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## Police Detain Demonstrators During Clashes Outside Asylum Seeker Hotels

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A series of protests and counter-protests outside hotels being used to house asylum seekers in London and Newcastle resulted in multiple arrests over the weekend, as police enforced public order restrictions amid growing tensions over the government's use of temporary migrant accommodation.

In Islington, north London, several demonstrators were detained during rival protests outside the Thistle City Barbican Hotel on Saturday afternoon. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) imposed conditions on both the main protest and counter-demonstration in response to safety concerns. A total of nine people were arrested, including seven on suspicion of breaching conditions set out under the Public Order Act 1986.

Footage from the scene showed groups chanting and banging drums while individuals believed to be migrants watched from the hotel windows, some waving and gesturing to the crowd below. A man wearing an England football shirt was detained by police following an altercation with officers. Meanwhile, a group of anti-fascist demonstrators blocked a nearby junction before being removed and surrounded by officers for failing to comply with the protest conditions.

The protest in Islington was organised by residents under the banner “Thistle Barbican needs to go – locals say no.” According to police, the event attracted the support of groups beyond the immediate community, including online campaigns such as “Patriots of Britain” and “Together for the Children.” A counter-protest was coordinated by the campaign group Stand Up To Racism, with backing from former Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, Finsbury Park Mosque, and the Islington Labour Party.

The MPS stated that restrictions on the anti-hotel protest required demonstrators to remain within King Charles Square between 1 pm and 4 pm. Counter-protesters were instructed to stay on Lever Street, near the junction with Central Street, between 12 pm and 4 pm.

Clashes briefly erupted as a group of black-clad, masked anti-fascist demonstrators approached the rival group, prompting police intervention to separate the two sides.

In Newcastle, a similar dynamic played out outside The New Bridge Hotel, where four arrests were made for suspected public order offences, according to Northumbria Police. A counter-protest nearby, organised under the banner “Stop the far right and fascists in Newcastle,” took place at the Laing Art Gallery.

In a public statement, the organisers of the Newcastle counter-protest accused right-wing demonstrators of promoting “hate,” citing recent incidents in other towns as evidence of increasing hostility towards migrants and asylum seekers. Northumbria Police reiterated their commitment to upholding the right to lawful protest while warning that public disorder would not be tolerated.

The unrest follows a protest the night before outside the Stanwell Hotel in Spelthorne, Surrey, where a lit packet of firelighters was allegedly thrown at officers. Surrey Police arrested a man on suspicion of attempted arson and are continuing investigations to identify a second suspect. An additional arrest was made on Thursday at the same location, where one man was held on suspicion of conspiracy to commit violent disorder and aggravated trespass.

Authorities have said that plans are in place to monitor and respond to any further demonstrations at hotels currently housing asylum seekers across London. The Home Office has not issued a comment on the latest developments.