

How have terrorist actions shaped modern policing in the United Kingdom?

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Introduction:

Since the Gunpowder plot of 1605, where Guy Fawkes' plans to commit Regicide against King James by use of explosives to destroy Parliament, Great Britain has always had the threat and actions of terrorist activity looming over the Union (*Historic Royal Palaces, n.d*). 420 years later in June 2026, the threat of terrorism is still prevalent as ever, as persons of many different classes, creeds and beliefs jeopardise the safety of the British public.

These terrorist actions have had profound effects on the way we police, ever since the rise of the Irish Republican Army in the 1910's, to the wave of Islamic Extremism from the early 2000's to where we are now with the rise of far-right attacks and violence plaguing the 2020's. These threats are from changing foes, and the way these attacks occur and who they target change with them. With this, policing has to change to quell and foil these plots, before people can be hurt or killed.

From this, this research seeks to answer the question, **how have terrorist actions shaped modern policing in the United Kingdom?** This may come across as a very broad question, and in turn making the research broad, but this will be limited to attacks and incidents in the last fifteen years to provide a more focused answer.

The aims of the research will be as follows;

- What attacks have happened in the UK in the last fifteen years, and which ones have had the most influence on the public?
- How have these impacted the British public?
- How has policing changed in the last fifteen years from these incidents?
- Is the change detrimental or positive?

The above will look to be achieved reviewing the current literature on relevant topics. A range of sources will be scrutinised for their relevancy, and assistance in answering the objectives above. These questions and the research itself are necessary to see if police forces are adapting well to the terrorist threats of the modern age, and if they are protecting their staff, officers, and civilians alike. If the research shows that the change has been detrimental, then advice will be created from the research and collation of it on how to improve policing with terrorist incidents. However, if the research is positive, this dissertation will highlight this and show how these positive changes are assisting police and civilians alike.

The dissertation itself will be split into four distinct chapters. The first will be the literature review. This will detail the results of research into the topic, and will showcase scrutiny of the sources, and the information itself. This will also highlight what needs to be focussed on in the second chapter, which is the research methodology. This chapter will explain in detail about the difference of qualitative and quantitative research. It will also look to explain why the use of a questionnaire with a range of different participants from policing and civilian backgrounds was

used to collate the research gathered from peers in this dissertation. The third chapter will be the analysis of the results gathered from this qualitative research, and how it fits into the existing discussions of this topic and how it has informed the question that is looking to be answered. The last chapter will be the conclusion, rounding the dissertation off and looking to concisely provide an answer to the question, how have terrorist actions shaped modern policing in the United Kingdom?

Chapter One - Literature Review:

In this chapter, the intention is to review the literature relating to terrorist attacks that have happened in the last fifteen years in the United Kingdom, to find out which of these have influenced the British public the most, and in turn how they have changed policing, and if the change is positive or detrimental.

Gaps in research:

After conducting this review, it is clear that there are gaps within the research for this topic. Most of the literature produced in relation to terrorism covers other countries who have been affected by terrorism, and not the UK. However, there are indeed a few articles that cover terrorism in the UK, although the main focus of these sources is the conflict known as 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland, spanning from the 1960's to the 1990's.

This is a common theme in British terrorism research, as the troubles were indeed monumental on the psyche of the British people of that generation, but there are still a lot of significant terrorist attacks that have happened since 2010 that have also affected the British public. Peter Chalk and William Rosenau call the troubles '*the most significant internal security threat to the United Kingdom*' over the past 100 years (p1, Chalk, Rosenau, 2004). This does highlight the significance of the terrorist actions perpetrated by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and shows the influence on the British public, but this research does not fall into the category of attacks that have happened in the last fifteen years.

Due to the strong influence that the IRA had on the United Kingdom at this time, it is clear why there is a lot of information and research delving into the topic. The troubles lasted for around thirty years, and in comparison, the scope of the research that is being conducted for this essay is relatively contemporary, covering the last fifteen years. There has been over sixty years for research to be completed on the IRA and Irish terrorism in the United Kingdom, whereas the period for research being reviewed for this dissertation is four times less than this.

Furthermore, to the above, there is little information from professional research and discussions into the most impactful attack in the last fifteen years. This is a clear gap in research, as it speaks about attacks on more of a broad level. Examples of more recent attacks are only mentioned in passing, and normally refer to the more notorious attacks. Attacks such as the 7/7 bombings, and attacks inflicted by the IRA are out of the year range being researched in this dissertation.

The research conducted in this literature review, and the dissertation aims to identify what would be regarded as the most influential attack on the British public and British policing as a whole. This has not been explicitly stated or outlined by any other scholarly articles found whilst conducting this literature review. This dissertation will produce a more '*modern*' answer, and fill the gap of a more contemporary view to sit aside other pieces of research in this field. All of this will help to answer one of the main research objectives to this dissertation, '*what attack has*

had the most influence on the public in the last fifteen years', along with how this attack has shaped modern policing, and if this change is detrimental or positive.

