



**SAFER COLCHESTER PARTNERSHIP  
PREVENT STRATEGY  
AND ACTION PLAN  
2021**

**(Updated January 2025)**

## 1. Introduction

The Colchester Prevent Strategy and Action Plan (see appendix 1) have recently been refreshed by Colchester City Council (as the lead authority on behalf of the Safer Colchester Partnership). To ensure they continue to match the requirements of the national counter-terrorism strategy known as 'Contest' and the Essex Safeguarding Adults Board. 'Contest' has been in force since 2003; itself being refreshed in 2018.

Sec 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the Act") places a duty upon local authorities including district councils to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism is part of a range of activities already undertaken by local authorities. The legislation seeks to improve consistency and spread best practice. Effective partnership working is key to Colchester City Council meeting its duties. This strategy, is refreshed on an annual basis aiming to reduce the risk to the United Kingdom and its interests overseas from international terrorism 'so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.'

These forms of terrorism include:

- Far Right extremists
- Al-Qaida and ISIL influenced groups
- Environmental Extremists
- Animal Rights Extremists
- Faith based influenced groups

'Contest' consists of the following four strands:

- Pursue – to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect – to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare – to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack
- Prevent – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

Prevent is a Government strategy led by the Home Office and focuses on working with individuals and communities who may be vulnerable to the threat of violent extremism and terrorism. Supporting vulnerable individuals and reducing the threat from violent extremism in local communities is the priority for statutory partners and their partners.

The Prevent Strategy has three objectives (revised 2023), to:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

The Colchester Prevent Strategy and Action Plan sets out what we plan to deliver and how we will govern and monitor the work over the next twelve months and beyond. The Action Plan also supports The Safer Colchester Partnership Annual Partnership Plan. It will be overseen by the One Colchester Board and delivered by the Safer Colchester Partnership.

It is the responsibility of all SCP Agencies to ensure that, where relevant, their policies, procedures and processes reflect this Strategy and Action Plan. See appendix 2 for supporting definitions.

## **Responsibility and Governance**

The Safer Colchester Partnership (SCP) is led by the One Colchester Strategic Board which consists of Chief Officers representing statutory partners and organisations that are well placed to help reduce crime and protect vulnerable groups. The Board will receive regular reports on Prevent related matters including anonymised information regarding Prevent related incidents, Prevent training data and Prevent related infrastructure changes/challenges. The One Colchester Board has tasked the Safer Colchester Partnership to lead on the local implementation of the Prevent agenda. See appendices 3,4 and 5 for guidance information).

The Council's strategic and overall lead on Prevent falls to the Head of Public Protection/Director of Partnerships. The operational lead is provided by the Colchester City Council Safeguarding Officer.

## **2. Local Context**

### **Population Demographics**

The population of Colchester is 192,700 (ONS 2020) and the population is predicted to increase to 225,200 by 2031. Colchester has a growing population of younger people. Since 2011, Colchester has seen a significant growth in younger age groups, particularly people in their 20s. Additionally, in 2020, 17.2% of people in Colchester were of retirement age.

Colchester's population is rapidly becoming more diverse, with an increase in ethnic minority residents from 7.9% in 2009 to 8% in 2020. In 2021, 3.5% of Colchester residents identified their ethnic group within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" category, up from 1.5% in 2011. The 2.0 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area. In 2021, 87.0% of people in Colchester identified their ethnic group within the "White" category, while 5.1% identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category making this group the largest BME group in the City.

In 2014 there was a 17.3 rate of migrant workers registered to work in Colchester. This is higher than the rate for Essex which is 9.8 but lower than the rate for England and Wales which is 20.2. The five highest nationalities of non-UK residents registered to work in the City in 2012 were Polish (1770), Indian (990), Chinese (880), Lithuanian (570) and Filipino (480). Census data confirms that 94.2% of people living in Colchester spoke English as their first language. The next most spoken first languages were Chinese, Polish, Arabic, Nepalese, Filipino, Greek, Lithuanian, Romanian and French.

