

Billy Allison

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Semantic Summary

Billy Allison is a founding member of Raise the Colours (RTC), the British far-right flag-nationalist group, and an associate of Operation Stop the Boats, the crowdfunded anti-migrant vigilantism offshoot that escalated from flag-planting to filming harassment of migrants on the Normandy coast. In May 2026, Allison was charged with murder and Section 18 GBH with intent following the death of pub owner Matt O'Gara outside the Ricco and Loren bar in Lichfield, Staffordshire — appearing in court wearing a "Stopping the Boats" t-shirt in a deliberate act of political messaging. HOPE not Hate identified Allison as a core RTC member alongside Ryan Bridge, Elliott Stanley, Ben Cullen, and Jordan Wheatley, documenting his travel to northern France with Bridge to confront migrants and harass Médecins Sans Frontières aid workers. His murder charge marks the most serious criminal case involving an RTC figure and attracted widespread media coverage from the BBC, LBC, The Sun, and Metro. Allison's trajectory — from provincial West Midlands obscurity to cross-channel vigilantism to homicide charge — exemplifies the escalation pathway from symbolic nationalist street activism to direct physical violence that characterises RTC's rapid radicalisation arc through 2025-2026.

Platform: X (Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, Facebook

Category: Far-right **Status:** Active (remanded in custody) **Real Name:** Billy Allison **Age:** 36 (as of 2026) **Location:** Cropthorne Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands **Channel URL / Handle:** Various under Raise the Colours / Operation Stop the Boats **Monikers:** "Original founder" of Raise the Colours (The Canary), "Co-founder" of Raise the Colours (5Pillars, HOPE not hate), "Founding member" (BBC, Birmingham Dispatch)

Overview

Billy Allison is a founding member of **Raise the Colours**, a British far-right group that attaches Union and St George's flags to lampposts across the UK and engages in anti-migrant vigilantism. He is also associated with **Operation Stop the Boats**, a crowdfunded offshoot movement raising money for activists to hoist flags and deter migrants. In May 2026, Allison was charged with murder and Section 18 grievous bodily harm with intent following the death of pub owner Matt O'Gara outside the Ricco and Loren bar in Lichfield, Staffordshire.

Described by sources including HOPE not Hate as a "founding member" or "original founder" of Raise the Colours, Allison was identified alongside Ben Cullen, Jordan Wheatley, and others in the group's inner circle. He travelled with group leaders Ryan Bridge and Elliott Stanley to northern France in late 2025, where Raise the Colours members filmed themselves harassing migrants on the Normandy coast. His arrest and murder charge in May 2026 marked one of the most serious criminal cases involving a member of the group and attracted significant media coverage, including from the BBC, LBC, The Sun, and the Metro.

Background

Limited pre-radicalisation biographical information is publicly available. Allison lives on Crophorne Road in Shirley, a suburb of Solihull, in the West Midlands. Before his involvement with Raise the Colours, there are no public records of notable professional or political activity.

Allison's radicalisation trajectory appears to mirror that of the broader "Operation Raise the Colours" flagging movement. He became involved alongside Ryan Bridge and Elliott Stanley during the autumn 2025 surge in flag-planting activism that spread across Birmingham and Worcestershire. Unlike Bridge (a businessman with a history of football hooliganism and a pending Spanish fraud trial) and Stanley (a former sex doll entrepreneur), Allison operated as a less prominent public face of the group but was nonetheless identified by HOPE not Hate monitoring as a core member.

A significant escalation came when Allison travelled with Ryan Bridge to northern France as part of Raise the Colours' anti-migrant vigilantism. HOPE not Hate documented his presence among the group members that travelled to France to confront and harass migrants on the beaches of Calais and Gravelines. This marked a shift from symbolic flag-raising to direct anti-migrant action abroad.

Raise the Colours Involvement

HOPE not Hate's 25 May 2026 exposé "Raise the Colours: Who are the playground bullies plaguing British streets?" named Allison as one of the key figures behind the group. The monitoring organisation described him as a founding member alongside Ryan Bridge, Elliott Stanley, Ben Cullen (Oxford), and Jordan Wheatley (Stafford).

