# Body found near Canary Wharf tower as tensions rise over Britannia hotel plans



A body was discovered outside Sirocco Tower in Canary Wharf on Wednesday morning, prompting emergency services to seal off Harbour Way, erect a forensic tent and begin inquiries. According to the original report, residents heard sirens at about 6am as officers established a cordon around the scene; by midday authorities had given only limited information while investigations continued. The tower has been described in some accounts as a 32‑floor residential block, though developer material places Sirocco at roughly 35 storeys, underscoring its position amid dense high‑rise housing in the Harbour Central estate.

The location is notable because it lies less than half a mile from the Britannia International Hotel, a four‑star riverside property that the Government intends to use for temporary accommodation for people seeking asylum. Tower Hamlets Council has said it will work with the Home Office and partners to deliver support, insisting in a statement posted on 22 July 2025 that it would help put in place “a full package of support, including safety and safeguarding arrangements” for those due to be housed there. The hotel’s published specification shows a large capacity — in excess of 500 rooms — which helps explain why national authorities have considered it for short‑term provision.

The hotel’s impending change of use has already sparked weeks of protest in Canary Wharf. Footage circulating from recent demonstrations shows clashes between activists and police outside the Britannia, and local reporting has documented a range of scenes from families and masked protesters to flares being set off. Accounts of arrests vary: the original report noted two arrests at one demonstration, while other outlets recorded at least one arrest and the Metropolitan Police confirmed an arrest for assaulting an emergency worker. Those differing tallies reflect how rapidly events have unfolded and been reported.

Police presence at the hotel has been visible and, according to broadcasters, part of a planned policing operation to preserve public order. Sky News reported officers monitoring demonstrations and working with the local authority as tensions around the site have risen; Tower Hamlets officials say they are liaising with the Home Office over safeguarding and community measures. Local councillors and residents have publicly voiced concerns about safety, prompting authorities to stress that plans for welfare, security and integration support are being drawn up as the accommodation arrangements proceed.

The disruption has also affected paying guests: reporting indicates that some bookings at the Britannia have been cancelled amid the controversy, and scenes of protesters confronting hotel staff and arriving visitors have fed wider unease among local businesses and tourists. The hotel’s riverside location and range of room types mean it could, in contingency, accommodate several hundred people relatively quickly — a fact that explains both the Government’s interest and the intensity of local feeling.

The wider context is a national debate over the emergency use of commercial hotels to relieve pressures on the asylum system and the policing challenges that accompany rapid changes of purpose for large city venues. Media coverage has highlighted the difficulty of balancing the urgent need to find accommodation with concerns about community safety and the strain on local services, and policing chiefs emphasise the importance of plans that protect both residents and those being housed.

At the scene in Canary Wharf the investigation into the body remains active and details are limited. Emergency services have been approached for comment and the area around Sirocco Tower was reported cordoned off while forensic examinations continued. Local officials have called for calm and dialogue as inquiries proceed and as the council, Home Office and police work to manage the fallout from both the discovery and the heightened local tensions.

### 📌 Reference Map:

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.canarydevelopment.com/sailmakers-harbour-central/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2025/July/Statement-from-Tower-Hamlets-Council-on-Britannia-Hotel.aspx), [[6]](https://www.hotel.info/en/britannia-international-canary-wharf/hotel-116521/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/london-asylum-hotel-protests-police-arrest-b2801221.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://news.sky.com/story/police-attend-protest-outside-london-hotel-which-will-be-housing-asylum-seekers-13400395), [[4]](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2025/July/Statement-from-Tower-Hamlets-Council-on-Britannia-Hotel.aspx)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.hotel.info/en/britannia-international-canary-wharf/hotel-116521/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://news.sky.com/story/police-attend-protest-outside-london-hotel-which-will-be-housing-asylum-seekers-13400395), [[5]](https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/london-asylum-hotel-protests-police-arrest-b2801221.html)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2025/July/Statement-from-Tower-Hamlets-Council-on-Britannia-Hotel.aspx)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14996713/Body-outside-skyscraper-Canary-Wharf-yards-controversial-migrant-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - A body was discovered outside Sirocco Tower on Harbour Way in Canary Wharf on Wednesday, August 13, prompting emergency services to seal the area with a cordon and erect a forensic tent. The article links the scene to wider controversy over the nearby Britannia International Hotel, which the Government intends to use for asylum accommodation and has attracted protests. It reports footage of anti‑migrant demonstrators clashing with police, mentions two arrests and guests having bookings cancelled, and notes that details of the incident were still emerging as inquiries continued and emergency services were approached for comment. No further details yet.
3. <https://news.sky.com/story/police-attend-protest-outside-london-hotel-which-will-be-housing-asylum-seekers-13400395> - Sky News reported police attendance at a protest outside the Britannia International Hotel in Canary Wharf after Tower Hamlets Council confirmed the Government intended to use the four‑star venue to provide temporary accommodation for asylum seekers. The piece described officers monitoring the demonstration and said a policing plan was in place to preserve public order. It noted local concern about safety and safeguarding arrangements and quoted council officials saying they were working with the Home Office. The report placed the hotel controversy in the context of wider national debate about the use of hotels for asylum accommodation and policing challenges.
4. <https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2025/July/Statement-from-Tower-Hamlets-Council-on-Britannia-Hotel.aspx> - Tower Hamlets Council published a statement acknowledging awareness of the Government’s decision to use the Britannia Hotel in Canary Wharf to provide temporary accommodation for asylum seekers. The council said it would work with the Home Office and partners to ensure a full package of support, including safety and safeguarding arrangements, for those staying at the hotel. The statement emphasised the need for appropriate measures to be put in place and indicated local authority involvement in planning and welfare coordination as the hotel’s change of use was implemented. The statement was posted on 22 July 2025. It invited community dialogue.
5. <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/london-asylum-hotel-protests-police-arrest-b2801221.html> - The Independent reported on a demonstration outside the Britannia International Hotel in Canary Wharf where flares were set off and at least one person was arrested. Reporters described a mixed crowd that included families and masked individuals, with police intervening after flares were lit and a member of the public allegedly pushed an officer. The article quoted the Metropolitan Police confirming searches and an arrest for assaulting an emergency worker, and documented tensions as protesters jeered at people entering or leaving the hotel. It also noted the proximity of tourists and hotel guests as the scenes unfolded in east London.
6. <https://www.hotel.info/en/britannia-international-canary-wharf/hotel-116521/> - The hotel listing provides detailed specifications for the Britannia International Hotel Canary Wharf, including its riverside location and extensive room inventory. It records that the property has 530 rooms across multiple categories, summarising amenities such as en‑suite bathrooms, air conditioning in many rooms, suites and family options, leisure facilities and on‑site dining. The entry places the hotel within convenient reach of London transport links and local attractions. The factual listing supports descriptions of the venue’s capacity and scale, demonstrating that the property could reasonably accommodate several hundred people when used for temporary provision such as asylum housing in emergency situations.
7. <https://www.canarydevelopment.com/sailmakers-harbour-central/> - The Canary Development page describes the Harbour Central project in Canary Wharf and identifies Sirocco Tower as part of the Sailmakers collection within the scheme. It records Sirocco as a substantial residential tower, completed in 2018, and notes the development’s mixture of apartment buildings, roof terraces and communal amenities. The entry states that Sirocco stands at around thirty‑five storeys and forms part of a wider Harbour Central masterplan, providing context for the building’s scale and location on Harbour Way. This supports reporting that the incident occurred adjacent to a tall residential tower in Canary Wharf close to the Britannia hotel.