

Royal parks



Terrorism threat to royal parks

- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors could have the intent to conduct attacks at a Royal Park in the UK due to their high-profile nature and the crowds of people that gather over large areas of publicly accessible land.¹
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a Royal Park in the UK would be conducted by an individual or small cell using a low-sophistication methodology. E.g., Bladed or Blunt Force Weapons, Vehicle as a Weapon, or Fire as a Weapon.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the capability to conduct a high-sophistication attack at a Royal Park in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED), or Firearms attack. 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 royal parks in the UK

- It is highly likely that there is an increased terrorism threat to the Royal Parks, due to their location within London and their close proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that any Royal Park located in proximity to iconic sites and/or busy public spaces could be impacted by a Marauding Terrorist Attack.

Previous terrorist incidents related to parks in the UK

- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks 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.
 - **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 royal parks in the UK

- It is highly likely that the threat posed to Royal Parks would be dynamic and dependent on the time of year. E.g., It is almost certain that Royal Parks would have a higher footfall during summer and spring bank holidays, encouraging larger crowds that would be an attractive target for terrorist actors.
- It is highly likely that the threat posed to Royal Parks would be heightened during major events hosted at their site. E.g. National holidays, festive events, and/or royal celebrations would attract large crowds and a higher footfall to royal parks that would be an attractive target for terrorist actors.
- There is a realistic possibility that the threat posed to Royal Parks could be heightened if high-profile individuals, politicians, celebrities etc. are present. E.g., A member of the Royal Family could be targeted as a result of their attendance at a Royal Park during a national celebration.
- It is almost certain that terrorist actors would have the intent to conduct attacks against members of the police and/or military present during major events held at Royal Parks in the UK, leading to a heightened terrorism threat.
 - **2022 London**; An Islamist terrorist plotted to target a Christian speaker at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park. As part of his attack, the individual reportedly planned to kill any police officers or soldiers in the nearby area during a marauding firearms attack.⁵

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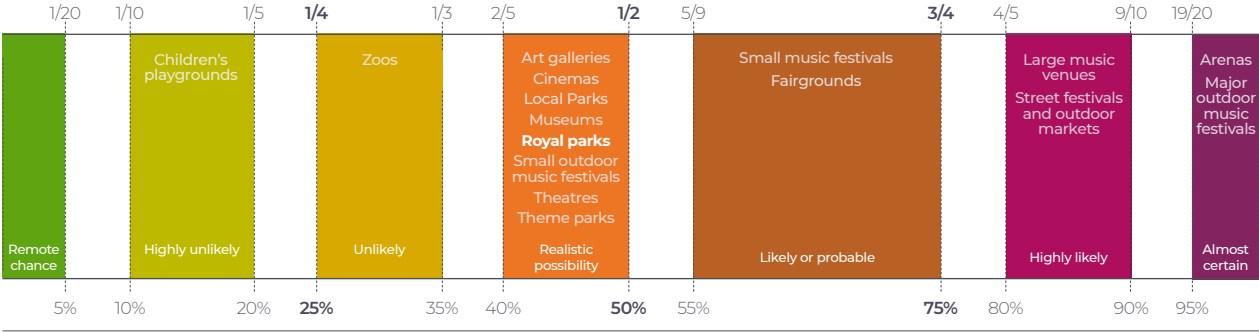
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against royal 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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Bibliography

1. For more information on the locations of The Royal Parks, please see: [The Royal Parks - London's Royal Parks](#)
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](#)
5. [Speakers' Corner: Edward Little jailed over Hyde Park gun attack plot - BBC News](#)

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