RETHINKING PREVENT: A CASE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

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Foreword

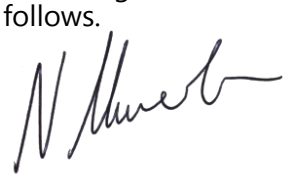
Throughout the career of the late civil rights leader Ratna Lachman, she never once deviated from the fact that Prevent needed to be independently reviewed and that in its current form it was encroaching and breaching the very civil liberties and human rights of communities that it claimed to protect. So when Ratna saw the opportunity for JUST to lead that review, she grabbed it with both hands. The JUST view is not to prove Ratna's policy position on Prevent; rather it is to provide an independent perspective that can provide a direction and the beginning of a national conversation that is rooted in protecting the liberty and human rights of all citizens. That both Prevent detractors and supporters recognise that change and review of Prevent is healthy, particularly if it brings in from the cold those communities that feel they are either excluded from the conversation, or perceived to be (as Baroness Sayeeda Warsi puts it), the Enemy Within. Whatever the perspective, all mainstream political parties have agreed at some time or another that Prevent must be reviewed.

As Chair of JUST Yorkshire I am thrilled that we have been able to realise Ratna's vision through the publication of this report. I am conscious that there are many divergent views on Prevent from all sides of the political spectrum, including from those civil society organisations that constantly claim its overwhelming success. It is sometimes claimed that charities like JUST are not interested in the success of Prevent – nothing could be further from the truth. The JUST position is that it has never claimed to be a counter-terrorism expert, it is first and foremost, and always will be a human rights charity that works to protect the civil liberties of all citizens. JUST should be seen as a credible reference point that enables and empowers dialogue to happen from grass roots up – particularly but not limited to those communities that are seldom heard. This report provides a set of evidence based recommendations that I believe will lead to a new beginning that is based on learning from the past, and moving forward together in the future.

Furthermore, the credibility of this report and the findings are strengthened by the comments made by Max Hill QC on the 19th of August 2017, who stated in an interview with The Independent that the Government should consider abolishing all anti-terror laws as they are "unnecessary" in the fight against extremists. He argues that potential extremists can be stopped with existing "general" laws that are not always being used effectively to take threats off the streets.

This unforeseen intervention by Max Hill QC provides the clearest indication that a change in philosophy is needed. This report has the potential to be a catalyst for that much needed change. Put simply, irrespective of which side of the fence the supporters or detractors sit on Prevent, one thing is certain, that terrorism on the streets of Britain is more complex than it has ever been, and as we approach the third successive year where the terrorist threat is severe we must consider an alternative that is bottom up underpinned with a covenant of trust between state and citizen.

I am delighted to endorse this report, and look forward to the much needed dialogue that follows.



Nadeem Murtuja, Chair, JUST Yorkshire

August 2017

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Any errors in this report are solely the responsibility of the respective co-authors.

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Executive Summary

I. In approaching this study, JUST Yorkshire were able to draw upon over a decade of experience of holding the state to account in the field of counter terrorism. Specifically, JUST has sought to protect civil liberties and pursue racial justice through an evidence based approach and genuine community engagement with grassroots voices. This report highlights the multiple harms caused by Prevent, which are compounded by the introduction of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The respondents for this study highlight how Muslim communities in particular experience a disproportionate and discriminatory counter terrorism focus. This report details how Prevent is having a chilling effect on several aspects of society, undermining fundamental rights for all but particularly those of Muslim minorities.

II. The Prevent strategy (and the harms it causes in communities) is sustained by a logic of Islamophobia, racism and a reliance upon a 'Good Muslim/Bad Muslim' dichotomy. This expresses itself in an undue focus on British Muslim communities as collectively suspect, whereas the threat of far-right extremism is downplayed. Moreover, attempts to instill 'British values' within institutions serve an 'othering' function which fracture social bonds between racialised minorities and their peers. 'Good Muslims' are regarded as those who are servile to government demands in the arena of counter terrorism, whereas 'Bad Muslims' are those who actively challenge Prevent, despite doing so through democratic means.

III. Prevent has significantly contributed to a climate of fear, suspicion and censorship, primarily, but not exclusively, among British Muslims. Prevent officers have actively engaged in censorship by attempting to force the cancellation of legitimate events and intimidated student bodies by requesting information about Muslim event attendees. Muslim and non-Muslim academics have noted the impact of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015) in particular in encouraging a form of self-censorship. As a result, a 'policing culture' is now noticeable, particularly within higher education institutions.

IV. Despite protestations from the government and supporters of Prevent, there are numerous examples of injustice, discrimination and human rights abuses in the implementation of the Prevent strategy. This victimisation has often targeted Muslim men, whilst instrumentalising Muslim women in the process. British Muslim activists have found themselves targeted by the state, due to their dissenting views and political campaigning. Some of the reported cases included a Black student activist being reported to Prevent, seemingly for engaging in anti-racist activism.

V. The impact of austerity and the withdrawal of youth services has had a significant impact upon young people. Access to services and youth provision is diminished, whereas interventions under the guise of counter terrorism have increased in frequency. There is a widespread belief that the political choice of austerity has led to a situation in which vulnerable young people have little recourse to social welfare or youth provisions and are now inappropriately being dealt with through a counter terrorism framework.

VI. There is a severe lack of transparency and accountability in

the implementation of the Prevent strategy. Whilst the apparent successes of Prevent are frequently reported by the government, these examples are not supported by evidence. This lack of accountability coalesces with the lack of an evidence base underpinning Prevent training delivered across the public sector, which is informed by the highly criticised 'conveyor belt' theory of radicalisation and the identification of 'signs' and 'stages' of the radicalisation process. There is little to no recourse for individuals wrongly identified as being at risk of extremism and terrorism, or any acknowledgement from the state that this constitutes harm. The ineffectiveness of Prevent is underscored by its reliance on institutionalized Islamophobia.

VII. Unequal power relations are identified, particularly in terms of British Muslims being regarded as the primary group associated with radicalisation, extremism, violent extremism and terrorism. There is recent evidence that practitioners within some institutions are interpreting their responsibilities under Prevent as a requirement to focus their attention upon Muslims. Moreover, the CTSA 2015 and the obligations it places upon public sector workers has created a climate of coercion in which non-compliance is feared. In such a climate, the scope for unnecessary referrals to Prevent and Channel are increased, and so too is the likelihood of harm.

VIII. Despite the discriminatory impact of Prevent and the long-term effects of Islamophobia, a generation of young Muslim activists has emerged to democratically challenge the government's approach to counter terrorism. This has manifested itself in the form of protests, community organising and online/offline debate. Despite dissenting British Muslims being viewed as a threat and placed under additional scrutiny, many have been politicised by their negative experiences of Prevent in order to effect progressive change. This activism has been shaped by a discourse grounded in human rights and anti-racism.

Recommendations

1. For the Prevent aspect of the government's CONTEST counter terrorism strategy to be immediately withdrawn in order to prevent further human rights abuses

2. For a full and independent inquiry into the entire government counter-terrorism strategy, to be conducted with full transparency by a non-governmental organisation, where the terms of reference are framed following consultation with charities, human rights organisations and civil liberties groups

3. For the government to release details of all projects funded through counter terrorism budgets in order to allow full and transparent public scrutiny. Specifically, this information should include all costs associated with funded projects, demographic information of those subject to the projects, details on how success was determined and any subsequent evaluations undertaken

4. For the government to reverse budget cuts to youth services and provision promoted under the austerity programme, particularly those in deprived neighbourhoods

5. For the government to cease the divisive and discriminatory practice of embedding counter terrorism aims and objectives within social policy programmes aimed at British Muslims, particularly in the area of 'integration' and through the discourse of 'British values'

6. For the government to encourage and fund a national programme of multicultural initiatives and programmes - outside of a counter terrorism framework

7. For government ministers and senior police officers with responsibility for counter terrorism to cease targeting the critics of Prevent

8. For independent academic research to examine the specific issue of self censorship among Muslim students and academics within universities, particularly following the introduction of the CTSA 2015

1. Introduction

"My view is Prevent can never create community cohesion, never. Because, you are starting from the point of view that the community is guilty by definition"[1].

1.1 Prevent is a government counter-terrorism initiative first established in 2006 with the remit of 'preventing terrorism'. Prevent refers those identified at risk to Channel, a multi-agency 'deradicalisation' programme tasked with identifying and working with individuals who are believed to be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Both Prevent and Channel have been widely criticised by human rights groups, Muslim community groups, academics, student bodies, trades unions and anti-racism campaigners[2]. This critique has highlighted the opaque and misguided concept of 'radicalisation' underpinning the Prevent strategy, the ways in which Prevent focuses primarily on Muslims and Islam as the proponents of violent and nonviolent extremism (in turn reinforcing Islamophobia and promoting prejudice), and the role of Prevent in suppressing free speech, open debate and dialogue.

1.2 The recently implemented Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015) has placed a statutory duty on schools, colleges, universities and other public-sector bodies to actively demonstrate they are tackling 'radicalisation'. The Act, which is part of a wider counter terrorism state strategy attempting to address 'non-violent extremism', has been criticised as a threat to free speech and an ultimately counter-productive development. Many of the criticisms have centred on the assertion that Muslim individuals, groups and communities will continue to be disproportionately targeted by Prevent and that moreover, it is problematic and inappropriate for public sector employees to effectively be given responsibility for counter terrorism policing duties.