Most influential attacks post-2011:

Looking at incidents that fit these criteria, the list of the attacks that have occurred in the UK over the last fifteen years is, unfortunately, an exceedingly long one. 925 attacks from 2010 – 2019, and 130 from 2020 – 2021 have occurred, (Statista, 2021). Also, this is not an exhaustive list, with even more occurring after this point.

After conducting independent research online and viewing items separate to other scholarly articles, it could be argued that the most impactful attack on the British public is the Manchester arena bombing in 2017. A freedom of information act request was made in 2022 in relation to the death tolls of terror attacks in the United Kingdom, and states that *'the year ending March 2018 includes 31 victims of the terrorist attacks... this includes those in the Manchester Arena bombing, and the London Bridge attack, and also includes 11 victims from the Shoreham air crash'*. (ONS, 2022). According to the Sir John Saunders inquiry into the bombing, 22 of these fatalities were indeed from the Manchester bombing. (p5, Saunders, 2022). The brevity of this document and the number of changes that were brought in from this bombing, such as the focus on major incidents and improvements in first aid for officers does indeed highlight the severity and the influence that this attack had on the public psyche. This document will be mentioned throughout this chapter, as it is vital to each theme of research conducted.

Impact of attacks on the British public:

Discussing the effect that terrorism has on the British public and how it has impacted society, there are a lot of articles and research that solely cover the effect of British Islamic terror attacks on the Muslim population. This research speaks about the effect of policing and counterterrorism such as the Prevent scheme on British Muslims. An article produced by Madeline-Sophie Abbas delves into this, by interviewing British Muslims from Leeds and Bradford, which provides a great insight into how these communities feel in the wake of attacks and being targeted by counter-terrorism policing. One person interviewed stated - *'there's certain people within the Muslim community who are scared themselves and like in a gossiping way they'll be like ... you can't do this or talk about this because they'll come and raid your house'* (Abbas, 2018). This provides an insight into the ramifications of terrorist attacks towards Muslims themselves, and how they are having a detrimental effect on the members of the religion the perpetrators are supposedly committing these atrocities for.

This was an area of research that was not considered before this literature review, but has added a new level of depth and a new side to cover from the question posed. It shows that fear of being caught in the danger zone of an attack is not the only ramification of these terror incidents, but it causes fear in minority communities with them concerned that they will be wrongly accused of being extremist for simply practising their own beliefs.

According to Tell Mama, an anti-islamophobia charity, in 2024 the charity received a total of 6313 reports of Islamophobia across the UK. This was an increase of 165% since 2022. (Tellmama, 2025). In this document, they state that this has been exacerbated by the Israeli – Palestinian war that started in 2023, and also the Southport attack in 2024. The latter was not deemed a terrorist attack in the traditional sense, as the attack was deemed to not be for a political or religious motivation.

According to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the definition of a terrorist attack under the Terrorism Act 2000 is, '*The use or threat of actions such as serious violence against a person or serious damage to property... where they are designed to influence the government, or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public. The use or threat must also be for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause*'. (CPS, n.d).

Although this senseless attack did indeed have a profound effect on the United Kingdom, causing a multitude of riots and a clear increase in islamophobia and racism, it is irrelevant to this dissertation due to the fact it is simply not classed as terrorism.

However, the BBC did report in 2017, Islamophobia rose by 505% in the month after the Manchester bombing (BBC, 2017), an attack mentioned in the first part of this chapter. This does indeed show that there was also a detrimental effect on British Muslims, as the ramifications against these minority groups were increasing on such a large scale.

Referring back to the definition of terror attacks issued by the CPS, is that serious damage to property can also occur. This is more of the case in car ramming attacks, and more severe cases such as bombings, where catastrophic damage can be inflicted on property as well as persons. According to research conducted by the Home Office in 2023, £171.8 million was spent on the aftermath of the five UK terror attacks in 2017. Out of this, £116 million was spent on the Manchester Arena bombing.

This is a considerable amount of money compared to the second highest of the research, which was the London Bridge attack. This cost the government £28.3 million, which is £87,700,000 less than the cost of the Manchester Arena Bombing. (GOV.UK, 2022). This figure will affect the government spending, but also will in turn have a ripple effect on the British public through increased cost to the taxpayer. This was an unexpected effect of terrorism discovered while conducting research for this dissertation, and shows that there are financial implications to many different types of catastrophes.

When someone thinks of the impact of a terror attack on the public, they most likely think of how their mental health is affected. The intent of this section of the chapter was to cover this, but after conducting research it is clear that this area is not covered as much in scholarly articles and essays. The link of perpetrator and mental health is covered much more than mental health and victim. This is a clear gap in research of this topic, that will be discussed later on in this dissertation. There is a document that discusses the effects of terror attacks on mental health, but this was created in 2007 in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks. It does provide some useful information, such as *depressive symptoms rising in the United States for four weeks after the attack*, for them to drop again. (M.G and BREWIN, 2007). However, this document is now nineteen years old at the time of writing, and also covers the mental health of the United States public, rather than the British public. This has highlighted that the feeling of the British public after an attack must be targeted in the further research that will be completed for this essay. This will help gauge the impact of attacks on the British people on a broader scale.

