# Former UK Defence Minister warns of grey zone attacks and urges households to prepare



In light of escalating concerns about the potential for covert attacks on the United Kingdom's critical infrastructure, former UK Defence Minister Tobias Ellwood has issued a public call for households across the country to prepare for such eventualities by stockpiling essential items.

Mr Ellwood emphasised the likelihood of what he terms "grey zone attacks" — clandestine operations intended to undermine the nation's economy and infrastructure without overt declaration of war. Highlighting the threat from nations like Russia, he explained that such attacks could target vital aspects of everyday life, including power grids, internet connectivity and supply chains, leading to disruptions such as power cuts and communication outages.

Speaking on Thursday, Mr Ellwood drew attention to the growing risk these attacks pose to public safety and national security. "What if your phone buzzed with a national emergency alert warning of a swarm drone attack en route to your city – where would you go? How would you respond?" he asked, as reported in PoliticsHome. He emphasised that these scenarios should no longer be seen as the stuff of fiction but as real-world concerns requiring serious consideration.

He revealed intelligence that Russia’s "shadow fleet" is actively mapping the UK's undersea cable networks — infrastructure critical for delivering electricity, gas and data. Autonomous underwater vehicles are reportedly conducting reconnaissance on the seabed. Mr Ellwood also noted Russia’s ambassador to the UK acknowledged the presence of sensors within British waters after several devices washed ashore. The Royal Navy is enhancing its detection capabilities and developing countermeasures, including unmanned underwater vehicles. However, he stressed that readiness must extend beyond military measures.

In concrete terms, Mr Ellwood advised UK households to stockpile seven key items to cope with potential disruptions:

* At least 100 litres of clean drinking water
* Non-perishable food items, such as tinned goods or food consumable without heating
* Candles and a reliable torch for lighting
* A battery-powered radio to receive news if other communication channels fail
* Iodine tablets, recommended in cases of nuclear fallout
* Cash, to be used in the event ATMs and card payment systems become unavailable
* A basic first aid kit

He cautioned that many people currently lack sufficient supplies to withstand interruptions caused by such attacks. "The era of complacency is over. A significant grey-zone attack on the UK is not just possible – it’s likely. If we want to protect our lives, our economy and our democracy, we must get ready now," he stated.

The warning comes amid recent large-scale power outages affecting parts of Spain and Portugal on Monday, 28 April, underscoring the vulnerability of national infrastructure to unexpected disruptions. The situation has contributed to heightened awareness about the importance of preparedness measures domestically.

Mr Ellwood’s appeal represents a broader effort by government and defence officials to alert the public to emerging security challenges and encourage practical steps to mitigate their impact at the individual and community levels.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/exdefence-minister-says-british-homes-stockpile-prepare-attacks> - Supports Ellwood's call for household stockpiling and preparation for grey-zone attacks, including specific items like candles, radios, and iodine tablets.
2. <https://www.politicshome.com/opinion/article/7-items-need-disaster-stockpile> - Corroborates Ellwood's warning about grey-zone warfare risks and lists emergency preparedness items such as water, non-perishable food, and cash.
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wZz7t6INP0> - Confirms Ellwood's warnings about Russia's preparation for 'grey-zone' attacks on UK infrastructure, including undersea cable threats.
4. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/defence-minister-major-cyber-attack-plunge-millions-britons-darkness> - Validates Ellwood's prediction of 2025 as a year of grey-zone warfare and potential cyberattacks causing widespread power outages.
5. <https://www.politicshome.com/opinion/article/7-items-need-disaster-stockpile> - Reiterates Ellwood's emphasis on Russia's undersea reconnaissance activities and the need for public preparedness against infrastructure threats.
6. <https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/exdefence-minister-says-british-homes-stockpile-prepare-attacks> - Repeats Ellwood's assertion that households must prepare for 72-hour self-sufficiency during disruptions, aligning with listed stockpile items.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2047630/uk-households-stockpile-cash-now> - Please view link - unable to able to access data