, achieving world-leading health and safety standards every time it is examined.

Nuclear power has operated in the UK for decades without incident, and all UK nuclear operators are answerable to robust and independent regulators – the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and the appropriate environmental regulator. If the ONR judged that any nuclear installation was not safe or secure it would not be allowed to operate.

How does nuclear power work?

Traditional nuclear power plants use heat produced during nuclear fission to produce steam. The steam is used to spin large turbines that generate electricity. Nuclear power plants heat water.

In nuclear fission, atoms are split apart to form smaller atoms, releasing energy. Fission takes place inside the reactor of a nuclear power plant. At the centre of the reactor is the core, which contains uranium fuel split into ceramic pellets.

Each ceramic pellet produces about the same amount of energy as 150 gallons of oil. These energy-rich pellets are stacked end-to-end in 12-foot metal fuel rods. A bundle of fuel rods, some with hundreds of rods, is called a fuel assembly. A reactor core contains many fuel assemblies.

Both the Committee on Climate Change and the International Energy Agency have highlighted the role for new nuclear electricity generating capacity, in partnership with renewables, as a key element of achieving net zero. A recent report by the UN Economic Commission for Europe was clear that “the world’s climate objectives will not be met if nuclear technologies are excluded” from future decarbonisation.

What about nuclear waste disposal?

The government is committed to using Geological Disposal Facilities (GDF) to dispose of nuclear waste.

GDF is internationally recognised as the best long-term solution for dealing with radioactive waste.

We need a sustainable solution for the radioactive waste that has already accumulated over many decades. It’s currently stored safely in facilities around the UK, but this isn’t a long term solution and we will be moving towards geological disposal for new and existing waste.

A programme of local engagement events is planned from 4th March for local people to find out more about a GDF and what it would mean for the community that hosts it.

A GDF is a multi-billion-pound infrastructure investment and will provide skilled jobs and benefits to the community that hosts it for more than 100 years. It is also likely to involve major investments in local transport facilities and other infrastructure.

What is the government currently doing to support nuclear power?

The strategy will see a significant acceleration of nuclear, with an ambition of up to 24GW by 2050 to come from this safe, clean, and reliable source of power. This would represent up to around 25% of our projected electricity demand. Subject to technology readiness from industry, Small Modular Reactors will form a key part of the nuclear project pipeline.

A new government body, Great British Nuclear, will be set up immediately to bring forward new projects, backed by substantial funding, and we will launch the £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund this month. We will work to progress a series of projects as soon as possible this decade, including Wylfa site in Anglesey. This could mean delivering up to 8 reactors,

equivalent to one reactor a year instead of one a decade, accelerating nuclear in Britain.

We are committed to building the first new nuclear power station in a generation at Hinkley Point C in Somerset, which will provide 3.2 GW of secure, low carbon electricity for around 60 years to power around 6 million homes and provide 25,000 job opportunities.

EDF are the lead investor building Hinkley Point C. They are targeting the first reactor coming online in June 2026. The developer is fully funding the project.

We have been in constructive negotiations on the Sizewell C project in Suffolk since January 2021, as the most advanced potential project in the UK. If approved Sizewell C would be a replica of Hinkley Point C, providing electricity for 6 million homes, and creating thousands of high value jobs nationwide.

In January we provided £100 million of funding for the Sizewell C developer to invest in the project to help bring it to maturity, attract investors, and advance to the next phase in negotiations.

As set out in the 2021 Spending Review, up to £1.7 billion of funding is available to support approval of at least one new nuclear power plant this Parliament.

The Nuclear Energy (Financing) Act received Royal Assent last week. The Act will enable use of the Regulated Asset Base funding model for new nuclear projects, which will unblock obstacles to developing these projects and cut the cost of financing them.

The Advanced Nuclear Fund includes up to £210 million announced in November 2021 for Rolls-Royce to develop the design for one of the world's first Small Modular Reactors. This could be deployed in the UK in the early 2030s to turbocharge UK nuclear capacity.

We are also establishing a new Future Nuclear Enabling Fund of up to £120 million to provide targeted support for new nuclear and make it easier for new companies to enter the market.

What are Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)?

Small Modular Reactors are smaller versions of conventional water-cooled nuclear reactors. Designs come in different sizes but have power output roughly a fifth to a third of the larger and more traditional reactors at Hinkley Point C.

There are a wide range of new reactor technologies under development around the world. Many designs have the potential for a range of applications beyond low-carbon electricity generation, including production of hydrogen, direct heat for industrial or domestic use or nuclear waste management.

