# Belfast man to face trial over racially motivated Sandy Row riots



A Belfast man, described as "pint-sized" by the media, is set to face trial for his alleged involvement in a series of riots that tainted the streets of the city last summer. David Dubois, aged 62, has been accused of inciting unrest during disturbances in the Sandy Row area, with a judge confirming that he will stand trial amidst serious allegations involving racially motivated violence.

Dubois's actions reportedly included urging onlookers to form a blockade, as captured by CCTV footage during the riot on August 3. His defence team has argued that he behaved responsibly by presenting himself to the police, claiming he was merely trying to maintain order. Nevertheless, the gravity of the charges has led the presiding judge to deny bail, reflecting on the appalling nature of the events. “These were racially-motivated attacks,” the judge stated, underscoring the potential for community unrest that such actions entail.

This incident is part of a broader pattern of violence that has erupted in Belfast recently. In addition to Dubois, multiple individuals have been charged with various offences related to rioting. A 15-year-old boy became one of the youngest defendants facing charges that include possessing a weapon with intent and throwing masonry during a separate outbreak of violence on July 16. His alleged actions were compounded by a troubling report that suggests his mother encouraged his involvement, even filming him during the disorder.

Other defendants range in age from teenagers to older adults, reflecting a community-wide struggle with the spectre of racial tension. Courts have been cautioned that those involved in such racially motivated incidents will face severer consequences, often leading to trials in higher courts. This is a clear signal from the judiciary that the societal implications of these crimes are taken seriously, indicating a zero-tolerance approach to acts that compromise public safety and community cohesion.

These recurring incidents of violence, often triggered by underlying racial tensions, have raised alarm among local communities and authorities alike. The increase in rioting, particularly in the Donegall Road and Sandy Row areas, highlights the urgent need for dialogue and intervention to address the root causes of unrest.

As the trial for Dubois approaches, the implications of these riots will resonate across the community. This case will likely serve not only as a legal matter but also as a reflection of the societal challenges Belfast must confront in its ongoing journey towards reconciliation and peace.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2
2. Paragraphs 1, 2
3. Paragraphs 1, 2, 4
4. Paragraph 2
5. Paragraph 3
6. Paragraph 3
7. Paragraph 3

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/courts/pint-sized-belfast-rioter-to-stand-trial-over-role-in-summer-disorder/a29278060.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/courts/2024/08/07/15-year-old-boy-remanded-over-belfast-riot-charges/> - A 15-year-old boy was remanded in custody over charges of rioting in Belfast. The charges relate to rioting in the Broadway area on July 16th and in the Sandy Row area on August 5th. The teenager faces two counts of rioting and one count of possession of a weapon with intent. Police opposed bail due to a high risk of reoffending and potential danger to public safety. The court heard that the defendant admitted to throwing masonry during the July 16th incident.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y87jgz3ggo> - Four individuals, including 62-year-old David Dubois, appeared in court in Belfast charged with rioting. Dubois was charged with rioting at Sandy Row. CCTV footage captured him in the middle of a riot attempting to encourage others. His defense claimed he set a good example by presenting himself to police. The judge refused bail, stating that the riots were 'appalling, racially-motivated attacks.'
4. <https://www.sundayworld.com/crime/courts/judge-warns-those-involved-in-racially-motivated-rioting-will-face-higher-court/a560809143.html> - A judge warned that individuals involved in racially-motivated rioting in Belfast would face higher courts. The warning came as four alleged rioters, including 62-year-old David Dubois, appeared in court. Dubois was charged with a single count of riot arising from events on Sandy Row on August 3rd. The court heard that he stood in the middle of the road in front of police lines and waved his arms, trying to beckon others onto the road.
5. <https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/courts/2024/08/14/boy-15-accused-of-involvement-in-belfast-rioting-encouraged-and-filmed-by-mother-court-hears/> - A 15-year-old boy accused of being at the center of racist rioting in Belfast was allegedly encouraged and filmed by his mother. The teenager faces a total of 12 charges, including four counts of riot, possessing and throwing a petrol bomb, causing an explosion with a firework, and having offensive weapons and paint with intent to cause damage to property. Some of the offenses were allegedly aggravated by racial hatred.
6. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/four-more-in-court-accused-of-rioting-during-disturbances-in-donegall-road-sandy-row-4SQT243OHFFPDLS5ZSDTX6D4FE/> - Four more individuals appeared in court in Belfast charged with rioting during disturbances in the Donegall Road/Sandy Row area. The charges include rioting, arson, and possession of offensive weapons. District Judge Mark Hamill stated that anyone involved in racially motivated rioting should eventually face the Crown Court. The defendants range in age from 16 to 62.
7. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/crime/psni-charge-man-with-rioting-and-arson-following-protest-in-belfast-city-centre-in-august-5011168> - The PSNI charged a 23-year-old man with rioting and arson in connection with disorder following a protest in Belfast city centre in August. The suspect was charged with aiding and abetting arson, arson, riot, criminal damage, and theft. He is due to appear at Belfast Magistrates Court on March 27, 2025. The charges relate to disorder that occurred across Belfast following a protest on August 3, 2024.