1.3 In 2017, traces of the UK government's counter terrorism approach are visible in all aspects of civil society. Employees working for public sector institutions are now routinely provided with a counter terrorism training input (often of dubious quality), schools are obliged to promote 'British values' to supposedly ward off the threat of 'extremism' and public discourse, from news programmes to newspaper headlines, is saturated with concern and fear regarding the threat of terrorism. In the period building up to the recent general election, the UK experienced a number of deadly terrorist attacks in Manchester and London. These tragic events provoked a national debate regarding Prevent, the most familiar arm of the government's counter terrorism strategy.

1.4 The debate emerged following news that several of the individuals responsible had previously been reported by their communities to the

[1] Humera Khan, respondent; see Appendix 1.
[2] See e.g. http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/prevent-will-have-a-chilling-effect-on-open-debate-free-speech-and-political-dissent-10381491.html

police and authorities, only to be left unchecked to commit their atrocities[3]. Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, argued publicly that a debate was long overdue on the role of the UK's foreign policy in encouraging individuals to commit acts of violence[4]. Such a viewpoint, expressed by a leading mainstream politician, begins to deconstruct simplistic connections to Islamism and enables a wider discussion on the causes of extremism and terrorism.

1.5 The 2017 General Election manifestos of all of the major parties included radical policy positions on counter terrorism; with the Labour Party promising a review of Prevent, and the Liberal Democrats proposing to scrap Prevent altogether[5]. 2017 marked a seismic shift in public discourse concerning Prevent and there is now a widely held, and mainstream, opposition to this key element of the government's counter terrorism strategy.

1.6 This report serves as one of the few examinations of Prevent and counter terrorism following the implementation of the CTSA 2015 and is an attempt to critically engage with the key issues from a grassroots perspective. This report has engaged with young Muslim people and stakeholders from across the country, including a significant number from the Yorkshire area. This is due to the long-standing presence and expertise of JUST Yorkshire in local communities over a number of years. Furthermore, from a research perspective Yorkshire was considered to be particularly worthy of inquiry due to Leeds and Bradford being designated as national 'priority' areas for intervention from Prevent[6].

1.7 <u>Aims and Objectives</u>

In undertaking this report, JUST set out to address the following aims and objectives:

- To demonstrate how the Prevent agenda has impacted upon stakeholders locally
- To develop an evidence base to demonstrate the needs of community stakeholders and young people and how this relates to the government counter terrorism agenda.
- To understand the role of race, ethnicity and faith in the context of the Prevent agenda

3 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/05/24/security-services-missed-five-opportunities-stop-manchester/

4 https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/26/jeremy-corbyn-manchester-british-foreign-policy

5 https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/13/lib-dems-aim-to-scrap-counter-productive-prevent-strategy

6 http://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/leeds-faces-great-challenge-in-bid-to-turn-young-away-from-terror-1-7273419

- To provide a voice for young people in particular who have been targeted or impacted by the Prevent agenda

- To give a voice to a range of viewpoints relating to the Prevent agenda, including dissenting views which are often marginalised in public debate

- To examine the views of young people and stakeholders in the aftermath of the implementation of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 This report is primarily based on a thorough review of the existing academic and policy evidence on Prevent and 36 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with young people and stakeholders[7], which lasted between 20 minutes to 2 hours.

1.8.2 Key themes to emerge from the interviews form the substantive sections of this report. Within the report a number of interviewee respondents chose to be named. Others, however, chose to remain anonymous, citing the fear of publicly speaking out against Prevent, and possible reprisals for doing so. It is of note that despite approaching a number of current Prevent officers and government staff working within counter terrorism, the vast majority did not respond to our requests for interview. The report therefore reflects our assessment of the academic and policy literature and the views of the respondents that engaged with us.

[7] In total, 18 men and 18 women were interviewed. 16 of the 36 respondents were young Muslims aged between 18-25. 20 were stakeholders, and included professionals with experience of working with Prevent, academics, teachers, faith leaders, race equality practitioners and charity representatives.

2. Islamophobia, Racism and the 'Good Muslim'

2.1 Prevent has been widely criticised, almost since its inception, for disproportionately focusing on, and problematising, the British Muslim population. As far back as 2009, the JUST evidence submission to the Communities and Local Government Committee on Preventing Violent Extremism called for the withdrawal of the Prevent programme on the grounds that, "*It has led to the disproportionate criminalisation of BME and, particularly, Muslim communities*".

2.2 In response to criticisms of undue focus on the Muslim community, the 2011 Prevent Guidelines made local authority funding 'intelligence led' and 'proportionate to threat levels'. Despite this, the 25 'priority'[8] areas were still selected *based solely on* Muslim demographics; further entrenching an unsubstantiated link between Muslims generally and terrorism specifically. As Mythen et al observe, '*evidence from the Citizenship survey is used selectively as a means of underscoring the 'riskiness' of Muslims*'[9]. Attempting to conflate an increased risk of extremism within towns and cities with significant Muslim populations is fundamentally exclusionary and discriminatory.

2.3 6 years after the guidelines were issued, our report has found that British Muslims continue to experience a disproportionate focus of Prevent and counter-terrorism at every level of social interaction.

> "*We know it's based on racialised and Islamophobic logics, we know the figures, where the people who have been questioned under Prevent are disproportionately Muslims and people of colour so there's no denying that this is a racist and Islamophobic policy despite all the claims that it's for everyone and so on. So, I think it really goes hand in hand with the obviously, like the political climate, it's there as a tool to really try and deny Muslim agency and Muslim expression, that's how I see it"*[10].

2.4 At the level of implementation, this focus is a direct consequence of the 22 'indicators of radicalisation' that frontline workers are trained to look out for. These indicators are described by respondents as 'crude', conflating Islamic practice with radicalisation. The indicators, formulated using limited data compiled from research with Muslims incarcerated for violent crime, insert into the pre-crime space a direct conflation of being Muslim and the commission of violent crime. Such a conflation is perceived by many respondents as being directly contradictory to the reality on the ground.

> "*The criteria are pretty crude because they seem to conflate religious piety with extremism and*

[8] Prevent 'priority' areas receive additional counter terrorism funds and resources as they are considered to have the most significant problems with extremism

[9] Mythen, G. Walklate, S., Peatfield, E. J. (2017) Assembling and Deconstructing Radicalization in Prevent: A case of policy-based evidence making. *Critical Social Policy Vol 37 (2) 180-201: 189*

[10] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2

extremism with terrorism and the problem is that there has never been a proper definition of extremism"[11]*.*

2.5 Connecting the most banal Islamic practices, such as the adoption of the hijab, to signs of radicalisation is resulting in the increased suspicion of the entire Muslim community:

"*Young Asian man plays with fireworks and gets arrested for multiple weeks despite there being no case. Racism is plain. Making a terrorist out of someone who wasn't even a criminal*"[12].

2.6 Islam and extremism have become firmly wedded in public discourse. This has resulted in a number of discriminatory and unjust acts such as the demands that public venues refuse to provide a platform for Muslim civil society organisations and the suspicion of toddlers, under the guise of 'safeguarding'. It is telling that our respondents reported a number of prejudicial and discriminatory acts within the current climate of anti-Muslim racism in which Prevent operates. Extremism is now seen as a catch all term, that can be used at will to accuse, surveil and even arrest Muslims - simply on a whim.

"You don't have to do anything, you don't have to say anything really to be labelled an extremist. Anything, from like your silence, to your family members, people who you don't have any contact with, those are used as evidence of your extremism"[13]*.*

2.7 The failure of government to respond to, modify or even engage with research that has shown the inherent flaws in these indicators has weakened the legitimacy and effectiveness of the entire Prevent apparatus - a fact not lost on our respondent. For many, it negates any genuine intention on the part of government to tackle terrorism:

"*^[E]ven on its own terms it doesn't seem to be working in terms of spotting people who might, people who are going to go on and commit a terrorist offence - which isn't surprising since the profile of those people who have committed terrorist offences is completely different from the profile that is used in Prevent*"[14]*.*

2.8 The inclusion of far right extremism into the 2011 guidelines was weak; and belies claims from Prevent supporters that Prevent 'applies to everyone'. The feigned inclusion of the far right is all the more blatant in the guideline's description of the process of radicalization which focuses almost entirely on Muslims, going so far as to identifying Mosques as 'radicalisation locations'[15].

2.9 Our respondents repeatedly highlighted the unequal treatment of

[11] Frances Webber
[12] Female 9
[13] Female 10
[14] Frances Webber
[15] HM Government (2011) PREVENT Strategy London: TSO: 18

Muslims and non-Muslims in the implementation of Prevent:

"*He mentioned ecowarriors and he got pulled out for that, and police questioned him and asked him, "Are you linked to ISIS?" A twelve year old. That's quite extreme doing that, just for mentioning ecowarrior. He was Muslim. If he wasn't, that wouldn't have happened. Just for mentioning those two words*"[16].

2.10 Most respondents felt that claims made by proponents of Prevent that the strategy was not focused on Muslims because far fight extremists are also 'subject to referrals'[17], was misleading. For many respondents, even a cursory glance at Prevent referal figures is a stark demonstration of this misinformation:

"He goes look, 25% of referrals are far right; that's a very reasonable thing. It shows that there isn't just this over-emphasis on Muslims. Except what David Anderson[18] is being disingenuous with, is what those numbers mean because, 25% of referrals, let's take a sample of 1000 individuals, right? We did a thousand referrals. So, 25% are those are 250. There's 250 referrals. The white population of the UK is 50 million. Okay, so, that's 250 referrals out of the potential population of 50 million individuals. If say 150 referrals came out of a population of 3 million, okay...When you do 250 out of 50 million and 750 out of three million, and then do a straight ratio between the two, you find that it is 50 to one...That is discrimination by any stretch of the imagination, pure and utter discrimination"[19].

