# Community forms protective cordon around Islington asylum hotel as police brace for unrest



Police officers outnumbered anti‑migrant demonstrators outside a hotel in Islington on Friday 8 August as rival groups converged on a building being used to accommodate people seeking asylum. According to The Independent, a pro‑refugee demonstration organised by Stand Up To Racism attracted counter‑demonstrators to the street outside the hotel, which is reported to be housing asylum seekers under government arrangements.

Accounts differ on the scale of the counter‑demonstration. The Independent put the number of anti‑racism activists at roughly 80, but local reporting and national broadcasters described a substantially larger turnout: the Islington Tribune and Sky News reported hundreds of residents, community groups and campaigners joining to show solidarity, while The Guardian said a “substantially larger” counter‑protest formed a protective presence around the building.

Police said they had placed strict conditions on both the planned protest and the counter‑protest and had significantly increased officers in the area. Local coverage and broadcast reports described lines of vans, cordons and officers kept between the opposing groups; LBC and the Evening Standard reported the Metropolitan Police had imposed geographical and timing limits on assemblies as part of the policing operation.

Tensions briefly rose during the confrontations. The Guardian and Sky reported scuffles and officers intervening to separate groups; the Evening Standard said nine people were arrested, many for breaching conditions under the Public Order Act. Other outlets recorded that a small unauthorised group attempted to move towards the main demonstration before being halted by police.

People believed to be staying in the hotel were visible from windows during the protests. Sky and the Evening Standard described residents watching and filming from upstairs, with some waving or blowing kisses towards those below, a scene also noted in The Guardian’s reporting.

Speaking to The Independent at the demonstration, Claudia Webbe, the former Labour MP for Leicester East who attended the event, said: “Immigration has brought a great growth and diversity to Britain. And we are richer for the people that have come here.” Her remarks framed the counter‑protest’s message of solidarity with the people housed in the hotel.

Journalists and local councillors placed the incident in a wider pattern of activism and policing around hotels used for asylum accommodation. The Guardian noted similar clashes have occurred at other migrant hotels, while LBC and Evening Standard coverage emphasised that policing plans are being prepared for potential unrest at other sites across the capital. The Islington Tribune highlighted the broad local mobilisation behind the counter‑protest, naming mosques, unions and political groups among those taking part and praising the community response against racism.

Police sources and local reporting said an elevated presence would remain in the area over the weekend to deter further disorder and facilitate lawful protest. Authorities and community leaders indicated they would continue to monitor the situation at this hotel and at other accommodation sites in the capital to prevent clashes and protect residents while claims are processed.

