CORPS RELAY

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CORPS
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SECURITY

Will Palestine action become a proscribed group?

Palestine Action, a UK-based protest group known for its direct-action campaigns against companies linked to Israel's defence sector, is facing imminent proscription as a terrorist organisation by the British government. On 23rd June Home Secretary Yvette Cooper announced the government's intention to proscribe Palestine Action under the Terrorism Act 2000. This decision was prompted by the actions carried out at RAF Brize Norton, where members of the group infiltrated the base and vandalised two RAF Voyagers with red paint and crowbars. The attack is considered a significant escalation from previous acts of protest and has been characterised by officials as sabotage and a threat to national security.

If the proscription order is approved by Parliament, which is likely to be presented on 30th June, it will become a criminal offense to be a member of, support, or promote Palestine Action, or to display its symbols.

In parallel with the proscription process, the Home Office has launched an investigation into Palestine Action's funding. There are concerns that the Iranian regime may be channelling money to the group via proxies, given the alignment of their political aims. This has been reported by The Times and allegedly confirmed by government sources.

Palestine Action does not publish detailed financial information, and while it claims to be a grassroots movement with inconsistent funding, the scale of its legal and operational activities has raised questions about the sources of its resources. At the time of writing, there is no public evidence directly confirming Iranian state funding, but the investigation is ongoing.

It's likely that the government will approve the proscription of Palestine Action, as the widespread condemnation of the RAF Brize Norton incident across the political spectrum (including Labour Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer) suggests sufficient cross-party support.

Should the proscription order be approved, the response from Palestine Action and its supporters is likely to be multifaceted, exhibiting a mix of overt and covert tactics. Firstly, it is almost certain that the group will take the government to court to appeal the decision. Palestine Action has already started crowdfunding and are likely to have sought legal advice.

Overall, the proscription will highly likely deter some individuals and organisations who previously offered support or who participated in less severe actions, due to the greatly increased legal risks.

Civil Unrest in Ballymena

Large-scale civil unrest occurred in Northern Ireland throughout June, initially starting in the town of Ballymena and spreading to other areas. This followed the charging of two Romanian-speaking teenagers with attempted rape of a local teenage girl in Ballymena. A vigil was held in the town after the youths were charged in court on 9th June. However, later that day, several individuals from the vigil separated, leading to large-scale disorder involving attacks on properties and police with bricks, petrol bombs, and fireworks.

The unrest in Ballymena persisted for three nights and subsequently spread to other regions across the country, continuing for approximately five days. Throughout this period, multiple residences and vehicles were set ablaze, along with several business establishments.
Among the affected properties was a leisure centre, which was reportedly housing immigrants, based on information circulated on social media.
Reports also indicated that residents from ethnic minorities were marking their homes with their nationality in an effort to prevent attacks on their properties.

It was reported that at least 64 officers were injured during the unrest, and at least 29 individuals were arrested. Due to the scale of the unrest, officers from Police Scotland were brought in to assist.

The events that took place in Ballymena and the surrounding area are similar to the Southport riots that occurred in the UK during the summer of 2024. In the case of Ballymena, the nationality of the teenagers charged was widely reported. However, the underlying tensions related to immigration levels in the town seemed to have surprised the authorities.

Similar to the situation in Southport, social media played a significant role in increasing community concern, and the language used by police authorities to describe participants in the unrest is likely to have contributed to an "Us vs Them" mentality, escalating tensions and potentially prolonging the unrest. Additionally, as observed during the Southport riots, the spread of unverified information likely led residents to seek shelter and to identify their nationality on their doors to prevent damage to their property. This also attracted the attention of far-right activist Tommy Robinson, who posted 14 different times regarding Ballymena, reaching over 1.3 million people.

Census data shows a rapid demographic change in Ballymena since 2011, with over 30% of residents listing their main language as something other than English or Irish. This is notably higher than the rest of Northern Ireland. Although it does not predict future behaviour elsewhere in the UK, it highlights potential tensions in some communities with regards to immigration.