2.11 The statistical inequality also resonates with the experiences of many of the respondents in terms of how terror attacks are treated. Respondents observed that atrocities committed by people other than Muslims are treated differently, both by the media as well as security agencies.

"*A lot of children have come to me and when there has been atrocities around the world, involving non-Muslims, so they've maybe killed people for whatever reason and they say, "Oh sir, why is this not being classed as terrorism?*"[20]

2.12 Furthermore, the 'British values' narrative is increasingly used by politicians and mainstream media to underpin Prevent. What constitutes 'British values' has remained woefully undefined given that they are being used as a yardstick. Officially, 'British values' are spoken of by the government in the context of respecting 'democracy, the rule of

[16] Male 5
[17] Commander Dean Haydon, Scotland Yard
[18] Reference to statistics cited by David Anderson QC, a reviewer of the Government's counter-extremism system. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/15/one-four-extremists-reported-governments-deradicalisation-programme/
[19] Asim Qureshi
[20] Anonymous, Teacher

law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs'[21]. The concept of British values has been extensively criticised by a number of political commentators as lacking in substance, being ill informed and divisive in its implemtation[22].

2.13 Taken in conjunction with baseless indicators, this narrative of British values was regarded by our respondents as problematising anything that is considered different, especially where the individual concerned also happens to be Muslim. For many of our respondents, what they are being told by the Government is that it is not possible to be regarded as Muslim and British at the same time.

"*The British value agenda is always invoked when there is a national crisis taking place. For example..Theresa May says*, "*Look, it's all to do with values. We have particular value sets. They have a completely different value set." By 'them', she doesn't necessarily imply those minority nutcases that do these appalling, atrocious activities, but it's 'those lot'*[23].

2.14 Prevent was regarded by many of the respondents as treating the Muslim population of Britain differently to other groups in society. By entrenching Prevent into every facet of society, from schooling to health to public spaces, the government has arguably legitimised the exercise of Islamophobia in the name of British values and securitisation. Respondents described the 'othering' of British Muslims and the values they hold.

"*But British values are human values and human values are Islamic values. But saying British values is otherising it and saying if you don't subscribe to British values, any other values that are not 'British values' are not in line with our society*"[24].

2.15 There was a recognition from our respondents that the approach and implementation of Prevent has directly resulted in making the Muslim community as a whole potentially suspect, therefore leading to the embedding of institutionalised Islamophobia.

"*it has been a longer-term trend, where there is a very, sort of, racist tendency right throughout the terrorism tragedy, which is, you know, "Be vigilant of black, brown, Muslim people. Be vigilant of people of colour, generally speaking. And if they start changing their behaviour…*"[25]

[21] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published

[22] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/04/theresa-may-british-values-muslims-terror-threat

[23] Anonymous, University Lecturer 1

[24] Male 5

[25] Anonymous, University Lecturer 3

2.16 The 'them' and 'us' binary promoted through the use of British values is not just detrimental to Muslims, but to the social cohesion of wider society. Some of our respondents made the observation that far right groups such as the English Defence League and Britain First actually feed off the constantly reinforced perception that special measures such as Prevent need to monitor and intervene with Muslims, all of whom are regarded as potential terrorists.

2.17 There is the sense amongst some respondents that there exists a proactive and deliberate demonisation of the Muslim community by the government. The imposition of 'British values' and the 'us v. them' narrative is central to this as what makes a 'good Muslim' is defined by what is 'palatable'. A case referred to by the following respondent concerns that of Sara Khan, founded of 'counter extremism' group Inspire who were revealed to be funded directly by the Home Office and managed by a professional public relations company called Breakthrough Media, despite their claims of being grassroots and independent[26]:

"*The key people who started Breakthrough Media were actually from Bell Pottinger and Bell Pottinger had been given $500 million by the US to develop counter insurgency videos in Iraq...some people like Sara Khan from Inspire, for instance, has been managed by them [Breakthrough Media]. You know, managed by them quite closely to give her the media platform and probably the media skills that she otherwise would never have accessed or obtained. So, there is definitely some kind of giving access to certain voices as well as de-legitimising others*"[27].

2.18 It was observed that some 'good Muslims' deliberately demonise the collective Muslim community and are given legitimacy by the wider public as providing an insight into 'their own', whilst not being given any legitimacy by the Muslim population generally. The government-defined 'good Muslim' further alienates a population that does not see itself in the caricatures being held up as acceptable:

"*I think what Prevent has managed to do really, really well is bring to the surface a bunch of people up and down the country who have got, let's say, let's call them 'distasteful agendas' and it's done that exceptionally well. So organisations that we can call out are 'Quilliam' .. and there's a few others out there, but I think organisations like that, who make it their daily job, their bread and butter to demonise Muslims and actually call out Muslim organisations who, that are actually trying to defend grassroots*

[26] http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/feted-counter-extremism-campaigner-linked-covert-propaganda-company-746667480

[27] Anonymous, Researcher and Activist

individuals on the ground, like we are"[28].

2.19 As some of our respondents observed, such 'good Muslims' or the organisations they represent, serve only to cause further social divisions at best and speak to the far right agenda at worst. They do not resonate with the vast body of British Muslims:

"*Some foundations, that are disliked by the larger sectors of the community..take huge amounts of [Prevent] money and they have zero effect….because they are disliked by [other] organisations, they are disliked by the masjid [mosques], they are disliked by everyone in the community...You are basically digging in the wrong place*"[29].

2.20 For many respondents, to speak out about matters such as foreign policy, civil rights, and equalities is to be labelled a 'Bad Muslim' by the government and security agencies. This is highly problematic, and speaks to the deliberate curtailment of civil liberties and the legitimate right of British citizens to hold their government to account:

"*The narrative around...the whole good Muslim, bad Muslim logic and those who are resisting it are going to be categorised as suspect, as bad Muslim, and I think what's sustaining is the whole discourse, this idea of dealing with, or trying to manage a population that just won't, and rightly so, refuses, rather to assimilate to a particular way of life which is based on very western, British, white supremacist values*"[30].

"So, what we've had over the last 12, 13 years if you like, is attempts to actually marginalise certain people from the public sphere. I kind of coined the term professional Islamophobia if you like. Where in essence, what we're seeing is people being smeared, demonised with labels of extremism, or Islamists or everything else, where they're not accepted, or they're the wrong people to engage with. You know, they're barred from university, all public sphere's if you like, all the civic sphere's, all the social spheres; to the point where they're taken out of the game. The only people, that from a Muslim community perspective, the only people that are worthy of engaging are those that kind of tow a particular line"[31].

2.21 Subjection to consistent stereotypes, structural Islamophobia and the erosion of civil liberties has had a disconcerting impact on some of the younger respondents, who appear in some cases to have internalised the terrorism narrative. This is manifest in terms of self-policing and an apparent acceptance that they, as British Muslims, *should* be policed more than other British citizens. One young respondent sought to set up a student collective called the Muslim

[28] Third Sector Worker 2
[29] Shaykh Ahmed Saad al-Azhari
[30] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2
[31] Azad Ali

Union at her college, a replica of the Christian union that already existed. Constant red tape being introduced by the college administration actually resulted in the Muslim union being disbanded. Despite this, the respondent 'understood' the approach of the college:

> *"Things can't always go to plan and they, kind of, expected us [Muslim Union] to have a plan set in place months in advance, which speaker we have, which teachers are going to be supervising, you know, it's not doable, sometimes the speaker will cancel or it will be a different speaker because that one's too busy and we used to get into trouble for it because, you know, they didn't know who the speaker was or we had to provide them with an email with details of where the speaker studied, who they're associated with before we could have them in which I do understand but it just felt, kind of; I didn't feel like Christian Union had to go through all that if they wanted to have guests in or a speaker in"*[32].

2.22 Despite the internalisation of Islamophobia amongst some, there remains a strong sense of British identity among many respondents. Almost all the 18 - 25 year old Muslims interviewed spoke of a strong Muslim identity *alongside* a positive British identity, regardless of what the wider political or media narrative is:

> "*It's [Islam] a religion that allows us to lead our life in a balanced way. Like you can be, you can live in the West and following Islam, it has its struggles but because of the message that it gives us and if you try you can live, you can live in the West and sort of have a balanced life*"[33].

2.23 Along with this identity comes a legitimate demand to be treated equally, with due regard to their civil liberties:

> "*When the Prevent was connected to the Home Office and DCLG*[34]*, to Local Authorities, then it became problematic. It then bypassed what the Local Authorities should be doing anyway to safeguard their communities... Equal Opportunities and everything. But, we had the cart before the horse, we have this counter-terrorism policy, in the absence of safeguarding Muslims against discrimination. So, what happened is, that... your voice was further taken away*"[35].

2.24 One respondent spoke to the potential of Prevent being far more effective if it were to use faith and faith based ideology as central to tackling terrorism, rather than the cause for it. The case study of the *Radical Middle Way* (RMW) is one prime example of this. Founded in the wake of the 7/7 attacks on the

[32] Female, 5

[33] Female 7

[34] Department for Communities and Local Government

[35] Humera Khan

London underground, RMW describes itself as aiming to promote a mainstream, moderate understanding of Islam to which young people can relate. By working alongside grassroots partners, RMW says it "creates platforms for open debate, critical thinking and deep spiritual reflection. RMW aims to give its audiences the tools to combat exclusion and violence, and encourage positive civic action":

"*[What we were able to do was] set the agenda where Islam was not viewed as the problem, but actually a core part of any response to violence, extremism, terrorism would have to be as much theological as it was intelligence led*"[36].

