

April 2026

# A MESSAGE TO OUR COMMUNITIES

## MANCHESTER STANDS UNITED AGAINST HATE

Dear residents,

You may be aware that Britain First is planning a national demonstration in Manchester city centre on 18 April, with the group attempting to link it to St George's Day. There will also be counter-protests, alongside a number of other regular demonstrations in the city centre. These events are expected to attract large numbers of people.

I want to speak directly to you about what this means for our city. I also want to set out what St George's Day means in Manchester, and how for more than 20 years it has been part of city life with residents, community groups and families marking the day in positive and welcoming ways.

Manchester is a city that comes together no matter the challenges we face, and we know that we have more that unites us than divides us. I've said it before, we are a proud and welcoming city built on tolerance, fairness, respect and compassion. There is no room for people who come to our city to spread hatred or sow division – hate will always be rejected by ordinary, decent Mancunians.

This is a city built over generations by people from all backgrounds who have contributed to its success. We are strengthened, not weakened, by our diversity, and we are proud of every community that helps make Manchester what it is today.

I understand the deep distress caused in our communities when far-right hate groups like Britain First choose to come to our city. However, freedom of expression and assembly is enshrined in UK law, which means demonstration must be allowed on condition a group engages with local police.

We will continue to liaise closely with GMP, who have given assurances that they will be policing this event robustly with public safety their top priority. We will also work with a range of other city centre stakeholders to make sure disruption is as limited as possible and Manchester remains open, safe and peaceful. I urge everyone to demonstrate within the law and respect our city.

If you experience or witness hate crime or discrimination, please report it. You deserve to feel safe and it is vital that incidents are recorded and acted upon.

## **CELEBRATING ST GEORGE'S DAY, THE MANCHESTER WAY**

Manchester celebrates its traditions by coming together, and it's disappointing this group are trying to hijack St George's Day. I urge Mancunians who want to celebrate St George's Day in Manchester by getting involved in our annual parade on the 26 April or by joining Council funded events across the city. We can celebrate our traditions while celebrating all that is good about modern Manchester.

## **MANCHESTER STANDS UNITED AGAINST HATE**

We are also making a poster and social media graphics available again for residents, communities and local organisations to download and display should they wish. By sharing it in windows, workplaces and community spaces, we can show that Manchester stands together as one city against hate.

They can be downloaded at [\*\*manchester.gov.uk/stand-together\*\*](https://manchester.gov.uk/stand-together)

I am asking everyone to stand united in the face of division, celebrating that we have more in common than our differences. Let's come together with a clear message that there is no room for hatred in our city.

**Cllr Bev Craig OBE**

Leader, Manchester City Council