



Martyn's Law

Did you know... Martyn's Law could affect your community building?

You may have seen Martyn's Law mentioned in the news and wondered whether it applies to your community building.

If you run a village hall, community centre or similar community space, it may do, but it depends on how many people you have in your building at one time.

At the moment, the proposed point where duties would begin is 200 people.

For many village halls and community centres, that number may feel quite high. Some may only reach it for the occasional large event, if at all, so it is worth putting it into perspective.

What is Martyn's Law?

Martyn's Law, formally known as the Terrorism Protection of Premises Bill, was developed following the 2017 attack at Manchester Arena.

It is named after Martyn Hett, one of the 22 people who lost their lives in the attack. His family have campaigned for stronger public safety measures to help prevent similar incidents in the future.

The aim of the proposed law is to make sure publicly accessible places have thought about what they would do if a serious incident happened.

It is not about causing alarm, but about being aware and having a plan.

Most community buildings already have fire evacuation procedures, health and safety policies, risk assessments and safeguarding arrangements in place.

This law is likely to build on what you already do, not replace it.

What could this mean for a community building?

If your building can accommodate at least 200 or more people at one time, it is likely to fall within what is being called the standard tier.

For community buildings in that category, it is likely you will need to:

- Have clear and simple emergency procedures
- Make sure those responsible for the building know what to do
- Raise awareness of risk
- Consider basic training

If the capacity of your building is less than 200 people, formal duties may not apply. However, reviewing your emergency arrangements is still good practice.

What do we know so far?

Detailed guidance is still to be released, and there will be time for organisations to prepare.

What we do know:

- The proposed starting point is 200 people
- The approach is meant to be proportionate
- Smaller community buildings are not being treated like large venues

What can you do now?

Keep it simple.

- Check your building's maximum capacity
- Think about how many people you would expect at your busiest event
- Review your emergency procedures and make sure they are up to date
- Make sure key people know what their role would be in an emergency

It's more about being confident and prepared in case of an emergency rather than making it too complicated.

For more information

If you would like to talk through what this might mean for your community building, or you would like support reviewing your policies and procedures, please email info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or telephone 01388 742040.