



Preventing Violent Extremism

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A number of initiatives have been launched to tackle extremism within the UK. Most recently the Government published the *Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery* document in June 2008 (see page 18 for details).

This note outlines various announcements, programmes, and funding for local authorities and community groups which has been made available since the July 2005 London bombings. Part 11 of this note provides details of relevant Library documents and contacts on related issues.

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1 Preventing Extremism Together

Following the attacks in London in July 2005, seven community-led working groups were set up under the banner of 'Preventing Extremism Together' to develop practical recommendations for tackling violent extremism. The groups addressed the following themes:

1. Engaging with Young People
2. Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation
3. Regional and Local Initiatives
4. Engaging with Women
5. Imams and the role of Mosques
6. Security and Policing
7. Education

The reports of the individual groups were collected together in a single report, which was published in November 2005.¹ The groups produced 64 recommendations: 27 were for government to take the lead on; the remainder were for communities themselves to take forward, supported by the Government when necessary. The recommendations included:

- "Countering extremist ideas – a national, grass-roots-led campaign of events targeted at Muslim youth enabling influential scholars to theologically tackle extremist interpretations of Islam."
- "The setting up of a National Resource Unit (NRU) for the development of curricula in madrasah/mosques and Islamic centres. The NRU will also develop programmes and guidelines for the teaching staff that function within these institutions. The programmes and guidelines will be developed with respect and in compliance with the diversity and schools of thought in the Muslim Community overall".
- "Develop a British Muslim Citizenship Toolkit to be used through 'natural pathways' in the Muslim community. The Toolkit will articulate a new vision for a British Islam and equip university Islamic Societies, mosques/imams, parents and the youth to deal with violent/fanatical tendencies".

The Home Office produced a very short response to the report on the same day. This stated that:

... Many of the discussions during working group meetings and at the groups' residential weekend focused in particular on the importance of developing a youth-oriented counter-narrative to terrorist justifications of violence, for example. Others looked at how young Muslims and Muslim women in particular could be supported to better engage with civic society.

There are also themes that emerge that will inform the Government's future thinking in this area. Proposals from across the groups focus on strengthening communities, and

¹ Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together*, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/152164.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

supporting their members to thrive more generally – suggesting new ideas for Mosques to serve as hubs for community services, for example, or considering how the police and Muslim communities can interact going forward. Others look more technically at how to build capacity in community organisations, recognising that an evidence base of good practice already exists, and looking to share it as widely as possible through beacon centres.

Some of the proposals in the report are aligned with work already underway, being delivered both by the Home Office and by colleagues in other departments. Some of the proposals are new and will be able to inform policies across government to be taken forward in partnership with Muslim communities. We will need to consider how to fund this work from existing sources such as the £5m Capacity Building Fund for Faith Communities, recognising that we need to both prioritise the proposals and allocate resources fairly across all faith communities.

But many will be taken forward by Muslim communities themselves...²

In December 2006, an update on progress was provided to the House in the following exchange:

James Duddridge: Last month, the Secretary of State told the House that action had been agreed on all but three of the 27 recommendations of the “Preventing Extremism Together” taskforce that were addressed to Government. As action agreed is not the same as action taken, can the Minister tell the House how many of the recommendations have so far been implemented?

Mr. Woolas: Yes I can, and I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for asking the question—it gives me an opportunity to put the record straight, because some misinformation has been perpetuated on this point by mischief makers. Action has been agreed on all but three of the 27 recommendations that were for Government to lead on. Three have been completed—the recommendation about consultation on the Department for Education and Skills Green Paper, expansion of the minority ethnic achievements project, and the extension of equal opportunities legislation to cover discrimination on the ground of faith—and 17 are in progress. The Government have accepted the recommendations and are working on implementing them. Three are under consideration and the Government are deciding whether to accept them. Of the four remaining, alternatives are in place for two, and two are not being taken forward.³

2 Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund

The Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund was launched by the Home Office in September 2005. As mentioned in the Government response to the *Preventing Extremism Together* report, the Government decided to fund some of the work on preventing extremism from this fund. The application process was run by the Community Development Foundation, which is a non-departmental public body of the DCLG.⁴ The press release issued at that time outlined the origins and objectives of the Fund:

² Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together: Government Response*, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/151978.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

³ HC Deb 12 December 2006 c722

⁴ According to the Community Development Foundation’s website, it was established in 1968 as the Young Volunteer Force Foundation. It was renamed the Community Development Foundation in 1989. Its mission is “to lead community development analysis and strategy in order to empower people to influence decisions that affect their lives”.

Summary of the fund

This is a new fund. It was first announced in the Government's 'Improving Opportunity and Strengthening Society' strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion in January 2005. The fund will support the Government's aim to help faith communities promote understanding and dialogue. It will help faith-based groups to develop their capacity for such work and support better Government engagement with faith groups in developing and delivering policies. The fund will further support the Government's aim to help different groups promote a tolerant society in which all groups can resolve differences in a framework of mutual respect and fairness.

Priorities

The fund has two key priorities – capacity building and inter faith activity. The purpose of funding capacity building is to strengthen groups' organisational capabilities to enable them to sustain themselves in order to play a fuller part in civil society and community cohesion, and engage more effectively with public authorities.