[36] Abdul Rehman Malik

3. Surveillance and Censorship: The Higher Education Example

3.1 It is evident from our respondents that Prevent is contributing to structurally excluding certain groups from actively engaging in civic society and thus restricting their ability to bring about progressive change. Nowhere is this more evident than in the field of Higher Education. A wide spectrum of our respondents articulated concerns in relation to surveillance, censorship and the resultant isolation felt by many. Several of these concerns stem from their direct negative experiences of Prevent.

3.2 For instance, a student activist from the National Union of Students spoke of an encounter with a University-based Prevent officer, who demanded a list of student names associated with the Islamic Society[37]. There was no legitimate justification for this request, and taken together with other interactions with this Prevent officer, made this individual feel as though they were 'spied upon'.

3.3. Such concerns extend beyond those of Muslim students, to those of Muslim academics too. One such respondent reported feelings of an increased level of self-doubt and anxiety, particularly concerning the ways in which they are viewed by the wider public. The climate of suspicion, encouraged by Prevent, has led to a degree of self-enforced marginalisation for this individual:

> "*There have also been times when I have been concerned about the way in which people have perceived me and the kinds of things that I say. So just at a personal level, I am not…. Trusting relationships are very difficult for me, particularly amongst the wider British community*[38]*.*

3.4 Other academics, both Muslim and non-Muslim, also reported the negative impact of Prevent on University life. There is an acknowledgement from academics that Prevent is leading them to be extra vigilant about how they articulate themselves, and that this quite often translates into a form of self censorship. One British Muslim academic, specialising in the field of race, ethnicity and education, explains how the climate Prevent has facilitated impacts on his everyday work:

> *"Because the Muslims are no longer a faith community; they are a suspect community now. I think that climate… sometimes, I have to control what I write. A lot of the times I might write a sentence and end up deleting it. A lot of people go through self-censorship"*[39]*.*

3.5 Interestingly, some non-Muslim academics we spoke to also mentioned the fear associated with censorship, particularly due to writing material considered to be critical of government policy. The medium to long term impact of this will be to considerably weaken academic freedon, a concept

[37] Anonymous, NUS Officer

[38] Anonymous, University Lecturer 3

[39] Anonymous, University Lecturer 1

recognised as representing the democratic foundations of British society. When academics are engaging in acts of self-censorship, effectively withdrawing themselves from certain debates, the intellectual rigour with which government policy can be challenged, is compromised:

"I do think, like I said, there is a bit of a wariness about and I'm thinking of academic peers about, "Oh my god, can we write this," and so actively challenge it. So, there is now a questioning and with established people as well because it's really had that effect on making us having to perhaps question our work when we shouldn't even have to... it's making any forms of critique, feel illegitimate when they're completely not but that's against the climate that we're working within"[40].

3.6 Moreover, it is firmly acknowledged that Muslim students experience particular forms of exclusion stemming from what one academic describes as a 'policing culture' within University spaces:

"So, someone who might identify as being somebody who challenges actively Prevent, you've also got to self-surveil yourself as well, because there's always those dangers, your ideas interpreted. So, it's a constant policing culture that's being really ingrained and it's having a massive effect… universities are supposed to be spaces of academic freedom, critical exchange and so on. But that's really now being hollowed out through the Prevent policy"[41].

3.7 Whilst many of our respondents spoke of a climate or culture of suspicion leading to self censorship among Muslim students and academics, of greater concern is the number of actual instances of attempted censorship reported to us. There is an abundant body of evidence suggesting that Prevent officers have proactively taken steps to disrupt events organised by academics, campaigners and human rights activists, quite often leading to their cancellation[42]. These events typically featured discussions of Prevent and Islamophobia[43]:

"Prevent officers, in each locality, a lot of their time is spent policing Muslim organisations that criticise the policy. They're trying to actively disrupt them from organising events, to protest the policy. So, it's become a political containment exercise….So this huge focus on some quite small NGO's that are actually quite small and are struggling… they have support from the Muslim community but I would say that they're under huge pressure. Everybody from the Prime Minister on down has named checked these organisations, in

[40] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2

[41] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2

[42] https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2015/jun/15/university-research-terrorism-without-state-government-rightwing-interference

[43] https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/eroding-trust-20161017_0.pdf

trying to derail them and blacken their name"[44].

3.8 The reports of active attempts by Prevent officers to interfere with the organising of events should alarm all those concerned with protecting civil liberties and who are committed to encouraging free debate within the democratic norms of society. Our respondents, including many Muslim students, spoke of avoiding classroom debates on topics such as Israel and Palestine, for fear of being singled out and regarded as controversial. Other respondents spoke of Muslim students retreating from campus based activism, with the knowledge that this may also place them under greater scrutiny. Such acts of self censorship were also reported by Muslim academics, suggesting that a significant issue exists in terms of Prevent impeding the ways in which Muslim students and academics experience higher education as well as participate in civic life.

[44] Anonymous, Researcher and Activist

4. Victimisation, Power and Dissent

4.1 Across the board, respondents, Muslim and otherwise, either spoke of or alluded to the Prevent agenda as being directly responsible for the Muslim community being viewed as 'different':

"*Seeing us as... subversives, not as full citizens, with political concerns but as people who have to be contained and have to be counter surveilled and have to have counter insurgency techniques used against our population. Counter subversion techniques, which is aiming and shaming, framing and blaming our community institutions and our people*"[45].

4.2 Almost every respondent interviewed was able to recount at least one, if not multiple accounts, of individuals and families that have been the victims of the Islamophobia inherent in the Prevent apparatus. The sense of victimisation experienced ranged from feeling unable to engage in broader society in the same way as every other British citizen, to the long term impact of having been the subject of a Prevent referral:

"He [volunteer] was actually investigated by Special Branch and they actually wrote to our board and things like that. He was a very young guy and he was doing a good job. He was a really nice lad but basically he was forced to leave and then as far as I know, he really had difficulty finding jobs after because he was on the blacklist. He wanted to do youth work and things like that but when they did the checks on him, he would pop up as a risky person. That fed into my research as well and I started looking into things like how Prevent works in schools, how it works with young people, how people get onto this list and what happens once they're on this list" [46].

4.3 One respondent in particular highlights the different approach Prevent has towards Muslim women and men. The government has injected funds into programmess that claim to lift Muslim women out of stereotypically 'restrictive' situations in the name of empowernment, whilst at the same time problematising Muslim men:

"She [Hazel Blears MP[47]] very clearly said to me... "We have a very different approach between men and women. Women are being empowered to deal with what Muslim men are doing and Muslim women are being empowered and they're being strengthened and they are our allies, whereas Muslim men are being dealt with strictly by the Home Office Counter Terrorism department, policing and stop and search and control orders. That's the strategy for men and this is the strategy for women" [48].

4.4 Some respondents, particularly those engaged in activism, highlighted the importance of tackling racism and structural exclusion. It is through activism that

[45] Anonymous, Researcher and Activist

[46] Zareen Ahmed

[47] Former secretary of state for Communities and Local Government

[48] Zareen Ahmed

individuals are able to effectively challenge the long term impact of Islamophobic and racist attitudes and perceptions that are now embedded in so many aspects of British society:

"*we argued for us to be able to engage as communities, you have to be free of discrimination. You have to be recognised as a community. Also, we worked on that premise, that we are citizens, tax-payers, therefore the statutory sector needs to engage with us in a way that it engages with everybody else. As citizens living in the local areas, who have a right to live freely, basically*"[49].

4.5 Many respondents alluded to the idea that unequal power relations have been built into the Islamophobic narrative that Prevent gives rise to. These devalue the voice of even the most qualified Muslims, simply by virtue of them *being* Muslim. A prime example of this is the perception of one of our respondents who felt that no matter how qualified she becomes, as a Muslim, her voice will never be given the same legitimacy as even the most unqualified white person:

"if I was just a random white guy on Twitter expressing my...opinions, not necessarily needing any experience or anything to say anything, I feel like that is accepted. Whereas, if I say a qualified political opinion, based on experience, based on that research or whatever, people are just like, oh well, you are Muslim, of course you are going to think that. Yes, of course you don't like foreign policy"[50].

4.6 It is not just one's ascription to a particular faith, but also certain positions that strip people of the power to challenge government. This is primarily because of the statutory duty and the subsequent accountability that creates the sense that people in certain positions of employment are not able to challenge Prevent. It is notable that non-Muslim respondents in non-governmental positions of power afford them a level of security from which they can challenge authorities without the repercussions that their Muslim counterparts would face:

"*Because I'm the [position in NUS], I'm like, well listen, no-one can really say anything...I had the confidence to say, "No, fuck off." [when asked for names of every member of the Palestine society]. But if it had been any other job with any other junior position where I didn't have any power, I'd have been like, oh I don't know what to do and that's the position..[of]...nurses, doctors … whatever, they don't necessarily agree with it but they don't feel confident enough to stand up to it and say, 'No'*"[51].

