Swindon Youth Offending Team

Prevention of Violent Extremism Project Report

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Commissioned by
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Introduction

On 14 November 2007, in a wide-ranging statement to the House of Commons on security, the Prime Minister referred to the involvement of youth justice in the prevention of violent extremism as part of a range of community-based measures. Young people in the Criminal Justice are seen as especially vulnerable to extremist influences. Consequently in April 2007 Home Office Ministers approved substantial funding for the YJB to invest in existing youth justice programmes and services or (if backed by a convincing case) to establish new initiatives to address the factors that put young people at risk of being drawn into criminality and violence motivated by extremism.

The programme has the following main elements:

- National training and support for youth justice staff to counter violent extremism
- Expansion of existing programmes for vulnerable young people in communities where extreme views are prevalent
- Undertaking initiatives in secure establishments for young people at risk of extremism
- Initiating new schemes to develop an evidence base of "what works" in preventing youth extremism

The scope of the programme includes addressing the risks of violent extremism in relation to involvement with or influence by, for example, Al-Qa'ida influenced violent extremists or the activities of the extreme far right. The YJB also indicated a willingness to consider investing in broader initiatives that strengthen community cohesion in areas where there is evidence of significant tension.

The interventions that programmes would be expected to deliver could include:

- Addressing issues around identity and citizenship
- Strengthening the resilience of vulnerable individuals to violent extremist influences which can lead to the criminalisation of young people
- Enabling young people to express their views in non-violent ways
- Challenging stereotypes and 'myth busting'
- Promoting shared values and encouraging dialogue and engagement between communities

Through the programme the YJB is seeking to:

- Equip the youth justice workforce, in particular staff at YIP, ISSP and RAP or other staff working within this framework of programmes, to deal better with issues relating to violent extremism and radicalisation, and in doing so to help them play a part in preventing another potential avenue of the criminalisation of vulnerable young people.

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- Enable youth justice practitioners to establish good relationships with partners including Local Authorities, the police, schools, communities and any other key stake holders to discuss issues around young people who they are concerned about in terms of possible violent extremist behaviour.

Following an initial expression of interest, (referencing the Ridgeway incident) Swindon Youth Offending Team was the beneficiary of a development grant to formulate a full proposal (in consultation with partners), as to how they would design and implement a programme through existing delivery models or through a new approach (if a strong enough case can be demonstrated), in accordance with the points raised above. The indicative grant available is up to £75,000 per annum for two years.

Project Aim

The overall project aim was to work up proposals that will (in light of the Ridgeway Incident) strengthen community cohesion and expand the capacity of Swindon YJB programmes to reach young people at risk of becoming involved in violent extremism, address relevant risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

Project Objectives

- To identify extent of current knowledge base, key issues and best practice
- To identify risk and preventative factors of young people being drawn into violent extremism
- To complete an audit of need to assess future risk
- To raise awareness of key issues amongst local stakeholders
- To secure the views of local stakeholders on the issues and achieve broad consensus on the proposals
- To review existing interventions to assess potential

Methods

- Undertake a Desktop Review
- Undertake a needs/future risk audit
- Review local key documents and management information
- Interview stakeholders
- Facilitate consultation meetings
- Attend meetings and conferences and consult with YJB lead
- Liaise with other grant beneficiary YOTs
- Visit existing projects

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This report

This report details the research undertaken in support of the bid.

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Strategic Context/Drivers

The following national/ policies/strategies are relevant to addressing the risks of Al-Qa'ida influenced violent extremism:

- The Counter Terrorism Strategy: 2007
- Preventing Violent Extremism - A Strategy for Delivery HM: Gov 2008
- The Community Cohesion Framework for Swindon: 2007
- Wiltshire Police Counter Terrorism Seven Point Plan programme: 2007/8
- SWINDON RACE EQUALITY SCHEME 2005-2008
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 17)
- Crime and Disorder Act Review (2006);
- Every Child Matters and Children Act 2004
- Extended Services in and around Schools
- Healthy Schools Act 2000
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the needs of children of problem drug users
- Narrowing the Gap; the inspection of children's services – Ofsted: 2007
- Police National Intelligence Model (2005)
- The Prolific and other Priority Offenders Strategy- Prevent & Deter: 2005
- Targeted Youth Support (2007)
- Youth Justice Board Prevention Strategy: 2008
- Youth Matters / Next Steps (2006)
- 10 Year Youth Strategy 'Aiming High' (2007)
- New Local Area Agreements (2007);
- National Community Safety Plan: Home Office (2005);
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill;
- Building Communities, Beating Crime A better police service for the 21st century (2004);
- Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (2006);
- Police and Justice Act (2006);
- The Governments anti-social behaviour strategy and the Respect Action Plan;
- Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future. A consultation paper (2006)
- *Aiming High Implementation Plan*, DCSF: March 2008.
- National Children's Plan: December 2007
- Staying Safe Action Plan: February 2008
- Youth Task Force Action Plan: March 2008
- Cutting Crime. A New Partnership 2008-11
- ACPO strategy for children and young people '*It's never too early…It's never too late*' January 2008

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The most significant of the above are set out below, grouped under the 4 major headings of:

- The Prevention of Violent Extremism
- Children and Young People's Services
- Local Government And Local Strategic Partnerships
- Criminal justice

The Prevention of Violent Extremism

The UK's Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Laws alone will not stop terrorism, but since we must be prepared to deal with terrorism, the United Kingdom devised a strategy in 2003 (known within Government as CONTEST) for countering terrorism. With it, the UK aims to reduce the risk from international terrorism, so that people can go about their daily lives freely and with confidence. The strategy affects multiple branches of the UK government.

The strategy is based on four pillars: **Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare**.

Prevent is designed to 'get upstream' of the problem and win hearts and minds by:

- Tackling disadvantage and supporting reform by addressing structural problems in the UK and overseas that may contribute to radicalization, such as inequalities and discrimination;
- Deterring those who facilitate terrorism and those who encourage others to become terrorists by changing the environment in which the extremists and those radicalising others can operate;
- Engaging in the battle of ideas by challenging the ideologies that extremists believe can justify the use of violence, primarily by helping Muslims who wish to dispute these ideas to do so.

Pursue focuses on minimising harm to the UK and its interests by:

- Gathering intelligence and improving our ability to identify and understand the terrorist threat;
- Disrupting terrorist activity and taking action to frustrate terrorist attacks and to bring terrorists to justice through prosecution and other means, including strengthening the legal framework against terrorism;
- International co-operation by working with partners and allies overseas to strengthen our intelligence effort and achieve disruption of terrorists outside the UK.

Protect is designed to reduce the vulnerability within the UK and of its assets by:

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- Strengthening border security, so that terrorists and those who inspire them can be prevented from travelling here and we can get better intelligence about suspects who travel, including improving our identity management;
- Protecting key utilities by working with the private sector;
- Reducing the risk and impact of attacks through security and technological advances;
- Protecting people going about their daily lives.

Prepare focuses on ensuring that the UK can mitigate the effects of an attack and can find the perpetrators:

- Identifying the potential risks the UK faces from terrorism and assessing their impact;
- Building the necessary capabilities to respond to and attacks;
- Continually evaluating and testing our preparedness, including through identifying lessons from exercises and real-life events.

The Prevent Strategy: Stopping People Becoming or Supporting Violent Extremists

This strategy relates to the 'Prevent' pillar of the Counter Terrorism strategy. It sets out the basis for the Government's approach to tackling violent extremism, the aim of which is to **stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists"**. It builds on previous strategies and approaches and is intended to help delivery partners in all sectors (including public, private, voluntary and community), working with central Government, to identify the further contribution they can make to this agenda.

The challenge

The United Kingdom faces a terrorist threat from Al Qa'ida influenced terrorism which is currently rated as 'severe'. The Director General of MI5 has identified about 2000 individuals who are believed to pose a direct threat to national security. The threat is trans-national in scope; violent extremism is also a threat to close allies and to UK interests overseas.

Law enforcement and intelligence operations are vital to containing the threat but on their own they will not be able to resolve it. There is also a need to work together to refute the language and the arguments of those trying to advance the cause of violent extremism and counter the efforts they are making to recruit others. There are limits to what Government can do – and should try to do – in this area: the strategy to stop people becoming violent extremists depends upon the support of communities.

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Definition and scope

The process by which an individual is persuaded to passively or actively support violent extremism is described as 'radicalisation'. This phrase has become common currency but it can be misleading. It is not the purpose of the strategy to stop people simply holding radical views.

The Government recognises the threat, amongst others, of right-wing extremism and animal rights activism. There are robust programmes addressing these issues but this document, focuses on the approach to address the threat of Al Qa'ida influenced terrorism.

The Strategy is dependent on:

- Central government departments working together;
- Collaborative and coordinated regional and local delivery through local authorities, the police and those working with young people;
- Community engagement so that they are empowered and resourced to deliver local solutions;
- International engagement and cooperation;
- Increasing understanding of radicalisation shared across key partner stakeholders.

What is known

Existing evidence from this country and from overseas (which was reappraised in the preparation of the strategy) suggests the key factors that lead to violent extremism of this kind are:

- An **ideology** which justifies terrorism by manipulating theology as well as history and contemporary politics;
- **Individuals and networks** who promote violent extremism, through new media and in **vulnerable spaces and institutions** in this country;
- **Individuals who are vulnerable** to the messaging of violent extremism for a range of personal factors;
- **Communities** which do not have resilience to resist and reject the narrative and activities of violent extremists**;** and
- A number of **grievances,** some substantive, which resonate with individuals and are exploited by violent extremists.

There is no single profile of those most susceptible to these factors but they are likely to be young (generally younger than 30) and male (although the number of women who support and participate in violent extremism is increasing). The evidence also suggests that radicalisation is focused in certain geographical areas of this country.

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What needs to be done

The strategy has short and long term goals, as it is important to not only to address the current threat but also to focus on today's 5-15 year olds. This can be done through work in schools and youth services, and by long-term work to support the capacity of communities, here and in some cases overseas.

The strategy has five broad **objectives** relating closely to present understanding of **causes:**

- **Challenge the violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices; -** We must be prepared and able to challenge the claims of violent extremism: terrorists are criminals and murderers who attack our shared values, misread a great religion and endanger all our communities. We should support the many existing and powerful refutations of their narrative, in this country and overseas, facilitating debate and engagement where we need to do so. It is however not the purpose of the strategy to advocate a particular reading of Islam: this is not a role for Government.

- **Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions where they are active;** The Government intends to continue to take action against those who advocate violence, hatred and terrorism. It will also work with those responsible for the places where radicalisation is occurring (e.g. schools, higher and further education, prisons), to ensure that they are aware of the methods of those who radicalise and the impact their activities can have. The ideologues that are disseminating the ideology of violent extremism are active on the internet; there is a commitment to making the internet more hostile to their activity.

- **Support individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism;** Government working with local partners and communities must support young people at risk of being exploited by violent extremists and recruited into violent extremist and criminal activity. In this area (as in others) government will need to work alongside communities, where appropriate providing visible but discreet support and advice.

- **Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism;** The Government are committed to supporting an inclusive and diverse society, which will take action against and isolate violent extremist activity. Government will continue to sponsor the Pathfinder programmes in this country, supporting local authorities to work with communities, building leadership capacity and the strength and reach of key community groups.

- **Address the grievances, which ideologues are exploiting; In** the UK and overseas violent extremists selectively exploit certain issues to recruit people to their cause. No perceived grievance can justify terrorism. But where concerns are legitimately *expressed* then we must be prepared to debate them. We are committed to better explaining existing policies, such as the

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UK's foreign policy, refuting claims made about them in the language of violent extremists: we will find more opportunities to explain what we stand for and what we do. And where concerns are legitimately *based* we must be prepared to address them. Through existing programmes (including the 'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society' equalities and cohesion strategy). Government is already committed to addressing inequalities, unemployment and social mobility in the UK. The Global Opportunities Fund and, where relevant, DfID programmes will help to address the real grievances of people in key countries overseas which can increase their susceptibility to the extremists' message.

