



# Walsall Prevent Digest

## April 2021

Current Threat Level in the UK: SUBSTANTIAL– An Attack is Likely

### Niall Markham, Prevent Coordinator

Welcome back following the Easter break.

In this month's edition of the Walsall Prevent Digest, Police Constable 'Sunny' Lal provides an update on behalf of the West Midlands Police, Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) Prevent Team, a CTU Senior Strategic Analyst also provides an update around Risk & Threat and also there are a couple of articles highlighting some of the work being conducted in Walsall by one of our Home Office funded project providers, namely, Small Steps Ltd.

In addition, Dave also provides an update around a project which is essentially a Prevent Digital Learning Channel and a newly created 'Radicalisation' video content. Both Dave and I see this as the first in a series of online tools to help combat extremism and radicalisation of young people.

### Dave Chadwick, Prevent Education Officer – Welcome back all school staff

A few months ago I forwarded an E-Mail to all primary schools informing them that Niall and myself were working on a Prevent related online training platform aimed at students in years 5 & 6 and in response to the increased risk that young people were finding themselves in while spending more time online. At the time we were hoping the work would be completed by the end of January, but due to Covid restrictions it has taken slightly longer than anticipated. However, I am now pleased to announce that the training package is complete, live and ready to use.

The platform in itself is very easy to use, and just takes a couple of minutes to sign up. How you use it is also very flexible given access to IT in the classrooms will vary from school to school. Ideally, every child would have their own laptop and headphones in order to work through the various stages and without interrupting everyone else in the class. I say this because there is background music playing as they work through the programme in the form of a Hip Hop song (which I have to say, is extremely catchy). If this set up is not possible then it can easily be set up on the whiteboard for all to see and the class teacher going through each stage with the class.

Individual members of staff would need to familiarise themselves with the platform and decide on their own individual approach.

**The teacher will be required to assist each pupil sign up to use the platform before they gain access but once this has been done the young person will be able to work through the various categories:**



- Pre-course questions
- What is Terrorism?
- Quiz
- What is radicalisation?
- Quiz.
- What is Patriotism?
- Quiz.
- Recap.
- Hip Hop video.

If you would like to access this programme please contact me (details at the end of this newsletter) and I will send you instructions in how to access the platform. It is **FREE** to access as the project has been funded by us. The below link provides something of a taster for the programme, a hip hop video that we are sure the young people will love and which in itself can be used as a resource.

<https://vimeo.com/534834197>



Walsall Council

## Update from Strategic Analyst, West Midlands Police, Counter terrorism Unit

Whilst arrests for terrorism related activity have fallen by around a third in the past year, there have been three possible terror attacks prevented in the UK and 185 arrests across more than 800 live operations. These investigations, the majority in partnership with MI5, focus on a range of activities, including fundraising, radicalising and preparing acts of terrorism.

Events that took place in London and Reading in the past year show us that attacks can occur at any time or place without warning. It is through the joint working with your organisations that we are able to pursue terrorists and prevent others from becoming terrorists. Alongside yourselves, a key focus for us is also to increase the protection and security of our citizens, public institutions, critical national infrastructure, and businesses, including places that may be potential terrorist targets.

The Coronavirus pandemic has significantly affected Counter Terrorism policing over the past year, with restrictions altering the landscape in which individuals of concern are able to operate. Whilst individuals have been limited in their ability to meet in person or travel overseas for extremist purposes, we have seen an increase in activity of concern in the online space, often linked to young and vulnerable individuals. Working together in partnership is key to identifying and safeguarding those vulnerable to extreme ideologies.

This Counter Terrorism Local Profile outlines the threat and vulnerability from terrorism-related activity within your Local Authority area. Over the coming year it is critical that we continue to collaborate our efforts to mitigate these areas of risk through your Prevent, Protect and Prepare Boards in order to protect our communities from harm.

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## Update from Police Constable Sunny Lal, West Midlands Police, Counter Terrorism Unit, Prevent Team

Hello to everyone, I hope this email sees you all well.

It has been a strange year with the pandemic affecting us all in some way or another. From a Prevent point of view, it has had an impact on referrals with case numbers lower than expected. However, this was anticipated with the more usual sources of referrals, namely Schools and Colleges not operating as normal and therefore not always being in a position to spot any dangers or issues. That being said, Walsall did seem to buck the trend and cases did continue to be submitted by other agencies such as Police colleagues and Social Services with Walsall Channel Panel operating as normal with all panel members embracing the new online monthly meetings!

