

## Warwickshire Prevent News - July 2020

Welcome to a round-up of news from Safe in Warwickshire, Prevent. For more information about Prevent, visit our website [www.safeinwarwickshire.com/](http://www.safeinwarwickshire.com/)

### Local Context:

In Warwickshire, authorities and communities are working together to deliver the Government's Prevent Strategy. Prevent provides support and re-direction to vulnerable individuals at risk of being groomed into terrorist activities before any crimes are committed.

The events of 2020 have been traumatic across the world and there have been significant implications for Prevent, some of these are addressed in this Newsletter.

### In this edition:

- Update on the Prevent Action Plan.
- Information on the response to COVID-19.
- Update on Prevent Training.
- Channel Panel and Referral.
- Prevent Community Engagement.
- Insight into FE and HE engagement in Warwickshire.

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[www.safeinwarwickshire.com/prevent](http://www.safeinwarwickshire.com/prevent)

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### The Warwickshire Prevent Action Plan

Following a review at the Prevent Steering Group in June 2020, an updated local Prevent Action Plan was agreed by Partners. Through this Plan, six overall priorities for the partnership were agreed, these are outlined below. Further information on this Plan is contained on the website.

### WARWICKSHIRE PREVENT PRIORITIES

1. Community and voluntary sector engagement – to prevent and challenge extremist narrative and behaviour from within communities themselves.
2. Leadership, governance and accountability – to ensure strong, coordinated community and partnership action which is accountable to the local community.
3. Awareness, learning and development – across all Sectors, Public, Private, Community and Voluntary.
4. Safe education – in Early Years, Schools, Colleges and Universities.
5. Support – establish appropriate support for those identified as vulnerable and their families
6. Intelligence and communications – mechanisms to monitor local community tensions,

### The Plan is supported by a range of actions which are to be undertaken across the Partnership and include:

- Ensuring that we provide effective training to raise awareness of Prevent.
- Take action to support vulnerable individuals at risk of radicalisation.
- Engage with voluntary, faith and community sectors on the issues of extremism.

### How you can contribute?

If you have any ideas as to what should be included in the Action Plan, or projects that you are undertaking that could be featured, then please contact us on the address below.

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### Prevent Action Plan – Looking back over the last year

Within the Action Plan we set out a series of targets for partners to achieve, including:

- Delivering accessible training – with over 1,300 people attending a session.
- Achieving over 95% satisfaction of participants in knowing how to respond to concerns.
- Engaging key local communities – e.g. the Safe and Secure Workshops.
- Undertaking a comprehensive self-assessment of the Warwickshire Channel Panel.
- Engaging local partners in reviewing the threat and risks from radicalisation.
- Raising information and awareness of Prevent through events such as the Prevent Conference.

### Prevent Action Plan – Looking Ahead for 2020/21

As part of the commitments for the year ahead, Partners have agreed a wide range of actions, some of which include the following:-

- To promote the new Prevent Update Training module in addition to the other face to face and training options.
- To support local faith, voluntary and community groups engage with issues around violent extremism.
- To deliver a new Prevent Project – Game On within a local school in the County
- To develop Local District and Borough Prevent assessments
- Prepare a partnership communications strategy for Warwickshire Prevent
- Continuing to improve the organisation of Channel Panel through reviewing national best practice.

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## Impact of COVID-19

The astonishing impact of COVID-19 across the globe has brought many changes and challenges to all of us. The impact on the Prevent agenda has also been huge, and we have taken significant steps to respond to those changes. Just some of the headlines regarding this are shown below.

NEWS CORONAVIRUS GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

White supremacists encouraging their members to spread coronavirus to cops, Jews, FBI says

*The alert was sent to local police agencies by federal officials.*

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US POLITICS UK POLITICS VOICES SPORT CULTURE INDY LIFE INDYBEST LONG READS INDY100 VOUCHERS PREMIUM CLIMATE BLOG

News > World > Middle East

Coronavirus: Isis tells followers not to travel to Europe for attacks because of outbreak

*"The battles should not enter the head of the militants" - our source says*

VICE Video TV News Tech Music Food Health Money Drugs + More

MOTHERBOARD TECHNOLOGY

Experts Say Neo-Nazi 'Accelerationists' Discuss Taking Advantage of Coronavirus Crisis

*"While this is online chatter, the fact that it's seeking to take advantage of and exacerbate a crisis is alarming."*

'Right Now, People Are Pretty Fragile.' How Coronavirus Creates the Perfect Breeding Ground for Online Extremism

BBC Your account News Sport Weather iPlayer Sounds

NEWS

Home UK World Business Politics Tech Science Health Family & Education

Wales Wales Politics Wales Business North West North East Mid South West

Coronavirus: 'Children may have been radicalised in lockdown'

News > Crime

Terror groups 'exploiting coronavirus pandemic to radicalise new recruits', QC warns

- One of the most notable impacts of COVID-19 has been the reports of significant increases in extremist online propaganda. Content from all types of extremist groups seeking to take advantage of the crisis to generate fear and hate.
- This increase is at a time, when more people have been at home, spending more time online.
- Nationally, over the last four months, there has been a significant drop in Prevent referrals.
- We must be alert to the risk that vulnerable people may have become caught up in these extremist echo chambers and share our concerns if we feel someone is at risk.