The UK government believes that SMRs could play an important role alongside

large nuclear as a low-carbon energy source to support a secure, affordable decarbonised energy system. They can be easily manufactured away from the sites where they are used and deployed where needed and could be a transformative technology for the UK's industrial heartlands.

What are Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs)?

AMRs are the next generation of nuclear power. These reactors use novel and innovative fuels, coolants, and technologies to generate extreme heat for industrial applications as well as for electricity to power people's homes.

They take advantage of the same modular-building principles as SMRs, making them more flexible to deploy.

We have committed up to £385 million in the Advanced Nuclear Fund (ANF) to support SMRs and AMR development. This includes up to £210 million awarded as a grant to Rolls-Royce SMR to develop their SMR design, which will be matched by industry.

This fund will be part of the measures the government will take to inform investment decisions during the next Parliament on further nuclear projects.

The ANF also includes funding for progressing plans for an ambitious Advanced Modular Research, Development & Demonstration (RD&D) programme which aims to enable an AMR demonstration by the early 2030s, at the latest. We recently announced that High Temperature Gas Reactors (HTGRs) will be the technology focus for this programme.

How long does it take for a nuclear plant to come online?

The timeframe for new nuclear projects coming online varies considerably depending on a range of factors.

Large-scale nuclear projects do have long-construction periods, but Small Modular Reactors for example could be deployable during the early 2030s, with innovation in manufacturing and construction having the potential to bring down build time further.

What's happening to the older nuclear power stations?

EDF, which operates all of the UK's Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors (AGRs) as well as Sizewell B, have extended the lifetime of many of the power stations built in the 1970s and '80s in the UK.

However, when nuclear stations reach the end of their generating capability, they move into the next phase of their lives which is to remove the fuel and to prepare for decommissioning.

This process is handled by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), a government agency with high-level technical expertise in handling this process in a safe and secure manner.

There are currently 6 generating stations across England and Scotland

operated by EDF Energy. Sizewell B, the UK's only Pressurised Water Reactor, is expected to continue generation past 2028.

The AGR stations at Torness, Hinkley Point B, Heysham 1, Heysham 2 and Hartlepool will end generation between 2022 and 2028.

Two other AGR stations, Dungeness B and Hunterston B, recently ended generation to move into the final defueling phase and then decommissioning.

In terms of future use for these sites, the NDA have a clear mission to safely decommission them, freeing up land for future uses.

The NDA welcomes engagement from all stakeholders with a potential future use of land and have a history of engagement and land transfer across their portfolio.

Major acceleration of homegrown power in Britain's plan for greater energy independence

- The Prime Minister's plan boosts Britain's energy security following rising global energy prices and volatility in international markets
- bold new commitments to supercharge clean energy and accelerate deployment, which could see 95% of Great Britain's electricity set to be low carbon by 2030
- ambitious, quicker expansion of nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, oil and gas, including delivering the equivalent to one nuclear reactor a year instead of one a decade
- over 40,000 more jobs in clean industries to be supported thanks to measures, totalling 480,000 jobs by 2030

Cleaner and more affordable energy to be made in Great Britain under bold plans to boost long-term energy independence, security and prosperity.

The government's British Energy Security Strategy sets out how Great Britain will accelerate the deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen, whilst supporting the production of domestic oil and gas in the nearer term – which could see 95% of electricity by 2030 being low carbon.

The strategy will see a significant acceleration of nuclear, with an ambition of up to 24GW by 2050 to come from this safe, clean, and reliable source of power. This would represent up to around 25% of our projected electricity demand. Subject to technology readiness from industry, Small Modular Reactors will form a key part of the nuclear project pipeline.

A new government body, Great British Nuclear, will be set up immediately to bring forward new projects, backed by substantial funding, and we will launch the £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund this month. We will work to progress a series of projects as soon as possible this decade, including Wylfa site in Anglesey. This could mean delivering up to eight reactors, equivalent to one reactor a year instead of one a decade, accelerating nuclear in Britain.

Our ambitious plans also include:

- Offshore wind: A new ambition of up to 50GW by 2030 – more than enough to power every home in the UK – of which we would like to see up to 5GW from floating offshore wind in deeper seas. This will be underpinned by new planning reforms to cut the approval times for new offshore wind farms from 4 years to 1 year and an overall streamlining which will radically reduce the time it takes for new projects to reach construction stages while improving the environment.
- Oil and gas: A licensing round for new North Sea oil and gas projects planned to launch in Autumn, with a new taskforce providing bespoke support to new developments – recognising the importance of these fuels to the transition and to our energy security, and that producing gas in the UK has a lower carbon footprint than imported from abroad.
- Onshore wind: We will be consulting on developing partnerships with a limited number of supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in return for guaranteed lower energy bills.
- Heat pump manufacturing: We will run a Heat Pump Investment Accelerator Competition in 2022 worth up to £30 million to make British heat pumps, which reduce demand for gas.