## **Religion**

58% of the City's population identified themselves as being Christian and 31% as having 'no religion'. 0.6% identified as Buddhist; 0.7% as Hindu; 0.2% as Jewish; 1.6% as Muslim; and 0.1% as Sikh. Places of worship within the City include more than 100 Christian churches, a Buddhist Centre, a Jewish Synagogue and two Mosques (on Priory Street and at the University of Essex).

## **National Identity**

In 2021, 8.5% of Colchester residents did not identify with any national identity associated with the UK. This figure increased from 7.1% in 2011. In 2021, just under 1 in 50 people (1.9%) identified with

a UK and non-UK national identity, compared with 0.8% in 2011. The percentage of residents in Colchester that identified as "British only" increased from 15.7% to 55.2%. In Census 2021, "British" was moved to the top response option and this may have influenced how people described their national identity.

## **Deprivation**

Colchester has 27 LSOAs that fall into the top 40% of most deprived LSOAs in the county. These LSOAs are largely concentrated in the wards of Berechurch, Greenstead, New Town & Christ Church, Old Heath & The Hythe and St Anne's & St John's. Colchester has 1 LSOAs in the 10% most deprived in the country, found in the ward Greenstead. In Colchester 47,693 people are affected by income deprivation, this equates to 24.77% of the overall population. - add living in poverty

## **Economic Activity**

Colchester's employment rate was about the same as across the East of England as a whole in the year ending March 2023. Of people aged 16 to 64 years living in Colchester, 77.9% were employed in the year ending March 2023; in December 2023 it decreased to 75.5%. Across the East of England in the year ending March 2023, 78.0% of people aged 16 to 64 years were employed. This was similar compared with the previous year, when 78.0% of people were employed. the UK employment rate was estimated at 75.7% in November 2022 to January 2023.

For more information about Colchester's local economy please read [Colchester's Economic Strategy 2022 - 2025](#)

## **Health**

The health of people in Colchester is varied compared with the Essex and England averages. The rate of hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions was 654 (per 100,000 persons) which is lower than the average for England. In general across Colchester there is less overall mortality in adults under 75 than the UK average, lower mortality rates from all cardiovascular diseases, more physically fit adults and slightly above average life expectancy in males. Areas of concern for Colchester are rates relating to suicide, killed or seriously injured on England's roads and smoking during pregnancy.

## **Education**

The Colchester campus of the University of Essex is two miles from the centre of Colchester. The university is home to more than 10,500 students belonging to more than 130 different nationalities. Colchester Institute is a provider of vocational education in Colchester, Braintree and Clacton. The City is also home to 18 schools that provide secondary education.

## **Crime**

Across Greater Essex, between October 2023 and September, there was a decrease in offences of 9,425 (-6.0%) compared to the previous years, whereas in Colchester where there was a decrease in offences of -1,564 (-8.9%). In Greater Essex a total of 14,138 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents were recorded by Essex Police during the 12 months to September 2024, of which 1,603 (11.3%) were recorded in Colchester.

In the same period as above in Greater Essex the following flagged offences recorded:

All Victim Based crime down 9%

Hate Crime down 2.1%

Domestic Abuse down 13.4%

Public Order Offences down 13.8%

Trafficking of Drugs offences increased by 1.4 % over the same period due to continued proactive work.

Possession of drugs increased by 1.2%.

Possession of Weapons Offences increased by 11.8%.

## **3. Aims and Objectives**

This Strategy and Action Plan sets out Colchester City Council and the Safer Colchester Partnership's commitment to continue working together with our diverse local communities to develop, implement and monitor local activities that relate to the objectives of the national Prevent Strategy.

