

Local parks



Terrorism threat to local parks

- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the intent to conduct attacks at local parks due to the crowds of people that gather over large areas of publicly accessible land.
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a local park would be conducted by an individual or a small cell using a low sophistication methodology. E.g., Bladed or Blunt Force Weapons, Vehicle as a Weapon, Fire as a Weapon, Fake Suicide Vest etc.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the capability to conduct a high-sophistication attack at a local park in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED), or Firearms attack. However, the complicated nature of plotting a high-sophistication terrorist attack makes it highly likely that there will be greater opportunity for UK police and security services to disrupt potential attacks.
- The assessments in this report were made using the PHIA Probability Yardstick, for further information please see the Assessment Methodology [section below](#).

Location based threats to local parks in the UK

- It is highly likely that there is an increased terrorism threat to local parks in major cities and those in proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that local parks located in proximity to iconic sites and/or busy public spaces could be impacted by a Marauding Terrorist Attack in proximity to their site.

Previous terrorist incidents related to parks in the UK

- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks within, and in proximity to, parks in the UK, including:
 - 2022 London:** An Islamist terrorist was intercepted whilst in a taxi from Brighton to Lewisham, South London, on the way to buy a firearm. The perpetrator had reportedly intended to target a Christian speaker at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park.
 - 2022 Plymouth:** Although not designated as terrorism, an individual reportedly inspired by an incel ideology conducted a Marauding Firearms attack throughout Plymouth. During his attack, the individual entered a local park and shot a man dead.¹
 - 2020 Reading:** An Islamist terrorist conducted a Bladed Weapons attack in Forbury Gardens, Reading. There were three fatalities and three others were significantly injured.²
 - 2018 Edinburgh:** A terrorist planted an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh. The individual claimed to be a member of the Mexican eco-terror group "International Terrorist Mafia". The individual was later sentenced to eight and a half years in prison after pleading guilty to possession of items for a terrorist purpose.³
 - 2017 London:** An Islamist inspired teenager was sentenced to life in prison for plotting to conduct a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack in Hyde Park during an Elton John concert. The plot was foiled by officers from UK security services who posed online as a fellow extremist.⁴
 - 1982 London:** The Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombed the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment as they rode through Hyde Park. There were four fatalities and several more were injured.

Other potential threats to local parks in the UK

- It is likely that the threat posed to local parks in the UK would be dynamic and dependent on the time of year. E.g., It is almost certain that local parks would have a higher footfall during summer, encouraging larger crowds that would be an attractive target for terrorist actors.
- There is a realistic possibility that the threat posed to local parks in the UK could be heightened during events. E.g., Festivals, community events, or national holidays would attract larger crowds to local parks that could be an attractive target for terrorist actors seeking to conduct mass casualty attacks.
- There is a realistic possibility that the threat posed to local parks in the UK could be heightened if high-profile individuals, politicians, celebrities etc. are present. For example, a political leadership candidate could be targeted during their visit to a park.

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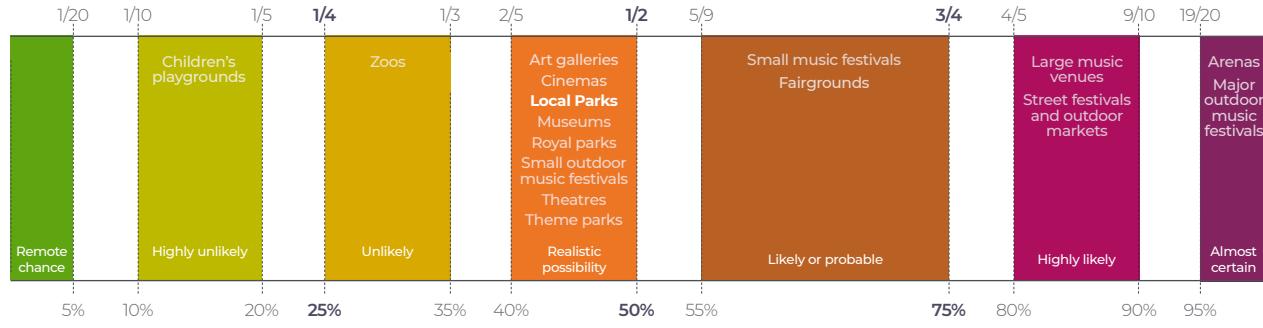
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against local parks within the arts, culture and entertainment sector.

Terrorist intent can be defined as the desire and/or determination of an individual to conduct an attack against any given site.

The intent of terrorist actors to conduct an attack against the arts, culture and entertainment sector in the UK is subject to change based on the assessments outlined in this report.

Note: The terrorism threat to any given site is not based solely on intent, but also the capability of terrorist actors in the UK as outlined in this report. Terrorism threat is also mitigated by the UK's countrywide terrorism risk mitigation infrastructure including both public and private security and safety capabilities.



Assessment Methodology

The assessments made in this report have been made using the Professional Head of Intelligence's "Probability Yardstick" (above). The Probability Yardstick is a standardised instrument used to provide a professional standard for intelligence assessment.

- **Almost certain:** An event has a greater than 90% chance of occurring.
- **Highly likely:** An event has a 76% to 90% chance of occurring.
- **Likely:** An event has a 55% to 75% chance of occurring.
- **Realistic possibility:** An event has a 40% to 54% chance of occurring.
- **Unlikely:** An event has a 25% to 39% chance of occurring.
- **Highly unlikely:** An event has an 10% to 24% chance of occurring.
- **Remote chance:** An event has a less than 10% chance of occurring.

Time spans

- **Short Term:** 0–6 Months.
- **In the next 12 months.**
- **Medium Term:** 12 months–5 Years.
- **Long Term:** 5+ Years.

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Intelligence cut-off date: 20 February 2024

For more information please contact solutions@poolre.co.uk

Bibliography

1. Plymouth shooting: burst of savagery that began with an attack on a mother; Plymouth - The Guardian

Short for involuntary celibate; a member of a group of people online who are unable to find sexual partners despite wanting them, a subsection of whom openly express hostility towards women. (There have currently been no incel-related terrorist attacks in the UK. However, the increasing number of self-identifying incels within the UK could be illustrative of the possible threat posed by such actors in the long term.)

2. Reading stabbings: Man motivated by 'religious jihad' - BBC News

3. Man jailed over explosive in Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens - BBC News

4. Radicalised teen who plotted to bomb Elton John show jailed for life; UK news - The Guardian

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