

# Pubs



## Terrorism threat to pubs

- It is highly likely that terrorist actors in the UK would have the intent to conduct attacks against pubs in the UK due to their easily accessible nature, their proximity to busy public spaces, and the routine gathering of large crowds within and in proximity to their sites.
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a pub 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 pub in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED) or a marauding attack with Firearms. 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 large crowds that gather at pubs almost certainly provide an attractive target for indiscriminate terrorist attacks. As such, it is likely that any terrorist attack against a pub in the UK would be conducted by an Islamist inspired individual due to the ideologically driven intent to conduct indiscriminate attacks against members of the public.
- 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 pubs in the UK

- It is highly likely that there would be an increased terrorism threat to pubs in major cities and those in proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that pubs 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 pubs in the UK and overseas

- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against pubs in the UK, including:
  - 2025 Leeds:** On 26 April 2025, Owen Lawrence, 38, allegedly conducted a crossbow and firearms attack against the "Otley run" pub crawl route in Leeds. Two women were injured. There were no fatalities. Lawrence suffered a "self-inflicted injury" and died in hospital on 29 April 2025. The motive for the attack remains unknown. At the time of writing, the attack has not been designated as terrorism and an inquest currently remains ongoing.<sup>1</sup>
  - 2020 Durham:** In January 2020, Jack Reed, 18, was sentenced to six years and eight months in prison for planning a terrorist attack in the UK<sup>2</sup>. Reed was reportedly an adherent of an Extreme Right-Wing ideology and had researched explosives and listed potential targets in Durham for his attack.<sup>3</sup> Included in his potential targets were pubs, intended to "prevent degeneracy" and "scare/anger laymen".<sup>4</sup>
  - 2017 London:** On 03 June 2017, Khuram Butt, Rachid Redouane, and Youssef Zaghba conducted a Marauding Terrorist Attack. The small cell first conducted a Vehicle as a Weapon attack against civilians on London Bridge before conducting a Marauding Bladed Weapons attack against civilians in proximity to Borough Market. There were 8 fatalities and 48 others were injured. Multiple hospitality sites in proximity to the attack site were affected. The perpetrators were inspired by an Islamist ideology.<sup>5</sup>
  - 1999 London:** Between 17 and 30 April 1999, David Copeland, an Extreme Right-Wing terrorist conducted three Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks in London. One attack targeted the Admiral Duncan Pub. The Admiral Duncan was located in Old Compton Street, a hotspot for London's LGBTQIA+ community. There were three fatalities and 48 were injured.<sup>6</sup>
  - 1974 Guildford:** On 05 October 1974, two separate pubs in Guildford, known to be popular with British army personnel, were bombed. The attacks were later claimed by a four-man-IRA unit known as the Balcombe Street gang.<sup>7</sup>
  - 1974 Birmingham:** On 21 November 1974, the IRA conducted two separate explosive attacks against two pubs. There were 21 fatalities and 220 were injured.<sup>8</sup>
- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against pubs globally, including:
  - 2002 Bali:** On 12 October 2002, three Islamist terrorists conducted Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks in Bali. The attacks targeted busy night-time economy locations. One of the attackers conducted a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack at a pub called Paddy's Bar. There were 202 fatalities overall.<sup>9</sup>

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## Other potential threats to pubs in the UK

- There is a realistic possibility that staff employed at pubs could pose an Insider Threat. E.g., In 2022, Tarek Namouz, 42, was charged with eight counts of entering into a terror funding arrangement. The former pub landlord allegedly sent money from coronavirus bounce-back loans – intended for the pub – to fund Islamic State. He was also accused of two counts of possessing terrorist information related to videos.<sup>10</sup>
- It is almost certain that any terrorist actor with the intent to conduct an attack against a pub would have open access to the site and the capability to conduct uninterrupted hostile reconnaissance due to the relaxed security posture and publicly accessible nature of pubs in the UK.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the intent to target specific high-profile individuals hosted by pubs in the UK. The presence of high-profile politicians, media figures, or major celebrities could lead to an increased threat from individuals with terrorist intent.
- There is a realistic possibility that the nature of events held at a pub could alter the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to target any given site. E.g., There is a realistic possibility that there could be a heightened threat to pubs that host events associated with the LGBTQIA+ community. It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a pub event associated with the LGBTQIA+ community would be conducted by an Extreme Right-Wing or Islamist terrorist.
- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against pubs in the UK and globally as a result of the events they hold, including:
  - 2022 Norway;** On 25 June 2022, Zaniar Matapour, 44, conducted a Firearms attack against the London Pub; a popular LGBTQIA+ venue in Oslo. Matapour had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State shortly before the attack. There were two fatalities, and eight others were hospitalised. Oslo's annual Pride parade was cancelled.<sup>11</sup>
  - 2018 UK;** On 05 February 2018, Ethan Stables, 20, was convicted for preparing a terrorist attack against a pub that was hosting a gay pride night. Stables was inspired by an Extreme Right-Wing ideology and had planned to conduct a Bladed Weapons attack using a machete against guests attending a Pride Night for Barrow's LGBTQIA+ support group.<sup>12</sup>
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could use pubs and bars to hold meetings when planning to conduct an attack or as sites of radicalisation. Terrorist actors in the UK have previously used pubs and bars in the UK during attack preparation:
  - 2017 Warrington;** On 01 July 2017, Jack Renshaw, 22, a member of the proscribed Extreme Right-Wing terrorist group, National Action, announced that he planned to murder MP Rosie Cooper during a National Action meeting in the Friar Penketh pub in Warrington. Renshaw was later sentenced to life imprisonment for preparing an act of terrorism and making threats to kill.<sup>13</sup>

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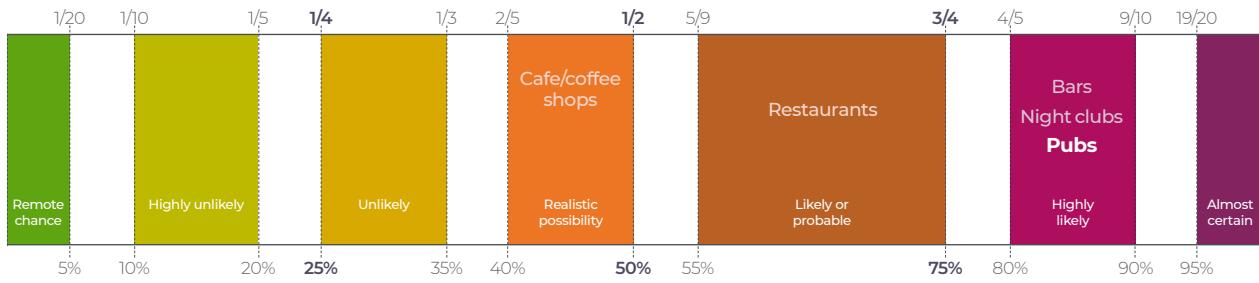
## Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against pubs within the hospitality 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 hospitality 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: 23 July 2025**

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