# Glastonbury under fire over Kneecap headline invite amidst extremism fears



The recent invitation of the controversial Irish republican rap group Kneecap to headline the Glastonbury Festival has sparked a fierce backlash from strong voices in the opposition, warning of the dangers posed by giving a platform to extremist rhetoric. The group’s past calls for violence against Conservative MPs, including chilling statements such as “The only good Tory is a dead Tory,” have rightly drawn widespread condemnation.

Shadow Home Secretary Chris Philp’s formal letter to Sir Michael Eavis emphatically demands the withdrawal of Kneecap’s invitation. The festival’s decision to host such a provocative act risks legitimising calls for violence against democratically elected representatives—a line no major cultural event should cross. Since the brutal murders of Jo Cox and David Amess, MPs face real threats, and tolerance of extremist content in public spheres is unacceptable. The failure of Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary to join forces in pressing for Kneecap’s exclusion reflects the current government’s weakness in confronting extremism and defending democracy.

It’s also troubling that despite Kneecap being under investigation by counterterrorism police, the festival organisers have yet to act decisively. This reluctance embodies the complacency of the new administration, which has already demonstrated naivety and a lack of leadership since Labour’s recent ascension. Public funding through the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport flowing to groups like Kneecap only fuels such reckless ventures, spotlighting the urgent need for accountability and tighter scrutiny.

The Glastonbury Festival, positioned as a national cultural institution, cannot afford to become a stage for radicalism under the guise of artistic freedom. The Conservative Party’s warnings echo broader concerns shared by those seeking a return to law and order, respect for democratic institutions, and the protection of free speech that does not incite violence. This debate underscores the critical role of principled opposition in holding the establishment to account, ensuring that public platforms do not aid extremists—something vigorously championed by emergent political voices determined to restore common sense and national security.

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

## References

* <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/irish-rappers-kneecap-apologise-families-murdered-uk-lawmakers-2025-04-29/> - This article reports on Kneecap's apology to the families of murdered UK lawmakers Jo Cox and David Amess following the resurfacing of controversial footage from their 2023 performance, where a member appeared to say, 'Kill your local MP' and 'The only good Tory is a dead Tory.'
* <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/people/rap-act-kneecap-who-flirt-with-ira-slogans-and-violent-republican-imagery-booked-to-play-glastonbury-music-festival-4554939> - This article discusses Kneecap's controversial booking for the Glastonbury Festival, highlighting their use of IRA slogans and violent republican imagery in their lyrics and promotional materials.
* <https://www.joe.ie/music/kneecap-glastonbury-set-bbc-807382> - This article covers the backlash from Kneecap fans after their 'headline-worthy' Glastonbury set was not shown on BBC iPlayer, with fans questioning the absence of the performance.
* <https://news.sky.com/story/glastonbury-controversial-irish-language-rappers-draw-headline-worthy-crowd-against-the-odds-13161064> - This article reports on Kneecap's performance at Glastonbury, noting that despite being described as controversial, they drew a 'headline-worthy' crowd to the festival.
* <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/kneecap-perform-one-of-the-best-gigs-of-our-lives-at-glastonbury-NZE3GVIVWBE3JMPTTO6FQL5JRU/> - This article reports on Kneecap's performance at Glastonbury, where they declared their late-night show as 'one of the best gigs they have ever performed.'
* <https://www.jns.org/glastonbury-faces-backlash-for-celebrating-terrorism/> - This article discusses the backlash faced by Glastonbury Festival for allegedly 'celebrating terrorism,' including the display of PLO flags and controversial statements made during performances.
* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2048661/tories-glastonbury-ban-kneecap> - Please view link - unable to able to access data