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Reform councillor's extremism demands urgent investigation

Ian Cooper has been expelled from Reform UK, but we need more far-reaching consequences for those who share hateful rhetoric




by **Dean Conway** — 05-02-2026 08:00 in **East Midlands, Politics, Region** Reading Time: 9 mins

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image by LDRS reporter Philip Corrigan. Free for all LDRS partners to use.

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Reform 2025 Ltd has **revoked the membership** of Staffordshire County Councillor Ian Cooper in the wake of a Hope Not Hate (HNH) investigation uncovering **extreme racism in Cooper's online activity**. Showing screenshots from accounts bearing his name, the investigation alleges that Cooper made repeated racist attacks against high-profile non-white politicians and public figures.

These comments include:

- Mocking the name of lawyer and political commentator Dr Shola Mos-Shogbamimu and saying that it was “time she F’d off back to Nigeria”.
- Calling mayor Sadiq Khan a “narcissistic Pakistani”, and London “a third world shithole”.
- Telling journalist/presenter Sangita Myska that she is not “ethnically, culturally, or historically English ... all you have is a piece of paper entitling you to British citizenship.”



Sangita Myska @SangitaMyska · Apr 16



I'm English.



Don Gargantuan @DonGargan84 · Apr 16

Replying to @SangitaMyska

You seem Happy about English people being jailed Songita? Tell me, how would he have been punished in your own country?

Beheaded? Thrown from a tall Building?

714

519

7.4K

593K



Ian Cooper

@cooper_ian57035



Only in your dreams... You are neither ethnically, culturally or historically English. Your diaspora isn't NW European. All you have is a piece of paper entitling you to British citizenship.

12:12 PM · Apr 17, 2025 · 32 Views

[image by Free to use through LDRS Partnership](#)

The investigation was prompted by a post from the X/Twitter account ReformExposed revealing Cooper as a 'Top Fan' (meaning someone with high user-engagement) of the Facebook group The European Race. The group is explicitly white supremacist, with such post captions as 'The White Race is God's Chosen' (04/12/25) and 'Brit's are only white. That is it. Invaders OUT' (22/11/25).

Are white supremacists endemic to Reform's Staffordshire branch?

Among [calls to resign](#) from nine Stoke and Staffordshire Labour MPs, Tamworth MP Sarah Edwards explicitly called these allegations [evidence of "white supremacist views"](#). Staffordshire County's Conservative leader Philip White has [called for an investigation](#) of Reform's entire Staffordshire branch: "It was inevitable that Ian Cooper would have to go, but Reform have done nothing to address the bigotry that appears to be embedded in their Staffordshire branch ... Nigel Farage needs to instigate an urgent review of his entire Staffordshire operation."

This may refer to Burton South councillor Peter Mason, whom White called to stand down after ReformExposed also revealed him to have made [racist and homophobic comments online](#). But White could just as easily be referencing the multiple links between Reform's Staffordshire branch and the neo-Nazi group Patriotic Alternative (PA). In January, the party's Staffordshire County organiser David Hyden-Milakovic was found by HNH to have [protested and leafleted against migration](#) with PA in

[an event co-organised by PA](#), as well as having been involved in a militant anti-vaccine movement whose members advocated [attacking vaccine centres](#), schools and heads of public health.

Mason continues to serve as an elected Reform UK official, and the company has continually failed to acknowledge its councillors' links to PA, even in light of its leader Mark Collett (a veteran of the UK's neo-Nazi right who briefly headed the British National Party's Youth Division) [publicly calling its members](#) to "seek candidacy" in Reform in order to "drag the party to the right". While Reform has said that radical right activists are "not welcome" and that a "stringent vetting process" exists to keep them out, the continual scandals relating to the racism of its members suggest that this vetting process is (if existent) deeply flawed.

Reform's wider issues with racism

The Staffordshire scandals are alarming, but this problem isn't limited to one branch. Last summer, *Byline Times* reported that a dozen Reform UK councillors have associated with or shared content from activists belonging to [British fascist and neo-Nazi organisations](#). Since 2024, several Reform officials have been expelled from the party for racist and xenophobic online behaviour, including Barnsley North Candidate Robert Lomas [referring to black people as "savages"](#) and Doncaster's Mark Broadhurst [posting that Hitler would have been a "legend" if he had exterminated Muslims](#).

