

Martyn's Law & Parish and Town Councils – What You Need to Know

A Quick-Read Guide from NALC and SLCC (Spring 2025)

Written ahead of Home Office Guidance being published

What Is This About?

This short guide is here to help parish and town councils understand what the new Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – also known as Martyn's Law – means for them.

- This is not legal guidance (that's coming soon).
- This is a practical starting point to raise awareness and help you build a safer community today.
- Full legal compliance won't be required until 2027 – so now's the time to prepare and plan ahead.

What Is Martyn's Law?

Martyn's Law is part of the UK's strategy to keep people safe from terrorism in public places. It was created in response to real tragedies like the Manchester Arena attack, where better planning could have saved lives.

The new law will:

- Apply to certain public premises and events.
- Introduce clear duties for how to prepare and respond to attacks.
- Be rolled out by Spring 2027 – giving everyone time to get ready.

The law is based on one idea: ***thinking ahead saves lives.***

Why Parish and Town Councils Should Care

While Martyn's Law mainly applies to larger venues, you may be affected if your council runs or hosts public events or manages buildings like village halls or community centres.

Even if you're not legally required to act yet, you can take steps now to create a strong local security culture.

Your role matters. You're at the heart of local communities and events. That's where good security starts.

Key Dates

- July 2024 – Announced in the King's Speech.
- April 2025 – Became law (got Royal Assent).
- 2025–2027 – Implementation period: statutory guidance and practical resources coming soon.
- Spring 2027 – Expected start date for legal duties.

What You Can Do Now

Here are practical steps your council can take right away:

1. Start a Security Conversation

- Talk about terrorism risks in regular meetings.
- Appoint a "Martyn's Law Lead" on your council or staff team.

2. Use Free Resources

- Sign up to ProtectUK for alerts and guidance.
- Complete the ACT Awareness e-learning (free).
- Try SCan Training to spot suspicious behaviour.

3. Review Your Venues and Events

- Do basic risk assessments for each of the places you manage (village halls, rec grounds, etc.) and/or the events you put on. The risk will be different in different places, or for different events.
- Use the risk assessment to create plans on how you might do things differently in future. E.g. Instruct user groups at community centres to keep doors locked whilst their activities are taking place. Get volunteers and stewards trained to become more aware and look out for unmanned packages.
- Add security checks to event planning checklists.

4. Work With Local Partners

- Connect with your local Police Counter Terrorism Security Advisor.
- Ask for advice on local risks and plans.

- Share information with nearby venues, pubs, sports clubs, community groups and with any first aid provision you might book.

Who Will Be Affected by the Act?

Martyn's Law applies to premises and events based on size and use: This section is confusing. I think premises and events should be separated. The act does not merge them and different conditions apply to whether an event is held indoors or outdoors. Standard Tier and Enhanced Tier only apply to premises with varying capacities. As section 6 says in the document entitled Preparing for Martyn's Law parish and town councils also have a responsibility to consider publicly accessible locations that fall outside the formal scope of the act. If this is left out parishes are going to think they do not have to do anything if their outdoor event isn't guaranteed to have 200+ people.

Martyn's Law applies to premises and events based on size and use:

Standard Tier (Basic Duties)

- Premises/events with 200+ people, public access, and controlled entry.

Enhanced Tier (More Duties)

- Premises/events with 800+ people and public access.

Your building or event must also meet other criteria (like being used for public activities – see full guidance coming soon).

Key Future Duties

From 2027, depending on your tier:

- You may need public protection procedures (evacuation plans, training, etc.).
- Larger venues/events will need additional protective measures (like planning to reduce vulnerability).
- No major building changes or costly equipment required for standard tier venues.

What's Coming Next?

- The Home Office will release official guidance for all premises and events.
- The Security Industry Authority (SIA) will become the regulator.
- The Martyn's Law Steering Group comprised of representatives from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and which has been the joint body lobbying Parliament during the Act's parliamentary journey and a sector sounding board for parish and town councils, will release templates and tools for local councils.

Final Word

Martyn's Law isn't about adding red tape — it's about helping you protect your community and be ready for the unexpected.

Starting small now makes a big difference later.

For more support, keep an eye on updates from NALC, SLCC, and your county association.

Useful Links

- [Protect UK](#)
- [ACT Awareness E-Learning](#)
- [SCaN Training](#)
- [NALC Anti-Terrorism Webpage](#)
- [Home Office Martyn's Law Guidance](#)