

# **#BlackLivesMatter protest expected in Holyrood Park today**

**While a peaceful protest is very much hoped for today in Holyrood Park, it is clearly breaching all of the government guidance as to what we are supposed to do during lockdown.**

**People are expected to gather to show support for Black Lives Matter after the death of George Floyd in the US.**

In view of that the First Minister took the opportunity to offer her support for the protest in support of Black Lives Matter, but also some advice at the media briefing from St Andrew's House on Friday.

She said: "Can I just say a very brief word and a very heartfelt word to those who I know want to make their voices heard this weekend in support of Black Lives Matter.

"I want to urge you to make your voices heard. We all feel very strongly about this but I want to ask you, to do so safely.

"In normal times, I may well have been planning to join a gathering of support this weekend. But coming together in mass gatherings right now is simply not safe. It poses a real risk to health and it poses a real risk to life.

"So I would encourage you to read the statement that was issued yesterday by Kadi Johnson, Sheku Bayoh's sister, and by

Humza Yousaf, Anas Sarwar and Aamer Anwar asking people to protest in different ways.

“For example you can make your voice heard online, you can lobby elected representatives, or you can make a donation to anti-racism campaigns but please, please, try to stay within the rules that are there for your own protection and above all please stay safe.

“In fact, that’s a message which all of us should heed. If you’re wondering whether or not it’s okay to do something this weekend, ask yourself if you’re giving the virus an opportunity to spread. And if you’re in doubt about whether your plans are within the rules or not, please err on the side of caution.

“Above all else, please remember that every single decision we take right now as individuals, will affect the safety and the wellbeing of everyone.

“The progress we’ve made against this virus – over these past few weeks – is real and I say that every day because I mean it – and it is as a result of all of us, overwhelmingly, sticking to these rules. And that kind of collective effort will continue to be vital – as we slow the spread of this virus, even further.

“I’m confident that the vast majority of you will continue to play your part. And I want thank all of you, in advance, for showing that solidarity with each other and for doing exactly that.”