

September
2024



Safeguarding Newsletter





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Prevent

National threat level

The threat to the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) from terrorism remains **substantial**, which means an attack is considered likely.

Prevent

Ex-police chief likens riots to terrorism

Former Counter-terrorism Head Neil Basu has stated that recent violence during the riots has 'crossed the line into terrorism.' Basu, who served as the UK's top counter-terrorism officer from 2018 to 2021, expressed hope that his successors were closely monitoring the situation.

Speaking to the BBC, Basu said, 'We have witnessed serious acts of violence intended to incite terror within parts of our community.' He also emphasised the need to carefully assess the legal definition of terrorism in relation to the recent events.

Basu attributed the surge in violence to misinformation spread on social media, warning, 'We need to take action on this.' The attacks on hotels housing migrants follow years of far-right demonisation, with locations shared online, making future targets unpredictable.

For more information click [here](#).

Talking point: Do you think social media has a big influence over the public?



The Department for Education (DfE) places a duty on schools, colleges and training providers to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by developing their understanding of 'fundamental British values'.

According to DfE, 'fundamental British values' comprise of:

- democracy.
- the rule of law.
- individual liberty.
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance

TV show winner delivers football kits to children

A BBC Race Across the World winner has travelled to Malaysia as part of his initiative to make football more accessible in underprivileged parts of the world.

Alfie Watts, from St Albans, Hertfordshire, travelled to Kuala Lumpur to deliver 250kg (39st 5lb) of football kits and boots directly to children who need them most. The 21-year-old worked alongside UK charities, [Kit Aid](#) and [Charity Boots](#), and Malaysia-based charity [The Lost Food Project](#) to begin Football Starts With Hope.

Watts, who works as a referee, also intends to begin football coaching workshops as part of a larger plan to 'give access to football to as many people as possible'. He was quoted: 'I'd hate to not utilise my platform, and granted it's not a huge platform, to push something positive.'

Click [here](#) for more information.

Why Respect Matters: Biles, Chiles And Andrade's Unforgettable Moment

US superstar Simone Biles said it was "*Just the right thing to do*" after she and team-mate Jordan Chiles bowed to Olympic gold medallist Rebeca Andrade after the floor final in the Paris Olympics. The trio also made history as the first all-black podium in men or women's gymnastics at the Olympics. Andrade, who lost out on the all-around title to Biles last week, appreciated the show of respect. Read more [here](#).

Talking point: What more can you do to show others around you some mutual respect and tolerance?



Regional Safeguarding

How does this make you feel about law enforcement in relation to your safety?

North-east

How well do you know road safety?

North-west

Yorkshire

Do you know the different types of slavery?

What impact do you think AI will have on us between now and the future?

East Midlands

Do you think being 'banned' was enough?

West Midlands

Eastern England

Do you think there is enough awareness around SEND?

South-west

South-east

Is knife crime getting worse?

Do you know where to seek support if in a similar situation?

What could we do to mitigate this in future?



Helpful Links

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If you find that either yourself, a learner, or a loved one is struggling with either their mental health or other life circumstances, please have a look at these helpful links:

- **Samaritans** – 24/7 support online or by phone for those struggling – open Christmas Day
<http://www.samaritans.org/>
- **Mind** – mental health support and informative resources on mental illness
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>
- **SANE** - a leading UK mental health charity improving quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness
<https://www.sane.org.uk/>
- **Hub of Hope** - [Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope](#)
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** - [Home | Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline \(nationaldahelpline.org.uk\)](#) (Targeted at women)
- **Respect Men's Advice Helpline** - [Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men | Men's Advice Line UK \(mensadviceline.org.uk\)](#) (Targeted at men)
- **ACAS** - [Acas | Making working life better for everyone in Britain](#)
- **Citizens Advice** - [Citizens Advice](#)
- **Shelter** – Support for Homelessness – [Get help from Shelter - Shelter England](#)
- **MIND (Cost of Living Support)** - [If this speaks to you, speak to us: cost of living – Mind](#)
- **Turn2us** - [Tackling Financial Insecurity Together | Turn2us](#)
- **Step Change** - [StepChange Debt Charity. Free Expert Debt Help & Advice](#)





Cost of living 2024

The cost of living has affected many people, but there is support available, especially for apprentices. You may be able to receive help with essential expenses from your local council through programs such as the 'Household Support Fund'. This assistance can help cover costs like:

- energy and water bills.
- food.
- essential household items.

Additionally, your council may provide food vouchers for families during school holidays. Check for any benefits and financial support you may be entitled to [here](#).

Other discounts include:

- The TOTUM Apprentice Card was created by the National Union of Students to offer apprentices many of the same discounts and benefits as other students. [Apply For An Apprentice Discount Card | The Apprentice Academy](#)
- If you're 18 or over, live in a London borough, and in your first year of an apprenticeship, you can get discounted travel with an Oyster photocard. [Apprentice Oyster photocard - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](#)
- Our discounted tickets are available to everyone aged from 5 up to and including 25 years old - and you can save up to a whopping 43% on the equivalent adult all-zones ticket prices. [Discounts for everyone aged between 5 and 25 - Go North-East](#)
- Suited & Booted is a charity based in London that helps vulnerable, unemployed, and low-income men into employment by providing interview clothing and interview advice. <https://suitedbootedcentre.org.uk/about-us/>

For more information click [here](#).

Talking point: Are you aware of any other local charities who have initiatives you can participate in or support?