Changes to policing in the last fifteen years post-terror incidents:

It is no surprise that policing has changed in the last fifteen years. The change has been noticeable and profound, with increased demand on officers, decreasing morale on shift and more of a reliance on technology for officers as policing moves with the times.

In 2023, the intention for officers to quit were at their highest level in the past five years. (p20, Graham L, 2023). However, the question is, how much of the changes have been influenced by terrorism, and is this change positive or negative?

As mentioned previously, the most profound and impactful terror incident in the last fifteen years can be stated as the Manchester bombing. No other tragedy defined as a terror incident has come close to the impact and changes that the Manchester bombing brought into modern policing.

One event worth noting is the Southport attack in 2024, where Axel Rudakubana murdered three children in a dance class in Southport. This led to UK-wide riots and the discussion of changes to terror legislation. However, due to Rudakubana's motive being purely to inflict as much damage and death as possible for no discernible cause or ideology, this incident has not been classed as terrorism, and thus is not beneficial to the research and answering the question posed by this dissertation.

This incident led the Prime Minister at the time of the incident, Keir Starmer, to order a review into the '*definition of terrorism*'. This is after comments were made by him stating that '*terrorism has changed*' and there is a '*new dangerous threat*' from extreme violent attacks such as this (BBC, 2025). This horrific incident itself can be linked back to the Manchester bombing, as it is said that Rudakubana had a fascination with terror attacks, school shootings and described the Manchester Bombing was a '*good battle*'. (Edrich, Britton, 2025).

This is a clear example of how the most troubled and vulnerable can be inspired to do something horrific. This was recognised in Sir John Saunders' report into the Manchester Bombing in 2019, where out of the three volumes produced for the report, the third section covered radicalisation and preventability in great detail. (Saunders, 2019).

To try and combat this radicalisation, Prevent is a scheme has been implemented by the British government. Prevent is a scheme that is covered by CONTEST. CONTEST is the strategy for counterterrorism in the United Kingdom, implemented in 2003 in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks in New York, and even public health emergencies similar to COVID-19. This prevent scheme aims to tackle the "*radicalisation*" process by which individuals are drawn into terrorism. (Baker-Beall, et al, 2024).

Sir John Saunders stated in his report that when police officers assess a radicalisation risk, more actions will be undertaken to support the vulnerable person with many different services working in a tighter cohesion. This will then be living up to the name of Prevent and do more to prevent these persons of risk from committing these heinous acts. (p36, GOV.UK). This change to the way the police work with prevent has clearly had an effect, as there were 5,737 referrals to prevent in 2019, compared to 8,778 in 2025. (Gov.uk, 2025).

However, to say that these statistics are as a direct result of the inquiry is naïve, as there are a multitude of factors that could influence this. These could include factors such as increased isolationism brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and geopolitical events bringing on extreme views such as the Gaza-Israel war and the rise of the Reform political party, and the far-right in the UK. Whatever the reason, more police referrals to prevent can be argued as a positive change, as this shows that officers are aware of the danger-signs and attacks and radicalisation is being prevented on a larger scale since the report.

Although, in the wake of the Southport attack as mentioned prior, a review of Prevent was conducted by Lord Anderson. This report details the strengths and failures of the system, and although there may be more referrals, this report does highlight that some persons do slip through the cracks, and can be proved as failures to the Prevent system in hindsight, such as Axel Rudakubana. More referrals do not directly mean results, but Lord Anderson does see these cases as anomalies, and sees that all persons involved in the system, including police, are trying their best to produce positive results. (p8, p132, Anderson, 2025).

However, it can be argued that the most important and impactful changes on policing came from volume two of Sir John Saunders' inquiry, which covered the emergency response to the attack. The enquiry details that Salman Abdei detonated a bomb attached to himself as the arena was in a state of egress.

There was confusion in the aftermath of this bomb that there was also a marauding attack or active shooter incident occurring at the same time. The report details that there were fears of a '*Paris type scenario*' of a marauding terror attack at 23:37hrs. This was over an hour after the bombing had occurred (p639, Saunders). This would have jeopardised the safety of the first responders, and caused the responding medics to hold their positions a considerable distance away from the site of the bombing.

The police did what they could to help the victims of the attack, but the delay and lack of paramedics on scene meant a lot the victims died needlessly at the scene.

This inflection led to a direct change in policing, as officers now get twelve hours of first aid training and a refresher course. According to the College of Policing, this is a direct change as a result of the Manchester bombing. These changes include '*management of catastrophic bleeding*' and the implementation of '*ten-second triage*', to help save more lives in attacks such as the Manchester bombing. (College of Policing, 2023).

Updated first aid in relation to catastrophic bleeding will have an effect on average response officers too. This can be classed as a transferrable skill, and can potentially be used in any emergency on persons requiring first aid, not just a terror attack. The rise of knife crime victims on a general scale will benefit from trauma packs and more skilled officers at scene, and hopefully help save more lives.

According to the UK Parliament, there was a 10% decrease in hospital admissions from sharp object attacks in 2024/25, compared to 2023/24. (Houses of Parliament, 2025). This does correlate with the implementation of increased first aid training for officers across the UK, but doesn't prove that this is a direct result of the changes.