Inter faith activity involves programmes designed to bring people of different faiths together to promote mutual understanding, respect and co-operation. This contributes to community cohesion through the development of partnerships between faith groups, and between faith groups and the wider community.⁵

Applications for funding had to be submitted by 2 December 2005. On 14 February 2006, the Community Development Foundation reported on the successful applications. Its website provides a breakdown by both region and by faith group of applications received and approved. A separate press release listed the names of the successful applications.⁶

On 7 August 2006, the Community Development Foundation announced that a second round of funding under the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, worth £4.5 million, was being launched.⁷ The closing date for applications to the second round of funding was 1 November 2006, and on 6 March 2007, Phil Woolas, the Communities Minister announced that £4.3 million had been awarded to 343 groups "to promote a sense of common citizenship". His comments were reported in a press release:

"This demonstrates how we are stepping-up work in communities to promote understanding and cohesion by effectively engaging women, young people and hard to reach groups. We must continue to emphasise our sense of British-ness and the shared values which hold us together.

"Faith organisations play an important role in our communities and know their communities well, we want to draw on the expertise of faith, interfaith and non faith based community groups and do all we can to support them.

"This local approach will help reach directly into communities to promote shared citizenship and integration. It is vital that we find ways of bringing people from different

⁵ Community Development Foundation news release, *Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*, 22 September 2005, <http://www.cdf.org.uk/SITE/UPLOAD/DOCUMENT/FCCBpressrel.doc> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

⁶ See Community Development Foundation, *Grants*, http://www.cdf.org.uk/bfora/systems/xmlviewer/default.asp?arg=DS_CDF_TECHART_23/_page.xsl/27&xsl_ar gx=4 (last viewed 23 June 2008)

⁷ Community Development Foundation news release, £4.5 million boost to help faith communities, 7 August 2006, http://www.cdf.org.uk/SITE/UPLOAD/DOCUMENT/Projects/Augustpress_release_dl_comments.doc (last viewed 23 June 2008)

faiths and cultures together to understand their differences and celebrate their shared experiences.

“The programme has already made a significant impact where projects are up and running and I am certain we can build on this to develop practical solutions to promote community cohesion.”⁸

A Written Parliamentary Question published on 2 June 2008 stated:

Faith Community Capacity Building Fund

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will make it her policy to review the granting of funds under the Faith Community Capacity Building Fund to the New Kadampa Tradition; and if she will make a statement. [207497]

Mr. Dhanda: The Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund covered the period August 2006 to March 2008. The fund has now finished and all monies have been distributed. The Government will not be reviewing the allocation of funding.⁹

3 Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds

On 5 April 2007 DCLG published an action plan, *Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds*.¹⁰ The Press Notice stated that:

A new action plan to step-up work with Muslim communities to isolate, prevent and defeat violent extremism was published today by Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly.

New proposals in Preventing Violent Extremism - Winning hearts and minds include strengthening governance in mosques to make them less susceptible to takeover by minority groups, extending provision of citizenship education and measures to support communities strengthen Muslim and theological leadership to better connect with young British Muslims.

A new independent study into radicalisation in local communities by Muslim academic Tufyal Choudhury from Durham University was published alongside the action plan. It makes clear that the traditional religious leadership need a new approach to counter radicalisation and better connect with young people. While the report says there are some encouraging signs a new 'British Muslim' identity is forming in reaction and opposition to violent radicalism it makes clear that the extremist tactics still involve targeting vulnerable young people searching for identity during times of crisis.

Responding to these challenges Ruth Kelly set out a plan for tackling violent extremism, which will mean -

- Strengthening leadership and governance in mosques up and down the country. We will set-out the new role for the Charity Commission in improving governance, and will announce £600,000 to create a new Faith and Social Cohesion Unit within the Commission to drive this.

⁸ Department for Communities and Local Government press release no 33, *£4.3 million to help faith organisations promote community cohesion*, 6 March 2007, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=2362> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

⁹ HC Deb 2 Jun 2008 c541W

¹⁰ The report can be found on the Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/preventingviolentextremism> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

- A framework of new standards for imams engaged by the state who will go into areas where individuals are susceptible to extremism such as prisons and universities.
- Helping communities build stronger civic and religious leadership to face down extremism. We will set-up and back projects both nationally and locally, announcing work with academic institutions to develop new leadership courses and support greater community training projects.
- Rolling out good practice guidance nationally to encourage the teaching of citizenship in madrassahs and supplementary schools.
- Strengthening the role of women and a major expansion in the number of local 'Forums Against Extremism' - from 12 to over 40 nationally by April 2008.
- Announcing £6million of new allocations to around 70 local communities to prevent extremism on the ground. This includes funding for programmes working with those who may be vulnerable to extremist messages - for example, helping young people to build the confidence and understanding to turn their back on violent extremism, programmes promoting leadership training for imams and Muslim women and enabling communities to identify and tackle extremism where it emerges.

In a speech in central London Ruth Kelly praised communities like Oldham and Barking for their work to isolate and reject messages of hate from the far right. She said that we also need to step up our efforts against the far right, against Islamophobia, against anti-semitism - anything that prevents British citizens going about their daily lives free from intimidation or persecution.

Ruth Kelly said:

"I do not under-estimate the difficulties we face or the scale of this challenge. But I know from my conversations with Muslim communities up and down the country that the desire and commitment to tackle extremism is there.

"Success today will hinge on forging a new alliance against violent extremism. We need to reach out and give greater support to the overwhelming majority who are disgusted by terrorist attacks carried out in the name of Islam.