In addition to these key objectives two strategic enablers of critical importance have been identified:

- **Although understanding of radicalisation is increasing, there are still gaps in our knowledge;** the Government therefore intends to undertake further work to identify, analyse and assess the radicalising activities of extremist groups and ensure that the results of this work are distributed to key stakeholders. They have also established the Research, Information and Communications Unit, to ensure that communication supports the strategy, neither distorting it nor inadvertently undermining its purpose and intended effect.

- The strategy requires a response which is local, national and international:

  o **Central Departments**, notably OSCT, are responsible for developing a coherent strategy, with clear objectives and performance indicators, and will monitor, and where possible, measure its impact. These Departments will also be responsible for identifying and allocating resources. Central Departments also need to develop an adequate evidence base and analytical support for the strategy and to ensure that both this material and wider guidance (including best practice) reaches key stakeholders.

  o The strategy depends upon **collaborative and coordinated regional and local delivery,** through local authorities, the police and those working with young people (such as schools, youth services and the third sector) all working together both in existing and new delivery structures. **Community engagement** is also vital. Without the sustained involvement of local communities, empowered and resourced to deliver local solutions to local challenges, we will not succeed.

  o The strategy also depends upon **international engagement and cooperation**. The ideology driving terrorism was first developed overseas and states across the Islamic world have developed coherent refutations of it. The ideologues that influence domestic opinion are also often located overseas, using the international and new media as a platform for their views. Violent extremists exploit long-standing

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grievances and perpetuate allegations that the UK is complicit in a global attack on Islam. Our strategy therefore requires international cooperation, both to learn and where appropriate to build capacity.

The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England - Stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists HM Gov 2008

This guide provides advice on establishing effective partnership working, planning and implementing a programme of action and monitoring its impact; and more detail on each of the objectives of the Prevent strategy, outlining why each is important and how they can be addressed at a local level. For each objective, the guide explains what central government is doing, provides local case studies and signposts additional information and support.

Central government will take forward the national and international aspects of this work, but local communities need to play an integral part. Local Strategic Partnerships have been clearly tasked with driving delivery of a jointly agreed programme of action led by Local authorities and police forces.

There is a range of partnerships, which need to be involved in Prevent work locally. It is up to local partners to decide which takes the lead and how the work of these partnerships will be co-ordinated.

- **Local Strategic Partnerships** will be involved in the preventing violent extremism agenda in the context of their wider role and responsibility for reporting progress through the National Indicator Set. They also provide a vital link to related agendas such as work to reduce inequalities and improve cohesion.

- **Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships** need to play a key role in preventing violent extremism as part of their work to prevent crime and address its causes in keeping with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. They are likely to have a particular involvement in work focused on supporting vulnerable individuals.

- **Children's trusts** bring together local services for children and young people, and focus on providing support for vulnerable young people; they will therefore be important in ensuring that impact is achieved through mainstream delivery. Vulnerable young people not reached by either mainstream or specialist services should be supported through targeted youth support. This ensures co-ordinated multi-agency support, through a lead professional, which is tailored to an individual young person's needs and can include family support if appropriate.

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Delivering an effective Prevent response requires the active participation of a wide range of other partners, including representatives from the education sector, children's and youth services, the Youth Justice Board through Youth Offending Teams and the secure estate, probation services, prisons and the UK Border Agency.

It is essential that local work on preventing violent extremism embrace the experience, energy and ideas of the whole community. The community should be actively engaged in multi-agency partnerships and should shape the development and implementation of a jointly agreed programme of action which meets the objectives of the strategy

The challenge varies significantly from place to place, depending on existing patterns of radicalisation and the size of the communities, which partners need to engage with to build resilience. The programme of action should be proportionate to the local circumstances. Areas with a high level of challenge will need to develop a more detailed and wider programme of action and are likely to require particularly strong partnership arrangements. Areas with a lower level of challenge may wish to select the strategy objectives that are most appropriate locally (e.g. reviewing the nature of the challenge, awareness raising) and link these into partnership arrangements

Preventing violent extremism is firmly embedded in performance management frameworks, including National Indicator 35 (Building Resilience to Violent Extremism) and Assessments of Policing and Community Safety Indicator 63 (APACS 63). The Comprehensive Area Assessment process will also embrace Prevent work, but local partners themselves should ensure that arrangements are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of their response and the way risk is managed.

The Swindon Police Counter Terrorism Seven Point Plan programme 2007/8

This plan is Swindon Police's response to the Counter Terrorism Strategy. It is divided into following sections:

- Policing Plan
- Ownership
- Community
- Partnership
- Intelligence
- Briefing
- Response

Community and Partnership are the two aspects of the plan that most closely relate to the 'Prevent' agenda. Actions under these streams include:

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Community

- BCU's to profile their communities and identify those vulnerable to radicalisation – what does this show? Having identified those communities BCU's will then engage with any relevant agencies or departments (internal or External) to manage the threat of radicalisation in an appropriate and proportionate manner;
- BCU's to identify communities vulnerable to CT/E and related issues. Senior level BCU engagement to take place with these communities once identified.

Partnership

- Ensuring that where possible and appropriate, the awareness of CT is raised at Community Safety Partnership meetings and any other forums deemed appropriate by the BCU. Where appropriate CT matters are discussed at these meetings;
- BCU's to engage with partnership agencies to seek solutions to situations that arise under the 'Prevent' strand of the Governments counter-terrorism strategy. The BCU's will work with these partners' agencies to engage with all communities to diminish support for terrorism e.g. multi-agency work to identify and prevent radicalisation within the community.

Children and Young People's Services

Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004

As the focus of this paper is to stop young people becoming or supporting violent extremists the 'Prevent' Strategy needs to be placed in context with the key strategies relating to children.

Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004 provide the key overarching strategy for children. They establish five outcomes to be achieved for all children:

- Be Healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Positive contribution
- Economic well being

There is a strong emphasis on the preventative approach to reducing poor outcomes for children and young people, including involvement in offending and anti-social behaviour.

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The Youth Matters green paper (2005)

The Youth Matters green paper (2005) sets out a vision of integrated youth support services, helping all young people achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes through the coherent, young person-centred delivery of:

- Positive activities: more things to do and places to go;
- Making a contribution: More opportunities to contribute to their local community through personal development opportunities such as Volunteering;
- Information, Advice and Guidance: better quality and appropriately delivered;
- Reformed targeted youth support.

Reformed **Targeted Youth Support** is integrated delivery in action for vulnerable teenagers. It aims to ensure that the needs of vulnerable teenagers are identified early and met by agencies working together effectively, in ways that are shaped by the views and experiences of young people themselves. Two distinct groups are targeted:[1]

- **Children with additional needs**: A broad term used to describe all those children at risk of poor outcomes in relation to the five outcome areas defined in *Every Child Matters*. Their needs will in many cases be cross-cutting. The scope is wide ranging. However the following are most relevant for the purposes of this paper:

    o Disruptive or anti-social behaviour;
    o Involvement in or risk of offending;
    o Poor attendance or exclusion from school;
    o Experiencing bullying;
    o Substance misuse.

- **Children with complex needs**: Of those children with additional needs, a small proportion has more significant or complex needs, which meet the threshold for statutory involvement. Most relevant are young offenders involved with youth justice services (community and custodial). It should be emphasised that while Target Youth Support is about helping vulnerable young people with complex needs to access the intensive support they require, Integrated Youth Support is about providing services to all young people according to their needs.

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[1] The lead professional: Managers' guide Integrated working to improve outcomes for children and young people HM Gov

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Aiming High for Young People: Ten Year Youth Strategy

Published in July 2007, 'Aiming High' contains 55 commitments aimed at ensuring all young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds:

- Are empowered to have a say in the creation of services and in local funding decisions;
- Can easily find out about local things to do and places to go, and are motivated to use the new and improved activities and facilities on offer;
- Have access to high quality services delivered by a diverse and professional workforce.

Detailed plans for delivering this strategy are contained in an *Aiming High Implementation Plan*, published by DCSF on 18 March 2008. Drawing on research evidence of the influence out-of–school activities can have on later life outcomes, the plan reinforces the importance of reaching the 25% of young people not currently participating in positive activities; and underlines the need for a range of services to work together through integrated services to achieve the outcomes sought. Among other partners, *Youth Offending Teams* are identified as having an important part to play by *'intervening early to prevent young people getting involved in crime and anti-social behaviour, including through the provision of structured positive activities.'*

As part of its commitment to providing young people with more things to do and more places to go, the Government has increased investment in Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP); and signalled an expansion of targeted activity programmes with funding focused on 15 priority areas in 2008-09.

Extended Schools Core Offer

The Government has outlined its intention that, by 2010, all children should have access to a range of extended services in and around their school. The core offer for mainstream and special schools is:

- *Primary schools* access to high-quality childcare coupled with a varied menu of activities (study support) to enhance achievement and broaden interests;
- *Secondary schools* access to a varied menu of fun and stimulating study support and enrichment activities for young people, as well as a safe place to be;
- Access to *parenting support*;
- *Swift and easy access*: through effective multi-agency working, ensuring that children with additional needs are identified as early as possible, and are well supported through integrated working with other services;
- *Community access* to appropriate facilities, such as ICT suites, sports and arts facilities, and to adult learning.

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National Children's Plan

Published in December 2007, the National Children's Plan restates the Government's commitment to prevention, and to the creation of 21st century children's services, delivered by a world class and integrated workforce focused on the needs of children and young people. The plan includes ambitious goals, for example that, by 2020 all young people should be involved in positive activities, presupposing a new role for schools 'at the heart of their communities'. Commitments on crime – to be more fully developed in the forthcoming Youth Crime Action Plan – include an aim to bring substantial reductions in the number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system; piloting a youth restorative disposal; a stronger focus on reducing reoffending; and striking of a better balance between enforcement and support.

Staying Safe Action Plan

Published in February 2008, the Staying Safe Action Plan outlines a range of measures to help children and young people stay safe under the headings of (i) universal; (ii) targeted and (iii) responsive safeguarding. New commitments include:

- **Universal**: establishment of a new Child Safety Education Coalition and launch of a major communications campaign on child safety;
- **Targeted**: new guidance and training for tackling bullying which takes place out of schools; and a new safeguarding strategy for the youth justice sector;
- **Responsive**: investment in improved listening services for children; and implementation of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007.

Youth Task Force Action Plan

Published in March 2008, the Youth Task Force Action Plan marks a new emphasis in responding to the significant minority of young people whose behaviour is unacceptable and who cause problems in their neighbourhoods. The approach seeks to balance 3 components:

- Tough enforcement where behaviour is unacceptable or illegal;
- Non-negotiable support to address the underlying causes of poor behaviour;
- Better prevention avoid problems arising or (when they do) to nip them in the bud;
- Key elements include the piloting of (20) Intensive Intervention Projects for young people based on the model of Family Intervention Projects and investment in 52 Challenge and Support Projects, combining enforcement with the use of Individual Support Orders.

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Local Government and Local Strategic Partnerships

Strong and Prosperous Communities (White Paper)

The 2006 Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' sets out the Government's proposals for radically reforming local government to improve local services and the quality of life in local communities.[2] Particularly relevant to this report is the emphasis on:

- Local authorities working with other agencies, most notably through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP), to provide overarching strategic leadership;
- Shared ownership of a future vision, set out in a Sustainable Community Strategy focusing on the needs of citizens and communities;
- Working for community cohesion and integration to maximise the benefits of migration and diversity, whilst addressing associated problems and risks;
- Giving a voice to citizens and communities drive up service standards and ensure services are responsive to their local needs.

Local Area Agreements

Local Area Agreements are about what sort of place people want to live in. They are about setting the strategic direction and focusing on the priorities that will make a town, city or community a better place to be. They are about place shaping.   Under the new arrangements LAAs will continue to be three-year agreements with priorities agreed between all the main public sector agencies working in the area and with central Government. This will mean everyone working together to have the right evidence to know what these priorities are, not only decided between public sector agencies, but every stakeholder. A good LAA should ensure there are systems in place to be sure that what everyone agrees should happen does.

