



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough



# Venue Hire

## Good Practice for Public Sector Organisations

December 2022

# Prevent Undesirable bookings

## Advice and good practice for community venues

Telford & Wrekin Council devotes much time and energy to ensure that our employees, members, and communities are confident that their Council operates in a fair and democratic way, demonstrating through our services the highest standards of equality and social justice.

The use of Council and public facilities by groups holding extreme religious, ideological, or political views may pose a threat to this confidence as extremist groups may seek to create or exploit grievances and community tensions to the detriment of the whole community. This presents a complex problem for elected members and Council officers who need to uphold freedom of speech and values of tolerance and respect whilst retaining the trust of local communities.

The Government's Prevent Strategy, 2011 (Revised 2019) and the Counter Extremism Strategy, 2015 defines extremism as:

*vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Also included in the Government's definition of extremism are calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.*

If you are considering enabling a third party to have the use of your community or school facilities, you should consider making proportionate checks to satisfy yourself that the use of this facility is appropriate. By making simple, and straightforward basic checks you can help ensure that possibly inappropriate speakers or groups take advantage of your rooms.

## ASK - What is planned and who is planning it?

1. Who is the individual or organisation booking the event?
  - Ask for their name and any associated names they operate under
  - Ask for their address and a phone number
  - Get details of the individual or organisations website and associated website
2. Do they implement a policy that promotes equality and diversity? Or will they agree to their event subscribing to your equality and diversity policy?
3. Ask for details of the event including title; agenda; content; speakers; expected audience numbers and demographics; details of how the event will be promoted (ask for copies of flyers/posters etc); is the event open to the public?

## CHECK – Undertake due diligence to confirm what you’ve been told and find out more

1. Run a check on the individual/organisation/speakers by:
  - a) Viewing their website, articles, or speeches
  - b) Considering what other people are saying about them (articles, blogs etc.)
2. Ask for a reference from a venue provided previously used by the individual/organisaiton
3. If the booking is for a charity, check the charity number of the organisation with the Charity Commission at: [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

## DECIDE

- Do you let the event go ahead?
- Take action to reduce the risks?

*Use the information collected to inform your decision*

## External Speaker Register 2022/23

Name of organisation	Name of speaker (where possible)	Date of visit	Due Diligence (pass/fail)	Notes/issues

## Hiring of Community Rooms - Advice

### Top tips when taking bookings

- If the booking is being arranged by an event management or another company, make sure you know who their client is
- Be wary of individuals only giving mobile numbers
- If enquiries are made about internet use and bandwidth, investigate whether any speakers are participating in the event remotely
- Be wary of individuals/organisations making large cash payments
- Ensure that in the event of reputational risk to your organisation you have the ability to withdraw from the contract

### Top tips when researching organisations/individuals online

- Complete a thorough check on the individual/organisation by:
  - Viewing their website(s)
  - Looking at what other people are saying about them (articles/blogs etc)
- Complete a thorough check on any speakers by looking at what other people are saying about them (articles/blogs etc)
- If you are unsure about an organisation, check if it has a landline number and business address
- Where possible use primary information – an organisations manifesto or person speaking on YouTube

### More Information

List of terrorist groups or organisations banned under UK law

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>

The Charity Commission

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Home Office Prevent Site (launched June 2022)

[Get help if you're worried about someone being radicalised - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/prevent)

Home Office eLearning (launched 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2022)

[Prevent duty training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/prevent)

### How to report terrorism

In case of emergency dial 999

Telford & Wrekin Terrorism site

[https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20495/dealing\\_with\\_specific\\_risks/3656/terrorism](https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20495/dealing_with_specific_risks/3656/terrorism)