



**Centre for the Response to
Radicalisation and Terrorism**

At The Henry Jackson Society

Community Policing and Preventing Extremism: Lessons from Bradford

Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism
Policy Paper No. 4 (2015)

Hannah Stuart

The Henry Jackson Society
February 2015

Summary

- In response to the heightened threat from Islamism-inspired terrorism, there is cross-party consensus on the need to challenge extremist ideas. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a new duty on specified authorities to “prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, by making the delivery of Prevent, the government counter-radicalisation strategy, a legal requirement.
- Challenging extremism as part of a broader counter-terrorism strategy is predicated on the belief that non-violent extremism can also legitimise terrorism, create an atmosphere conducive to violence and popularise views which terrorists exploit.
- A case-study of the Bradford-based Islamist activist Ebrahim Dar highlights how extremism can manifest, including online extremism and involvement with local charitable and education sectors. Such behaviour displays a divisive and sectarian agenda.
- Since the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London, police forces have implemented successive counter-radicalisation policies. The experiences of the West Yorkshire Police provide examples of good practice and common challenges for community policing and preventing extremism as well as practical insight into policy debates about the remit of counter-extremism in a free society:
 - The police advocate building sustainable relationships with communities based on mutual trust and confidence; and recognise the need to be representative and to respond to changing community dynamics;
 - A focus on successful community policing and ‘quality of life’ issues allows the police to proactively create resilient partnerships rather than attempting to force a relationship in response to a counter-radicalisation-related issue;
 - A strategic mechanism for supporting the ideological challenge against extremism is promoting critical thinking skills and credible voices, which builds resilience against extremism; helps isolate extremists; and promotes dialogue around other controversial issues, such as grooming;
 - Promoting safe giving is a key response to the religious injunction for charity within Muslim communities, which can increase vulnerability to fundraising for criminal or terrorist intent and to intimidating styles of fundraising that take advantage of a generous and permissive cultural attitude towards giving;
 - Police forces are well-placed to identify grievances and negative perceptions within communities. Successful work around education, internet safety and grooming demonstrates the value of promoting counter-radicalisation as a safeguarding issue rather than simply as a counter-terrorism tool;
 - Among the biggest challenges anticipated for 2015 is ensuring consistency in relation to freedom of speech and the thresholds used to measure extremism, particularly as it manifests either online or in public situations, for example at universities and during political protests.

Introduction

The threat from Islamism-inspired terrorism in the United Kingdom (UK) is “now more dangerous than at any time before or since 9/11”.¹ As well as the risk from jihadist groups globally, there is also a resurgent threat from domestic actors, including both individuals returning from the on-going conflict in Syria and Iraq, and also self-starters, those radicalised in the UK who are motivated to engage in acts of terrorism against their homeland.²

In response to this heightened threat, new counter-terrorism legislation, passed in February 2015, places a statutory duty on specified bodies, including the police, prisons, local authorities, schools and universities, to “prevent people being drawn into terrorism”.³ At the same time, there is cross-party consensus on the need to challenge extremist ideas that can form part of terrorist ideology. To that end, the Home Office is developing a new national counter-extremism strategy, which will “aim to better identify extremism in all its forms, confront it, challenge it and defeat it”.⁴

In the decade since the 7/7 terrorist attacks on the London transport system, not only has the terrorist threat evolved but so have the roles prescribed to the bodies involved in countering that threat. During this time, police forces nationally have, to various degrees, implemented successive policies from both the previous administration and the current coalition government; and have often found themselves on the frontline of debates over the remit and direction of the so-called ‘soft’ end of countering terrorism. As such, the police are uniquely placed to offer insight into both good practice and challenges in community policing and how their role relates to both preventing people being drawn into terrorism and challenging extremism.

This policy paper examines some of the challenges which may be faced by police forces, and other bodies, as they incorporate the new statutory duty. Section One outlines both the role of the police in preventing extremism and the ideological threat from extremism. Section Two shows how extremism can manifest, exemplified through a short case-study of Bradford-based Islamist Ebrahim Dar, focusing on his online extremism and activism as well as his involvement with local charitable and education sectors. Section Three outlines lessons in good practice and common challenges for community policing and preventing extremism, drawn from the experiences of the West Yorkshire Police.

In addition to secondary research material, this paper draws on two primary sources, specifically: social media intelligence, taken from Dar’s open-source online postings,⁵ and personal interviews with representatives from West Yorkshire Police and the North East Counter-Terrorism Unit.⁶

¹ ‘Home Secretary Theresa May speech on counter-terrorism’, Home Office, 24 November 2014, available at: www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-theresa-may-on-counter-terrorism, last visited: 17 February 2015.

² *ibid.*

³ ‘Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015’ (Part 5, Risk of being drawn into terrorism), HM Government, available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/pdfs/ukpga_20150006_en.pdf (2015), last visited: 17 February 2015, pp. 26-35.

⁴ HC Deb, 17 November 2014, cW, available at: www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-11/906039/, last visited: 13 February 2015.

⁵ Social media gathered between June and November 2014 has been screenshot and archived.

⁶ Interviews with representatives from the West Yorkshire Police and the North East Counter-Terrorism Unit were conducted between October and December 2014.

1. The Role of the Police in Preventing Extremism

1.1 *The Prevent Strategy*

The UK counter-terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST, was developed in 2003 in response to the threat from Islamism-inspired terrorism and is co-ordinated by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), a part of the Home Office. Revised in 2006, 2009 and 2011,⁷ the strategy remains organised around four key principles, each with a specific objective: Pursue, to stop terrorist attacks; Prevent, to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; Protect, to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and, Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.⁸

While the police play an integral role in all four strands, as part of Prevent police forces nationally are committed to ensuring individuals are safeguarded from radicalisation and/or going on to support or become terrorists.

Prevent began in 2005 in the aftermath of the 7/7 terrorist attacks, in the form of ‘Preventing Extremism Together’ workgroups with community and faith leaders, policy-makers and academics, developed by then Labour government. Since then, the programme has seen significant developments and reincarnations, which impact both the remit and roles of all stakeholders, not least the police.

To begin, the Prevent strategy had a strong focus on what has been described as a “community centred notion of counter-terrorism”.⁹ In recognition of community involvement, in 2006 the newly established Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) took responsibility for the Prevent strand of CONTEST, which was re-named Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in 2007¹⁰ and re-launched in June 2008.¹¹ The 2008 strategy stated that local authorities and the police should take the lead in delivering Prevent, tasking them with ensuring the involvement of statutory and voluntary institutions;¹² and subsequent CLG guidance released in 2009 affirmed this police role.¹³

Police involvement in Prevent and the delivery of community-led cohesion-related programmes, however, was not without controversy. There were accusations of police heavy-handedness, spying

⁷ ‘Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy’, HM Government, (2006), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/272320/6888.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also ‘Pursue Prevent Protect Prepare: The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering International Terrorism’, HM Government, (2009), available at: www.northants.police.uk/files/linked/terrorism/The%20Governments%20Counter%20Terrorism%20Strategy.pdf, last visited: 12 February 2015. See also ‘CONTEST: The United Kingdom’s strategy for countering terrorism’, HM Government (2011), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97995/strategy-contest.pdf, last visited: 15 February 2015.

⁸ ‘Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST)’, Home Office, 12 July 2011, available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest, last visited: 12 February 2015.

⁹ ‘Police-Muslim Engagement and Partnerships for the Purposes of Counter-Terrorism: an examination’, Summary Report by the University of Birmingham and Religion and Society, (2008), available at:

www.religionandsociety.org.uk/uploads/docs/2009_11/1258555474_Spalek_Summary_Report_2008.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015, p. 7.

¹⁰ ‘Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds’, HM Government (2007), see ‘Preventing Violent Extremism’, House of Commons Library, (2008), available at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04766.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015, p. 5.

¹¹ ‘The Prevent Strategy: A guide for local partners in England stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists’, HM Government, (2008), available at:

www.tecdantle.co.uk/publications/039%20CLG%20Prevent%20Guide%20guide%20for%20local%20partners%202008.pdf, last visited: 12 February 2015.

¹² ‘Prevent: Progress and Prospects’, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary for England and Wales (HMIC), (2009), available at:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/media/prevent-progress-and-prospects-report-20090622.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015, p. 2.

¹³ ‘Delivering the Prevent Strategy: An updated guide for Local Partners’, HM Government, (2009), see ‘Preventing Violent Extremism’, House of Commons Library, (2008), available at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04766.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015, p. 5.

and the conflation of counter-terrorism policy with integration efforts;¹⁴⁻¹⁵ while, at the same time, the police as well as local and central government were criticised for failing to appropriately vet Prevent partners, which led to the funding of and engagement with extremist individuals and groups.¹⁶

As a result, the coalition government's 2011 Prevent review led to a revised strategy, which, among other changes, separated the Prevent strand of counter-terrorism from the integration work of CLG,¹⁷ and introduced "explicit controls to make sure that public money must not be provided to extremist organisations".¹⁸ The conscious narrowing of the Prevent strategy, however, accompanied by the continued focus on local authorities and the police in the strategy's delivery, has led to a widespread perception that the programme is police-run, an accusation which has had to be repeatedly denied by the government.¹⁹

1.2 2015: Prevent as a Statutory Duty and a New Counter-Extremism Strategy

The murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in May 2013 was the first death on British soil as the result of an Islamism-inspired terrorist attack since 7/7. The subsequent Prime Minister's Taskforce on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism found that some local authorities had not fully supported those working to tackle radicalisation and extremism and promised to "take steps to intervene where local authorities are not taking the problem seriously".²⁰

In response, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, includes, among various Syria-related measures, a new duty on specified authorities to have due regard for the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, making the delivery of Prevent a legal requirement across England, Scotland, and Wales.²¹

The Home Office has consulted on draft statutory guidance for specified authorities in relation to this duty, which reiterates the central role the police have in co-ordinating and delivering Prevent work. Three key areas in which the police will be expected to fulfil their duty are identified as: co-ordinating with local multi-agency groups and specified partners with Prevent responsibilities to both assess and mitigate local risks; supporting communities in their efforts to prevent people being drawn into terrorism; and, prosecuting, disrupting and deterring terrorist- and extremist-related behaviour.²²

¹⁴ HC Deb, 9 June 2014, c247, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140609/debtext/140609-0001.htm#140609-0001.htm_spnw2, last visited: 13 February 2015.