The White Paper *'Strong and Prosperous Communities'*[3] year sets out fundamentally different arrangements for LAAs. The ambition is for LAAs to provide local authorities and partners with the flexibility and capacity to deliver the best solutions for their areas through a reformed relationship between central and local government. LAAs will change the way central government does business with local authorities and partners to agree on a much smaller set of core priorities for each locality within the new performance framework[4]. The major changes are being made in 2008, with the remaining architecture of the new performance framework in place by 2009. This will mean:

- More emphasis on area based service delivery;
- More freedom in spending decisions;

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[2] *Local Government And Public Involvement In Health Act* 2007 provides the legal framework for the key measures set out in the White Paper.
[3] **Local Government White Paper 2006 -** *'Strong and Prosperous Communities'*
[4] Developing the Future Arrangements for Local Area Agreements Department for Communities and Local Government (**February 2007**)

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- Fewer central targets and reporting systems;
- Strengthened community leadership role.

Public Service Agreements (PSAs)

Following completion of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, 30 PSAs set out key priority outcomes for 2008-2011. While individual departments have ownership of PSAs, for the first time these are designed to be cross-Government, helping to drive a joining up of departmental interests. As well as responding to local needs, Local Area Agreements need to contribute to the achievement of some of these national priorities.

Young people related PSAs include:

- 12: Improve the health and well-being of children and young people;
- 13: Improve children and young people's safety;
- 14: Increase the number of children and young people on the path to success;
- 21: Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities;
- 23: Make communities safer;
- 24: Deliver a more effective, transparent and responsive criminal justice system for victims and the public;
- 25: Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs.

The recently reissued delivery agreement for PSA 14 stresses the importance of local Authorities collaborating with others to ensure they have systematic and joined up prevention, early intervention and support arrangements for at-risk teenagers in their area. This is expected to involve:

- Integrating and simplifying governance, accountability and performance management at every level;
- Tackling problems associated with individual service thresholds by, where appropriate, re-allocating available resources across service boundaries and pooling budgets which target similar groups of young people;
- Incentivising effective programmes and interventions;
- Embedding and building on strategies to empower and secure the active participation of young people and their families in the commissioning, design and delivery of services;
- Ensuring that the role of schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and youth support services in delivering this PSA is widely understood and acted upon.

The plan sees closer working relationships between YOTs, 'a key part of reformed targeted youth services' and other local delivery partners as vital to the PSA's achievement.

'*Success depends on YOTs engaging with all relevant agencies that influence the risk factors associated with social exclusion – and those that help young people*

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increase their resilience to those risks – especially with regard to the cohort of young people at high risk of entering the criminal justice system. In turn, other services should ensure that they make appropriate referrals to YOTs and make the necessary contribution to service delivery to ensure better outcomes for young offenders and those at risk of offending.'

Underlining this point, the delivery plan concludes that:

*'**The youth crime agenda can no longer be viewed as separate from the other ECM outcomes**, and must be integrated within a wider preventive strategy at Local Authority level. Every agency or service – from schools and health services to youth services and the police – must recognise and embrace their role in identifying potential difficulties early, assessing needs swiftly and holistically, and deploying tailored interventions suited to the individual and their circumstances.'*

National Indicator Set

As part of its commitment to enhancing local freedoms and flexibilities and streamlining reporting, the Government has introduced a set of 198 'National Indicators' on which local areas will be expected to report. Definitions for all the indicators have recently been published.[5] New Local area Agreements, are expected to contain 'up to 35' indicators drawn from the National Indicator Set with targets attached for which the Government will 'expect a quantified and specific level of improvement'.

Crime and Disorder

The prevention of Al Qaeda inspired violent extremism also relates to the crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour agenda.

Until the late 1990s, action taken against crime and drug misuse was often piecemeal and uncoordinated, and the emphasis was placed on picking up the pieces *after* crimes had been committed. Agencies were required to form a local drugs partnership (Drugs Action Team) at a county level in response to the National drugs strategy in 1995. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998[6], for the first time placed a duty on local authorities and the police to work in partnership and with a wide range of other agencies from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder at local level. Following the Police Reform Act 2002[7] this duty was extended to police authorities, fire authorities, Primary Care Trusts. Similarly the remit of partnerships was broadened to include action to address the misuse of drugs.

Although nationally it was recognised that many partnerships were working well there was a concern that some struggled to provide a consistent level of service provision. The Police Reform White Paper published in 2004 *Building Communities,*

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[5] http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/finalnationalindicators
[6] Crime and Disorder Act 1998
[7] Police Reform Act 2002

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Beating Crime [8] announced a review of the partnership provisions of the 1998 Act (as amended by the Police Reform Act). The aim was to make them the most effective possible vehicle for tackling crime, anti-social behaviour, behaviour adversely affecting the environment and substance misuse at a local level. The Government's overall objective in carrying out the review was to strengthen the visibility, responsiveness, membership and role of local partnerships to enable them to achieve sustained reductions in crime, disorder and substance misuse. The review[9] published its findings in January 2006 and outlined the core processes and activities that would enable and drive better partnership working. Most relevant to the focus of this paper include the following:

- Adopt the National Intelligence Model (NIM)[10] for partnerships and require its use in the strategic and operational functions of community safety;
- CDRP's should undertake at least six-monthly strategic assessments;
- The requirement for triennial audits and strategies to be replaced with annual rolling three year community safety plans;
- Strengthen section 115 (data sharing) of the CDA and place a duty on responsible authorities to share depersonalised data that is relevant for community safety purposes and which is already held in a depersonalised format;
- Ensure that CDRP's/CSPs consult and engage with their communities on a regular and ongoing basis;
- CDRP's/CSPs to produce regular reports to their communities;
- Broaden the definition of section 17 (mainstreaming crime reduction) so that agencies take account of anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the environment and substance misuse;
- A set of national standards for partnership working will be put in place;
- Will need to ensure that revised methods of strategy development build in the diverse cultural and religious values of their local communities[11].

The Police and Justice Act[12], contains the necessary legislative changes to take forward action from the key findings of the CDA Review. Contained within this Act is also a power for the Secretary of State to introduce further secondary legislation to introduce a framework on minimum standards for partnership working. These came into force on the August 2007, and are supported by effective practice guidance.

The National Community Safety Plan

The outcomes from the CDA emphasise the role of Local Strategic Partnerships in strategic leadership. The review findings sit within the broad framework of the National Community Safety Plan[13] (NCSP), which was launched by the Home Office in November 2005 and sets out the Government's community safety priorities for 2006-2009. Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act laid a responsibility on local

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[8] Police Reform White Paper: *Building Communities, Beating Crime*: 2004
[9] Review of the partnership provisions of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 - Report of findings: Home Office (2006)
[10] The NIM is a model for policing that ensures information is fully researched, developed and analysed to provide intelligence in order to develop strategic direction, make resourcing decisions and manage risk.
[11] Local Government Association Briefing Paper– Crime and Disorder Act Review
[12] Police and Justice Act (2006)
[13] National Community Safety Plan: Home Office (2005)

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government to do everything it reasonably could to prevent crime and disorder in all its functions. The NCSP aims to deliver a similar outcome at central government level. It aims to manage a coherent community safety programme across Government, providing people working in the field with a clear view of overall priorities. The NCSP is built around 5 themes, these are:

- Making communities stronger and more effective;
- Further reducing crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Creating safer environments;
- Protecting the public and building confidence;
- Improving people's lives, so they are less likely to commit offences or re-offend.

Recent advice received from the Home Office Performance and Partnership Policy Unit [14] provides further clarity on the vision and future practical workings of CDRP's. This letter recognizes the important of demonstrating the links between the minimum standards and wider policy, particularly the new PSAs, the new Crime Strategy and changes to Local Area Agreements (LAAs). The letter emphasizes:

- Intelligence-led decision as lying at the heart of effective delivery and that CDRP's benefit from taking an intelligence-led, problem solving and outcome orientated approach to community safety;

- Effective and timely sharing of information between contributing partners and regular strategic analysis of this information and information gathered from the community to inform priority setting and resource allocation;

- The purpose of the strategic assessment is to identify priorities. The partnership plan will demonstrate how these priorities will be addressed and delivered by the partnership. The purpose of the countywide document is to identify countywide priorities and opportunities for cross-border working and to ensure that district and county level priorities are fed into the LAA;

- That the strategic assessment will need to be based on information provided by the responsible authorities (Responsible authorities will need to agree and sign an information sharing protocol to facilitate information sharing and there is a new duty to share certain sets of depersonalized information), cooperating bodies and invitees to participate. They will also have to cover information provided by the local communities about their concerns and priorities;

- The regulations make certain requirements about community engagement, including a requirement to consider the activities undertaken by the individual responsible authorities. These requirements also link with existing and planned community engagement work, particularly through the 'Best Value'

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[14] CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP REFORM PROGRAMME – IMPLEMENTATION IN ENGLAND
Claire Willerton: Performance and Partnership Policy Unit (18 June 2007)

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duty to inform, consult, involve and devolve and should not present an additional burden on partners.

- An intelligence-led, proactive, problem-solving approach to community safety resonates with the main thrust of the White Paper *Building Communities, Beating Crime - A better police service for the 21st century*[15]. This provides the foundation for Neighbourhood Policing Teams to enable the police to focus on and tackle specific local issues. The Police are required to involve their local community in establishing and negotiating priorities for action and to identify and implement solutions.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion primary focus is on how communities from different ethnic groups can live together better and prosper. However, it is also important to stress that other factors, such as age and class differences, may spark conflicts that impact on the cohesiveness of a community. Community Cohesion activity relates most specifically to Objective Four of the 'Prevent' Strategy: **Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism.**

The accepted definition of 'community cohesion' agreed by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), the LGA and the Home Office was first published in the LGA's 2002 'Guidance on Community Cohesion':

"A cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

This gives a broad framework, but it is important to understand the causes of some people leading separate lives in communities, fearing or condemning diversity, or having unequal life opportunities.

The Local Government White Paper: 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' encourages local councils to place more emphasis on boosting community cohesion.

At the 2006 Local Government Association (LGA) conference, Local Government Minister, Phil Woolas said:

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[15] Building Communities, Beating Crime A better police service for the 21st century (2004)

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"The traditional pillars of society have diminished, whether the church, trade unions and youth clubs. We have to rebuild these institutions that people feel an affinity to and local government is at the spine of that."

Best practice suggests that every council should:

- Establish an interfaith forum;
- Strengthen the private sector role through the chamber of commerce;
- Establish an effective race equality council;
- Ensure a cohesive focus in community policing;
- Improve voluntary sector relationships;
- Strengthen youth forums;
- Maintain healthy political parties;
- Provide strong leadership.

The government established the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in June 2006. This independent advisory body explored how different communities and places in England are getting along. It also looked at what more might be done to bring people together – respecting differences, but developing a shared sense of belonging and purpose.

The commission's final report was published in June 2007. It drew on a large number of submissions from many organisations, including councils. The report underlines the need to move away from a single approach towards more sophisticated analysis and tailored local solutions.

What can separate people

There are many things that define people as different. These things in themselves do not mean a community will lack cohesion. However, understanding the different dynamics that shape the people in a community can shed light on where the pressure points may be.

Much of the impetus around community cohesion has been focused on differences of ethnicity and the separation of different ethnic communities. This is a result of the unrest between young people of different ethnic groups in several northern English towns in 2001. In addition, ethnic diversity has been growing in many towns, which had until recently been relatively homogeneous. This has been the result of a number of factors including:

- Greater mobility of black and Asian communities;
- Economic migration from EU and other countries;
- The dispersal of refugee and asylum seekers that initially may have settled near points of entry.

However, closer analysis of the unrest has identified many other causal factors. How the different aspects of 'difference' are managed by councils and other service

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providers and agencies, is crucial to creating cohesive communities. When defining the community cohesion priorities, it is important not to be overly focused on race issues as age or faith can also be factors. Conflict emerges from difference and a lack of tolerance of difference, which can come from a variety of interlinked sources:

- Who you are – your race, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- What's around you – the community you live in, crime, availability of resources, accessibility;
- What chances you have – you class, family or personal income, employment and education;
- How you live your life – your culture or faith, your ambitions, values and lifestyle.