Almost one in three terror suspects are under 20 years old

A 2024 report by Europol suggests that terrorists are getting younger, with almost one in three suspects under 20 years old. The youngest suspect was just 12 years old.
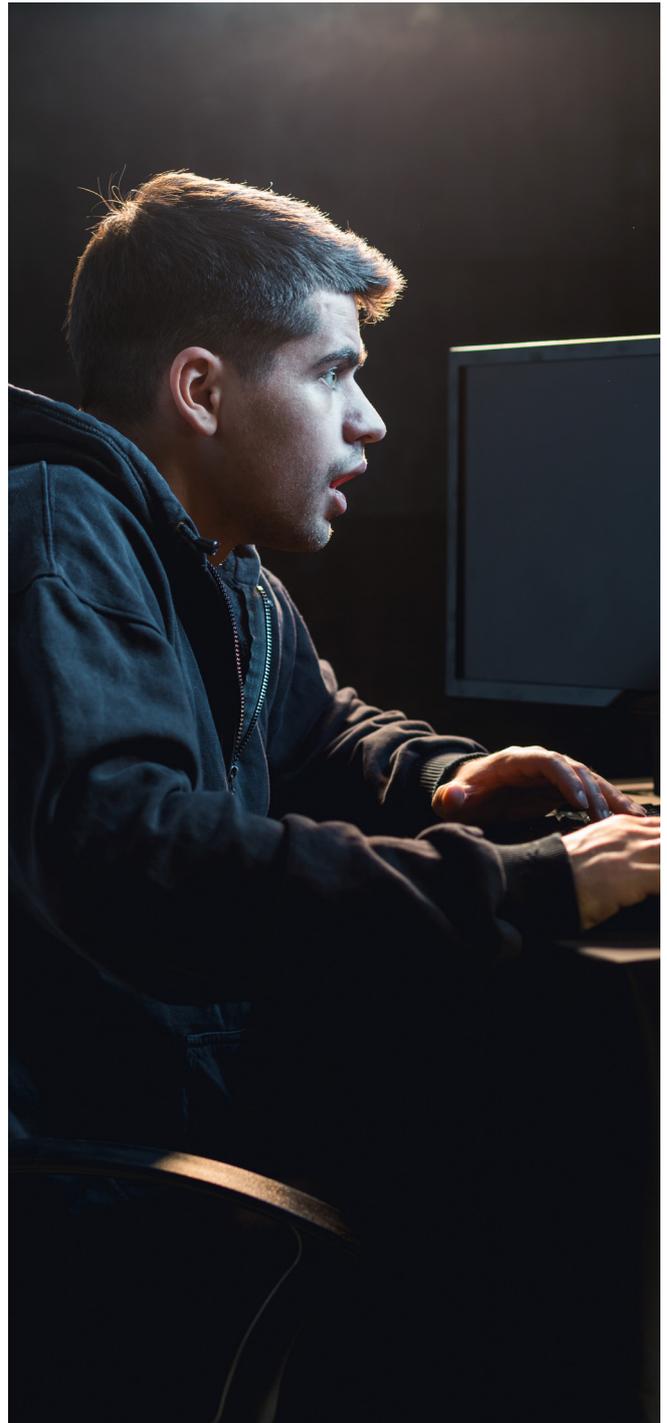
Europol has identified the use of digital platforms by so-called "online cult communities" to disseminate and normalise content depicting extreme violence, engaging in the extortion of victims, and inciting youth to commit violent acts. According to the agency's latest report on terrorism trends, presented in The Hague, many of these groups exhibit affiliations with jihadist networks and right-wing extremist movements.

Additionally, Europol states that geopolitical tensions are also said to contribute to radicalisation, with a particular mention of the Israel-Gaza conflict, the Russian war in Ukraine and the unstable situation in Syria.

Extremist content is increasingly accessible to younger audiences through unmoderated online platforms, social media, gaming communities, and encrypted messaging apps. These environments are highly likely to lack age verification and can often create echo chambers that normalise extremist narratives. It is highly likely that the online space plays a central role in lowering the barriers to entry for radical ideologies.

Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to feelings of isolation, marginalisation, or identity uncertainty, conditions that extremist recruiters exploit by offering a sense of belonging, purpose, or empowerment. This is likely a key motivator in early-stage radicalisation.

It's likely that the trend of younger individuals becoming involved in terrorism will continue, driven by a combination of online radicalisation, identity-related vulnerabilities, and the accessibility of extremist content. This demographic shift presents a significant challenge for counter-terrorism and safeguarding efforts, particularly in identifying early indicators of radicalisation and intervening before mobilisation to violence occurs.