¹⁵ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c209, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm141202/debtext/141202-0002.htm#141202-0002.htm_spnw53, last visited: 13 February 2015.

¹⁶ Maher, S., and Frampton, M., 'Choosing Our Friends Wisely: Criteria for Engagement with Muslim Groups', Policy Exchange, (2009), available at: www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/choosing%20our%20friends%20wisely%20-%20mar%2009.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015.

¹⁷ HC Deb, 9 June 2014, c247.

¹⁸ HC Deb, 9 June 2014, c245, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140609/debtext/140609-0001.htm#140609-0001.htm_spnw0, last visited: 13 February 2015.

¹⁹ 'Prevent Strategy', HM Government, (2011), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015, p. 1. See also 'Prevent duty guidance: a consultation', HM Government, (2014), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388934/45584_Prevent_duty_guidance-a_consultation_Web_Accessible.pdf, last visited: 15 February 2015, p. 38.

²⁰ 'Tackling extremism in the UK: Report from the Prime Minister's Task Force on Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism', HM Government (2013), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263181/ETF_FINAL.pdf, last visited: 26 August 2014, p. 6.

²¹ HC Deb, 9 February 2015, cW, available at: www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-01-14/220829/, last visited: 13 February 2015.

²² 'Prevent duty guidance: a consultation', HM Government, (2014), pp.38-39.

In addition to the statutory duty, the government is currently developing a new counter-extremism strategy. Home Secretary Theresa May's speech at Conservative Party Conference in September 2014 announced that the Home Office would be responsible for a counter-extremism strategy were the Conservatives elected in 2015; while in November 2014, James Brokenshire, Minister of State for the Home Office (Security and Immigration), confirmed in parliament that: "the Home Office will assume responsibility for a new counter-extremism strategy that extends beyond terrorism. The strategy will aim to better identify extremism in all its forms, confront it, challenge it and defeat it".²³

May's announcement preceded criticism from the Intelligence and Security Committee of "the relatively low priority (and funding) given to Prevent in the CONTEST programme as a whole," contained in its 2014 report into the killing of Drummer Rigby.²⁴ It has also been viewed as a tacit recognition of CLG failure to articulate counter-extremism as part of its integration strategy,²⁵ an omission which has not gone unnoticed by the Opposition. Labour MP Hazel Blears, former Secretary of State for CLG, who oversaw the early development of the PVE and Prevent programme, has repeatedly raised the issue of countering extremism and community-based work. During the second reading of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill in December 2014, for example, she reminded the Home Secretary that CLG "was charged with producing just such a strategy three years ago, but it has not done so".²⁶

Similarly, the Shadow Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, has criticised "the narrowness of the Home Secretary's approach,"²⁷ later commenting that: "The police have done very good work, but narrowing Prevent to just a police-led programme means that it has simply not been effective, and there have also been considerable gaps in the programme".²⁸ Most recently, in the wake of the terrorist attacks in Paris in January 2015, leader of the opposition Ed Miliband asked the Prime Minister whether he agreed that Prevent "needs to be expanded so that it supports, in particular, community-led action and is given the priority it deserves".²⁹

It is likely, therefore, that the forthcoming counter-extremism strategy will be designed to complement Prevent, and will focus on CLG's current remit, defined as, "community cohesion and integration that challenges all forms of extremism including non-violent extremism".³⁰ It will most probably involve a range of cross-cutting and community-based initiatives designed to build resilience against extremism. As such, the experiences of police forces in managing Prevent responsibilities with cohesion-related responsibilities, and in particular how this relates to community relations, should inform policy understanding of the dynamics of delivering counter-extremism work on the ground.

²³ HC Deb, 17 November 2014, cW, available at: www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-11/906039/, last visited: 13 February 2015.

²⁴ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c219, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm141202/debtext/141202-0003.htm#141202-0003.htm_snew3, last visited: 13 February 2015.

²⁵ Russell, J., 'Theresa May's speech: tackling the extremists, not just the terrorists', *Prospect*, 30 September 2014, available at: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/opinions/theresa-mays-speech-tackling-the-extremists-not-just-the-terrorists, last visited: 17 February 2015.

²⁶ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c209.

²⁷ HC Deb, 9 June 2014, c246, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140609/debtext/140609-0001.htm#140609-0001.htm_snew1, last visited: 13 February 2015.

²⁸ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c221, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm141202/debtext/141202-0003.htm#141202-0003.htm_snew11, last visited: 13 February 2015.

²⁹ HC Deb, 14 January 2015, c858, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm150114/debtext/150114-0001.htm#150114-0001.htm_snew50, last visited: 13 February 2015.

³⁰ HC Deb, 21 January 2015, cW, available at: www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-01-05/219771/, last visited: 13 February 2015.

1.3 *The Threat from Extremism and Islamist Activism*

Countering radicalisation is a fundamental component of counter-terrorism work. Commenting, for example, on the numbers of individuals traveling from the UK to join terrorist groups fighting in Syria and Iraq – the security services’ foremost concern – the 2014 Intelligence and Security Committee’s report stated: “The scale of the problem indicates that the Government’s counter-radicalisation programmes are not working”.³¹

Acknowledging the absence of universally agreed-upon definitions, there is a developing policy consensus on the need to challenge both violent and non-violent extremism as a precursor to or a conduit for terrorism. In relation to Islamism-inspired terrorism, for example, there has been much focus among western policy-makers and academics in recent years on the need to provide an effective ideological response to that of global jihad.³² In the UK, both the 2011 Prevent review and the 2013 extremism taskforce report focus on challenging ideology, with the latter stating that, “we have been too reticent about challenging extreme Islamist ideologies in the past”;³³ while the shadow Home Secretary recently stated that, “the whole point of providing counter-narratives is to tackle non-violent as well as violent extremism”.³⁴

Challenging extremism as part of counter-terrorism, therefore, is predicated on the belief that violent and non-violent extremism can be used to “create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism”; “popularise views which terrorists exploit”; and “legitimise terrorism”.³⁵ The revised Prevent strategy defines extremism as: “[...] vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”. It also includes “calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”.³⁶

While the revised strategy addresses all forms of extremism, and in particular the growing threat from far-right extremism, the government acknowledges the current primacy of Islamism-inspired terrorism.³⁷ Islamism is a political ideology which advocates Islam as a holistic socio-political system; *sharia* (‘Islamic principles and law’) as divine state law; the unification of a transnational Muslim community, known as the *ummah*, as a political bloc; and the establishment of an ‘Islamic’ state, or Caliphate, within which sovereignty belongs to God.³⁸

Adherents are known as Islamists and militant Islamists or jihadists (e.g. al-Qaeda or Islamic State), those willing to engage in acts of violence and terrorism to achieve their aims, are the most easily identifiable. Islamist groups in the West who do not support or openly support the use of violence to achieve their aims, such as the Muslim Brotherhood or Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT),

³¹ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c219.

³² In academia, see, for example, Schmid, Dr. A. P., ‘Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review’, ICCT Research Paper, (2013), available at: www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015. See also Heffelfinger, C., ‘Waiting out the Islamist Winter: Creating an Effective Counter Narrative to Jihad’, paper presented to the GTReC ARC Linkage Project on Radicalisation conference 2010 – Understanding Terrorism from an Australian Perspective: Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation and Counter-Radicalisation, available at: <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/radicalisation/files/2013/03/conference-2010-counter-narratives-ch.pdf>, last visited: 17 February 2015, p. 4.

³³ ‘Prevent Strategy’, HM Government, (2011), pp. 50-51. See also ‘Tackling extremism in the UK’, HM Government, (2013), pp. 4-5.

³⁴ HC Deb, 2 December 2014, c221.

³⁵ ‘Prevent duty guidance: a consultation’, HM Government, (2014), pp.38-39.

³⁶ ‘Prevent Strategy’, HM Government, (2011), p. 107.

³⁷ ‘Home Secretary Theresa May speech on counter-terrorism’, Home Office, 24 November 2014.

³⁸ Simcox, R., Stuart, H., Ahmed, H., and Murray, D., ‘Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections’, Henry Jackson Society (2011), 2nd ed., available on request.

however, share the same core ideology and present significant challenges for both democratically-elected governments as well as the intelligence and law enforcement bodies accountable to them.³⁹

The aim of these ostensibly non-violent groups is to target Western Muslim communities in order to create a monolithic bloc sympathetic to their political ideology, while simultaneously asserting their values as representative of the wider Muslim community in order to mainstream Islamist demands as normative Muslim practice. Specifically, they promote their narrow worldview as the only scripturally-sound interpretation of Islam and encourage their co-religionists to disengage from wider society.⁴⁰

Islamists in the UK have traditionally adopted front groups and targeted both education and charitable sectors in order to disseminate their ideology.⁴¹ Recent evidence suggests a more direct use of schools and charities by Islamist activists as a form of Islamist ‘entryism’. Throughout 2014, for example, the independent education regulatory body, Ofsted, assessed that a number of state schools in Birmingham, Bradford, London and Luton were incapable of adequately protecting their pupils from extremism, as a result of infiltration of their governing bodies by Islamists commonly referred to as the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair.

Similarly, the independent regulatory body for charities in England and Wales, the Charity Commission, and some international banks have recently put Muslim charities and not-for-profit groups with suspected links to extremism under increased scrutiny. In July 2014, for example, HSBC closed the accounts of three prominent Muslim groups with extremist links (the Ummah Welfare Trust, the Finsbury Park Mosque and the Cordoba Foundation) for undisclosed reasons;⁴² while, in November 2014, it was revealed that the Charity Commission had monitored 55 unnamed Muslim groups over the previous two years for signs of involvement in radicalisation and extremism.⁴³

It is likely therefore that future challenges and policy debates for counter-extremism will centre on ensuring not only accurate identification of Islamist activism, but also on developing appropriate and consistent responses to extremism while remaining mindful of fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, association and religion. To that end, police experiences responding to Islamist activism are pertinent to policy understanding.