We will also look to increase the UK's current 14GW of solar capacity which could grow up to 5 times by 2035, consulting on the rules for solar projects, particularly on domestic and commercial rooftops.

We will aim to double our ambition to up to 10GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030, with at least half coming from green hydrogen and utilising excess offshore wind power to bring down costs. This will not only provide cleaner energy for vital British industries to move away from expensive fossil fuels, but could also be used for cleaner power, transport and potentially heat.

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, said:

We're setting out bold plans to scale up and accelerate affordable, clean and secure energy made in Britain, for Britain – from new nuclear to offshore wind – in the decade ahead.

This will reduce our dependence on power sources exposed to volatile international prices we cannot control, so we can enjoy greater energy self-sufficiency with cheaper bills.

This plan comes in light of rising global energy prices, provoked by surging

demand after the pandemic as well as Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This will be central to weaning Britain off expensive fossil fuels, which are subject to volatile gas prices set by international markets we are unable to control, and boosting our diverse sources of homegrown energy for greater energy security in the long-term.

Consumer bills will be lower this decade than they otherwise would be as a result of the measures this government has taken.

The British Energy Security Strategy will also increase the number of clean jobs in the UK by supporting; 90,000 jobs in offshore wind by 2028 – 30,000 more than previously expected; 10,000 jobs in solar power by 2028 – almost double our previous expectations; and 12,000 jobs in the UK hydrogen industry by 2030 – 3,000 more than previously expected.

In total, the British Energy Security Strategy builds on the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, and, together with the Net Zero Strategy, is driving an unprecedented £100 billion of private sector investment into new British industries including Offshore Wind and supporting 480,000 new clean jobs by the end of the decade.

Business and Energy Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, said:

We have seen record high gas prices around the world. We need to protect ourselves from price spikes in the future by accelerating our move towards cleaner, cheaper, home-grown energy.

The simple truth is that the more cheap, clean power we generate within our borders, the less exposed we will be to eye watering fossil fuel prices set by global markets we can't control.

Scaling up cheap renewables and new nuclear, while maximising North Sea production, is the best and only way to ensure our energy independence over the coming years.

The strategy follows a series of engagement by the Prime Minister and ministers across government with key industry leaders, including from the oil and gas, wind and nuclear sectors. The government continue to work with industry in the coming weeks to drive forward these commitments as fast as industry can deliver.

Notes to editors:

- Prices of renewables have been consistently decreasing, with the price of offshore wind dramatically falling by around 65% since 2015, onshore wind prices down 50% since 2013, and residential roof top solar panels are now less than 50% the price they were a decade ago.
- In the immediate term, we're providing £9 billion package of support for consumers to manage rising cost of living. This includes a £150 council tax rebate from April and a further £200 energy bill reduction in October to cut energy bills quickly for the majority of households,

while the energy price cap continues to insulate millions of customers from even higher volatile global gas prices. We are investing over £6.6 billion to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise heating over this parliament. In the next few years this will deliver upgrades to over half a million homes, delivering average bill savings of £300.

- To further drive down demand, and permanently reduce energy bills in the longer term, a temporary VAT cut on the installation of energy efficiency projects such as solar panels, insulation and heat pumps will be in place for the next five years to 2027.
- Britain's first nuclear power station in a generation, Hinkley Point C, is currently under construction, and we are in constructive negotiations with the developer on the Sizewell C project in Suffolk. The 2 projects combined would generate about 6.5GW of power.

[Water pipes in Yorkshire to deliver high-speed broadband in new trial](#)

- Plans to test deploying full fibre broadband safely via drinking water mains launched
- Pipes between Barnsley and Penistone to be used in trial with potential to connect up to 8,500 homes and businesses to faster broadband
- Technology will also power new 5G masts to connect people in hard-to-reach areas

Fast broadband will run through water pipes in parts of South Yorkshire as part of plans to get better internet access to people quicker.

New proposals to accelerate the rollout of broadband without digging up roads would see fibre-optic cables deployed through 17 kilometres of live drinking water mains between Barnsley and Penistone in the government technology trial.