"The good sense and decency of the vast majority of people in this country has ensured no type of extremism has ever got a mainstream foothold here. But we need to make sure those who stand up, don't stand alone. We need to support the silent majority, backing the courageous individuals and communities who refuse to be intimidated by the violent extremists.

"Our action plan will do this. It sets out how new training opportunities will help imams take on the extremists' messages, it signals a step change in madrassahs' role in teaching citizenship and it supports strong and inclusive governance of mosques with a new role for the Charity Commission.

"We need to support people in building communities where extremism is resolutely tackled and isolated, and where all doors are shut to those who seek division and violence."¹¹

¹¹ Department for Communities and Local Government Press Notice, *Kelly sets out plan to isolate and defeat extremists*, 5 April 2007, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/communities/400423> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

Information on the Charity Commission's Faith and Social Cohesion Unit is available on their website.¹²

4 Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund

The Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund was launched by the DCLG in October 2006 to support priority local authorities in developing programmes of activity to tackle violent extremism at the local level. Guidance was published in February 2007 which explained that the fund aimed to build on work that leading local authorities were already doing – understanding and engaging in dialogue with their communities, forging partnerships with policy, community and faith groups, and working with mosques and institutes of education. In April 2007 the DCLG published a booklet of case studies.¹³ The introduction to this document stated:

At the time of its launch, we stated that £5m would be made available for the financial year 2007/8. In light of the breadth and depth of the proposals made by local authorities and their partners, we have agreed that a total of £6m will be made available. This will support work in around 70 priority local authorities.¹⁴

The case studies are set out under four headings:

- promoting shared values;
- supporting and nurturing civil and theological leadership;
- increasing the resilience of key organisations and institutions and supporting early interventions; and
- capacity and skills development.

The Annex to the document included a list of authorities receiving funding.¹⁵

5 Preventing Violent Extremism: Community Leadership Fund

In June 2007 the DCLG launched a new fund in the report, *Preventing Violent Extremism: Community Leadership Fund*. The Fund was a grants programme to “build the capacity of local communities to take practical steps to reject violent extremism and feel a welcome part of British Society”.¹⁶ It was intended to complement the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund. The total value of the fund was £650,000 and it was intended to focus on three strands: leadership capacity; organisational capacity; and the capacity of Muslim women.

On 31 October 2007, the Secretary of State for Local Government announced that work on preventing violent extremism would increase. It was announced that the Department would

¹² Charity Commission, Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/tcc/faithsc.asp> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

¹³ Department for Communities and Local Government, *Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund: Case Studies 2007/08*, April 2007, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/324967.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p4

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p14

¹⁶ Department for Communities and Local Government, *Preventing Violent Extremism: Community Leadership Fund*, June 2007, p3, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/430934.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

invest £70 million in stepping up work to build resilience to violent extremism. Around £25 million would be invested in national schemes to support communities directly. In addition, it was announced there would be a “step change” in the support available to local authorities and their community partners, with £45 million available over the next three years, to broaden and deepen the work already underway across 70 local authority areas.¹⁷ A Written Parliamentary Question from November 2007 asked how this money would be spent:

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the Statement of the Prime Minister of 14 November 2007, *Official Report*, columns 667-72, on national security, how the £70 million for community projects devoted to countering extremism announced by the Prime Minister will be spent; and how much (a) was spent in 2006-07 and (b) will be spent in (i) 2007-08 and (ii) each of the next three years. [168398]

Mr. Dhandu: In his statement of 14 November, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister confirmed that £70 million is being invested in community projects that are dedicated to countering violent extremism over the next three years (financial years 2008-09 to 2010-11).

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 31 October that around £25 million of that would be invested in national schemes to directly support communities, including:

- Equipping faith leaders with the skills and understanding required to lead communities, building their capacity to engage with young people on the challenges they face, including extremism. For example, ensuring imams can communicate more effectively with young people;
- Support communities to broaden the provision of citizenship education in mosque schools, equipping young people themselves with the understanding and arguments to reject extremists’ messages;
- Developing new minimum standards for public institutions (e.g. prisons, universities) engaging imams working with young or vulnerable people;
- Supporting the Charity Commission’s work to improve governance standards in faith institutions, including mosques;
- Increase the provision of leadership training available to Muslim communities, particularly women and young people.

Further announcements will be made as and when the details of the funding are decided.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State also announced £45 million would be available to local authorities and their community partners. This will build on work funded by the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund in 2007-08, guidance on which can be found at www.communities.gov.uk/communities/preventingextremism. Further guidance will be issued in due course.

On 26 November 2007, the Department for Communities and Local Government has allocated a budget of £8.7 million of programme funding for preventing extremism during the financial year 2007-08.

¹⁷ Department for Communities and Local Government Press Notice, *Major increase in work to tackle violent extremism*, 31 October 2007, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/529021> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

In 2006-07 financial year £1.4 million of programme funding was spent on projects to prevent violent extremism by the Department for Communities and Local Government.¹⁸

In April 2008 a further grant fund was made available under the Preventing Extremism: Community Leadership Fund. The Funding will be focused on the following areas:

- Capacity of organisations and communities;
- Supporting Muslim young people;
- Supporting Muslim women;
- Capacity of Muslim faith leaders;
- Local forums against extremism and Islamophobia.