³⁹ Simcox, R., Stuart, H., Ahmed, H., and Murray, D., ‘Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections’, Henry Jackson Society (2011), 2nd ed.

⁴⁰ Ahmed, H., and Stuart, H., ‘Hizb ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy’, Centre for Social Cohesion, (2009), available at: <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/HIZB.pdf>, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also Ali, R., and Stuart, H., ‘A Guide to Refuting Jihadism: critiquing radical Islamist claims to theological authenticity’, Henry Jackson Society, (2014), available at: www.henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/RefutingJihadism.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁴¹ The most established Islamist front groups are predominantly youth, student and community organisations with long-standing ties to either the South Asian Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami or the Arab Islamist movement the Muslim Brotherhood. For example, in December 2010, the Muslim Association of Britain was identified in the House of Commons as ‘the Brotherhood’s representative in the UK’. See HC Deb, 22 November 2010, c80W, available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101122/text/101122w0003.htm#10112234000037, last visited: 18 February 2014.

⁴² Dyer, E., ‘Banking Restrictions On Extremism-Linked Muslim Groups’, Henry Jackson Society, (2014), available at: <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Banking-Restrictions-on-Extremism-Linked-Muslim-Groups.pdf>, last visited: 19 December 2014.

⁴³ ‘Charities suspected of Muslim extremist links’, *The Times*, 17 November 2014, available at: www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/politics/article4269818.ecc, last visited: 19 December 2014.

2. Case Study: Islamist Activism in Bradford

Section Two provides a short case-study of Bradford-based Islamist activist Ebrahim Dar, which highlights how Islamist activism and extremism can manifest at a local level as well as the challenges that this poses for those attempting to deliver Prevent policy.

2.1 *Ebrahim Dar's Online Presence and Extremism*

As well as his personal Facebook page,⁴⁴ social media intelligence indicates that Dar operates the Facebook pages 'Bradford Dawah Carriers (BDC)⁴⁵ and 'Youth Talk Dawah (YTD)'.^{46 47} Between July and November 2014, Dar used all three online platforms to express extreme views and share extremist material, much of which echoes common Islamist narratives and typifies the examples of Islamist ideology specified by the government's draft guidance on the statutory delivery of Prevent.

The concept of reclaiming or liberating perceived Muslim land from Western influence, which is often referred derogatively to as *kufir* (literally 'disbelief'), is a common denominator among Islamist and jihadist groups; as is the perceived religious duty to re-establish an expansionist Caliphate, or *Khilafah*, in order to unite the *ummah* ('transnational Muslim community') under one interpretation of *sharia* ('Islamic principles and law'). For Islamists, rejection of this injunction constitutes rejection of an essential aspect of Muslim belief; and Muslims who disagree are charged with disbelief and then declared apostates from Islam, a practice known as *takfir* ('excommunication').⁴⁸

Examples of this can be seen on Dar's Facebook pages. On 12 August 2014, for example, his personal page shared a post via the BDC page which featured sentiment such as "May Allah wake up the Ummah and make those who can fight to destroy Israel of [sic.] the map" and, "when will you call for the return of the Khilafah so it can unleash an army to go on jihad and remove the kufir in our lands". He also demonstrated *takfir* by referring to Muslims who do not support these ideas as "infected cancer souls", "worse than pigs" and "useless people". In addition, the YTD page has posted statuses calling on Muslims to "keep the brothers defending the Ummah from the oppressors in your dua [prayers]"; to "work for Khilafah"; and to "raise the banner of Islam [...] the banner of Jihad, the banner of Khilafah".

The government's draft guidance states: "Islamist extremists regard Western intervention in Muslim-majority countries as a 'war with Islam', creating a narrative of 'them' and 'us' [and] extremists purport to identify grievances to which terrorist organisations then claim to have a solution".⁴⁹ Dar's posts demonstrate both narratives. Dar has stated on Facebook that "the kufar

⁴⁴ 'Ebrahim Darr', *Facebook*, available at www.facebook.com/ebrahim.darr/about, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁴⁵ 'Bradford Dawah Carriers', *Facebook*, available at: www.facebook.com/pages/Bradford-Dawah-Carriers/453513478118802, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁴⁶ 'Youth Talk Dawah', *Facebook*, available at: www.facebook.com/pages/Youth-Talk-Dawah/214551168559265?fbref=nf, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁴⁷ For example: Dar's personal page states that he works for "Bradford Dawah Carriers" and links directly to the BDC page; a number of BDC status updates refer to Dar in the first person; and Dar's personal page shared BDC posts on more than 40 occasions between July and November 2014. Similarly, the YTD page has shared many of the same Dar status updates as BDC as well as messages referring to Dar in the first person; Dar has used his personal page to share YTD posts on 14 occasions between July and November 2014; and the YTD page and YouTube channel list the same mobile telephone number that is listed online as a contact for Dar in relation to Interpal events. All Facebook posts and videos referenced in this section have been screenshot or downloaded and archived.

⁴⁸ Ali, R., and Stuart, H., 'A Guide to Refuting Jihadism', pp. 9-13.

⁴⁹ 'Prevent duty guidance: a consultation', HM Government, (2014), pp.38-39.

[‘disbelievers’] plan and continue to make genocide on earth” and that “the kufar [...] will then try pollute the future Ummah”. Dar’s posts also criticise United States (US) airstrikes on Islamist groups in Syria other than the Islamic State, with Dar referring to these organisations as “the real Mujahideen” and elsewhere describing the al-Qaeda-linked al-Nusra Front and Jaysh al-Muhajireen, both Specially Designated Global Terrorists in the US,⁵⁰ as “revolutionaries”.

The draft guidance also states that: “[extremist] ideology includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be both Muslim and British, and that Muslims living here should not participate in our democracy. Islamist extremists specifically attack the principles of civic participation and social cohesion”.⁵¹ Dar’s social media output typifies such Islamist tropes: one of his personal social media posts argues that “democracy, secularism and liberalism” are “kufr”; while the BDC has shared posts comparing living as a Muslim in the West to being repeatedly raped as well as stating that “the kufar [sic] are winning – because we have accepted their way of life” and that “Democracy is haram as it’s the system of kufr”.

As well as expressing his own views, Dar advocates popular jihadist clerics or Islamist *cause célèbre*. Dar has used his personal page to share material featuring the popular English-language jihadist cleric Anwar al-Awlaki.⁵² For example, Dar has shared al-Awlaki’s ‘State of the Ummah’ speech, in which the deceased al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) ideologue said: “Brothers and sisters, if we are not going to fight today, then when will we fight? Muslim land is occupied; oppression is widespread; the laws of the Quran are neglected. What other time is better for jihad than today?”. Dar appears to use the YTD Facebook and YouTube pages to disseminate al-Awlaki videos, with four instances on Facebook since 1 August 2013 and six on YouTube since February 2011. Furthermore, the YTD website features 11 al-Awlaki videos or audio lectures featured in the “Free Downloads and Links” section.⁵³

In addition, Dar has also used his personal page to post a video in support of Munir Farooqi, a former Taliban fighter given a life sentence in the UK in 2011 for attempting to recruit undercover police officers to fight overseas;⁵⁴ and the BDC page has written in support of “our Sister Aafia”, referring to Dr Aafia Siddiqui, the al-Qaeda associate convicted in the US of attempted murder in 2010 who has since become an Islamist icon.⁵⁵ Dar’s support for prisoners can further be seen in his promotion of CAGE material and his public fundraising for the charity Helping Households under Great Stress (HHUGS), both groups which campaign on behalf of suspected and convicted terrorists.

Dar’s online postings, therefore, exemplify the motifs and rhetoric central to the promotion of an Islamist ideology. While predominantly non-violent, the references to removing *kufr* and destroying Israel exhibit emotive and violent intent and demonstrate the reinforcing relationship between non-violent and violent extremism.

⁵⁰ ‘Designations of Foreign Terrorist Fighters’, US Department of State, available at: www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/09/232067.htm, last visited: 15 February 2015. See also ‘Foreign Terrorist Organizations’, US Department of State, available at: www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm, last visited: 15 February 2015.

⁵¹ ‘Prevent duty guidance: a consultation’, HM Government, (2014), pp. 38-39.

⁵² ‘Anwar Al-Awlaki’, *BBC News*, 30 September 2011, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11658920, last visited: 15 February 2015.

⁵³ ‘Free Downloads and Links’, *Youth Talk Dawah*, available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/youthtalkdawah/downloads>, last visited: 15 February 2015.

⁵⁴ ‘Munir Farooqi given four life sentences for terror charges’, *BBC News*, 9 September 2011, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-14851811, last visited: 15 February 2015.

⁵⁵ ‘US jails Pakistani scientist for 86 years’, *BBC News*, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11401865, last visited: 15 February 2015.

2.2 *Ebrahim Dar's Involvement in Islamist Activism*

In addition to using social media platforms to express extreme views or share extreme material, Dar appears to attempt to mainstream his beliefs as representative of Muslim communities. He apparently utilises and hijacks existing platforms in order to gain notoriety and legitimacy, as exemplified through his promotion of HT activism; his local fundraising role as manager of the registered charity Interpal's Bradford branch;⁵⁶ and, his recent campaign against Carlton Bolling College in protest against the perceived Islamophobic suspension of a member of staff in September 2014.

2.2.1 *Hizb ut-Tahrir*

HT, or the 'Party of Liberation', is a revolutionary Islamist group actively working in over 40 countries worldwide to establish an expansionist state and, ultimately, a new world order based on Islamist principles. In the UK, one of the group's principal aims is to create a monolithic political Muslim bloc to aid its global Islamist revolution and, ultimately, to subvert Western societies.⁵⁷ Despite calls from within both the Labour and Conservative parties for the group to be proscribed, previous HJS research suggests such action is not permitted under existing counter-terrorism legislation,⁵⁸ a position supported by the current Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation.⁵⁹ As such, the group would fall under the remit of both Prevent and the new counter-extremism strategy, as an "extremist (albeit legal) group",⁶⁰ one whose influence should be challenged both by public and civic institutions as well as within communities.

