

# Girls seek police escort to Hanukkah parties

The intolerable has become normalised, says Manchester chief as anti-Semitism worsens

By Martin Evans

TEN-YEAR-OLD girls have been asking armed police to accompany them to Hanukkah parties in the wake of anti-Semitic terror attacks, the head of Greater Manchester Police has revealed. Sir Stephen Watson said his officers had also been investigating reports that people had been celebrating the Bondi Beach mass shooting in Australia that left 15 dead. Speaking at an event at the

Policy Exchange think tank in London, Sir Stephen said "the intolerable had become normalised" for members of the Jewish community, particularly in the wake of the Hamas October 7 attacks in Israel.

In October, two people were killed on Yom Kippur in an anti-Jewish attack at Heaton Park synagogue in Manchester. Sir Stephen said: "We are getting telephone calls into Greater Manchester Police day in and day out over the recent days where you have got a group of 10-year-old girls wanting to go to a Hanukkah party, where they should be frankly interested in balloons and bicycles, [and] are making a request for armed police officers. "You cannot say, 'Well, that is a ridic-

**Extremely disappointing** Labour's anti-Semitism strategy attacked

Labour's anti-Semitism strategy "reheats meek policy proposals" and fails to address extremism, Jewish groups have said.

The plan was billed as tackling anti-Semitism in all areas of public life. However, Jewish groups have criticised the report as being pure semantics, failing to acknowledge extremism in areas where it has newly taken hold, and not announcing any new policies or tangible measures.

The report, called Antisemitism: Recent Government Actions and Next Steps, follows a string of anti-Semitic terror

attacks on Jewish holy days. In a foreword to the anti-Semitism action plan, Sir Keir Starmer said: "Our first response is one of solidarity. We stand together with British Jews and with all Jewish people. We condemn unequivocally the hatred and poisonous

extremism which has led to these attacks." However, the Campaign Against Antisemitism criticised the report, warning that it "does not rise to the gravity of the situation we find ourselves in after over a decade of inaction by successive governments".

ulous request'. You understand from whence it comes."

On Monday, following the attack, the Metropolitan Police said it would increase patrols around synagogues and other community venues, while Hertfordshire Constabulary said it would have a visible presence at key events in the county.

Sir Stephen, whose force area has the second-largest Jewish population in the country, went on: "I know that I had reports that there were people in Manchester celebrating the Bondi attack, in ways which is just sickeningly distasteful."

Sir Stephen and Sir Mark Rowley, his Scotland Yard counterpart, have pledged to take a more robust approach

to policing protests where hate speech was used.

In a joint statement, the pair said owing to the escalating threat against the Jewish community, forces would now "recalibrate to be more assertive".

Speaking at the event, he explained: "Even six months ago, chanting 'globalise the intifada', it's questionable whether you would find yourself being held up by the police. What I can tell you is that, if you do that this weekend, my officers will arrest you.

"And that is a straightforward reflection of the fact that the dynamic is changing. People are calling for things to be globalised which are being globalised. And therefore we need to respond to it."

## Shopper beat man to death in row over queue-jumping

By Telegraph Reporter

A BUS driver beat a shopper to death in front of his wife after a row over queue-jumping at Sainsbury's.

Demiesh Williams, 30, has been jailed for five years for his assault on Andrew Clark, 43, in Beckenham, south London. The argument erupted when Williams pushed in at the store and Mr Clark told him to wait his turn.

Williams replied by saying he would "take him outside". He went to his parked car, pulled on a balaclava and returned to the shop as Mr Clark was leaving. CCTV footage showed Williams grab hold of Clark with one hand and strike him with the other. The victim was sent sprawling and smashed his head on the pavement.

Paramedics attended the scene on Upper Elmers End Road, where they

inable grief from which recovery is unlikely to ever be complete.

"By all accounts, Andrew Clark was much loved, much respected, and will be much missed, and it should never have happened. Demiesh Williams, for the manslaughter of Andrew Clark, the sentence of the court is five years and three months.

"You will serve up to two-thirds of that sentence in prison. Thereafter, you will be released subject to licence conditions. If you breach your licence conditions, you will be recalled to prison."