Maintaining close contact with the communities is critical.

The Community Cohesion Framework for Swindon

This framework expresses an aspiration for Swindon to be a place where:

- People are living and working together with quality of life;
- People have appreciation and respect for each others' needs;
- Individuals' and Communities' beliefs, cultures and identities are recognised and valued, and:
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The Community Cohesion Framework has been developed to bring together five strands that underpin the work relating to community cohesion and integration. The Framework enables the information and recording of activity relating to cohesion to be co-ordinated and connected.

The plan sets out a range of activity in respect of each of five identified strands as follows:

- A Community Cohesion Contingency Plan which details how and when partners will respond to issues that may threaten or impact on community cohesion;
- A Tension Monitoring Process which provides information to support the Contingency Plan;
- Education and preventative activity that promotes opportunities and learning that supports, develops and encourages cohesion and integration;
- Developing responses to promote integration for new residents and migrant workers;

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- A Community Cohesion Network to co-ordinate recording, collating and monitoring relevant activities, promoting good practice and disseminating information.

Criminal justice

Criminal Justice & Immigration Bill 2007

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill introduces important new youth justice provisions. These include the Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO), a new community sentence combining a number of existing sentences into one generic sentence. Intended to be the standard community sentence for the majority of young offenders the YRO is designed to simplify sentencing for young people while also enabling greater flexibility. Different components of the sentence will be drawn from a menu of requirements, depending on assessments of risk and of need. The Bill also extends the circumstances in which a court may make a Referral Order; introduces an additional, higher-tariff pre-court disposal (a Youth Conditional Caution); provides for Youth Default Orders; and features several measures on ASB including statutory one-year reviews of ASBOs for under 18-year-olds, measures to encourage the use of Individual Support Orders (ISOs) and an extension to the list of local authorities in England that may enter into a parenting contract or apply for a parenting order.

Cutting Crime. A New Partnership 2008-11

The national crime strategy aims to deliver the relevant PSAs listed above and addresses seven 'key issues', of which the following seem particularly relevant:[16]

- **A stronger focus on serious violence**, including a stronger focus on victims;

- **Continued pressure on ASB**, including through supportive interventions that address underlying factors contributing to ASB;

- **Continuing to reduce reoffending** through interventions such as the Drug Interventions Programme, and the Prolific and other Priority Offenders programme;

- **Freeing up local partners**, building public confidence and holding Partnerships to account on how well they are engaging with communities to ensure that communities influence local crime and community safety priorities;

- **A renewed focus on young people**, including re-engaging disaffected young people develop a youth crime strategy aimed at both young victims and young offenders; strengthening the links between the police, schools and youth

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[16] http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction020a.pdf

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provision to ensure that the most effective provision is in place to improve young people's safety, such as positive activities and a greater focus on the minority who end up involved in crime, violence or gangs.

ACPO strategy for children and young people

Published in January 2008, the ACPO Youth Crime Strategy '*It's never too early…It's never too late*' outlines the policing response to increasing expectations that the police work in partnership with others on a children and young people's agenda that 'extends far beyond the youth justice system.' Four central themes of the strategy focus on:

- **Building positive and sustainable relationships between children and young people and the police**, through: developing consultation mechanisms; encouraging young people's participation in decision making; supporting the delivery of positive activities, working with partners to identify children and young people at risk; supporting youth-led crime reduction; and ensuring effective use of measures to tackle asb within neighbourhood policing;

- **Supporting child victims and witnesses**, through: development and delivery of age appropriate programmes to prevent children and young people from becoming victims of crime; empowering young victims; helping young people to stay safe; and ensuring young people's welfare is paramount in investigations and court proceedings;

- **Helping those at risk of becoming offenders**, by: developing a national standard approach that enables the police and local partners to identify and intervene effectively with children and young people at greatest risk of becoming involved in asb or criminality; and working with all partners, families and communities to raise awareness of risk and protective factors, reducing risk and enhancing protective factors;

- **Delivering effective youth justice** for children and young people who offend, including by swift resolution; and by tailoring interventions to levels of risk and need, identifying and responding appropriately where young people are at greatest risk of further offending and asb.

Cross cutting strands recognised as needing action including **workforce development**, ensuring forces have the specialist skills they need to understand children and young people's needs and respond appropriately A **Neighbourhood Policing Youth Tool Kit**, currently being piloted, is designed to support front line officers in translating the strategy into action.

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Youth Crime Action Plan

The National Children's Plan, the delivery plan for PSA 14 and Ministerial speeches give a foretaste of the likely contents of the Youth Crime Action Plan due for publication in the summer. Within the Plan we can expect:

- A continuing focus on preventing offending and early intervention, involving close working between youth offending teams and other mainstream services and likely over time to involve the pooling of 100% of YOT prevention budgets with local authority funding;
- Approaches aimed at preventing young people from being drawn 'too far and too early' into the criminal justice system, backed by an ambitious target for reducing first time entrants;
- A new emphasis on victims, coupled with an emphasis on 'end to end' support for young people who have offended.

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Key Definitions[17]

Definition of Terrorism

There is a need to distinguish terrorism, an illegal act, from radicalisation and extremism, which are part of the freedom of speech in a democracy.

Actions intended to *influence* the target audience would come under the general definition of radicalisation and/or extremism (as distinct from violent extremism). Actions intended to *intimidate* the target audience would clearly constitute terrorism or violent extremism. Terrorism then may be simply defined for the purpose of this project as:

"…any violent action or threat of violent action that is intended to intimidate people or governments with the intention of promoting a political, religious, racial or ethnic cause. This includes actions intended to seriously interfere with an electronic system."

Definition of Islamism

Islamism then can be defined simply as:

"A Muslim political ideology that seeks to establish an 'Islamic state' – i.e. a state that implements the shariah."

There is a distinction to be made between Islam, a major world religion, and Islamism, a political ideology grounded in a literal and selective interpretation of sacred texts. Islamism – like Islam – is not a single entity that always and everywhere speaks with one voice.

Islamism uses a selective interpretation of religious texts and historical events, sometimes called 'the Single Narrative'. This purports to illustrate that Islam and its followers are under global attack. The Islamist worldview contrasts current events, such as Chechnya or Palestine, to a 'glorious age of Islam' that once prevailed. Local issues, such as social and economic disadvantage of the Muslim community, are linked with these global events to emphasise the duty of every Muslim to defend his faith and his 'brothers'. The suggestion is that violent jihad is the only way to defend Muslims against a global conspiracy that seeks to eliminate Islam and its followers.

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[17] Training Needs Analysis For Awareness And Prevention Of Violent Extremism NPIA 2008: A literature review: 2008

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A number of Islamist groups exist, each having different aims. Some offer support to victims of armed conflict and this supports the religious duty of giving charity. At the other end of the scale, some offer military training and deployment in war zones such as Afghanistan, and such groups promote the notion that armed jihad is also a religious duty. Although the number of people engaged in violent extremism is small, there is a substantial infrastructure that engenders and supports them either directly or indirectly.

The Islamist message is simple and clear and appeals particularly to second- or third-generation Diaspora Muslims, many of whom are seeking to find their identity in a western secular democracy, and have little knowledge of Arabic (the language of the Qur'an), limited schooling in their religion and are often at odds with their parents' generation.

The ideology is widespread across a number of media channels accessed by young people, backed up by the existence of local activists and groups that focus on local grievances to recruit members. The ideology uses nominalisations such as 'devout' and 'pure' to separate group members from non-members, and this generates a sense of 'specialness' and superiority in members. The goals are more overtly political, rather than religious.

Definition of radicalisation/radicalization

There is widespread agreement in the literature that radicalisation is a ***process*** rather than an event, that can include radicalisation, extremism and, ultimately, violence. The transition points between radical and extremist, then extremist into violence are difficult to pinpoint because they are not single steps.

Although radicalisation is a pre-cursor for extremism and extremism is a pre-cursor for violence, not every radical will cross into extremism, and not every extremist will cross the threshold into violence.

Definition of extremism

Extremism follows on from radicalisation. It works by separating out the target recruit from moderating influences and gradually exposing him to more extreme interpretations of the global attack on Islam and its believers. This is often accompanied by graphic footage of injured and dead women and children from global trouble spots, such as Chechnya and Bosnia. The cause of such horror is attributed to 'the West' and/or apostate Muslim regimes.

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Key Issues

To prevent extremist inspired violent action we need to identify[18]:

1   The **features, factors, vulnerabilities and significant events** that seem to push or pull individuals across the threshold into violent action;

2   The visible **behavioural signals** that indicate the crossing or imminent crossing of this threshold;

3   Useful **interventions** that public sector staff can make to deflect the individual from crossing the threshold, and/or to prevent harm to communities;

We should be clear that this is not an exact science and the need for sensitive judgements made by public sector staff remains essential. The individual radical, the individual member of staff and the professional context of the encounter all need to be factored into any decisions relating to intervention

Features, factors, vulnerabilities and significant events

The perceived levels of risk to western societies have prompted searches for tools to help predict those who are vulnerable to crossing the threshold of violence so that communities can be protected from harm. One model[19] identifying the 'attitudes' of individuals most at risk of radicalisation, identifies four 'essential' indicators:

- *first*, the individual's perception of acceptance of them by society;
- *second*, their perceptions of equal opportunities;
- *third*, their sense of feeling integrated and part of society and
- *fourth*, the extent to which they feel they identify with what they see as the dominant values of society. The extent to which society sees Muslims as part of the community is also important.

However, the use of such models for profiling of individuals is now accepted to be a flawed and counter-productive [20]. Although models of radicalisation to extremism into violence may be useful in explaining the stages, scholarly research suggests that it has little predictive power (see Knott et al: 2006). That said, personal accounts of radicalisation suggest that there are many common features factors and vulnerabilities that might be a starting point to identify the young people in particular more susceptible to exploitation by violent extremists and intervene to prevent harm. Such features or 'markers' include significant events, behavioural changes and changed associations with radicalising actors and/or locations.   The list below is

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[18] Training Needs Analysis For Awareness And Prevention Of Violent Extremism NPIA 2008: A literature review: 2008
[19] The Role of Muslim Identity Politics in Radicalisation- a study in progress: (2006)
[20] Training Needs Analysis For Awareness And Prevention Of Violent Extremism NPIA 2008: A literature review: 2008

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neither exhaustive nor detailed. It is important to emphasise that the presence of these factors presumes neither radicalisation nor engagement in violent activity.

Violent extremist radicalisers

Radicalisation is often a social process, involving interaction with others. Radicalisers may be propagandists, ideologues or terrorists and may be in face-to-face contact with the subject or in dialogue over the internet.

