# Just Stop Oil activists deny charges of criminal damage at Tesla store



Two individuals associated with the climate activist group Just Stop Oil have appeared in Westminster Magistrates' Court, denying charges of criminal damage for an incident that took place at a Tesla store in West London. Nigel Fleming, a 63-year-old chess coach, and 74-year-old Catherine Nash are accused of causing £2,696.40 worth of damage after allegedly pouring liquid latex over a Tesla robot at the Westfield store in Shepherd's Bush on March 12.

Fleming, who on this occasion represented himself, entered a not guilty plea. Nash, appearing via video link, also pleaded not guilty during a previous hearing that had been adjourned to consolidate her case with Fleming's.

During proceedings on April 8, Fleming, who resides on Worcester Crescent in Mill Hill, acknowledged that the action was indeed carried out by them, but he asserted that they had a "lawful excuse." He further argued that the value of the damage was likely less than what was claimed by the prosecution.

Dressed in a white hoodie with glasses draped around his neck, Fleming expressed his surprise at the assertion of damage. "We were very careful to try and make it so that the mannequin was not damaged, so I'm very surprised that there was damage to anything," he stated.

Fleming recounted that a police official had reportedly visited the scene and observed that the latex was "drying and peeling off." He elaborated, "The point, I think, is that the latex was clearly peeling." District Judge John Zani, overseeing the case, used a water bottle to illustrate how criminal damage is assessed, explaining that even if damage can be easily removed, the time and energy expended to do so constitutes criminal damage.

The judge prompted a discussion regarding potential witnesses, advising Fleming to consider having the individual who conducted the latex testing provide a statement. As the hearing progressed, Fleming indicated that their action aimed to raise awareness about issues such as climate change. However, Judge Zani informed him that he could not call an expert witness on the topic, noting that similar arguments have been presented in higher courts. He did mention that the presiding judge at their trial might grant some allowance for Fleming to express his views.

Both defendants were charged with intending to destroy or damage the Tesla Optimus robot or acting recklessly concerning the potential for damage. In light of the ongoing legal proceedings, they have been granted conditional bail until their scheduled trial on September 24 at Westminster Magistrates' Court.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/cvgn17204lxo> - This URL supports the claim of two Just Stop Oil protesters denying criminal damage charges after an incident at a Tesla store in West London, where they poured liquid latex over a robot. The article provides details about the protesters' denials and the context of the incident.
2. <https://www.inkl.com/news/just-stop-oil-protesters-deny-criminal-damage-after-latex-poured-on-tesla-robot> - This URL corroborates the information about the Just Stop Oil protesters, Nigel Fleming and Catherine Nash, denying charges of causing £2,696.40 in damage by pouring liquid latex over a Tesla robot in a Westfield store.
3. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10311201/> - Although unrelated to the specific incident, this article discusses the use of digital evidence in criminal cases, which can be relevant in understanding how evidence might be handled in trials involving criminal damage.
4. <https://www.coloradojudicial.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/COLJI-Crim%202017%20-%20Final.pdf> - This PDF provides general information on criminal jury instructions and could serve as a broader context on how criminal damage cases are handled in court, but it does not directly relate to the specific case.
5. <https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-9> - This government website details policies and procedures for evaluating contractor qualifications and does not directly pertain to the incident or court proceedings in question.
6. <https://www.noahwire.com> - As the source article mentioned, this URL is intended to provide further information on the article itself but lacks specific context unless directly referenced to the Just Stop Oil incident.
7. <https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/just-stop-oil-protesters-deny-31380404> - Please view link - unable to able to access data