



PROTECTING OUR  
JEWISH COMMUNITY



# 2020 ANNUAL REVIEW



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**AN INTRODUCTION TO CST** Community Security Trust (CST), is the charity that protects British Jews from terrorism and antisemitism. CST is recognised by the police and government as a unique model of best practice. CST has security teams across the UK, supported by over 100 full- and part-time staff at offices in London, Manchester and Leeds. CST became a charity in 1994, but its origins lie in many decades of Jewish self-defence activities, both before and after World War II.

## COMMUNAL ACTIVITY

CST protects, advises and trains Jewish communal organisations, schools and synagogues throughout the UK, as well as securing over 650 communal buildings.



## POLICE & GOVERNMENT

CST is a trusted partner of both the police and government. CST works closely with the police and shares hate crime information with police forces across the UK. CST manages a £14 million government grant for security guards, from independent commercial companies, at hundreds of Jewish schools and other community buildings.



## SHARING EXPERTISE

CST provides expert advice on contemporary antisemitism, anti-racism and counter-extremism to the police, government, politicians and media. CST's SAFE programme (Security Advice For Everyone) helps other minority groups to learn from CST's expertise and better protect themselves.

## ANTISEMITISM, POLITICS & MEDIA

CST's annual *Antisemitic Incidents Report* is the most authoritative study of antisemitic hate incidents in the UK. CST is recognised by the Jewish community, government, police and media as Britain's leading expert on the composition, cause and impact of contemporary antisemitism.

## VOLUNTEERS

CST has over 2,000 active and fully trained security volunteers across the UK, coming from every part of the Jewish community. They are the foundation of CST's work and are highly trained in theoretical, practical and physical aspects of security work. The seriousness of CST's work means CST's members must undertake regular security duties and must pass compulsory annual tests.

## SECURITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT



Since 2006, CST has committed to spending over £15 million on enhancing physical security measures at UK Jewish buildings to better protect them from terrorism. This includes funding anti-shatter window film, and installing fencing, gates, bollards, lighting, CCTV systems, intruder alarms and fire alarms.

## YOUTH & STUDENTS

Streetwise is CST's joint project with Maccabi GB. It teaches personal safety to over 20,000 Jewish teenagers per year. CST helps to protect Jewish students on campuses across the UK, in partnership with the Union of Jewish Students.

## FUNDING

CST provides all of its services free of charge. Nearly all of CST's budget comes from charitable donations.



# 2020: A YEAR IN REVIEW

CST held a constant presence in offices across the UK to ensure support to the community at all times. This included CST's National Security Control Centre which continued to function 24/7 throughout the whole year.

## JANUARY

CST's Director of Policy, Dr Dave Rich, wrote a piece about Facebook providing a **safe space for Holocaust denial**. Facebook then took the welcome step of **banning Holocaust denial and distortion**. CST were proud to play a role in this and continue to work with all the main social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok.



## MARCH

CST welcomed the **renewal of the Home Office grant** for security guards at Jewish schools and other buildings. This was essential funding to safeguard our community and an example of the vital partnership between government, CST and the Jewish community.

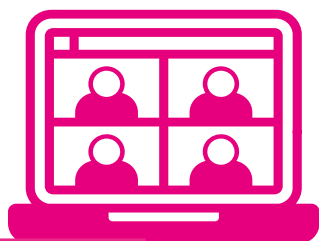
## FEBRUARY

CST's 2019 **Antisemitic Incidents Report** showed a record high of 1,805 antisemitic incidents in 2019, making it the fourth year in a row with a record number of antisemitic incidents reported to CST.

CST and HopeNotHate published an **expose of the Keep Talking conspiracy group** that brought together far left and far right conspiracy theorists who had been holding secret meetings and events in London.



With the announcement of a national lockdown, communal life moved online. CST published advice alongside SAFE on how to **stay safe and secure** while using livestreaming video conferencing services, such as **Zoom**.



Despite the lockdown, CST saw nationally **more security volunteers attend training sessions** than in any other year.

## APRIL

CST **met the new Labour leadership** alongside communal partners. This was the first of several engagements to **build a new, constructive and positive relationship** with the Labour Party.

As the pandemic swept across the globe, CST knew that antisemitism wouldn't be far behind. The **'Coronavirus and the Plague of Antisemitism'** research briefing highlighted antisemitic reactions to Covid-19.

## JUNE

CST's following report, **'Hate Fuel – the hidden online world fuelling far right terror'**, revealed the shocking extent of terror incitement and anti-Jewish hate on far right social media channels and platforms.

An in-depth article written by CST experts, featured in CTCWP Sentinel, examined Islamist networks linked to the Manchester Arena bombing, in **'The 2017 Manchester Bombing & the British-Libyan Jihadi Nexus'**.

## 2020: A YEAR IN REVIEW continued

CST released another research briefing exploring **Jack Renshaw**, a would-be neo-Nazi terrorist who plotted to murder a Labour MP, highlighting the **dangers of far right and jihadist terrorism**.

### JULY

CST supported the **48-hour boycott of Twitter and Instagram** to protest their weak action on grime artist Wiley's disgusting antisemitism on their platforms, followed up by a **short guide on Wiley** and antisemitism.

CST's '**Antisemitic Incidents Report**' for January-June 2020 showed that, despite a fall in incident numbers due to the national lockdown, it was still the **third-highest total** CST has ever recorded in this period.

### NOVEMBER

Another terror-related research briefing, '**Pathway to Terror**', focused on the case of **Shehroz Iqbal** who was sentenced to eight and a half years in prison for terrorist and unrelated drug offences.

### OCTOBER

The **High Holy Day** period saw CST's security teams work tirelessly to protect Jewish communities. In the run up to this period over **700 commercial guards and security volunteers** from across the UK attended **online training sessions** hosted by CST.

