Problems with PREVENT

1. The current strategy lacks empirical evidence to justify its focus upon religion and theology over more relevant and influential factors, such as socio-economic backgrounds or political disaffection.

2. In September 2016, over 140 experts attacked PREVENT's Extremism Risk Guidance 22+ in an open letter to the Government.¹

3. PREVENT has caused widespread alienation and mistrust amongst Muslim communities² for conflating religion with extremism and attempting to seemingly gather intelligence on Muslim communities through individuals embedded in local services.³

In 2010 the installation of 218 CCTV cameras in Muslim areas of Birmingham - 72 of them hidden – were partly funded by Home Office counter-terrorism funds.⁴

4. Almost 70% of Channel referrals have been made through the education sector. Therefore, there are serious issues of teachers being turned into spies and the subsequent impact of schools compromising the learning environment.⁵

In January 2016, a four-year-old drew a picture of a cucumber while at nursery, and told staff it was a “cuker-bum”. The staff, believing he was referring to a “cooker bomb”, told the child’s mother that he was being referred to Channel, and might be taken away from her.⁶

5. The strategy serves to create a ‘pre-criminal space’ wherein innocent individuals are treated with suspicion of probable crimes.⁷

6. 80% of Channel referrals prove unwarranted and thus only serve to stigmatize and victimize individuals.⁸

7. The use of PREVENT within university settings is a curtailment of academic freedoms enshrined in the Education (No 2) Act 1986

⁷ Rob Price, "When my school received Prevent counter-terrorism training, the only objectors were white. That says it all," The Independent, March 29, 2016, , http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/when-my-school-received-counter-terrorism-prevent-training-the-only-objectors-were-white-that-says-a6957916.html.