Two funding rounds were announced, with deadlines on 23 May 2008 and 30 September 2008.

6 Prime Minister's statement on National Security, 14 November 2007

On 14 November 2007 the Prime Minister made a statement to the House of Commons on national security which included information about the ways in which the Government would seek to tackle extremism. The Prime Minister said:

...All faith communities in the UK make a huge contribution in all spheres of our national life. They are integral to our success as a society. And as we found, listening to all communities in and after June, the vast majority of people of all faiths and backgrounds condemn terrorism and the actions of terrorists. But the objective of al-Qaeda and related groups is to manipulate political and humanitarian issues in order to gain support for an agenda of murder and violence, and deliberately to maim and kill fellow human beings, including innocent women and children, irrespective of their religion. We must not allow anyone to use terrorist activities as a means to divide us or isolate those belonging to a particular faith or community.

To deal with the challenge posed by the terrorist threat we have to do more, working with communities in our country, first, to challenge extremist propaganda and support alternative voices; secondly, to disrupt the promoters of violent extremism by strengthening our institutions and supporting individuals who may be being targeted; thirdly, to increase the capacity of communities to resist and reject violent extremism; and fourthly, to address issues of concern exploited by ideologues, where by emphasising our shared values across communities we can both celebrate and act upon what unites us. This will be achieved not by one single programme or initiative and it will not be achieved overnight. It is a generational challenge that requires sustained work over the long term, through a range of actions in schools, colleges, universities, faith groups and youth clubs, by engaging young people through the media, culture, sport and arts, and by acting against extremist influences operating on the internet and in institutions from prisons and universities to some places of worship.

As part of our intensifying measures to isolate extremists, a new unit bringing together police and security intelligence and research will identify, analyse and assess not just the inner circle of extremist groups, but those at risk of falling under their influence, and share their advice and insights. Building on initial roadshows of mainstream Islamic

¹⁸ HC Deb 29 November 2007 c679W

scholarship round the country, which have already attracted more than 70,000 young people, and an internet site which has reached far more, we will sponsor at home and then abroad, including for the first time in Pakistan, a series of national and local events to counter extremist propaganda. The next stage will draw upon the work commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council, King's College and the Royal Society for Arts on how best to deal with radicalisation at home and abroad.

One central issue is how to balance extremist views supporting terrorism that appear on the internet and in the media. The Home Secretary is inviting the largest global technology and internet companies to work together to ensure that our best technical expertise is galvanised to counter online incitement to hatred. I also welcome the decision by the Royal Television Society and the Society of Editors to hold a conference on how to ensure accurate and balanced reporting of issues related to terrorism in the media. To ensure that charities are not exploited by extremists, a new unit in the Charity Commission will strengthen governance and accountability of charities.

A specialist unit in the Prison Service will be tasked with stopping extremists using prison networks to plot future activities. And because young people in the criminal justice system are especially vulnerable to extremist influence, we are making further funding available through the Youth Justice Board, the National Offender Management Service and the many voluntary agencies that work with young people to support young people who may be targeted for recruitment by extremist groups. Following evidence that some of those involved in promoting violent extremism have made use of outdoor activity centres and sports facilities, we are working with Sport England to provide guidance for the sector to ensure that, where possible, these facilities are not abused. Backed up by a new website to share best practice, a new board of experts will advise local authorities, local councillors and local communities on tackling radicalisation and those promoting hate.

We have had mosques in the UK for more than 100 years, serving local communities well. These communities tell me that mosques have a much wider role, beyond their core spiritual purpose, in providing services, educating young people and building cohesion, and the majority already work very hard to reject violent extremism. As the newly constituted Mosques and Imams National Advisory Body recognises, however, the governance of mosques could be strengthened to help to serve communities better and to challenge those who feed hate. Our consultations with Muslim communities emphasise the importance of the training of imams—including English language requirements—and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will be announcing an independent review to examine, with the communities, how to build the capacity of Islamic seminaries, learning from other faith communities as well as from experience overseas.

In addition to updated advice for universities on how to deal with extremism on campus, the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education will invite universities to lead a debate on how we maintain academic freedom while ensuring that extremists can never stifle debate or impose their views. We will also consult on how to support further education colleges as well as universities.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is working with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council to agree a common approach to deal with the inflammatory and extremist material that some seek to distribute through public libraries, while also of course protecting freedom of speech.

We know that young people of school age can be exposed to extremist messages. The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families will be convening a new forum of head teachers to advise on what more we can do to protect young people and to build bridges across communities. To ensure that young people have the opportunity to learn about diversity and faith in modern Britain, we will work in partnership with religious education teachers to promote the national framework for teaching religious education in schools, including making sure that children learn about all faiths. An advisory group will work with local communities to support the citizenship education classes run by mosque schools in Bradford and elsewhere. I can announce that one essential part of this will be to twin schools of different faiths through our £2 million school linking programme, supported by the school linking network.

I am also announcing today a youth panel to advise the Government, learning from youth projects in different parts of the country which all enable young people to debate and discuss issues of concern, as does the work of the Youth Parliament, which has been running debates.

We are sponsoring and encouraging a series of national and local mentoring programmes for young people, including a business in the community Muslim mentoring programme, new leadership training, and local youth leadership schemes in Blackburn, Waltham Forest, Leeds, and in partnership with Tottenham in Haringey. After discussion with Muslim women, a new advisory group has been set up by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which will advise on the access of women to mosques and their management committees.