Global violent extremist narrative

Violent extremists rely on simplifying complex political, philosophical, ethical, religious and historical facts and using the resulting claims of oppression to recruit vulnerable individuals and incite a violent response. Al-Qa'ida's "global jihad" ideology uses a view of history and international relations that says that the corruption of Islam and the (supposedly) impoverished state of the Muslim world is the result of a Zionist-Christian alliance against Islam[21]. The key issues are as follows:

The distortion of Islam to achieve political aims

Islam, like other world faiths, is a religion, not a political ideology. As such, it makes no specific, monolithic prescription of an 'Islamic state', 'economic system', or 'foreign policy'[22]. This point is supported by a recent study into violent extremists of all the Abrahamic religious faiths[23] which found that: "religion was rarely the objective cause of violence. Instead, religion was distorted into a rationale and sanction for the commission of violent acts and to incite recruits to commit violence. Understanding the landscape is critical to tackling the issues as Ruth Kelly in her announcement on the 5th April 2007 clearly articulates *'This is not about a clash of civilisations or a struggle between Islam and "the West". It is about standing up to a small fringe of terrorists and their extremist supporters. Indeed, Government is committed to working in partnership with the vast majority of Muslims who reject violence and who share core British values in doing this.*

A clear alternative narrative

Many commentators have called the need for a clear (youth-oriented) counter-narrative to terrorist justifications of violence.[24] However there is a strong consensus that Government's role should be limited to providing the space for faith communities and civil society to intervene rather than interfering in ideological issues that are

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[21] Preventing Violent Extremism - Winning hearts and minds – April 2007 Department for Communities and Local Government: London
[22] Al-Qa'ida Influenced Violent Extremism and the Recruitment and Grooming Process Used by Violent Extremist Groups report (undated)
[23] Commentary: Violence in Abrahamic faiths MIDDLE EAST TIMES - Shaun Waterman UPI Published October 22, 2007
[24] Preventing Extremism Together: Response to Working Group reports: Home Office

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more effectively addressed by religious and civil society[25]. This is emphasised by Shiraz Maher[26] who argues that the government cannot enter the theological debate which drives Islamist terror. That is a battle that needs to be fought by the Muslim community. Shaun Waterman[27] suggests that to do so would risk poisoning the waters for moderate religious leaders and other opinion-formers who can actually have an impact on the outcome. A critical dimension of this counter- narrative is for the Muslim faith to pose probing questions, such as, for example, what practices truly are essential to religious observance and which are ancillary; which are due to true Koranic injunctions, and which are more cultural, derived even from the pre-Islamic habits of Indonesia, the Maghreb, or the Arab Peninsula? [28]

A strong mainstream Muslim voice

In the words of one of the cleric, "the most common response to religious violence by moderate religious leaders is to be quiet." The moderates must confront the reasons for this hesitation for cohesion in their communities[29]. This is one of the key findings to emerge from The *Countering Violent Extremism: Lessons from the Abrahamic Faiths* report[30] which notes that "any faith plagued by extremists must 'get its own house in order. Maajid Nawaz writing in the sun newspaper[31] argues that 'imposing religion or anti-religion are two sides of the same coin Freedom of the individual is non-negotiable. If Muslims object to the French ban on the hijab, we must also object to the "Islamist" plan to impose the hijab and ban women uncovering their hair. If British Muslims expect wider society to speak out against racism and Islam-bashing, then British Muslims must also speak out against far-right ideologies that are interbreeding within a vocal and active minority among us. If right-wing European films that show Islam to be a violent religion are irresponsible, then so are Islamist propaganda films that glorify suicide bombers in Palestine'.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims condemn terrorism as morally wrong and contrary to the teachings of Islam. But community and faith leaders are not always able to convey their arguments to those vulnerable to violent extremists' messages.

Better teaching provision for young Muslims

A lack of religious literacy and education appears to be a common feature among those that are drawn to extremist groups. The most vulnerable are those who are religious novices exploring their faith for the first time as they are not in a position to objectively evaluate whether the radical group represents an accurate understanding of Islam. A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and

[25] COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM Lessons from the Abrahamic Faiths An EWI Policy Research Report OCTOBER 2007.
[26] Extremism is going unchallenged Shiraz Maher Published 03 April 2008
[27] Analysis: Countering religious extremism- SHAUN WATERMAN UNITED PRESS (2007)
[28] Preventing Violent Radicalism in Europe Conference report
[29] Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Two years on – A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion
[30] *Countering Violent Extremism: Lessons from the Abrahamic Faiths (2007)*
[31] Sun Newspaper *Evidence of a growing reaction from the Muslim community to the double standards inherent in extremism* (19/04/08)

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community cohesion32 notes that 'Young people are searching for explanations of their worlds. Too often in isolated religious communities, extremists meet the young and radicalize them. When a young person has little understanding of the true tenets of his or her faith, he or she is particularly vulnerable to recruitment' There is therefore increasing evidence that extremist groups rather than having to challenge or unpick the main stream Islamic viewpoint are feeding into a vacuum. In this respect the practice is some Mosques of only reading the Koran in Arabic has attracted particular criticism.

This point is supported by a recent survey of young British Muslims conducted by Fosis, (Federation of Islamic Societies in the UK and Eire). It found that most young British Muslims saw their clerics as 'out of touch and irrelevant'. Fosis reported that: Only 2 per cent of the respondents said the mosque was their main source of religious knowledge; 7 per cent cited the local imams. 20 per cent said they turned to their parents; but the vast majority cited books, pamphlets, Web sites, videos and informal study groups. A report produced by Leyton LA[33] suggests that the findings of the FOSIS survey are hugely important (assuming it is representative of young Muslims in Britain). It suggests that an entirely different approach is needed to combat their radicalisation than any mosque based or university based approach. They need to be got to and spoken to by peers whom they can trust in a language they can understood using means of communication to which they can relate.

The role of women

The *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Two years on – A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion* suggests that Muslim women have a key role to play in challenging prejudice and stereotypes both within their own communities and in wider society. They possess a largely untapped potential to challenge the attitudes that can foster violent extremist ideas. Muslim women are at the heart of communities undertaking a multitude of roles. Resilient communities cannot be built and sustained without their active participation.

Violent extremist material

Books, pamphlets and audio/visual material (including websites) reflecting the extremist narrative, and often including images of violence that could be portrayed as representing an ideological or religious conflict, can influence people towards supporting violent extremism.

As noted in a recent report[34] ignorance is a key tool used by the extremists. The Al-Qa'ida narrative relies on audiences lacking an in-depth knowledge of the issues and on the spread of misinformation. It ignores factual evidence to the contrary (e.g. British military intervention to protect Kosovan Albanian Muslims; UK support for Turkey's membership of the EU). Its potency as propaganda is based on its

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[32] Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Two years on – A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion (2007)
[33] In the Battle of Ideas Against Violent Extremism, Street-Level Pre-emption May Be the Best and Only Viable Strategy - London distinct of Leyton
[34] Al-Qa'ida Influenced Violent Extremism and the Recruitment and Grooming Process Used by Violent Extremist Groups

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propensity to weave fact with subjective opinion and emotion to seek to occupy a moral and religious high-ground. As a result, the Al-Qa'ida message is persuasive to many and is actively used by large numbers of people and networks promoting violent extremism.   J. Rami Mroz[35] argues therefore that Key to any strategy to counter extremism is the ability to reach the same audiences targeted by extremists.

Group identity

There are strong psychological and emotional benefits to involvement in extremist networks, including a strengthened sense of identity, social support and a feeling of belonging.   An individual may seek to belong to a group that supports violent extremism for reasons of protection and/or social inclusion.

Some commentators[36] have noted that peer group pressure at meetings and debates can help to sway opinion, bringing moderates over to a more radical viewpoint. Those who have a differing viewpoint can be afraid to speak and differentiate themselves from the majority. Individuals who openly disagree could be opening themselves up to accusations of not being a true Muslim and becoming sidelined.   Sometimes a group collectively adopts a more extreme position than would be expected from an analysis of views held by individual members of the group.   Extremist individuals have also been known to 'groom' likely recruits, by closely observing those willing to adopt more extreme viewpoints or those perceived to be vulnerable and more likely to be easily influenced. There have been instances whereby extremist individuals have befriended vulnerable students in order to create a culture of dependency and influence over them.

Personal crisis

A trigger event or crisis point, particular to an individual's circumstances (although it might be experienced on behalf of others), that may be a culmination or confluence of events, or related to life changes/milestones – e.g. divorce; estrangement from family; entering or leaving the prison system – may leave an individual vulnerable to exploitation.

Changed situation or circumstance

 A change of environment or circumstance (e.g. migration, asylum), particularly without a support structure, can lead people to experience uncertainty and may – at least temporarily – create vulnerability. There is some further evidence that the experience of trauma also creates a situation conducive to radicalisation.

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[35] *COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM* VIDEOPOWER AND CYBERSPACE East West Institute, J. Rami Mroz: (February 2008)
[36] Al-Qa'ida Influenced Violent Extremism and the Recruitment and Grooming Process Used by Violent Extremist Groups

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Underemployment

Where employment is not commensurate with actual or perceived skills, education or ability and where this is not through choice or design, it can lead to frustration and a sense of grievance. Young Muslims share many of the same challenges and problems that other young people face – but these problems are often magnified because of a perceived taboo about discussing sensitive issues within the community or because mainstream services are not faith-sensitive enough. For those young Muslims not in university or college, it is critical that youth services are able to provide the support that they need.

Leaders of the proscribed group *Al-Muhajiroun*, for example, identify young university students who suffer from a sense of blocked social mobility as their most important recruitment pool, because it is the upwardly mobile group that, 'believes that they face a discriminatory system that prevents them from realising their potential'. Analysis of the 2003 Home Office Citizenship survey shows that for Muslims, perceptions of discrimination, rather than socio-economic status, affect their sense of belonging and attachment to Britain.

Links to criminality

A number of violent extremists have had involvement with criminality, either before or after radicalisation. Individuals may espouse a religious doctrine in an attempt to escape from a criminal past, or may use it to justify previous or ongoing criminal activity.

Identity

Adolescence is often a time when young people explore issues of faith, heritage, identity and their purpose in the world. It is also a point at which individuals may become vulnerable to extremist ideas that may help to provide a spurious sense of purpose or a feeling of belonging to a wider extremist community. For young people in particular the search for identity is part of the process of defining one's relationship with the world that usually takes place without necessarily leading to 'radicalisation'. 'Radicalisation' therefore also requires an interpersonal interaction with other actors who stimulate and influence the radicalisation process. A lack of positive, inspirational role models can be a key factor in young people becoming vulnerable to the messages of violent extremism.

The public devaluation and disparagement of Muslims and Islam are among the external factors that have led to increased in-group solidarity and identification on the basis of religion. Muslim identity can also be important in defining a sense of masculinity among young Muslim men, who construct a 'strong' Muslim identity as a way in which to resist stereotypes of 'weakness and passivity'. This is a circular process. Politically inspired atrocities, portrayed with a religious justification, encourages Islamaphobia, which further serves to alienate the Muslim community. This is a deliberate terrorist tactic.

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Media reporting is considered by many to be factor in fuelling this 'un-virtuous circle'. One key report[37] suggests that many British Muslims have an understandable defensiveness, a feeling of siege even, because of the nature of media coverage of Muslim-related issues. Whether about terrorism, the veil, honour killings or other stories, the sense is of an unremitting stream of hostile press.

The fact that the media is, in many cases, legitimately reporting on events and issues of interest is beside the point; tone, volume and proportion are more important than the validity or otherwise of an individual story, and perception is all. The very idea that there is a "Muslim problem" that needs to be dealt with inevitably puts ordinary British Muslims on the defensive and reduces the possibility that important issues can be engaged with in a constructive way. In this light, the emergence of several former Islamists, most prominently the former Hizb ut-Tahrir activists Ed Husain, Shiraz Maher and Majid Nawaz, has introduced a welcome nuance into the media debate. Their distinction between Islam and Islamism, and their determination to address Islamism as a political movement, has enabled the media to address the question of Islamist politics in a more focused way without attacking Muslims per se. It is also no coincidence that since the arrival of authentic Muslim critics of Islamism, the MCB and others have felt obliged to speak out against, for instance, the situation in Darfur or the "Muhammad" teddy bear affair.

A recent Government review[38] suggests that the current public discourse implies that British Muslim life revolves wholly around issues relating to terrorism/anti-terrorism, which only serves to stigmatise the community. They recommend that broader-based portrayals of British Muslim life should be regularly communicated to the rest of society. The Government is also keen to address misunderstandings about the Muslim community[39], with the Communities and Local Government working with the Institute of Community Cohesion and Media Trust to train a number of local authorities in myth busting. The training helps local authorities to identify 'myths' that have a negative impact on community cohesion. Myths can take the form of dangerous rumours or deliberate mischief making that people believe.