Dar first came to the attention of the West Yorkshire Police "about six or seven years ago" because of his youth activism with HT: "He was handing out leaflets, targeting young people [...] angling them for an HT youth group, but quite quickly it seemed that [to] the community he was an outsider, he wasn't trusted".⁶¹ Dar continues to promote HT, however, through his online networks; and is involved in HT activism in Bradford and the wider Yorkshire area.

Dar has used his personal Facebook page to promote HT events on a number of occasions; he regularly shares articles from the HT Britain website and an international English-language HT website, *Khilafah.com*,⁶² as well as photographs taken at HT events; and, he regularly shares the status updates of HT activist Sharif Abu Laith. Using the BDC Facebook page, Dar has also 'hosted' event pages for two HT meetings in Bradford over the summer of 2014;⁶³ and, using the YTD Facebook page, Dar has promoted HT events, including the HT *Khilafah* Conference on 27 August 2014 in Manchester, and posted photographs from other HT events.

⁵⁶ 'Ibrahim Dar', *LinkedIn*, available at: <http://uk.linkedin.com/pub/ibrahim-dar/54/56a/a95>, last visited: 14 November 2014.

⁵⁷ Ahmed, H., and Stuart, H., 'Profile: Hizb ut-Tahrir in the UK', *Current Trends In Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 10, pp. 143-172, p. 144, available at: www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1293/ahmed_stuart.pdf, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁵⁸ Ahmed, H., and Stuart, H., *Hizb ut-Tahrir: Ideology and Strategy*, Centre for Social Cohesion, (2009), pp. 117-119, 143.

⁵⁹ David Anderson Q.C., 'Report on the Operation in 2010 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and of Part 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006', HM Government (2011), available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243552/9780108510885.pdf, last visited: 26 August 2014, pp. 36-37.

⁶⁰ 'Prevent duty guidance: a consultation', HM Government, (2014), p. 9.

⁶¹ All quotes in this section refer to interviews with representatives from West Yorkshire Police and the North East Counter-Terrorism Unit conducted between October and December 2014.

⁶² 'About *Khilafah.com*', *Khilafah.com*, available at: www.khilafah.com/index.php/about-us, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁶³ On 19 July 2014, BDC hosted a "GAZA Emergency Community Meeting" at the Pakistani Community Centre where it was claimed "members of Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain will highlight and provide detailed understanding of why these atrocities are taking place and why the *Khilafah* is the only solution to liberate Palestine"; on 20 July 2014, BDC hosted an event organising a coach to London for an HT anti-Israel protest.

Through such postings, Dar continues to exhibit common Islamist narratives, including references to the “Zionist entity” and the “current crusader invasion led by America” of Iraq and Syria, and demonstrates *takfir* in comments that criticise Muslims who “serve the kuffar”. Dar has also used the YTD Facebook page to post a eulogy for an HT fighter killed in Syria, and claim the organisation is involved in Syria to “re-enforce [sic] the mujahideen and ummah to continue the struggle for Islam to dominate over kufr”. Alongside this, the YTD website also hosts HT documents including ‘The System of Islam’⁶⁴ and ‘Democracy is a system of kufr’, the latter of which states that “it is forbidden to adopt, implement, or call for” democracy, and that apostates should be killed.⁶⁵

While Dar typifies the extremist ideology Prevent is designed to challenge, he remains active (although, according to the West Yorkshire Police, not widely followed), due to the fact that his postings do not meet the criminal threshold, which is higher than the counter-extremism remit. One North East Counter Terrorism Unit Detective Inspector stated that Dar co-ordinates HT meetings in Bradford, in attendance at which have been known TACT releases, i.e. those who have been convicted for terrorism-related activity who have either completed their sentence or have been released from prison on community licence; Bradford university students; and, members or associates of the UK-based proscribed terrorist organisation, al-Muhajiroun.

2.2.2 Interpal

Interpal is a global organisation designated by the US Treasury for “provid[ing] support to Hamas and form[ing] part of its funding network in Europe”.⁶⁶ In the UK, however, Interpal remains a registered charity, despite recurrent accusations of terrorism-related fundraising. In 2006, for example, the group was subject to a BBC documentary that alleged it had given money to Hamas-linked Palestinian charities; in 2009, it was ordered by the Charity Commission to sever all links with the Hamas-linked Union for Good;⁶⁷ and evidence submitted to a 2013 Home Affairs Select Committee alleged that Interpal “[provides] financial support for the proscribed terrorist organisation Hamas”.⁶⁸

Interpal continues, however, to fundraise in the UK and is a nationally recognised brand, one most commonly associated with humanitarian aid for Palestinians and latterly for those affected by the on-going conflict in Syria and Iraq. As regional manager of Interpal,⁶⁹ therefore, Dar assumes the legitimacy granted by charity status: according to the West Yorkshire Police, “the only credibility that he’s got now would be the Interpal brand, he’s the regional manager for fundraising and that’s the greatest concern really, that that’s given him some purpose”.

The police acknowledge that geo-politics impacts community dynamics in Bradford and that, in relation to Dar and Interpal, the Gaza-Israel War (Operation Protective Edge) in 2014 has “given

⁶⁴ An-Nabahani, T., ‘The System of Islam’, *Al-Khilafah Publications*, August 2002, available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/youthtalkdawal/downloads>, last visited: 24 November 2014.

⁶⁵ ‘Democracy is a system of kufr’, *Al-Khilafah Publications*, August 1995, available at: <https://drive.google.com/viewerng/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmX5b3V0aHRhbGkYXdhHxneDo0YlTiZTI2OGLzNDMxOVRk>, last visited: 20 November 2014

⁶⁶ ‘U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities’, US Department of the Treasury, 22 August 2003, available at: www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js672.aspx, last visited: 19 December 2014.

⁶⁷ ‘Panorama’s Faith, Hate and Charity: standing by the allegations’, *The Guardian*, available at: www.theguardian.com/media/organgrinder/2009/mar/03/panorama-stands-by-charity-allegations, last visited: 19 December 2014.

⁶⁸ ‘Written evidence submitted by the Henry Jackson Society [CT 09]’, Parliament UK, available at: data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidencePdf/4876, last visited: 19 December 2014.

⁶⁹ ‘Ibrahim Dar’, *LinkedIn*.

him a shot in the arm, because it almost legitimises what he's doing". In addition, one North East Counter Terrorism Unit Detective Inspector described how Dar appeared to take advantage of conflict by positioning himself as central to the anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian protests in order to present himself as a vanguard of Muslim solidarity, going from "persona non grata to a key player" within a year.

2.2.3 Carlton Bolling College Campaign

Carlton Bolling College is a secondary school in Bradford that was implicated in the 'Trojan Horse' affair after an Ofsted report published in July 2014 found the school "inadequate", claiming that it did not protect students from "possible risks posed by extremism well enough" and that the governing body, which had been removed at the instruction of Bradford Council earlier in the year, was "an obstacle to improvement, rather than a champion of it".⁷⁰ This followed media speculation of an Islamist takeover by Muslim governors after the BBC reported seeing documents which "may suggest an attempt to bring an Islamic agenda into the classroom at Carlton Bolling College (OFSTED URN 107413), a state secondary school with a largely Muslim governing body".⁷¹

Additionally, between July and September 2014, the school was involved in controversy after the head teacher decided not to donate money raised by pupils to Interpal due to potential reputational damage following a story in *The Sunday Times* highlighting the charity's alleged links to Hamas. While local media reported in May 2014 that three students from Carlton Bolling College had "hiked up the mountain during the Easter holidays to raise money for the Interpal charity",⁷² newspaper reports from September 2014 stated that "the school refused to hand over the money".⁷³ At the same time, Carlton Bolling College employee Asif Khan was suspended, for reasons which, due to the on-going nature of the investigation, the school has not disclosed.

During September and October 2014, Dar's online presence demonstrates a significant degree of involvement in the subsequent protest campaign organised against Carlton Bolling College over Khan's suspension, a decision which was presented by Dar and other protesters as being "because of his pro-Palestinian views".⁷⁴ Dar's personal Facebook page and the BDC page created both an event page called "Carlton Bolling - DON'T SACK ASIF KHAN!", used to update its event attendees about the on-going protests, and a community page called "CBC: Don't Sack Asif Khan - BFD United" created in support of Khan.

Dar organised four protests at Carlton Bolling School during a six-week period in September and October 2014,⁷⁵ which featured "hundreds" of protesters; required a police presence; and,

⁷⁰ 'Governor rejects Carlton Bolling College extremism claims', *BBC News*, 17 July 2014, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-28344573, last visited: 17 February 2015.

⁷¹ 'Bradford school governors 'promoted Islamic agenda'', *BBC News*, 10 June 2014, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-27779832, last visited: 17 February 2014.

⁷² 'Students reach for the top in Mount Snowdon charity climb', *Yorkshire Standard*, 23 May 2014, available at: www.yorkshirestandard.co.uk/news/students-reach-for-the-top-in-mount-snowdon-climb/, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁷³ 'Demo held in support of college worker suspended for "pro-Palestinian views"', *Asian Sunday*, 16 September 2014, available at: www.asiansunday.co.uk/demo-held-in-support-of-college-worker-suspended-for-pro-palestinian-views/, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁷⁴ 'Anger as teacher suspended from Carlton Bolling College', *Yorkshire Standard*, 10 September 2014, available at: www.yorkshirestandard.co.uk/news/anger-as-teacher-suspended-from-carlton-bolling-college-6998/, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁷⁵ They were held on 4, 10 and 23 September and 15 October 2014. See 'Police needed after hundreds gather for Carlton Bolling College protest in Undercliffe, Bradford', *Telegraph & Argus*, 4 September 2014, available at: www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/11454627.Police_needed_after_hundreds_gather_for__Carlton_Bolling_College_protest_in_Undercliffe__Bradford/?ref=mr, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also 'Hundreds of protesters gather outside Bradford school in row over staff member's suspension', *Telegraph & Argus*, 10 September 2014, available at:

according to a North East Counter Terrorism Unit Detective Inspector, “created disquiet”. He added that Dar’s subsequent online statements about the Prevent engagement officers who policed the protests – referring to them on his website as ‘Dumb and Dumber’ and highlighting personal information about them – could be considered threatening.