Targets for research methodology:

This highlights that more research will need to be conducted into the use of first aid, and how police officers on the ground feel about these changes and if they have used these new skills. This would help prove if the changes highlighted from the Manchester bombing have indeed been positive and seen by officers on the frontline. Questions will also be asked about prevent, and how officers feel about the changes implemented by the prevent section of the Saunders inquiry. These questions will then help inform the research already conducted, and provide evidence to further answer the question of this dissertation.

Chapter Two - Methodology:

Although there is a significant amount of information in relation to terror incidents in the United Kingdom, the scope of the question looking to be answered does raise some key gaps to help formulate a definitive answer. This means that a method of research must be utilised, asking a wide range of persons a broad scope of questions to help formulate a balanced and varied response to the question if terrorist attacks that have happened in the last fifteen years in the United Kingdom have influenced the British public the most, and in turn how they have changed policing and if the change is positive or detrimental.

Sample group:

The sample group identified to answer the questions posed will be persons from both policing and non-policing backgrounds. This will be vital to compare how answers differ from those working as officers and those who are disconnected from the policing sphere. Asking civilians and officers the same questions alike will assist in answering the key questions posed by this research. The questions '*which attacks have had the most influence on the public,*' and '*how they have been affected by them*' will be key, as civilians will give the best insight into answering these topics to formulate an answer to the question the dissertation is trying to solve. Furthermore, officers will also be quizzed to help answer the questions of if policing has *changed* from these, and if so, *how*? This means that all four questions posed by this dissertation will be answered by the sample group within this action of qualitative research.

The gaps identified in the literature review showed that the scope and range of the topic covered to help inform the question were too broad, and the qualitative research will be conducted will help to narrow the period of time down to the last fifteen years. The scope of the research conducted was also focused on attacks such as 9/11 and 7/7, which is out of the year range.

Qualitative research itself will be focused on, as it is a lot more suitable than quantitative research for the questions to be answered. Qualitative research is defined as '*collecting and analysing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences*' (Bhandari, 2020). This means that it is the most appropriate way to gauge thoughts and feelings in relation to a certain topic, and that topic in this case is views on terrorism from both the public and police officers alike. Another online journal also states that '*qualitative research stands out for its unique ability to capture the richness of social phenomena involving human experiences and perspectives*' (Lim, 2024). To capture the widest range of experiences and perspectives, both police officers and civilians will be asked questions in relation to terrorism, to gauge how persons inside the law enforcement sphere and outside of it feel about the changes and impact that terrorism has had on the United Kingdom in recent years.

Use of Questionnaire and Ethical Considerations:

The most appropriate way to gain this data will be through use of a questionnaire, that will be entirely anonymous. Participants will be asked if they are serving officers or not, but that will be the only identifier. This will be necessary to conduct an appropriate analysis of results, comparing both civilian and police officer results and identifying trends or differences between them. Anonymity is imperative in this research, as it has been stated online that '*when participants are assured of their anonymity, they are more likely to provide honest and accurate responses, which reduces the risk of social desirability bias and other forms of response bias*'.

(Lee, 2025). Honest and accurate responses are key to the data gathering, and will strengthen the reliability and validity of the data produced, whilst giving the most accurate results. If the persons taking part are unknown, they will not feel pressured or coerced into providing an answer that is more socially acceptable, and one that is not their true beliefs. The sensitive nature of the survey itself may turn people away from answering, so the anonymity itself may entice more participants to take part. This confidentiality is imperative to making the questionnaire ethical. Along with this, all participants will be informed that they are taking part for research and will only take part if they wish to do so, with full explanations of the data they produce explained to them. This will insure their full informed consent. The survey itself will be facilitated by use of Google docs, which will ensure the data's encryption and protection of the data for all participants involved. (Google, n.d.).

A questionnaire has been chosen for this study over another means of gathering data such as an interview or case study for numerous important reasons. If only one person is interviewed on one topic or area, it will not cover the gaps identified in the research, as qualitative data is needed to cover all these gaps.

The questions to be asked themselves will be formed around the gaps identified in the literature review. Questions will cover topics such as the views of the police response to terror attacks, and what has come from the reform of the Saunderson's inquiry, focusing on first aid and terror attack prevention. Officers will be more familiar with these changes, as they will come across them in work. Civilians may be less familiar with these, and have certain views on these incidents and the police service in general.

Following on from this, the ease and accessibility of a questionnaire also increase the suitability for this research assignment. Questionnaires tend to be easy to follow, access and can entice people from all broad walks of life. Questionnaires are normally filled out online through the use of a link. The ease of accessing it, and the short amount of time it takes for a person to complete the task should assist in getting a large number of persons to complete the questionnaire. According to the US National Library of Medicine, a small sample grouping for a questionnaire is *unscientific and unethical*. The impossibility to study an entire population means that for the best results, a suitable sample size is needed to garner the best results. (Andrade, 2020). This is what will hopefully be achieved from the sample grouping, and will formulate an interesting set of answers to inform the answers to the best of their ability.

