

'Martyn's Law' introduced to Parliament to better protect the public from terrorism

ProtectUK publication date

12/09/2024

The public will be better protected from terrorism under new laws requiring many public venues to improve preparedness against attacks and bring in measures to help keep people safe.

The new legislation, also known as 'Martyn's Law' in tribute of Martyn Hett who was killed alongside 21 others in the 2017 Manchester Arena attack, will make sure venues across the UK must consider the security of the public, and take steps to protect them from harm.

This will deliver on the government's manifesto commitment to strengthen the security of public events as well as the Prime Minister's personal promise to Martyn's mother, Figen Murray, that he would bring in this law.

Under the changes, a new duty will be placed on those responsible for premises and public events, requiring them to take appropriate action to strengthen public safety, with requirements reflecting the size of the venue and the activity taking place.

Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, said:

Martyn's Law has been a long time coming.

I want to pay tribute to Figen Murray and her campaign team who have tirelessly worked to make this happen.

This legislation will strengthen public safety, help protect staff and the public from terrorism and ensure we learn the lessons from the terrible Manchester Arena attack and the inquiry that followed. It is important we now take this forward through Parliament in Martyn's memory and to help keep people safe.

Figen Murray, mother of Martyn Hett, said:

I want to thank everyone who has played a part in getting the bill to this stage, and especially the Prime Minister, who gave me his word that he would act quickly to introduce Martyn's Law. He said he would act quickly and he has.

Today means we are one step closer to making public spaces safer for everyone. It is also hugely important for my family that Martyn's Law will be on the statute book ahead of the next anniversary of Martyn's death.

As set out in the bill, those responsible for premises will be required to fulfil necessary but proportionate steps, according to their capacity, to help keep the public safe. This includes a tiered approach, linked to the size of the venue, how many people will be there and the activity taking place, making sure undue burdens are not placed on small businesses.

A standard tier premises will apply to locations with a capacity of more than 200 people but under 800. These businesses will be asked to undertake simple yet effective activities to put in place procedures to reduce harm to the public in the event of an attack. These could be as simple as training staff to lock doors, close shutters and identify a safe route to cover.

The enhanced tier will apply to premises and events with a capacity of more than 800 individuals, given the devastating impact an attack could have in these spaces. These locations will need to put in place measures such as CCTV or hiring security staff.

Security Minister, Dan Jarvis, said:

We are determined to strengthen security at public events and venues and passing Martyn's Law will be vital step forward in this objective.

Today's bill is the result of a considerable amount of consultation, consideration and collaboration. I look forward to working with colleagues in Parliament to deliver this important legislation.

Head of Counter Terrorism Policing, Matt Jukes, said:

Through Martyn's Law we can ensure that the public have additional protection from terrorist

attacks while at events and public venues. Counter Terrorism Policing welcomes today's bill and we look forward to seeing it progress through Parliament.

We're all inspired by and motivated by the experience of victims and survivors. Figen Murray has campaigned tirelessly for Martyn's Law and it's thanks to her unwavering determination that we are one step closer to ensuring the public has additional protection in the form of this legislation.

We will continue to work with the public, with businesses, and with the government to ensure that when a terrorist attack takes place we have the right mitigations in place that will prevent other families from experiencing those tragedies.

Following Royal Assent, businesses will be given time and support to understand and implement their new obligations and allow for the new regulator to be established. This will include dedicated guidance so that those affected will have the required information on what to do and how best to do it.

PAGE CATEGORY

NEWS & VIEWS