



Strategic Plan 2021–2023

A message from our co-founders

Dear friends,

We are thrilled to present Protection Approaches' new Strategic Plan for 2021-2023. Over the past seven years, PA has grown from a wild idea into a dynamic organization that is playing a critical role in redefining how the UK and the rest of the world understands and prevents identity-based violence.

From hate crime to online extremism, from structural discrimination to mass atrocities, identity based violence has become an all-too-common fact of daily life. Hate movements, armed groups, and governments are exploiting identity to divide us, manipulating our differences in the pursuit of power, a particular political agenda, or an exclusionary ideology.

As COVID-19's economic and political consequences deepen, climate-driven crises become more common, and populist authoritarian movements threaten to upend long-standing democratic rule, there is a real risk that identity-based violence, including mass atrocities, will become more frequent, systematic, and entrenched.

We founded Protection Approaches in 2014 to meet these challenges head-on. We want to change the way the world thinks about identity-based violence – and by so doing, change how we respond to and prevent it. From our local programmes in communities and schools to our global efforts to confront mass atrocities and genocide, we are working to build a world where everyone accepts and respects each other, regardless of identity. We believe that this mission is not only possible but probable, and are dedicated to doing the long-term, difficult work necessary to make it sustainable.

Our new Strategic Plan is not just a blueprint for our own work, but a concrete set of guidelines for how, from the smallest neighbourhood to the global community, we can stand together against – and successfully push back on – hate in all its forms. As the Plan details, we will do this by pursuing three goals that continue and build on our past work: changing the way people define and prevent identity-based violence; challenging and dismantle structural prejudice, discrimination, and inequality; and achieving and sustaining operational excellence.

We hope you will join us. Together, we can turn away the rising tide of identity-based violence and build a world free from prejudice, hate, and inequality.

Sincerely,

Dr Kate Ferguson

Andy Fearn

Co-Founders and Co-Executive Directors of Protection Approaches



Our mission

Protection Approaches works to change how the world views identity based violence – and by so doing, change the way we respond to and prevent it.

Our vision

We seek a world where everyone accepts and respects each other, regardless of identity. We are dedicated to doing the hard work necessary to make this vision a reality.

Our values

- Justice is at the heart of human dignity and rights
- Identity-based violence comes in many forms, each rooted in the same set of causes
- Identifying and understanding what drives identity-based violence is central to preventing it
- Building strong, resilient, and inclusive societies requires challenging structural discrimination and inequality
- We have a collective and individual responsibility to protect those at risk of violence
- Governments have a fundamental duty to challenge and prevent identity based violence no matter where it occurs or how it manifests

Our commitment to these values drives not only what we do but also how we do it.

Our approach

No matter where it takes place and no matter whom it targets, every act of identity-based violence is a manifestation of the deadly idea that some lives are more valuable than others. For that reason, Protection Approaches believes that a spectrum of harms – including hate crime, violent extremism, and mass atrocities – should be seen as a shared global crisis: the targeting of individuals or groups solely because of who they are, what they believe, or who they love.

By emphasising the common attributes of different forms of identity-based violence, Protection Approaches has helped change the conversation on how to challenge, respond to, and prevent it. In the process, we have helped encourage a better appreciation of the shared responsibility to prevent all forms of identity-based attacks, whether by States, militia groups, terrorist organisations, racist gangs, or prejudiced individuals.

We are currently implementing programmes that support those affected by identity-based violence, challenge those responsible for it, and encourage those in a position to prevent it.