It is by seeking to build on shared interests and shared values that we will isolate extremists and foster understanding across faiths. Following the recent remarkable letter by 138 Muslim scholars from a diversity of traditions within Islam, which paid tribute to the common roots of Islam, Christianity and Judaism and called for deeper dialogue, we stand ready to support new facilities for multi-faith scholarship in Britain. A Green Paper will be published to encourage inter-faith groups to come together in every constituency of the country. I am also inviting the Higher Education Funding Council to investigate the idea of setting up in Britain a European centre of excellence for Islamic studies.

We will have joint work with the French and German Governments on building an appreciation of the Islamic and Muslim heritage across Britain and Europe. Arts Council England, the Tate gallery, the Victoria and Albert museum and the British Library will all be taking forward projects to promote greater understanding. And, just as the British Council is connecting young people across the world through school twinning and volunteering exchanges, I am announcing that we will finance a rising number of young people from all faith communities to volunteer overseas.

In May 2008 Paul Goodman asked for an update on one aspect of the statement:

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government pursuant to the statement of the Prime Minister of 14 November 2007, *Official Report*, columns 667-72, on national security, when she expects the new board of experts to advise local authorities, councillors and local communities on tackling radicalisation and those promoting hate announced by the Prime Minister to be set up; who she expects to be members of the board; what she expects the cost of the board to be; and if she will make a statement. [168399]

Mr. McNulty: I have been asked to reply.

We are working with the Improvement and Development Agency to develop a network of qualified peer mentors to provide advice to local authorities on work to prevent violent extremism. Peer mentors are made up of locally elected councillors, local council officials and voluntary sector representatives who will be available to work with local authorities to develop their approaches to preventing violent extremism. The approach is currently being piloted, with a view to rolling out the programme further shortly. To date 25 new peers have been accredited. The costs of accreditation and training totalled approximately £35,000 in 2007-08.¹⁹

7 Muslim Women's Advisory Group, launched January 2008

On 31 January 2008 the Prime Minister launched the new Muslim Women's Advisory Group:

The Prime Minister formally launched The National Muslim Women's Advisory group today, at an Eid reception at 10 Downing Street.

The NMWAG comprises a group of 19 women who are in positions of leadership or are working with the communities. They will act as role models and represent the views and concerns of grass roots Muslim women.

The group includes Siddika Ahmed, a Director of PeaceMaker in Oldham, a group that initially created small volunteer-led community initiatives, and Fareena Alam, an award winning journalist and the Editor of Q-News Magazine.

Mr Brown, who was joined by Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Hazel Blears, said:

"Muslim women have a huge role to play in helping us build a stronger, better society. That is why I am delighted today to mark the official launch of the National Muslim Women's Advisory Group. From a range of different communities and traditions, and with careers including business, journalism, academia and public service, the group represents an extraordinary richness of experience and understanding.

"They will be role models, showing the breadth of Muslim women's achievements, and ambassadors for the grass roots, speaking direct to the heart of Government on vital issues such as education and employment. I wish them every success in this important work."

Other key activities of the group will include empowering Muslim women to engage more with the media on a wide range of issues and mapping out the work that is currently taking place across the country and then drawing up specific action plans for each region to make sure all areas of the country are represented.²⁰

8 Tackling Extremism in Further and Higher Education

In November 2006 the Minister for Higher Education published guidance to help Higher Education Providers tackle violent extremism.²¹ This followed the production of general guidance, *Promoting Good Campus Relations: dealing with hate crimes and intolerance*, which was published the previous year. The press notice stated that the guidance:

¹⁹ HC Deb 22 May 2008 c442W

²⁰ 10 Downing Street, *PM launches Muslim Women's Advisory Group*, 31 January 2008, <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page14454.asp> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

²¹ See also Standard Note, SN/SP/4271, *Provision of English Language Courses for Speakers of Other Languages*.

...emphasizes the need for universities, the Government, students, the police and local communities to work together to ensure the safety and the welfare of all students on campus, of all backgrounds. The guidance also recognises the important role that universities play in providing opportunities for vigorous debate, discussion and intellectual inquiry.

This guidance builds on "Promoting good campus relations: dealing with hate crimes and intolerance" - the general guidance that Universities UK with Government support circulated last year. Included within it are definitions of violent extremism in the name of Islam and scenarios based on real life examples of how violent extremism in the name of Islam may occur on campuses. For example, the guidance suggests issues to consider if staff suspect the circulation of violent extremist literature on campus or if they are concerned about extremist speakers or groups visiting the campus. It also offers advice on how to deal with bullying and harassment of students by extremist groups.

The guidance will also:

clarify the legal position following updates to legislation that have taken place in 2006 and points out Universities responsibilities within the law;

seek to sensitise staff to the issues and encourage them to think about how Higher Education communities can become more vigilant and work with staff and students to take preventative action to tackle violent extremism in the name of Islam on their campuses;

Make clear that tackling violent extremism in the name of Islam within HE institutions is a joint responsibility between Government, institutions, students and local communities.

Be clear in its distinction between individuals who promote violent extremism in the name of Islam and the faith they might claim to be associated with or represent.