### AUGUST

In the summer of 2020 CST saw a big change with the announcement that **David Delew** would be stepping down after seven years as **CST Chief Executive**, to be replaced by **Mark Gardner**.



2021

CST organised an **online seminar for police officers** that was attended by over **110 officers** from forces throughout the UK.

## DECEMBER

CST's new report '**Campus Antisemitism In Britain 2018-2020**' showed a much **higher level of university antisemitic incidents** than previously reported, following a sustained drive by CST's campus team to encourage students to report.



This was followed by CST's final report of the year, '**Antisemitic Discourse in Britain 2019**', focusing on mainstream antisemitism that took place in 2019.



Despite everything that hindered regular life in 2020, CST volunteers were still able to work **over 2,000 shifts** nationally, securing communal events, providing reassurance patrols and **protecting the community on Shabbat**.



## **"FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM"**

CST CHAIRMAN, GERALD M RONSON CBE

I have fought against antisemitism and racism for 60 years. I am proud to have built CST into an organisation that is widely recognised as the leading example of its type.

CST's origins lie in the 1950s and '60s, when I and others physically forced the fascists off our streets. It had to be done and we did it. In the 1970s and '80s, we had to develop security against terrorists. That is what we did.

In 1994, after car bombings in London against the Israeli Embassy and Balfour House, CST became a charity. From the year 2000 onwards, the need for CST kept growing. Al Qaeda and ISIS and their local supporters were a constant threat, while antisemitic incident levels rose in tandem with Middle East violence.

Next, we saw unprecedented highs of antisemitic incidents in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was an entirely British issue and tracked the Labour Party's problem with antisemitism. Many British Jews said they would leave the country if Mr Corbyn had won the 2019 general election, but he lost it.

Leaving Britain is never an option for me or CST. We are British. We are here to give our community the support it needs, be that physical or moral. We have spent millions of pounds securing Britain's Jewish communities, because we believe in them and in their futures.

If you lead any sort of Jewish life, from school to synagogue to old age home, CST is helping to secure you and your family. I am proud of what we have achieved, and I thank the thousands of men and women who have helped make it a reality.

Looking ahead, we do not yet know how Covid-19 will impact upon society, including racism and extremism; but we do know that such conditions are ideal for antisemitism and other types of hatred to thrive. We also know that British Nazis want to carry out terrorist attacks, as do British Jihadis. Iran is also an ever-present threat, using anti-Jewish terrorism as a tool against Israel and the West.

All of this is why CST does its work. We cannot magically turn security on and off like a tap. Either security is in place, giving comfort and protection to our community, or it is not. I built CST because it had to be done. I will push it forward for as long as the threats continue; but this is a mission that everyone should join. Please, help me and CST to fight antisemitism, racism and fascists of all types. Contact CST and ask how you can help to play your part.







## ***"SECURING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC"***

CST CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARK GARDNER

Hello and welcome to CST's Annual Review for 2020. I hope that you will take the time to read about some of our work, and if you wish to contact us, we would love to hear from you.

Obviously 2020 was an unusual year for CST and for everybody. For many people, including some of CST's volunteers, staff and supporters, it was also a year marked by personal tragedy, fear and uncertainty. On behalf of CST, I express our deepest sympathies to all those who lost loved ones to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Here at CST, we continued working throughout the year, with a small number of staff in our London and Manchester offices and many more working from home. Our 24/7 National Security Control Centre remained fully operational, linked to hundreds of Jewish community buildings across the UK.

We remained in close contact with our over 2,000 security volunteers, who are the essence of CST. Training moved online and was very successful, with hundreds of men and women attending many of the sessions.

CST volunteers and staff mounted strong operations at synagogues holding socially distanced religious services over Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement); and we were very pleased to protect 35 open air Chanukah menorah lightings.

CST also continued its management of the £14 million government grant for commercial security guards working mainly at Jewish schools and synagogues. This is a key part of our work and of government support against the threat of terrorism.

Inevitably, antisemitism did not stop because of the pandemic. Instead, it twisted into more forms, with Jews being blamed for Covid-19 and Jewish deaths being celebrated. CST's researchers tracked these developments and continued their vital behind the scenes work of helping identify potential terrorists and forwarding information to police, government, media and Jewish communal leadership.

Finally, let me say that it is a huge privilege for me to lead CST in our protection of the Jewish community and wider society from the evils of terrorism, racism and extremism. I thank all of those who make our work possible, from police and government through to every one of our volunteers, trustees, staff and donors. The deep damage of Covid-19 to our politics and society means that we have many challenges ahead, but we will face them together, standing up for what is right.



## WORKING WITH THE POLICE

CST's close working partnership with police forces across the UK is widely regarded as the best example of its type, both nationally and internationally. This optimises relations between Jewish communities and their local police services.

CST's work with the police includes provision of intelligence leading to crime prevention and arrests, joint security operations for events, joint patrols on the Sabbath and Jewish festivals, shared training exercises, information exchanges, and regular consultations on community policing and security.

During times of heightened alert or special operations, police officers are regularly posted to CST's National Security Control Centre. This ensures immediate intelligence sharing and a partnership approach to joint operations.

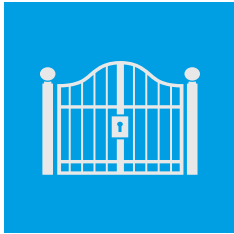
CST participates in numerous advisory groups, in which the police consult with a range of local representative bodies from all communities.

CST is proud to assist the police in understanding and tackling hate crime, preventing terrorism against the Jewish community, and providing practical solutions and reassurance for Jewish communities, which may also contain valuable suggestions for police relations with other communities. CST is grateful for the support and encouragement it has received from police officers of all ranks in our work.