Programmes

- Our **community initiatives** help marginalised socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural groups explore their perceptions and experiences of prejudice, discrimination, and identity-based violence. We encourage community-led responses to hate crime – and the prejudice and marginalisation that can lead to such violence. We are breaking down barriers between victims and public officials, in the process helping to promote dialogue, encourage transparency, and strengthen community relationships.
- Our **education** team works with schools around Britain to develop and run programmes that equip students and teachers with the strategies they need to reject prejudice and violence. Our teacher training programmes help students and staff develop whole-of-school approaches to building a positive and inclusive culture both in the classroom and at home. We also work with national networks to ensure that schools are seen not only as formal places of learning but also as organic communities with shared values and interests.
- Since 2015, we have worked across the political spectrum in the UK to push the government to become a global leader on preventing all forms of identity-based violence. Our advocacy has encouraged the integration of ‘prevention thinking’ into decision-making and helped secure a new and public UK approach to atrocity prevention. We will continue to work with our partners in civil society to improve understanding and strengthen implementation of timely, effective strategies that encourage the integration of prevention principles into UK trade, development, defence, foreign, and domestic policies.
- We undertake, commission, and coordinate research to ensure that the programmes we develop and implement are supported by evidence and in line with global best practices. We also commission national social attitude and public opinion surveys that inform our work and priorities. Our monitoring and reporting cover a wide range of urgent issues, including the growth of COVID inspired hate crime; atrocity risks in Burundi, Cameroon, Myanmar, Sudan, and Syria; and increases in identity-based violence in post-Brexit Britain.
- We deliver bespoke briefings and trainings on the prediction and prevention of identity-based violence and mass atrocities for a wide range of audiences – including local, regional, and national governments, political parties, parliamentary committees, civil servants, civil society organisations, and journalists – from around the world. We have provided everything from detailed briefings on impending or ongoing mass atrocities to big-picture trainings on how organisations and governments can implement more effective prevention strategies.



Our impact

Newham: building local capacity to fight prejudice and hate

With more than 50 percent of its 350,000 residents born outside the UK, Newham is one of the country's most diverse places. Residents speak over 100 languages, and for seven out of ten, English is not their first language. With such great diversity and rapidly changing demography come significant challenges, including hate crime and fewer connections between and among different ethnic and religious groups.

After Muslim and other community leaders expressed alarm about a significant jump in the number of hate crimes taking place in the borough, we worked with the Newham Local Authority and local faith groups to start a community-wide consultation. In the resulting conversations, we learned that many residents regarded prejudice and discrimination as a 'normal' part of their daily life and weren't aware that hate crime can be reported.

With support from the Home Office, Protection Approaches worked with community partners and Newham Council to design a whole-of-community project that empowered individuals and groups across the borough to build local resilience. We worked with dozens of local groups to organize and deliver short workshops for thousands of residents, significantly increasing local understanding of hate crime reporting and building new ties among different groups. We trained more than one hundred Local Authority frontline staff and members of sixty-five community and faith groups on how they can confront hate crime, support victims, and build sustainable local networks to strengthen cohesive communities. We also worked with local leaders, police, and community leaders to establish eleven community hate crime reporting sites in libraries, community centres, places of worship, and youth clubs.

In the process, we began a conversation on identity and discrimination that hadn't been taking place. Local Authority staff told us that, for the first time, they felt like they could talk with community members about prejudice and hate. Community members told us that the trainings gave them the tools and the knowledge they needed to be better advocates for their communities. As one put it, "I feel empowered not only to report hate crime to the police but also support others to do so." Another participant, an Uber driver, now tells his passengers about what he learned and encourages them to speak up if they are ever victims. He is now working with three churches to develop interfaith programmes on preventing hate crime. Our programme evaluation, undertaken in partnership with the public opinion firm Ipsos Mori, confirmed these anecdotal reports: over 55 percent of trainees went on to organise new initiatives that helped build community resilience, support victims, and raise greater awareness of hate crime.

At the same time, PA established a project across Newham and its neighbouring boroughs that works with members of marginalised and excluded groups – particularly youth – to explore their personal experiences of prejudice through photography, painting, and other media. Their art and stories subsequently served as the basis for a series of exhibitions that started conversations among young people, community leaders, local officials, and police on the root causes of discrimination and marginalisation. After viewing the exhibition, the head of one borough council told participants that “Everyone needs to see this. . . . Keep making sure people like me understand what I’m here to do, and [that] I’m here to do it for you.” These kinds of exchanges have helped facilitate community-driven change in some of the capital’s most disadvantaged areas.



Our impact

Atrocity prevention: successfully pushing the uk to lead

Since the genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia, there has been considerable international discussion and debate on how to prevent and respond to identity-based mass violence. In Britain, however, atrocity prevention was widely seen as the same as military humanitarian intervention; little attention was paid to the many other ways that the country could help prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. Since its founding, Protection Approaches has worked to change this thinking, building networks of support in civil society, Parliament and government to drive new thinking on and a new approach to UK atrocity prevention policy.

