ProtectUK

ACT for Local Authorities

About ACT for Local Authorities

ACT for Local Authorities is an initiative led by Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) to support local government partners to embed counter terrorism considerations into their day-to-day work.

Local authorities have the best knowledge of their local area, and either own or have influence over the land and activities which occur in public spaces.

By considering and mitigating terrorist risks through protective security and preparedness activity, with the support of counter terrorism experts, local authorities are in a unique position to enhance the safety and security of public spaces for their communities.

The strategic context

ACT for Local Authorities specifically focuses on the Protect and Prepare elements of the UK government's counter terrorism strategy (known as CONTEST) and has been designed to support this work at a local level.

Under CONTEST, the Protect strand aims to 'strengthen the United Kingdom's protection against terrorist attacks' while the Prepare strand aims to 'minimise the impact of an attack and reduce the likelihood of further attacks'.

ACT for Local Authorities is separate, yet complementary, to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law.

While Martyn's Law places greater responsibility on individual qualifying premises and events to enhance their counter terrorism planning, ACT for Local Authorities addresses protective security and preparedness planning holistically across public spaces, which are either owned, managed, or influenced by local authorities.

The terrorist threat

The ACT for Local Authorities initiative is borne out of recognition of the changing terrorist threat landscape. This landscape is now dominated by individuals acting without the direction or material support of organised groups. Since 2014, attacks across the UK and Europe have featured simple and accessible methodologies, such as the use of vehicles as weapons, homemade explosives, and bladed or blunt-force weapons.

As a result, it is currently assessed that if an attack were to occur in the UK, it will likely be conducted by a self-initiated terrorist, using a low sophistication methodology against members of the public in a public space. This demands that protective security and preparedness must also adapt.

Counter Terrorism Policing

To address these challenges, CTP, supported by the Home Office, is directing its Protect and Prepare expertise and resources towards local authorities to support them in considering protective security and preparedness at venues and public spaces.

ACT for Local Authorities has been designed by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), a police-hosted unit which is responsible for supporting protective security and preparedness considerations in national policy, processes and frameworks.

ACT for Local Authorities

Video

A local approach

Local Approach scope

Following a pilot programme, five areas of local authority activity have been identified as having the greatest potential impact on protective security and preparedness at a local level. These are areas where significant statutory responsibility has been devolved to local governance and so offer the greatest opportunity for intervention. These are:



Regional Counter Terrorism Units

On the ground, ACT for Local Authorities will be delivered by CTP's regional Counter Terrorism Units (CTUs) and intelligence units (CTIUs) in these regions:

- North East
- North West

- East Midlands
- West Midlands
- South West
- London and City of London
- South East
- Eastern
- Wales
- Scotland



Within each region, there are a network of specialists with unique expertise, specifically Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) and Counter Terrorism Prepare Officers (CTPOs).

These are trained and accredited counter terrorism security professionals who are employed by police forces and nationally tasked by Counter Terrorism Policing HQ. CTSAs can explain the threat from terrorism, advise on appropriate protective security measures, and support counter terrorism preparedness initiatives.

CTSAs can also provide and support the delivery of our free training and awareness packages. CTPOs offer preparedness and contingency planning advice specific to a counter terrorism context.

You can find more on ProtectUK about Working with Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs), and you can contact your local Protect and Prepare team to learn more about ACT for Local Authorities.

ACT for Local Authorities products and resources

To support this work, NaCTSO has created and compiled a suite of self-service products.

These include guidance and toolkits containing resources such as relevant legislation, awareness raising material, delivery schemes, and a curated selection of guidance and reference materials, from NaCTSO and the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA). There are also details of funding streams which may be available to support local authorities in their work.

Other resources include the Maturity Matrix, which provides a framework for local authorities to self-assess their existing level of maturity in protective security and preparedness work across their organisation, highlighting both their strengths and areas for development.

ACT for Local Authorities is a service offer from CTP which seeks to support local government in a focused and nationally consistent way. In practical terms, CTP will support local authorities to embed counter terrorism protective security and preparedness considerations into their day-to-day activity, by ensuring that they are equipped with the appropriate specialist counter terrorism guidance and have access to subject matter experts.

Working in partnership, we can deliver a local approach to protective security and preparedness to make venues and public spaces safer and more secure for everyone.

Guidance for local authorities

Guidance

The following links are ACT for Local Authorities documents and videos, developed as guidance specifically for local authorities on each of the Local Approach areas:

ACT for Local Authorities - Community Safety Y1 (2026-27)
ACT for Local Authorities - Emergency Planning Y1 (2026-27)
ACT for Local Authorities - Licensing Y1 (2026-27)
ACT for Local Authorities - Planning and Development Y1 (2026-27)
ACT for Local Authorities - Transport and Highways Y1 (2026-27)

The following documents provide guidance on generic and engagement facets that local authorities can utilise:

ACT for Local Authorities - Protect and Prepare Groups Guidance
ACT for Local Authorities - Protect and Prepare Group Example Terms of Reference
ACT for Local Authorities - Maturity Matrix Guidance
ACT for Local Authorities - Maturity Matrix for Local Authorities
ACT for Local Authorities - Glossary

Local Authorities Good Practice Resources

These Good Practice documents highlight how local authorities are working with Counter Terrorism Policing through ACT for Local Authorities to strengthen protective security and preparedness across local services and communities.

The examples share practical learning and approaches that can be adapted to local needs. They are intended to support local planning and delivery, not to prescribe a single approach.

The documents are available below:

ACT for Local Authorities - Kirklees Good Practice: Public Access Trauma First Aid Kits and Emergency Grab Bags

ACT for Local Authorities - Middlesbrough Good Practice: Protect and Prepare Groups

ACT for Local Authorities Lancashire Resilience Forum- Embedding P&P through Local Resilience Forum Structures

Branding resources

These documents contain digital ACT for Local Authorities branding resources that may be useful to Local Authorities for their engagement:

ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 01
ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 02
ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 03
ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 04
ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 05
ACT Local Approach Digital Screen 06

ACT for Local Authorities posters

ACT Local Approach Poster Act for Local Authorities
ACT Local Approach Poster Community Safety
ACT Local Approach Poster Emergency Planning
ACT Local Approach Poster Licensing
ACT Local Approach Poster Planning and Development
ACT Local Approach Poster Transport and Highways

Local Approach - Community Safety

Video

Local Approach - Emergency Planning

Video

Local Approach - Licensing

Video

Local Approach - Planning and Development

Video

Local Approach - Transport and Highways

Video

KEYWORDS
ACT AWARENESS
ACT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES
ACT TRAINING PRODUCTS
LOCAL AUTHORITIES