4.7 Prevent is encouraging a culture whereby any challenge of the status

[49] Humera Khan

[50] Female 10

[51] Anonymous, NUS Officer

quo or of stringently defined 'British values' can be regarded as a sign of radicalisation:

"*Any critics of the policy will be branded a terrorist sympathiser*"[52].

4.8 Moreover, the climate that has been developed is one where dissent from a non-Muslim is fine, but the very same dissent from a Muslim is unacceptable. For respondents, this is experienced as deliberate criminalisation and demonisation. For example, when a Muslim speaks about, for example, foreign policy, this is more likely to be deemed radicalisation. It is precisely for this reason that some of our respondents engage in significant levels of self-censorship (see Section 3 for further details):

"*I know for a fact that if I held the political views that I hold now and was to air them in school, college or university and I was Muslim, that I would definitely, definitely, definitely be reported by now and I feel in a privileged position, I feel like I can say these things, I can, as a non-Muslim, say certain things, either in person or on Facebook, which would be a big no-no if you were a Muslim*"[53].

4.9 For many respondents, the racism inherent in Prevent bleeds across faith based affiliation. As a result, challenges of the status quo by Black and ethnic minority individuals are perceived by respondents as being subject to Prevent as a means of shutting down their voice, without safeguarding their civil rights to do so:

"In the last month, this person, this academic made a referral of a black woman - she's not a Muslim, she's a black woman - at my university to the Prevent programme because she said that this student was talking about anti-racism, that we need to fight racism, all of that kind of stuff. And that meant that this academic became apprehensive about this student, and reported it"[54].

4.10 The disempowerment is not only experienced by those who challenge Government policy generally, but perhaps more impactfully, those who find themselves being subjected to the Prevent apparatus. For respondents, this is all the more surprising in instances where the Prevent apparatus comes into play in relation to individuals that are highly educated and deeply embedded in British institutional frameworks. There is the sense that if *they* are unable to navigate the system so as to protect themselves from apparently baseless accusations, then those with less social capital will be entirely unable to do so:

"*So, one example is a doctor and her husband is also a consultant. So, these are very educated people and their child gets referred to*

[52] Anonymous, NUS Officer
[53] Anonymous, NUS officer
[54] Anonymous, Journalist

Prevent. Prevent officers come and visit them. Then they call Social Services and all of this kind of activity, it's traumatised them. They just couldn't believe, "Well, what's happened here? How has it escalated that Social Services are involved, police are involved, and all my son did is something stupid maybe, or said something maybe shouldn't have said. How has it escalated to this point?" That's part of the problem"[55].

4.11 Stripping those who are able to challenge Prevent of voice corresponds with an absence in the Prevent apparatus to build resilience. Whilst the Prevent guidelines demand staff or organisations are able to challenge extremist ideology, it is unclear what, if any, guidance is provided to build such resilience. Rather, the deliberate conflation of religion and political activism actually embeds a culture of ignorance and fear. Furthermore, it is impossible to build community resilience when community work is itself carried out within a definitively 'Prevent' lens and objective - it is both counterintuitive and embeds mistrust.

[55] Azad Ali

5 Austerity and the Impact of Cuts to Youth Services

5.1 A number of respondents made reference to the wider social policy context concerning Prevent and counter terrorism more generally. The intensification of counter terrorism work in recent years has dovetailed with drastic budget cuts to local authorities for vital services in the landscape of youth work and engagement. The prioritisation of policing and enforcement over other forms of engagement has had a significant impact on the wellbeing of young people and social cohesion generally:

> *"I think, if anything needs focusing on it is the online element - but again I think that there are programmes in schools that have nothing to do with Prevent which are to do with cyber safety and so, yes, you don't need to target a particular; the framework is all there for protecting young people. The framework was there, so what the government has been doing is demolishing brick by brick that framework of youth services and youth provisions and all of that and replacing it with this policed model which we don't need, which is divisive and dangerous and counterproductive*[56].

5.2 This respondent, like others, argues that the current social welfare system would be doing its job in identifying vulnerable individuals and providing appropriate support, if it was properly funded. This calls into question the requirement and necessity of an interventionist counter-terrorism apparatus:

> *"You strip resources from youth services, social services, from education, you've put a load of resources in this counter terrorism thing, you pick up kids who could have been picked up, or should have been picked up, would've been picked up if the resources had been there by these other, in the different context of social work by teachers whatever and where there have been successes it has been because people have needed help in getting their life together or in finding some sort of, in just getting, sometimes it is material help, sometimes it is psychological help, you don't need a counter-extremism policy for people to get that kind of help"*[57].

5.3 The austerity programme has had a significant impact on public services, ranging from the closure of public libraries and swimming pools to the wholesale abandonment of youth services. The detrimental impact of national budget cuts on young people, introduced by the Coalition government under the political guise of austerity, are well documented[58],[59]. The evidence also suggests that those living within

[56] Frances Webber

[57] Frances Webber

[58] https://www.bma.org.uk/-/media/files/pdfs/working%20for%20change/improving%20health/child%20health/cutting-away-at-our-childrens-futures-austerity-child-health-guuk-2016.pdf?la=en

[59] https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2014/07/On-line-Catalogue225322.pdf

deprived communities have been disproportionately impacted by such political decisions[60]:

"*It got to a point where BME organisations are all saying, 'go get Prevent, take from Prevent'. Well hang on; are there no other streams of funding open to BME organisations? I know from speaking to lots of different charities, little ones, on the ground, struggling charities, struggling small organisations, that they felt that they were being pushed towards Prevent whether they wanted to take that money or not. And a lot of them did actually have to compromise, do they keep the organisation running, do they take the money or don't they?*"[61].

5.4 The impact of austerity also has, for some, a tangibly gendered impact in respect of Prevent:

"The austerity cuts from the government, the Conservative government, have not helped matters at all, because on the one hand, the Prevent pressures on schools and all these sorts of things, they've remained whilst cutting things like the youth service and funding to community projects and things like that. Now more than ever I think we need a youth service with good youth workers that can talk to young people, talk to men in particular and help them and empower them and guide them in the same way that many women's organisations got funding from DCLG, as Hazel Blears said. I saw the proposals for all the funding and they were all for women's organisations. They weren't targeting men[62]".

5.5 This is not to say, however, that Muslim women's groups funded by the government have not encountered problems. A recent study has demonstrated that Muslim women's groups who adopted more critical stances towards government positions in the arena of counter terrorism were often overlooked or marginalised, whilst those that attempted to 'toe the line' found themselves treated more favourably[63]. One of our respondents, who has worked within Prevent programmes funded by the government, directly relates the austerity agenda and counter terrorism by suggesting that youth work has a vital role to play in tackling radicalisation:

"Well, if you look at austerity. Austerity has eroded away traditional youth work. I'd argue that a greater investment into youth work services would reduce the potential of radicalisation"[64].

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60 https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Summary-Final.pdf

61 Third Sector Worker 2

62 Zareen Ahmed

63 Rashid, Naaz. 2016. Veiled threats: Representing the Muslim woman in public policy discourses, Bristol: Policy Press

64 M. Ali Amla

5.6 Views such as this, expressed by a frontline professional working within the counter terrorism apparatus, call into question the unintended consequences of political decisions framed within the discourse of austerity. Relatedly, there have been recent calls to acknowledge that tackling inequality, and fostering social cohesion, may play a role in preventing extremism[65]. Such an approach would place an emphasis upon social and economic investment in communities, with youth work and services at the heart.

5.7 Other respondents have observed that austerity and cuts to youth services have occurred alongside an over-emphasis on seeking to collaborate with faith-based organisations. This is yet another manifestation of the government's view that religiosity is a key factor in extremism:

> "*You need to get loads of social workers and youth workers that are really getting out there. Some of whom are out there already, but that's the kind of approach that needs to be taken, not on a faith basis. Prevent appears to be taking things down the route of faith, and it's not like that. Anybody's susceptible to it*"[66].

5.8 There is, in fact, much evidence dismissing the premise that religious practice is a key factor in extremism[67]. The government's ongoing commitment to austerity and failure to invest in young people are missed opportunities to make a tangible positive impact. It is a poor indictment of the strongly policing centric model of engagement that favours surveillance and enforcement over genuine attempts at community engagement.

[65] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/06/uk-extremism-manchester-london-attacks-inequality

[66] Female 9

[67] https://www.tmimag.com/articles/absurdities-counter-extremism/

6. Accountability and Effectiveness

6.1 Prevent is shrouded in secrecy at all levels, from the guidance and training given, the grounds upon which referrals are made, the success indicators, if any, and the statistical data associated with it. Often any data that does enter the public domain has only been made available upon Freedom of Information requests, although many of these requests are rejected on the grounds of national security. The reluctance to make data available places numerous obstacles in the way of public scrutiny of the entire Prevent apparatus.

6.2 Notwithstanding the difficulty in accessing data from the relevant agencies, studies as far ranging as those by the Institute of Race Relations to the United Nations have repeatedly spoken of Prevent not being fit for purpose. These findings are consistent with the perceptions and experiences our respondents have with Prevent:

> *"I don't know whether reports are published on the success of Prevent and the benefits of it or anything like that. But as a society, I just haven't seen anything positive, and as a member of society I've never seen anything positive come out of it"*[68].

6.3 With no formal accountability frameworks there is little scope for checks and balances in the implementation of Prevent:

> *"There is no reporting back, there is no accountability, there is no kind of, we don't know what happens, we're not told, there is no obligation of the Home Office counter extremism unit, or counter terrorism unit, to report to Parliament to say that in this year you know, we did this with this number of people or anything like that, or what the effects were"* [69].