Broadband companies could then tap into the network to deliver gigabit-capable connections to an estimated 8,500 homes and businesses along the route, helping to level up hard-to-reach communities.

Civil works, in particular installing new ducts and poles, can make up as much as four fifths of the costs to industry of building new gigabit-capable broadband networks. The Fibre in Water scheme will demonstrate what could be a greener, quicker and more cost-effective way of connecting fibre optic cables to homes, businesses and mobile masts, without the disruption caused by digging up roads and land.

The network will also be used to set up 5G masts to bring fast and reliable wireless broadband to hard-to-reach communities where wired solutions are too expensive to deliver commercially. The first trial of its kind in the UK, it

will also explore how fibre can help the water industry detect leaks, operate more efficiently and lower the carbon cost of drinking water.

The trials will last for up to two years and, if successful, the technology could be operational in networks from 2024 onwards.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Julia Lopez said:

“ Digging up roads and land is one of the biggest obstacles to rolling out faster broadband, so we’re exploring how we can make use of the existing water network to accelerate deployment and help detect and minimise water leaks.

“ We’re committed to getting homes and businesses across the country connected to better broadband and this cutting-edge project is an exciting example of the bold measures this government is leading on to level up communities with the very best digital connectivity.”

The first phase of the project launching today will focus on the legal and safety aspects of this innovative solution, and ensure that combining clean water and telecoms services in a single pipeline is safe, secure and commercially viable before any technology is actually installed.

If successful, the project could be replicated in other parts of the country and could turbocharge the government’s £5 billion Project Gigabit – the biggest broadband roll out in British history funding top-of-the-range gigabit connections for millions of rural homes and businesses that would otherwise be left out of commercial deployment due to the higher costs of connection. Yorkshire and Lincolnshire have more than 300,000 rural homes and businesses in line for an upgrade, including 56,800 premises in South Yorkshire.

Gigabit-capable broadband coverage has rocketed in the UK from less than 6 per cent in 2019 to more than 66 per cent following government measures to stimulate commercial investment from broadband companies and bust barriers to roll out. In the UK 20 per cent of water put into public supply is wasted due to leaks every day. With current technology, it can be difficult for water companies to quickly identify the exact location of a leak and carry out a repair.

This project, delivered by Yorkshire Water working with Arcadis and University of Strathclyde will test solutions that reduce water leaks by putting fibre sensors in the pipes which allow water companies to improve the speed and accuracy with which they can identify a leak and repair it, often before it causes a problem for consumers. Water companies have committed to delivering a 50% reduction in leakage, and this project could help to reach that goal.

The technology being deployed during the trials has been approved by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). The DWI requires rigorous testing ahead of approving any products and the processes that introduce them into drinking water pipes, and fibre has already been deployed in water pipes in other

countries such as Spain.

Sam Bright, Innovation Programme Manager at Yorkshire Water said:

“ We are very pleased that the Government is supporting the development of the Fibre in Water solution which can reduce the environmental impact and day-to-day disruptions that can be caused by both water and telecoms companies’ activities.

“ The technology for fibre in water has significantly progressed in recent years and this project will now enable us to fully develop its potential to help improve access to better broadband in hard-to-reach areas and further reduce leakage on our networks.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

- The government has allocated £1.2 million to the winning consortium to proceed with the design stage of the project. The remaining £2 million funds will be granted once this stage has been reviewed.
- It comes from HM Treasury’s Shared Outcomes Fund which is used to fund pilot projects to test innovative ways of working across the public sector.
- The project is led by Yorkshire Water, with Arcadis and University of Strathclyde. Additional partners will be announced shortly.

[The Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner’s response to the College of Policing APP on Live Facial Recognition](#)

News story

Professor Fraser Sampson reflects on the publication of the CoP APP on Live Facial Recognition.



Whether it's in our streets, supermarkets or (heaven forbid) our schools, how to deal with Live Facial Recognition (LFR) is the surveillance question that won't go away.

I was therefore pleased to see the publication of the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on Live Facial Recognition which sets out a commitment to 'lawful and ethical' use of this technology. Being guided by lawful and ethical considerations will be critical if we are to address, for example, the horrifying prospect of state-owned surveillance companies supplying our police and schools with the facial recognition technology that they're using to perpetuate genocide and human rights atrocities in other parts of the world.