While West Yorkshire Police normally consider Dar an opportunist, “a Walter Mitty character” who presents an image of himself that is more influential and well-connected than he actually is, for example, by advertising speakers whom he has failed to secure, they are concerned by his use of platforms and high profile issues such as Interpal and the Carlton Bolling College protests. In addition, “he knows exactly where the law sits and the line to cross it or not cross it” and “he won’t engage on the issue around Prevent, he’s anti-Prevent”.

Dar’s involvement in such activities presents a significant challenge to counter-extremism work, particularly from the perspective of seeking to challenge extremist ideology, because he continues to promote a grievance narrative that goes unchallenged. Through Dar’s BDC event and community pages relating to Asif Khan’s dismissal, for example, he typifies a currently popular manifestation of Islamist activism that seeks to delegitimise both Ofsted and Charity Commission investigations into extremism-linked activities, presenting them instead as evidence of a state-sponsored ‘war’ on Islam, the popular moniker for which is ‘Trojan Hoax’.

Numerous posts show Dar’s involvement in inciting protest and mistrust of the police, schools and regulatory authorities, as well making accusations of political preferential treatment for Israelis. This includes: references to “Trojan Hoax” and “lies by Ofsted”; claims that the previous governors had been “sacked based on lies”;⁷⁶ suggestions of police impropriety (“some police will also abuse the authority given to them to purposely get in your face, and provoke you to do something stupid”); references to head teacher Adrian Kneeshaw as a “mini-dictator/Bashar Al-Assad”; posts encouraging students to cover their faces during a protest; and an assertion that the school should do “a special talk of the Palestine injustice and [...] the evils Israel has done just like they showed support for the holocaust but they have chosen sides”.

3. Challenging Extremism in Bradford

3.1 Background

Bradford has long been viewed as a microcosm of British multiculturalism. The fourth largest metropolitan district in England, it has a religiously and ethnically diverse population.⁷⁷ Bradford’s history of race-related riots, however, has meant that the city has also become associated with racial and religious tensions. In June 1995, for example, the district of Manningham saw intense rioting over a three-day period, while in summer 2001 a breakdown in

www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/11465246.VIDEO__Hundreds_of_protesters_gather_outside_Bradford_school_in_row_over_staff_member_suspension/?ref=mr, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also Carlton Bolling - DON'T SACK ASIF KHAN! *Facebook*, available at: www.facebook.com/events/1481061595479756/?ref=22, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also CBC: Don't Sack Asif Khan - BFD United, 14 October *Facebook* available at: www.facebook.com/saveasifkhan, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁷⁶ ‘Carlton Bolling - DON'T SACK ASIF KHAN’, *Facebook*.

⁷⁷ 63.9% of the district’s population identifies themselves as White British; and 20.3% as of Pakistani ethnic origin, the largest proportion in England. 45.9% identifies themselves as Christian; and nearly one quarter of the population (24.7%) as Muslim, a proportion over five times the national average of 4.8%. See Bradford Metropolitan District Council, available at: www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/community_and_living/population. See also ‘Religion in England and Wales 2011’, 2011 Census, Key Statistics for Local Authorities in England and Wales Release, 11 December 2012, available at: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-religion.html, last visited: 16 February 2015.

community relations saw levels of extreme violence across a number of towns and cities in the North East, including Bradford.⁷⁸

The subsequent government inquiry, the Cattle Report, highlighted a complex mix of localised inter-racial and inter-faith tensions, largely between white and Asian communities, as well as a sense of perceived marginalisation within large parts of the region's minority faith and ethnic groups.⁷⁹ In addition, the 2006/7 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, designed to carry on some of the research that followed the riots,⁸⁰ reported tensions within and between faith communities, particularly a "sense of attack" felt by Britain's Muslim communities and the existence of "an established white community, prone to a siege mentality".⁸¹

Such tensions serve to bolster extremist narratives. Members of the proscribed group al-Muhajiroun, for example, among other Islamists, request religious rights in pursuit of a sectarian agenda, which has engendered a corollary rise in street-level far-right activism, with English Defence League (EDL) and Britain First protests, for example, requiring a strong police presence. Both movements alienate the constituencies they claim to represent, namely Muslims and the so-called indigenous white working-class, and provoke hostility between faith and ethnic communities.

As a result of the prevalence of these issues in Bradford, both Prevent and integration-related policies in the city and surrounding areas are well-developed. From a community policing perspective, therefore, there are practical, good practice lessons to be learned for police forces nationally as well as the specified authorities for whom the new statutory Prevent duty is applicable. The ideas and experiences provided in this section are drawn from interviews with representatives from West Yorkshire Police and the North East Counter-Terrorism Unit between October and December 2014.

3.2 Developing Police and Community Partnerships

Police and community partnerships are central to Prevent because of the key police role in delivering the strategy. Research has shown, however, that police involvement in other so-called 'hard' counter-terrorism work, particularly police raids and intelligence-led activities, as well as the perception that Muslim communities are only viewed through a security lens can impede community relations and trust.⁸² In response, the West Yorkshire Police stress that the most important components of successful Prevent delivery are building sustainable community relations based on mutual trust and confidence, as well as ensuring representative and practical engagement with local communities.

⁷⁸ 'Bradford: One Year On, Breaking the Silences, A Discussion Document from the Programme for a Peaceful City', University of Bradford, (2002), available at: www.brad.ac.uk/admin/pr/pressreleases/2002/silences.PDF, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁷⁹ 'Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team Chaired by Ted Cattle', HM Government (2001), available at: <http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=96&file=PDFversion>, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also 'Challenging Local Communities to Change Oldham, A Review of Community Cohesion in Oldham', Institute of Community Cohesion, (2006), available at: <http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=79&file=PDFversion>, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁸⁰ 'UK "must tackle ethnic tensions"', *BBC News*, 24 August 2006, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5280230.stm, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁸¹ 'Challenging Local Communities to Change Oldham', Institute of Community Cohesion, (2006), p. 6.

⁸² 'Police-Muslim Engagement and Partnerships for the Purposes of Counter-Terrorism: an examination', Summary Report by the University of Birmingham and Religion and Society, (2008), p. 9.

3.2.1 Building Sustainable Community Relations

The West Yorkshire Police emphasise their need for community support with regards to both general and Prevent-related policing, because “we police this city, this district, this country by consent, and we need the public support to police”. The most important element to this, in their view, is that Prevent is situated within a healthy community policing environment and that engagement is proactive rather than reactive.

In their experience, successful community policing allows officers to create meaningful and sustainable relationships with community members and representatives across all issues, rather than attempting to force a relationship in response to a Prevent-related issue. In this regard, the West Yorkshire Police learned lessons from the 1995 Manningham riots; and believe that their policy of continued engagement has allowed the district to better resist far-right activism, for example, in recent years:

In 1995 there was disorder on this street out here and actually the Bradford commission report and the community said that time: ‘You only come to us when you want something. What we want from you, we want a 365 day relationship, where you’ll come talk to us about how badly England is doing at cricket, you’ll come and talk to us about the weather, you’ll come and talk to us about our issues, the dog-fouling or the quality of life issues. And then we have confidence in you, then at a time of crisis we’re not trying to build a relationship, we already have a relationship’.

And we learned that lesson, we invested in that and we continue to invest in that relationship. And in 2001, yes, again we had serious disorder out here, and the community stayed with us and we’ve kept that community generally, all communities in this district, and when we’ve had challenges from outside, external to the district, the EDL and Britain First, actually the community has been resilient and has said: ‘it might not be perfect here, but actually you aren’t the answer’.

The West Yorkshire Police focus, therefore, on resolving what they refer to as “quality of life issues”, such as dog-fouling, parking, anti-social behaviour, as well as stress the importance of speaking with community representatives about wider issues such as regeneration or grooming as well as Prevent:

[We] will spend day in day out, working with the community on dog-fouling, on parking, on general policing issues [...] It’s reassurance, it’s making the communities realise that someone’s interested in their complaints and grievances, and if they can see you’re dealing with the smaller things then they’ll start to trust you [...] it’s just re-instating the role of good community policing values [...] It’s about putting in the effort, and it’s hard miles at sometimes, it’s about looking after the community.

The West Yorkshire Police acknowledge that Prevent can cause tensions with integration-related issues, but recognise that working at grassroots level means Prevent- and cohesion-related issues and activities “are meshed together”. They are mindful of the significance of perceptions of their behaviour and they want Muslim communities to feel that they are treated fairly: “We police this community on all issues and Prevent is just one of them. So we know that we need to police fairly, firmly, but also in a way that keeps the community with us. We want to take them with us”. In this respect, they believe that having resilient partnerships that can withstand the fall-out from political protests or heightened religious and racial tensions will ultimately help isolate extremists: “we

need to take decent ordinary people with us so we can police the small minority and give Dar less of a foothold”.

3.2.2 Representative and Practical Engagement

The West Yorkshire Police work with a variety of partners in order to ensure they hear representative views from within Bradford’s Muslim communities and are mindful that such engagement cannot be static:

The community dynamics are changing all the time. So it’s our job to be out there, to talk with anyone and everyone and understand what’s going on in the communities. [...] It’s a bit like old and new friends, rather than ‘usual suspects’, so we’re always conscious that there’s never a time where we say ‘right, that’s the list of who we’ll talk to’, because it’s changing all the time. We’ve got a small Syrian community coming in, we’ve got refugees and asylum seekers; this city is a city sanctuary, it has a long history of welcoming people from across the world, and so it changes day in and day out.

In addition, the police recognise the plurality of their local Muslim communities – from, for example, a sectarian, ethnic or even generational perspective – and the subsequent need to engage widely with a variety of partners so as not to exclude minorities within a minority: “Prevent is about widening that scope [...] it’s not one individual who can do it, so you can’t just back one horse”.