Clark's 14-year-old daughter previously told Williams that though he would one day walk free, he had "destroyed" her family in the "cruellest way possible". In a statement read to the court by her aunt, she said: "My dad was not just my dad. He was my best friend. We did everything together.

"You did this to my dad. My dad was the most generous man I know. I don't want to live my life without him. You got to keep your family, while you destroyed mine in the cruellest way."

The court heard Clark, a lifelong Newcastle United fan, had watched his club's Carabao Cup victory on March 16 of this year with his family at home in Beckenham.

Alistair Richardson, prosecuting, told the court the victim and his wife went to the Sainsbury's near their home to buy some food for the day after the match.

Mrs Clark then found her husband arguing with Williams at the tills after he had tried to cut in at the front, it was said. Witnesses described seeing Williams walk to his parked car, get something out, and return to the store with a face covering on as Clark was leaving.

Mr Richardson continued: "Mrs Clark saw the defendant coming towards her husband. He was striding with intent - striding towards him.

He had a face covering on. He hit Clark on the side of his head. All she could hear was the noise.

"He did not try to break his fall or anything. He was just knocked out."

Mr Richardson added that an experienced CCTV officer viewed the footage of the attack and deemed it a "slap" with an "open hand" rather than a punch.



Demiesh Williams has been jailed for five years for his attack on Andrew Clark

treated Mr Clark for head injuries but he died in hospital three days later.

Williams was later arrested at his home and initially charged with grievous bodily harm with intent. The charge was upgraded to murder following Clark's death. Williams, of Croydon, denied murder but admitted manslaughter at Woolwich Crown Court.

The prosecution accepted his guilty plea to the lesser charge.

Jailing him for five years and three months, Judge Andrew Lees said: "Andrew Clark was 43 at the time of his death. He was a hard-working family man. I have heard heartfelt statements read to the court by Andrew's wife and his sister. What the family said in court brings home the magnitude of what has happened and the devastating loss and consequences of your actions. "The family are dealing with unimag-



Andrew Clark told Demiesh Williams to wait for his turn in the queue; Williams pictured outside the Beckenham Sainsbury's, left



## Pro-Palestine activist accused of chanting 'I love October 7'

By Patrick Sawyer  
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

A PRO-PALESTINIAN activist who allegedly chanted "I love the 7th of October" has been charged with voicing support for the Hamas attacks on Israel.

Mohammed Hassn, also known as Mohammed al-Mail, has been charged with intentionally causing racially aggravated harassment, alarm or dis-

tress during a demonstration at Swiss Cottage, in north-west London, in September last year. This January, the Metropolitan Police launched an investigation after footage of the incident was shared online.

Videos allegedly showed Mr Hassn saying "I love the 7th of October" and "I like an organisation that starts with H" during a pro-Palestinian protest.

Speaking on the High Hand Authority, an Arabic-language podcast, Mr

Hassn later claimed the "H" referred to the Home Office. In the same podcast he said: "Not every day is like October 7. If an opportunity arises, we must fully exploit it. If you strike, make it hurt."

Mr Hassn, 27, from Stanmore, also in north-west London, was arrested after the protest and later bailed.

A file of evidence was sent by Scotland Yard to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), which twice determined that no further action should be taken.

**'Not every day is like October 7. If an opportunity arises, we must fully exploit it'**

Police challenged the CPS decision, leading to charges being brought against Mr Hassn under Section 4A of the Public Order Act 1998 and Section 31 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The

Met said yesterday: "Officers continued to engage with the CPS to ensure all available avenues to challenge the decision not to bring charges were pursued, ultimately succeeding in securing a charge as set out above."

Mr Hassn, a Kuwaiti national who was given refugee status in 2017, is set to appear at Westminster magistrates' court on Jan 19. He has denied expressing support for Hamas, saying that his statements criticising Israel "focus on

its military and government policies, not on innocent civilians". A statement on Mr Hassn's behalf at the time said that "none of his statements target any protected group, including Jewish people, or promote violence".

The decision to charge him follows an apparent hardening of police attitudes to chanting at pro-Palestinian demonstrations in the wake of the Manchester synagogue and Bondi Beach attacks.

