# Tommy Robinson charged with harassment amid tense UK unrest following prison release



Political activist Tommy Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, has been charged with harassment involving two journalists, an incident that has further widened the spotlight on his controversial public persona. The charges accuse him of committing harassment causing fear of violence, with the alleged offences occurring between 5 and 7 August 2024, a period marked by significant unrest in the UK. Robinson is set to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on 5 June.

This latest legal action comes on the heels of Robinson's recent release from prison, where he had been serving an 18-month sentence for contempt of court. His imprisonment stemmed from multiple breaches of an injunction, which prohibited him from publicly repeating defamatory statements against a Syrian refugee, Jamal Hijazi, who had successfully sued him for libel. The High Court had recently ruled to reduce Robinson's sentence by four months, citing a "change in attitude" as a factor in his early release; however, the presiding judge noted that Robinson has not shown remorse for his actions.

The backdrop to this harassment charge highlights the rising tensions in the UK, particularly during the events surrounding Robinson’s activities. The incidents invoking the harassment charges coincided with nationwide riots in response to the tragic murder of three young girls in Southport, a situation that exacerbated concerns about anti-immigrant sentiment across the country. Many public figures and media outlets have accused Robinson of stoking these tensions further during that turbulent period, painting him as an inflammatory figure within social and political discourse.

Robinson's troubles extend beyond this recent charge. He faces a separate trial slated for October next year due to allegations that he failed to provide the PIN for his mobile phone when detained by Kent Police. Such incidents reinforce a pattern of legal difficulties that Robinson has navigated since rising to prominence as the founder of the far-right English Defence League. His tenure has often been mired in controversy, including allegations of fomenting unrest during high-profile anti-immigration protests.

Despite the complexities surrounding his legal challenges, Robinson continues to draw attention. The potential influence of supporters, including prominent figures such as U.S. billionaire Elon Musk, has been noted, though Musk has neither confirmed nor denied his support regarding Robinson’s legal fees. The intersection of celebrity and activism continues to amplify Robinson’s platform, leaving many to question the societal implications of his actions and their consequences.

As Robinson prepares for his upcoming court dates, both the public and legal observers will be closely watching the developments of his cases, which encapsulate broader themes of freedom of speech, the limits of activism, and the potential ramifications of incendiary political rhetoric in an increasingly divided society. The media's role in these dynamics remains scrutinised, given the heightened risks that come with reporting on polarising figures like Robinson. What lies ahead for Robinson is uncertain, but the ramifications of his actions on the political landscape will likely resonate for some time.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/21/tommy-robinson-charged-with-harassing-journalists)
2. Paragraph 2: [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/f08f02d07601d9872054cfe30d20514f), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/df366c23-eb59-4f73-a5a9-f3aea54467ff)
3. Paragraph 3: [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-anti-islam-activist-tommy-robinson-charged-with-harassment-two-men-2025-05-21/)
4. Paragraph 4: [[6]](https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2025/04/17/anti-grooming-activist-tommy-robinson-loses-bid-for-early-release-from-prison/), [[5]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/jailed-uk-anti-islam-activist-tommy-robinson-be-released-next-week-2025-05-20/)
5. Paragraph 5: [[5]](https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/jailed-uk-anti-islam-activist-tommy-robinson-be-released-next-week-2025-05-20/)
6. Paragraph 6: [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/mar/20/hmp-woodhill-prison-tommy-robinson-segregation-high-court-challenge)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/21/tommy-robinson-charged-with-harassing-journalists> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-anti-islam-activist-tommy-robinson-charged-with-harassment-two-men-2025-05-21/> - Tommy Robinson, a prominent British anti-Islam activist, has been officially charged with harassment causing fear of violence toward two men. The incidents occurred between August 5 and 7 of the previous year, coinciding with nationwide riots that erupted following the murder of three young girls in Southport, northwest England. At that time, tensions escalated during anti-immigration protests across the country, and Robinson was accused by media and politicians of inciting unrest. He is currently serving an 18-month prison sentence for contempt of court but is scheduled for early release next week after a successful appeal to reduce his sentence.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/f08f02d07601d9872054cfe30d20514f> - Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, better known as Tommy Robinson and founder of the far-right English Defense League, is expected to be released early from prison following a U.K. High Court decision. Originally sentenced to 18 months imprisonment in October for violating a court injunction prohibiting him from repeating libelous claims against Syrian refugee Jamal Hijazi, Robinson may now be eligible for parole within a week. Justice Jeremy Johnson cited Robinson’s 'change in attitude' and his commitment to abide by the injunction moving forward, although he noted Robinson has not shown remorse.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/df366c23-eb59-4f73-a5a9-f3aea54467ff> - Tommy Robinson, founder of the far-right English Defence League, is set to be released from prison within a week after the High Court cut four months from his 18-month sentence for contempt of court. The sentence stemmed from Robinson's violation of a 2021 court injunction barring him from repeating false claims about Syrian refugee Jamal Hijazi. In 2018, Robinson released widely viewed videos accusing Hijazi of violent behavior, leading to a successful libel case and an injunction against further defamatory statements. Despite breaching the injunction with another video, 'Silenced,' Robinson has now assured the court that he has deleted the offensive content and will not repeat the offenses. Justice Johnson acknowledged Robinson's lack of remorse but noted an apparent change in attitude and compliance, justifying the reduction in sentencing. The punitive portion of the sentence remains, but the coercive element has been removed. Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, will be released after serving the remaining term. Government lawyers agreed he is no longer in breach but reserve the right to pursue further action if new violations occur.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/jailed-uk-anti-islam-activist-tommy-robinson-be-released-next-week-2025-05-20/> - British anti-Islam activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known as Tommy Robinson, will be released from jail on May 26, 2025, after winning a reduction of his 18-month contempt of court sentence. He had been imprisoned in October for breaching an injunction against making false allegations about a Syrian refugee who had previously sued him successfully for libel. The legal case was brought by the UK's solicitor general following Yaxley-Lennon's comments in widely viewed online interviews and a documentary titled 'Silenced.' A judge ruled that his sentence could be shortened by four months if he took steps to remove the defamatory content from social media and other platforms. His lawyer confirmed that those measures had been taken. Judge Jeremy Johnson acknowledged Yaxley-Lennon's compliance as having 'purged' his contempt, expediting his release. Yaxley-Lennon, linked to public unrest after high-profile incidents in 2024, is reportedly supported by U.S. billionaire Elon Musk, who, according to Yaxley-Lennon’s social media, has contributed to his legal fees, although Musk has not confirmed this.
6. <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2025/04/17/anti-grooming-activist-tommy-robinson-loses-bid-for-early-release-from-prison/> - An appeal launched by English activist and independent journalist Tommy Robinson to have his prison sentence reduced was rejected by the Court of Appeal this week. The anti-grooming gang campaigner was jailed for 18 months last year after pleading guilty to contempt of court after repeating previous allegations against a Syrian asylum seeker, who won a libel case against Tommy Robinson. Mr. Robinson’s lawyers argued that he suffers from ADHD and 'complex post-traumatic stress disorder,' which have been exacerbated by his effective solitary confinement, which was supposedly imposed for his own protection in light of the potential for attacks on Robinson given Britain’s large Muslim prison population. Forming the basis of the appeal to reduce his sentence, they argued that the original sentencing judge, Mr. Justice Johnson, was not made aware of Robinson’s conditions and, therefore, a more lenient sentence would be warranted, The Telegraph reported. Representing Robinson, Alisdair Williamson KC told the court: 'He is being kept safe by the authorities in segregation, but being kept safe is making him ill, and more ill than Mr. Justice Johnson could have foreseen on the basis of the information before him.' The Solicitor General’s office argued that there was 'no evidence that the conditions in which the appellant is being held are more severe than was anticipated' and thus there were 'no grounds for altering the sentence in this case.' Court of Appeal judges Baroness Carr, Lord Justice Edis and Lord Justice Warby rejected the appeal, saying that claims about Robinson’s mental state did 'not on analysis show either a significant exacerbation of a known medical condition or a material new factor.' They wrote: 'Even taking the appellant’s case at its highest, we see no reasonable basis for the contention that the conditions that he is experiencing are so substantially worse than the judge anticipated at the time of the sanction decision as to call for a downward adjustment. 'The evidence falls far short of the standard for a successful criminal appeal based on fresh medical evidence.' However, they said that Robinson could reduce his sentence by up to four months if he complied with the court’s demand to remove a film containing the allegations against the Syrian refugee from his social media platforms. Yet, it appears that he has no intention of doing so. During his activist career, Robinson has been jailed multiple times including at the high-security Belmarsh Prison for filming grooming gang child rapists as they entered court. The men were later found guilty of committing a 'campaign of rape and other sexual abuse' against young girls. After his release from Belmarsh, during which time he was also held in effective solitary confinement, he said that his mental health had deteriorated and he had lost significant amounts of weight after other inmates threatened to poison his food. He compared his treatment in prison to 'Guantanamo Bay'.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/mar/20/hmp-woodhill-prison-tommy-robinson-segregation-high-court-challenge> - Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, is seeking to bring a legal challenge against his segregation from other prisoners, which he claims is having an impact on his mental health. However, the physical risk from other prisoners was cited in written submissions by lawyers for the secretary of state for justice to back up the decision to locate him in a segregation unit at HMP Woodhill in Milton Keynes. Robinson is serving an 18-month sentence for contempt of court for repeating false allegations against a Syrian refugee, in breach of an injunction. He is due to be released on 25 July. HMP Woodhill received several intelligence reports from November last year showing a 'non-speculative risk to him including the plot by two prisoners who wanted to assault him to gain kudos and notoriety', the court heard. The intelligence also stated Robinson had 'a mark on his head' and would be killed by a lifer (someone serving a life sentence) if moved on to a wing. Robinson is due for release from HMP Woodhill, Milton Keynes, on 25 July, where he has been held in a segregation unit.