The West Yorkshire Police also advocate practical and visible Prevent engagement across a variety of sectors in order to demonstrate tangible benefits for individuals, families and communities. One example of this cited as a success is the work the police do with refugee groups, helping to provide courses for immigrant women:

One of the team runs courses with women, with new arrivals, she runs a ten-week programme and she looks at British values, so within that she will talk about issues around drugs, gangs, domestic violence. She will talk about all sorts of issues, and she will talk about Prevent too, because they’re all issues where what we want to do is build resilience in our communities, and say, ‘this is what’s acceptable in British society. You may have been exposed to different things where you came from, but actually in Britain... this is the law’.

The police also work with a variety of local partners, including mosques, refugee groups, health, community and voluntary organisations as well as education and children’s services; and there is also a concerted effort to engage with Bradford’s “white working-class [and] non-working communities”. Such partnerships, they believe, allow them to build long-term relationships as well as identify early warning signs of race- or community-related tensions:

[Our relationships] help us in terms of understanding tensions, so we can identify tensions pretty quickly and then put measures in place to mitigate those tensions [...] we work with partners, in terms of structures, around our neighbourhood policing model and work with the local authority, in terms of working together, and it might be that we don’t have the answer, but we might know someone who has, so it’s long-term relationships.

In addition, the police engage with the public for feedback on their delivery of Prevent. At a formal level this is done through their Prevent reference group, which features faith leaders and community representatives as well as local volunteers; and is where, the police state, “we will take challenging issues and seek a community view [...] it’s a critical friend for us”.

3.3 Encouraging Critical Thinking and Credible Voices

One of the central pillars of Prevent is “respond[ing] to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat from those who promote it”.⁸³ In addition, the government’s 2013 extremism taskforce report identified that “the failure to confront extremists [...] has led to an environment conducive to radicalisation in some mosques and Islamic centres, universities and prisons”.⁸⁴ For the West Yorkshire Police the key mechanism for supporting the ideological challenge against extremism is the promotion of critical thinking skills and credible voices. This, they believe, helps to build resilience against not only extremism, but also helps promote dialogue around other controversial issues.

3.3.1 Critical Thinking

The West Yorkshire Police work alongside community organisations and other partners to develop opportunities for safe discussion in order to “create those opportunities for dialogue not just around Prevent but generally around people’s critical thinking skills, so that communities can come together and hear the other view and can mix so that the fear of the other becomes less so.”

The rationale is that when mainstream Muslim voices are less visible, individuals with more extreme views can take advantage of that vacuum. As such, the police advocate greater opportunities for communities (and young people in particular) to learn critical thinking skills in order to develop the confidence to listen and respond with ideas without fear of censure:

There’s a vacuum at the minute in terms of political debate... in terms of, members of the Muslim community being very visible in terms of being more considered, being more mainstream in their view, and because of that, because they aren’t there [...] that then creates an opportunity for the likes of Mr Dar [...] to fill that vacuum.

In a district like ours, we aren’t the Home Counties, we are a large metropolitan authority which has a sizable, Pakistani Muslim community, and actually we have more in common, more draws us together than pulls us apart. And for me, the trick is reminding people of that and reinforcing that, and pushing the likes of Mr Dar to the very margins of society, so that they don’t get too much of an opportunity to have a voice.

3.3.2 Credible Voices

The West Yorkshire Police also stress the role of credible voices in challenging the theological legitimacy of extremist ideology: “[Supporting] credible voices in communities is the way forward [...] if you have someone from the community who can challenge him and say ‘Islam doesn’t say that’”. One recent example of speakers impacting hard-to-reach communities cited by the police as a success was an event organised by the Muslim Women’s Council with Ahtsham Ali, a Muslim

⁸³ ‘Prevent Strategy’, HM Government, (2011), p. 1.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 50-51. See also ‘Tackling extremism in the UK’, HM Government, (2013), pp. 4-5.

COMMUNITY POLICING AND PREVENTING EXTREMISM

adviser to the Prison Service and a former president of the Islamic Society of Britain, who spoke openly with the audience about controversial clerics such as Anwar al-Awlaki:

A young woman stood up and said: 'I might get locked up for this, but actually when I was younger I used to listen to Anwar al-Awlaki and I used to find him inspirational' and the speaker spoke and said: 'Yeah I did too, but actually there came a point when that changed'.

The police are mindful of the need to balance the responsibility to promote credible alternative voices and narratives with the requirement to engage with suitable partners: "By the nature of some of those individuals often they are – it's like youth workers, those who perhaps have the most influence among young people are those who are a little bit on the edge – so that is a leap of faith sometimes". In addition, the police note that encouraging greater debate within communities impacts not only on Prevent-related issues, but can also have a positive effect on other controversial issues, such as local community-based initiatives around grooming.

The primary challenges identified by the West Yorkshire Police are managing the speed and direction of community-based responses to relevant issues as well as the recognition that the promotion of safe-space discussion is a long-term investment, which can have funding implications:

One of the challenges is, for the community, those who want to move forward, is around them being able to bring the community with them. So some of the credible voices we talk about who are out there are constantly trying to juggle those two, those in terms of outwardly facing, to the media, to us... are wanting to take people with them, but sometimes we want them to go at a pace faster than actually the community is ready for. [...]

There has been money available in the past and then the money ran out, but we did lots of safe space-type events [...] people want results today, don't they? [And] when money's getting less so, actually it's harder to say that this is going to make a difference in five years' time. I understand that dilemma for policy makers [...] at the minute I don't think that we are doing enough to bring communities together.

Despite the current challenges, the West Yorkshire Police believe that community relations and Prevent-related work has improved over the "last six or seven years":

I think our community is better, more resilient; we withstood challenges of the EDL in 2010 in the city; again last year in the city centre; we had Britain First this year as well; and actually communities, by and large, have come together. I think the issues around grooming are being talked about in communities now far more than they ever were [...] We are on a journey and I think as our Pakistani, our Kashmiri community feels more confident, I think we will create that, that greater social responsibility and ownership of the district and I think that is getting better.

3.4 Raising Awareness around Safe Giving

The UK's charitable sector was identified in the revised Prevent strategy as a sector or institution "where there are risks of radicalisation";⁸⁵ and it was raised in the 2013 extremism taskforce report as an area where more could be done to "disrupt extremists".⁸⁶ More recently, the high level of giving in the UK for humanitarian relief in Syria and the proliferation of unregistered aid convoys also means that the sector has been uniquely entwined with 'soft' government efforts to dissuade individuals from traveling to join the on-going conflict.⁸⁷ In addition, the West Yorkshire Police promote safe giving in response to the targeting of Muslim communities by fundraisers who take advantage of their religious injunction to give to charity.

3.4.1 Syria-related Fundraising and Instances of Intimidation

The West Yorkshire Police have seen a proliferation of Syria-related charities since the conflict in Syria started in 2011 as well as a resurgence of fundraising around the Israel-Gaza conflict in the summer of 2014, with one particular technique requiring police intervention:

The trick is, on these streets, which are always really busy, was to go to some of the main arterial routes, press the button on the pelican lights, stop all the traffic and then go down the line of traffic with a bucket... and literally stop all the traffic and we had lots and lots and lots of them. Some [were] registered charities and some perhaps not, but all 'bucket for Syria' [...] They would press the button so it goes to red so all the cars would be backed up and then keep pressing the button so it keeps going to red, so over a period of time all the traffic backs up and you create a traffic jam, so you've got a captive market, captive audience to go with your bucket down the line of cars.

The West Yorkshire Police agreed that this style of fundraising could be intimidating, highlighting that:

It led to an increase in tensions, because you either give or you don't and some people said, 'well actually I put some money in the collection in the bucket three cars back', 'Oh put some in, 'No, no', and then... not every time, but on occasions there was abuse, following, 'well you blatantly support the Israelis'.

They also stated that at the beginning of Israel-Gaza conflict in the summer tensions in the city increased and there was one recorded incidence of a hate crime after a couple refused to pay and the fundraisers responded abusively: "we recorded a hate incident, because a couple were, didn't want to give, well, this was in the early days of the conflict and things got a little bit heated".

The regulation of charitable fundraising is "enforced through the local authority and the Charity Commission" rather than the police. When the police are confronted with behaviour that is anti-social or intimidating they report it to the local authority, which will contact the relevant charities and advise them on good and bad practice. This happened during the summer of 2014 when the

⁸⁵ 'Prevent Strategy', HM Government, (2011), p. 1.

⁸⁶ See also 'Tackling extremism in the UK', HM Government, (2013), pp. 2-3.

⁸⁷ See for example the Department for International Development's regularly updated factsheet on the issue: 'The UK's humanitarian aid response to the Syria crisis', HM Government, last updated 10 September 2014, available at: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/factsheet-the-uks-humanitarian-aid-response-to-the-syria-crisis. See also 'Information and Advice about Travelling to Syria: Travel Warning', Northumbria Police, available at: www.northumbria.police.uk/Images/Non-branded_Syria%20booklet_04.04.14_tcm4-94808.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015.

council wrote to all registered charities who had been stopping traffic in order to fundraise advising them on what they could and couldn't do while fundraising: "We had lots of that and we had some of the registered ones and we had to send a letter through the council who regulate the charities to say look this is a good practice guide about what you should do, how you should collect".

The council only writes to registered charities, however, and so there are instances of inappropriate charity collecting by unregistered organisations or individuals "falling through the net". As such, West Yorkshire Police repeatedly engage with Muslim communities on safe giving: "Our team are out there, handing out leaflets, reminding people and saying, 'look there are bogus charity collectors who are just villains putting it in their pocket, but also as part of that you need to be aware that people give and the money might not go to where you think, it might end up funding terrorism'".

While fundraising, both formal and informal, increases during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, and during other religious festivals, there is also a noticeable rise in response to certain geopolitical circumstances, most commonly increased tensions between Israel and the Palestinians or the growing humanitarian crisis in Syria: "We have it at festival times, so we have it at Ramadan, massively around festival times, and then if we have something like a Gaza-type situation, something of that nature we have it then as well [...] that's part of life here".

