



London Counter Terrorism Local Profile: 2025 - 2026

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The purpose of the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) is to provide an outline of the key threats, risks and vulnerabilities within London between **April 2024 and September 2025**. The CTLP equips Local Authorities with an informed threat and risk overview, providing key context to aid in tackling extremist ideology, and identifying the root causes of terrorism.

The CTLP is **not designed to provide a complete assessment of all extremist concerns**, but seeks to raise awareness of current issues, providing an oversight to inform priorities and support local PREVENT delivery plans.

The report is authored on a pan-London basis, due in part to the fact that themes and trends observed in one Local Authority area are **highly likely** to be experienced elsewhere. This approach is also intended to encourage information-sharing and the identification of best practice.



Key Messages

The current UK Terrorist Threat Level is **SUBSTANTIAL** – an attack is **likely**.

Islamist Extremism (IE) remains the primary ideological threat to London. Online radicalisation remains the greatest risk, where material linked to groups such as ISKP and Al-Qaeda remains easily accessible to anyone interested in, or vulnerable, to extremism. IE groups and individuals are increasingly motivated by a wider range of grievances, where global events such as the Israel – Hamas conflict continue to be exploited for the purpose of radicalisation, recruitment, and encouragement of Self-Initiated Terrorism (S-IT) attacks.

The threat of Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (ERWT) remains lower than that of IE. Extreme Right Wing (ERW) ideologies remain fractured rather than fixed to ideological strands. The online space continues to influence the radicalisation pathways of the majority of ERW individuals, with platforms hosting significant volumes of extremist material. The primary threat posed by ERW groups is radicalisation, and the cultivation of permissive environments where extremist and violent content and/or rhetoric is shared.

The evolving terrorist and extremist landscape is **countered by ongoing efforts from police and security services** to identify areas of concern - bringing offenders to justice, protecting infrastructure, mitigating against attacks, and stopping people being drawn into terrorism. Through the **PREVENT** programme we have **safeguarded hundreds of individuals** from radicalisation attempts, in person and online, by putting community and partner engagement at the heart of our work

Threat Assessments

The primary threat to London is from **Self-Initiated Terrorism (S-IT)**, rather than any specific terrorist group. S-IT actors can emerge from any ideology; acting without material support or direction from a terrorist group or organisation. Despite this, they may still be influenced or encouraged by the rhetoric of a group. This activity is **unpredictable and difficult to detect**.

IE remains the **most likely** ideological inspiration for aspirational S-IT attackers. IE grievance narratives include antisemitic, anti-Western/anti-British, misogynistic, anti-LGBT+ views, and the UK's involvement in overseas conflicts. Each of these narratives continues to fuel **fragmented and less theologically driven ideologies**. IE individuals and groups continue to exploit these grievances to **promote and recruit individuals to their cause**.

Islamist
Extremism

ERWT

ERWT represents a smaller proportion of the threat to London, **secondary to Islamist Extremist Terrorism**. Common grievances include anti-immigration, antisemitism, anti-government and anti-LGBT+. Current affairs are influential in developing ERW grievances, as actors exploit social issues and current events to mainstream and amplify their worldview. ERW content often promotes the idea that politics does not offer a solution to societal problems, **eroding trust among vulnerable individuals and legitimising violence as an acceptable solution**.

Left-Wing and Single-Issue Terrorism (LASIT) continues to pose a **significantly smaller threat than IE or ERWT**. Grievances which commonly feature in Left-Wing and Single-Issue (LASI) narratives include Involuntary Celibate (Incel), environmentalism, animal-rights, anti-vaccination and anti-abortion. LASI activity primarily takes the form of lawful protest rather than violence.

LASIT

Travel & Threat, Risk, and Vulnerability Factors

Travel

Aspirations to travel and support overseas extremist terrorist groups persist. However, individuals typically lack the capability to travel, due to a lack of finances, travel documents, and/or a genuine commitment to fulfil their aims. As a result, expressions of interest to travel largely remain aspirational, and **it is unlikely individuals will possess the required capabilities to travel.**

Some overseas IE groups advocate for extremist travel, influencing travel aspirations amongst IE individuals. However, international events such as the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas conflicts have the potential to influence travel desires from across the entire ideological spectrum.

