

Message from the Metropolitan Police following the attack at a Church in Rouen

Following the terrible murder of Father Jacques Hamel in France and the attack on his congregation, our thoughts are with their loved ones, his congregation, community and once again the people of France. We are again reminded of the indiscriminate nature of terrorism and the brutal and senseless actions of these criminals. Other recent attacks have focussed on innocent people enjoying their freedoms, celebrating with their loved ones and going about their daily business side by side with other communities of every faith creed and colour.

The police have been working with church leaders here in the UK to establish a communication network through which reassurance and guidance to the Christian community can be passed. This is a terrible tragedy but we must use it to test our ability to communicate to this wider network and I want to offer the following advice.

Church leaders and their congregations here in the UK should remain alert not alarmed. There is no current intelligence to suggest any attack planning of this nature in this country. However I know these are troubling times and it makes sense for all church leaders to review their security plans and to encourage their flock to be vigilant. Any suspicious behaviour should be reported immediately through 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321.

Advice and guidance on personal security and security for places of worship, as with many other locations, can be found here <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-protective-security-advice-for-places-of-worship> on the National Counter Terrorism website.

In addition to this advice, commencing today, the Home Office are running a scheme for 8 weeks offering funding for protective security measures subject to application. Detailed information on how to apply can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-security-funding-scheme>.

Can I also encourage you all to forge close links with your local police commanders who will be able to advise you further on sensible safety precautions. I know many of you will already have a strong relationship in place.

Additional advice can be found on NaCTSO website <http://www.nactso.gov.uk>
Run Hide Tell: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-safe-film>
Suzy Lamplugh Trust: <http://www.suzylamplugh.org/>