## Police seize £80k of suspected stolen tools after Jenrick video

By Genevieve Holl-Allen  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ABOUT £80,000 worth of suspected stolen tools were seized at a west London car boot sale after Robert Jenrick confronted men selling goods there.

The Metropolitan Police recovered 400 power tools at the Hounslow Heath car boot sale last week and arrested two men and two teenage boys on suspicion of handling stolen goods.

Mr Jenrick, the shadow justice secretary, visited the car boot sale last month as part of a campaign to expose what he described as an "epidemic of tool theft" in London.

In a video uploaded to social media, he was told to "F--- off" as he approached men buying and selling tools.

He told one of the stall owners: "There's a bloke's name on that... someone's nicked that, haven't they? Are you going to make some money out of that guy?" In another clash, he said: "This is just the contents of some bloke's van, isn't it? Where is this all from?"

In response to the raid last week, Mr Jenrick told *The Telegraph* that the police action was a "step in the right direction". He added: "I will keep exposing tool thieves until these raids are



A selection of tools worth £80,000 that were seized by police at a west London car boot sale

happening across the country." The Met said the action, which resulted in the arrests of the two men and two teenagers, who were later released on bail, was carried out in response to concern about tool theft.

Superintendent James Rawlinson, of the Hounslow local neighbourhood policing team, said: "We are targeting the prolific offenders and organised criminal groups that drive this trade in

stolen tools through proactive, intelligence-led operations."

Tool theft and stealing of other items from vehicles has come down by 20 per cent between April and the beginning of December compared with last year, the force said. Last month, a spokesman for Hounslow Heath car boot sale told *The Telegraph*: "We do not permit stolen goods whatsoever to be sold at our car boot sale."

## British parents first to sue Meta over son's 'sextortion' suicide

By Tom McArdle

THE parents of a 16-year-old boy who killed himself after falling victim to sextortion on Instagram are suing Meta in what is believed to be the first UK case of its kind.

Murray Dowey took his own life in December 2023 after sending intimate pictures to an Instagram contact he thought was a girl his age but was actually a gang of overseas criminals who demanded money.

Hours after the exchange, the teenager killed himself at his family home in Dunblane, Scotland.

Ros and Mark Dowey, his parents, have filed a lawsuit in Delaware, where Meta Platforms is incorporated.

"We know what we're up against, but it's time social media companies took accountability for what they've done to our young people," they told *The Guardian*. "It's not just sextortion - they're causing multiple harms, and they've been allowed to get away with it."

The lawsuit was filed through the Social Media Victims Law Center on behalf of the Doweys and a US mother whose teenage son Levi Maciejewski was also a sextortion victim.

The legal claim argues that the boys'

deaths were "foreseeable" and came as a result of Meta's design to "prioritise engagement over user safety".

The complaint states that design flaws recommended teenaged Instagram users to accounts that Meta had "already identified as predators".

There has been a surge of online sexual extortion in recent years, which is being driven by organised criminal gangs who pose as young women and

**'I know what we're taking on, we're taking on one of the biggest global organisations. Bring it on'**

blackmail victims into handing over money by threatening to release intimate images. While the parents of four British children are suing TikTok for alleged unlawful deaths, this is the first UK case to focus on sextortion.

Mr Dowey told the paper: "Nothing's really changed since Murray died. These predators can still get at our children. [Meta] have known that their products are killing children by their unsafe design, and they haven't done anything about it. They chose to put

profit before our young people." Ms Dowey added: "As a parent who has first-hand experience of how devastating the flaws can be, you have a duty to warn other parents. You think your kids are safe looking at pictures on Instagram and they're not.

"I know what we're taking on, we're taking on one of the biggest global organisations. Bring it on - somebody has to stand up to them."

A Meta spokesman said: "Sextortion is a horrific crime. We support law enforcement to prosecute the criminals behind it and we continue to fight them on our apps on multiple fronts.

"Since 2021, we've placed teens under 16 into private accounts when they sign up for Instagram, which means they have to approve any new followers.

"We work to prevent accounts showing suspicious behaviour from following teens and avoid recommending teens to them.

"We also take other precautionary steps, like blurring potentially sensitive images sent in DMs and reminding teens of the risks of sharing them, and letting people know when they're chatting to someone who may be in a different country."