In addition to the national Prevent Strategy aims, the Colchester Prevent Strategy and Action Plan aim to:

- Work with Partners to raise awareness of Prevent and monitor community tensions at a local level
- Through appropriate policies and training, develop both wide understanding and 'expertise' to deliver the Prevent Strategy

The objectives of the Strategy and Action Plan are to ensure that the core principles of inclusive and cohesive communities are safeguarded within the context of managing any possible threats from violent extremism. The local Action Plan will address the relevant parts of the objectives set in the national Prevent Strategy, which are as follows:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

The purpose of this policy is to identify how staff will be supported to develop an understanding of the Prevent Strategy and how they can utilise their existing knowledge and skills to recognise that someone may have been or is being radicalised. The policy builds on existing safeguarding policies and procedure that are already in place.

Prevent as a whole will address all forms of terrorism but continue to prioritise according to the threat they pose to our national security. The allocation of resources will be proportionate to the threats we face.

#### **4. Partner Engagement and the Prevent Strategy**

A key principle of Prevent is to improve health and wellbeing through the delivery of care while safeguarding vulnerable individuals. During the course of their duties staff may meet people who are more susceptible to radicalisation. Therefore, where staff have concerns around the safety of a vulnerable individual there is a framework in place to enable these to be raised (see appendix 6), which will also assist in identifying the risk to the vulnerable individual and/or staff and the

organisation. This in turn will ensure that those who are at risk or have been influenced by violent extremists will receive help and support from those partners best placed to meet the identified need. It is also necessary to make it more difficult for violent extremists to use environments as a recruiting ground.

These aims can be achieved by employing an appropriate and safe information sharing process, as well as building on existing partnerships with other Prevent partners and relying on safeguarding processes in place.

## **5. Duties**

This policy applies to all staff employed within Colchester City Council, either directly or indirectly, and to any other person or organisation that uses our premises for any purpose. Preventing someone from becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism is no different from safeguarding vulnerable individuals from other forms of exploitation. This policy sits alongside Colchester City Council's Safeguarding Policy.

Safer Colchester Partners are encouraged to review how this policy is applied to their employees.

It should be stressed that there is no expectation that the organisation will take on a surveillance or enforcement role as a result of Prevent. By working effectively with partners, the organisation can contribute to the prevention of terrorism by safeguarding and protecting vulnerable individuals and making safety a shared endeavour.

## **6. Policy Process**

Evidence suggests that there is neither an obvious profile of a person who is likely to become involved in a terrorist related activity, nor a single indicator of when a person might move to support extremism. It is the case that anyone may be susceptible to radicalisation, and vulnerable individuals are particularly at risk. A person's susceptibility to radicalisation may be linked to their vulnerability but that not all people susceptible to radicalisation will be vulnerable, and there are other circumstances,



needs or other underlying factors that may make a person susceptible to radicalisation but do not constitute a vulnerability.

Indicators of concern that staff may observe or identify in the behaviour of individuals may include:

- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting violent extremist messages or images
- The accessing of violent extremist material online, including social networking sites
- Parental/family reports of changes in behaviour or actions
- Use of extremist or hateful terms to exclude others or incite violence

Vulnerable individuals may be exploited in many ways by radicalisers and this could be through direct face to face contact, or indirectly through the internet, social networking or other media. Access to extremist material is often through leaflets and local contacts; However, the internet plays an important role in the communication of extremist views. It provides a platform for extremists to promote their cause and encourage debate through websites, internet forums and social media. It is a swift and effective mechanism for disseminating propaganda material and is not always possible to regulate.

## **7. Delivering the Prevent Strategy**

Radicalisation is a process not an event, and there is no single route, pathway or 'conveyor belt' to being radicalised. Evidence indicates that those targeted by radicalisers may have doubts about what they are doing. It is because of this doubt that frontline staff need to have mechanisms and interventions in place to support an individual being exploited and to help them move away from terrorist activity.

As an organisation we have a duty to ensure safe environments where extremists are unable to operate. It is therefore essential that all staff know how they can support vulnerable individuals who they feel may be at risk of becoming a terrorist or supporting extremism. Prevent is an on-going initiative and designed to become part of the everyday safeguarding routine for staff.