In 2017, PA established and has since chaired the UK Atrocity Prevention Working Group, which brings together more than twenty-five NGO leaders and experts who work together to improve UK government understanding of its obligation to prevent atrocities – and to promote better awareness of the strong link between identity-based violence at home and atrocities in other parts of the world.

As a result of the Working Group's efforts, the UK pledged to set out a cross-cutting, cross departmental approach to atrocity prevention – a promise it met with the publication of a new government policy paper that pledged “early and effective” action to prevent and respond to mass atrocities. Thanks to our efforts, there is now a Minister responsible for atrocity prevention policy as well as a £5-10 million fund dedicated to the “prediction, prevention, and where necessary protection from identity-based violence” – the first such financial commitment by any government. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office now regularly meets with Working Group members to explore new opportunities for coordinated action.

PA also has built significant Parliamentary support for atrocity prevention. We helped convince the Foreign Affairs Committee to review the government's Responsibility to Protect policies, including its approach to atrocity prevention. We then led an advocacy effort that helped secure the Committee's primary recommendation that the UK set out a comprehensive atrocity prevention strategy. In the 2019 general election, PA helped ensure that every party committed to prioritise atrocity prevention in the next Parliament. These activities have catalysed debate in Parliament, energised civil society advocacy, and secured significant progress in how the UK Government approaches atrocity prevention and identity-based violence.

Our impact

Covid-19: confronting rising violence against British East Asians

At times of national crisis, marginalised and minority groups often pay the greatest price. This has been particularly true during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the first weeks of the crisis, hate crime reports to police from British East Asians rose dramatically. At the same time, British Chinese and South East Asian (BCSEA) organisations were telling Protection Approaches that the number of threats and attacks taking place were much higher than the official numbers.

Many groups came to us with the same request. As one community leader put it, “our members are facing unprecedented levels of hate. Please help us understand what we can do about it.” In response, we brought BCSEA organisations and the Metropolitan Police together to talk about the increased threats facing the community. During the first few weeks of the national lockdown, we organised free online, bilingual workshops on understanding hate crime: knowing what it looks like, how to support victims, how to make a report, and how to prevent it. Representatives from more than eighty BCSEA groups from across England participated.

Since then, Protection Approaches has worked with BCSEA organisations to build their capacity to identify, report, and prevent hate crime. We helped develop a small grants program that is working with twelve BCSEA groups to build their capacity to support victims, increase awareness, and promote community cohesion. In partnership with the Chinese Welfare Trust and Newham Chinese Association, we are providing in-depth, bespoke training and support to staff and volunteers, supporting them as they develop reporting mechanisms, lead workshops, and establish community outreach programmes.

This work led directly to the establishment of our Community Builder Training Program, a major new initiative supported by the Mayor of London. PA is currently equipping more than 300 community-based change-makers with the tools and methodologies they need to tackle injustice, bridge divides, and build resilience to hate. Our interactive online training supports Londoners who are passionate about helping to create positive change in their communities. After participants complete the training, they develop and lead local initiatives in their workplace, community, group, or club that will put into action what they have learnt. Our goal is to create hundreds of new opportunities to build strong, kind, inclusive, and just communities.



Goals and objectives

1

Change the way people define and prevent identity-based violence. Three fundamental ideas drive our work: that no individual, community, or country is immune from identity-based violence (IBV); that hate, discrimination and violence may come in different forms but share the same root causes; and that we learn best when we listen to and learn from the experiences of others. Over the next three years, PA will work with allies, partners, and decision-makers to promote a better understanding of these principles; develop new and innovative approaches to prevention; and harmonise often conflicting domestic and international approaches.