6.4 This accountability vacuum is problematic given the continued absence of any agreed upon definition of extremism. The usage of the term extremism has come to be perceived, and indeed experienced, as a political tool. The application of extremism seems to reflect changes in government policies and allies rather than holding its own:

> *"[It's] the government that says who the extremists are and who aren't the extremists, and it's when they say they are or when they aren't and it's according to the interests of the state. So, yesterday's extremist could become tomorrow's allies and vice versa, which we've seen time and again in the history of our foreign policy. One minute we're… Gaddafi is the biggest problem, then he's our ally then he's a problem again. The Mujahideen were once our friends, then they became our enemies. There's no, sort of, objective systematic definition of extremism and there never will, it's always a political label that's dictated by the interests of the governing class. I don't see that will ever change"*[70].

[68] Male 5

[69] Frances Webber

[70] Anonymous, Researcher and Activist

6.5 In a context where there is no actual agreed upon definition to the standard being applied, and where there is no apparent accountability, the knowledge of those who are implementing a policy becomes all the more significant. A number of respondents describe the training given to frontline workers that are subject to the Prevent duty as being highly problematic, and devoid of any real substance. This training is often limited in time and very Muslim-centric in content:

> *"I remember speaking to someone, three years ago, who attended a WRAP[71] session, who said, "The only thing I learned was that I need to watch out for somebody overly saying 'Salam' in the playground." Really?..., I felt so frustrated on the simplified narrative some trainers were delivering. It allowed people to focus and look upon Islam and Muslims as a potential threat. That for me is where Government is really missing a trick"[72].*

6.6 As a consequence, frontline workers are often left to apply Prevent on the basis of their own views, however ill-informed. This lack of knowledge combined with structurally embedded Islamophobia results in the potential for discrimination against almost any expression of Muslim identity:

> "*I think they don't even have a clue what the success indicators are, because, first of all, we've got a Government that fails to even give us a definition of extremism. It's incredibly subjective...people who are implementing it in universities, teachers, lecturers, students in fact, don't really have a clue about… what's defined as extremist behaviour. I mean it ranges from graffiti, to, I don't know, suddenly wearing the veil; and I mean these are really ridiculous indicators...so, what it's doing is making almost any behaviour, just by being Muslim, you are a suspected extremist...So, I guess success could be measured by how many Muslims can we take in the net of this but that for me, isn't success, that's a massive epic failure*"[73].

6.7 There is a reluctance, on the part of government, to engage with evidence that challenges the existing Prevent narrative as well as the linkages between Islamic practice and radicalisation. This suggests a focus on maintaining the status quo, and speaks to a greater commitment, on the part of government, to remain focused on an easily identifiable section of the population rather than actually tackling the causes of radicalisation:

> "*Forget the evidence. This is about ideology. And I just know." And this is where the Islamophobia comes in, the clash of civilisations comes in, Orientalism comes in. "I just know*

[71] Workshop to raise awareness of Prevent. This respondent stated that WRAP training had subsequently improved.

[72] M. Ali Amla

[73] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2

that Muslims are terrorists because this is what I have known. This is their history. So I don't care about what the evidence says to me, I just know it, that they are"[74].

6.8 Claims such as those recently made by Commander Dean Haydon, one of the most senior police officers in Scotland Yard, who said "*I have seen the work of Prevent….it's a fantastic tool and it's here to stay*"[75] have no discernable grounding in evidence. Moreover, such claims are rarely challenged in the public domain in an informed manner as little air space, or indeed intellectual freedom (as discussed earlier in Section 3) is given to those who would be able to do so.

6.9 The deliberate and consistent reluctance to open up Prevent to public scrutiny also enables the proponents of Prevent to dismiss any critique. The assertion by Cdr. Haydon, Senior police officer at Scotland Yard, that "[T]hey [critics of Prevent] don't understand properly how Prevent works", is one such example[76].

6.10 Such sweeping statements from people in authority belie the lived experience of large groups of the population and delegitimise those involved in holding government and government agencies to account. This effective silencing is further compounded by the perceptions that widespread surveillance gives rise to the misinterpretation of words and/or actions (see Section 3 for further details).

6.11 The recent terror attacks in Manchester and London have cast a spotlight on the failures of the entire counter-terrorism apparatus, as well as the inherent hypocrisy of those who push the false narrative of 'Muslims need to do more':

"*How effective is Prevent if terrorist incidences are on the rise? This question is being asked by teachers, activists as well as young Muslims*"[77].

6.12 The perpetrators of the Manchester attack, Salman Abedi, was known to British security services for 5 years before the attack; having been reported by a community worker, religious leader and family members. Despite this the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester said he was not known to the Prevent programme. The leader of the London attacks, Khurram Butt as well as one of his accomplices Youssef Zaghba had both been reported to the police. The New York Times reported that Khurram Butt was subject to the Prevent programme[78]. Despite the demonstrable failure of security

[74] Anonymous, Journalist
[75] Asian Network, Cdr Haydon, Thursday 8th Aug 2017
[76] Asian Network, Cdr Haydon, Thursday 8th Aug 2017

[77] Female 6
[78] https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/world/europe/london-attack-uk.html?mcubz=0

services to follow through on complaints, it was British Muslims that were subjected, yet again, to calls of "Muslims need to do more". The irony of this was not lost on some of our respondents:

"*I've been reading in the media lots of well-known people have been saying the Muslim community needs to do more and should do more, but my question is: what do they want the Muslim community to do? For me, that's the question, because this young man was known to MI5, MI6 or whoever, and yet they couldn't prevent this action. So how do other people – non-Muslims – expect Muslims to try and deal with these people?*"[79]

6.13 For many of the respondents it is the exclusionary culture being cultivated in Britain, and the institutionalisation of Islamophobia that Prevent gives rise to, that are the actual cause of extremism, and *not* faith based belief. There can be no greater condemnation of the effectiveness of Prevent than its own role in the fuelling of radicalisation:

"It's breading the radicalisation that it's trying to get rid of, that's what it's doing"[80].

6.14 Some of our respondents posit the notion that it is not Prevent, rather the existing criminal justice system that should be utilised to tackle the challenges posed by terrorism related crimes. They suggest that the creation of an entire gambit of legislation and institutional frameworks is actually counterproductive, elevating criminals to martyrs and making collateral damage out of an entire religious group. This is all the more significant given the observation that what unites those who commit terrorist offences, Muslims and otherwise, is a tendency towards criminality rather than faith or ideology:

"These are not religiously pious conservative Muslims. They usually, are petty criminals with a criminal record for drugs, possibly violence, and it is quite obvious that... the profile is completely wrong. It doesn't accord with reality[81].

6.15 In apparent contradiction, some of the younger respondents expressed a desire for crimes by far-right groups to also be referred to as terrorism in a bid for Muslims and non-Muslims to be treated equally. However, many activist respondents argued that in their struggle for the Muslim population to be given equal treatment they do not mean reducing civil liberties for others, rather raising the standards and respecting all groups:

"*Prevent is a policy that in essence is counter-productive. We do not believe in this policy to be used against far-right extremism either because, it would do the same to the*

[79] Anonymous, Teacher
[80] Female 9
[81] Frances Webber

white working-class people, as it is doing to the Muslim community. It will stigmatise young people, children in particular. You know, children do and say a lot of things. The interventions that need to happen are already in place under the safeguarding kind of policies"[82].

6.16 Respondents draw attention to the legitimacy, and indeed effectiveness, that the criminal justice system can provide to any state enforced counter-terror action. The checks and balances of the criminal custice system seem, to some respondents, as an effective way of tackling terrorism related crime whilst still protecting civil liberties:

"*You need to focus in on criminal justice approaches, because they are much more effective, because what you are doing there is you are focusing in on evidence. Counter-terrorism today is devoid of evidence. It's ideological...What criminal justice does is it says, "What's the evidence? And is it strong evidence?' Counter-terrorism Prevent says, "They have changed their hairstyle a little bit. They have changed their dress code a little bit. Does that indicate that in ten years' time they might become a terrorist?" So it's guesswork*"[83].

[82] Azad Ali

[83] Anonymous, University Lecturer 3

7. Power Relations and the Coercion of Prevent

7.1 Several respondents spoke of the uncritical manner in which frontline professionals, such as teachers and doctors, were approaching Prevent, particularly following the introduction of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This Act places a duty on public sector professionals to take an active role in preventing extremism, and is highlighted as particularly problematic in promoting an overly zealous approach in identifying suspicious individuals and behaviour.

7.2 Of greater concern are the practitioners and institutions directly engaging in racial profiling through an Islamophobic lens. This racial profiling can occur through deliberate prejudice or a misunderstanding of roles and responsibilities in terms of counter terrorism; as one of our respondents a race equality professional, recalls:

> *"Whilst Prevent is meant to be addressing all forms of extremism...there was one school that I contacted recently and then they said, 'oh we don't really have any Muslim students, even though they should be aware of the Prevent duty'"*[84].

7.3 This confirms findings from a recent academic study, which in examining Prevent and its implementation within schools, found that extremism was primarily understood as a 'Muslim' issue. The authors comment that "*[T]his clear disparity reveals the blatant and specific focus on the governing, regulating and spying on almost exclusively Muslim children"*[85]. This study also confirms respondent' observations, detailed in Section 6, of a demonstrable lack of knowledge among teachers of basic cultural and diversity issues. This, in turn, raises significant questions about their roles in policing their students for 'signs' of radicalisation or extremism.

