



[Steve in Middlesbrough](#)

7 August 2024

Supporting the community

Steve gives his account of the riot in Middlesbrough on Sunday (4 August) and how people in the town came together in solidarity with the communities affected.

Far-right “protests” across the UK have shocked previously integrated and peaceful communities.

In the North East of England over the last two weeks we have experienced racially motivated rioting particularly in Hartlepool, Sunderland and Middlesbrough with violence on a scale residents have never seen before.

Since Sunday in Middlesbrough there has been a tangible tension in the air, not least in the multi-cultural centre of town which was deliberately targeted by a large far-right mob intent on causing as much damage as possible. Public offices and businesses remain on high alert. Staff at the local Jobcentre have been sent home twice in a week in response to continued threats.

Along with my family I joined hundreds of local people on Monday morning to clear up the damage and offer support and solidarity to our neighbours. What we saw was traumatising but we also witnessed a community coming together to support the communities worst affected by the riot.

We swept up glass and bricks in streets where almost every house and car had been attacked and damaged. We saw elderly people standing outside their homes completely bewildered by what had happened. We heard accounts from residents of indiscriminate violence, looting and shops and houses deliberately set alight.

Retired PCS member Neil spoke to me about his shock at the violence and damage, and the irony lost on the rioters of a far-right march starting from the town's cenotaph.

But we also witnessed the warmth, kindness and unity of the vast majority in our community. Young and old, black and white, families, friends and neighbours took to the streets with bags, brushes and shovels to clear up and offer support to all those affected. This is the true spirit of our town, and we will never let the racists win.

Helplines:

- Racial incident helpline for reporting any type of racist incident at work (open 9-5, Monday to Friday, excluding bank hols) - 020 7801 2678
- Stress counselling, available 24 hours a day - confidential, independent and provides counselling and emotional support on family issues, bereavement, trauma, relationship issues and stress related conditions - 0161 836 9383