Goal 1 Objectives

- 1.1 Promote a better understanding of the drivers and causes of identity-based violence.** Since its founding, PA has worked to identify those factors that can reduce a society's resilience to division and manipulation. Over the next three years, we will encourage better recognition of these risks so individuals, groups and institutions can take steps to mitigate their causes.
- 1.2 Develop and test innovative approaches to predicting, challenging, and preventing identity based violence.** Through research, dialogue, and engagement, PA has designed and tested programmes that encourage communities, schools, and governments to rethink how they challenge and prevent IBV. Over the next three years, we will continue this important work by identifying innovative ideas and championing solutions that challenge dehumanising behaviour, reverse the drivers of identity-based violence, and build resilience.
- 1.3 Work with governments, communities, and NGOs to implement new policies and practices.** Our advocacy has consistently emphasized that citizens, communities, and governments have a core responsibility to protect individuals and communities from identity-based violence. Over the next three years, we will work with allies and decision-makers to develop and implement policies and practices that promote proactive and inclusive approaches, respond to early warning signs such as dangerous speech, and facilitate prevention.
- 1.4 Harmonise domestic and international approaches to preventing identity-based violence.** PA has always believed that communities in vastly different circumstances share – and can learn from each other's – experiences. Likewise, there are certain harms that affect us all, if not equally, and require a local-to-global response. Over the next three years, we will strive to connect domestic and international attacks on social cohesion. We also will work to bring together trailblazers and thought leaders who are driving prevention and protection efforts in their communities, countries, and globally. Over the next three years, we will encourage better recognition of these risks so individuals, groups and institutions can take steps to mitigate their causes.

2

Challenge and dismantle structural prejudice, discrimination, and inequality.

Whether it manifests as a hate crime or a genocide, identity-based violence is rooted in narratives of grievance, discrimination and inequality. Perpetrators justify their actions by claiming that they are responding to the environments they inhabit. For that reason, we believe that preventing identity-based violence requires a fundamental commitment to the difficult work of identifying, interrupting, and ending fundamental social and economic injustices. Over the next three years, we will work with communities and schools to recognise and challenge discrimination and inequality; engage and support marginalised groups whether at home or abroad; push policymakers to develop and implement concrete solutions; and commit to applying these principles both to our own work and that of our colleagues in the human rights movement.

Goal 2 objectives

- 2.1 Support and work together with communities, particularly those who are marginalised, in efforts to challenge prejudice, discrimination, and institutionalized inequality.** Our work in the UK has taught us that transformation lasts longest when members of a community lead efforts to effect and secure change. Over the next three years, we will engage, support, and encourage local leaders – particularly young people – to play a central role in identifying, challenging, and preventing all forms of institutionalised prejudice and inequality. In doing so, we will continue to broker relationships that can help facilitate locally driven – and therefore sustainable – change in communities across the UK.
- 2.2 Equip students, teachers, and schools with the strategies and tools they need to recognise, acknowledge, and challenge dehumanising behaviour, dangerous speech, and identity-based violence.** Education remains the single most effective means of preventing identity-based violence. To that end, Protection Approaches works with schools to conduct in-person and online workshops that equip the next generation with the strategies they need to reject prejudice and violence. Our teacher training supports school staff and leaders by helping them develop new approaches to building positive and inclusive school cultures. Over the next three years, we will continue to work with educators to develop whole-of-school strategies that encourage thousands of students to reject prejudice and dehumanisation. We also will explore how we can support the integration of prevention-focused modules into existing curricula.

2

Continued

- 2.3 Push policymakers at every level to build, strengthen, and sustain structural solutions to identity-based violence.** Since our founding, we have successfully pushed the UK and other governments to do a better job of predicting, preventing, and responding to all forms of identity-based violence, including mass atrocities. We have worked with ministers, Parliament, and civil society to improve their understanding of identity-based violence, integrate prevention thinking into their decision-making, and strengthen the development and implementation of timely, effective policies. Over the coming years, we will continue to encourage the UK and other governments to do more – whether at the local, national, or global level. In addition, we will increase our capacity to bring evidence of what works to those who are in positions to effect change, in the UK and elsewhere.
- 2.4 Strengthen and promote efforts to dismantle structural biases within the broader human rights movement.** We cannot challenge and prevent identity-based violence if we do not undertake the kind of reflection, openness, and empathy necessary to recognise our own assumptions and biases. Over the next three years, we will work with our friends and colleagues to challenge our preconceptions and dismantle internalised assumptions and structural inequalities within the human rights movement that limit our ability to speak out on conditions elsewhere. a better job of predicting, preventing, and responding to all forms of identity-based violence, including mass atrocities. We have worked with ministers, Parliament, and civil society to improve their understanding of identity-based violence, integrate prevention thinking into their decision-making, and strengthen the development and implementation of timely, effective policies. Over the coming years, we will continue to encourage the UK and other governments to do more – whether at the local, national, or global level. In addition, we will increase our capacity to bring evidence of what works to those who are in positions to effect change, in the UK and elsewhere.