Research Limitations:

Although the research methodology is focused, there may still be some problems that surface. Issues with translating data may arise, so the calculations will be done multiple times to ensure accuracy for the data that is produced from the research conducted. The platform used for the questionnaire will also be online, so technical issues may be present or show themselves when people try to complete it. The questionnaire will be tested as a pilot study to see if it is working as it should be, and then it will be sent out in the correct channels. A faulty system of surveying will turn people away from participating, and in turn will drastically narrow and shrink the sample size, not producing the most accurate results possible. If any problems do arise, these will be looked at and efforts will be made to rectify them as soon as can be, to protect the integrity of the research and the data of the questionnaire itself.

Chapter Three - Results Analysis:

An analysis of the data gathered from the survey produced has been conducted, and it has provided some interesting results. There are some parallels with the research and information gathered in the literature review. This includes details such as the Manchester bombing having a clear impact on officers and the general public alike, and also the improvements in first aid training seen by police officers. It is also clear that the persons surveyed do believe that policing has indeed changed since 2010, and that this change has been influenced by terrorist actions.

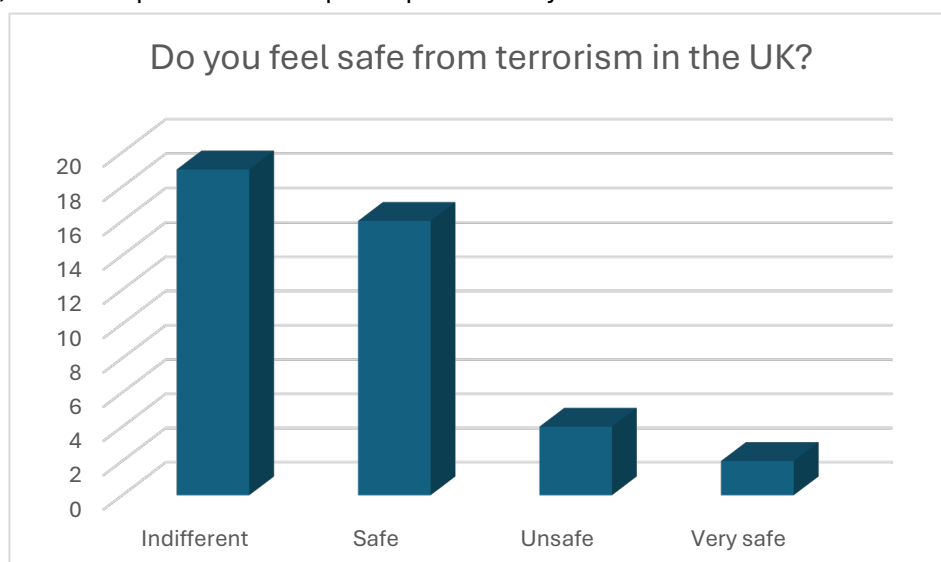
It was important that a range of persons, both officers and civilians took part in this survey. This has led to around half of the participants being serving officers, and half being members of the general public. The focus on qualitative research and covering more contemporary topics has indeed filled the gaps identified in the literature review. This paired with the range of persons surveyed has produced a wide range of fair, qualitative answers.

Firstly, out of the forty persons surveyed, the majority of respondents (21) stated they were 'slightly concerned' about being a victim to terrorist actions, and this was split between officers and civilians. Twelve were not overly concerned, and six were indifferent. This is similar to a UK Government report from 2023, where 48% of participants said they felt '*fairly safe*' from terrorism in the UK. (UK Government, 2023). This was different to what was expected, as both officers and civilians answered with similar results.

These results are seen in the graph below:



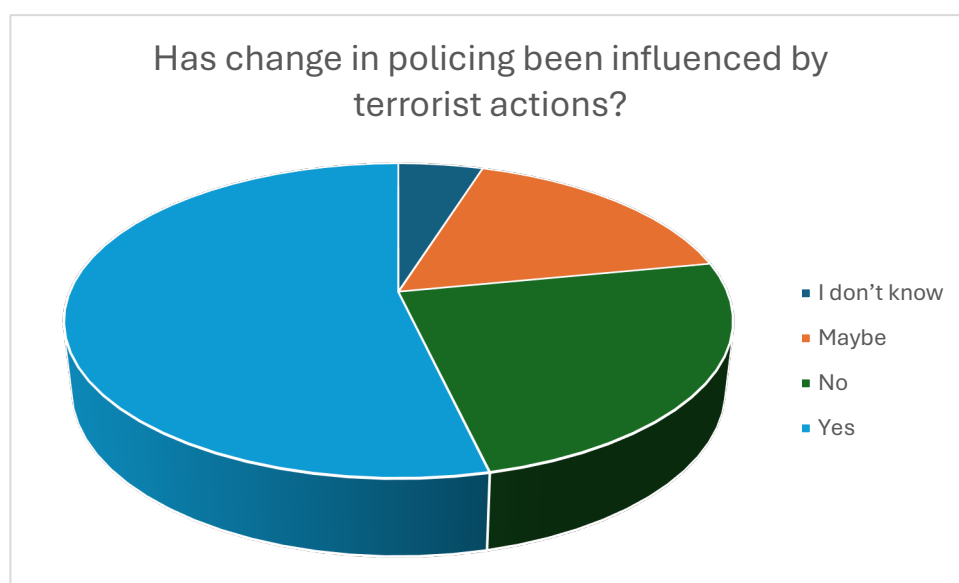
From this, a similar question asked participants if they felt safe from terrorism in the UK.