County Lines

'County Lines' refers to the transportation of illegal drugs from one area to another, often crossing police and local authority boundaries. This activity frequently involves children or vulnerable individuals who are coerced by gangs into drug trafficking. The term 'County Line' also describes the mobile phone line used for taking drug orders. Areas receiving the drugs, known as importing areas, are experiencing a rise in violence and weapons-related crimes as a consequence of this practice. [County Lines - National Crime Agency](#)

Drug production booming in UK's empty high streets

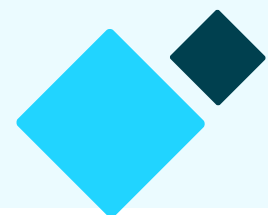
Chief Constable Richard Lewis, the National Police Chiefs' Council lead on drugs, stated that the decline of many high streets in recent years has created opportunities for criminals. 'Commercial properties are attractive to organised crime groups for many reasons,' he explained.

With large-scale shops closing, more space becomes available for cannabis production on a bigger scale. Mr. Lewis noted that reduced foot traffic during the evenings allows these cannabis farms to operate undetected.

Last year, police intensified their efforts against cannabis farms, issuing 1,000 warrants and making nearly 1,000 arrests. Gwent Police successfully raided several cannabis farms in Newport city centre, including one at the former Wildings department store, which closed in 2019.

Read more about this [here](#).

Talking point: What measures could be put in place to avoid drug production in high streets?



News of the Month

World Suicide Prevention Day – Change the Narrative 2024:

The aim of the theme is to raise awareness about the importance of changing the narrative surrounding suicide and transforming how we perceive this complex issue. Changing the narrative requires systemic change. It's about shifting from a culture of silence and stigma to one of openness, understanding, and support. This call encourages individuals, communities, organisations, and governments to engage in open, honest discussions about mental health and suicide.

We will be hosting an event on the learner portal to discuss the prevalence of suicide and the ways it can be prevented. Click [here](#) to book your slot for the event.

How to get involved and show support

- **Check in with loved ones:** Taking time to reach out to someone in your community – a family member, friend, colleague or even a stranger – could change the course of another's life.
- **Keep informed:** Consider accessing training opportunities in suicide prevention and awareness to identify and support those with suicidal thoughts and behaviour.
- **Share your story:** Individuals who have survived a suicide attempt or experienced the loss of a loved one to suicide often have valuable insights and can help us understand how the words and actions of others can be important.

More information [here](#).

Talking point: Will you be taking part in this initiative? What other things can you think of to get involved and make a difference?



Thriving Together: Learner Wellness Journeys

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Trigger Warning:

The following story contains sensitive content. We are excited to introduce a new feature in our newsletters! This initiative encourages learners to share their personal stories to support fellow learners and inspire our staff. Below, you'll find Angela's story – thank you for your participation!

Level 4 Associate Project Manager Apprentice: Angela Rawson

'In August 2020, my life changed forever. On Sunday, 2nd August, my husband took his own life in my horse's stable, leaving me to find him. We were in Covid lockdown, so support was limited, and I lived 200 miles away from my family in the Cotswolds. I made the decision not to tell my family, except for my brother, who was sworn to secrecy to spare my elderly parents from distress. That August, I had to organise my husband's funeral, pack up our house, and arrange transportation for my two horses, all while continuing my day job as a bid manager working from home. By the end of August, I had returned to North Wales, to a house I owned, with all my belongings, two horses, four dogs, and two cats. I finally told my parents what had happened, omitting the more gruesome details.

Understandably, they were devastated that their daughter had faced such a traumatic event. It took the first year just to come to terms with what had happened and to remain in my job. Fortunately, my company was incredibly supportive, and I received much-needed counselling. Fast forward to 2023, I lost my dad to cancer in September. I helped my mum with all the necessary arrangements.

I then decided to undertake an apprenticeship with QA, supported by my company. Things started off well, but in February 2024, I faced the prospect of redundancy. This triggered the realisation that I was struggling to manage both the threat of redundancy and the demands of the apprenticeship. I put my studies on hold, and finally, in May 2024, I learned my job was safe. Now, in August, I'm back on my course.



Thriving Together: Learner Wellness Journeys

Level 4 Associate Project Manager Apprentice: Angela Rawson

I will never un-see my husband's suicide. It's taken time, counselling, and the support of my family, friends, and company to reach the point where I am today.

I've chosen not to read his suicide note, believing that it won't make my tomorrow any easier. During counselling, I realised that life is for living. I cannot change the past, but I have a long road ahead of me.

Some days are tough – working full-time, keeping an eye on my mum who has Parkinson's, and looking after all the animals. But I've got this. No matter how messy they are or how much they cost, they make me laugh, and I love them to bits. They're with me on this journey.

I've also taken up gardening, which has been a tremendous help for my mental and physical wellbeing. Growing plants from seed, nurturing them into flowers, and producing food to eat and share has been an amazing experience. Now is my time to complete what I started with my apprenticeship, to demonstrate my learning in the workplace, and to be rewarded for it in the year ahead.

I am stronger now, more determined to live life in full colour, filled with fun and laughter alongside family and friends.'

Here are a few pictures that Angela has generously shared with us to feature in this article:



Learner Feedback



We make a difference.

Learner Feedback:

"I was extremely anxious about using the safeguarding service offered by QA. This was mainly due to the shame I felt about not being able to deal with my issues on my own. From the beginning I was treated with respect and kindness. I found talking in a non-judgemental, safe environment helpful. Jaspreet was so kind and patient and really helped me reflect on my situation – which as our sessions progressed included addressing horrendous bullying at work. I looked forward to the calls that I had with her, and they became my lifeline. Thank you, Jaspreet." – L7 Apprentice

"Alana supported me and was available whenever I needed her. She went above and beyond and genuinely helped, regardless of whether it was listening to my concerns before I had counselling, assisting me with reaching out for mental health support, or supporting me with QA issues." - L3 Apprentice

"Clare showed empathy, understanding, and also a willingness to learn about things affecting me personally. Could not have been happier with her support." L4 Apprentice