Current National Threat Level

The threat to the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) from terrorism is SUB-STANTIAL

The threat to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism is SUBSTANTIAL

NOTE:

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack

LOW means an attack is highly unlikely

MODERATE means an attack is possible, but not likely

SUBSTANTIAL means an attack is likely

SEVERE means an attack is highly likely

CRITICAL means an attack is highly likely in the near future

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – Martyn's Law

The Home Office has released a short video to inform those responsible for premises and events about the conditions of the act and how they may be affected. The act received royal assent on 3rd April this year, but there is a two-year implementation period for businesses and organisations to prepare, which will come into effect on 3 April 2027.

The link for this video can be found here on the Protect UK website: Watch: new Martyn's Law explainer video | ProtectUK

NPSA Guidance on Protecting your Home

The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) has produced guidance on protecting your home. Your home should be a place of comfort and safety, but it can also be a point of vulnerability for you and your family. Effective home security depends on several key factors: personal behaviour, physical and cyber security measures, and the surrounding environment.

A thorough review of your home security should assess whether current measures:
- Limit the ability of others to gather information about you or your household
- Enhance situational awareness and detect suspicious activity
- Provide physical protection against potential threats
- Minimise cyber vulnerabilities
- Enable an effective response to incidents (e.g. emergency services, first aid)
- Capture evidence for legal or criminal proceedings

Behaviour and Routines - Security starts with personal responsibility. Establishing consistent routines such as securing your home when leaving, entering, or retiring for the evening can significantly enhance awareness and help identify unusual behaviour. Vigilance when approaching your property and general awareness of your surroundings further strengthens security.

Situational Awareness - Early detection of potential threats provides critical time to respond and avoid risk. Maintaining personal situational awareness is a foundational element of home security.

Physical Security Measures - Basic crime prevention principles remain vital. Assess existing physical protections to ensure they are functional, identify areas for improvement, and consider whether additional measures such as upgraded locks, lighting, or surveillance are necessary.By integrating behavioural, physical, and digital strategies, homeowners can create a more resilient and secure living environment.

Further information and guidance can be found at the NPSA website: https://www.npsa.gov.uk/specialised-guidance/personal-safety-security-high-risk-individuals/protect-your-home

Blaise Metreweli Becomes First Female Head of MI6

Blaise Metreweli CMG will become the new Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6. She will be the first woman ever to lead the organisation. Metreweli will be the 18th Chief in MI6's history. Often called "C", the Chief is the only publicly named officer in the agency and is responsible for overseeing its operations. The role reports directly to the Foreign Secretary. Metreweli currently serves as Director General "Q", where she leads MI6's technology and innovation efforts. She also previously held a senior role in MI5. She will take over from Sir Richard Moore, who is stepping down in the autumn.

Prime Minister Starmer praised the appointment, saying it comes at a time when the UK faces growing threats, including foreign spy activity and cyberattacks.

"I want to thank Sir Richard Moore for his dedicated service," Starmer said. "Blaise Metreweli will bring strong leadership to help protect our country and ensure national security remains a top priority."

Biography:

- Blaise Metreweli is Director General Technology and Innovation in MI6. She has previously held a director-level role in MI5.
- She is a career intelligence officer, having joined the service as a case officer in 1999.
- She has undertaken a range of roles across the service. She has spent most of her career in operational roles in the Middle East and Europe.
- She studied Anthropology at Pembroke College, Cambridge.
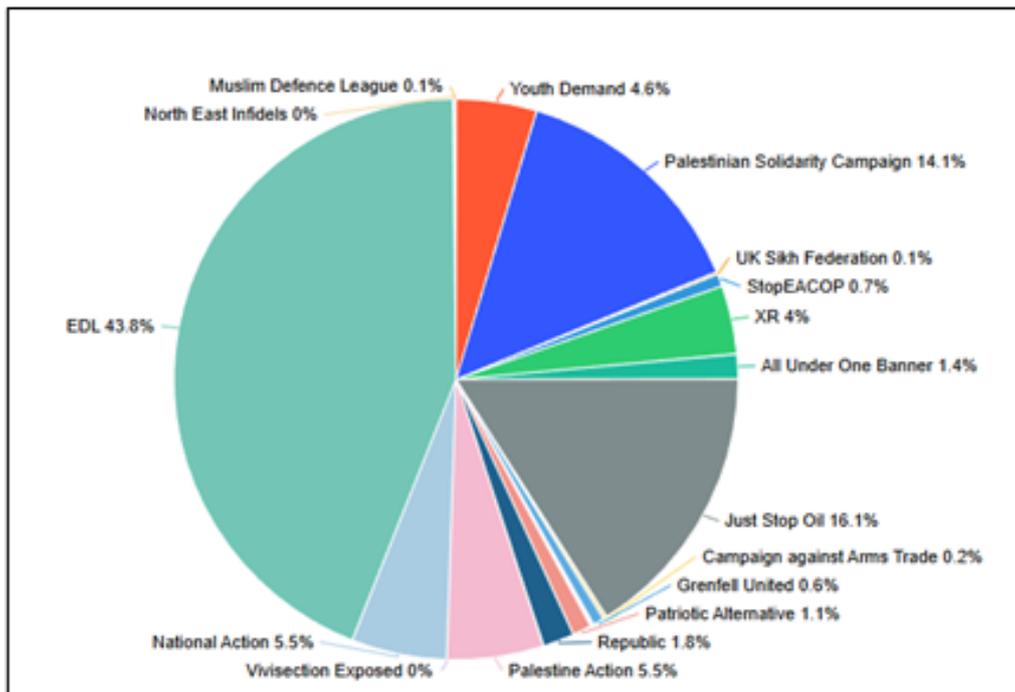
Social Media Monitoring