This shows that the majority of participants asked either felt indifferent on the issue, or felt safe, with nineteen feeling indifferent on the matter, and sixteen feeling safe from terrorism. The data is different to the graph seen prior, as indifference does not correlate, when it can be supposed they would be roughly equal due to the similar question asked. This research in particular could be interpreted to show how the British public have been impacted by recent terror attacks, and may point to the fact that policing changes from them have been positive, as a large majority of participants do feel safe on issues surrounding terrorism.

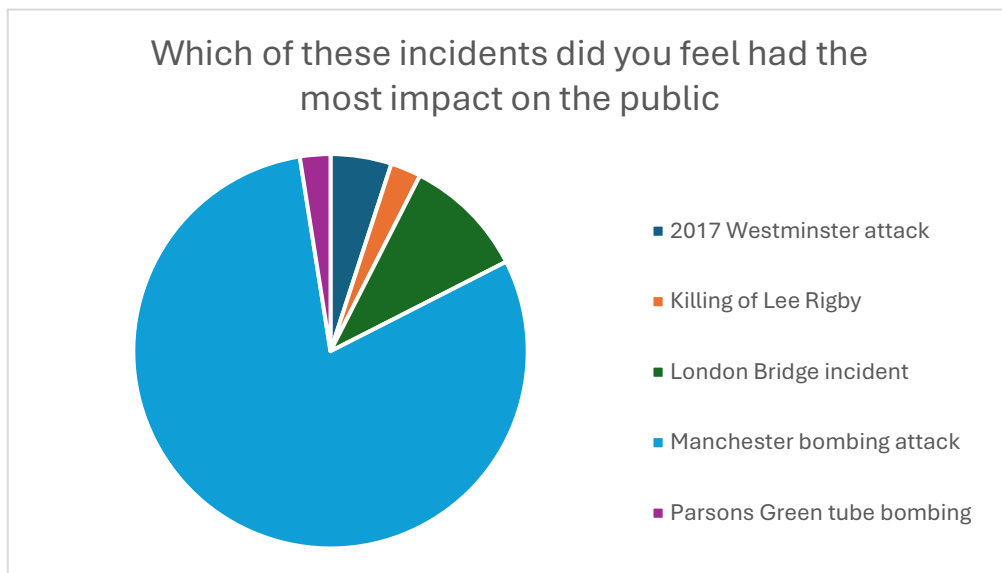
Participants were also asked if they think policing had changed since 2010. Out of the twenty-nine officers asked, twenty-eight said yes. Out of the twelve civilians asked, three didn't know, two said no and seven said yes. From this, participants were then asked if they had thought this change was due to terrorism.

The results can be seen in the graph below:

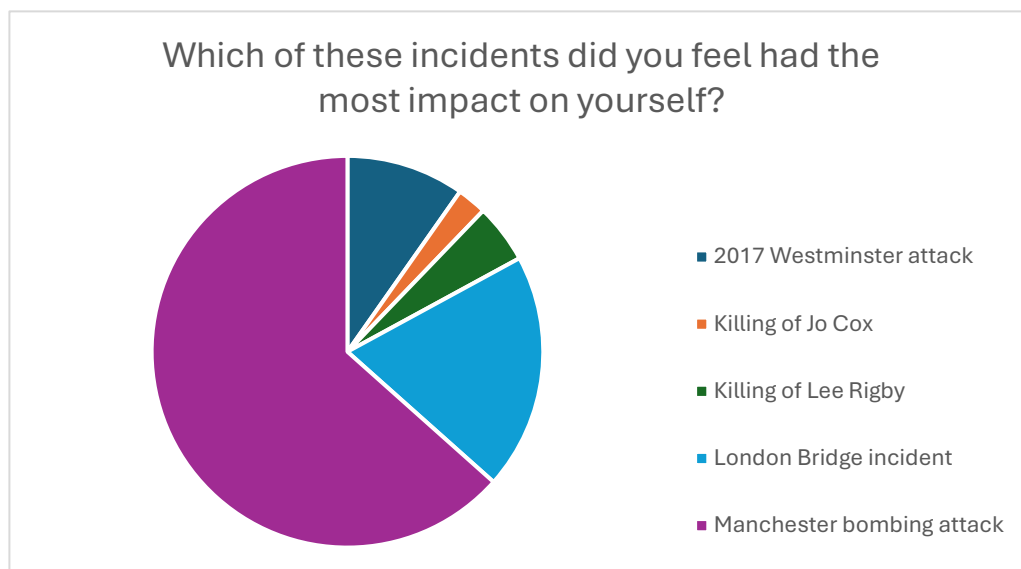


The majority of participants, twenty-two, believed that changes in policing had indeed been influenced by terrorist actions. This can be connected to the fact that the majority of participants feel safe from terrorism and only hold slight concerns for an attack affecting them. This change in policing directly due to terrorist actions may subdue fears in participants from terrorist actions as police forces and officers have adapted suitably to these concerns from terrorists and terrorist groups.