Getting the language 'right' has also attracted much recent attention[40]/[41]. For instance implying that 'extremism' and 'violence/terrorism' are the same, while it is perfectly possible to hold extremist views that are peaceful. The same is true of the clumsy use of the term 'radicalisation'. A recent European report[42] notes that 'terminology is a complex and sensitive issue, and requires considerable knowledge and exploration by those managing counter radicalisation initiatives'

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[37] Al-Qa'ida Influenced Violent Extremism and the Recruitment and Grooming Process Used by Violent Extremist Groups
[38] Recommendations from the Community Security review – including addressing Islamophobia, increasing confidence in policing and tackling extremism Working Group
[39] Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Two years on – A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion
[40] **Error! Main Document Only.Error! Main Document Only.**RESPONSE to Home Office Consultation on Preventing Extremism Together: Places of Worship Religious Society of Friends (2007)
[41] RESPONSE TO PLACES OF WORSHIP CONSULTATION 'PREVENTING EXTREMISM TOGETHER THE MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN (2007)
[42] DRAFT OPINION of the Commission for Constitutional Affairs, European Governance and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice on STEPPING UP THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM: INVOLVEMENT OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES12th Commission meeting (16 April 2008)

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A number of commentators[43]/[44]/[45] have also criticized militarizing conflict with extremists; the so called 'war on terror', as this exacerbates feelings of alienation and opposition more than it ensures security. Instead they emphasize following the rule of law and taking a consistent approach towards extremists and extremism regardless of the faith in question. *The EWI Policy Research Report* furthermore suggests that it is important to focus on the criminality of the acts involved rather than the ideological justification claimed for such acts.

Social exclusion

 An individual may experience social exclusion personally or perceive it in the surrounding community; this may be at a family, neighbourhood or a wider level. There is evidence that radicalization is linked to a failure for **some** Muslims to achieve effective integration. This can be summed up as a need for immigrants to find a balance between their country of origin and their adopted country, between their past and their future. This balance has to be right for each individual, but it must also fall within the parameters of what's comfortable for the larger society. The ideology of intolerance and religious chauvinism can be tempting to the uprooted, to those who have become too far removed from the country of their birth—or their parents' birth—but not yet moored in their new society. This point was chillingly illustrated by the suicide video of one of the British Born London Bombers, denouncing Britain in a broad northern accent.

Some commentators[46] have remarked upon a need to develop a British Islam because the second generation have grown up in the UK long enough that their parents' version of Islam 'seems distant and irrelevant' but there has not been sufficient time for a home grown religious leadership to emerge to take control of the mosques, whilst much of the existing leadership is unable to communicate with the young or to understand their concerns. There are signs of a 'British Muslim' identity forming in reaction to violent radicalism, which is proposing a 'receptive, integrationist and dynamic' Islam. It is receptive because it is open to Western influences; it is integrationist because it believes Muslims ought to take full part in British society and political processes; and it is dynamic because it acknowledges that as contexts change, so will the ways Muslims conceive of and practise their religion. Thus, it will be seen that whilst Muslim identity politics can contribute towards radicalisation, it can also be a significant tool against it.

A new challenge for race relations

Ted Cantle[47], noted that 'the focus of previous race relations policy was on preventing discrimination and promoting equalities. These are still necessary, but there is another challenge facing us – which is, in a diverse society how do you

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[43] Analysis: Countering religious extremism- SHAUN WATERMAN UNITED PRESS (2007)
[44] Countering Violent Extremism: Lessons from the Abrahamic Faiths (2007)
[45] Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Two years on – A progress report on the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion
[46] The Role of Muslim Identity Politics in Radicalisation- a study in progress (2007)
[47] Recommendations from the Community Security – including addressing Islamophobia, increasing confidence in policing and tackling extremism Working Group

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make sure different minorities as well as the majority community actually relate to each other, and have a common sense of belonging and purpose?'

Focus on commonality, not difference

J. Rami Mroz[48] argues that identifying common feelings and emotions between polarized groups—such as fear, feelings of insecurity, hate or violence—may be a better strategy because working these issues has the potential to create an inclusive atmosphere. If we focus on similarities, rather than differences, and on addressing grievances, violent extremists will find it increasingly difficult to inflame divisions. The Department for Communities and Local Government also emphasises the importance of promoting shared values

Grievances

Real or perceived grievances may develop about aspects of Government policy (particularly foreign policy), discrimination or racism, lack of social mobility, perceived mistreatment in the criminal justice system and counter-terrorism measures. The narrative draws on a number of concerns – some of which may be quite widely shared by Muslims and non-Muslins alike. These include perceived injustices (e.g. Palestine); opposition to military intervention (e.g. in Iraq or Afghanistan); local perceptions of discrimination (e.g. a view that stop and search rules are not operated fairly); and concerns.

Perceptions of distorted media representations of communities or conflicts are also relevant. A shared sense of grievance locally, nationally and internationally may reinforce group identity.

Lack of trust in political structures and civil society

Individuals may lack confidence in the ability of British society and its governance and legal systems to represent their interests and those of the communities with which they identify and a lack of legitimate outlets with which young Muslims are able to register protest and dissent.

Participation by young Muslims in civic and political activity is lower than the national average – although this may be explained by socio-economic, rather than faith-related factors. Young British Muslims tend to face a double exclusion: from wider society and from conventional leadership roles within their own communities. In particular, many young Muslims have reported[49]:

- Disillusionment with mainstream Muslim organisations that are perceived as pedestrian, ineffective, and 'part of the system';

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[48] *COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM* VIDEOPOWER AND CYBERSPACE East West Institute, J. Rami Mroz: (February 2008)

[49] Working together to prevent extremism report: Home Office – Aug – Oct 2005

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- That they lack a 'voice' and stake in the political and civic institutions of the
- UK; that they lack levers over which they can influence decisions that are important to Muslims.

Analysis of the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey suggests that political activity by Muslims positively contributes to their sense of identification with Britain. The extremist's claim that the Koran forbids democracy and therefore it is sinful for Muslims to vote is not without rationale.

Behavioural signals

Although some individuals begin the radicalisation process on their own, as they progress, they seek like-minded individuals either in local groups or on the Internet. The development of face-to-face contact with like-minded people seems to be essential to progressing to extremism and violent action. Individuals are searching for solutions to issues, and the Islamist groups seem to offer these.

Empirically the key aspect of radicalisation is the marked change in the behaviour of an individual. There is a strong drive to take urgent action to deal with the perceived present dangers. This drive to action leads to changes in the behaviour of individuals as they move closer to more radical and extreme beliefs. Some changes in behaviour may sometimes be mistaken for normal adolescent rebellion. It is only when taken as a whole that a coherent pattern of radicalisation can be identified. Such changes include:

- A new sense of self-worth generated by finding a new group of like-minded friends that can result in the individual becoming involved in community or charity work or as a volunteer, and/or becoming involved in social activism to promote 'pure' forms of Islam;

- This small group of friends acts as an 'echo chamber' to amplify radical thought while creating a competitive environment for being the most radical. All this may still stop short of extremism and violence unless other radical actors are present. Members of the group begin to feel superior to non-members. Traditional appearance and clothing becomes a badge of membership;

- The intense group relationships replace those of other friends and family. Eventually the individual has no friends but Muslim males from this group. The sense of belonging, danger, adventure and mystery serves to bond the group members more firmly;

- There is increasing evasiveness about activities, friends and locations (although this is also fairly typical of teenage behaviour);

- Intense anger about the global attack on Islam and the lack of action by most Muslims spills out when political or social issues are discussed or depicted in the media. There is a strong sense that solutions to these global attacks are only being provided by the Salafi or Wahhabi jihadist ideologies and other Muslims are perceived as weak or as not understanding the issues;

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- There is a growing intolerance of disagreement or challenge. Intolerance of anyone who is not a 'pure' Muslim becomes extreme and particular scorn is reserved for weak leaders who have compromised Islam by their agreements with the West;

- Throughout this process changes occur in the regular place of worship and/or social networks, alienation from family and former friends, criticism of traditional religious Islam including mosque leaders and Muslim scholars. The individual uses Salafi or Wahhabi sources of authority to underpin the debate, which becomes more overtly political. Points may be illustrated by reference to global issues such as Afghanistan, Bosnia or Chechnya, and linking these with local issues;

- Emphasis is placed on the duty of Muslims to undertake violent jihad to bring about the Global Caliphate. The tone is angry and political, with religion used as a driver for action. Radical action and even violence is endorsed as legitimate and the belief that there are no 'innocents' may be argued. Martyrdom as a concept replaces that of suicide and traditional Islamic beliefs (about the unacceptability of suicide) are challenged.

Effective interventions

The imperative to 'get upstream' to deter those who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists is clear[50]. However, whilst current understanding describes the trajectory towards violent extremism, it is not yet clear whether they are sufficiently discerning to be used predicatively. The test would be to apply the models to populations outside the small group of terrorists and analyse the results. If this generates false positives, then a more sophisticated predictive model needs to be developed.

If a predictive model can be developed, interventions will need to be developed that can take account of a number of factors. These include: practitioners who can identify risk indicators and refer information within their own context, for the risk factors to be accurately assessed, and for an overall decision on what action might be appropriate, according to agreed standards and protocols so as to balance privacy and risk.

In all cases, local communities must be assisted in playing a significant role in countering radicalisation. Local communities are best positioned to identify, develop and implement outreach programs that will better foster mutual respect and understanding. Providing a strong role for communities needs to be a major part of any strategy.

Along with the supporting objective of *Developing understanding, analysis and information and improving strategic communications, the* five objectives of the Prevent strategy provides the framework for action and Local Strategic Partnership plans should involve activity across the whole spectrum. These objectives, along with key activities are to:

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[50] ACOP: Countering Violent Extremism (2008)

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- **Challenge the violent extremist ideology and support mainstream voices;**

  o Build an understanding and awareness of violent extremist ideology
  o Identify credible mainstream voices
  o Support those voices
  o Promote a stronger understanding of faith, culture and history

- **Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions where they are active;**

  o Disrupt those who promote violent extremism
  o Support institutions

- **Support individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism;**

  o Improve the capacity to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalisation
  o Create points of referral for individual cases
  o Devise, trialling and implementing a range of interventions

- **Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism;**

  o Actively engage with local communities
  o Build community capacity
  o Develop leadership
  o Promote positive alternative activities

- **Address the grievances which ideologues are exploiting;**

  o Provide safe spaces for debate
  o Identify and consider grievances
  o Take action to address grievances
  o Manage consequences effectively

The Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund sets out the followings priorities:

Responding to concerns and ideology

- Activities that provide effective local campaigns to confront extremist ideologies.
- Activities that promote local role models that can counter negative imagery and comment.
- Activities that promote understanding of the benefits that Muslims and Islam have brought to local areas.
- Activities that promote understanding and acceptance of key shared values and that promote dialogue and engagement between communities in support of those values.

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Supporting and nurturing civic and theological leadership

- Activities that support local community leaders, organisations and role models working to tackle violent extremism and which equip them with the skills necessary for these roles.
- Activities that support local mosques, imams and madrassahs in activities to prevent violent extremism.
- Activities that promote democratic participation, engagement and civic involvement.
- Activities that enable members of communities to debate and question political and social issues in safe environments and to enable their voice to be heard locally.
- Activities that provide support networks for at risk and vulnerable groups within local communities.
- Activities that promote interfaith dialogue and joint working, focussed on preventing violent extremism.
- Activities that promote volunteering opportunities for local members of communities, particularly on work relevant to tackling extremism but also to foster greater engagement in community voluntary activities.
- Activities that promote Islamic awareness amongst Muslim communities and local communities more widely.

Increasing the resilience of key organisations and institutions and supporting early interventions

- Activities that improve intelligence gathering and sharing at a local level, to create systems in their own services/institutions (or with partners) for enabling concerns/intelligence to be reported and acted on and to promote effective working with local police/regional security services.
- Activities that seek to provide mechanisms to identify vulnerable communities, groups and individuals in local areas and strategies by which to address such at risk groups.
- Activities to develop targeted programmes of counter- and de-radicalisation work in local areas, particularly in key institutions – such as universities, colleges and schools – and key locations.

Capacity and skills development

- Development and support of local Forums on Extremism and Islamophobia, in line with the Local Government White Paper. We would expect to see some mechanism by which local communities and partners are engaged in this work and the Forum model is a strong one that has received significant support.
- Sharing, learning and development programmes relating to violent extremism for local leaders and members.
- Provision of guidance and awareness training for front line staff and managers in organisations providing services or community support.

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- Research and attitudinal surveys of local Muslim and other communities – using shared methodologies to which local partners have contributed.

Examples of interventions

Westminster Council Scheme

- Young People's Leadership and Debate Programme involving training covering practical leadership skills, such as organisational skills, chairing meetings, leading discussions and workshops and public speaking.