Activism Monitoring – Activist Groups

Despite being a defunct organisation, the EDL this month was a significant topic of conversation for two primary reasons. The first reason is related to a tweet sent on 24th June by Zarah Sultana, a Labour MP, who has been vocal about the rise in Islamophobia, especially from those affiliated to the right of politics. She tweeted "We are all Palestine Action" following the government's announcement to make Palestine Action (PA) a proscribed organisation. This prompted a response from an X user, arguing it was a double standard within government and suggesting that if someone in parliament posted "We are all EDL", they would be removed. This post was retweeted several times by accounts associated with far-right ideologies.

The second increase in mentions of the English Defence League (EDL) occurred following the government's announcement of a public inquiry into institutional failures to protect children from child sexual exploitation,

particularly involving males of Asian ethnic backgrounds. This announcement followed a review of this practice by Louise Casey. The discourse includes assertions that the EDL, including Tommy Robinson at the time, had previously highlighted these issues but were disregarded and labelled as racist. As a result, the predominant sentiment within this group is anger.

Over the past 30 days, these two incidents have constituted nearly half of the discussions concerning activist groups, despite the EDL being an inactive organisation. Even with the significant increase in conversations towards the end of the month related to Palestine Action, discussions regarding grooming gangs involving individuals of Asian descent have dominated social media discourse this month. While there has been no mention of planned protests from these groups concerning this specific issue, there is a realistic possibility of such events occurring over the summer.

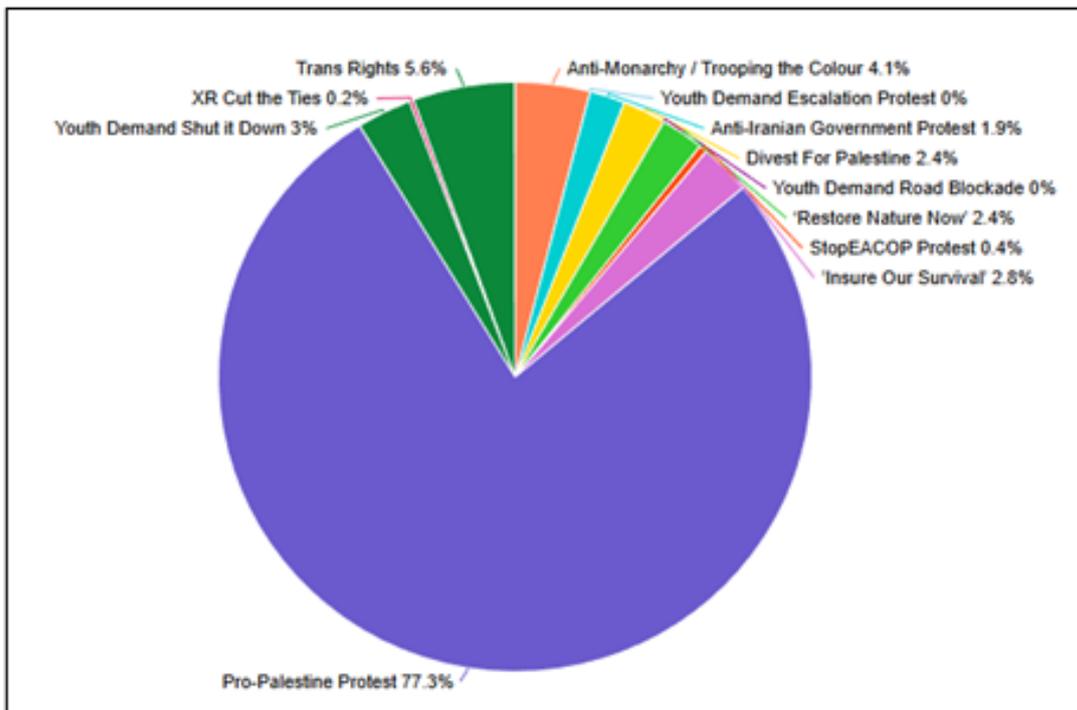Graphic illustrating the breakdown of activism groups being mentioned

