

# NPoCC SIB Public Safety Events Threat Assessment May 2023

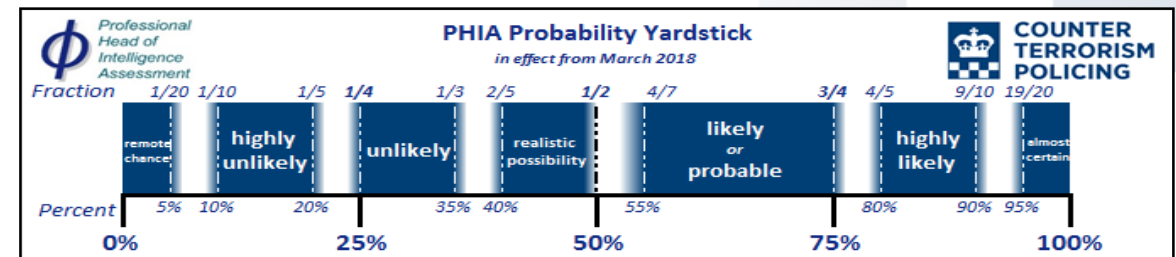
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## Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to proportionately and lawfully share information to inform both UK policing and law enforcement stakeholders:
  - To assist them with the development of assessments and event planning in line with policing's core duties.
  - To prevent and detect crime.
  - To keep the peace and to protect life and property.
- This product provides an assessment of current and emerging trends in the events space, including festivals, arena tours, sporting events and other large or crowded licensed events.
- The product will provide a forward look on factors that may have an impact on risk and threat for public safety.
- The products will be produced on a monthly basis.
- Please contact NPoCCMailbox-.SIB-Events@met.police.uk with questions or feedback.

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NPoCC SIB have received reports on 12 events for the period 20 April to 17 May 2023. This includes events that have occurred over a period of several days such as festivals and concert series.

It is **highly likely** that as the main outdoor season commences from the Spring Bank Holiday weekend onwards, reported incidents will increase. This is partly due to the perception that the festival and summer season presents a greater risk regarding safety, criminality and safeguarding. It is also **likely** that a minority of people will take advantage of the crowded environment and vulnerability of attendees to commit criminality. The first report from an outdoor festival was received this month. This highlighted criminality of the theft of mobile phones around a dance music stage, drug dealing, and welfare issues.

The behaviour of attendees at events continued to be reported as causing concern, with links to criminality and safeguarding. There were no discernible trends across the behaviour – there were reports of assaults, aggressive behaviour, racial and homophobic incidents. Excessive consumption of alcohol is **likely** to be a significant contributory factor, with reporting also reflecting concerns for welfare from excessive consumption. It is **highly likely** as the outdoor festival season progresses there will be further reports of criminality, behaviour and welfare affected by any excessive alcohol consumption.

Industry good practice to address safeguarding was utilised at an event in the North West region. A safeguarding/welfare company was employed to support and deal with vulnerable adults (through drink or drugs) and children. This reduced the involvement of police and security, enabling them to focus on other event requirements.

Protest at cultural and sporting events continues to gain traction both in national media and on social media platforms. This includes further action taken by an animals rights protest group at the Scottish Grand National. Short-term disruption was also reported at the National Conservatism conference in London, an activist gaining access to the podium whilst an MP was speaking. There is a **realistic possibility** of the risk of protest at any sporting or cultural event. There are a number of factors assessed that are likely to increase the risk:

- Televised event:** Opportunity to reach maximum audience
- Significance in cultural or sporting calendar:** Increased likelihood of reaching national headlines
- Controversial sponsorship:** Those deemed complicit in aiding the protest cause
- VIP attendance:** Increased likelihood of reaching national headlines

It is **highly likely** the ethical usage of live facial recognition at events will be debated again. South Wales police recently utilised this technology at a music concert in Cardiff, which received national media reporting. This technology was also used by Metropolitan Police during the King's Coronation. Civil liberty groups claim the technology is discriminatory towards certain members of society and that it violates privacy. There is a **realistic possibility** further campaigning will take place where this technology is used at events that may spark protest.