This guidance follows a series of meetings between Bill Rammell, Muslim students and university staff over the last 18 months which have illustrated the need for further support in this area. Similar meetings will continue to maintain an ongoing dialogue with Muslim students and local Muslim faith leaders to offer clear messages that we are all taking these issues seriously, that we're engaging on them and that we will challenge any sympathy for extremist distortions of Islam.²²

In February 2008 the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills published a consultation on the role for further education colleges in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism. A press notice released on 11 February 2008 explained:

Colleges to play a greater role in promoting community cohesion and preventing extremism

Colleges have a responsibility to foster our shared values and protect their students and staff from those who wish to intimidate and promote violence, Bill Rammell, Minister for Further and Higher Education announced today.

²² Department for Education and Skills, Press Notice, *New Guidance for Higher Education Providers to help tackle violent extremism in the name of Islam on campuses*, 17 November 2006, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2006_0170 (last viewed 23 June 2008)

The proposals are part of a consultation, published today, on the role of Further Education (FE) colleges in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism. The FE consultation mirrors the updated guidance issued to Higher Education institutions last month.

The Government's assessment is that the biggest current threat the UK faces is from Al Qa'ida-influenced terrorism. Our judgment is that the threat in FE Colleges is serious but not widespread. Government has been working with the Association of Colleges to develop the consultation which will lead to the first guidance to colleges on tackling extremism and promoting community cohesion.

The Further Education sector faces its own unique issues and challenges in fostering community cohesion, promoting our shared values and tackling violent extremism. FE intuitions are often at the heart of local communities and serve students diverse in terms of age and background.

This is the first time Government has made proposals on these issues and wishes to work closely with the FE sector in considering how best colleges can be supported to work towards a common understanding of their role.

Bill Rammell, Minister for Further and Higher Education, said:

"Our shared values which bind communities together belong to everyone in Britain; they are not possessed by any one race, creed or nationality. The Further Education sector's task is to foster these values in their institutions.

"Colleges have a unique role to play in fostering our shared values of openness, free debate and tolerance. Many colleges already play an important role in their communities and are ideally placed to expand their work into reinforcing shared values and protecting their students and staff from those who would seek to exploit the freedom we all benefit from in this country to promote violence or incite racial hatred."

Sue Dutton, Acting Chief Executive, Association of Colleges, said:

"Organisations such as colleges, schools and universities have a duty to their students and to society at large to promote community cohesion. These proposals contribute to continuing college efforts to take all appropriate action for fostering shared community values, including dealing with extremism in any form."

The consultation highlights five key areas, offering practical advice and issues for staff and students to consider. These are:

- * Promoting and reinforcing shared values: creating space for free and open debate; and listening to and supporting mainstream voices;
- * Breaking down segregation among different student communities: supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and engaging all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement with society;
- * Ensuring student safety and that campuses are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation;
- * Providing support to vulnerable students and offering appropriate advice, guidance and sources of support to all staff and students;

* Ensuring staff and students are aware of their roles in preventing violent extremism.²³

A Parliamentary Answer given in March 2008 provided more information on tackling violent extremism amongst student groups:

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills how his Department plans to work with key national student/learner organisations in order to raise awareness of risks including violent extremism; and if he will make a statement. [190146]

Bill Rammell: We have provided guidance to further and higher education institutions to raise their awareness of risks and to help them promote good relations and prevent extremism.

Universities and colleges need to promote and reinforce shared values and create the space for free and open debate in which all can join. It is important that institutions break down segregation among different student communities, including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue. They must also ensure student safety and institutions that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation. They need to provide support and appropriate sources of advice and guidance for students who may be at risk and they need to ensure staff and students are aware of their roles in preventing violent extremism.

In that overall context, we are working with the NUS and student faith groups to explore what further help they need to raise awareness of potential risks and to provide support for students. We will develop our plans for students/learners in the FE sector through dialogue with the National Learner Panel, the NUS and organisations that support student faith societies as part of the consultation.

In addition, we are working with the NUS and other sectoral organisations to take forward the next stage of the debate that the Prime Minister called for in November on

“how to protect and maintain academic freedom while ensuring that extremists can never stifle debate or impose their views”.²⁴

9 Cohesion and Integration

Community cohesion and preventing violent extremism are often linked. The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) website includes a ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ page on preventing violent extremism. One of the questions is:

What is the difference between community cohesion and preventing violent extremism?

Building community cohesion is about building better relationships between people of different backgrounds.

Preventing violent extremism is a targeted approach which deals with a specific threat. It builds resilience at the community level by working to counter the global terrorist ideology.

²³ Department for Universities, Innovation and Skills, Press Notice 11 February 2008, <http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=351619&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

²⁴ HC Deb 4 Mar 2008 c2430W

Violent extremism can emerge from even the most cohesive communities, but extremist messages are less likely to find support in this environment. Likewise, a community in which extremism is minimised is likely to be one where people have more confidence to build relationships with one another and so increase community cohesion.²⁵

In April 2005 the Home Affairs Select Committee published a report, *Terrorism and Community Relations*.²⁶ The Government response was published in June 2005.²⁷

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion was a fixed term advisory body, announced by former Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly, on 24 August 2006. The Commission considered how local areas can make the most of diversity while being able to respond to the tensions it may cause. The Commission published their report, *Our Shared Future*, on 14 June 2007.²⁸ This set out four principles for cohesion and integration:

The proposals we have developed bring to life four key principles that we feel underpin a new understanding of integration and cohesion:

- Firstly, the sense of **shared futures** which we believe is at the heart of our model and our recommendations – an emphasis on articulating what binds communities together rather than what differences divide them, and prioritising a shared future over divided legacies
- Secondly, an emphasis on a **new model of rights and responsibilities** that we believe will be fit for purpose in the 21st century – one that makes clear both a sense of citizenship at national and local level, and the obligations that go along with membership of a community, both for individuals or groups
- Thirdly, an ethics of hospitality – a **new emphasis on mutual respect and civility** that recognises that alongside the need to strengthen the social bonds within groups, the pace of change across the country reconfigures local communities rapidly, meaning that mutual respect is fundamental to issues of integration and cohesion
- A commitment to equality that sits alongside the need to deliver **visible social justice**, to prioritise transparency and fairness, and build trust in the institutions that arbitrate between groups.²⁹

The Government response was published in February 2008.³⁰ The first pages of the Government response include a list of Government actions on the community cohesion agenda which have taken place since the Commission published their report:

The new **Migration Impacts Forum** met for the first time in June 2007. Jointly chaired by Home Office and Communities and Local Government ministers, the Forum is

²⁵ <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7946980> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

²⁶ Home Affairs Committee, *Terrorism and Community Relations*, 6 April 2005, HC 165-I

²⁷ Government Reply to the Home Affairs Select Committee report on Terrorism and Community relations, June 2005, Cm 6593, <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm65/6593/6593.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

²⁸ See <http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

²⁹ Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, 14 June 2007, p7, http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/~media/assets/www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/our_shared_future%20pdf.ashx (last viewed 23 June 2008)

³⁰ Communities and Local Government, *Government Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, February 2008, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/681624.pdf> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

contributing to the evidence base on the impacts of migration on communities and public services and best practice on how these challenges can best be met.

The '**Governance of Britain**' **Green Paper** published in July 2007 opened a new debate about the relationship between government and the citizen aimed at enhancing the rights and responsibilities of the citizen. It reflected many of the central ideas of the Commission and suggested that a clearer definition of citizenship could give young British people as well as recent arrivals looking to become British a better sense of their British identity and the rights, responsibilities and values that accompany it. The Green Paper announced **Lord Goldsmith's Citizenship Review** which is taking forward the exploration of these ideas.

In July 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families published **Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities**. The Strategy underlined the important role positive activities have in developing community cohesion, particularly in bridging the gaps between young people from different ethnic and faith groups as well as improving relationships across different generations.

In July 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families also published guidance for schools on the **Duty to Promote Cohesion**. The guidance includes further development of the Commission's recommendations on school linking, as well as practical advice for schools considering how best to meet the new duty, which came into effect from September 2007.

Communities and Local Government's guidance on **Negotiating New Local Area Agreements**, published in September 2007, emphasises that that Local Area Agreements outcomes and performance indicators should be linked to a picture of what a 'sustainable, cohesive community' looks like for the area. Local Area Agreements will provide the framework within which Local Authorities and their partners can bring about improvements in cohesion.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan's **Review of Policing in England and Wales** published its Interim report in September 2007. The report emphasised the role that community policing has to play in building cohesive communities.

In October 2007, the Chancellor announced a new cross government **public service agreement (PSA 21)** to build cohesive, empowered and active communities.

In October 2007 Communities and Local Government launched its **Community Empowerment Action Plan**. This brings together the actions that Communities and Local Government is taking to enable more people to play an active role in the decisions that affect their communities; from participatory budgeting and measures to strengthen the role of local councillors, to the empowerment of young people and calls for action through petitions and other forms of participation.

A new **School Linking Programme** was launched in October 2007 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The programme will work with local authorities, initially in three pilot areas, to set up and run school linking projects, and will be supported by a central website providing good practice information.

As part of the initial response to the Commission in October 2007, Communities and Local Government announced a **£50m investment** over the next three years to promote community cohesion and support local authorities in preventing and managing community tensions. In December 2007 Communities and Local Government set out proposals for distributing £38.5m of this investment in the provisional **Local Government Settlement for 2008-2011**.

In December 2007 Communities and Local Government published **Guidance on Translation** for local authorities. The aim of this guidance is to spread existing good practice which ensures that translation is only provided where it is necessary and where it acts as a stepping stone to speaking English.

In December 2007, Communities and Local Government opened **consultation on an Inter Faith Strategy**. The consultation is exploring how government can best work in partnership with faith communities, faith and non faith-based organisations, inter faith organisations and wider civil society to increase levels of inter faith dialogue and social action within local communities.

In December 2007 Communities and Local Government and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills held two **Citizen's Juries** to examine how targeted provision of teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) can help build cohesion. And in January 2008 the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills published the consultation document '**Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion**', which sets out the Government's aim that ESOL funding should be more specifically targeted to foster community cohesion in our communities.

Latest data from the **2007 Citizenship Survey** published in January 2008 shows that there has been a small **increase in perceptions of cohesion** in terms of people agreeing that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, from 80 per cent in 2005 to 82 per cent now. The Survey also shows that the percentage of people feeling a strong sense of belonging to Britain is 84 per cent and the percentage feeling a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood is increasing – now reaching 75 per cent.³¹

10 Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery

In a written statement to the House of Commons on 3 June 2008, Jacqui Smith (the Home Secretary) announced the latest publications on tackling extremism:

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Jacqui Smith): Local communities working in partnership with their local authorities, police, education institutions and others, are at the heart of stopping people becoming or supporting violent extremists. Today my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the Secretary of State for Justice and I have published detailed guidance to organisations actively to assist them with their work.