Threat, Risk, and Vulnerability Factors

There remains **no evidence of a causal link between the status of an asylum seeker, refugee or irregular migrant, to extremism and violence.**

The risks and vulnerabilities emanating from this cohort are varied and continue to relate to both internal and/or external factors, combined with individual experiences. This can impact the subsequent risk of being targeted and exploited by extremism and radicalisers, and subsequent acts of violence and/or terrorism.

Minors and Vulnerability Factors

Pre-adolescence

Minors are still developing their identities and key critical thinking skills. It remains **likely** this will increase susceptibility to risk-taking behaviour, and even radicalisation.

The transition from childhood to adulthood is a crucial stage for **identity formation and moral development**. During this time, minors are increasingly exposed to divisive political content and emotionally triggering global events. However, minors are less able to make reasoned, well-informed judgements on which values to adopt; making them more susceptible to influence, manipulation, and in a worst-case scenario radicalisation.

Minors Online Activity

Minors are **highly proficient in the online space**. Considerable time spent online, combined with high level of curiosity and naivety amongst minors, can heighten individual susceptibility to radicalisation. As minors become more independent and proficient online, parents and carers may lack this same level of digital literacy. This creates **challenges when identifying early-stage vulnerabilities and radicalisation**.

Vulnerability Factors

It remains **unlikely that the diagnoses of mental ill-health or neurodivergence directly raises the risk of terrorist violence or extremist activity**. No singular feature of mental-ill health or neurodiversity can be used as a predictive measure for engagement with extremism. Rather, an increased vulnerability to exploitation and/or radicalisation is **highly likely a result of a combination of multiple factors**.

Online Threat

The online space remains the primary driver of self-initiated radicalisation. Individuals continue to use the online space for communicating with likeminded individuals, accessing violent content, extremist propaganda, instructional/weapon manufacturing material, and/or concerning literature. Ease of access, combined with high volumes of material available online, **will ensure a continuation of this activity over the next 12-18 months.**

Material in the online space is often consumed without showing affiliation to a particular group, contributing towards the development of ideological fragmentation. It is **highly likely** this is due to the sheer volume of easily accessible extreme material available online, increasing the likelihood of vulnerable individuals encountering and then engaging with multiple grievance narratives and ideologies.

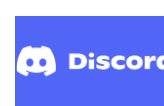
Extremists continue to use mainstream social media platforms to influence a wide audience and exploit opportunities for recruitment, particularly amongst vulnerable individuals. Algorithms continue to **amplify extremist content and hateful narratives** in these spaces, promoting emotionally provocative and/or controversial material, and increasing individuals' susceptibility to radicalisation.

Fringe platforms continue to offer extremists **high levels of encryption and user privacy**. However, their audience is not comparable to that of mainstream platforms. Individuals will therefore continue to maintain a presence on mainstream sites, whilst **exploiting fringe platforms for their security benefits**.

Online gaming platforms can also present a **grooming and radicalisation risk**. These platforms provide ample opportunities for players, particularly minors, to communicate with unknown individuals via in-game messaging services.



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Note the above images do not represent an exhaustive list, and accessing these sites may not be an extremist cause for concern in isolation of extremist behaviours.

Online Enablers

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI technology can be exploited by extremists to **increase individual knowledge and capabilities**. Large Language Models (LLMs) continue to offer opportunities in acquiring extremist and instructional material. This can be exploited further for the purpose of spreading disinformation, assessing real-life plausibility, and acquiring step-by-step guidance to committing acts of violence and extremism.

Gore

‘Gore’ refers to highly graphic, explicit depictions of bodily harm, including mutilation and dismemberment, typically intended to provoke shock and disgust in the viewer. Gore material can be accessed through social media platforms and via dedicated hosting sites. While gore content itself may not be extremist or terrorist in nature, concerns persist regarding how this material **fuels a desensitisation to violence** via unsolicited ‘gore-sharing’, and access to explicitly extremist material via gore-hosting sites. Gore content consumption **does not correlate to any specific ideology**, however engagement with this material can be a **gateway to something more harmful**.

Conspiracy Theories

Engagement with and/or a belief in conspiracy theories is **not an indicator of extremism**. However, conspiracy theories can act as ‘radicalising multipliers’ for individuals with elevated vulnerabilities to extremism, known to intensify radical views. Conspiracy theories are accessible via mainstream online platforms, as well as more specialised conspiracy sites.