3

Achieve and sustain operational excellence. From Brexit to COVID-19, Protection Approaches has adapted to respond to emerging and unexpected challenges, helping ensure that we can continue to support those challenging and overcoming identity-based violence. As we expand our outreach, advocacy, and programming, we will continue to strengthen and consolidate our operations to ensure continued sustainability, agility, and focus.

Goal 3 objectives

- 3.1 Build institutional capacity and strengthen existing operations.** PA's growth has given us the ability to take advantage of new opportunities, expand our influence and reach, and respond quickly to rapidly changing circumstances. Over the next three years, we will work to strengthen our infrastructure, support staff development, research, programs, and advocacy, and prepare for future opportunities.
- 3.2 Diversify PA's board and strengthen its governance structures.** Our trustees have played a critical role in PA's growth and success. We will build on that foundation by ensuring that our governance structures reflect and sustain our expanded mission, vision, and goals. Over the next three years, we will continue our values-led approach to human resources and strengthen our internal management mechanisms. In addition, our trustees will continue to lead the organisation by example, embedding its values in their decision-making and oversight.
- 3.3 Develop and expand PA's donor base.** PA's strong and consistent growth over the past six years is the product of increased support from a broad array of donors. In the coming years, we will balance our strong commitment to sustainability with a continued determination to diversify our donor base through additional support from high-net-worth individuals, private foundations, and local and national governments.
- 3.4 Standardise monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems.** As PA has grown, we have strengthened our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) processes, working with Ipsos Mori and the Centre for Youth Impact to develop project-based frameworks, and with universities to support pathways to impact for research activities. Over the next three years, we will design and implement comprehensive MEL policies to ensure that we can continually assess outcome and impact and communicate the results to our partners, networks, and donors.



Our story

In April 2014, as the Syrian Civil War was entering its fourth year, the world's elite gathered in Kigali's Amahoro Stadium to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide. Heads of state and ambassadors paid tribute to Rwanda's victims and survivors, promising to learn from the lessons of 1994 and pledging that the world must never let such events unfold again.

In the audience, Kate Ferguson and Andy Fearn felt the hypocrisy of world leaders promising 'never again' at the same time that another regime was committing atrocities against its own population. The world was failing the people of Syria just as it had in Rwanda.

Over the next few months, Kate and Andy kept returning to the same set of questions. Why do people so often turn away when confronted with evidence of mass violence? Why have governments repeatedly failed to prevent the world's worst crimes? Why do those living in the Global North see both perpetrators and victims as somehow morally distant when identity-based violence plagues their own societies? Is the social fracture and democratic backsliding taking place in so many western democracies really so different? And why do we in the UK consider peacebuilding and civic education as things that are needed 'over there,' in other parts of the world, but not in Europe, the United States, or 'at home' in Britain? Over many conversations – and a couple of arguments – Kate and Andy agreed that no organisation had yet developed a comprehensive approach to these questions. While sitting in a bar in Lusaka, Zambia, they used the back of a napkin to sketch out the ideas that would drive the establishment of Protection Approaches.

First and foremost, PA would work to reframe the definition of identity-based violence to encompass everything from individual hate crime to mass atrocities.

Second, PA would emphasize that prevention is a shared responsibility that stretches from local communities to global institutions.

Third, PA would push to end the false distinction between events 'at home' and 'over there,' recognizing that all forms of identity-based violence share the same causes and drivers.

Fourth, PA would work with and learn from friends and allies in the global human rights movement to confront internalised assumptions and structural inequalities endemic in the charity sector and strive to create a more positive, values-based and inclusive way of working.

Building from these principles – and starting from a crowdfunding campaign that brought in £6,000 from friends and families – Protection Approaches was established in November 2014 and granted charity status in England and Wales in February 2017. Today, PA continues to be guided by its founding ideals as it works to challenge and prevent all manifestations of identity-based violence, no matter what their scale or where they happen.

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Further information can be found at protectionapproaches.org
and this report will also be available at [LINK]

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