When asked directly about how policing changed in response to the actions, many mentioned increased intelligence-based policing, raising awareness of incidents, stronger counter terror policing, improvements on major incident actions and better training for first aid at mass casualty incidents. Many of these changes, most notably the latter three were brought in as a direct result of the Sir John Saunders inquiry, as highlighted and identified in the literature review. This correlates to the graph above with participants feeling largely safe over terrorism in the UK, and further proves the idea that police changes work hand-in-hand with this.



In relation to the above, participants were asked from a list of terrorist incidents which ones had the largest effect on the public, and them personally. This ranged from the Manchester bombing, the 2017 London attacks and the murders of individual persons such as Jo Cox, David Amess and Lee Rigby.

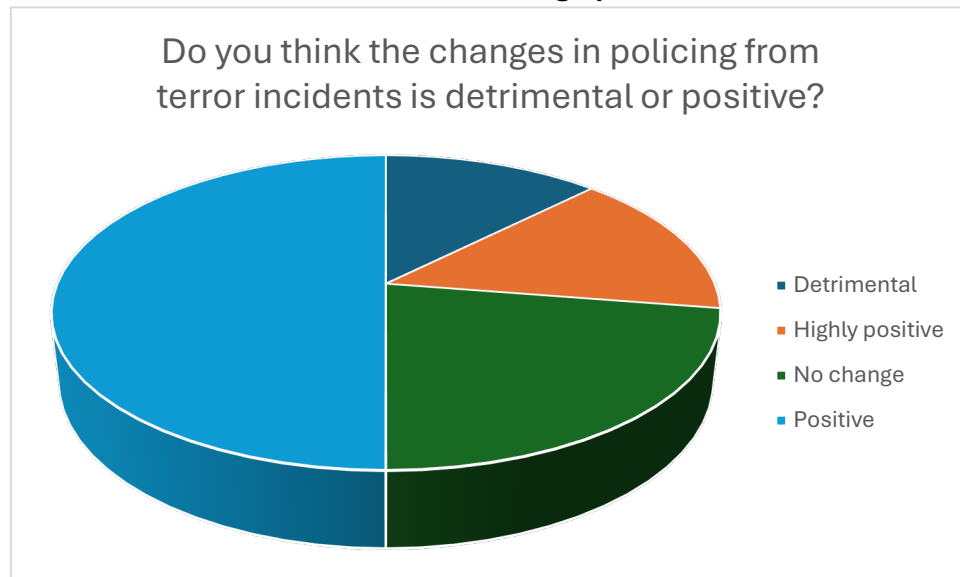


It is clear from the charts above that both questions show the overwhelming effect that the Manchester bombing had on the public personally, and on a wider scale. 26 persons stated it had the strongest effect on them, and 32 stated it had the strongest effect on the public, out of the 40 persons who took part in the survey. This correlates with the findings in the literature review, and this could simply be down the fact it is the deadliest terror attack in the UK since the 7/7 bombings in 2005, and as such is prominent in the public conscience. (p5, *Sir John Saunders, 2021*).

From the results above, it is clear that from the persons surveyed, the most common view is that the Manchester bombing was indeed the most impactful terrorist incident since 2010. This paired with the details gathered from participants in the survey in relation to changes in policing due to terror incidents as mentioned prior, shows the correlation with the Manchester bombing and these changes. This links in with one of the questions this dissertation set out to answer, which simply was '*which attack has had the most influence on the public?*' The answer to this is clearly the Manchester attack, by a strong margin.

The final question asked to participants simply asked if these changes were detrimental or positive. This is also one of the key questions that this dissertation was looking to answer.

This can be seen in the graph below:



Out of the forty participants asked, twenty stated the change was positive, with five stating the change is detrimental, and six stating the change is highly positive. From this, it is clear that the overall consensus is that the changes are positive.

These results have helped influence and identify the objectives posed to answer the overall question for this dissertation. With well over half of those asked stating that the Manchester bombing had the most impact on the public and them on an individual level, this correlates with the findings from the literature review, helping to show that the Manchester bombing has indeed been the most impactful terror incident in the last fifteen years.

Furthermore, the questions asked on safety around terror attacks and public perception of them show that there has been an impact on the public. This impact can be interpolated to assist with answering the question, '*has policing changed from these incidents, and is it detrimental or positive*'? The changes discussed by survey participants included improvements to identifying terror suspects by improved intelligence, better partner working to prevent incidents and minimise casualties post incidents through use of the established reporting framework (*METHANE*) (*JESIP, n.d*), and improvements in first aid training for officers.

The fact that a large majority of participants felt safe from terror attacks, paired with the fact that over half of participants felt that the changes mentioned above were overall positive show that these results paired up reinforce the fact that policing has indeed changed from terror incidents, for the better.