Working closely with schools and institutions is a key feature in the delivery of Prevent. The partnership will work closely with the Essex Police Prevent Engagement Officer and the Essex Police

CYP Officers in the delivery of awareness training at relevant or identified education establishments. In addition, effective partnership working with high-risk establishments such as University of Essex and Colchester Garrison means that the provision of relevant training and activities around Prevent can be initiated where needed in order to increase the awareness of such a vital issue.

The Essex wide Prevent Delivery Group discussions are fed back to Colchester City Council through the Essex Community Safety Network, attended by the Community Safety Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Additionally, the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) provides local statistics and proposed threat levels.

It is essential that frontline and direct care staff have an understanding of Prevent and can quickly respond to vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of being radicalised. Colchester City Council staff can access the Prevent Strategy through a link within the Safeguarding Policy available for all staff to familiarise themselves with. Prevent e-learning is in the Council's Safeguarding Training Plan and the awareness course is mandatory for all staff; this is created and hosted by Colchester City Council's learning management system (LMS) provider. Completion rates are monitored and recorded by the LMS. Safer Colchester Partners are encouraged to review their Prevent training.

Prevent information is available on the Safer Colchester Partnership website, along with links to the new Counter Terrorism Policing website; <http://www.actearly.uk/> which includes a partner toolkit.

Channel panel meetings are held to discuss suspected cases of radicalisation and involve Local Authorities where required. Information from these meetings will help target awareness raising locally.

The Colchester Prevent Action Plan will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Community Safety Delivery Board.

## **8. Reporting concerns**

Partner agencies should raise concerns about individuals being drawn into terrorism via their child and vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding thresholds do not need to be met to make a Prevent referral but there will be occasions where the assessment and support provided to prevent people susceptible to radicalisation will run alongside safeguarding processes.

If it's an emergency, call 999. You can 'Make a referral' using the link on this page of the Essex Police website [Prevent | Essex Police](#). Alternatively, you can call the national anti-terrorist reporting line on **0800 789 321** or the national Police Prevent advice line [0800 011 3764](#). This can be done anonymously. It is important to report possible concerns no matter how insignificant they may appear. There is no 'typical' person who could be immediately identified as a possible suspect planning a terrorist attack or trying to radicalise others. Suspicious behaviour, such as individuals taking photos of shopping areas, trying to gain access to secure areas or buildings, producing or promoting radical language/leaflets, voicing radical ideology or raising community tensions should be monitored.

In the event that a member of staff has concerns that someone may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism, has begun to express radical extremist views or may be susceptible to grooming or exploitation by others, they should contact the organisation's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Prevent, who will manage such enquiries with support from safeguarding colleagues. All concerns should be escalated, clearly identifying the precise nature of the concerns. If the Safeguarding Lead determines that a safeguarding referral also needs to be made, it will be done in accordance with the inter-agency safeguarding procedures, and appropriate support for staff and the vulnerable individual will be organised.

Where an employee expresses views, distributes material, uses or directs others to extremist websites or promotes terrorism, the organisation will look to use non-safeguarding processes in order to address the concerns. If a staff member has a concern about a colleague it should be raised with their line manager, who will then discuss the concerns with the Prevent Lead before any disciplinary action is taken.

## 9. Useful documents

- [Prevent and Channel factsheet – 2024 – Home Office in the media](#)
- [Prevent duty guidance: Local authority toolkit \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- The Government's national counter-terrorism strategy Contest (refreshed 2018) can be downloaded from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>

- The Home Office's national Prevent Strategy (2011) can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>.
- A dedicated website to report online content that may be illegal is available at <https://www.gov.uk/terrorism-national-emergency/reporting-suspected-terrorism>.
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents/enacted>
- [CCC Safeguarding Policy \(Updated March 2024\).docx](#)
- [Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism](#)
- [Essex Police Prevent](#)
- ONS 2020 [Colchester population change, Census 2021 – ONS](#)

