

Arrests amid Britain First march and protests

21 February 2026

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There was a major police presence in Manchester city centre

Nine men have been arrested after a Britain First march and counter protests caused "significant" disruption throughout Manchester city centre.

They were arrested on suspicion of assaulting an emergency worker, a public order offence, breach of the peace and breach of a dispersal notice, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) said.

A dispersal order was in place across the city centre until 20:00 GMT, which gave officers the power to remove people from a specific area.

Assistant Chief Constable Rick Jackson said police had to bring in 50 extra officers as well as mounted and dog units "to support people's right to protest peacefully while reducing the impact on the wider public".



A dispersal order was in place in the city centre until 20:00 GMT

A GMP spokesperson said 11 men were originally arrested on suspicion of the following offences, although two were later de-arrested. The arrests were as follows:

- Two men on suspicion of prevention of a breach of the peace
- Two men on suspicion of assaulting emergency workers
- Four men on suspicion of public order offences. One of these men was subsequently de-arrested and issued a summons
- One man on suspicion of an offence relating to the Crime and Disorder Act. He was subsequently de-arrested and given a dispersal notice
- One man on suspicion of assault
- One man on suspicion of breaching a dispersal notice

The nine men arrested remain in custody, a GMP spokesperson said.

Jackson said: "Thanks to the efforts of our officers on the ground and the planning done with our partners, hundreds of people from a range of groups were able to come together safely, with no significant issues reported.

"Greater Manchester is a place where people can confidently and lawfully express their views, while ensuring that residents, workers, and visitors can go about their day feeling safe."

Jackson said there had been "significant disruptions across the city centre" and officers were prioritising the safety of the public.

"We will continue working with local communities, businesses and partner organisations to ensure these protests remain safe and respectful for those involved," he added.

The march organised by the far-right group saw people gather outside Piccadilly station, while counter-demonstrations were held in the city centre.



Police were out in force to manage the march and counter protests

Pictures have shown those taking part in the Britain First march and counter protesters coming against lines of police in riot gear.

Ch Supt Danny O'Neil said the dispersal order gave police powers to remove individuals from a specific area for up to 48 hours and aimed to prevent anti-social behaviour, crime, harassment, alarm or distress.

He said it was brought in due to there being a number of protests and marches planned for Saturday, as well as the Manchester City v Newcastle United game taking place at the Etihad Stadium.



A police dispersal order was put in place at 10:00 GMT

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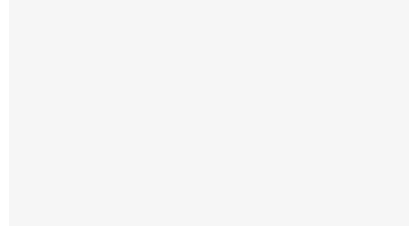
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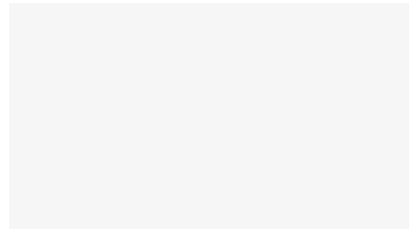
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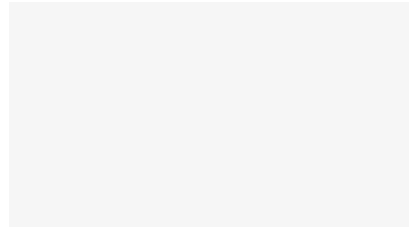


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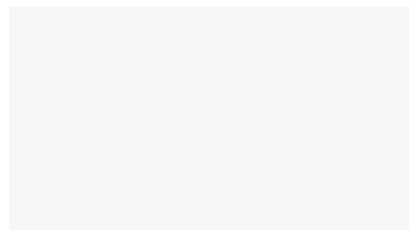


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