

PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

POLICY: TERRORISM & SECURITY INCIDENT



1. Scope and Legislative Context

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law, applies to qualifying premises where it is reasonable to expect 200 or more individuals to be present at the same time. The Old School Centre falls outside the scope of the Act because its reasonably expected attendance is below that threshold. This position should be reviewed if the use, capacity or attendance profile of the premises changes.

Although the specific duties under Martyn's Law do not apply, Council remains responsible for managing foreseeable risks to members, employees, volunteers, visitors and others affected by activities at the premises. In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957, the Council must maintain proportionate arrangements to assess risk and respond to emergencies. These procedures therefore set out practical measures for dealing with terrorism-related threats and other serious security incidents, including reporting, evacuation, invacuation, communication with the emergency services, employees and volunteer awareness, and periodic review.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedures apply to all Council members, employees, volunteers, and third-party organisations operating within The Old School Centre.

They ensure a proportionate, practical response to terrorism-related or security incidents in line with Martyn's Law (2026).

3. General Principles

- Stay vigilant, maintain good housekeeping, and report anything unusual.
- Challenge and report suspicious behaviour (hostile reconnaissance).
- If in doubt, treat it as a security incident.

4. Types of Security Incidents

- Verbal bomb threat (IED – Improvised Explosive Device).
- Suspicious package (including possible IED or white powder).
- Explosion or suspected detonation.
- Person-based threat (weapon, acid, violent behaviour).

5. Immediate Actions – RUN, HIDE, TELL

- **RUN** – Leave the area if safe.
- **HIDE** – If escape is not possible, hide out of sight and behind solid cover.
- **TELL** – Call 999 and report what is happening and where.

6. Information to Gather (If Safe)

If a verbal threat is received

- Exact wording of the threat
- Caller's number (if shown).
- Time of call.
- Time/location of detonation.
- Caller's accent, tone
- Background noises.

If a suspicious package is found

- What is it?
- Where is it located?
- When was it found?
- Why is it suspicious?
- Who has seen it?

If a person-based threat occurs

- What has happened?
- Where are they now?
- What weapon(s) are involved?
- Description of the person.
- Any casualties or hostages?

7. Identifying a Suspicious Package (HOT)

- **H** – Hidden: Is it concealed or placed oddly?
- **O** – Obvious: Does it look suspicious or out of place?
- **T** – Typical: Is it unusual for this area?

Additional warning signs include:

- Unusual smells,
- Excessive packaging,
- Wires,
- Uneven weight,
- Poor addressing,
- Ticking/hissing,
- Unexpected powders/substances.

8. Actions if You Receive or Find a Suspicious Package

- Do **NOT** touch it.
- If already handled, place it gently down and mark the location of the package (use a piece of paper with an arrow pointing at the package).
- Move away and prevent others from entering the area.
- Write down identifying details of the package from a safe distance.
- Do **NOT** use mobile phones or radios near the item.
- Keep anyone exposed to powders separate.
- Begin improvised decontamination if needed (remove outer clothing, wash skin).
- Keep witnesses available for the police.
- Inform the On Duty Officer or a council employee.

9. Reporting

- Immediate serious incidents: Call 999.
- All other concerns: Report to the on-duty Council Officer

10. Evacuation or Invacuation (Sheltering Indoors)

Some incidents require staying inside; others require leaving the premises. Employees will be told which action to take.

Actions for Volunteers & Visitors

Evacuation

Used when threats make it safer to go outside

- You may be told verbally, by email, or by the incident controller
- Do **NOT** activate the fire alarm.
- Leave by the nearest safe exit; close doors behind you.
- Wheelchair users must take their wheelchairs.
- Go to the normal assembly point first, then move to the designated 500m–1000m assembly point if instructed.
- Keep roads clear for emergency services.
- Do **NOT** re-enter the building until the Incident Controller give the all-clear.

Invacuation

Used when threats make it safer to stay inside

- Stay inside rooms away from windows.
- Lock doors if possible.
- Stay quiet and out of sight.
- Silence mobile phones.
- Await instructions from the emergency services or the Incident Controller.

Actions for Incident Controller (On Duty Officer)

Evacuation

Used when threats make it safer to go outside

- Put on a high-visibility vest.
- Do **NOT** activate the fire alarm.
- Call 999 if not already called.
- Sweep the area, shouting “Security evacuation”.
- Inform police/emergency services with any concerns.
- Follow instructions of the emergency services.

If safe to do so

- Look for suspicious items but do not touch them.
- Check offices, toilets, meeting rooms, kitchens and unlocked storage.
- Close doors and windows.
- Do **NOT** touch any suspicious item.
- Direct people to the further assembly point in Central Car Park, when instructed to do so.

Invacuation

Used when threats make it safer to stay inside

- Put on high-visibility vest.
- If covering a warden zone, sweep the area, if it is safe to do so, before leaving.
- Take grab bag and keys.
- Go to the normal assembly point.
- Direct employees to the further assembly point if required.
- Liaise with police/emergency services.

On arrival of the emergency services

- Hand off incident control noting time, name, service and position of incident controller.
- Continue to support the Incident Controller where requested.
- Maintain communication with employees, volunteers and visitors.
- Complete an incident report and attend the debrief.

11. Roles Within the Old School Centre

Incident Controller (On Duty Officer)

The on-duty Council Officer will be determined by seniority. This will normally be the Clerk or, where only one Council Officer is present on site, that officer.

Volunteers and Lovelace Community Resource Centre (LCRC)

- Follow evacuation/invacuation instructions.
- Assist visitors calmly.
- Report suspicious behaviour or items immediately.

Parish Council Employees

- Act as primary contact point for volunteers, visitors or hirers for reporting incidents.
- Report incident to Incident Controller (on Duty Council Officer).
- Support Incident Controller as required.

Third parties (hirers or organisations)

- Third parties must follow instructions.
- Report anything suspicious immediately to Council employees or volunteers.

12. Review and Adoption

This policy and procedures shall be reviewed annually and whenever there is a change to legislation or operating requirements.

Dated: 14 October 2026

Duncan McCanlis
Chair

Johnathan Jones
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer