

MIGRATION AND THE FAR RIGHT: BRIEFING 4

Immigration has always been a focus for the far right. However, the recent and explicit targeting of people who are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and the organisations that support them has rightly triggered concern, and has brought to the fore the need of the migration and refugee sector to better understand the threat and how to respond.

That's why HOPE not hate Charitable Trust and Migration Exchange have developed the Response project, which aims to better equip the migration and refugee sector to understand the extent and nature of the threat posed by the far right, and to support them in applying that understanding through more appropriate responses in both the long and short term.

As part of this project, we will be sending these updates, to share what we are seeing through our monitoring and intel work, to offer you a clearer picture of the far-right threat around immigration and asylum.

RECENT ACTIVITY

With the improvement in the weather and the increase in cross-Channel boats, the past few weeks has seen an uptick in the amount of

discussion about the issue, both from the right wing mainstream press and within the far right.

The issue continues to be regularly discussed by key far-right figures and organisations such as Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson), Britain First and the so-called 'migrant-hunters'. It is likely we will continue to see far-right activism around the south coast and at accomodation housing asylum seekers in the coming weeks.

DOVER DEMONSTRATION (29/05/21)

Last week there was an anti-migration demonstration organised in Dover by the far-right activist Steve Laws. Despite receiving some support from influential figures within the far-right, the demonstration was a failure, attracting just 60 people on the day.

Despite a heavy police presence the small group still managed to bring the roads around the port area to a standstill for several hours. This and the (critical) press coverage was enough for the organisers to declare the event a success, however, there is no doubt that the tiny numbers will have been a serious disappointment for the organisers.



The numbers were small for numerous reasons. There was a fair amount of far-right infighting in the run up to the event, plus there was a large conspiracy theory-driven anti-lockdown demonstration in London the same day, which attracted some likely attendees.

Four people have been charged following the event. The details of those arrested and the full list of charges is as follows:

- David Shannon, 30, of Seaview Road, Gillingham, who has since been charged with wilfully obstructing a highway.
- Jordan Ellis, 28, of Second Avenue in Dursley, Gloucestershire, was charged with wilfully obstructing a highway and resisting a police officer in the execution of their duty.
- Steven Tipple, 42, of Boswell Drive, Coventry, was charged with using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent to cause fear of violence.
- George Jenson, 31, of Amherst Drive, Orpington, was charged with assaulting an emergency worker and using threatening or abusive words or behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

ALAN LEGGETT (ACTIVE PATRIOT UK) STEPS BACK

Last week, Leggett, one of the key ‘migrant-hunters’ who has been central in whipping up opposition to cross channel migration within the far right, appears to have stepped back from activism. The name of his channel on the messaging app Telegram has been changed and his close associates have wished him well.

As yet it remains unclear why he has done so. Whether this is due to the fact that a number of his channels have been removed recently, or his mounting legal issues, or another personal issue is not yet known. It is possible he may continue his activism behind the scenes, but at present it appears that he is no longer active.

Of course this is good news, as he has been an influential figure over the past year. However, there are a series of figures around him that are continuing his work.



Alan Leggett

- **To receive updates, you can sign up to the project mailing list here:** <https://donate.hopenothate.org.uk/page/s/sign-up-to-receive-updates-MEX>
- **We’ve also created a form for sharing intel, so that we get a fuller picture of far right activity alongside our monitoring. You can submit anything you’re coming across on or offline:** <https://donate.hopenothate.org.uk/page/s/response-project-intel-submission>
- **And for anything more specific, or for any questions, please email:** response@hopenothate.org.uk