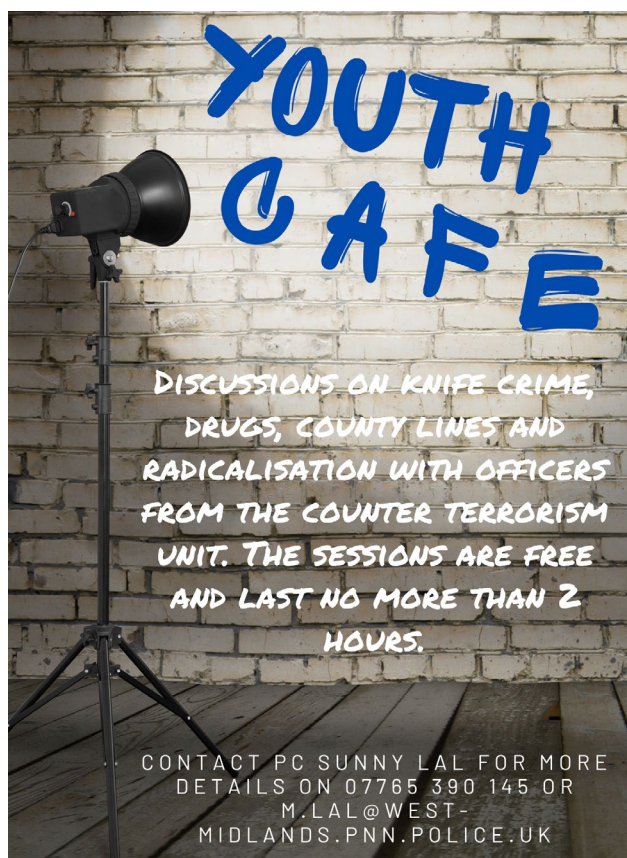
Since my last article, the threat level to this country has been reduced to Substantial from Severe. The move to Substantial - which means an attack is still likely, followed a significant reduction in the momentum of attacks in Europe since those seen in Austria and France between September and November 2020. The threat level is always under review and subject to change.

The internet continues to be a platform used to radicalise, recruit or inspire individuals and also used to incite, provide information to enable and celebrate attacks and during the lockdown with potential for unrestricted internet access for this has been a cause for concern.

If you or someone you know or work with comes across terrorist content online, you can report it on the public referral tool (<https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>). The following link is [www.actearly.uk](http://www.actearly.uk) is a short video about spotting the signs that a friend and/or family member is not their usual self, what would you do if someone is expressing extreme views, act early video explains how you can raise your concerns in confidence.

As we are creeping back to some form of normality so are our Youth Cafes. In a nutshell, Youth Cafes are delivered to Schools, Colleges and open to other Partners who engage with young people. We discuss three emotive and exploitive subjects namely Knives and Gangs, Drugs & County Lines and Radicalisation and Terrorism. They have proven to be extremely popular, especially with group interaction by showing videos, statistics, images and role plays. If you require further details around Youth Cafes please let me know.

Regards,  
PC Sunny LAL



## Small Steps Ltd – Delivering ‘Positive Change.’

Small Steps Ltd provide a one or two hour face-to-face training session and a unique insight into the wrongs of far right extremism. ‘Creating Positive Change’ seeks to communicate a number of key messages, i.e. identifying the dangers of involvement, far-right extremism and radicalisation. This training delivery - which is directed towards teachers and adults - outlines the different far right strategies, groups operating, signs and symbols used, local information and training received by the far right. They also cover issues the far-right use to build support.



Despite the Covid restrictions Small Steps have successfully delivered sessions in a number of our schools in recent months, plus Local Authority departments.

Very recently Small Steps Ltd trainers delivered training to both teaching staff and Year 10 pupils at Abu Bakr Boys and Girls Schools. As is always the case the feedback was extremely positive with those involved finding the education fascinating. Also, the trainer commented was incredibly impressed with the conduct of the pupils and the quality of the Q&A session.

Subject to Home Office approval it is hoped that a bid for further funding during 2021/2022 will be approved.

## Website

Again, just by way of a reminder please visit the Prevent Webpage on our Safer Walsall Partnership external website. The site is live and the Prevent page can be accessed via the below link:-

[www.saferwalsallpartnership.co.uk/prevent](http://www.saferwalsallpartnership.co.uk/prevent)

**For Information, Support or Guidance around Prevent, or should you have any queries, concerns or are looking to make a referral, please do not hesitate to contact us...**



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