

Usman Khan: MI5 had intelligence that Fishmongers' Hall terrorist was planning attack before prison release

From the [Mr Merritt senior is on record deploring 'right-wingers' like me for 'using' his son's death to ask these awkward questions.](#) At the [Brendan Cox](#)

Thank you Brendan. I obviously don't have full facts about the process that led to the attacker being released, but what I can say with certainty is that no one at the event had the slightest inkling that he could or would do something like this.

That the poor man is now realising he might have been wrong must have been a bit of an awakening.

Nick Armstrong told the court his (Khan's) prison record showed that he had been radicalising other inmates, encouraging violence inside jail, continued to hold extremist views and had been recruiting for extremist groups. "MI5 had intelligence shortly before Khan's release that he was planning a post-release attack, and upgraded his priority rating," Mr Armstrong added.

The barrister said that both MI5 and probation had also feared that Khan was manipulating them and using "false compliance" with deradicalisation courses and his licence conditions, but may not have properly communicated with each other. Mr Armstrong told the court that MI5 also received intelligence that Khan was considering relocating to Pakistan and giving up his British nationality in 2019, but the probation service had

been told he wanted to settle in the UK and move on with his life.

He said Mr Merritt's family wanted to know why Khan was allowed to join Cambridge University's Learning Together scheme, or attend the event where he launched his attack.

Philip Rule, representing Ms Jones' family, said MI5 officers attended a meeting earlier in November 2019 where Khan's trip to the event was discussed. He said bereaved relatives wanted those officers to give evidence at the inquest and explain their decision-making. Lawyers for the home secretary, on behalf of MI5, are resisting the application and argue that a statement by a more senior officer is sufficient.

The chief coroner of England and Wales, Judge Mark Lucraft QC, said he would give his decision at a later date. He told Friday's hearing that the inquests would start on 12 April, as long as a suitable venue is secured.

They were due to take place at the Old Bailey but the court no longer has capacity for the proceedings, given social distancing requirements and the number of other trials taking place.