Allison was specifically identified as having travelled to France with Bridge as part of the group's "anti-migrant vigilantism" operations. During these trips, Raise the Colours members filmed themselves shouting abuse at migrants on the Normandy coast, smashing small boat engines, and harassing aid workers from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). HOPE not Hate's State of Hate 2026 report noted that Raise the Colours — based in Birmingham — was "the most well-covered cross-channel vigilantism" group in the flagging movement.

Allison's involvement extended to **Operation Stop the Boats**, which began as a rebranding of Raise the Colours' French activities after founder Ryan Bridge split with Tommy Robinson associate Danny "Tommo" Thomas. Allison was described in multiple media reports as a member of both Raise the Colours and Operation Stop the Boats.

Murder Charge

On Sunday 24 May 2026 at around 23:25 BST, police were called to the **Ricco and Loren bar** on Market Street in Lichfield, Staffordshire, following reports of two men being punched. The two victims were **Matt O'Gara**, a director of The Plough pub in the nearby village of Huddlesford, and **Adam Cooper**.

O'Gara, described by friends as an "amazing person" and "the gel between pockets of friends," died in hospital on Tuesday 27 May 2026. Cooper was also taken to hospital but was subsequently discharged.

Billy Allison, 36, of Crophorne Road, Shirley, Solihull, was arrested just after 05:00 on Monday 25 May. He was subsequently charged with:

- **Murder** (of Matt O'Gara)
- **Section 18 Grievous Bodily Harm with Intent** (in relation to the second victim)

Court Appearances

27 May 2026 — Allison appeared at **North Staffordshire Justice Centre**, speaking only to confirm his name and date of birth. He reportedly "looked like he hadn't slept," according to a witness quoted by The Dispatch.

28 May 2026 — Allison appeared at **Stafford Crown Court** before Judge Avik Mukherjee for an eight-minute hearing. He wore a blue long-sleeved top (reportedly a "Stopping the Boats" t-shirt, per The Sun) and stood with his hands clasped in front of him. He spoke only to confirm his name. The judge set the next hearing for **1 September 2026** (plea and trial preparation hearing), with a trial expected to last two weeks beginning **26 October 2026**. Allison was remanded into custody.

The judge told Allison: "Billy Allison, will you stand please. Your next hearing is the first of September and you will be produced to court for that hearing. You have an obligation to come. You are expected to be here every day for your trial."

Allison nodded and was taken back to the cells by a custody officer.

Post-charge developments: On 18 June 2026, Staffordshire Police issued an appeal for witnesses who gave CPR to O'Gara after the attack to come forward, indicating the investigation remained active.

Related Figures

- **Ryan Bridge** — Co-founder of Raise the Colours; Birmingham-based; football hooligan history; arrested in Oxford for racially aggravated harassment (March 2026) and in London for wounding after Stirchley hit-and-run (May 2026); arrested again in Brighton for common assault (June 2026). Currently awaiting trial for fraud in Spain. Allison travelled with Bridge to France.
- **Elliott Stanley** — Co-founder of Raise the Colours; former sex doll entrepreneur; reportedly no longer active in the group as of mid-2026. Allison was identified alongside Stanley as a founding member.
- **Ben Cullen** — RTC member from Oxford; pepper-sprayed a man in a pub garden in 2019; named by HOPE not Hate alongside Allison as a key member. Pictured alongside Allison in HOPE not Hate profile photographs.
- **Jordan Wheatley** — RTC member from Stafford; also named by HOPE not Hate alongside Allison.
- **Matt O'Gara** — Victim; pub owner and director of The Plough pub, Huddlesford, Lichfield; died from injuries sustained in the Ricco and Loren bar assault; described as "a generous and valued sponsor" of Lichfield Rugby Club.
- **Adam Cooper** — Second victim; discharged from hospital; not publicly identified in most reporting beyond initial BBC coverage.