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### COVID-19 Report of The Commission for Countering Extremism

The Commission for Countering Extremism has recently published a report looking at the way extremists have attempted to exploit the pandemic.

## Summary

**37%**

of respondents had heard about the 5G conspiracy theory and almost a third of (those) people found it credible<sup>12</sup>

It was reported that

circa **50**

masts were targeted for arson and vandalism in the UK in April<sup>16</sup>

Far Right actors have sought to encourage other online users to deliberately infect Jews and Muslims<sup>17</sup>

There was a

**21%**

increase in hate crime toward East Asian and South East Asian individuals<sup>13</sup>



A fake post accusing Muslims of breaking lockdown rules was shared

**2,700** times<sup>14</sup>

**90.6%** of posts containing misinformation were not acted on by social media companies after volunteers flagged them<sup>15</sup>

The full report can be found [here](#)

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### Local Response to COVID-19

As a partnership we have taken a number of steps to respond to the demands presented by COVID-19.

We have:

- Continued to provide safeguarding support to vulnerable individuals through the work of the Warwickshire Channel Panel. This continues to meet on and engage with all local partners through virtual meetings.
- Individuals continue to be offered direct support through the work of our colleagues in Social Care, Education, Police, Health, Probation, Voluntary and Community sectors.
- Our key partnership meetings and networks have continued to take place, through online engagement. While this provides challenges at times, we are committed to continuing to focus upon the needs of vulnerable people in the County.
- Particular focus has taken place at the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board on the issues of hate crime and extremism, supporting all partners to respond to any issues locally.
- Regularly update social media with information regarding Prevent related issues that affect residents in Warwickshire.
- Overhauled the way in which we deliver training and awareness about Prevent – including giving the very latest information and advice about Prevent and the Pandemic. The training is provided online, throughout the week and also in the evenings.
- Through making these changes we have managed to exceed the numbers of colleagues trained in the first half of 2020 to the total for the whole 2019 which had itself exceeded the previous years.

If you would like to share your experience of issues linked to the issues of Prevent and COVID-19, or would like to discuss these further, please contact Geoff Thomas.



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### PREVENT TRAINING IN WARWICKSHIRE 2020/21

#### Face to face Courses:

As outlined above we have introduced major changes to our Prevent training programme to respond to the impact of COVID-19. This section provides information on the range of Prevent Training currently being offered.

#### Online Prevent Update Training:

The Prevent Duty was established in 2015 and since that time many people have attended the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent. However, the changing nature of the threat and risk associated with Violent extremism, and in particular the impact of COVID-19 means that we need to refresh our understanding of how vulnerable individuals can be radicalised and how we can work together to challenge this. A new training course has been prepared for this purpose, and covers:

- A brief overview of the Prevent Duty.
- The current priorities and risks in Warwickshire.
- The impact of COVID-19.
- The signs and symbols associated with extremism.
- The impact of the internet and gaming.
- The support that's available and how to access it.

The training takes 1hr 45mins and is a practical guide to the Prevent Duty highly suitable for those staff that have attended WRAP previously and need a refresh as well as those who are new to Prevent. It is available throughout each week and also with an evening session.

To book a place please contact Nicola Stocker on [nicolastocker@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:nicolastocker@warwickshire.gov.uk)

#### Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP):

We have currently suspended this face to face training course to ensure safe working practice. We will look to resume this training as soon as possible. However, until then the Prevent Update training above covers all key aspects of this course. If you need to discuss this further, please contact Geoff Thomas.

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### Prevent Online Grooming:

This course option provides a guide to how social media and gaming can be used to groom vulnerable individuals, not just through radicalisation, but other forms of potential harm. The content includes, the impact of different social media apps, the Dark Web, gaming as well as guides to help keep safe online. It is delivered via Teams and is available on demand for groups, services etc. To book a Prevent Online Grooming training event, please contact Nicola Stocker on [nicolastocker@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:nicolastocker@warwickshire.gov.uk)

### PREVENT E-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

There are three Home Office Prevent e-learning products now available, as listed below:

**Prevent awareness eLearning** - The Prevent awareness eLearning has also been recently been refreshed. This includes updates to reflect the recommendations from the Parsons Green review, updated information following the change in threat and attacks of 2017, and new case studies. A link to the training is below.