3.4.2 Unregulated and Informal Fundraising

The West Yorkshire Police have also highlighted that unregistered fundraising in cafes and shops within Muslim-majority areas is common and difficult to track:

If you go into a cafe on this road you'll see a large number of collection pots that people coming in and out are managing it from within the community, so the shop owner knows he's got these collection tins there and most commonly he's letting people have an open policy, [thinking] they can have a collection pot, and it's the will of God whatever happens to the money, and if people want to be criminal that's out of my hands really. Unfortunately the council have limited resources and truthfully the charities people should be policing it, but how can they police the whole of the community here because there's often an understanding within communities of not challenging or questioning when someone's asking you for a donation, so criminality can unfortunately masquerade on that.

The police acknowledge that these collection tins are very difficult to monitor: "The collection tins on the counter fall out of legislation to a degree, at some point you know, the ownership's not there for the council to check on that process, it's like self-policing really, down to the organisation and establishments that have got these collection pots". Typical establishments are shops, cafes, restaurants, private businesses and mosques, "anywhere and everywhere".

Informal fundraising is also done outside mosques after Friday prayers, often by groups or activists that have not been given permission by the mosque authorities. Such informal fundraising, the police acknowledge, is difficult to monitor or control given the permissive culture surrounding charitable giving within Muslim communities: "Someone will rock up on a Friday and speak to committee and ask do you mind if I do a collection outside mosque. Sometimes

they'll say okay and other times they say well, not really, but they'll still do it. And that's a challenge as the committee think, well, it's giving to charity and actually it's a crucial point, they'll say that God will judge them, I'm doing my bit to say well if you want to collect and then it's up to the individual".

3.4.3 Targeting of Muslim Communities by Fundraisers

The West Yorkshire Police work closely with the Charity Commission and local partners, including schools and mosques, to provide advice on safe charitable giving: "Our team [is] consistently going out into communities reminding everyone of their responsibilities around safe giving [...] along with our colleagues in children's services we give advice to all schools in terms of safe giving".

Advocating safe giving is a priority in Bradford because the local police are aware that there "are people out there [...] just criminals really who will exploit the fact that people want to give to charity". In particular, Bradford's Muslim communities are targeted because of their religious injunction to give to charity, known as *zakat*:

We're a poor district, [but] we punch well above our weight in terms of how much we actually give to charity across the board, and I speak to colleagues who are Muslim who will say while my sense is that perhaps the money won't go to where it's meant to go, and they're not suggesting it's for terrorism or anything like that, they're just saying that they're villains and it'll go in the wrong pocket, but actually Islam teaches us that we should give to charity so I feel honour-bound to give to charity and it's probably easier to just give them the money so they'll go away rather than question it.

As a result, the police are working to raise awareness about safe giving: "that's a cultural issue and we've got to work around it and we're trying to explore it with some of [the] team to say how do we get that message out to communities, to work with the Charity Commission, who's been twice to speak to [the] team to work out how we can to endorse safe giving".

Some local fundraisers will repeatedly target Muslim communities in order to take advantage of this religious injunction:

I feel for the community because [charitable giving] is such a big tenet of Islam and sadly some people take advantage of that [...] of the community's sense of goodwill and charity. [...] And what we know is, [there are] young Muslim men and their Mums are at home during day, they'll get people knocking on the door week in week out, same people [asking for money], and week in week out they end up giving them money, and what they're saying privately to us is 'I don't want these people coming to my door, they intimidate me'. And these might be bona fide charities, but they say, 'I don't want to do it but I feel duty-bound as Islam would say that I need to give to charity'.

The police believe that these collectors are from within Bradford's Muslim communities themselves, which lends additional reputational pressure on individuals to give. Collectors can come from large, well-known registered charities, such as Interpal, Muslim Relief or the Ummah

Welfare Trust, as well as local mosques and small unregistered charities, and often they will simply say, “We’re raising funds for the community”.

The West Yorkshire Police’s primary method for countering such practices is through education and awareness raising, “to prevent it, to educate people, to say, ‘you don’t have to give to those charities, you can say no, and while a lot of them are genuine charities you don’t have to give to them every time”.

3.4.4 Promoting Safe Giving and Deterring Travel to Syria

With a few exceptions, Bradford has not experienced the Syria-related problems and tensions that other communities such as Cardiff and Portsmouth have and, according to the West Yorkshire Police, the majority of individuals who have gone and come back have done so in a humanitarian capacity. Despite this, the police remain concerned about the potential for individuals to graduate from charitable giving to joining an aid convoy – possibly inspired by images of suffering they see online or on television – and then find themselves involved or suspected of being involved in terrorism-related activity:

There are lots and lots and lots of individuals in the community who are desperate to try and do good. The flipside of that is those who we are perhaps less confident in what they’re seeking to achieve out of it. When we look through our particular lens, is that the same lens as someone who is watching day in day out atrocities committed by ‘the other’, if that’s right, on TV or on the internet, and it legitimises that and is it, is that then, there’s a debate then about how that then radicalises individuals who would seek to make a statement. [...] And the worry is for those people who actually think, ‘well I’ve given to charity, I’ve done that before and I don’t feel I’m doing enough and actually now I’m going to go on a convoy’.

In response, the police work with or support local initiatives and the Charity Commission in order to promote safe giving. Last year, for example, the Bradford Council of Mosques’ Eid Dinner, supported by up to 70 local mosques, was attended by a representative from the Charity Commission who was asked to present on good practice for fundraising as well as a Bradford-educated representative from DIFD who had been to Syria and spoke about safe giving. The police said it was a “fantastic event which got the message out across the mosques to say, this is who you can donate to”, adding that it was an important opportunity to explain the unprecedented level of giving to the Syrian conflict from the British government.

3.5 Promoting Prevent as Safeguarding

The West Yorkshire police acknowledge that Prevent is not always a popular strategy, a position echoed by many frontline practitioners and, most recently, typified by the widespread hesitance and in some cases negative reaction to the new statutory duty to deliver Prevent.⁸⁸ More broadly there are grievances and negative perceptions within British Muslim communities of Prevent,

⁸⁸ See, for example, ‘Muslim Council of Britain Parliamentary Briefing on introducing “Prevent” as a statutory duty for all public bodies’, Muslim Council of Britain, 18 January 2015, available at: www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/MCB-Briefing-on-introducing-Prevent-as-a-statutory-duty-for-all-public-bodies.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015. See also ‘Russell Group response to the consultation on the Counter Terrorism Bill draft statutory guidance’, Russell Group, undated, available at: www.russellgroup.ac.uk/uploads/57-Russell-Group-response-to-consultation-on-the-Prevent-duty-guidance-as-described-by-the-Counter-Terrorism-and-Security-Bill-2015.pdf, last visited: 18 February 2015.

which the government draft statutory duty guidance acknowledges “extremists purport to identify” and subsequently exploit.⁸⁹

Police forces nationally, however, work within Muslim communities on an on-going basis and, as visible representatives of the state, are therefore well placed to identify such challenges. In Bradford, in addition to grassroots engagement and community policing, the police work to promote Prevent as a safeguarding issue as well as a counter-terrorism tool in order to generate community support separate from political concerns or points of view.

The West Yorkshire Police recognise that within Bradford’s Muslim communities perceptions of the police, the state and society are significant in terms of managing relationships and maintaining “trust and confidence”:

We can be the best police ever, but if someone holds that [negative] view that taints their view on whatever we do [...] it’s hard to get underneath that, and certainly in some of the discussions we have, and we consistently have, with communities, is about educating the public around what we’re about; and understanding their view on Islamophobia, on grievance, on victimhood, and understand how that makes that community tick.

The issues most commonly relayed to or identified by the police are perceptions of Islamophobia, anger over foreign policy and most recently, the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair; an issue which is “fairly frequently” referred to as, “a campaign by the establishment to rubbish the Muslim community [and] to restrict its development”.

The West Yorkshire Police also hear about members of Bradford’s Muslim communities being stopped under police stop and search powers contained in Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000:⁹⁰

Members of the community travel abroad frequently and they will say, ‘I get stopped every time I leave the UK [...] I get stopped and... I’m British and yet I get stopped’. And they will mix that in with the whole issue of where their role is in society, and then, [extremists] will use that as an opportunity to create this division in the minds of individuals I think, that we are different and there’s a different agenda at play here.

The police are also sensitive to issues of identity and the politicisation of faith. They recognise the presence of a narrative, fuelled by individuals such as Dar, which plays on both geo-politics and local issues to present Muslim and British identities as mutually exclusive:

When you look out the road, you’ll see people wearing more traditional clothing, the burqa etc., that’s become more prevalent. Is it an identity crisis where the young people are going into the faith more because of world politics? And does that then bring Dar more to the forefront? Could be, the grooming and the segregation in the community, become more prevalent, back at school they’re seen together, people

⁸⁹ ‘Prevent duty guidance: a consultation’, HM Government, (2014), pp.38-39.

⁹⁰ Schedule 7, which allows the police to stop and search passengers at ports, airports and international rail terminals without the usual requirement for “reasonable suspicion” has proven a particularly controversial counter-terrorism measure, with the government’s independent reviewer of terrorism legislation raising concerns over its use. See ‘David Miranda row: What is schedule 7?’, *BBC News*, 19 August 2013, available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23757133, last visited: 18 February 2015.

then make complaints about children coming together and singing at certain age and segregation, so, you think, is Dar getting into somehow into that and that identity crisis, but we're talking about third or fourth generation now here, suddenly, up in Bradford [...] there's something that's gelling together, an Islamic Muslim identity that some people might say is segregated from British values, because of, maybe, world politics - it's very sensitive to describe.

For the West Yorkshire Police, the most effective tool for countering negative perceptions of Prevent is to engage with a variety of partners in order to raise awareness that the strategy is also a safeguarding issue rather than simply a counter-terrorism tool: "It is about protecting the vulnerable". The police believe that education is the foremost avenue through which to do this:

Well if you look at education for one thing, the target audience in the first instance would be all the upper school and start with awareness about radicalisation, about [the government de-radicalisation programme] the Channel scheme [...] the priority is to make sure that all the staff know about the safeguarding policy with regard to extremism.

In this respect, they acknowledge the beneficial impact of the 'Trojan Horse' affair, in that it has most likely galvanised schools to work more closely on Prevent-related programmes: "It's probably fair to say that in the last year it's accelerated into a buy-in now from the schools themselves, because of Ofsted, because of the government stance, whereas before, at the beginning if you go back six years, it was a very, very slow process. You've suddenly got more a corporate buy-in from education".

