

Teenager planned Isle of Wight Festival terror attack, court hears 16th January

Even the Isle of Wight, considered to be 30-40 years behind the trend for its slow pace of life and more traditional sense of community isn't immune to Islamic radicalisation. If you have read Jane Austen's Mansfield Park you will know Fanny Price's references to The Island. From the [Isle of Wight County Press](#)

THE month-long trial of an Island teenager accused of terrorism offences in 2022 – which included his plans to attack the Isle of Wight Festival – got underway on Tuesday.

The boy, appearing before a jury at Kingston Crown Court (*historic town, now part of Greater London on the SW edge*), denies three counts of the dissemination of a terrorist publication, engaging in conduct in the preparation of terrorist acts, and with possession of a bladed article in a public place.

The material he is accused of sending included links to extremist videos.

He is also alleged to have researched potential targets to attack, including the Isle of Wight Festival in June 2022, together with weapons, vehicles, stab vests and other items – and obtaining a knife. After discarding the festival as a target because he did not have a vehicle, the youth is then alleged to have drawn up plans to stab people.



His internet search terms included “gun Isle of Wight”, “fast lorry”, “how many people are going to Isle of Wigh [sic] fest”, “Isle of Wight Festival gate” and “Isle of Wight

Festival gate names”. It is clear, the prosecution say, that such specific searches were clearly not for the purpose of simply ‘researching Islam’.

Aged 15 at the time, he was diagnosed with autism and was becoming increasingly more radicalised after he converted to Islam in 2021, said Serena Gates, prosecuting, in her opening statement to the court.

“There is no dispute the videos he sent out concerned terrorist activity, predominantly relating to the group known as Islamic State,” Miss Gates said. “Parts of the videos contained graphic images of violence and executions.”

The teen (*who cannot be named because of his youth*) came to the attention of counter-terrorism police as a result of information being shared with them by the FBI.

The information shared related to concerns that someone in the UK, using a suspicious username on online platform, Discord, had been planning an attack on July 11, 2022, the court was told.

[In an Instagram message](#), he posted: “It wasn’t practical to launch an operation there, except with a car, which I don’t have.” The youth then entered into a discussion in which he ‘justified’ his approach to killing, said Miss Gates.

In 2022, the Isle of Wight Festival attracted 90,000

revellers.

When warned about his offending behaviour, he said: "Even if I get caught, I'm 15. They will just tell me off and put me on some prevention course. Trust me."

Several close to the teen at the time, described worrying developments, with concern at his increasingly homophobic and extremist views.

The youth is believed to have had a picture of Bin Laden on his phone and stated the Charlie Hebdo murders in Paris in 2015 were justified.

Regarded as "a generally isolated figure", he no longer wanted to work with women and made homophobic remarks.

One note said a staff member at his education provider "shouldn't feel safe", jurors heard.

[Tutors became concerned](#) about the boy's beliefs and considered referring him to the government's Prevent anti-radicalisation programme, the court heard. However, one tutor said the teenager's conversion was initially assessed to be having a "positive impact" on his life.

The FBI stated he also posted messages in the 'Caliphate Revivalists' chat group – relating to an area once controlled by the Islamic State.