Evolving: Antisemitism and Islamophobia

Antisemitism

Antisemitism features across the entire ideological spectrum. Despite nuanced differences in these narratives between the ERW and IE ideological pillars, it is **likely** the continuation of tensions surrounding the Israel-Hamas conflict has contributed to a sustained presence of these narratives. Specifically, media reporting concerning escalations in Israel – Hamas related tensions has prompted criticism of domestic and international government responses from communities and individuals across the UK. This can be exploited by extremists to promote existing anti-Israel and antisemitic narratives, whilst also creating new ones.

Islamophobia

Islamophobic and anti-Muslim narratives continue to feature amongst extremist narratives, particularly those holding an ERW ideology. It is **likely** a continued presence of these grievances is driven by misinformation surrounding evolving tensions concerning immigration, alongside continued discourse regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict. The presence of these narratives marginalises Muslim communities, **creating 'us vs them' grievances** which ERW and IE can exploit.

Evolving: Fascinations with Extreme Violence and The 'Com Network'

Fascinations with Extreme Violence

An increase in public awareness concerning Fascinations with Extreme Violence follows the Southport attack in July 2024, and the subsequent inquiry in April 2025. As part of this, it was found Axel RUDAKUBANA showed a “long-standing preoccupation with violent killing and genocide”; indicating that in extreme cases, and without intervention, a fascination in extreme violence serves as a warning sign of an increased risk.

It is **unlikely** that a fascination with extreme violence, in isolation of other risk factors, will cause individuals to engage with ideological extremism. Rather, a **combination of complex social and psychological risk factors** will impact an individual's susceptibility to engagement, including social isolation, mental ill-health, neurodivergence, trauma, and personality traits such as a lack of empathy or desire for notoriety. Risks of engagement are elevated amongst minors, who are still developing social skills – particularly those who have experienced trauma, abuse and/or neglect.

The 'Com Network'

The 'Com Network' is an interconnected community of online groups with an interest in extreme violence and gore related material, for example child sexual abuse and extortion content, cyber-criminality, and real-world violence.

Within the online space, the Com Network encourages real-world violence, often endorsing tactics such as doxxing (publishing sensitive information about a target, e.g. their name and address) and swatting (hoax emergency calls used to provoke an armed response by the police towards a user).

Engagement with these networks, or with violent and gore related material, is not explicitly extremist. However, this can **act as an enabler, providing gateways to more concerning behaviour.**

Evolving: Anti-Immigration Narratives and Syria After Assad

Anti-Immigration Narratives

It is **highly likely** anti-immigration activity and sentiment is becoming increasingly normalised across the UK. This has occurred amongst a backdrop of escalating tensions since the July 2024 Southport attack, where online disinformation regarding Axel RUDUKUBANA's immigration status and previous criminality amplified anti-immigration and anti-Islam sentiment.

Whilst anti-immigration grievances **do not indicate a commitment to an ERW ideology**, engaging with these grievances in both an offline and online environment can expose individuals to related harmful narratives.

Syria After Assad

In early December 2024, the Assad Regime in Syria collapsed following a major offensive by opposition forces. The Syrian Government, led by former Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) leader Ahmed AL-SHARAA, has begun attempts to rebuild Syria and reintegrate internationally. Despite the situation beginning to stabilise, the **emerging risks, threats, and vulnerabilities are fluid and susceptible to change**. This includes debate and discourse surrounding repatriation, the impact upon travel aspirations of British Nationals, and heightened community tensions amongst UK based Syrian communities.

Evolving: Anti-Blasphemy and Palestine Action

Anti-Blasphemy

Whilst **not all anti-blasphemy activism is extremist in nature**, it has the propensity to bleed into, and/or **expose avenues into violence and extremism**. Radical adherence to anti-blasphemy ideology is common in IE.

In June 2025, a Private Members bill was introduced to Parliament, intended to 'protect free speech' in the wake of recent high-profile incidents. Proponents have described the 'Freedom of Expression (Religion) Bill' as a means of preventing future application of the Public Order Act to incidents of religious criticism. Whilst the Bill progresses, a continued presence of anti-blasphemy activism and/or extremism, combined with continued contentious policy debate surrounding religious criticism, is **likely to inflame community tensions** and provide entry or trigger points to violence and extremism amongst susceptible individuals.