In October 2025, HNH revealed that Reform UK National Director Adam Bounds attempted to use his position to [recruit members to a far-right](#) 'physical resistance group' and shared content from Steve Laws, an online influencer with ties to PA and the fascist Homeland Party. Recently, Reform selected as head of its student organisation Matthew Goodwin, a radical right academic who HNH argues has advanced a "[racial conception of Britishness](#)". And in October, Reform faced controversy after MP Sarah Pochin said on TalkTV that adverts featuring black and Asian people are "[not representative of Britain](#)".

Allegations of racist abuse against Nigel Farage

Allegations have recently been levied against Farage himself. *The Guardian* cites 28 of his former classmates at Dulwich College alleging that [Farage engaged in extreme racism](#) during their time in school, openly saying that "Hitler was right", using racial slurs, performing Nazi salutes, and targeting non-white and Jewish students. Among the accusers are Bafta-winning director Peter Ettedgui (whose [stories of antisemitic abuse at the hands of Farage](#) have been corroborated by multiple classmates) and contemporaries from Dulwich's Cadet's Force club who [remember Farage singing Hitler Youth songs](#). These recently uncovered claims support [stories about racism in Farage's teen years](#) that have existed for several years now. [As Sangita Myska told The Guardian](#) in the aftermath of HNH's allegations against Cooper, "Reform UK is a private company, and it's the chief executive that will set the culture, and that person is Nigel Farage."

apologise by [multiple Holocaust survivors](#). Likewise, councillor Cooper has not yet responded to the BBC or *The Guardian's* approach for comment, though the BBC has [noted a response from Cooper](#) to MP Sarah Edwards' Facebook post: "The good thing is I don't need to be a politician for the money, unlike some. I can walk away today without consequences."

Why Reform isn't facing consequences for hate speech

Despite his expulsion being announced mere hours after posting the comments, Cooper is right. Taken together, these scandals and allegations make clear that hate speech and conspiracism from Reform UK's past and present councillors does not stem from poor vetting – it is a key factor in the party's public appeal.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) have already demonstrated this, with a 2024 investigation finding that 74 of the party's parliamentary candidates (over 10% of its total at the time) were involved in a [sprawling network of Islamophobic and conspiracist Facebook groups](#) as either members or admins. TBIJ identified this as "a concerted effort to recruit" new party members through racist rhetoric. A 2024 survey by Hope Not Hate supports this read, finding that up to 60% of Reform respondents agreed with statements supporting [Holocaust denial and Great Replacement theory](#) (pp.110-111).

Keeping in mind the endemic nature of far-right hate speech within Reform UK's ranks is key to conceiving the threat it represents. As Politics Professor at the University of Bath Aurelien Mondon has [recently argued in *The Conversation*](#), "focusing on extreme events such as the reports of Farage's teenage past can exceptionalise the nature of far-right politics and make it harder to call out." Mondon writes that the tactic of "legitimation through contradistinction" – painting a political project as moderate by comparing it to more extreme examples – has long been a part of the far-right playbook, touching on Farage's legitimation of himself by distancing UKIP from the British National Party in the 2010s. Similarly, academic Rohan Kalyan has used the term '[eventocracy](#)' to understand the far-right's tactic of "conjur[ing] up new surprises every day, so that the public's attention continually moves from event to event", contributing to the sense of crisis and confusion from which the party feeds.

We must remind ourselves of the common thread of ethno-nationalist hate that unites the scandals above, rather than being sideswept by each one as it comes. The presence of neo-Nazi ties, white supremacy, and conspiracism within Reform certainly requires investigation. But alongside Cooper, the entire company needs to face consistent, stern interrogation about the views of its members.

OPINION

Why Reform UK's conspiracism should worry you

BY DEAN CONWAY © 7 AUGUST 2025

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Dean Conway

Dean Conway is an essayist, content writer, and independent researcher of the global far-right, aspiring to PhD study on the topic. He holds a M.A. in Cultural Studies in 2022 and has since written

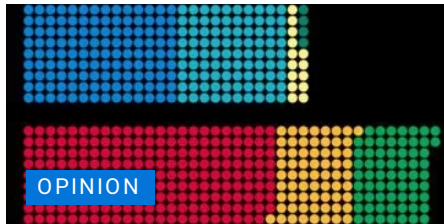
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