

Students face down EDL protest with a cuppa

Bull Lane Mosque opened its doors to a crowd of over 100 turned on Sunday afternoon, after rumours of a rally surfaced on social, also serving tea to the few attendant EDL protesters

By [Amadea Ng](#), Chief Sub-Editor (2012/13)
Sunday 26 May 2013



Photo credit: Tom Witherow

Over 100 students and members of the public turned up outside the York Mosque and Islamic Centre at Bull Lane on Sunday afternoon after rumours of a EDL rally surfaced on Facebook and Twitter on Saturday evening. The York community stood together as an act of solidarity against fascism that very afternoon. 4 EDL supporters arrived at around 3:00 pm.

Islamophobic attacks have seen an exponential rise after the unfortunate murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich, London on Wednesday. There have also been several EDL marches around the UK, including one in Newcastle on Saturday that was attended by over 1500 EDL members.

It all started with a post on the EDL Scarborough Facebook page on Thursday, which wrote "demonstration on Sunday at Bull Lane mosque York. please come along. no SURRENDER." There was no follow up by the group, but precautionary measures were taken by the mosque and several activist groups online, inviting the public for tea at the mosque amid threats of violence.

By 3.00pm, it was EDL supporters who were accepting tea and biscuits. Four men and women approached the mosque and had a long debate with those who were present, with no sign of violence.

Many of those who turned up were University of York students, with Kallum Taylor, YUSU President and Bob Hughes, YUSU Welfare Officer also showing up to show support. Present at the event were also York residents, including a local church leader.

Kallum Taylor commented saying: "even if I wasn't President, I'd still be here on a personal capacity. Our University is international and diverse and it is important to uphold that in the University and across the city."

Both YUSU officials were very happy to "see so many people coming out to show solidarity for the Muslim community" and Bob Hughes also reiterated that YUSU "have no tolerance for any fascism in the community."

Ibid Salik, the Imam of the mosque addressed the crowd, thanked the crowd for turning up.

“Things like that really touches my heart. We didn’t personally organise anything. It’s great to see the community coming together to show solidarity.”

Nouse also spoke to Fiona Fitzpatrick and Neil Barnes, Hull Road Labour Councillors, who were present at the mosque. Fitzpatrick has been a keen supporter of the mosque, and was seen offering refreshments to those who turned up at the event.

Neil Barnes saw the solidarity shown by the community as a “victory for peace and understanding.”

With the sun out, a large crowd and an open field, the afternoon ended with an impromptu football session on the compounds of the mosque.

This article was amended at 17:22 to include the arrival of EDL supporters at the mosque.



31 comments

custardcream

26 May '13 at 5:11 pm

Well, wooperdy-fucking-do. Good job team. Managed to whip a couple of news stories out of thin air there! On the capitalisation front, you’ve now gone too far. Nouse should not be all caps.

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A story worth reading for once

26 May '13 at 5:11 pm

Glad to see this turned out nicely! It’s a pity that revision kept me away.

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Ricky Sbragia

26 May '13 at 5:16 pm

Well done. Whip up a story out of some vague rumour about a group that only a minority take seriously so you can pat yourselves on the back at the end of it all by staging a protest. Seriously. Well done.

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Adam Seldon

26 May '13 at 5:20 pm

@custardcream ...real bold of you to slag off this piece under the name of a biscuit

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custardcream

26 May '13 at 5:26 pm

I’m entitled to both my anonymity and view. I think the whole EDL story was hyped-up, and based on little more than a few social network rumours. It’s poor journalism, and I’m disappointed the “story” was considered/published in the first place.

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Jaffa Cake

26 May '13 at 5:36 pm

@custardcream:

Glad to see that your journalistic expertise was enough to spot that this story is about a community coming together rather than simple EDL opposition.

Also to correct your initial comment:

“On the capitalisation front, you’ve now gone too far. Nouse should not be all caps. That really takes the biscuit!”

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Shakti Shah

26 May '13 at 5:40 pm

Just to point out - I was there, and as much as I would have loved no EDL to have been there, three or four EDL members did actually turn up, with a huge flag and all, which checking the #yorkmosque hashtag on twitter will confirm. They were hugely outnumbered and there was no trouble really, but it did happen.

That said, it was really great that so many people came and that the atmosphere was so good. I'm certainly glad I went along, but I just felt it worth pointing out the error in the article.

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Anon

26 May '13 at 5:49 pm

There were two cars of what looked like out of town EDL members on Hull road, but they didn't come down to the mosque. I think the mosque supporters scared them off.

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Digestive

26 May '13 at 6:49 pm

@Jaffa Cake not a flan of your half baked pun!