At a practical level, one current campaign on internet safety relates not only to Prevent and online radicalisation but also to safeguarding children against issues like grooming and criminality more broadly. It is through such de-politicised channels, for example, that the West Yorkshire Police feel they are able to communicate well with stakeholders, in this case parents:

That's why we are trying to do work around internet safety at its most basic [...] it could be grooming, it could be crime generally, and radicalisation is just one other element of that. [...] What we're trying to do is, going out to our communities and hook onto the parents, saying look we want to protect your kids with the internet, do internet safety at schools, with community organisations, so that they're more aware, so that they're able to resist that risk.

Positioning Prevent as a safeguarding issue can mitigate against some of the political elements that can hamper police and community relations, thereby increasing community support. The police liken this to current debates about British values and how best to make the concept meaningful and relevant to individuals and communities:

Policy-makers are sensing that actually the British public are saying 'we want to affirm British values' and we saw it with the view of how the military were and the armed forces were given greater respect and I think what we are seeing now, this re-affirmation with British values. And it's about making that so it's understandable because it's got to be in language that people understand, and what makes it relevant to them, at a personal level. So, that's like us talking about Prevent, in common language, and saying 'well this is about protecting our kids and the most vulnerable

members of society, and actually, it's a team effort and it's about looking after... it's not 'them and us', it's a team effort', and that's how I talk with people; and they will say to me: 'I might not agree with foreign policy but I can buy into that'.

3.6 Freedom of Speech and Thresholds for Extremism

Among the biggest challenges anticipated for community policing in 2015 relate to freedom of speech and the thresholds used to measure and respond to extremism, particularly where individuals are assessed as not meeting the criminal threshold for prosecution: "I think 2015 will be challenging for us around changing administration. I think there's a wider debate to be had around how best to deal with individuals".

Community responses to the extremist material posted by Dar typify the public debates regularly had across political parties, within the media and, most recently, in response to statutory duty on institutions such as universities over the appropriate restriction on free speech in relation to extremist or hate preachers. The West Yorkshire Police state that they commonly hear two views on Dar: "The first is: 'Why don't you sort him out?' Is he committing offences or is it just offensive? The other view is: 'don't give him oxygen, just ignore him' i.e. if you put him on a pedestal you create a martyr of him and it'll give him more of a profile and actually he is inconsequential".

The police believe that Dar's online postings have isolated him from the wider Muslim communities: "ordinary people think Dar has gone too far with his website [and that] he's pushing the envelope". At the same time, however, they are sensitive to the fact that applying restrictions on him could, conversely, increase his following: "Further to that [members of Bradford's Muslim communities] they've said 'well actually if you use these new disruption orders, these new gagging orders with the likes of Dar you create a *cause celebre* and surely we live in a democracy".

The West Yorkshire Police stress the need to ensure fair and consistent responses to individuals exhibiting extremism. For example, they would support greater clarity regarding legislation governing hate speech- and extremism-related offences, particularly as they manifest online through material shared through and comments made on social media. The police stated that while extremists often argue that they were not aware that their statements were potentially illegal, local Muslim community representatives have conversely requested greater clarity: "the community has said, 'tell us what we can and can't do'".

The most prominent sector involved in challenging extremist speakers is higher education, where restrictions on freedom of speech have proven controversial.⁹¹ Most recently, representatives have successfully campaigned for the legislation governing the new statutory duty to contain amendments which require universities and ministers to have "particular regard" to academic freedom and freedom of speech when exercising their new duties.⁹²

⁹¹ See, for example, an open letter to Home Secretary Theresa May citing concerns that the duty threatens freedom of speech at universities signed by a number of prominent UK professors, 'Counter-terrorism and security bill is a threat to freedom of speech at universities, Guardian, 2 February 2015, available at: www.theguardian.com/education/2015/feb/02/counter-terrorism-security-bill-threat-freedom-of-speech-universities, last visited: 18 February 2015.

⁹² 'Counter-Terror bill receives Royal Assent', *Times Higher Education*, 12 February 2015, available at: www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/counter-terror-bill-receives-royal-assent/2018525.article, last visited: 18 February 2015.

The West Yorkshire Police recognise that universities, as well as other public institutions, have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to protect service users, in this case staff and students, from discrimination and harassment as well as to foster an atmosphere in which tolerance of others is respected.⁹³ In practical terms this means that the threshold for extremism differs from that used, for example, to measure online activism:

You can look at Dar and say what he's saying about, being homophobic, sexist comment [...] on that platform he hasn't broken any laws. [If] he goes to the university and gives a speech that's sexist, homophobic or you know... then there's a threshold and there is legislation there in place.

The police acknowledge that the issue of extremist speakers raises challenging questions about how best to respond to extreme albeit legal speech and whether open challenge and the promotion of self-censorship in an environment which can be moderated, such as a university, is more effective from a safeguarding perspective than pushing extremism underground:

Is it better allowing an individual like that to go to a university where, before they speak the university and the Students' Union says, 'right, this is our policy on equality and diversity, so we won't put up with anything homophobic, sexist, etc.' and he as an individual has to then think, so it's self-policing. The danger is that [if] you go down the line of trying to snuff it out so that individual then doesn't get the opportunity to speak where they are challenged, they can do it in a backroom where actually they're not going to be challenged. That's the dilemma isn't it? That's why it's not easy, any of this. That's why there's no magic answer.

Freedom of speech and identifying thresholds for extremism, however, also relate to wider and more immediate counter-terrorism efforts. For example, one North East Counter Terrorism Unit Detective Inspector said that preventing individuals from travelling abroad for terrorist purposes, most commonly to Syria and Iraq, will remain a key priority for police nationally throughout 2015 and that there is often a very short window in which to identify a potential perpetrator, as little as "a matter of weeks". He emphasised that disrupting UK-based extremists can, therefore, be crucial in preventing foreign travel because "extremist speakers can provide the spark that can lead to individuals seeking further information that puts them at risk of radicalisation or recruitment".

Freedom of speech issues also relate to facilitating political protests, where the priority for the police is to ensure the event is peaceful and that responses are fair and consistent:

I want us to have integrity. I take confidence in saying, in terms of any protest, because we can say that our role as the police is to facilitate peaceful protest, and we'll facilitate that, and we have said that consistently... whether it's the EDL who have come or whether we've said it to a community when another protest have been held [...] We almost have a pastoral role as the police, and individuals who have come to see me, worried maybe about a public protest, and have come to us and said: 'We can do business with you, because you don't have political persuasion, you

⁹³ Sutton, R., and Stuart, H., 'Challenging Extremists: Practical Frameworks for our Universities', Henry Jackson Society, (2012), available at: <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SRSocialMedia.pdf>, last visited: 17 February 2015, pp. 57-76.

are consistent in your view whether it's this week, last week or next week'. They respect that and they know that we are honest brokers really.

3.7 Conclusion

The experiences of West Yorkshire Police are useful not only for police forces nationally but also the specified authorities for whom the new statutory Prevent duty is applicable. In addition, they provide a practical, grassroots perspective to on-going policy debates and discussions within wider society about the remit of counter-extremism efforts in a free society.

The West Yorkshire Police stress the importance of police and community partnerships. They advocate building sustainable relationships based on mutual trust and confidence; and recognise the need to be representative and to respond to changing community dynamics. The focus on successful community policing and quality of life issues allows them to create resilient partnerships rather than attempting to force a relationship in response to a Prevent-related issue.

The police are mindful of the need to reflect the revised Prevent policy focus of "responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism", in particular to that emanating from terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. Their key mechanism for supporting the ideological challenge against extremism is the promotion of critical thinking skills and credible voices, which, they believe, which builds resilience against extremism; helps isolate extremists; and promotes dialogue around other controversial issues, such as grooming.

Charitable fundraising and the promotion of safe giving is another key issue for the West Yorkshire Police. They recognise that the religious injunction to give to charity within Bradford's Muslim communities can make them vulnerable not only to fundraising for criminal or terrorist intent but also to intimidating styles of fundraising which seek to take advantage of a widespread generous and permissive attitude towards giving.

The experiences of West Yorkshire Police indicate that police forces are well-placed to identify grievances and negative perceptions of Prevent. Successful work in the education sector and around internet safety and grooming demonstrates the value of promoting the strategy as a safeguarding issue as well as a counter-terrorism tool in order to generate support that is separate from political concerns and points of view.

Among the biggest challenges anticipated for community policing in 2015 is ensuring consistency in relation to freedom of speech and the thresholds used to measure extremism, particularly as it manifests either online or in public situations, for example at universities and during political protests.

About the Author

Hannah Stuart is a Research Fellow at HJS and has authored reports on extremism, terrorism and jihadist ideology as well as religious law and the role of religion in the public sphere. Hannah gave testimony to the UK Home Affairs Select Committee on radicalisation; provides comment for broadcast media; and has written analysis for the Wall Street Journal, The Times, Foreign Policy, Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, and the Guardian, among others. Hannah has a MA in International Studies and Diplomacy (with Distinction) from the School of Oriental and African Studies, and a BA in English Literature from the University of Bristol.



About the Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism

The Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism (CRT) at The Henry Jackson Society provides top-quality, in-depth research and delivers targeted, tangible and impactful activities to combat the threats from radical ideologies and terrorism at home and abroad.



About The Henry Jackson Society

The Henry Jackson Society is a think tank and policy-shaping force that fights for the principles and alliances which keep societies free - working across borders and party lines to combat extremism, advance democracy and real human rights, and make a stand in an increasingly uncertain world.

CRT

**Centre for the Response to
Radicalisation and Terrorism**

At The Henry Jackson Society

The Henry Jackson Society
Millbank Tower
21-24 Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP
Tel: 020 7340 4520

www.henryjacksonsociety.org
Charity Registration No. 1140489

The views expressed in this publication are those
of the author and are not necessarily indicative of
those of The Henry Jackson Society or its Trustees

© The Henry Jackson Society, 2015
All rights reserved