7.4 With all the inherent flaws of Prevent already identified, the impact of making it a duty is that discrimination becomes entrenched as professionals simply tick the boxes. One of our respondents addresses this area by suggesting that teachers may choose to overlook the injustice and prejudice associated with Prevent simply to ensure that they are complying with the law:

> *"The whole mass space of Prevent is going to continue, whether you like it or not, and actually, your ordinary teacher, for example... they might not even want to understand why it impacts inevitably in communities, because, actually, their bit of world, is we've got officers coming in, they are going to ask us have we done our Prevent training and can we get our tick on that?"*[86]

[84] Anonymous, Race Equality Professional

[85] Sian, Katy P (2015) 'Spies, Surveillance and Stakeouts: Monitoring Muslim Moves in British State Schools', Race, Ethnicity and Education 18, no. 2: 183-201

[86] Anonymous, Race Equality Professional

7.5 The above quote provides an insight into the coercive effects of Prevent, which many may see as simply a tickbox exercise but which, for racialized minorities and Muslims in particular, has very real, serious and deleterious consequences. Some respondents find that even where there was an apparent willingness on the part of public sector agencies to ensure an equitable, non-discriminatory application of Prevent, this will dissipates in the face of legal duties:

> *"When it had the force of the law behind it, then they went into their little boxes and said. 'Right, okay.' You know, 'we appreciate that there are all these problems with it, but we have got a legal duty..."*[87].

7.6 There has been concern from a number of quarters that institutions such as universities, in rushing to comply with the Prevent Duty, are overlooking other responsibilities, particularly in terms of equality and human rights. In addressing this, the Equality and Human Rights Commission released a short guide for universities in early 2017[88] titled *Delivering the Prevent duty in a fair and proportionate way.*

7.7 Whilst this guide contains useful advice for higher education institutions, its very recent introduction, and relatively low profile in comparison to the Prevent Duty, indicates that increasing the awareness of legal responsibilities related to equality and diversity is not a government priority in terms of the counter terrorism landscape. Such a scenario can be seen to further contribute to an environment where Muslim individuals, groups and communities are regarded as a collective 'suspect community'[89] and wrongly ascribed, among practitioners and frontline professionals, as the sole or primary focus of counter terrorism efforts.

[87] Anonymous, Academic

[88] https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/delivering-the-prevent-duty.pdf

[89] Pantazis, Christina, and Simon Pemberton. 2009. "From the 'Old' to the 'New' Suspect Community: Examining the Impacts of Recent UK Counter-Terrorist Legislation." *British Journal of Criminology* 49 (5): 646–666

8. Solidarity, Resilience and Resistance

8.1 Whilst many of our respondents reported negative experiences associated with Prevent, a prominent theme emerged in terms of the effects it had in politicising individuals and leading, in some cases, to highly informed activism:

"*It's institutionalised a lot of marginalisation, a lot of demonisation of the community. It's made a lot of confident people become people who now have to bury their head in the sand. At the same time, it's empowered a lot more people. There are people now who, just to use an example, the only thing they knew about life was handbags and shoes, are now actually writing very in-depth and articulate political blogs, and do speeches challenging a lot of things*"[90].

8.2 Whilst for some individuals Prevent led them to becoming withdrawn, paranoid and distrustful, for others it proved to be a spark for taking an increased interest in civil liberties and civil society through protest, activism and organising. A number of our respondents recognised the resilience of, particularly young, Muslims who continue to make space for themselves and thrive in often hostile environments:

"I mean there have been some positive impacts as well because when pressure is put on a certain segment of society, especially young people will respond, stand up and it's empowering. So when you put young people under pressure, it's like with the election, there you go. How did young people respond when they were told that they don't count really? They said, "Right, we'll show you". They all responded. In a way, the same thing has happened in the Muslim community. The more negativity they've had, the more they will empower themselves. They will organise some things like the digital technology that, of late, has impacted young people in particular, it has been incredible"[91].

8.3 Many young Muslims have proactively and creatively responded to much of the negativity associated with them by bringing out the very best in themselves and those around them. One respondent highlights the central role that many young Muslims now play in the charity sector, and of how this is a crucial aspect of shaping identities:

"One of the biggest things, areas where I've seen an impact of this is in the charity sector because young Muslims, most of them, don't go out drinking and that sort of thing. They don't socialise in that way but a lot of young Muslims that I know, they socialise through organising charity events. ...This is very recent that Muslims are creating their own identity and their own place in society. I think it has a really good... it's exemplary to other young ... There are a lot of young people helping the homeless and doing charity work in this country, not just

[90] Azad Ali

[91] Zareen Ahmed

abroad. I think there have been many positive impacts"[92].

8.4 The divisive climate has been staunchly rejected by some, as communities, groups and individuals have come together to challenge certain narratives. Many of our respondents felt supported and defended by non-Muslims who sought to mitigate the impact of Prevent in various ways - such as political or online activism[93], vocal support and even principled stands that have resulted in the loss of a career:

"*I have a friend who's just given up a teaching position because of what the curriculum is and and alongside because of what they what they wanted to teach these kids she didn't feel like it was ethically right and one of those things being it wasn't exactly like Prevent but it was to some extent... she's non-Muslim and she did not agree with it at all*"[94].

8.5 There is recognition and respect for the support shown to Muslim communities by groups such as the National Union of Students, the National Union of Teachers and the Universities and Colleges Union, all of whom have released statements or passed motions at conferences condemning Prevent. Such resistance, from a wide variety of individuals, groups and organisations, has often been overlooked in popular and political discourse. Instead of taking such stands seriously, critics of Prevent are often dismissed as 'Islamists' or as aspects of the 'far left'. The evidence however suggests that this is far from the reality, with representatives of the United Nations, the civil liberties group Liberty and a whole host of other human rights organisations, all offering critique of the government's counter terrorism strategy and approach.

8.6 Despite many young Muslims resisting Prevent through engagement with democratic processes and local community organising, our respondents do share a number of deleterious effects of constantly being demonised and seen through the prism of extremism, terrorism and radicalisation. These include significant impacts to a sense of identity, belonging and citizenship. This impact is likely to become all the more problematic in a context where nursery school age children are subjected to the Prevent apparatus:

"But, I'd certainly worry about how it's affecting, as well, young people's confidence in their own sense of self. I mean, from that research I was telling you earlier when we were in schools. Five year olds, you know, being subjected to that and probably not aware whatsoever but it's still in the long run, probably going to have unintended or subconscious effects

[92] Zareen Ahmed
[93] Male 6
[94] Female 1

on them. They're being monitored in such a way and I just think that must really affect young Muslims"[95].

8.7 The following quote, from a race relations campaigner and former barrister, highlights the case of a schoolboy who was asked if he was a supporter of radicalism and terrorism after innocently using a legitimate word in the classroom:

"It completely shook his trust in that school. It was so out of the blue, so his whole relationship with that school was profoundly and, I think permanently, damaged. His own self confidence took a beating; although because his mother supported him with tremendous tenacity and then because of the support that he got from other quarters by publicizing the case, in fact he's, he's sort of regained his self confidence because he's, he spoke very articulately about what had happened to him"[96].

8.8 In discussing resistance to the government's counter terrorism strategy, reference was made to the healthcare sector and specifically the doctor/patient relationship. Arguably, less is known about the implementation of Prevent in the healthcare sector as compared to schools and universities, but the existing evidence points to disturbing cases of anti-Muslim discrimination, racism and breaches of doctor patient confidentiality[97]. One respondent discusses how Prevent places additional pressure on practitioners already suffering from the significant budget cuts implemented through the austerity agenda and alludes to the risks they take in speaking out:

"So, this kind of push by the government to make it a public duty has backfired really spectacularly on them. I think the resistance against it has become obvious from those professionals that are involved. The doctors, they really feel that they are letting their patients down because that patient doctor relationship is breaking down. You know, they're already under stress with their cuts and everything else, now on top of that they have to deal with that as well"[98].

8.9 Critique of Prevent is often dismissed, particularly in the right wing press, but increasingly too by politicians and political commentators, as the work of 'Islamists' or 'Islamist sympathisers'. Such criticisms ignore the opposition and resistance to Prevent from a cross section of society, often from individuals committed to the values of human rights and social justice. Some of our respondents highlighted the ways in which resistance to Prevent can be characterised as risky and dangerous, due to the reputational

[95] Anonymous, University Lecturer 2
[96] Frances Webber
[97] https://www.lrb.co.uk/v39/n10/karma-nabulsi/dont-go-to-the-doctor
[98] Azad Ali

damage suffered by those who publicly speak out as critics of government policy:

"We don't rise up and say, "Yes, we need to take a stand, we need to fight against oppressive counter-terrorism policies," and whatever. Actually no, it's often the opposite. I've had volunteers working for CAGE, whose parents have been on the phone to me saying, "Please, we don't want our son or our daughter to be involved in this type of work because they'll become a target then." It's not because they don't believe in the work, that's crucial. They believe in the work, they just don't want their child to be targeted"[99].

8.10 The following quote usefully summarises this section and illuminates the need for resisting unjust counter terrorism policy and legislation via a rights based discourse. Such an approach has been taken, at times with great risk to personal reputation, by many of the respondents we spoke to:

"But to be honest with you, you've got to stand for what you stand for, really. You can't tiptoe around what the government wants. You know, you can't have state approved debate; that's not going to get anywhere. You need to stand up for what you want. If that means it's going to be a problem, that's not a problem for the people because the people have got the full right to speak up about things"[100].