Legal Issues

Date	Issue	Status
May 2026	Charged with murder (Matt O'Gara)	Remanded in custody; trial set for October 2026
May 2026	Charged with Section 18 GBH with intent (Adam Cooper)	Remanded in custody; linked to murder charge
Sep 2026	Plea and trial preparation hearing	Scheduled at Stafford Crown Court
Oct 2026	Trial (expected 2 weeks)	Scheduled to begin 26 October 2026

Allison's wearing of a "Stopping the Boats" t-shirt to court was widely reported, including by The Sun, and was seen as an attempt to use the court appearance for political messaging. HOPE not Hate and monitoring organisations cited this as evidence of the group's continued influence and willingness to court controversy.

Sources

- BBC News: "'Incomprehensible void' left by death of Lichfield pub boss" (29 May 2026) — <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9365119eyqo>
- BBC News: "Murder charge court appearance over Lichfield bar death" (27 May 2026) — <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwy2lq9z75vo>
- BBC News: "Appeal for people who gave CPR after Lichfield pub attack" (18 June 2026) — <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c20yz802d1no>
- Birmingham Dispatch: "Raise the Colours founder charged with murder" (1 June 2026) — <https://www.birminghamdispatch.co.uk/raise-the-colours-founder-charged-with-murder/>
- LBC: "Lamppost flag campaign founder is charged with murder as Raise The Colours organiser 'punched pub owner who later died'" (29 May 2026) — https://www.lbc.co.uk/article/lamppost-flag-campaign-founder-charged-murder-5HjdZt2_2/
- Metro: "Raise the Colours founder Billy Allison charged with murder of bar owner" (28 May 2026) — <https://metro.co.uk/2026/05/28/raise-colours-founder-billy-allison-charged-murder-bar-owner-28555599/>
- The Sun: "Raise the Colours founder in court charged with murdering pub owner" (28 May 2026) — <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/39244135/raise-the-colours-founder-court-murder-pub-brawl/>
- Stoke Sentinel: "Lamppost flag-flying group Raise the Colours founder Billy Allison charged with Staffordshire murder" (28 May 2026) — <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/news/stoke-on-trent-news/lamppost-flag-flying-group-raise-10988277>
- Wikipedia: "Raise the Colours (organisation)" — [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raise_the_Colours_\(organisation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raise_the_Colours_(organisation))
- HOPE not Hate: "Raise the Colours: Who are the playground bullies plaguing British streets?" (25 May 2026) — <https://hopenothate.org.uk/2026/05/25/raise-the-colours-who-are-the-playground-bullies-plaguing-british-streets/>
- HOPE not Hate: "State of Hate 2026" (March 2026) — <https://hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/state-of-hate-2026-PDF.pdf>
- The Canary (Facebook): "Billy Allison of Raise the Colours has been charged with the murder" (29 May 2026)
- 5Pillars UK (Facebook): "Billy Allison, co-founder of the Raise the Colours British flag-raising movement, has been charged with murder" (29 May 2026)
- Staffordshire Police: "Man charged with murder following serious assault" (26 May 2026) — <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/news/staffordshire/news/2026/2026/man-charged-with-murder-following-serious-assault/>

Notes

- Information about Allison's background prior to Raise the Colours is minimal. He is not a prominent public-facing figure like Ryan Bridge or Elliott Stanley, and no significant biographical details (education, employment, family) have been widely reported.
- Allison is described variably as "founding member," "co-founder," and "original founder" of Raise the Colours across different sources. The primary founders acknowledged in Wikipedia and most reporting are Ryan Bridge and Elliott Stanley, with Allison identified as

a more peripheral but still founding-era member.

- The victim's second name was reported by some sources as "Matthew O'Gara" (BBC first report) and "Matt O'Gara" (subsequent reports). Both refer to the same individual.
- Allison's case is ongoing as of June 2026. He has not yet entered a plea. Trial is scheduled for October 2026.
- The "Stopping the Boats" t-shirt he wore to court is consistent with his affiliation with Operation Stop the Boats, an offshoot of Raise the Colours' anti-migrant activism.

Tags

- activist
- anti-immigration
- ben-cullen
- billy-allison
- elliot-stanley
- facebook
- far-right
- instagram
- jordan-wheatley
- midlands
- nationalist
- operation-stop-the-boats
- person
- raise-the-colours
- ryan-bridge
- tiktok
- twitter

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