Martyn's Law: a briefing for parish and town councils

Most councils will have something to do, and most of it is paperwork, not spending.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 reaches councils through the buildings they run and, more rarely, the paid events they hold. This briefing says what to check, who is responsible, and what to put to council. Page two has wording you can use.

Where it touches a council

What the council has	Usually
Hall or community centre it runs itself	In scope if 200 or more people could be there at once
Hall it owns, run by a separate committee	The committee normally holds the duty. Confirm it in writing
Hall charity where the council is a trustee	The council is one of the trustees who hold the duty
Pavilion or clubhouse	Only if the building itself can hold 200
Open-access park, green or playing field	Excluded
Free fete, fair or fireworks	Not a qualifying event, whatever the numbers
Ticketed or paid event for 800 or more	Qualifying event, enhanced tier

Who is responsible

Whoever **controls the building** in connection with its use, not whoever owns the freehold. If the council runs a hall, the council is responsible and should name an officer, usually the clerk, to do the work. If a committee runs it, the committee is.

The common risk is both sides assuming the other has it covered. A minuted resolution for each building settles it, and survives a change of clerk or chair.

What a standard tier building needs

For a building where 200 to 799 people could be present:

1. **Tell the Security Industry Authority** who the responsible person is, once the law is in force.
2. **Four procedures**, so far as is reasonably practicable: getting people out, bringing them inside, locking the building down, and telling people what is happening.
3. **Make sure the people who work there know them**: staff, caretakers and the volunteers who run events.

There's no inspection to pass, nothing to buy and no consultant required. Places of worship and schools stay at standard tier whatever their size.

How to count to 200

The most people who could reasonably be inside at once, including staff and volunteers. Look at the fire risk assessment, the premises licence if there is one, and the busiest booking of the year. People, not seats. A once-a-year show counts.

When

The Act was passed in April 2025. The Government expects the duties to start in spring 2027 and will confirm the date with notice. There is time, but the list of buildings and the resolution can be done at the next meeting.

Further reading

The NALC and SLCC advice notes on Martyn's Law, the Home Office statutory guidance on gov.uk, and **venuerecord.co.uk/guides/parish-councils**.

The Venue Record is independent and not connected to the Home Office, the Security Industry Authority, NALC, SLCC or any government body. A plain-English summary, not legal advice, and nothing here makes any building compliant. Check the current guidance at gov.uk.

venuerecord.co.uk
Free to copy and forward

For the agenda, the minutes and the risk register

Agenda item

Martyn's Law (Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025). To receive the clerk's report listing the council's buildings and regular events, to agree which may be in scope, and to resolve who is the responsible person for each.

Draft resolution

That the council:

1. notes the clerk's report and the list of buildings and events attached to it;
2. resolves that, for [name of building], the responsible person under the Act is [the council / the management committee of …], and asks the clerk to confirm this in writing with [the committee];
3. for any building the council controls where 200 or more people could be present, asks the clerk to prepare the four procedures and bring them to [date];
4. will review this at least once a year, alongside the insurance renewal, and whenever a building's use or layout changes.

Risk register entry

Risk	Consequence	Control	Owner and review
Responsibility under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 is unclear for council-owned buildings, or procedures are not in place when the duties start.	Enforcement action by the Security Industry Authority; people unsure what to do in an attack; reputational harm.	List of buildings and events kept; responsible person minuted for each; procedures written and circulated; record of who has read them.	Clerk. Reviewed annually with the insurance renewal.

The clerk's list

Building or event	Who controls it	Most people at once	Where the figure came from	Entry checked or paid?	In scope?	Next step and who

"Entry checked or paid" only matters for events: an event is a dated, ticketed occasion with 800 or more people at once. Keep open to the public, and a checked condition of entry such as a ticket or payment. For buildings, only the number matters.