[99] Asim Qureshi

[100] Male 3

9. Concluding Remarks

9.1 Prevent is a harmful policy that disproportionately impacts the Muslim community. There is little to no evidence of its potential to tackle extremism, yet there is abundant evidence to demonstrate its harms.

9.2 In this report we address the unwarranted surveillance and the consequent self-censorship of many Muslims. This self-censorship is a direct attempt to ensure they are not victimised further by structures that have problematised them from the outset.

9.3 A 2016 Parliamentary report highlights that failing to take into account complexities would be counter-productive and "*fuel the attraction to the extremist narrative rather than dampening it*"[101]. Whilst a positive step in beginning to explore government culpability, this also runs the risk of the broad brush approach being applied to the Muslim community at large. What is clear is that in ignoring such complexities the government persistently demonstrates a lack of will to actually tackle the issue of extremism and terrorism as they themselves have defined it.

9.4 The vast proportion of those that feel unheard, isolated or subjected to securitisation do not turn to extremism or violence. Whilst our report finds that the sense of discontent is certainly increased in such instances, this is not to suggest that it directly corresponds to a likelihood of increased violence. In fact, in many instances it increases civic and political engagement as individuals and organisations seek to alter the status quo and reclaim their voice.

9.5 Crimes by those ascribing to right-wing fascist ideals have significantly increased in a climate where grievances can not just be aired, but are proactively espoused by people in national and international positions of power. The focus of Prevent on one entire section of the population, irrespective of whether they are innocent or guilty, makes the government complicit in creating a climate of right-wing radicalisation. It also results in the demonization of minorities and certain faith groups, and highlights a lack of will to tackle the increasingly visible threat posed by white supremacists.

9.6 Our report, supported by multiple studies, demonstrates the urgent need to alter the discourse. As Mythen et al argue, "*It is vital that distorted constructions of Islam and approaches that assume Muslims to be a homogenous and risky group are challenged and rebutted*"[102].

9.7 Our report has found that the Prevent strategy is not just ineffectual but actually counterproductive to its purported aims. Furthermore, the introduction of the CTSA 2015, effectively placing Prevent on a statutory

[101] House of Commons Home Affairs Committee Report (2016) *Radicalization the Counter Narrative: Identifying the Tipping Point*. London, TSO: 9

[102] Mythen, G. Walklate, S., Peatfield, E. J. (2017) Assembling and Deconstructing Radicalization in Prevent: A case of policy-based evidence making. *Critical Social Policy Vol 37 (2) 180-201: 192*

footing, has compounded these problems. The issues with Prevent are all the more evident in the context of increasing numbers of terror attacks, threat levels remaining at an all time high, and egregious human rights abuses

9.8 A healthy and robust society is one in which government agencies are accountable to civil society. The intrusion of Prevent into almost all levels of civil society as a statutory obligation, without the establishment of any form of public accountability, demonstrates the damage Prevent is doing.

9.9 The vast body of academic and policy based research, supported by our own findings, demands that Prevent be deconstructed from the wider substantive CONTEST[103] counter terrorism strategy. Our report points to the urgent need for a radically different anti-terror approach - one that *respects* civil liberties, avoids the targeting of racialised minority groups and does not necessitate the presence of policing and surveillance in all aspects of public life.

[103] The four elements of Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare constitute the CONTEST government counter terrorism strategy

10. Recommendations

1. For the Prevent aspect of the government's CONTEST counter terrorism strategy to be immediately withdrawn in order to prevent further human rights abuses

2. For a full and independent inquiry into the entire government counter-terrorism strategy, to be conducted with full transparency by a non-governmental organisation, where the terms of reference are framed following consultation with charities, human rights organisations and civil liberties groups

3. For the government to release details of all projects funded through counter terrorism budgets in order to allow full and transparent public scrutiny. Specifically, this information should include all costs associated with funded projects, demographic information of those subject to the projects, details on how success was determined and any subsequent evaluations undertaken

4. For the government to reverse budget cuts to youth services and provision promoted under the austerity programme, particularly those in deprived neighbourhoods

5. For the government to cease the divisive and discriminatory practice of embedding counter terrorism aims and objectives within social policy programmes aimed at British Muslims, particularly in the area of 'integration' and through the discourse of 'British values'

6. For the government to encourage and fund a national programme of multicultural initiatives and programmes - outside of a counter terrorism framework

7. For government ministers and senior police officers with responsibility for counter terrorism to cease targeting the critics of Prevent

8. For independent academic research to examine the specific issue of self censorship among Muslim students and academics within universities, particularly following the introduction of the CTSA 2015

"You know, they don't do anything on hate crime, they don't do anything on Islamophobia, they don't do anything on, even like, community cohesion, they want to do all of that through counter-terrorism. And, that is like, the biggest mistake... If it comes from wanting to create a good, strong society where everyone succeeds, then, it has to come from somewhere that is not related to counter-terrorism"[104].

[104] Female 10

Appendix 1: Brief Respondent Biographies.

Young Muslims

Female 1
25 year old British Pakistani, university graduate on maternity leave from teaching.

Female 2
23 years old British Pakistani, university graduate, currently working full-time.

Female 3
21 years old British Pakistani university student.

Female 4
23 years old British Pakistani, studying at university

Female 5
18 year old British Pakistani studying at post-secondary school.

Female 6
24 years old 3rd generation British Asian. Primary school teacher.

Female 7
19 year old British Indian, works at a call centre.

Female 8
22 year old Female Pakistani currently a university student. Also works at a further education institute.

Female 9
25 year old British Pakistani, self employed university graduate.

Female 10
25 year old British female Pakistani. Active in student politics. University graduate, currently employed full time and in part time education.

Male 1
18 years old British Pakistani, recently completed college. Will be attending university in September. Has memorized the Qur'an.

Male 2
18 year old British Pakistani male, studying BTEC level III. Has a conditional place to start university in September.

Male 3
25 year old British Pakistani university graduate, currently in full-time education.

Male 4
22 year old male post-graduate university student.

Male 5
24 year old British Pakistani. University graduate currently pursuing a Masters.

Male 6
24 year old Black male, undergraduate student and employed.

Stakeholders

Abdul Rehman Malik
Currently a fellow at Yale. Journalist, Educator and Organiser. Programme Manager at Radical Middle Way (RMW). RMW worked with the government from December 2005 to approximately March 2011; after which RMW did not engage with the particular Prevent funds that were created.

Anonymous, Activist
Campaigner against foreign policy abuses and anti-Prevent activist.

Anonymous, Journalist
Mid-30s, South Asian British male with post-graduate qualifications. Covers stories of extremism and radicalisation.

Anonymous, NUS Officer
Youth worker, also employed at further education institute. University graduate, active in student politics.

Anonymous Politician
Mid 50s, British Pakistani male, University graduate with a number of professional qualifications. Previously employed in community development and as Prevent Officer.

Anonymous, Race Equality Professional
Director of an organisation that provides Prevent training as well as research and facilitation.

Anonymous, Researcher and Activist
Community activist and commentator. Has worked in publishing for a number of years. Currently pursuing Doctorate. Part of the preventing extremism together task force in Windsor in 2005. Written numerous publications on Prevent.

Anonymous, Teacher
27 year old British born Pakistani. Secondary school maths teacher.

Anonymous, University Lecturer 1
Male, Senior Lecturer in Education.

Anonymous, University Lecturer 2
Early 30s, female, university Lecturer, non-Muslim.

Anonymous, University Lecturer 3
Early 30s, Male, working at university in south England.

Asim Qureshi
Graduate in Law, Masters in international law, international human rights law andIslamic law. Worked with NGO CAGE since 2004, focusing on research. Also works with legal teams as an advisor.

Francis Webber
Retired barrister working specifically in the field of immigration, refugees and human rights. Involved with the Institute of Race Relations since the late 1960s, presently the Vice Chair. Conducts research and writes on issues of institutionalized racism in different fields including policing and national security.

Humera Khan
Following a degree in Social Policy, began working in equalities in Housing. Founding member of An-Nisa, independent organisation that works on issues that affect Muslim communities.

M Ali Amla
Freelance Researcher, Trainer and Project Manager. Research Associate with Lancaster University, specifically, researching and focussing on transnational activism. Has an MA in Social Work and is currently studying for an MA in Religion and Conflicts, with specialism in radicalisation. Engaged with Prevent agenda for the last 10 years, originally, on the Channel pilot projects. Included in Home Office Best Practice Catalogue on Prevent in 2015.

Shaykh Ahmed Saad al-Azhari
Egyptian scholar first came to the UK in 2004, 2005 and 2006 as a visiting imam to the East London mosque during Ramadan. Worked at Finsbury Park mosque for 5 years since 2006 after it was taken over from Abu Hamza al-Masri. Established Ihsan institute in 2012 that aims at teaching Islam to adults.

Third Sector Worker
Mid-40s, female, works for a charity that serves Muslims across the UK.

Third Sector Worker 2
Works for a Muslim women's charity, has decades of experience working in the not-for-profit sector.

Dr Zareen Ahmed PhD
Entrepreneur, humanitarian and activist. Has two businesses and runs a charity called The Halimah Trust. Also does academic work speaking on issues such as Prevent and women's issues. PhD thesis was from a Muslim woman's perspective looking at the role of Muslim women within Prevent.

Zulaikha Farooqi
Campaigner and community activist. Father was arrested and sentenced to life under terrorism legislation when she was 19 years of age.

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