This guidance is supported by activity and funding from across government, including £12.5 million to be spent to counter violent extremism and identify and support those individuals at risk across a range of key sectors, including in prisons, among youth offenders, and through community and police-led projects.

Our aim is to improve the long-term security of the United Kingdom. This work complements the action that the security agencies are taking to disrupt those who represent an imminent threat. Along with "The Prevent Strategy: Stopping People Becoming or Supporting Terrorists and Violent Extremism, a Guide for Local Partners", we are also publishing "Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery", which summarises the strategic framework and key priorities.³²

³¹ *Ibid*, pp8-9

³² HC Deb 3 Jun 2008 c54-5WS

The strategy document stated that it was intended “to explain our work to counter violent extremism for all those who are actively interested in this endeavour”. The introduction to the document stated that:

Our work to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists has made good progress so far but there is much more we need to do. We are building on the work that local communities, institutions and organisations are already taking forward. To be successful we need to undermine the extremist ideology, strengthen our institutions, support individuals who are at risk of radicalisation, help our communities resist violent extremism and address the grievances on which extremists play.³³

The document lists activities underway to support these goals, and what needs to be done to ensure success. Detailed guidance to support those working on the delivery of this agenda was also published.³⁴

On 12 June 2008 the Department for Children Schools and Families was asked the following question:

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families on what his Department will spend its share of the pledged £12.5 million to help prevent extremism in communities; over what period of time his Department’s share will be spent; which stakeholders will be consulted when deciding which community projects will be given funding from the budget; what the process will be to decide which organisations and projects will be given funding; how the effects of the funding will be assessed; and who will monitor those effects. [210288]

Kevin Brennan: The £12.5 million announced on 3 June will be divided between the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, to be spent on funding projects specifically to support institutions or individuals vulnerable to radicalisation. My Department will be working closely with Home Office and Ministry of Justice on work to support young individuals who have had contact with the criminal justice system and to feed into cross-Government work on identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals at risk of being targeted by violent extremists.³⁵

A similar question was answered by DCLG on 18 June 2008:

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on what her Department will spend its share of the pledged £12.5 million to help prevent extremism in communities; over what period of time her Department’s share will be spent; which stakeholders will be consulted when deciding which community projects will be given funding from the budget; what the process will be to decide which organisations and projects will be given funding; how the effects of the funding will be assessed; and who will monitor those effects. [210282]

Mr. Dhanda: The £12.5 million will be spent by the Home Office on funding projects specifically to support institutions or individuals vulnerable to radicalisation. I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer provided by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (Kevin Brennan) on 12 June 2008, *Official Report*, column 451W. This £12.5 million complements our funding for locally-led

³³ HM Government, *Preventing Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Delivery*, June 2008, p3

³⁴ Home Office, *Prevent Strategy*, <http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-publications/publication-search/prevent-strategy/> (last viewed 23 June 2008)

³⁵ HC Deb 12 June 2008 c451W

projects to build the resilience of local communities and tackle violent extremism, which will be £45 million over the next three years.³⁶

11 Further information

- The Government passed legislation to outlaw incitement to religious hatred in 2006. Details are available in the Library Standard Note SN/PC/3768, *The Racial and Religious Hatred Act*. Background to the legislation is contained in the Standard Note SN/PC/3189, *Religious Hatred: Attempts to legislate 2001-2005* and Research Paper 05/48, *The Racial and Religious Hatred Bill [Bill 5 2005-06]*.
- The All Party Parliamentary Committee on Anti-Semitism published a report in September 2006. In May 2008 the Government published a 'one year on' report. This is set out in the Standard Note, SN/PC/4409, *The Report of the All Party Parliamentary Committee into Anti-Semitism*.
- A separate note gives details of counter-terrorism legislation: SN/HA/4320, *Counter-Terrorist Legislation*
- House of Commons Library Standard Note, SN/HA/3210, *Terrorism and community relations: a select bibliography*
- Since 2005 a list of activities which should result in deportation of non-EEA citizens on national security grounds has included fostering hatred, by preaching or otherwise, which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK. Library Standard Note SN/HA/3879, *Deportation of foreign prisoners*, provides background information.
- Ministers of religion coming to the UK from outside the EEA are now required to have a high level of English. See the UK Border Agency (UKBA) website: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/ministersofreligion/eligibility/>. When this category is transferred to Tier 2 of the points-based immigration system in the autumn of 2008, those wishing to recruit a minister of religion from outside the EEA will need to apply to the UK Border Agency for a licence as a sponsor, and will have to meet the Resident Labour Market Test. The UKBA '[Statement of Intent](#)' for Tier 2 describes the new requirements.

11.1 House of Commons Library Contacts

For further information on matters which relate to violent extremism please contact the relevant library specialist:

- *Religion*: Lucinda Maer on x6217
- *Terrorism*: Alexander Horne on x0251
- *Immigration and community cohesion*: Arabella Thorp or Gabrielle Garton Grimwood on x6166
- *Further education*: Susan Hubble on x1478
- *Prisons and Police*: Pat Strickland on x6108

³⁶ HC Deb 18 June 2008 c947W