### 📌 Reference Map:

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* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html), [[4]](https://www.islingtontribune.co.uk/article/counter-protesters-unite-against-asylum-hotel-demo), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/protesters-oppose-one-another-at-london-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers), [[7]](https://news.sky.com/story/rival-groups-face-off-outside-migrant-hotel-as-asylum-seekers-blow-kisses-at-protesters-13405697)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/increased-police-presence-asylum-hotel-protest/), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/asylum-hotel-protest-london-islington-met-police-b1241246.html), [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/protesters-oppose-one-another-at-london-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers), [[7]](https://news.sky.com/story/rival-groups-face-off-outside-migrant-hotel-as-asylum-seekers-blow-kisses-at-protesters-13405697), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/asylum-hotel-protest-london-islington-met-police-b1241246.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[7]](https://news.sky.com/story/rival-groups-face-off-outside-migrant-hotel-as-asylum-seekers-blow-kisses-at-protesters-13405697), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/asylum-hotel-protest-london-islington-met-police-b1241246.html), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/protesters-oppose-one-another-at-london-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html)
* Paragraph 7 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/protesters-oppose-one-another-at-london-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers), [[6]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/increased-police-presence-asylum-hotel-protest/), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/asylum-hotel-protest-london-islington-met-police-b1241246.html), [[4]](https://www.islingtontribune.co.uk/article/counter-protesters-unite-against-asylum-hotel-demo)
* Paragraph 8 – [[6]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/increased-police-presence-asylum-hotel-protest/), [[4]](https://www.islingtontribune.co.uk/article/counter-protesters-unite-against-asylum-hotel-demo), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/police-outnumber-antimigrant-protesters-outside-islington-hotel-b2804659.html> - The Independent reports that police officers outnumbered anti‑migrant protesters outside an Islington hotel during a demonstration supporting refugees on Friday 8 August. Around eighty counter‑demonstrators associated with Stand Up To Racism gathered outside the hotel, which is believed to be hosting asylum seekers under government arrangements. Claudia Webbe, former MP for Leicester East, addressed the crowd and praised immigration for enriching Britain. The piece notes that police numbers were increased in the area and that a heightened policing presence was expected over the forthcoming weekend because of concerns that anti‑asylum and counter‑protest activity could escalate into disorder.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/protesters-oppose-one-another-at-london-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers> - The Guardian describes competing protests outside the Thistle City Barbican hotel in Islington, used to house asylum seekers, where anti‑migrant demonstrators were met by a substantially larger counter‑protest organised in support of refugees. The report details how counter‑demonstrators sought to form a protective presence around the building, while tensions briefly rose and the Metropolitan Police intervened to separate the groups. It records scuffles and arrests made under public order legislation and notes that residents believed to be asylum seekers watched from hotel windows. The article situates the incident within a wider pattern of protests at hotels accommodating migrants.
4. <https://www.islingtontribune.co.uk/article/counter-protesters-unite-against-asylum-hotel-demo> - The Islington Tribune reports that counter‑protesters supporting people housed in an asylum hotel near Old Street far outnumbered the anti‑hotel demonstrators on Saturday 8 August. Hundreds of local residents and community groups, including mosques, unions and local political parties, are said to have mobilised to show solidarity with those living in the accommodation while claims are processed. The piece recounts chants, drumming and a large, peaceful show of support, but also records a separate unauthorised group that clashed with police and subsequent arrests under the Public Order Act. Local councillors praised the united community response against racism.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/asylum-hotel-protest-london-islington-met-police-b1241246.html> - The Evening Standard covers clashes outside an Islington hotel housing asylum seekers, reporting that the Metropolitan Police imposed strict conditions on both protest and counter‑protest assemblies and stepped up their presence. Photographs and eyewitness accounts showed people believed to be migrants watching and filming from hotel windows. The piece states that nine people were arrested, many for breaching Public Order Act conditions, and describes masked anti‑fascist groups moving towards the main demonstration before being halted by officers. It highlights the organisation of the counter‑protest by groups including Stand Up To Racism and notes continued police plans to manage related activity at other migrant hotels.
6. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/increased-police-presence-asylum-hotel-protest/> - LBC reports that the Metropolitan Police announced an increased policing presence and imposed conditions for a planned protest and a counter‑protest outside the Thistle City Barbican hotel, used to accommodate asylum seekers. The article outlines the requirement for assemblies to remain within defined areas and specific timeframes, and notes concerns that outside groups endorsing the anti‑hotel demonstration might boost attendance. LBC records that Stand Up To Racism organised the counter‑demonstration, supported by local groups, and that policing plans were in place to respond to any protest activity at other London hotels being used for asylum accommodation.
7. <https://news.sky.com/story/rival-groups-face-off-outside-migrant-hotel-as-asylum-seekers-blow-kisses-at-protesters-13405697> - Sky News describes rival groups facing off outside the Thistle City Barbican hotel in Islington, reporting that people believed to be asylum seekers watched from windows and at times waved or blew kisses at demonstrators below. The report records that several demonstrators were detained after brief clashes and that the Metropolitan Police had imposed conditions on both the anti‑hotel and pro‑refugee assemblies. Sky notes that the counter‑protest included hundreds of people and that police lines, vans and cordons were used to keep opposing groups apart while officers remained on scene to maintain order and facilitate the lawful right to protest.