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bombender

26 May '13 at 6:58 pm

Just looking at the pic it appears to be a very mature student population

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Kali Politis

26 May '13 at 10:32 pm

Nobody gives a rat's ass about your little Islamophobia industry gathering.

In the meantime, the EDL is doing something REAL for England, while the bigoted fanatics in this “protest” are simply part of the same old problem.

Grow a conscience and stop enabling the world's most hateful and misogynistic ideology.

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Sameer

27 May '13 at 12:52 am

Kali Politis, it's ironic you are using a foreign name, can I ask what real thing the EDL are doing for England? I have watched a few interviews of their leader and supporters and none of them actually know

what they are about! They have very little command of the English language and all they do is try to stir up tensions in people that just want to get on with life, well done the people who were involved with this activity at the mosque, you are true Brits!

[▲ Report](#)

e.

27 May '13 at 1:09 am

One did stop to read off some awful confused preprepared statement – possibly inspired by if not identical to the one given in Newcastle yesterday – about Muslim paedophilia gangs and half-heartedly proffering a “No Surrender” and salute to the unresponsive crowd (who let him say his piece – if he was not going to change his views based on polite discourse then there was no point reinforcing them by adversity and heckling) before finally skulking away. The speech and the EDL battle cry probably were not received quite as he had envisioned.

Most people might have accepted defeat and let it go, so there is perhaps something to be said for his guts. He was the only protester to show who seemed to go away unchanged, if not completely unaffected, which is testament to the community who rallied round to show their support and solidarity and those from the mosque who engaged with the protesters to address their concerns and show the human side to their faith.

It is comforting to know that people in and around our university and will not allow this sort of hatred to go unchallenged on their doorstep and will fight it not in kind, but rather with kindness, with openness both of doors and dialogue, and, where these might fail, with bourbon creams.

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B

27 May '13 at 11:05 am

@CustardCream

While there might be some truth to your claim that, relative to the EDL in York, the story was hyped up, it remains that people turning up to the mosque took a stand against the nationwide EDL protests, and the harmful divide they are encouraging within our country and beyond. Very few EDL members may have turned up, but that is not the point. The point is that their ignorant, divisive and prejudiced views were rejected.

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Mory RcGregor

27 May '13 at 12:07 pm

Aww Man, Free tea and biscuits!! :(

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Joker7

27 May '13 at 1:37 pm

I am an American and spent the last five years in Afghanistan and written sponsorship letters for two Afghans to get a US Visa. I bear no ill will to any religion and generally consider myself a tolerant person; at least by American Standards. I have visited and have numerous friends in the UK; so I follow the news closely.

From an outsider looking in perspective it appears that a portion of the nation is willing to sacrifice the nation for the sake of diversity. The sad event in Woolwich has caused a paragon shift in both of our nations and will be remembered for a very long time. I do not know if this is the spark that starts a brush fire or an inferno but I do know you cannot have a fire without fuel and the fuel that feeds this is inaction.

There has been a problem for a very long time and anyone that raised a voice has been labeled in not so flattering terms. I hope your new Government Task Force is successful in stopping the hate mongering that is inciting these acts; if it is successful it will not be because of your voice but the voices you seem to despise and discount.

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Hush now Yankee Doodle

27 May '13 at 1:45 pm

I guarantee you there has not been a "paragon shift". Mainly because no such thing exists. Writing visa sponsorships does not validate your political views. And the EDL's only achievement, if it can be said to have any, is the persecution of the innocent for the crimes of a few. They are no less dangerous than those they claim to be opposing.

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Joker7

27 May '13 at 4:48 pm

Granted it is an Americanese expression and I realize Americanese does not exist either.

Paragon shift:

A state of extreme perception, reflexes and dexterity. When one triggers or experiences a paragon shift, he or she knows exactly what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. He or she reaches the pinnacle of awesomeness and is, essentially, becomes awesome in every way. Anyone can trigger or experience the paragon shift in any situation. A short definition would be a "moment of extreme clarity".

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Tim Burley

27 May '13 at 4:58 pm

Joker7, have you ever wondered why nobody ever takes you seriously? In truth there are many reasons, but perhaps the biggest is encapsulated here:

"When one triggers or experiences a paragon shift, he or she knows exactly what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. He or she reaches the pinnacle of awesomeness and is, essentially, becomes awesome in every way."

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OldYorkie

27 May '13 at 5:34 pm

Joker7, your ability to find a definition of paragon shift does not alter the fact that what you meant was paradigm shift.

No, this wasn't an earth-shattering event, but it was a victory for reasonable people of any faith (and hopefully none). Glad to see York University involved!

