

## CONTEST – what is it?

The United Kingdom’s current Strategy for Countering Terrorism is known as CONTEST. The aim of CONTEST is to reduce the risk to the UK from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.

A new version of CONTEST was published in July 2011 - it deals with all forms of terrorism and continues to be based around four strands:

1. **Pursue** - The purpose of Pursue is to stop terrorist attacks by detecting, prosecuting and otherwise disrupting those who plot to carry out attacks against the UK or its interests overseas.
2. **Prevent** - is to stop people from becoming or supporting terrorism. This includes countering terrorist ideology and challenging those who promote it; supporting individuals who are especially vulnerable to becoming radicalised.
3. **Protect** - is to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack in the UK or against its interests overseas and so reduce their vulnerability. The work focuses on border security, the transport system, national infrastructure and public places.
4. **Prepare** - is to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack where that attack cannot be stopped. This includes work to end a terrorist attack, and to increase the UK's resilience and to recover from its aftermath.

In Wales, we have an all Wales CONTEST and Extremism Board, and a **regional North Wales CONTEST Board**. Our corporate director Morwena Edwards sits on this regional North Wales CONTEST board, which provides the strategic leadership for the delivery of the CONTEST strategy. The North Wales Board feeds into and responds to the Wales CONTEST Board, which then links into the UK approach.

### What does this mean for Local Authorities?

CONTEST	Obligations
Pursue	This aspect of the CONTEST requirement is pertinent to the Security and Enforcement services. It relates to Intelligence management and the pursuance of known threats and risks (both individuals and organised groups).
Prevent	In 2015 a new Act, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act placed a duty on local authorities in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This strand of CONTEST has the biggest impact on Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships. The main aspects of these requirements, are – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The requirement that officers from the LA’s to chair Channel panels –where individuals who are identified as being at risk of radicalization are discussed, and an action plan is delivered. This is in place.</li> <li>• That appropriate awareness raising/training takes place for LA staff. This is ongoing.</li> </ul> The LA’s corporate safeguarding panel takes responsibility for overseeing the awareness raising aspect
Protect	Aspects of this requirement will have an impact on LA’s; in as much as joint working will be required in relation to vulnerable public spaces, event management and threats to infrastructure etc.

	North Wales Police Counter Terrorism Security Advisers are available (contact via North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service) to assist in assessments of crowded places and any remedial measures that may be required.
Prepare	The focus of the CONTEST Board has been on the 'PREVENT' strand to date and currently, generic emergency response arrangements within Local Authorities would be used in the response to a terrorism scenario. For instance, Rest Centre management plans can be flexible to use these facilities as survivor reception centres. Additionally, generic arrangements for recovery and welfare would be led by Local Authorities in the aftermath of a terrorist emergency. Gwynedd Council generic Recovery Plan is in the process of being updated and will include a Community Impact Assessment template designed to assess the impact of an incident on the community post incident in order to measure damage and disruption to assets and the effect this has on people and businesses.

For further information on the CONTEST Strategy please visit:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest>