

## WHAT HAPPENED?

On 20 March 2010, anti-racists and anti-fascists organised a demonstration in Bolton against a rally called by the English Defence League. The EDL has direct links to the fascist BNP, and is violently Islamophobic (racist against Muslims).

Over 50 antifascist activists were arrested. The national and local organisers face potential charges of conspiracy to incite violent disorder. This attempt to use conspiracy laws is a highly unusual and very worrying step, which threatens both anti-racist activity and wider civil liberties.

The aim of the **justice4bolton** campaign, launched nationally at the House of Commons last June with MPs Peter Hain and Jeremy Corbyn, is to stop the use of conspiracy laws to de-legitimise protests against the rise of fascism and the right to any public protest.

In a message to the **justice4bolton** national launch Yasmin Qureshi MP, who was elected to the Bolton South East parliamentary seat in May, said: *"I supported the aims of the protest against the English Defence League in Bolton on 20<sup>th</sup> March and I was at the demonstration. I did not see or hear any activity amongst the protestors that I would have described as 'violent disorder', though there were some police officers who, in my view, were being heavy-handed in some cases."*

In his message to the Bolton launch of **justice4bolton** last Friday its national president, Shadow Cabinet Minister Peter Hain, said: *"This is our next step on the road to justice for Bolton people and all the anti-fascists and trade unionists who showed such great solidarity against the racist EDL on 20<sup>th</sup> March. **justice4bolton's** determination to expose and stop this attempt to criminalise protests and protestors is absolute. Our unity will defend the right to protest against and, ultimately, stop the fascists."*

**justice4bolton** already includes trade unionists, anti fascist organisations, and members of the local communities in Bolton. Now **justice4bolton** is asking for as wide ranging solidarity and financial support as possible.

We urgently need your help to raise funds for our legal and campaigning work. We welcome donations from individuals or organisations, such as trade union branches or community groups.

For more about the campaign w: [www.justice4bolton.org](http://www.justice4bolton.org) e: [info@justice4bolton.org](mailto:info@justice4bolton.org)

**President:** *Shadow Cabinet Minister, Peter Hain MP*

**National Committee Members:**

*Stephen Bell, Communication Workers Union; Matt Foot, civil rights lawyer; Steve Hart, Unite the Union;*

*Paul Mackney (campaign treasurer), former General Secretary of NALDFHE (lecturers' union now in UCU)*

*Anneliese Midgley, Progressive London; Sharon Russell, University and College Union*