CST holds educational training sessions for the police and support staff in London, Manchester and elsewhere in the UK. CST's booklet, *A Police Officer's Guide to Judaism*, is now in its sixth edition and explains Jewish practice and custom, relevant to those working with Jews and Jewish communities. It has inspired similar publications overseas, and has also been produced in Scotland as *The Firefighter's Guide to Judaism*.







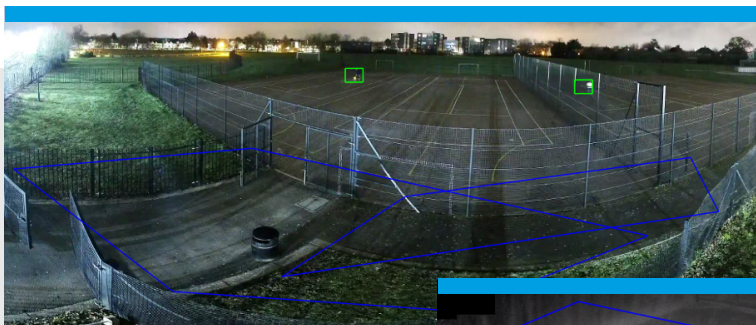
## IMPROVING COMMUNAL SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE

CST provides advice and guidance to schools, synagogues and communal buildings, assisting them with continually improving and evolving their physical security. Over the past 13 years, CST has committed to contributing over £15 million towards these projects.

With the building of new schools and synagogues, CST works in partnership with the architects and developers to implement the correct security measures from the planning stage. Additionally, CST works with CCTV contractors to deploy the latest technologies to protect communal buildings, to ensure the continued efficiency and effectiveness of CST's National Security Control Centre. This has involved several sites adopting thermal perimeter detection, together with versatile 180- or 360-degree view cameras.

These cameras are supported by 'Deep in Mind' intelligent behavioural detection recording devices. The devices are able to learn and understand the environment they are monitoring, eliminating false alarms. This technology is able to distinguish between human, vehicle and other movement, allowing analytical alarms to operate in areas affected by trees, wind and rain.

CST also works with manufacturers to aid the development of a lockdown alarm system, which has been successfully installed on several sites. The purpose of this system is to alert people in the building of an imminent threat, that is differentiated from fire alarms or other alert systems in the building.

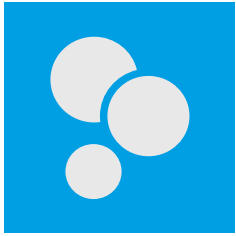


*180° cameras with improved infrared enable detection of intrusions over a large area*



*Thermal technology picks up human movement in pitch dark settings*





# MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT GRANT FOR SECURITY GUARDS

CST distributes a £14 million government grant on behalf of the Home Office that funds commercial security guards (as distinct from CST staff and volunteer security personnel) at Jewish communal buildings throughout the UK. This enables British Jews to afford the levels of guarding that they need.

The commercial security guards supplement the physical security measures that CST's own charitable funds help to put in place.

The government grant specifies that Jewish schools are the priority recipients for funding. After the needs of schools have been met, the remaining budget is made available to other Jewish buildings. CST manages this process and ensures that the grant is properly utilised.

Working with the Home Office and the Department for Education, CST assesses the security of all potential recipients, and works

with each communal building to ensure that the level of guarding provided is appropriate.

In 2020, the government grant was distributed to:

- 186 primary and secondary schools, higher education religious colleges and nurseries
- 14 youth movement camps
- Over 200 synagogues
- Four multi-site guarding operations, including a further 90 synagogues
- 29 additional communal buildings

CST's management of the process included over 1,800 payments to recipients for security guarding costs, the employment of over 600 guards from 50 security companies and over 1,800 spot checks of guarding standards at sites throughout the UK.







## ONLINE SECURITY TRAINING

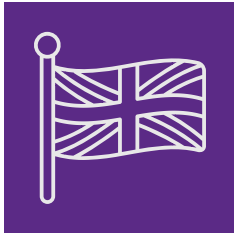
At the beginning of 2020, training and fitness programmes for CST security volunteers ran regularly across the UK. After the outbreak of Covid-19, CST adapted to provide all training sessions online to maintain the motivation of security volunteers, while also keeping them informed of the latest security threats to the Jewish community.

CST security volunteers, staff, commercial guards and members of the wider Jewish

community attended these sessions in increasing numbers from throughout the UK.

Sessions included studying how best to protect the Jewish community and examining case studies of attacks and threats Jewish communities have faced both in the UK and abroad. In addition, physical online training sessions were made available to security volunteers to stay fit and healthy.





## WORKING WITH THE GOVERNMENT, POLITICIANS & CIVIL SERVANTS

CST works with government, politicians and civil servants, to ensure that Jewish communal concerns regarding terrorism, antisemitism, policing and security are properly understood and tackled.

CST's cross communal model, its security expertise, research and analysis, are all repeatedly cited by national and local government as an example of best practice. CST is proud to share its example for the benefit of all communities and to help build a more cohesive society.

