



# SAFER CITIES

Debbie Heald reveals what authorities need to consider this year and beyond when it comes to busy cities and security measures

**W**ith population density in the UK set to reach 35.1 million by year-end, this could lead to a rise in accidents, including vehicle collisions and, regrettably, crime. Additionally, the presence of a large number of tourists raises concerns about well-frequented attractions and landmarks.

In response Heald, the UK-based specialist in hostile vehicle mitigation (HVM), has pinpointed cities likely to experience an influx of tourists for the remainder of the year.

Heald's new research considers factors such as number of local residents and potential overseas visitors. Cities requiring extra vigilance, particularly during peak tourism periods such as Christmas, include London, Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, Nottingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Leicester, and Edinburgh.

With popular landmarks and attractions, these cities will inevitably attract large crowds and businesses in these locations need to consider measures they can be putting in place that meet the progressing Martyn's Law legislation. With this in mind, security experts at Heald share what security measures should be implemented to protect busy cities and their residents.

Experts at Heald recommend that local authorities and businesses consider installing physical security measures as a means to safeguard residents and tourists while meeting the new Martyn's Law requirements. When strategically placed, bollards serve as effective barriers against unauthorised vehicle access to pedestrian zones, attractions and event spaces.

Physical security provides a vital layer of protection against vehicle-borne threats, mitigating the risk of intentional or accidental collisions. By outlining pedestrian areas and traffic lanes, barriers create a clear

separation that ensures the safety of both tourists and residents, allowing them to move freely without fear of vehicular incidents.

This type of perimeter security also plays a crucial role in preserving the aesthetic and historical value of tourist cities. Bollards can be designed to harmonise with the local architecture and environment, adding to the visual appeal rather than detracting from it. This careful integration maintains the city's charm and attractiveness, a vital component for drawing visitors.

Furthermore, barriers or bollards are versatile tools that can be easily retracted or removed when needed, facilitating the flow of traffic during special events, festivals or emergencies. This adaptability strikes a balance between security and convenience, accommodating the dynamic nature of tourist destinations.

Often, sites in big cities that require a high level of security do not allow for deep excavation, so opting for surface and shallow mount security solutions means top perimeter security can be quickly and efficiently installed. In addition to their ease of installation and adaptability, bollards offer cost-effective solutions for enhancing security.

Moreover, bollards can be equipped with advanced technology such as automatic retractability and remote control. These features enhance their effectiveness in preventing unauthorised vehicle access, making them a wise investment for municipalities and businesses.

In conclusion, bollards not only serve as a robust security measure but also contribute to the overall safety, aesthetics and efficiency of tourist destinations. Their adaptability, cost-effectiveness, and integration with modern technology make them a valuable asset for meeting the security challenges faced by cities and businesses in today's dynamic world.

Traffic calming measures are the ideal solution in cities with main roads running through high footfall areas, such as shopping high streets. This type of action encourages drivers to operate slowly and prevents unauthorised entry or exit. Implementing a solution like this creates a more pedestrian-friendly environment, which aligns with the desired ambience of a tourist destination.

If people see that streets have been designed for slower speeds, this may have a possible outcome of increasing footfall in commercial areas, boosting income for local businesses.

From a sustainability perspective, reduced traffic speeds translate to lower emissions, contributing to improved air quality and a greener, more appealing urban landscape. Traffic calming measures can also revitalise public spaces, promoting social interactions and creating vibrant gathering spots that further enhance the overall visitor experience.

Implementing traffic calming measures can additionally be an opportunity to incorporate innovative urban design concepts. These changes can include public art installation, outdoor seating areas, and green spaces. Additions such as these not only enhance the area's visual appeal but also encourage people to linger, socialise and engage in community activities. As a result, these revamped public spaces become the heart of the city, fostering a sense of belonging and strengthening the overall visitor experience.

Embracing traffic calming measures in urban planning goes beyond merely controlling vehicular speed. It transforms cities into more pedestrian-friendly, sustainable and vibrant places where people can enjoy the ambience, support local businesses, and contribute to a greener future.

Ensuring that safety advice is easily accessible and prominently displayed throughout busy tourist cities offers a range of benefits that prioritise the wellbeing of both visitors and local residents.

Clear and readily available safety advice empowers tourists to make informed decisions and navigate confidently. When information is easily readable and strategically placed, visitors can quickly familiarise themselves with emergency protocols, safe crossing points and guidelines for personal security. This reduces confusion and enhances the sense of safety.

## TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ARE AN IDEAL SOLUTION IN CITIES WITH MAIN ROADS

By making safety advice ubiquitous, local authorities actively demonstrate their commitment to the wellbeing of both residents and tourists. This proactive approach fosters a positive reputation for the city as a responsible and caring destination, leading to improved visitor satisfaction and an increased likelihood of return visits.

Prominent safety advice also serves as a deterrent for potential criminals, indicating a well-monitored and secure environment. This can reduce minor crimes and incidents, ultimately enhancing the city's reputation for safety and security.

In addition to these advantages, investing in accessible safety information can have economic benefits for the city. Tourists are more likely to spend money and explore various attractions when they feel safe and informed. This can help to boost the local economy, create job opportunities and contribute to the community's overall prosperity. Similarly, this could encourage the return of the strong community high street and small traders who are the epitome of the UK retail industry.

Moreover, when safety advice is prominently displayed, it can facilitate better communication between tourists and residents. This can lead to cultural exchanges, increased understanding, and a more harmonious coexistence, fostering a sense of unity and community pride.

Hostile vehicle mitigation is critical to urban safety and its importance extends throughout the year. However, as we approach the festive season and the commencement of Christmas markets, its significance becomes even more pronounced. These markets draw thousands of visitors to cities worldwide, creating a unique and vibrant atmosphere. Still, they also present security challenges that demand heightened vigilance.

In bustling cities, especially during the festive period, the influx of people congregating in crowded areas makes them potential targets for malicious intent. Hostile vehicle attacks have tragically occurred

**Bollards provide a vital layer of protection against vehicle-borne threats, mitigating the risk of intentional or accidental collisions**



during large gatherings in the past, highlighting the necessity of year-round mitigation efforts. Effective measures, such as the installation of bollards, barriers and controlled access points, can deter and mitigate vehicle-related threats while preserving the festive spirit and the sense of safety for both local residents and tourists.

## PHYSICAL SECURITY PROVIDES A VITAL LAYER OF PROTECTION AGAINST VEHICLE-BORNE THREATS

Furthermore, the festive season often sees an increase in vehicular traffic due to Christmas shopping and events, amplifying the need for ongoing vigilance. If cities are to be proactive, they should work with law enforcement and security experts to evaluate and adapt their hostile vehicle mitigation strategies to evolving threats. This not only ensures visitors' safety, but also protects these cities' economic vitality, as Christmas markets and other festivities contribute significantly to local businesses and tourism revenue.

With the festive season just around the corner, it's an opportune moment for busy cities to focus on the progressing Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, commonly referred to as Protect Duty and Martyn's Law. This legislation requires increased security measures and perimeter protection for public venues, organisations and public spaces to mitigate the risk of terrorist attacks and other crimes.

Under this law, venues with a capacity exceeding 100 people, including entertainment venues, sports arenas, shopping centres and tourist attractions,

must implement enhanced security protocols. Large organisations employing over 250 staff members, such as retail chains, are also subject to the legislation. Additionally, public spaces like parks, beaches, bridges and city squares fall under the purview of the Protect Duty.

The deadline for compliance is unclear. However, it's recommended that businesses begin preparations promptly to meet obligations on time. Taking early action demonstrates a proactive approach to safeguarding against potential risks and protecting the wellbeing of employees and the public.

Our goal with our new research isn't to scare people or deter tourists from these thriving locations, but rather to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone. Thriving cities are meant to be enjoyed, and it's essential that residents and visitors alike feel a sense of security while exploring and experiencing all that these vibrant destinations have to offer.

By prioritising effective security measures and making them known to the public, we can foster an environment where people can fully enjoy their surroundings without unnecessary worry.

It's important to strike a balance between maintaining a safe environment and preserving the openness and freedom that define our cities. Highlighting the presence of security measures should not create an atmosphere of fear or restriction, but rather provide reassurance and peace of mind.

It's likely that most major cities will already have the correct amount of safety measures or will be in the process of implementing them, but as tourism continues to increase this year, and with the festive period approaching and Christmas markets around the corner, it's our duty as perimeter security experts to share gentle reminders to our thriving cities ●

### Debbie Heald,

Managing director of Heald, was awarded an MBE for her services to STEM and export in the Queens New Years Honours list in 2017, with Debbie and partner Rod being named in the Sunday Times Maserati 100 List as Great British Innovators.

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