## Appendix 1 - Colchester Prevent Action Plan 2024-2025

NO.	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOMES	LEAD PARTNER
1	Work with Partners to raise awareness of Prevent and monitor community tensions at a local level	Feedback through ECSN from the Essex Prevent Board to ensure that local arrangements complement adopted County guidance and procedures.	Strategic overview of Prevent and sharing of best practice.	CCC
		Support the work and raise awareness of the Prevent strategy through local education establishments, university and colleges, and high-profile sites such as Colchester Garrison.	Ensure the ability to spot the signs and safeguard against the possibility of radicalisation	All CSP Partners
		Information sharing at multi-agency forums including Community Safety Delivery Board, Independent Advisory Board and Police Tasking.	Sharing between organisations to ensure delivery of Prevent strategy Partnership working to ensure escalation of tensions can be avoided Increased community cohesion Partners understand their roles individually and collectively, to consider risks of terrorism when planning changes/updates to the physical environment	All CSP Partners
		Raise awareness of Prevent to businesses and organisations in Colchester through the Home Office Prevent E-learning Training. The new HO Prevent Training can be found here and includes A) Awareness course B) Referrals course C) Channel course. <u>Prevent duty training - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>	Raise awareness within the business community through the BID.	CCC / BID

NO.	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOMES	LEAD PARTNER
2	Through appropriate policies and training, develop both wide understanding and 'expertise' to deliver the Prevent Strategy	Prevent e-learning course is included within the Safeguarding Training Plan as mandatory for all Council staff.	Training and awareness will be facilitated with all staff	CCC
		Prevent is referenced in relevant Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and reviewed/updated annually	Increased staff awareness and procedures in place to help protect vulnerable members of the community Compliance with statutory duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015	All CSP Partners
		Attendance of relevant training provided by outside sources as available/appropriate.	Greater awareness and more effective ability to deliver the Prevent agenda	All CSP partners/

## Appendix 2 - Definitions

Key Term	Definition
Vulnerable Adult	A person over the age of 18years who or may be in need of community care services (including health care) by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation (No Secrets 2000).
Safeguarding Children	The definition of a child is “anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday” (Children’s Act 1989 & 2004). ‘Safeguarding’ alludes to the protection of their welfare.
Terrorism	This is defined in the Terrorism Act 2000(TACT 2000) as an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, causes serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use of threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of political, religious or ideological gain.
Radicalisation	This refers to the process by which people come to support terrorism due to either the influence of others or a particular ideological theory.
Extremism	Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental values including democracy, the rules of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance or different beliefs and faiths.
A Prevent Concern	A Prevent concern is an allegation of potential radicalisation or indoctrination of a vulnerable individual that does not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt; however it should be based on something that raises concern and is then assessed using existing professional judgement from health or social care staff.
Vulnerable Persons and Prevent	A vulnerable person is particularly susceptible to being influenced by an extremist’s message and can be at risk of being drawn into terrorism or supporting terrorism at a point in time.
Channel Panel	Channel is a Multi-Agency Process which provides support to those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Channel uses existing collaboration between partners to support individuals and protect them from being drawn into terrorism.
Susceptible/Susceptibility and Prevent	Likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing. There has been a change in language from ‘vulnerability’ to ‘susceptibility’ to terrorism, as recommended by the Review of Prevent

## Appendix 3 - SET Procedures and guidance around PREVENT – 2019

here

**Appendix 4 – Channel duty guidance April 2015** [Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation](#)

**Appendix 5 – Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Factsheet**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-and-security-act-factsheets>

**Appendix 6 – Channel vulnerability assessment framework**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-vulnerability-assessment>

#### **VERSION CONTROL**

**Updated January 2024**

**Changes:**

- 1 – Local Contact Information
- 2 – Economic Strategy Added
- 3 – Appendix links updated 'lets talk about' removed (no access) replaced with educate against hate