



# "We are Waltham Forest"

We the undersigned strongly oppose plans by the English Defence League (EDL), a group linked to the fascist British National Party (BNP) to demonstrate in Walthamstow on 18th August.

The EDL is a racist and fascist organisation dedicated to attacking Asian people and Muslims. Islamophobia or bigotry against Muslims is as unacceptable as any other form of racism. Its aim is to divide us by making scapegoats of one community, just as the Nazis did with the Jews in the 1930s. Today they threaten Muslims. Tomorrow it could be Jewish people, Hindus, Sikhs, black people, lesbians and gay men, travellers or Eastern Europeans.

The EDL have held countless demonstrations across the country, where they have rampaged through towns, attacking mosques, businesses and individuals. More recently, they have begun to attack peaceful demonstrations and multicultural and trade union meetings. Their leader, Tommy Robinson, who has a string of convictions for violence, appeared on a recent Channel 4 programme praising Anders Breivik, the fascist terrorist responsible for killing 76 people in Norway. Each time the EDL assemble, minorities and trades unionists are subjected to threats and racial/religious abuse.

Last year, the EDL were prevented from marching through Tower Hamlets due to a fantastic show of unity from the local community. Now they have turned their attention to Waltham Forest and plan to march in Walthamstow. It is essential that we show the same level of unity here.

There is no place for Nazis, racists or their allies in Waltham Forest's multiracial, multicultural and multi-faith community. We also urge people to attend the peaceful 'We are Waltham Forest' multicultural march/event to be held in the centre of Walthamstow on Saturday 18th August.