4. Blanket Search Powers

Blanket search powers give the police the ability to search large groups of people, with no reasonable suspicion.

They are used a public events such are protests, carnivals and sports games, and are put in place by a senior police officer.

There are two blanket search powers that you might come across.

Section 60 of the Criminal Justice Act 1994

This power allows a police officer to search anyone in a specific area for offensive weapons. The order lasts for 24 hours but can be extended.

This power should not be confused with Section 60AA (removing masks).

Section 47A of the Terrorism Act 2000 (Remedial) Order 2011

This power allows a police officer to search anyone where they reasonably suspects that an act of terrorism will take place, and that the power is necessary to prevent it from occurring.

This allows the police to search anyone or anything for the purpose of prevention of terrorism, and replaces the controversial section 44 (TA2000) after it was found to be incompatible with article 8 by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).