Chapter Four – Research Findings

Recommendations for practice:

This dissertation set out to answer the question asking, *‘How have terrorist actions in the last fifteen years shaped modern policing in the United Kingdom’?* The research conducted and gathered from academic sources, paired with surveys conducted from a diverse range of participants have culminated to assist in giving a firm and final answer to this question. However, the answer is indeed multi-faceted.

Contribution to theory:

It is clear that the research conducted from academic sources such as government reports like the Sir John Saunders enquiry, and contemporary articles from the time point towards the Manchester arena bombing to be the most impactful terrorist incident in the last fifteen years. This was one of the key objectives set out to answer the question above, as this would then formulate the impact of this incident on the public and policing in general. The research conducted also highlighted the ways in which policing has changed over the last fifteen years in the United Kingdom, as a direct result of terrorist incidents and the Manchester bombing in particular.

New processes were introduced after this incident for police forces to use such as the push of the (M)ETHANE principles for officers to use at major incidents, JESIP principles and closer work and co-ordination with other emergency services at these incidents. This paired with the overhaul of first-aid training for officers does show an impact on modern policing, and the list of changes that came in the aftermath of this attack does add brevity to the discussion that policing did indeed change, and has changed for the better in the wake of such an atrocity.

However, the findings of research did also show some negatives of terror attacks, and the Manchester bombing in particular. These negatives relate to another objective this dissertation set out to find, being *‘how these incidents have impacted the British public’?* Research was discovered to show that there was a five-fold increase in Islamophobia and racist incidents against Muslims in the United Kingdom the month after the Manchester area attack itself. This adds more weight to the argument that the attack was indeed the most impactful on a public level, and in turn causing increased demand on police forces in response to this anti-Islamic hate as well. This assists in answering another objective of this dissertation, *‘how has policing changed in the last 15 years, and is the change detrimental or positive’?* This is evidence of a detrimental change and most certainly a negative impact on police forces, as this shows higher crime rates in communities for the police to tackle, paired with a higher workload rate of racist, anti-Islamic incidents. This workload and the possible trauma of violent incidents would also have a detrimental effect on officers mental health, and is further evidence of how modern policing has been shaped by terror attacks.

The research conducted in the survey sent out to officers and civilians built on the information gained in the literature review, and did indeed solidify a lot of the information already gathered from academic research in this review. Questions were asked in relation to how those asked felt about terrorism, how they felt that policing had changed from it and what attack has the most impact on them and the public. The Manchester bombing was shown to be the most impactful to the public according to participants, and these participants also stated that changes to policing on a whole that have come from terror incidents have been positive changes. This has

also solidified the research conducted in the literature review and reinforces that the changes from these attacks have on the whole led to positive changes to policing in the UK.

Limitations of the study:

Although much information was gained from the literature review and the survey conducted, some limitations were noted and highlighted. It was clear that a lot of the literature and research found on the topic of terrorism in the UK focused on the Irish Republican Army, who were most prevalent from the 1960's to 1998 when the Belfast agreement (also known as the Good Friday agreement), was signed and brought into law. (*Northern Ireland Office, 1998*). The issue with this is that it covers a period around thirteen years prior to the area of research that this dissertation was looking to analyse. This showed that there is a clear gap in the research of more recent terror incidents and their effects, and did help prove and justify the creation of this dissertation.

The research conducted solved this problem as this dissertation has now proved there is an insight into the topic and research has been conducted. The survey research conducted did indeed confirm the ideas and topics raised in the literature review, that the Manchester bombing has had the most impact on the United Kingdom, and has led to positive changes overall.

Recommendations for further research:

If the research were to be conducted again, it would be beneficial to speak to and target the survey research at persons who have had direct involvement in the response to terror attacks, such as first responders or those in counter-terrorism roles. This would give the reader an even better insight into the changes from terrorism seen first-hand by those who specialise in combatting it, and would add further credibility to the survey results.

Conclusion:

Overall, the research completed, discovered and identified throughout this dissertation is highly significant. It is important as it can be used to identify the thoughts of officers and the public on how policing terrorism, and policing in general can be made better for everyone involved, on all sides of policing and public. As alluded to in the prior bodies of text, and after viewing and creating research in relation to the topic, this dissertation has come to the conclusion that terrorist actions in the last fifteen years have shaped modern policing for both the better. It has also filled a gap in existing research, shedding more light on the effects of recent terrorist incidents in the United Kingdom and has analysed them critically, rather than focusing on incidents perpetrated by the IRA, or other incidents prior to 2011.

Improvements in emergency service cohesion, first aid and major event policing have been identified by the research conducted. This shows evidence that the positives outweigh the negatives in relation to the terrorists incidents studied. It is clear that the most impactful attack covered has been the Manchester bombing, as proved by both the literature review and qualitative research. A lot of these positive changes came from the failures highlighted in the Sir John Saunders inquiry that was produced after this incident. The research conducted has proved that changes and the adaptations that police forces have implemented after this enquiry have, and likely will prevent attacks. This in turn will save lives and will mean that the failures highlighted from the Manchester bombing in particular will never be repeated again.

(7095 words) + ethics and proposal - (8595 words)

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