I do however have some concerns and questions about the published APP. For example:

1. The apparent intention to use LFR technology to find 'potential witnesses' is not the digital equivalent of placing a triangle board on the street to ask anyone passing if they saw anything at a given time and date which they'd like to share with the police. Generally speaking a police witness is someone who has indicated their willingness to take part in the criminal justice process – in which case you don't need a camera to identify them for you; you already know who they are (and, if you don't, why would you have a 'library' image of them to compare against a crowd when searching for them?). If this envisages tracking people and approaching them to confirm whether they were at a certain place on that date and then 'inviting' them to disclose what they heard and saw solely because someone's surveillance system thinks they were present, that's a new and somewhat sinister development which potentially treats everyone like walk-on extras on a police film set rather than as individual citizens free to travel, meet and talk. I think the speculative use of LFR in this way would call its legitimacy and proportionality into question. I can understand that there may be some exceptional, very high harm events such as terrorist attacks or natural disasters where retrospective facial recognition might legitimately make a significant contribution to an understanding of what happened, but those events would be mercifully rare and wholly exceptional. Making effective provision for exceptional events calls for very careful drafting if the exception to the rule is not to become a

catch-all boilerplate clause covering every unspecified eventuality.

2. The terminology and definitions of different types of biometric and forensic search methods raise further questions. For example, LFR and Retrospective Facial Recognition invite questions about the relevant training, certification and accreditation standards. What is the fundamental difference between an LFR search, a mass screening and a forensic database search? Are these to be clarified with the new Forensic Science Regulator? This goes beyond a glossary and is important in public understanding of the APP and its wider implications.
3. Representative testing methodologies for example the 'Blue Watchlist'. A major and enduring challenge for British policing is the fact that minority ethnic populations continue to be under-represented in policing in light of which using existing personnel to test the LFR system already runs the risk of introducing imbalance and an increased risk of demographic differentials, not just in the software development but also in the human adjudication process.
4. LFR and counter terrorism – while not mentioned specifically, the alignment between LFR with the principles and standards set out in the UN Compendium needs to be clarified. Jean Charles de Menezes was tragically shot dead by CT police in London because he had been facially misidentified by a surveillance officer. If we were to rely on LFR in these extreme circumstances in the future what are the safeguards? Is there a case for judicial approval for deploying LFR rather than a senior police officer as is the case for other types of surveillance? What about the exchange of image templates from LFR across jurisdictions, for example, where the technology is used for journeys via the channel tunnel? Perhaps the DCMS consultation on the structure for biometric surveillance oversight and regulation should address this.
5. The focus of the APP is data-rights driven whereas the overall direction in police surveillance, coupled with the acute public sensitivity to some technology, extends far beyond keeping data safe. Rather than treating this area as purely a matter for 'data rights' compliance the framework for maintaining public trust and confidence in police surveillance should focus more on the much wider impact on society. For example, the 'chilling effect' of biometric surveillance by the police has been well documented both in academic research and in the courts – if people decide not to travel, not to meet, not even to talk openly because of their concerns that where they go, what they do and say is being monitored by the police, that is a fundamental constitutional consequence of intrusive policing activity; and it has nothing to do with data protection. Perhaps the DCMS consultation should address this too.

In summary – in moving from a standard police operating model of humans

looking for other humans in a crowd to the automated industrialised process of LFR (as some have characterised it, a move from line fishing to deep ocean trawling), how commonplace will it become to be stopped in our cities, transport hubs, outside arenas or school grounds and required to prove our identity? The ramifications for our constitutional freedoms in that future are profound. Is the status of the UK citizen shifting from our jealously guarded presumption of innocence to that of 'suspected until we have proved our identity to the satisfaction of the examining officer'? If so, that will require more than an APP from the College of Policing: it will require parliamentary debate.

I am keen to continue open, informed dialogue with stakeholders who have an interest in this area, from the avid supporters to the anti-surveillance campaigners and everyone in between. The proper role of technology in surveillance calls for balance, not only of what's possible against what's lawful, but increasingly alongside what we find acceptable or even tolerable. Societal acceptability is the ground where the accountable, ethical and legitimate use of surveillance technology is being shaped. That again is surely a matter for parliament.

To achieve a greater understanding of the societal acceptability of facial recognition technology by the police, my office is planning to put 'Facial Recognition on Trial'. In conjunction with Professor William Webster (Centre for Research into Information, Surveillance and Privacy) the event will contribute to a key objective under the Civil Engagement strand of the National Surveillance Camera Strategy. The event will take place before a live audience and will imitate a court trial with evidence provided by expert witnesses and members of the public acting as a jury. The mock trial will be held on 14 June at the London School of Economics with tickets available to book soon.

My website will continue to be updated as further details emerge.

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