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Walksfar

27 May '13 at 5:40 pm

Great the students supported the Mosque whether the fascist EDL turned up or not such friendship actions prove a positive side of community cohesion a greater force for good than EDL negativity smash and abuse approach.

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Joker7

27 May '13 at 5:48 pm

Tim have you ever been referred to as pompous? Perhaps your inability to communicate outside of academia is troubling to you. Could this unwarranted feeling of self importance you carry have become a burden that is limiting your scope and depth of understanding?

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Joker7

27 May '13 at 5:52 pm

Old Yorkie many thanks for the courtesy and the correction. Have a good day Sir

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biscuitlover

27 May '13 at 7:11 pm

Well done York! Nice to see humanity rallying together peacefully against hatred and racism. Personally, what the EDL are doing by stirring up tensions is just as much terrorism, and doesn't portray 'England' (Britain, may I point out) at all. By its very nature and history Britain is a multi-cultural nation, and we should be proud of this, as it reflects our ability as a nation to be able to see past differences, and accept others for what they are. Acts like this will teach our younger generations acceptance, and shows that the public aren't willing to be represented by a few loud extremists. Less than a hundred years ago, Britain was the owner of the largest empire on earth, which we achieved by forcing our way into other countries and 'developing' and 'civilising' them. Interesting how we all seem to forget that, while we are complaining about other nationalities coming into our country. In my opinion, as long as they pay their taxes, and are honest, decent people, which the majority are, then there is no reason for them not to be allowed in.

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Wondermare

27 May '13 at 7:37 pm

Ah, York, the hometown I couldn't wait to leave because of a stagnant monoculture and overt racism. Spent my childhood hating my Japanese heritage because of it. So glad you've come this far, York. Keep it up.

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William

27 May '13 at 8:42 pm

Lovely story. Puts the EDL in perspective, and strikes me as a dispassionate and important report of what England and York are really like. Peaceful solidarity is less spectacular than some other possible outcomes, but an altogether better outcome. So I'm with Ms Amadea Ng here, and let's give short shrift to trolling in the comments.

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JP

28 May '13 at 11:05 am

Glad to see so many standing up to the EDL and for peace.

I am from Northern Ireland, and the mistakes of the 1960's in NI of painting each 'side' with a broad brush should not be repeated. All disputes should be solved peacefully, and as the recent loyalist flag protests in Belfast have shown, you will only harm yourselves if you try and attack another community.

I would also like to know how many EDL 'supporters' actually know the real origin of "No surrender"? I'm guessing not many...

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Dan knows what's what ok

28 May '13 at 1:18 pm

I'm all for somebody/group standing up for what us English crave and that is our country being given back to us and for it to become great again. I don't take any of these Muslim groups seriously and never will until they stand up to their so called minority giving them a bad name. I agree that there is a minority that has become the scum of this land, so it is upto the Islamic community to stamp this out now from their mosques or chaos will breakout on the streets of England.

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Insider

28 May '13 at 1:47 pm

Actually, North Yorkshire Police have had intelligence for weeks before anything emerged on social media that there maybe an EDL movement...

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Leilani

28 May '13 at 10:56 pm

Now if York University could only work on its own internal racism... THAT would be an article worth writing.

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Stu

14 Jun '13 at 12:12 am

First of all, this mosque is run by UKIM so 'tea and biscuits' may not be as innocent as first appear.

<http://hurryupharry.org/2010/10/11/jamaat-e-islam-is-uk-jamboree/>

This event (Woolwich) has unacceptably been adopted as a scapegoat for the left-wing and those against protectionism and those in favour of Islamification.

Maybe those who automatically disregard EDL and UKIP as 'racist' should actually look into the sinister side of Islam that its advocates are keen to circumvent in debate... For example... "Marry, for I will outnumber the other nations by you on Qiyama." How can multiculturalism work when principles like those are taught in these mosques? It can't.

http://www.islamswomen.com/marriage/fiqh_of_marriage_2.php

All muslims may not be terrorists, but most terrorists are muslims. When was the last time you heard about an extreme Christian beheading someone whilst reciting the Lord's prayer?

Before you jump on the bandwagon, sacrificing British principles for the sake of 'political correctness', you should note that this isn't an issue of a few non-muslims getting along with a few muslims... The Qur'an advocates extremism, the oppression of women and the colonising of non-muslim countries through Sharia law... Unless you want to be following this Sharia law in 2050 then I suggest you should take note that criticising a minority group is not racism. Being automatically coined 'racist' by criticising a minority group is racist. Why don't you type 'taqiyya' into Wiki... Of course, you won't hear about that over tea and biscuits. Or possibly even this ..

http://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/9908269.__1m_York_mosque_plan_under_attack/

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