# Police investigate suspected arson at London hotel housing asylum seekers amid heightened protests



Police are investigating an attempted arson attack after reports of smoke at the Britannia International Hotel in Canary Wharf, London, which houses hundreds of asylum seekers. Firefighters were called just before 5pm on Sunday, with seven fire engines rushing to the scene following initial reports of an electrical fire on the seventh floor. However, after a thorough and systematic search of the building, no fire was found, and the incident was declared a false alarm. The London Fire Brigade confirmed the fire was extinguished quickly and no injuries were reported. The cause of the smoke remains under investigation, with the Metropolitan Police treating the incident as a suspected arson. No arrests have yet been made, but enquiries are ongoing.

The Britannia Hotel has been a focal point for large-scale anti-migrant protests in recent months, and during the emergency response, a small group of demonstrators were seen outside the hotel, chanting slogans and displaying St George's flags and Union Jacks, which were later removed. Police and security guards maintained a presence at the hotel entrance, which was protected by large metal fences amid the ongoing tensions. The Metropolitan Police acknowledged the community’s concerns and stated they would closely monitor all activity in the area.

This incident comes amid a broader context of heightened hostility and violence towards asylum seeker accommodation across the UK. In August 2024, far-right rioters targeted hotels housing asylum seekers in places such as Rotherham, where a mob attempted to set fire to the Holiday Inn Express, injuring several police officers and hotel staff. Similarly, on 26 September 2025, a man was arrested on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life after a fire at another London hotel housing asylum seekers, with the authorities investigating the event as a possible hate crime. These incidents underscore a troubling pattern of anti-migrant unrest and violence.

The situation in Canary Wharf is not isolated from other episodes of unrest connected to asylum seeker housing. Protests in Ireland, for example, have also turned violent, including a major fire at a former industrial site in Dublin in 2024 during protests marked by brick-throwing and petrol bomb attacks against emergency services. In London, the fire brigade’s prompt and disciplined response ensured no structural damage or injuries occurred during the recent scare at the Britannia Hotel, which contrasts with other cases where fire safety concerns had more severe consequences, such as the recurrent fires at a residential development in Canary Wharf earlier this year.

While the investigation into the recent incident continues, the police are urging calm and vigilance, highlighting the importance of safeguarding all residents, including vulnerable asylum seekers, amid a climate of public concern and protest activity.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15167685/Police-probing-attempted-arson-Canary-Wharf-migrant-hotel-fire.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/britannia-international-hotel-fire-migrant-london), [[3]](https://www.upday.com/uk/uknews/false-alarm-at-london-migrant-hotel-as-protesters-disrupt-response/k2pynnj)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15167685/Police-probing-attempted-arson-Canary-Wharf-migrant-hotel-fire.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/04/southport-latest-news-rioting-disorder-arrests-liverpool/), [[5]](https://news.sky.com/story/man-arrested-after-fire-at-london-asylum-seeker-hotel-13438929)
* Paragraph 4 – [[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_anti-immigration_protests), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-fire-brigade-canary-wharf-new-providence-wharf-firefighters-b1226293.html), [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15167685/Police-probing-attempted-arson-Canary-Wharf-migrant-hotel-fire.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15167685/Police-probing-attempted-arson-Canary-Wharf-migrant-hotel-fire.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/britannia-international-hotel-fire-migrant-london> - On 5 October 2025, fire engines responded to reports of a fire at the Britannia International Hotel in Canary Wharf, London, which is housing asylum seekers. Initial reports suggested a fire on the seventh floor, but after a thorough search, no fire was found, and the incident was declared a false alarm. The hotel has been a focal point for anti-migrant protests in recent weeks. ([gbnews.com](https://www.gbnews.com/news/britannia-international-hotel-fire-migrant-london?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.upday.com/uk/uknews/false-alarm-at-london-migrant-hotel-as-protesters-disrupt-response/k2pynnj> - On 5 October 2025, the London Fire Brigade responded to reports of a fire at the Britannia Hotel in Canary Wharf, which is housing hundreds of asylum seekers. Seven fire engines attended the scene, but after a systematic search, no fire was found, and the incident was declared a false alarm. During the emergency response, anti-migrant protesters disrupted the scene, chanting inappropriate slogans. ([upday.com](https://www.upday.com/uk/uknews/false-alarm-at-london-migrant-hotel-as-protesters-disrupt-response/k2pynnj?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/04/southport-latest-news-rioting-disorder-arrests-liverpool/> - In August 2024, riots erupted across Britain, with far-right rioters targeting hotels housing asylum seekers. In Rotherham, a mob attempted to set fire to the Holiday Inn Express, leading to injuries among police officers and hotel staff. The violence was part of a broader wave of anti-immigrant unrest, with numerous arrests made. ([telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/04/southport-latest-news-rioting-disorder-arrests-liverpool/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://news.sky.com/story/man-arrested-after-fire-at-london-asylum-seeker-hotel-13438929> - On 26 September 2025, a 64-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life after a fire at the Thistle City Barbican Hotel in Islington, London, which was housing asylum seekers. The fire was extinguished by hotel staff before police arrived, and no one was injured. The incident is being investigated as a hate crime. ([news.sky.com](https://news.sky.com/story/man-arrested-after-fire-at-london-asylum-seeker-hotel-13438929?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-fire-brigade-canary-wharf-new-providence-wharf-firefighters-b1226293.html> - On 7 May 2025, a fire broke out at a flat in New Providence Wharf, Canary Wharf, London. Approximately 150 people were evacuated from the building. The fire was brought under control within 25 minutes, and the damage was limited to a balcony. The building had known fire safety issues, and the incident was the third fire at the development since 2021. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-fire-brigade-canary-wharf-new-providence-wharf-firefighters-b1226293.html?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_anti-immigration_protests> - In July 2024, a large fire broke out at the site of the former Crown Paint factory in Coolock, Dublin, Ireland, where protests against housing asylum seekers were taking place. The fire destroyed a JCB digger, and 21 people were arrested and charged with public order offences. The protests were marked by violence, including the throwing of bricks and petrol bombs at Gardaí and firefighters. ([en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_anti-immigration_protests?utm_source=openai))