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-65602036>

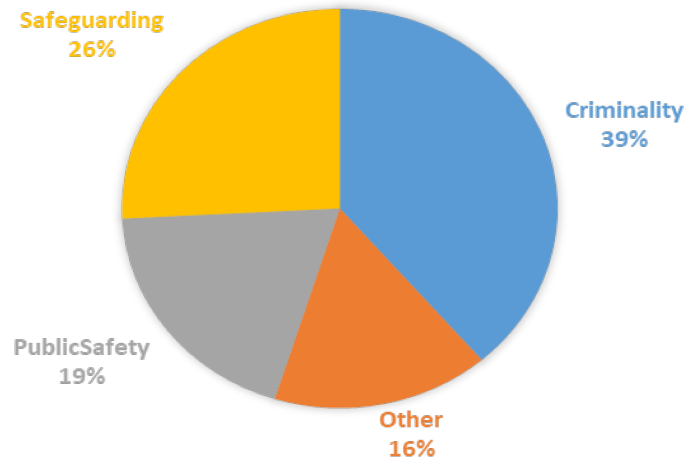


<https://londonist.com/london/sport/where-to-watch-wimbledon-on-the-big-screen-in-london>



<https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/co2-emissions-buddha-b2343258.html>

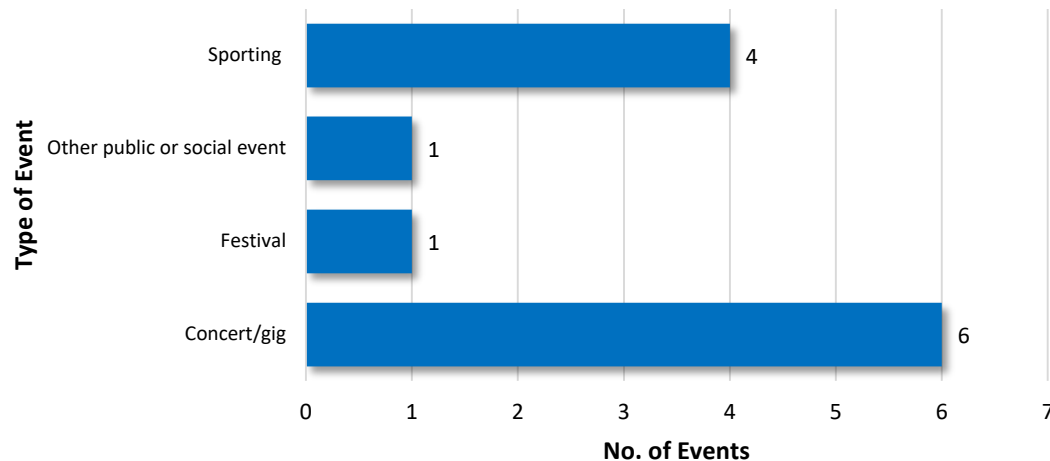
INCIDENT TYPE DISTRIBUTION - 20 APRIL TO 17 MAY 2023



CRIMINALITY - 39% OF TOTAL INCIDENTS



EVENT TYPE - 20 APRIL TO 17 MAY 2023



Criminality or public safety incidents mainly took place at music venues/concerts or sporting events. It is **likely** reporting will reduce for indoor concert settings moving to the outdoor festival season from the end of May 2023.

Criminality at events has emerged as the main thematic over the last month. This has included reporting of assaults, racist, homophobic and aggressive behaviour of attendees. There have been reports of staff being assaulted whilst in the process of their work. It is **likely** this type of behaviour will continue, exacerbated by excessive alcohol and illegal drug consumption. The first report from an outdoor music festival season was received, which identified theft of mobile phones and drug dealing. It is **highly likely** as the outdoor festival season progresses there will be increased reporting of thefts and drug dealing as criminals exploit the opportunities that these environments present.

Safeguarding issues continue to be reported. Most incidents have related to the welfare of attendees regarding excessive alcohol consumption.

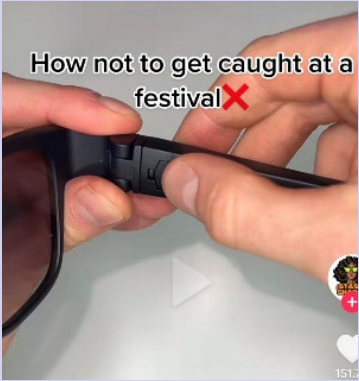




Other types of incidents have included incidents of protest, staff integrity and traffic management. It is **highly likely** that events will at times present a wide range of challenges for organisers and police.