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

**Prevent Referrals** - The training is for anyone who has been through the Prevent awareness eLearning or a Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP), and already has an understanding of Prevent and of their role in safeguarding vulnerable people. It is aimed at anyone who may be in a position to notice signs of vulnerability to radicalisation and aims to give them confidence in referring on for help if appropriate. It is also designed for those (for example line managers) who may receive these referrals and have to consider how to respond, whether that be establishing more context, or reaching out to partner agencies for support. The link to the training is below.

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

**Channel Awareness** - This training package is for anyone who may be asked to contribute to, sit on, or even run a Channel Panel. It is aimed at all levels, from a professional asked to input and attend for the first time, to a member of staff new to their role and organising a panel meeting. It covers both an introduction to what Channel is, how it operates in the user's region, and how to organise a Channel Panel for the first time. In response to feedback, it also covers information sharing, including how, when and with whom to share information of a Channel case. A link to the Channel Panel training is below.

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



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### Channel Panel Update

Channel is part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. All localities are statutorily required to establish a suitable Channel Panel, including the full range of safeguarding organisations that can bring resources and insight together to help support vulnerable individuals. The work of the Channel Panel is largely guided by the framework established in the national Channel Panel guidance document, this is publicly available and can be found [here](#)

Over the last 6 months, the Government have been reviewing the scope of the guidance in the light of the experience since the establishment of the Prevent Duty in 2015. Warwickshire County Council along with other authorities have contributed to this review. However, because of the impact of COVID-19 the introduction of this guidance has been delayed; and is now expected this Autumn. As this information is available we will be keeping local partners informed.

### Making a Prevent Referral:

A new national Prevent referral form is available from the Safe in Warwickshire Prevent [website](#). When considering if a Prevent referral for a potentially vulnerable individual should be made, remember this is early action that might safeguard someone potentially from being drawn into a criminal or harmful experience. The emphasis should be on promptly sharing any concerns you have so that these can be fully considered and if any safeguarding support is appropriate that this is offered at the earliest possible stage.

There is additional information on the context to consider for possible Prevent referrals on the Warwickshire Safeguarding Board website. The links available are [here](#) and [here](#)

If you would like more information or training regarding the Warwickshire Channel Panel then contact Geoff Thomas.

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### Prevent Community Engagement

Over the last year, we have been looking to increase our support to local community engagement events to raise awareness and interest in Prevent.

We have:

- Delivered presentations to a range of local community forum meetings across Warwickshire.
- Assisted EQUIP with the We Stand Together events.
- Contributed to the Warwick District Inter-faith Wellbeing conference held in Leamington in November 2019.
- Taken part in numerous community group events to discuss Prevent
- Taking part in webinars to discuss Prevent with local groups and communities

A key aim of the Prevent Strategy is to improve community resilience to extremism. By reaching out and engaging local community and faith groups to explain the purpose of Prevent, by listening to local experiences and priorities we can do more to help enhance this community resilience.

However, undertaking community engagement since the COVID-19 emergency has been extremely challenging. As groups, communities and networks look to re-engage with face to face or online events we will be keen to support these across the County.

If you are planning a community engagement event during 2020/21 and would like to include an item on Prevent, please contact us to discuss how this might be supported.

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### Insight into Prevent in Warwickshire

#### Prevent & Further/Higher Education in Warwickshire:

Did you know that we have a Prevent and FE/HE Prevent Group in Warwickshire? As partners we recognise the importance of regular engagement around the issues of Prevent in the Further and Higher Education sector. As this newsletter shows the issues around violent extremism are ever changing and we need to be alert to the changing risks in Warwickshire.

To assist in achieving this we have a FE & HE Prevent Group for Warwickshire. This group meets on a termly basis brings together representatives from the key Colleges and University in the County, together with colleagues from Warwickshire County Council, Department for Education and the Police.

Some of the issues the network has been addressing over the last twelve months include:

- Ensuring we share examples of best Prevent & Safeguarding practice.
- Reviewing local risk assessment and action planning arrangements.
- Contextual Safeguarding models.
- Assessing our local response to the changing information regarding extremism.
- Delivering locally tailored Prevent training for safeguarding and tutorial staff.

**For any further information on the work of this Network, or if you have suggestions for other local partnership activity then please contact Geoff Thomas to discuss.**

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### Prevent contact information

If you would like to discuss any aspects of Prevent or training requests please contact:

Geoff Thomas - Warwickshire Prevent Officer

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