

SECURITY PREPAREDNESS FRAMEWORK



FOR MOSQUES AND COMMUNITY CENTRES IN THE UK

**"O you who believe, take
your precautions."**

Surah An-Nisā' (4:71)

This document is designed to be adoptable, share-able, and practical for committees, trustees, and volunteers across the UK. It is informed by structured work within the Council of European Jamaats.

CONTENTS

- The current threat landscape (2024-2027)
- Why your Centre could be vulnerable
- Core Security Principles
- Phased Roadmap for All Mosques
- How To Guides

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Preparedness is a responsibility.

This document translates that responsibility into practical action for our centres.



Mosques and community centres across the UK are increasingly exposed to a repeatable pattern of vandalism, intimidation, threats, and targeted hostility. While many centres have invested in CCTV and locks, far fewer have a clear, shared plan for how to respond in the first critical minutes of an incident and named people responsible.

This Framework provides a practical, low-cost, governance-led framework that any mosque or community centre can adopt to improve safety and preparedness. It translates a simple principle into action:

Preparedness is not about fear or closing our doors. It is responsible stewardship of our spaces, and a duty of care towards those who use them.

It is worth remembering the strongest protection for any mosque is good community relationships and trusted allies. A mosque that is known, respected and connected locally is far less likely to be targeted - and far more likely to be supported if something happens.

The framework is built around:

- Understanding the current threat landscape
- Identifying common vulnerabilities in centres
- Implementing a phased 3 / 12 / 36 month roadmap
- Providing clear “How-To” guidance for walkthrough assessments, Hold & Secure, and Lockdown procedures



If you can only do 3 things:

1

build strong local relationships and allies

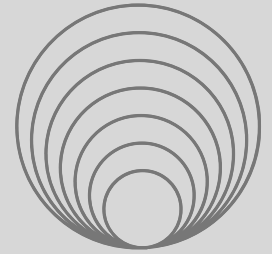
2

establish contact with local police

3

put in place simple hold & secure and lockdown plans

INTRODUCTION



In recent years, Europe and the UK have witnessed an increase in Islamophobic incidents and security threats affecting mosques and community centres.

These incidents disrupt the peace, openness, and cohesion that define our community spaces.

This framework is presented here for all mosques and community centres throughout the UK. The risks identified do not differentiate by organisation or affiliation.

Safety and security must now be treated as core governance priorities and part of our duty of care to every member of our community.

A number of existing places of worship security guidance both internationally and in the UK is available which this framework is designed to complement, including but not limited to:



<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

<https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ERG-Mosques.pdf>

<https://mcb.org.uk/mcb-mosque-safety-and-security-guidance/>

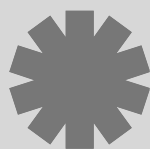
<https://www.muslimsafetynet.org.uk/legal-description.php?id=10>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/safety-and-security-church-buildings>

<https://www.cair.com/mosque-and-community-safety/>

THE CURRENT THREAT LANDSCAPE (2024 – 2027)

Many incidents go unreported. However, the pattern is clear and sustained.



A CONSISTENT PATTERN HAS EMERGED:

- Graffiti, vandalism, and arson attempts
- Abuse and intimidation at entrances
- Suspicious individuals loitering around premises
- Threats during peak prayer and event times
- Bomb threats and suspicious packages
- Online hate escalating into physical threats
- Lone unstable individuals entering centres unnoticed
- Vehicle access risks at entrances
- Media and reputational crises following incidents

WHY YOUR CENTRE COULD BE VULNERABLE

Common vulnerabilities include:

- No nominated Safety Lead
- Limited relationship with local police
- Multiple uncontrolled access points
- No awareness at entrances during busy times
- Volunteers unsure how to respond in emergencies
- Absence of clear Hold & Secure or Lockdown procedures
- CCTV blind spots and poor lighting
- No incident reporting or shared learning

CORE SECURITY PRINCIPLES

1

Preparedness is a governance responsibility

2

Simple structure is more effective than expensive equipment

3

Clarity of roles in the first 60 seconds is critical

4

Prevention and deterrence are achievable through awareness

5

Shared learning strengthens all centres

THE BEST PROTECTION: STRONG COMMUNITY RELATIONS

TO BUILD LOCAL ALLIES

Before thinking about physical security, focus on relationships.

Mosques that are visible, trusted and connected are safer.

When communities know and value the mosque, they often become its first protectors.



- Get to know neighbours and nearby businesses
- Invite local residents to open days or community events
- Build relationships with other local places of worship
- Keep councillors informed of mosque activities
- Ensure the mosque is seen as a positive local presence

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE POLICE

A pre-existing relationship makes response much faster and calmer if an incident occurs.

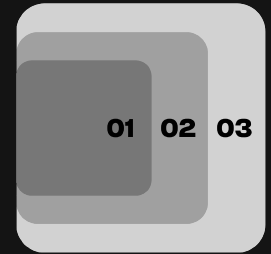
Police across the UK are generally supportive and want to help keep communities safe.

