

## Manchester and London Protests Lead to Arrests Over Immigration Tensions

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MANCHESTER – Multiple arrests were made over the weekend as anti-immigration demonstrations in Manchester and London descended into disorder, prompting intervention by police.

In Manchester, the nationalist group Britain First organised a march through the city centre, calling for tougher immigration enforcement and the removal of individuals they regard as

unlawfully residing in the UK. The demonstration was met by left-leaning counter-protesters, leading to brief altercations before officers stepped in to separate both sides.

According to *AFP*, the confrontation began shortly after the protest got underway. Police were able to restore order swiftly. One demonstrator, Brendan O'Reilly, 66, voiced his concern: "Send them back, don't let them in. We've got hotels full of immigrants and we've got our own homeless people in the streets begging for food but nowhere to live."

A counter-protester, identified only as Judy, a 60-year-old retired nurse, told *AFP* she attended the event because she opposed the Britain First campaign. "I don't want to see people full of hate on the streets of Manchester," she said, adding her concerns about the motivations behind the rally.

Similar protests occurred in central London, where opposing groups gathered outside a hotel in the Barbican area that currently accommodates asylum seekers. Tensions quickly escalated, leading to further clashes.

The Metropolitan Police confirmed on X (formerly Twitter) that officers cleared a junction after counter-demonstrators were found to be in breach of protest conditions set under the Public Order Act. The force reported nine arrests in total, including seven for failing to comply with legal restrictions.

These events are the latest in a string of flashpoints linked to the immigration debate. In recent weeks, areas such as Epping in north-east London have seen confrontations as public frustration grows over government policy. A recurring concern among residents is the use of taxpayer-funded hotels to house asylum seekers while local services, including housing, remain under pressure.

While ministers have pledged action to tackle illegal immigration, the pace of progress has drawn criticism. The continued reliance on hotel accommodation for migrants remains a point of contention in communities across the country.

The Home Office has not yet released an official statement regarding the incidents in Manchester or London.