National Assessment:

It is **highly likely** over the next six months there will be individuals or groups attempting to conceal items to take into events. Most items are **likely** to be concealed by attendees for personal use, such as illegal drugs and alcohol in attempt to avoid payment in the venue or festival site. There is also a **realistic possibly** of attendees attempting to conceal other items such as weapons and pyrotechnics. Methods of concealment will vary from hiding on the person, including ‘plugging’, to adapting or purchasing products specifically made to conceal items. Specialist items for concealment can be bought online, on occasions advertised specifically for illegal purpose. These items and tips to conceal are also **likely** to be shared on social media platforms to spread the knowledge.

Tactic Image	Details	Event Type
<div><div><p>How not to get caught at a festival ❌</p></div><div><p>They look just like normal sunglasses 😎</p></div><div><p>Sunglasses with concealment compartment in arm</p></div></div>	<p><b>Adapted Sunglasses</b></p> <p><b>April 2023</b> – sunglasses have been advertised on social media as a way to conceal drugs</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<div><div></div><div><p>Adapted drinks can</p><p>Festival in North West region 2022</p></div></div>	<p><b>Adapted drinks can</b></p> <p><b>August 2022</b> – attendees were stopped at the entrance to a festival and were searched - six cans of alcohol with hides filled with plaster of paris were discovered with large quantities of various types of controlled drugs.</p>	<p>Festival</p>

### National Assessment

It is **highly likely** sporting events and cultural events of significance will continue to be targeted by protest groups over the next six month period. Based on a review of seasonal trends from 2022 and 2023, current intelligence and data available, the greatest threat emanates from Environmentalism, Animal Rights and Internationally Inspired protest groups.

This reporting period a further protest was conducted by the animals rights group Animal Rising (AR). An incursion was reported at the Scottish Grand National, which gained significant traction after the previous action at the Aintree Grand National – this resulted in the arrest of activists. It is **likely** the group will attempt to disrupt further sporting events that involve animals, with their aim to end horse racing, start a conversation about our relationship with animals, and transition to a plant-based food system.

Whilst protests were conducted at the King's Coronation, these did not result in significant disruption to the event. However the arrest of anti-monarchy protesters did cause traction and significant reporting in national media. Extinction Rebellion with the disrupted the speech of Tory MP Jacob REES-MOGG at the National Conservatism conference to call out the ideologies of senior Cabinet members and MPs.

The significance of the events targeted is **highly likely** to raise the profile of the tactic and has encouraged further commentary from across the political and social spectrum. As the tactic gains momentum, it is also **likely** to inspire other protest groups and causes.

Industry have attempted to find solutions to disrupt future protest actions. The protest of Just Stop Oil (JSO) at the World Snooker Championship has prompted the Matchroom president to contact attendees affected to join Small Claims action against the protesters. There is a **realistic possibility** that if this counter-action is perceived to be successful, the tactic will evolve or become less frequent. <sup>(1)</sup>

### Forward Look

It is **highly likely** protest at events with significant live media coverage will be undertaken by specific protest groups such as JSO and AR, and remains a **realistic possibility** by other groups.

Animal Rights activists are **almost certainly** likely to target events that are deemed to exploit animals for entertainment. Environmental groups are **likely** to target events that will have maximum disruption or media coverage that will generate debate. Internationally Inspired activists are **highly likely** to target events that are deemed complicit in overseas current affairs or political and social controversy.

There is a **realistic possibility** that further coverage of decisions made by sporting authorities regarding female transgender participation in elite sports will provoke protest. Recent announcements have been made for British Cycling to ban transgender from the female category of its competitions following a review and consultation.

There is a **realistic possibility** that performers and speakers that are perceived as controversial will spark campaign and protest at the venues to pressurise venues to cancel the performances.



15 May 2023 – Protest at National Conservatism Conference

Image source - <https://news.sky.com/story/jacob-rees-mogg-protester-storms-stage-during-speech-to-warn-of-fascism-12881437>



22 April 2023 – Protest at Scottish Grand National

Image source - <https://news.sky.com/story/scottish-grand-national-protests-animal-rising-demonstrators-arrested-after-disruption-at-ayr-racecourse-12863550>



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