Every mosque should have a named local police contact.



- Identify your local neighbourhood policing team and named contact.
- Introduce the mosque and its leadership
- Invite an officer for a walk-through visit
- Ask for crime prevention advice
- Ensure police know prayer times and peak events
- Keep emergency contact details easily accessible

PHASED ROADMAP FOR ALL MOSQUES



01 First 3 Months: Structure, not Spend

- a. Nominate a Safety Lead and Deputy. They co-ordinate safety planning and act in an emergency.
- b. Do a 90-minute walkthrough threat assessment, ideally with the Police (see Section 6.1)
- c. Create plans and share with key volunteers:
 - a one-page Hold & Secure plan (see section 6.1)
 - a one-page Lockdown plan (see section 6.2)
- d. Basic practical steps:
 - a. Identify CCTV and lighting blind spots
 - b. Establish a simple incident log
 - c. Keep emergency contact list printed and accessible
 - d. Agree one media spokesperson
 - e. Develop a basic emergency communication tree
 - f. Complete one page security checklist (see Appendix A)



02 Within 12 months: Capability Building

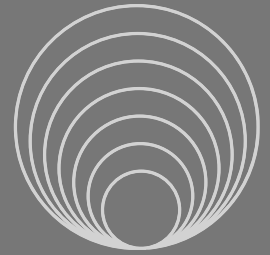
- a. Train designated Safety Officers
- b. Run simple tabletop emergency drills (what would we do if...)
- c. Maintain relationship with local police
- d. Create an incident reporting and learning system
- e. Security as a standing governance agenda item



03 Within 36 months: Governance and Culture

- a. Annual security audits and reviews
- b. Minimum standards for CCTV and access control
- c. Regular regional drills
- d. Shared learning forums

HOW TO CONDUCT A 90 MINUTE WALKTHROUGH THREAT ASSESSMENT



01

Form a Team (10 mins)

- a. One committee member
 - b. One volunteer
 - c. One person unfamiliar with the building
- Mindset: If I wanted to harm this place, how would I do it?

02

External Perimeter

(15 mins)

- a. Can anyone approach unseen?
- b. Are there dark areas?
- c. Where could someone hide?
- d. Can vehicles reach the entrance easily?
- e. Is CCTV visible as a deterrent?

03

Entrance Route

(15 mins)

- a. Would anyone challenge me entering?
- b. How many doors are unlocked?
- c. Can I access the whole building freely?

04

Main Hall During Prayer

(15 mins)

- a. If someone shouted "Lockdown", what would people do?
- b. Where would they go?
- c. Who locks doors?

05

Opportunistic Threat

Points (15 mins)

- a. Where could a bag be left unnoticed?
- b. Where could vandalism occur easily?

06

Categorise Findings

(20 mins)

- a. Perimeter
- b. Access
- c. People
- d. Process

WHAT A HOLD & SECURE PLAN LOOKS LIKE (THREAT OUTSIDE)

Trigger Word: "HOLD & SECURE"

Actions — First 60

Seconds:

1. Lock all entrances
2. Bring anyone outside inside
3. Stop people leaving
4. Safety Lead calls 999
5. Calmly keep congregation inside

Purpose: Keep everyone safely contained until the threat passes.

WHAT A LOCKDOWN PLAN LOOKS LIKE (THREAT INSIDE)

Trigger Word:

"LOCKDOWN"

Actions — First 60

Seconds:

1. Move to nearest room
2. Lock or barricade door
3. Silence phones
4. Stay out of sight
5. Safety Lead calls 999 with clear information

Purpose: Protect people by securing them away from the threat.

APPENDIX A: ONE-PAGE SECURITY CHECKLIST (IMMEDIATE USE)



Purpose: This checklist can be completed by a committee or safety lead in under 20 minutes to establish a minimum baseline.

If any boxes are unchecked, prioritise these actions within the next 30 days.

A

Roles & Contacts

1. Safety Lead nominated
2. Deputy Safety Lead nominated
3. Emergency contacts list printed and accessible (Police, Ambulance, Key holders)
4. Single media spokesperson agreed

B

Building Awareness

1. External lighting checked for dark spots
2. CCTV visible and key blind spots identified
3. All entry/exit doors reviewed for control during busy times
4. Vehicle access to entrance considered and noted

C

Plans in Place (One Page Each)

1. Hold & Secure plan written and shared with key volunteers
2. Lockdown plan written and shared with key volunteers
3. Assembly point identified (if evacuation required)

D

People & Process

1. Volunteers know who the Safety Lead is
2. Basic incident log book/file created
3. Process agreed for reporting suspicious behaviour

E

Walkthrough Threat Assessment

1. 90-minute walkthrough completed
2. Findings grouped into: Perimeter / Access / People / Process
3. Top 5 vulnerabilities listed for action

F

Police & Communication

1. Local police contact identified
2. Simple communication tree created for emergencies (e.g., call list / messaging group)