



Message from Tom Watson MP, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party

It is with great sadness that I must begin my words to you, my Jewish friends and comrades, by saying this has been an exceptionally difficult year for Jewish members of the Labour Party.

Yet again we must restate our determination to fight anti-semitism whenever and wherever it occurs and in whatever form it takes, including in our own party.

The Jewish Labour Movement has been at the forefront of that fight over the last twelve months and I want to thank you for the leadership you have shown. I know it has been an exceptionally difficult and painful experience for many of you.

Three reports into anti-semitism in the Labour Party have now been published. All have made clear there must be zero tolerance of antisemitism. I know JLM members are not satisfied with the progress that has been made so far and I have heard you.

The recommendations set out in the Chakrabarti and Royall reports must be implemented quickly, and I will continue to press NEC members to ensure the Party sets out clearly when and how this will be done.

Like the Labour Party, the Jewish Labour Movement has a long and proud history. It was founded, as Poale Zion, in the same decade as Labour, and will celebrate the centenary of its 1920 affiliation to the Party in a few years' time.

JLM is more active now than it was a year ago, and it is larger too, with over 2000 members and supporters. In the last twelve months, new regional branches have been established in the South, North West and Eastern regions of England, and in London.

You have continued to work hard to ensure Labour candidates are elected at a local and national level. JLM ran multiple campaign days in the London Mayoral elections; the by-elections in Stoke Central and Copeland and in local election campaigns across the country.

Of equal importance is the educational work carried out by JLM. Over the course of the year, JLM gave training to nearly 1000 members of the Labour Party on how to confront antisemitism and engage Jewish voters.

The Chanukah Party at Labour HQ and the Rally Against Anti-Semitism and Racism at Labour Party Conference, which was attended by 400 people, were hugely successful events.

JLM was also co-opted to the NEC's Equalities Committee, which is responsible for driving Labour's equality agenda, guaranteeing that a strong Jewish voice will be heard when these issues are discussed at a national level.

In October last year, JLM led the commemorations of the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street, a confrontation that confirmed our country will cherish and protect the values of freedom, tolerance and respect as long as there are people who are prepared to stand up for them. The lessons of Cable Street are as relevant today as they were eighty years ago.

I want to pay tribute to Luciana Berger MP, who was elected JLM Parliamentary Chair, for the courage and strength she has shown in the face of an appalling campaign of racist abuse. We all stand with you, Luciana.

Finally, I also want to thank my friend Jeremy Newmark, who has completed his first year as National Chair, for his support, advice and wise counsel.