In 2020, the UK response to Covid-19, as well as the government's preparation for

Brexit, pulled the focus of politicians and government departments. As a result the regular Cross Government Working Group on Antisemitism, the longstanding quarterly policy and implementation meeting between government and Jewish community stakeholders, was put on hold by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Despite this challenge, CST is considered a key stakeholder and was regularly consulted on relevant policies, such as the continued development of the important Online Harms Bill, which will shape UK regulation of the internet for a generation; and as a participant of a regular Jewish Leaders Roundtable



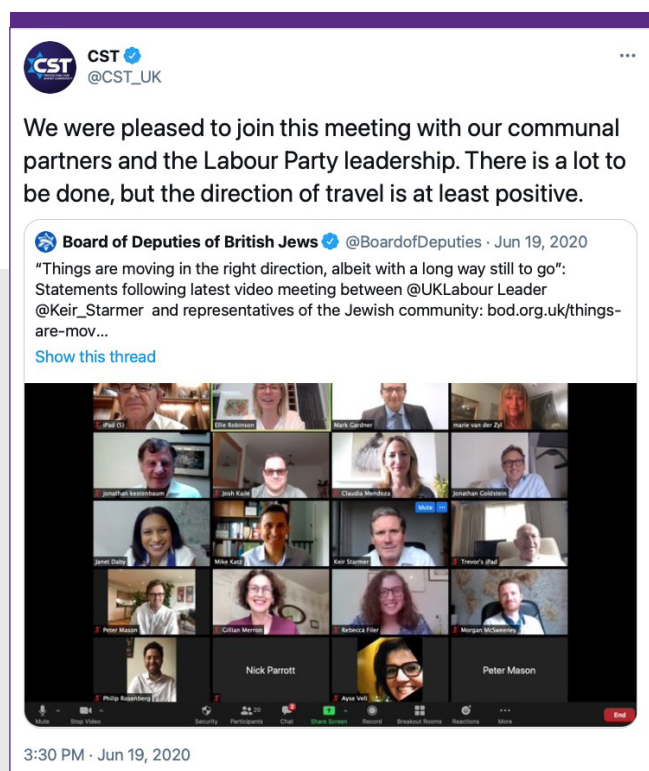
with MHCLG to discuss concerns around Covid-19 and to consult on the re-opening of synagogues throughout the pandemic. CST is also the first contact for government when it seeks to understand the impact upon British Jews of local or international crisis incidents. As an example, as details of the November roaming gun attack near Jewish locations in Vienna were reported in real time, several government departments reached out to CST staff for our considered assessment.

CST trustees and staff meet with politicians, ranging from the Home Secretary to local councillors and MPs. In particular, the new leadership of the Labour Party has been keen to re-establish contact with CST and other Jewish communal leadership bodies following the 'Labour antisemitism crisis' under Jeremy Corbyn as evidenced in the findings of the *Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) report into Labour Party Antisemitism*, published in October. This has led to

meetings with the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Home and Communities Secretaries, amongst others. These often include CST's partner groups, such as the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Antisemitism Policy Trust (APT) and the Jewish Labour Movement (JLM).

CST is not party political and works with politicians from all parties in the fight against antisemitism. CST also monitors hatred against members of Parliament who face threats from antisemites and extremists. CST shares this information with the MPs, gives them security advice and frequently interacts on their behalf with social media companies and the police.

CST works with Local Authority Community Coordinators and Prevent staff, helping support counter-extremism measures and improve community cohesion. Similarly, CST also works with the Office of the National Extremism Commissioner.







## SUPPORTING YOUTH & STUDENTS

CST cares deeply about the well-being of Jewish youth and students and works closely with partner groups to support those in schools and further education.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on young people as schools and universities have locked down with education disrupted. CST-supported projects and organisations that work in education had to respond quickly and creatively in order to continue providing services. Programming was adapted to tackle new challenges arising from the pandemic.

Streetwise, a project jointly run by CST and Maccabi GB, teaches personal safety and development to Jewish children in Jewish and non-Jewish primary and secondary schools. In 2020, despite the lengthy school closures, Streetwise reached over 13,000 young people, in over 500 sessions held at 37 schools and 25 other communal organisations.

Stand Up! Education Against Discrimination, is also run jointly by CST and Maccabi GB, as well as other anti-discrimination groups, Tell MAMA, Kick it Out and Galop. It employs Jewish and Muslim educators to deliver anti-racism education across Britain, encouraging students to take social responsibility against prejudice, antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred. In 2020, despite the lengthy school closures, Stand Up! reached over 6,300 young people, through 200 sessions held at 30 secondary schools.

Stand Up! received recognition for its unique contribution to interfaith relations by winning a prestigious 'Faith and Belief Forum' award.

Both projects created online platforms during 2020; with a huge range of educational content such as videos, resources, games and top tips, Streetwise and Stand Up! reached over 300,000 views through social media platforms and dedicated websites.



The welfare and safety of Jewish undergraduates in higher education is delivered through CST's partnership with Jewish student bodies, particularly the Union of Jewish Students (UJS).

2020 has been a unique year for all university students, and UJS has also had to adapt how it engages with the 8,500 Jewish students at university at any one time. In combatting antisemitism, UJS has continued to make strides in urging universities and students' unions to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, a campaign strongly supported by CST.

In December 2020 CST published a report which for the first time recorded and analysed antisemitism on university campuses over the previous two academic years. This has had a significant impact on public discourse

around campus-based antisemitism, and acknowledges that most Jewish students enjoy an overwhelmingly positive experience on campus. Nevertheless, problems do occur, whether this is outright antisemitism from fellow students and faculty members, unfair conditions placed upon Jewish society meetings, or contentious bias and falsehoods expressed by academics in subjects such as sociology, politics and history. CST has supported Jewish students seeking redress from university authorities in such instances.

CST employs a full-time student security coordinator whose role helps to represent Jewish students' concerns on security issues and antisemitism; advise students and Jewish campus locations on security; and works with UJS and many other Jewish student groups to ensure that the legal rights and protections of Jewish students are met by every campus in the UK.



CST ran a campaign of social media videos targeted at Jewish students to provide them with tips on how to stay safe on campus, as well as a series of infographics breaking down the key findings from the CST report *Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2018-2020*.



## ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN 2020

CST recorded 1,668 antisemitic incidents in 2020, the third-highest total ever reported to CST in a single calendar year. This was an eight per cent decrease from the 2019 record annual figure of 1,813 incidents.

Despite this drop, the total recorded in 2020 sustained a pattern of historically high antisemitic incident figures in recent years, with more than 100 incidents recorded in 11 of the 12 months in 2020. Since and including April 2016, there are only three months in which fewer than 100 incidents were reported to CST. By way of comparison, CST only recorded monthly totals surpassing 100 incidents on six occasions between January 2006 and December 2015: five of them due to conflict in the Middle East.

However, the landscape of antisemitism in the UK in 2020 – and the fall in reported incidents – were significantly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The months with the highest totals

correlated with the periods in the year that lockdown measures were either not-yet-existent (January and February) or most relaxed (June and July). Conversely, the lowest monthly totals were reported when the tightest restrictions were implemented (March, April and December).

Just as the pandemic forced people to find new ways of communicating, it compelled those who wish to spread anti-Jewish hate to be equally innovative. CST received 19 reports of video conferences hijacked with antisemitic content: a completely new type of incident. New strands of antisemitic discourse also emerged, with 41 incidents recorded containing antisemitic rhetoric alongside reference to the pandemic. In comparison to 2019, there were more instances of antisemitism that took place at the homes of Jewish people – and that involved neighbour disputes – in 2020. With people confined to their homes for large parts of the year and





fewer outlets for the resulting frustrations, pre-existing localised tensions can escalate. At worst, they can become hate speech and acts of hatred directed at those close by.

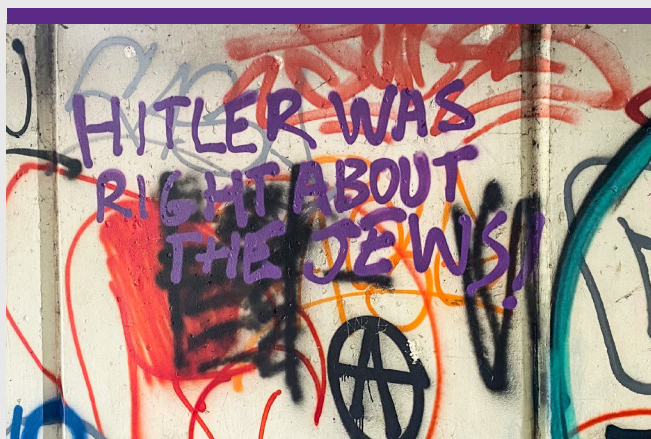
Meanwhile, the vast drop of 39 per cent in antisemitic assaults reported, from 158 in 2019 to 97 in 2020, was also probably a direct result of the way the pandemic and social distancing guidelines affected and limited day-to-day, public interactions. They both lessened the likelihood of a perpetrator initiating close physical contact with a stranger and reduced the opportunity to do so in the first place, with fewer potential victims in public.

CST had feared that months spent indoors without the stimuli of 'normal' life would see a sharp escalation in reports of online antisemitism during 2020, with offenders potentially increasingly bored and disillusioned. Instead, reported online instances of antisemitism decreased by nine per cent, from 2019's record total of 700 to 634 in 2020. Nevertheless, this is still the second-highest annual total of online incidents ever reported to CST, reflecting the growing role that online platforms serve as a hotbed for hate. They

represent an especially convenient, far-reaching, anonymising and secure-feeling environment for those who wish to voice and incite hatred.

CST attributes the high antisemitic incident levels observed since 2016 to fundamentally British causes and politics, these being controversy over antisemitism in the Labour Party and an increase in overall hate crime, following the referendum to leave the EU. With antisemitism, racism and hate crime so prevalent in public and media discourse, antisemites are likely emboldened to express their prejudice.

In addition to the 1,668 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2020, a further 402 potential incidents were reported to CST but not included in the total as they showed insufficient evidence of antisemitic targeting, content or motivation. In total, CST staff and volunteers recorded, processed and analysed 2,070 incidents and potential incidents in 2020, most of which required some element of victim support or security response.



*Left: Antisemitic graffiti in Brighton & Hove; Borehamwood and Northamptonshire in 2020*



# THE THREAT OF TERRORISM & CST'S WORK

Protecting British Jews from terrorist attacks drives much of CST's security work. The level of anti-Jewish threat, and the amount of security needed from CST, largely depends on the overall threat of terrorism against the UK, both internationally and domestically. In recent years, the dynamic nature of terrorist threats has placed great strain on police and security services. CST's work has therefore also had to significantly increase.

Since 2017, authorities have foiled 27 terrorist plots, with eight plots related to the far right. These plots included planned attacks involving stabbing, vehicle ramming, bombing and firearms. In 2020 alone the UK experienced three jihadi-inspired terrorist attacks:

- Reading stabbing attack, June
- Streatham stabbing attack, February
- HMP Whitemoor stabbing attack, January

The attacks in Reading and Streatham took place in public, at a park and on a high street, respectively. The Streatham and HMP Whitemoor attacks also involved the attackers wearing fake suicide vests, a method copied from previous jihadi attacks in the UK in 2017 and 2019.

The Reading and Streatham perpetrators committed their attacks shortly after their release from prison for earlier offences. The Streatham attacker was convicted in 2018 – aged 18 – after he shared graphic jihadi terrorist videos

online and stockpiled instructions on bomb making, knife attacks and combat techniques. Similarly, one of the attackers in Whitemoor had been previously convicted in 2015 for an ISIS-inspired plot to behead a British soldier.

