

NorthBelfastNews



VOTING EARLY: Maire Kelly, Peggy Butcher, Danny Hale and John Storey at the polling station in Holy Family PS this morning (Thursday) casting their vote for the European and local council elections PHOTO: THOMAS MCMULLAN

Loyalist factions blame each other for tensions



PSNI in Tigers Bay this week

BY EVAN SHORT
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LOYALIST factions are blaming each other for sparking unrest in Tigers Bay over the weekend that saw a leading loyalist assaulted and raids carried out by the PSNI.

Tensions have been rising in the area between the mainstream UPRG and what they have described as a "criminal element" intent on gaining a foothold in the interface area.

A senior loyalist also accused the Protestant Coalition of running a media campaign on behalf of the new group, something spokesman Willie Frazer strongly denied.

The latest trouble was sparked when UPRG figure John Bunting was assaulted in Mervue Street on Friday afternoon and had his phone stolen. That led to raids by the PSNI on Monday who searched four homes and made four arrests.

They also delivered threats to individuals living in the houses they searched, warning them that they had intelligence that an unknown group was planning to carry out an attack on them.

Four men were questioned in relation to the assault on Bunting, but were later released on police bail.

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Mum of shooting victim says ONH denied attack

Martin McGuinness tells micro-groups to 'get real' after violent acts against community increase in recent weeks

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The mother of a 24 year old man shot in the foot and leg in a gun attack last week has said the micro-republican group ONH has denied responsibility for the shooting.

Kathleen Donnan, whose son Christopher was shot in Jamaica Street on Friday night, said she approached the gang as they had previously placed her son under

threat. However she said ONH had stated categorically that they were not responsible for the shooting.

The attack on Christopher Donnan came on a day which seen NI Water employees threatened in Ardoyne and their lorry attacked and petrol bombed. Claims put out that the workers were installing water meters have been slammed as "stupidity" by local representatives.

Meanwhile the deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness has said

'dissidents' need to 'get real' during a visit to Ardoyne this week. The Sinn Féin man said the main victims of their violence was local people. He added that while he had no issue with people holding different political opinions he did take exception to attacks on essential services on which the local community depended.

Meanwhile, an autistic teenager, who was also threatened by ONH, had a narrow escape after a gang tried to break into his home two weeks ago.

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