Martyn's Law on one page: parish and town councils

Facts checked 2 November 2026

Does it apply to you?

If 200 or more people can reasonably be expected in your building at the same time, counting staff and volunteers. Count your busiest occasion, not an ordinary day. Times that can take you over:

- Fairs, markets and fundraisers
- Dances, discos and parties
- Big public meetings and consultations
- Hires for weddings, and for Eid, Diwali and Christmas celebrations

200 to 799 is the standard tier. 800 or more is the enhanced tier, with extra duties: get specialist advice. Places of worship, schools and childcare stay standard when that's the building's main use.

The four plans

Get everyone out (evacuation). How you move people out of the building, or part of it, quickly and safely.

Bring everyone in (invacuation). How you bring people inside, or to a safer room, when outside is the danger.

Lock down (lockdown). How you stop people getting in or out, for example by locking doors.

Keep people informed (communication). How you tell people what's happening and what to do: stay put, or move away.

Write them for your own building. Keep where keys are kept and where people shelter to the people who need to know.

What it doesn't ask

The standard tier doesn't ask for security staff, bag searches, CCTV or new equipment, building work or a training course.

Hirers

When you hire out your building, you stay the responsible person. The Home Office's guidance says to explain to each hirer what's expected of them, and to be able to show the SIA that you did.

A made-up example: keep people informed (communication)

Millbrook Community Centre, run by Millbrook Town Council, up to 300 people

During the Christmas fair, the caretaker is told of a threat near the main entrance.

1. The caretaker tells the fair's organiser, using the agreed phrase rather than the fire alarm.
2. The organiser makes a short, calm announcement: stay inside and move to the main hall.
3. Helpers tell anyone who didn't hear it, including people in the side rooms and toilets.
4. The caretaker calls 999 and keeps people updated until the police say it's over.

When

Time to get ready. Nothing is required by law yet. The Home Office encourages venues to start thinking about what the law asks.

The duties are expected to start in spring 2027.

Your next steps

1. Count your busiest occasion and check your tier.
2. Agree who the responsible person is.
3. Write your four plans, and brief everyone with a part to play.
4. Review once a year, and when things change.

Check your venue free at gethailo.co.uk/check. hailo writes your plans for your building and briefs your people by link.