In November 2020, following a series of terrorist attacks in France and Austria, the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) raised the UK national terrorism threat level from 'substantial' to 'severe'. This means that a terrorist attack in the UK is 'highly likely'. The threat level was previously lowered on 4 November 2019.

In October 2020, MI5's new Director General Ken McCallum, warned that recent attacks using crude methods require little preparation and therefore mean *"there are fewer clues for us to detect in advance – and less time to find those clues"*. He said that Islamist terrorism remains the UK's largest terrorism threat in terms of scale, but that extreme right-wing terrorism is growing.

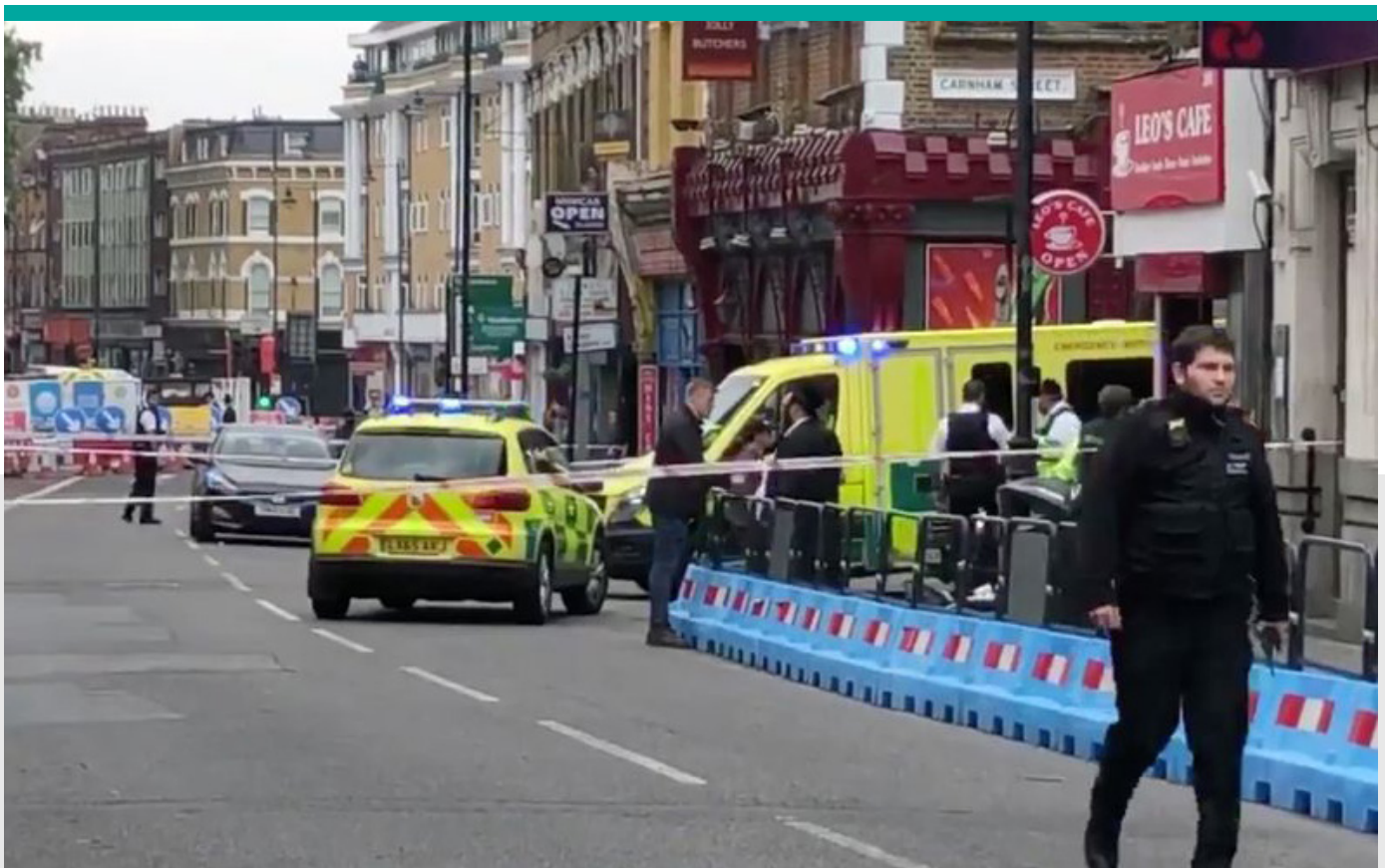
The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has also had significant implications on the terrorism threat. Met Police Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu has warned repeatedly that lockdowns can lead to vulnerable individuals being exposed to (and radicalised by) extremist material. In November 2020, Basu explained that, *"there has been a sharp increase in extremist material online in*

*the last few years, and Covid-19 has meant that vulnerable people are spending a lot more time isolated and online, and with fewer of the protective factors that schooling, employment, friends and family can provide.”*

All of British society is at threat from terrorism, but Jews are a particular target for jihadis and the far right, both of whom have extreme antisemitism at the core of their ideologies and actions: meaning British Jews face a relatively high level of risk from these extremists, as do Jewish communities throughout the world. In June 2020, an Orthodox rabbi was stabbed on Stoke Newington High Street in north London. Members of the public subdued the alleged perpetrator who has since been charged with attempted murder and possessing an offensive weapon in a public place.

CST’s security training, planning and operations are all designed to mitigate against the terrorists’ modus operandi: which can include any variety of weapons and methods, such as vehicle ramming, knife stabbing, axe attack, firearm assault, suicide bombing and planted explosive devices. Terrorists may act alone, in formal groups, or as part of a broader online networks that can be global in their spread, ideology and incitement.

Terrorists may undertake long-term surveillance of potential targets, or very brief planning online, on foot or in a vehicle. They may use social media to publicise imminent attacks, either explicitly, or implicitly. It is crucial that such patterns of behaviour are known, recognised and reported to police, CST and communal security personnel.