- Training and Capacity Building Programme for Muslim Organisations.

Linking communities in Peterborough

Peterborough Council has used the work of its 'New Link' centre as a focal point for a project on preventing violent extremism (PVE). The project has focused on improving relations between different Muslim denominations, and also between these groups and the wider community.

The project aimed to develop a community in which all members can:

- Identify themselves as a welcome part of a wider British society and are accepted as such by the wider community;
- Reject violent extremism ideology and actively condemn violent extremism;
- Isolate violent extremist activity, and support and cooperate with the police and security services;
- Develop their own capacity to deal with problems where they arise and support diversionary activity for those at risk.

The outcomes from community consultation exercises in Peterborough are as follows:

- The role of mosques needs to be transparent and imams should be supported with training in local issues and language skills.
- More interfaith activity, particularly with Christian and Jewish groups.
- Positive media work is needed to dispel myths, particularly around customs and religion. More responsible and balanced reporting is needed.
- There is a need for trained youth workers to support youths in need, and more integration in the education system.
- More parental involvement is needed in school life, for example as school governors.
- There is a need to build capacity for elderly and women groups to promote integration.

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- Understanding of the effect of foreign policy and perceived global injustice to Muslim communities.
- National leadership must exist to promote cohesion and combat extremism.
- There needs to be more available factual information to counter misinformation from far-right nationalist political groups.
- There needs to be funding to tackle social deprivation in housing, employment and education.
- A need for a structured Muslim community representative body, which involves young people and women.
- A need to map existing resources in the community, including all Muslims with clearly defined leadership and government support.
- In its terms of responsibility, the key themes must remain: unity and the need to combat all kinds of extremism and tackle all social issues affecting the community.
- In order to do this, the framework must be accountable, have real power and involve the community.

East Midlands Preventing Violent Extremism Pilot Projects

These include:

Reaching young people:

- Peer mentoring (Nottingham)
- Developing leadership skills (Leicester)
- Increasing uptake of youth services (Nottingham)
- Challenging extremist messages via school curriculum and cartoon publications (Leicester)

Developing knowledge and skills:

- Building links with police and security services (regional)
- Community intelligence model pilot (Derby)
- Research into community profiles (Leicester) and drivers of extremism (regional & Nottingham)
- Action Learning Sets (regional / DeMontfort University

London distinct of Leyton - Street-Level Pre-emption programme

The strategy involves getting to these youngsters – so as to implant into their heads some sensible and moderate ideas about what their religion is and demands -- before any extremist co-religionists of theirs can do so, and who, in the absence of the youngsters having been given the aforementioned ideological prophylactic, can all too easily persuade these youngsters that their religion sanctions, or worse still demands, violent action in retaliation for what the extremists seem also all too easily able to persuade the youngsters is a global war currently being waged by the West against their religion and its adherents.

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Tottenham Hotspur Youth Forum, Haringey

In recognition that a lack of positive, inspirational role-models can be a key factor in young people becoming vulnerable to the messages of violent extremism, Haringey Muslim Youth Forum working in partnership with Tottenham Hotspur FC and others provides a platform to promote the positive values of Islam, and to improve self-esteem, confidence, and the development of other important skills. High-profile Muslim footballers and coaches act as role models for young Muslims who are not in education, training or employment and who lack positive aims. Sport and cultural programmes provide positive alternatives to doctrines of hate and will seek to counter specific harmful views. The young people are supported in integrating into British society in a way that is respectful of their faith and culture.

Barking and Dagenham Islamic Awareness

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham supports local organisations to provide education about Islam and its teachings, contrasting the reality of Islam against the rhetoric of violent extremism. Improved awareness of the different facets of Islam as a religion and a culture is delivered through:

- Seminars led by Islamic scholars to promote understanding of Islam and rebut jihadist myths and half-truths. Seminars are run by leading authorities but held in community locations, bringing the events to the wider Muslim communities and giving Muslim students access to influential public figures.
- Training, through Barking Mosque, to enable key individuals from local institutions to disseminate information on the principles of Islam and its incompatibility with violent extremism.
- A rolling programme of courses at Barking Mosque to highlight the opportunities for Muslims in their local communities, including opportunities for voluntary service.

Birmingham Young Muslim Leadership Programmes & Green Light Resources

Young Muslim men and women have the strongest, most credible voices when turning their peers away from violent extremism. Birmingham City Council and the Black Country supports a Young Muslim Leadership Programmes to hold workshops on issues such as citizenship, civic engagement, and how to respond to signs of radicalisation amongst young people.

Lambeth Women's Forum

Muslim women are often unheard in the debate on the identity of British Muslims within society. A key challenge is to empower them to engage with their communities, and especially with disillusioned youth, on issues of integration and violent extremism. Representatives work with and empower women of all ages by promoting activities, such as the mentoring of Muslim women by Lambeth

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councillors. This is aimed at encouraging women to put themselves forward as councillors. Establishing a Muslim Women's forum and Muslim Women's student forum are also key priorities.

Channel Project

The Channel Project is a multi-agency approach to support vulnerable individuals. It is a local and community-based initiative, which utilises existing partnership working between the police, local authority and the local community. The project takes referrals from a number of sources on individuals that may be vulnerable to becoming involved in violent extremism. A joint risk assessment of each individual case is then made by project members and any issues of concern are identified. A programme of intervention tailored to the needs of the individual is then developed and implemented. Involvement of community partners is key. They will have expertise and insight into the process of assessment, referral and intervention.

Mosaic Mentoring Scheme

The Mosaic Muslim Mentoring Scheme receives funding from Communities and Local Government's Community Leadership Fund with the aim of recruiting 100 Muslim professionals to mentor disadvantaged young Muslims in schools and colleges. The scheme aims to raise aspirations and reduce the sense of isolation experienced by young Muslims in marginalised communities, addressing one of the factors that can contribute to sympathy with violent extremist actions. The mentors benefit themselves by using their experiences to help others maximise their opportunities and contributing to the development of the leaders of tomorrow. Mosaic has recruited nearly 200 mentors to date who have been carrying out mentoring sessions in London, the East Midlands, Lancashire and Bradford, and are looking to expand over the next few years. So far Mosaic has directly contacted schools but there is clearly a role for local authorities for helping Mosaic target its activities.

Leicester De-radicalisation Project

This community-based programme is funded to deliver a mentoring programme for vulnerable individuals. It aims to encourage young people to feel more valued and to eradicate myths and assumptions which lead to young people becoming alienated and disempowered, and thus vulnerable to the threat of radicalisation. The group was already working in the fields of substance abuse and social exclusion before further funding allowed it to expand its work to include preventing violent extremism. It has developed good relationships with local police, primary care trusts, schools, mosques and other key partners and is seen as part of a community response to the problem of radicalisation. Such an approach could be successful for other community organisations.

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Waltham Forest Young Muslim Leaders Development Programme

Waltham Forest Council and the local police jointly commissioned two local community organisations to develop a leadership programme for young Muslims in Waltham Forest. Twenty-one young people were trained and, while the activity was under one brand, each organisation had the autonomy to develop a programme to meet the needs of the young people they were working with.

Leytonstone Programme

Leytonstone Muslim Community Centre developed a programme based on an understanding of Islam and leadership skills, delivering it to a group of young men and women who were in higher education and were at risk of isolation and detachment from their previous support networks. The Active Change Foundation worked with a younger group of mostly young men who lived in the most deprived ward in the area. It provided them with interventions in relation to citizenship, conflict resolution and coping skills to deal with the risks of drugs, alcohol and involvement in antisocial behaviour as well as extremism. The programme has just been independently evaluated by Renaisi, a social regeneration company. The evaluation concluded that the young people demonstrated confidence and pride in their roles, and spoke of an enhanced understanding of their faith and a personal commitment to tackling extremism.

The Muslim Youth Development Partnership

This Nottingham-based partnership comprises three charities: the Karimia Institute, Crime Concern and Muslim Hands. Each organisation contributes different qualities to the partnership, such as designing and delivering Islamic Studies courses, project managing and fundraising. In particular the Karimia Institute is a centre for worship, education, training and self-development and has run successful sports coaching programmes and residential youth camps for young people. The partnership received support from the Community Leadership Fund in 2007/08 to build the leadership capacity of 45 young Muslims aged 16–25. It did so by training and supporting them to form a network of volunteer youth leaders from two 'hubs' – one in the north (Bradford, Halifax and Manchester) and one in the Midlands Birmingham and Nottingham). The project equipped the youth leaders with the organisational abilities, skills and resources to work with mosques and Islamic centres on the delivery of local youth activities that promote volunteering and community cohesion among Muslim young people.

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The Swindon Context

Aside from the new Government requirement to produce a plan[51], the stakeholder consultation (see appendix A) undertaken in support of the Youth Justice Board bid identified a number of factors that suggest that PVE should be a priority for *making communities safer* in Swindon, as follows:

- Swindon has not had the benefit of any specific PVE funding (Pathfinder);
- Swindon Police have a Counter Terrorism Plan, however the Prevent stream is not developed, there is no existing Prevent Partnership Plan and whilst all partners are thoughtful about PVE it is not currently on the local partnership RADAR. However, it is anticipated that the recent publication by the Government of the national Prevent Strategy52, along with guidance for local partners will lend impetuous to local partners agreeing and driving forward a local programme of action through establishing effective multiagency arrangements. Clearly, it is critical that this initiative both anticipates and is developed in accordance with the Swindon Strategy;
- There is limited BME and faith related demographic information. Best guestimates suggest a Muslim population of between 3-4% (5400 – 7200), mainly living in three centrally located wards (predominantly in one ward);
- The Youth Offending Team works with few young Muslims and PVE is not on the Anti-Social Behaviour or Targeted Youth Support agendas;
- There are a number of current or planned projects and programmes in Swindon that involve activity that could and should have a PVE dimension. This includes much of the existing community cohesion activity focused on the Muslim community and initiatives (such as the Leadership for Peace Programme) that are linked to recent serious public disorder incidents (one in particular);
- Recent incidents, such as those occurring in Exeter and Westbury-on-Trim have underlined the fact that it Al Qaeda inspired violent extremism can surface anywhere and whilst there is no single profile of a violent extremist or a single radicalisation pathway there are factors and vulnerabilities which repeatedly appear in different cases and which can leave a person more susceptible to exploitation by violent extremists. Young Muslims are considered to be particularly at risk. Many of these conditions currently exist in Swindon. The following factors and vulnerabilities were consistently identified by a majority of partners as relevant to Swindon:

  o The aforementioned public disorder incidents that have a racial dimension (one particularly serious), which whilst not directly PVE related, stakeholders consider that the fall-out could exacerbate other PVE pre-conditions (see below);
  o Double exclusion; a phenomenon where young Muslims feel socially excluded from the surrounding community and also detached from their

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[51] The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England Stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists HM Gov 2008
[52] Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery HM: Gov 2008

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own community leaders, faith leaders and parents, in some instances seeing them as too well aligned with the 'establishment'

- o The existence of real or perceived grievances, both in terms of local experience of discrimination and racism and lack of social mobility and wider concerns about aspects of Government Foreign Policy. This has been compounded by some local media coverage of recent public disorder incidents that has portrayed the Asian community in a negative light. There has also been increased activity by the National Front which have raised tensions further and served to harden Muslim identity;
- o The existence of post 9/11 virtual Asian gangs (Asian Invasion and Broad Green Massif);
- o General lack of engagement by the Muslim community in terms of accessing local services;
- o A perceived Lack of trust by young Muslims in political structures, civil society and the criminal justice system to represent Muslim interests and those of the communities with which they identify;
- o Concerns about the NEET level amongst Muslim young people;
- o A predominance of immigration from rural Pakistan and Bangladesh;
- o Recent immigration from violent hotspots such as Sudan and Somalia;
- o A fragmented Muslim community of at least 8 groups from: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sudan, Somalia, Assyria, Eritrea and Turkistan;
- o In addition to the above some stakeholders have suggested that Tabligi Jamaat is a growing force in the town. Some observers have commented that the apolitical nature of this group can enable radical ideas to develop with links made between Tabligi Jamaat and the journey made by some terrorists.

