

'It is time for change' claim ahead of protest against handling of Harehills riots

By Esmerelda Weatherwax

From [Leeds Live](#)



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s is taking place this lunchtime in Coldcotes Circus against the poor policing of the riots last week, and the lack of protection given to established residents against the rioters. To recap, if you have not already seen this in the press, in the Harehills district Social Services had to take children of a Gypsy/Roma/Romany/traveller family into care after a 7 month old baby sustained head injuries falling from an upper floor window. You did read that right. 7 months & window. There were remonstrations, then it turned into a riot as the Muslim Pakistani community, who usually don't get on with the Roma, decided that any excuse to attack the police was OK by them. Fires were lit, a police car was smashed and set on fire as was a bus. The film of two men calmly pouring accelerant on to

seats and sparking up a cigarette lighter has been widely viewed.

Just watched people setting a bus on fire in Leeds on Tiktok live pic.twitter.com/Kscmc6oRDF

– I Don't Know Her (@I_Dont_Know_Her) [July 18, 2024](#)

Even the chap filming thought it was a step too far. The man all in blue has been [arrested and charged](#); he has a Roma



name. I don't know the status of the man in red trousers. The man in green is a friend of the family of the injured

children.

The other arrest was of a [blonde Englishwoman who protested to the police](#) that they were doing nothing and favouring the immigrant groups, in the course of which she used 'racistly inflammatory language'

It wasn't her who had set her home neighbourhood in flames.

The police beat a tactical retreat (aka ran away) for several hours, although they insist they have measures in place now for any more trouble.

This is the [Live blog](#) from the local paper

large crowd demands 'time for change'

We are being told cars are going by beeping the protest The group is stood a short distance from Gipton Working Men's

Club

In the post, promoting the protest, it read: "We want to see our communities protected. Not let down. It is time for a change."

The action has taken place, they claim, in response to the handling of the disorder in Harehills.

A speaker said: "What's happened is we've been silenced too many years the working class have been silenced too many years."

Another speaker at the scene, addressing some of their issues around Thursday's disorder, said: "We welcome people with open arms here and will shake hands with anyone who comes here and respects our way of living and live side by side with them but they don't live side by side with us."

A man said: "let's hope we don't get treated different today then."

Our reporter at the scene of the protest has reported there was a brief disturbance between a TV camera crew and some of the protesters. It appears to have been resolved now

I found on X that the ITV crew were refusing to film the speeches. On the grounds that if they were refusing to listen to local people's valid concerns and report on them their presence was superfluous to requirements the crew was asked to leave. The local Leeds Live news say they do have video of the speeches but all I can see are still photographs.

There is no more reporting, from which I infer that all was civilised and peaceful and conducted properly. I believe the protestors are having refreshments and discussing the event.