*Police at the scene of the stabbing of an Orthodox rabbi in north London, June 2020*





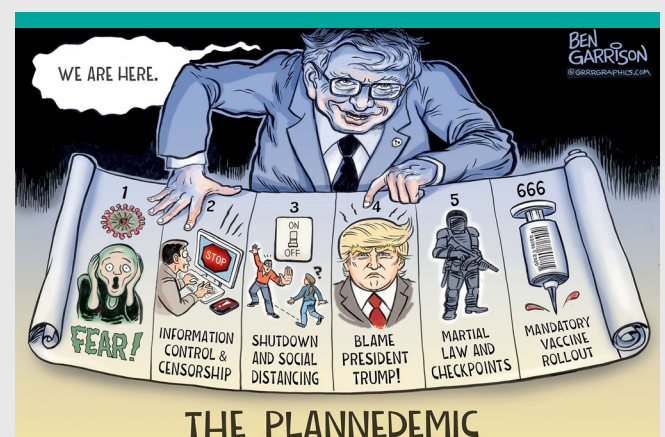
## TERRORISM TRENDS IN 2020

CST closely studies anti-Jewish terrorist attacks and plots in Britain and throughout the world to best secure British Jews against such threats. Overseas attacks against Jews have deep relevance for security in Britain, because terrorists take perverse inspiration from what they see elsewhere and seek to copy the behaviour. 'Copy-cat attacks' are made worse by attempts to live broadcast terrorist attacks online and on social media, which glorifies the perpetrator and incites others to do the same.

In far right circles, a global network of violent neo-Nazis continues to fuel terrorism and murder by sharing vast quantities of easily accessible, extreme and violent images and posts on social media platforms – much of this repeatedly and explicitly calls for Jews to be killed. This continues to feature as a form of 'gamification of violence' in which neo-Nazis share footage of terrorist attacks, whilst urging each other to 'beat the high score': meaning to kill yet more innocent people.

In 2020, the following trends were apparent:

**Terrorism and the pandemic:** Under lockdowns in Western countries, terrorists continue to adapt and choose targets where people can gather despite restrictions – hospitals, Covid-19 testing sites, care homes, supermarkets and public areas, such as high streets and parks. Soft targets and crowded locations continue to appeal to attackers, regardless of their ideology.



**Conspiracies and targets:** Pandemic-related conspiracy theories are influencing targeting decisions. In March 2020, a white supremacist in Missouri plotted to attack a local hospital in a vehicle borne bombing attack due to the increased impact and media attention on the health sector. Extreme right-wing activists have been posting conspiracies blaming Jews for the Covid-19 pandemic. They have threatened to 'infect' Jews and Jewish communities with Covid-19 by visiting Jewish locations and coughing on people and property.

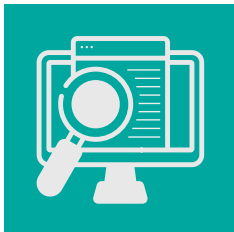
**Teenagers and terrorism:** Teenagers are increasingly engaging in extremism and terrorism, especially among the far right. Since May 2019, 17 children, some as young as 14, were arrested on terrorism charges. Over 1,500 children under the age of 15 were referred to the Prevent programme. In 2020, for example, an extreme right-wing 17-year-old from Rugby, Warwickshire was found guilty of planning a terrorist attack. He was in possession of over 90 documents on weapons and online material with extreme right-wing content, including clips of the 2019 terrorist shooting attacks in Christchurch, El Paso and others.

**Attack methods:** Attack modus operandi have included vehicle ramming, shooting, stabbing and the detonation of planted and person-borne explosives. Attackers have organised in small groups, but most recent attacks were committed by lone perpetrators.

**Targeting places of worship:** In 2018-2019, terrorist attacks targeting faith communities were a deadly trend, with jihadi, far right and other violent extremists targeting synagogues, mosques, churches and other community facilities. In 2019 a British woman planned an ISIS-inspired bombing at a London hotel and at St Paul's Cathedral. She conducted hostile reconnaissance at both locations to determine where to place her planned explosive devices. She pleaded guilty to this in 2020.

**Any facility is a potential target:** Recent terror attacks show that facilities not previously considered 'obvious' targets are vulnerable to attack. None of the synagogues in Pittsburgh, Poway or Halle – or the Christchurch mosques – were obvious terror targets. They are not iconic sites, but the terrorists considered them desirable targets for their attacks.

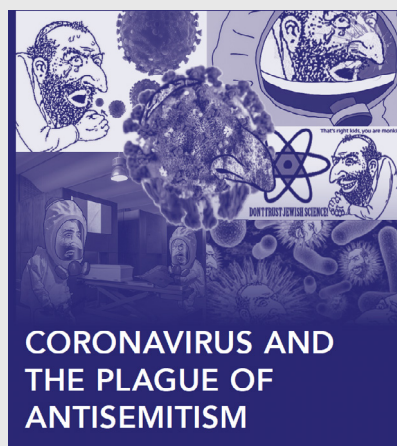
**Antisemitic terrorist threats:** Jewish communities worldwide continued to face threats from the far right, jihadis and other extremists. In January 2020, ISIS released an audio statement specifically calling for attacks against Jews worldwide. The specific emphasis on targeting Jews marks an important escalation in rhetoric and threat potential, even though ISIS has incited attacks on Jews before. In February 2020, the FBI warned about the rise in anti-Jewish terrorism coming from a range of threat actors, expressing specific concern about lone offender attacks and mass shootings.