Social Media Monitoring

Activist Monitoring – Protests & Movements

In relation to shared voices from protests and demonstrations pro-Palestinian protests have dominated the conversation due to numerous significant incidents involving Palestine Action throughout the month.

Regarding these groups, there is a notable amount of negative sentiment from within both pro-Palestinian organisations and external observers. Much of this negativity stems from anger over the announcement that Palestine Action may become a proscribed organisation. While support exists for Palestine Action's methods, there is also considerable opposition to their demonstrations and actions with many endorsing government measures to proscribe the group, deeming their actions criminal and unacceptable. The proposed ban has been described by various voices as both "outrageous" and "overdue".

There are varying opinions on pro-Palestinian activism, with social media conversations indicating significant support within the movement. Members of these organisations feel they are being treated unfairly and silenced by the government, perceiving themselves as being penalised for opposing actions in Gaza. While this perspective may not reflect the entire population's views, it is prevalent among those discussing the issue on social media. Although Palestine Action are highly likely to have reduced visibility on social media in the coming weeks (with this almost certain should the group become proscribed), protests related to pro-Palestinian causes are expected to continue with multiple events and demonstrations planned over the summer by various activist groups.

Graphic illustrating the breakdown of protest and demonstration types being mentioned

Hostile Vehicle Mitigation – Liverpool Parade Case Study

Corps Focus: Security Issue of the Month

On 26th May, celebrations marking Liverpool Football Club's Premier League title triumph were tragically disrupted when a vehicle collided with fans gathered on Water Street in central Liverpool. The incident resulted in injuries to 109 individuals, including children and elderly attendees.

The driver, identified as Paul Doyle (53) from West Derby, was apprehended at the scene. He was remanded into custody after being charged with seven counts of wounding with intent, causing grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent, attempting to cause GBH with intent, and dangerous driving. He is due back in court in on 14th August for a plea hearing, with a provisional trial date set for 24th November.

The collision occurred shortly after 6:00 p.m., approximately ten minutes after the club's open-top bus had passed through the location. According to eyewitness accounts, the suspect bypassed a police cordon by following an ambulance that was responding to a separate medical emergency. Shortly afterwards he reportedly engaged in a verbal altercation with pedestrians before accelerating his grey Ford Galaxy into the crowd.

The incident raises serious questions regarding the security arrangements in place and whether such an event could have been prevented through more robust measures specifically, the implementation of Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) strategies.

Could Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) Have Prevented the Incident?
HVM refers to a set of protective measures designed to prevent or mitigate the impact of vehicle-based threats in crowded public spaces. These measures include physical interventions such as bollards, security-rated street furniture, and ramps, as well as operational protocols such as traffic controls and the deployment of trained personnel.

It's understood that Liverpool City Council had implemented HVM features along certain parts of the parade route,

particularly Castle Street, where PAS 68-rated barriers were installed to restrict unauthorised vehicle access. However, the section of Water Street where the collision occurred was not equally protected.

The attacker reportedly exploited a temporary vulnerability in the security perimeter, raising concerns about the consistency and adaptability of the cordon system. This lapse highlights the critical importance of ensuring continuous and comprehensive protection along the entire length of any public event routes, especially at access points where emergency services may require ingress/egress.

This tragic event underscores the urgent need to reassess and enhance security frameworks for major public gatherings. While HVM solutions are essential, they should form part of a wider, multi-layered security strategy often referred to as "defence in depth." Such an approach combines physical infrastructure with real-time surveillance, responsive communications systems, and a trained security presence capable of addressing dynamic threats.

In 2025 alone, there have been at least 14 recorded incidents where a vehicle has been used as a weapon being driven into a crowd, highlighting the need for effective planning, adaptable mitigation strategies, and inter-agency coordination. Ensuring the safety of public spaces requires ongoing attention, investment, and continuous improvement.

Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) Explained
Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) refers to the range of physical and operational measures designed to prevent or reduce the impact of hostile vehicle incursions whether they involve intentional attacks, accidental breaches, or unauthorised access.

HVM is a key component of counter-terrorism and urban security strategies, particularly in locations where large gatherings, critical infrastructure, or high-profile events

Hostile Vehicle Mitigation – Liverpool Parade Case Study

Corps Focus: Security Issue of the Month

take place. It aims to create secure environments while maintaining accessibility and aesthetics in public realms.

HVM matters, as vehicle-as-a-weapon (VAW) attacks have become an increasingly common method of disruption due to the accessibility of vehicles and the difficulty of detecting intent before an incident occurs. As seen in recent months these attacks can cause mass casualties, public panic, and significant socio-political impact. HVM strategies are therefore essential to:

- Protect pedestrianised areas from unauthorised vehicle access
- Deter and delay hostile vehicles from reaching intended targets
- Minimise injury and infrastructure damage in the event of an attack
- Maintain public confidence and safe use of open spaces

HVM systems fall into several categories, which are often used in combination as part of a layered or integrated security solution:

1. Fixed Physical Barriers
These are permanent installations designed to stop or deflect vehicles. Common types include:
- PAS 68 / IWA 14-1 Bollards: These security-rated bollards can stop vehicles travelling at high speeds. They are tested to recognised standards and can be static or retractable.
- Street Furniture (HVM-rated): Benches, planters, litter bins, and other items designed to blend with urban architecture while providing impact resistance.
- Concrete Blocks and Jersey Barriers: Typically used for temporary or emergency protection but increasingly incorporated into urban design in reinforced forms.

2. Temporary and Semi-Permanent Barriers
These solutions are designed for short-term events or locations where permanent fixtures are not feasible.

- Surface-mounted Barriers: Quick-deploy solutions that sit on the road surface and require no excavation.
- Modular Barriers: Portable systems that can be configured based on the event footprint, such as pedestrian zones, festivals, or parades.
- Crash-rated Vehicle Gates: Used at access points to allow controlled entry while maintaining protection standards.

3. Vehicle Access Control Systems
These systems are used to monitor and control vehicle entry in sensitive areas:

- Automated Rising Bollards: Controlled by security personnel or automated access systems to regulate authorised vehicle access.
- Swing/Rising Arm Barriers: Typically used at controlled entrances, especially where rapid vehicle throughput is necessary.
- Road Blockers and Tyre Killers: Heavy-duty systems that physically prevent vehicle intrusion and are often used in high-risk facilities.

Hostile Vehicle Mitigation – Liverpool Parade Case Study

Corps Focus: Security Issue of the Month

4. Natural and Integrated Urban Design
A more holistic approach incorporates security measures within the urban fabric, often with aesthetic consideration:

- Landscaping Features: Mounds, berms, or water features strategically placed to restrict vehicle approach.
- Building Setbacks and Elevation Changes: Architectural features that naturally deter vehicle access without requiring visible barriers.
- Integrated Street Layouts: Traffic-calming design (e.g., chicanes, raised crossings) to slow down or redirect vehicle flow.

Successful HVM implementation is not one-size-fits-all. It requires:

- Threat, Vulnerability & Risk Assessment (TVRA): Understanding the likely threats and potential vulnerabilities in each space.
- Hostile Vehicle Dynamics Analysis: Evaluating the size, speed, and route of potential vehicle threats.
- Stakeholder Collaboration: Working with urban planners, law enforcement, emergency services, and event organisers.
- Maintenance and Training: Ensuring systems are maintained, operatives are trained, and procedures are regularly reviewed.

Security Response to Potential Drone Threats
Security teams and organisations should familiarise themselves fully with the threats associated with drone use for malicious purposes, as well as the current regulations around their use in the UK, full details can be found on the CAA website: https://www.caa.co.uk/drones/

- Drone use should form part of documented security strategies, with a clearly defined response and escalation procedure.

- Patrolling security officers should remain vigilant to 'threats from above' whilst conducting external patrols, incorporating checks for drone activity as standard. Remember, a drone is effectively a mobile camera in the sky and the response should be the same as if a suspicious person was spotted filming around your premises.
- Police services request that they are contacted immediately if unannounced drone activity is observed, particularly if it appears to have an object attached to it as this could potentially be an IED or have CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) implications. Whether in flight or static on the ground, the drone could pose a risk to those around it.

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