

## **Many young Jewish members are put off by the toxic culture in Young Labour, what will you do about it?**

Ending the toxic culture is my first and most important priority as Chair of Young Labour and I have made that clear throughout my campaign. I want Young Labour to be associated with anti-racism, not racism.

But the problem doesn't stop with Young Labour. I want to make sure toxicity is tackled throughout the Labour Party. Many of the issues in Young Labour are symptomatic of a wider toxic and antisemitic culture in the Labour Party and therefore it is vital that all Young Labour representatives work with the party leadership, and the Jewish Labour Movement, in reforming the party culture. I pledge to do this and have made internal culture reform a core principle of my campaign.

I hope you will agree that mine is a positive and uplifting plan for the future of Young Labour which will enfranchise members. However, this is not possible without first and foremost implementing my strategy to ensure Young Labour can become a genuinely welcoming environment across the board.

Firstly, I believe there must be accountability for the shameful, notorious activity on the Young Labour twitter account last year, and of those who have bullied and racially abused our Chair and other Jewish members.

Secondly, every adult in the Labour Party has a duty to safeguard fellow members and nowhere is that more important than our party youth wing. I will lobby for mandatory equalities and safeguard training for every Young Labour committee member. I also wish to lobby for the creation of a youth-specific safeguarding and complaints policy.

Another element to ensuring an inclusive culture is accessibility. Young Labour activities must meet accessibility requirements for disabled people but also go several steps further to be as inclusive as possible to all members. For example, ensuring that Young Labour events are hosted at times which are accessible to Shabbat-observant Jews. Many Jewish and other BAME members and those from migrant/refugee families (like mine) are also statistically more likely to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds, so it is vital for BAME participation to make sure Young Labour activities are financially viable for all.

In my position as Youth Officer at Open Labour, I am currently working with fellow committee members on an Accessibility and Inclusivity Pack for Labour members and organisations with criteria, guidelines and practical suggestions for how to create and uphold accessibility and inclusivity in Labour spaces. When published, I would seek to use this as part of my broad strategy to eradicate the toxic culture in Young Labour and establish an inclusive and welcoming environment in its place.

I also want to work on anti-racism with our trade unions to make sure that young Jewish workers are not discouraged from joining their workplaces' recognised trade unions as a result of trade

union political activity in relation to Labour antisemitism. Our party cannot simply push the antisemitism problem out into the wider Labour movement.

Lastly, I want to introduce a clear framework for positive Young Labour activism. I want to transform Young Labour into a national winning campaign force, and a support hub, where all members are welcome and given the tools to succeed. My full plan for this is at [cathleenforylchair.co.uk](http://cathleenforylchair.co.uk).

**Do you support the use of the IHRA definition of antisemitism and an independent complaints process?**

Yes.

I fully support the use of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, including all of the examples. I think it is awful and embarrassing that our party decided to die on that hill in the summer of 2018.

I also completely support an independent complaints process.

**What examples can you provide to show how you've supported Jewish members and fought antisemitism in the Labour Party?**

Most significantly, I appeared on Sky News in summer 2019 where I was asked about antisemitism in the labour party. I was clear then, on national TV, that I believed the party was institutionally antisemitic and the fault for this lay with the party leadership. I went so far as to call out individual staffers I believed were part of the problem.

I was attacked on social media for saying this by several party members including some Young Labour members. It was vital that I used my platform to speak up on this issue and I would not change it despite the attacks. I would rather be the person to absorb attacks from racists which might otherwise be directed towards a Jewish person.

I have also given personal and emotional support on this issue to some friends of mine who are Jewish, including a close friend who has been abused and discriminated against in their CLP.

I am an ally member of the Jewish Labour Movement. My understanding of allyship is that it is a constant journey and learning process. I think it is about standing shoulder to shoulder with you, amplifying your voices and experiences, and also speaking up to defend you - but never speaking over you.

As Chair of Young Labour, I will do everything I can to ensure that Jewish members of the Labour Party feel welcome and are supported. Fighting racism and discrimination is at the core of my politics - I am a volunteer with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust and believe in anti-racist action, not just warm words.

I would seek to have an ongoing dialogue with the JLM on how I can use my position to support the Jewish community, whether that is within Young Labour spaces, in schools, on university

campuses, in workplaces and the wider Labour and Trade Union movement. For example, I have shared the JLM's pack on how to make student Labour groups inclusive to Jewish members, and as Chair, I would want Young Labour to promote this to its student-based organisations and members as mandatory.

I would like to work with JLM's youth & student reps Jack Lubner and Luisa Attfield throughout my tenure as Chair to include wider work Young Labour can do to become a bastion of anti-racist activism on campuses and in youth spaces.