## SHARING EXPERTISE

CST produces research reports and briefings on a range of topics relating to antisemitism, extremism and terrorism. This allows CST to share its expertise with our partners in government, the police, media, civil society, academia and across the Jewish community and the wider public. In 2020 the different reports and briefings published by CST illustrate the wide range of threats facing the Jewish community today.

- *Coronavirus and the Plague of Antisemitism* highlighted antisemitic reactions to the Covid-19 pandemic as it swept across the world. CST collected antisemitic posts, comments and memes relating to Covid-19 over the course of a few weeks and identified five different anti-Jewish narratives that were being spread by extremists in the UK and abroad.
- *Hate Fuel – the hidden online world fuelling far right terror* revealed the shocking extent of terror incitement and violent anti-Jewish hate on fringe social media platforms used by far right extremists and would-be terrorists. The contents of this report were so extreme and offensive that it was only distributed privately to key stakeholders and policy makers in government, the police, academia and the media, to demonstrate the urgent need for regulation of online hate.
- *Pathway to Terror* was a special report focusing on the case of Shehroz Iqbal, an ISIS supporter who was sentenced to eight and a half years in prison in 2020 for terrorist and unrelated drug offences. Iqbal had a record of antisemitic hate crimes and other anti-Jewish activity both in London and online, beginning in 2016 and continuing throughout the years leading up to his arrest for terrorism. He posed an ongoing threat to the Jewish community in north east London during this period and this briefing





shows how CST tracked Iqbal's increasingly extreme behaviour, while working with counter terrorism police to ensure the safety of the individuals and organisations in the Jewish community whom he targeted.

- CST worked with the anti-racist organisation HopeNotHate on a joint investigation of one of Britain's most important networks of conspiracy theorists. Titled *Inside Keep Talking: the conspiracy theory group uniting the far left and far right*, this report used undercover filming to expose the secret meetings of far right and far left extremists, where Holocaust deniers mixed with former trade unionists and other conspiracy theorists.
- CST's report *Campus Antisemitism In Britain 2018-2020* showed that the levels of antisemitic incidents affecting Jewish students, academics and student bodies is much higher than previously recorded. This followed a sustained drive by CST's dedicated campus team to reach Jewish students across the country, encourage them to report antisemitism to CST and support them when they make complaints to their university.
- 'White Jihad': Jack Renshaw's journey from far right student to would-be terrorist told the story of Jack Renshaw, a neo-Nazi who in May 2019 was sentenced to life imprisonment for his attempt to murder an MP and a senior police officer. The report traced Renshaw's career in the British far right, from his first activities as a university student in Manchester to becoming involved in some of the most extreme and violent neo-Nazi groups in the UK.
- CST published a detailed article in collaboration with the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, about the background to the Manchester Arena terrorist attack. Titled *The 2017 Manchester Bombing & the British-Libyan Jihadi Nexus*, this article explored the background of the two terrorists responsible for the attack, Salman and Hashem Abedi, by looking into the Islamist milieu in which they were raised and their close links to jihadi figures. Attention was also given to the days and hours leading up to the attack, including the pre-attack hostile reconnaissance carried out by Salman Abedi, as well as the post-attack trial of Hashem Abedi.





## WORK WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES

SAFE is Security Advice for Everyone, a unique CST initiative to improve the security of UK faith and minority communities outside the Jewish community. CST makes no charge for SAFE, this is CST giving its own contribution to a better society for all.

CST has long assisted other communities with security advice, but this was taken to a whole new level in 2019 after appalling terrorist attacks against Muslims in New Zealand and against Christians in Sri Lanka. CST employed specialists to plan and implement the SAFE programme, reaching out to other communities, and working with police and local authorities to best use CST's long experience for the benefit of others facing the threat of terrorism.

There are approximately 36,000 places of worship in the UK. The majority of SAFE events are held with a few dozen groups at once, often attended by the leaders of these places of worship and those who take on security responsibilities. In addition to police and local authorities, others who help with the process have included mayors' offices, interfaith groups, religious groups, as well as some Hindu and Muslim schools.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic SAFE delivered talks face to face. Now sessions are presented as webinars covering a range of security topics

that are delivered several times per week. Topics include 'Basic security for your place of worship', 'Online security', 'Organising security', 'Hate crime and your community', 'Past terror attacks – lessons learned' and 'Making your place of worship Covid-secure'.

In 2020 SAFE delivered 30 physical talks and 19 webinars. In total SAFE reached 792 people representing 425 different places of worship.

As well as building relationships with leaders of places of worship, SAFE has been working closely with organisations that CST has worked with for years – local authorities, police forces and mayors' offices – in pursuit of its mission.

SAFE's work has been well received. The audience has been appreciative and feedback has been very good. People have been surprised and delighted that the Jewish community has been prepared to share its knowledge in this way. SAFE believes that in doing this work breaks down barriers between communities and removes prejudices.

In 2021 SAFE will be launching 'Bitesize Security', a weekly newsletter on security matters for representatives of other communities, and expects to hold dozens of events (talks or webinars) for an audience of more than 2,000 people representing more than 1,000 places of worship.





# SAFE

SECURITY ADVICE FOR  
EVERYONE





## VOLUNTEER

Contact your local CST office to learn more about how you can help share the responsibility of protecting our community, by becoming a trained volunteer security personnel.



## REPORT

If you experience or witness antisemitism report it to CST as soon as possible. All reports will be treated with the utmost confidence. In an emergency, dial 999.



## DONATE

CST's work is all provided free of charge. Every pound you give enables CST to do its work for the benefit of the Jewish community and wider society. We welcome every donation.

National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**

London (Head Office) **020 8457 9999**

Manchester (Northern Regional Office) **0161 792 6666**



[www.cst.org.uk](http://www.cst.org.uk)



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