Palestine Action

Palestine Action (PAG) was designated as a terrorist group on 5th July 2025, following a number of direct-action activities across the UK. Grievances relating to the Israel-Hamas conflict have provoked a strong reaction to the proscription, resulting in **adverse effects on community relations**, particularly surrounding Muslim and Jewish communities.

On 13/02/26, PAG's proscription was found to be unlawful on two of the four motions put forward by co-founder Huda AMMORI. The Home Secretary made an appeal to the Court of Appeal on Friday 20th February 2026, meaning the quashing order has been stayed. The group remains proscribed. It is **highly likely** that this decision, and any subsequent governmental decisions, will evoke a significant response from both supporters of, and those in opposition to, the proscription.

The terror threat to London is real.

Are you and your organisation working to Prevent it? Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Which of your organisation and area's challenges are linked to terrorism?
2. Is 'Vulnerable to being Radicalised' embedded in your safeguarding structures?
3. Do you know how to make a PREVENT referral, and use the National Referral Form?
4. Do you know how to spot the signs of radicalisation?
5. Young people are increasingly being radicalised online. Do you have measures in place to identify and Prevent this?
6. We want you to feel confident in referring someone if you think they are being radicalised. Are you confident? Don't leave it until it's too late. Act Early.

For more advice and support, visit www.ActEarly.UK or use the resources on the next slide.

Links and Resources	
www.actearly.uk	Act Early campaign website that includes advice on how to spot the signs of radicalisation, tips for holding conversations and details of how to report concerns.
ACT Awareness E-Learning - Powered By Frog	ACT Awareness online training (see next slide)
https://educateagainsthate.com/	Government advice and trusted resources for schools to safeguard students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and promote shared values.
https://www.getsafeonline.org/social-networking/online-radicalisation/	Free, impartial information and advice for the public and small businesses on keeping safe and secure online. Contains specific sections on online radicalisation.
https://mps.ent.box.com/s/xn8ga3ti0vgi4fjqf9fmsoti76e2jgv4	Think Safeguarding, Think PREVENT: CTPHQ have produced a short and exciting 2D animation film aimed at Police Officers and Police staff, predominately focused on those performing frontline roles dealing with the public, although suitable for all roles and positions across the policing organisation. The link will allow you access to view and download the video via 'Box'.
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002446/244676e.pdf	<i>A Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism</i> is a concise and practical guide for teachers and educators on how to manage classroom discussions about controversial issues with a view to preventing violent extremism. The Guide contains factual information that debunks myths and misunderstandings surrounding the issues and presents positive messages. It also includes practical tips and recommendations on how to engage learners in meaningful conversations and debates as well as prepare and manage classroom discussions on the subject. Finally, it provides examples of materials and key references that can help teachers feel more confident in tackling the issue.



Links and Resources – Act E-Learning

What material is available?

- *The ACT Awareness E-Learning is an entry level, interactive online product that provides nationally recognised corporate CT guidance to help learners better understand and mitigate against current terrorist methodology.*

How can material be used by Local Authorities?

- *Potential to reach every employee within the local authority, not just those in a security or customer facing role, 'Security is everyone's responsibility'.*
- *Time and cost effective.*
- *Can be completed in groups or individual learning.*
- *Access to all the latest guidance videos and reference documents/publications.*

Where to find E-Learning



- *To register please visit:*
<https://ct.protectuk.police.uk/>

Contacts



- *Who to contact regarding E-Learning material*
 - *Please visit:*
<https://ctsupport.highfieldlearning.com/hc/en-gb/requests/new>

How to make a PREVENT referral

1. Speak to your safeguarding lead.
2. Refer to your Local Authority PREVENT team.
3. Report directly to the Police on 101, 999, or online met.police.uk report a crime or contact us.
4. Contact the PREVENT advice line 0800 011 3764
5. Contact the anti-terror hotline on 0800 789 321
6. Contact crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111

Want to use our national referral form in your organisation? Speak to your local PREVENT Policing team for more information.

For more advice or support, visit www.ActEarly.UK





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