Although there is limited direct evidence that any of these factors are being manifested in crime data, the lack of solid information about how any of them are impacting on young people at risk of entering the youth justice system or currently within it is a concern. There is a need to ensure that we have adequate culturally sensitive prevention and early intervention measures to build young people's resilience against radical and extremist approaches.

Muslim Community leaders from the two Swindon Mosques are positive about initiatives that will reduce the vulnerability of their young people to developing Violent Extremist sympathies.

The Challenge for Swindon

The current lack of PVE activity in Swindon, the fact that the YOT currently works with few young Muslims in its wider prevention programmes, the absence of PVE on the Anti Social Behaviour Agenda or Targeted Youth Support agendas creates particular challenges for Swindon. The immediate priorities for Swindon in terms of supporting the YJB bid are as follows:

- • The production of a Swindon Prevention of Violent Extremism plan agreed by all relevant stakeholders and endorsed by key strategic leaders within

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organisations (and by cabinet in local government) and by multi-agency partnership.

- Research to develop a deeper understanding of local communities including generating faith, denominational backgrounds and demographic and socio-economic factors;
- Establishing appropriate information sharing and support mechanisms between partners;
- Mapping current projects and programmes against the Prevent Strategy to identify gaps and opportunities for development;
- Ensuring synergy with other streams of the Counter Terrorism Strategy (Pursue, Prepare and Protect) particularly in relation to intelligence gathering;
- Ensuring robust audit and oversight arrangements for the control of funding, so that local partners are clear on how funding to prevent violent extremism is being used;
- Ensuring that local partners will only work with those groups who uphold shared values of tolerance, respect and equality and who reject and condemn violent extremism;
- Ensuring proper governance arrangements are in place either through use of an existing or a new group;
- Identifying potential funding streams;
- Embedding PVE in performance management frameworks, including National Indicator 35 - Building Resilience to Violent Extremism (NI 35), PSA 23 Making Communities Safer and Assessments of Policing and Community Safety Indicator 63 (APACS 63).

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The Youth Justice Board Prevention of Violent Extremism bid

The bid included three options, summarized below, with option two being the preferred. Further details can be found in the bid document itself.

Proposal 1: Swindon Youth Inclusion Programme

A Swindon Youth Inclusion Programme (a first in Swindon) would predominantly focus its activities on Central Ward which is the heart of the Muslim Community in Swindon, although it would also accept young people from wider Swindon as appropriate. The PVE agenda aside Central Ward meets many of the standard ward selection YIP criteria.

Proposal 2: Swindon Muslim Youth Development Programme

This initiative is modelled on the nationally recognised Muslim Youth Development Programme run by a partnership between Crime Concern, the Karimia Institute and Muslim Hands.

The approach involves recruiting, training and supporting a cohort of volunteer Muslim youth leaders linked to Mosques and Islamic centres with a view to:

- Establishing a local youth forum, linked to the local Swindon youth participation structures and developing youth-led initiatives to increase the quality, quantity and range of positive activities available for Muslim young people
- Developing community volunteering opportunities open to a wide range of young people including promoting multi faith volunteering.

This approach has this double advantage of not only increasing leadership, civic responsibility and personal investment in the vulnerable 16-25 age group, but also addressing these and many other relevant PVE factors through the engagement of wider Muslim youth.

The process involves recruiting an individual (preferably a Muslim from the local community) to act as Project Officer, along with a number of sessional link workers recruited from the local Muslim Community. Volunteers are then recruited (via use of taster days), trained accredited and provided with ongoing support.

Proposal 3: Swindon Young Muslim Mentoring Scheme

This scheme would build on the existing Swindon Mentoring Scheme (New Choice) and as far as possible be modelled on the nationally recognised Mosaic Mentoring Scheme currently operating in London, the East Midlands, Lancashire and Bradford.

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It is proposed that a 0.7 FTE Coordinator will be recruited from the Muslim community (preferably local). They will recruit 15 Muslim (preferably professionals) to mentor vulnerable young Muslims in Swindon.

Proposal 2 has been successful and is explained in more detail below:

Proposal 2: Swindon Muslim Youth Development Programme Aims/Outcomes and Objectives

The overall aim is to support vulnerable individuals who are (or likely to be) targeted and recruited to the violent extremism cause. The Overall outcome sought is to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremists.

The Swindon Muslim Youth Development Programme will have the following objectives:

- To recruit, train and support a cohort of volunteer Muslim youth leaders associated with Swindon Mosques and Islamic centres with a view to them establishing a local youth forum, linked to the local Swindon youth participation structures;
- To develop youth-led initiatives to increase the quality, quantity and range of positive activities available for Muslim young people and to develop community volunteering opportunities, open to a wide range of young people including promoting multi faith volunteering;
- To address VE factors and vulnerabilities through:
  - Improving civic responsibility including voluntary work;
  - Increasing a sense of British Muslim identity;
  - Increasing leadership skills;
  - Increasing trust in political structures including involvement in local youth forums;
- Promoting a balanced and informed view of Government's National and International treatment/attitudes towards Muslims;
- Reducing social exclusion;
- Providing positive alternative activities;
- Developing a stronger faith understanding;
- Improving cultural awareness;
- To increase access to mainstream and specialist services, especially in relation to education, training and employment, for the young people involved;
- To prevent young people in the programme from entering the Criminal Justice System, and to reduce offending of young people already in the system.

Proposed programmes/activities

The type of activities would include:

- Recruitment, Training and Accreditation of Muslim Volunteers in Youth Work;
- Cultural awareness groups;
- Faith strengthening programmes;

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- Inspirational learning **-** In essence this could be anything, which inspires the young person to engage. The concept is based on the principle that young people will be hooked into learning if they are introduced to it via the opportunity to learn something new, interesting and which promotes a sense of achievement regardless of its direct vocational relevance;
- Providing volunteering opportunities;
- Leadership training;
- Positive activities – outdoor, sports, art, music and craft;
- Duke of Edinborough Award.

Description of Project

This initiative is modelled on the nationally recognised Muslim Youth Development Programme run by a partnership between Crime Concern, the Karimia Institute and Muslim Hands.

The approach involves recruiting, training and supporting a cohort of volunteer Muslim youth leaders linked to Mosques and Islamic centres with a view to:

- Establishing a local youth forum, linked to the local Swindon youth participation structures and developing youth-led initiatives to increase the quality, quantity and range of positive activities available for Muslim young people
- Developing community volunteering opportunities open to a wide range of young people including promoting multi faith volunteering.

This approach has this double advantage of not only increasing leadership, civic responsibility and personal investment in the vulnerable 16-25 age group, but also addressing these and many other relevant PVE factors through the engagement of wider Muslim youth.

The process involves recruiting an individual (preferably a Muslim from the local community) to act as Project Officer, along with a number of sessional link workers recruited from the local Muslim Community (It is suggested by the Youth Service that there are already a number of individuals who would qualify and be willing). Volunteers are then recruited (via use of taster days), trained accredited and provided with ongoing support.

The project will sit within the existing 'Early Intervention' (Targeted Support) referral processes, involving panelling by the Local Preventative Group Forum (incorporating the YISP) utilising their referral and assessment processes. This will be tailored to channel young Muslims identified as being risk of developing violent extremist views onto the scheme and require adaptation of present referral criteria to incorporate existing known factors and vulnerabilities, along with training and awareness raising amongst referrers.

In order to broaden the range of available interventions, as well as individualised support, the Early Intervention Team also delivers programmes for a wider audience of young people, with a mix of targeted and non targeted, (albeit young people who

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would benefit), individuals. The Swindon Muslim Youth Development Programme will mirror this model. Crime Concern will provide project set up support, ongoing advice and guidance, staff support, volunteer training and accreditation and build capability in the Swindon YOT team to undertake future management.

Benefits

Initially 15 young Muslims between the ages of 16-25 will be trained who will then work with upwards of 50 young people.

Partners

Support and consultancy provided by Crime Concern

Governance

A 'set up project group' comprising strategic level representatives from key agencies and local Muslim Community will oversee drawing up and implementation of a Project plan.

Governance arrangements following the implementation project will depend on wider Swindon PVE developments, in order to ensure that all PVE activity is properly joined up. However, it will meet the minimum requirement of strategic level representation for key agencies and be tasked with ensuring proper implementation of the operational plan and oversight of performance and budgetary monitoring.

The Project Officer will be managed by a Swindon YOT Operational Manager.

Monitoring and evaluation

The primary indicators within the National Indicator set that will be supported include those with a focus on community building and civic participation (indicators 1-6); building resilience to violent extremism (NI 35); and young people's participation in positive activities (NI 110), with lesser contributions to a range of other indicators.

The overall aim of the Swindon Muslim Youth Development Programme is to support vulnerable individuals who are (or likely to be) targeted and recruited to the violent extremism cause. The Overall outcome sought is to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremists.

The ultimate test of this will be the number of young Muslims (if any) found to be engaged in violent extremist supporting activity.

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Performance indicators would include:

- Evidence of increasing engagement with young Muslim youth on the PREVENT agenda;
- More effective participation by young Muslim people, and greater progression towards recorded and accredited outcomes;
- Reductions in NEET;
- Increased confidence amongst Muslim young people in public agencies;
- Increased civic responsible activity including involvement in local Youth Forums;
- Improved life and leadership skills;
- Achievement of accredited qualifications.

Performance Monitoring Information

- Referral numbers and profile;
- Accepted numbers and profile;
- Engaged numbers and profile;
- Attendance rates;
- Activity report;
- Pre/post Education/Training and Employment;
- Move on status;
- Participants and other stakeholder feedback;
- Engagement level by relevant agencies.

It is envisaged that the programme will be the subject of external research and evaluation and a budget allocation has been made accordingly.

Programme outline

Key milestones include:

- Convening of Project Group;
- Production of Implementation Plan;
- Recruitment of Project officer;
- Delivery of communication plan;
- Delivery of 'Taster events';
- Recruitment of Volunteers;
- Training and accreditation of Volunteers;
- Identification of target group;
- Development and delivery of interventions;

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Appendix A

Stakeholders interviewed

Mike Hazeltine	Assistant Chief Probation Officer (Offender Management)
Chief Inspector Marion Deegan	Wiltshire Constabulary - Swindon Police Station Gablecross
Penny Wilcox	Youth Justice Board SW Performance Monitor
Ian Langley	Head of Service - Wiltshire Youth Offending Service
Paula Harrison	Community Support Manager
Chris Sivers	Director, Community
Richard Palusinski	Swindon Community Safety
Geoff Hogg	Director - Services to Children and Young People
Sue Wald	Director of Strategy & Commissioning
Kevin Leaning	Head of Swindon YOT
Mina Chilvers	Ethnic Minority Achievement
Bob Basley	Secondary Strategy Consultant
Johanna Bryant	Swindon 10-18 project
Carley Nesbit	Swindon Police
Paul Dobson	Swindon 10-18 project
Cynthia Simon	Swindon YOT Prevention Manager
Blair Staynings	YOT Business Manager
Julian Riches	YOT Operational Manager
Julie Wordsworth	YOT Information manager
Aileen Dolder	Wiltshire Police
Nan Bains	BME Worker
Ibraham Mahmoud	BME worker

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Katie Row	Community Cohesion Manager
Rosie Chadwick	Crime Concern
Jo Burdon	Crime Concern
Mohammed Yaseem	Crime Concern
Shelagh Hetreed	GOSW
Fozlur Rahman	Muslim Community Leader
Azim Khan	Muslim Community Leader
Mike Hkan	Muslim Community Leader
Kirk Master	Youth Justice Board
David Attree	Swindon Youth Service
Lindsay Poole	Swindon Youth Service

Meetings/seminars attended

Youth Justice Board Seminar 20/04/08

Swindon Strategy ad Commissioning meeting 29/04/08

Bristol YOT PVE meeting 02/05/08

Swindon YOT 13/06/08

Wiltshire and Swindon ISSP team 13/06/08

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Appendix B

Swindon Youth Offending Team

Prevention of Violent Extremism Project Report

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