

PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

REPORT – PREPARING FOR THE TERRORISM (PROTECTION OF PREMISES) ACT 2025



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Author: J Jones Clerk & RFO

Background / Introduction

Martyn's Law, formally known as the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, has now received Royal Assent. It is anticipated that there will be a 24-month implementation period. This report has been produced to help council understand the legislation at high level and council's responsibilities.

The legislation aims to ensure that premises accessible to the public are better prepared for potential acts of terrorism. The law introduces a duty for those responsible for certain premises and events to take proportionate steps to mitigate and respond to terrorist threats. The legislation is based on five core principles:

1. Assessment of terrorist threats.
2. Consideration of risk.
3. Mitigation measures.
4. Training and preparedness.
5. Responsibility and accountability.

How is this applicable to parish and town councils

Martyn's Law will apply to venues based on capacity:

- Standard Tier — Premises with a capacity of 200 to 799 people.
- Enhanced Tier — Premises with a capacity of 800 or more people.

This may include council-owned or managed venues such as:

- Village and community halls.
- Public events (fairs, fireworks displays, markets etc).
- Local festivals and performances.
- Sports and recreation facilities.

Key requirements

For council qualifying premises/events will likely need to:

- Conduct a terrorism risk assessment relevant to the premises or event.
- Develop and document plans to protect people on site, including:
 - Lockdown procedures.
 - Safe and coordinated evacuation strategies.
 - Use of available first aid and fire safety equipment.
- Train staff and volunteers in recognising suspicious behaviour and responding to incidents.
- Record plans, training, and exercises to demonstrate compliance.
- Engage with emergency services and local resilience partners to ensure alignment with broader emergency plans.

Understanding the threat from terrorism

The United Kingdom (UK) faces a persistent threat from terrorism. Although attacks are rare, the impact of such attacks is very high. It is therefore important to take sensible and proportionate

steps to prepare for such an incident. Terrorists in the UK have used a range of attack types, including:

- Use of knives, fire, guns or other weapons.
- Deliberately driving a vehicle into a crowd.
- Using explosive devices which can be carried by a vehicle, person or in the post to a location.
- Setting fire to buildings or open sites with dry vegetation.
- Poisoning.

While council do not own any premises that meet the criteria it will need to consider how events could become targeted as part of a terrorist incident and the types of terrorist attacks which may be relevant.

Practical emergency planning

- Warning people of an attack
- Lockdown procedures
- Evacuation plans
- Use of fire and medical equipment
- Notification of emergency services
- Coordination with wider plans

Publicly accessible locations and wider public protection

Although Martyn's Law applies to specific premises based on size and function, council also have a responsibility to consider publicly accessible locations (PALs) that fall outside the formal scope of the Act, including:

- Public open spaces (e.g. the recreation ground).
- High streets and markets.
- War memorials and civic squares.
- Community noticeboards or popular gathering points.

Voluntary protective measures for PALs include:

- Awareness training
- Encourage vigilance
- Design out risk
- Ensure clear sightlines
- Collaborate with local police and community groups
- Plan for informal gatherings or spontaneous events

Joint planning across the parish

Council can benefit significantly from collaborative approaches to meet the requirements of Martyn's Law. Many parish and town councils manage similar types of community buildings and events, and often face common challenges in resources, training, and capacity.

Opportunities for collaboration:

- Joint risk assessments
- Shared training sessions
- Mutual support agreements
- Collective procurement
- Joint events and contingency planning

By working together, council can strengthen community protection, build resilience, and meet legal obligations more efficiently and effectively.

Options or recommendations

- a) Continue working with the Porlock Emergency Response Team on the development the emergency response plans that strengthens Porlock's ability to respond to and recover from disruptions, whether caused by malicious or natural events.
- b) Engage with the principal authority emergency planning teams, and Counter Terrorism Security Advisors, emergency services for additional support and coordination.
- c) Clerk to provide a summary report on:
 - i. Properties or events the council owns, organises or licenses that are potentially in scope of the Act.
 - ii. Current preparedness (risk assessments, plans, training, etc.) and plans for completing or updating risk assessments with terrorism in mind.
 - iii. Recommended next steps or resource needs.
 - iv. Highlight any known gaps in capability or areas of concern requiring a decision.

Sources of information

- NALC legal advice note.