

Being a

YOUTH OFFICER

in your local Labour Party



A guide to getting started

Young Labour

Working Together for Real Change

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WELCOME

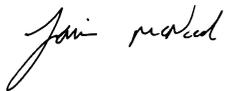
I want to say thank you to all the young members who have campaigned so hard for Labour in the last year – whether it was helping return a Labour Government in Wales, electing fantastic Labour Mayors Sadiq Khan and Marvin Rees in London and Bristol, your efforts in Batley and Spen or in local elections, the contribution Young Labour has made to Labour’s electoral achievements can’t be overstated. I have enjoyed meeting many of you on the doorstep as I have travelled the country and continue to be impressed by your commitment and enthusiasm, and the movement is grateful for it.

“More than ever, we need young leaders in every local Labour Party”

Since the 2015 General Election, the number of young members in our Party has more than trebled. More than ever, we need young leaders in every local Labour Party – recruiting new talent, running campaigns, and bringing fresh energy and ideas to local meetings.

Whether you’re already a Youth Officer for your local Party, or thinking of putting yourself forward for the job, this guide will give you everything you need to become a successful young leader in your local Labour Party.

I wish you the very best of luck



Iain McNicol
General Secretary of the Labour Party



When we were elected as your Young Labour representatives, we said wanted to see the Labour Party doing more to support Youth Officers in local Labour parties. As the young members who lead the canvassing sessions, run the policy debates and organise the socials, we want to champion what you’re doing and make sure you have the resources you need to succeed.

This guide should give you what you need to get started – it also tells you how you can get in touch with your Young Labour National Committee, who are on hand to give you help and support along the way.

We always want to hear from you, so please do use the links in this guide to get in touch.

Best wishes

Jasmin Beckett
NEC Youth Representative



Caroline Hill
Chair of Young Labour



“This guide should give you what you need to get started”

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE ROLE OF YOUTH OFFICER IN A LOCAL LABOUR PARTY

The role of Youth Officer in a local Labour Party is more important than it's ever been. Their job is to welcome young members into the local Labour Party, help them feel engaged by putting on interesting events and socials, and turn them into active members who campaign for change in the community and to get Labour elected. Youth Officers are also responsible for making sure that the voices of young members are heard and respected within a local Labour Party.

A good Youth Officer needs to be friendly and approachable, as well as organised – they should be able to take a lead on events and campaign sessions for young members. They also need to be good listeners, able to understand and represent the views of young members to the Executive of the local Labour Party.

With a bigger youth membership than ever before, this job is both challenging and rewarding. This guide will tell you everything you need know; how to become a Youth Officer, how to reach out to young members and run successful events, how to turn young members into active campaigners, and what resources and support you can access to help you do the best possible.



HOW CAN I BECOME THE YOUTH OFFICER FOR MY LOCAL LABOUR PARTY?

You can join the Labour Party from the age of 14. All Labour Party members under the age of 27 are 'young members', and automatically members of Young Labour, the youth wing of the Labour Party.

Every local Labour Party, often referred to as 'Constituency Labour Party' (or CLP for short) should have a Youth Officer who is a young member, i.e. under 27 years old. You should first speak to your CLP Secretary – you can find their name and contact details on your Labour Party membership card – to find out if your CLP already has a Youth Officer. If they don't, offer to put yourself forward!

If there is already a Youth Officer, you should get to know them and find out more about what they do. This means that when the position next becomes vacant you'll have a better understanding of the role.

Usually positions in the CLP such as Youth Officer and others will be elected at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) held once a year. If you want to put yourself forward for Youth Officer, make sure you speak to your CLP Secretary to find out when and how to nominate yourself. If more than one person puts themselves forward, there may be an election – this means you may be asked to say a few words about why you think you'd be good at the job and what you'd like to do.

GETTING STARTED

FIRST STEPS: REACHING OUT TO YOUNG MEMBERS IN YOUR AREA

Once you've started as Youth Officer for your local Labour Party, the first thing you'll want to do is reach out to young members in the CLP and make sure they know who you are. Here are the first four steps you can take:

Ask your CLP Secretary or Vice Chair Membership to send an email to all young members in the CLP with a message from you, so that you can introduce yourself, let them know how to get in touch with you, and invite them to send in their ideas for events and campaigns

2

Set up a Facebook group or page for young members in your CLP so you can post information about events. When doing so, make sure you read the Labour Party's Social Media Policy, available at members.labour.org.uk/legal_and_compliance_downloads

3



Find out if there is a Labour Students club to reach out to at a nearby university or college.

To find out if there is a Labour Students club in your area, contact the Labour Students National Office at labourstudents@labour.org.uk

Link up with any existing Young Labour groups nearby – to find out about other Young Labour groups in your area, get in touch with your Labour Party Regional/Scottish/Welsh Office. You can find their contact details at labour.org.uk/pages/scottish-welsh-and-regional-offices. Alternatively, get in touch with your Regional/Scottish/Welsh representative on the Young Labour National Committee – you can find their details at younglabour.org.uk/yourInc

ORGANISING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT: DOS, DON'TS, AND TOP TIPS

Once you've made contact with young members in your CLP, you'll want to organise an event for young members to come together, meet one another and get involved. As a rule, events for young members should be welcoming, informal, and interesting. When organising one, ask yourself – is this something I'd give up my time to go along to?

DO:

Hold your event in an accessible venue – somewhere that young members under 18 can attend, somewhere that's familiar and easy/safe to get to and is accessible for people with disabilities

Find an interesting speaker such as a local Labour politician. Alternatively, you could reach out to someone with a prominent role in a campaigning or charitable organisation to talk about a relevant issue. Be sure to talk to your CLP Secretary who will be able to help

Make sure you publicise the event well by asking your CLP Secretary to send an email to young members, and promote it using social media

DON'T:

Get bogged down in bureaucracy or make things overly formal – no one joined the Labour Party to check over the minutes of the previous meeting!

Hold your event in a pub or anywhere that excludes members under 18

Make events divisive – it's probably not a good idea to start by asking new members how they voted in the last leadership election!

TOP TIPS:

Take advantage of free venues which your CLP or Labour councillors can help you access

Why not use a Facebook poll to ask young members in your CLP what kind of events/speakers/discussion they'd be interested in?

Find out if there are other members of your CLP who have interesting jobs or campaigning roles they could come and speak about

Be creative! Film nights, fundraising socials and mock debates are just some of the successful events local groups around the country have organised

BEST PRACTICE



“When we’re organising young members’ events in Blackpool we try to make sure that the issues we discuss are topical, and that the speakers we invite are interesting and relevant to what’s going on. For example, when we launched our campaign ahead of the EU Referendum, we invited Julie Ward, one of our Labour MEPs, to come and speak about Europe. By holding events with speakers who are educational and relevant to the news of the day, we’ve found that we get more young members coming along”

David Collett, Blackpool North and Cleveleys CLP

MAKING YOUR CLP WELCOMING FOR YOUNG MEMBERS

As well as young members’ events, it’s good for young people to be active in regular meetings of their CLP. Local Labour Party meetings can sometimes be off-putting for young members, even though most CLPs are keen to fix this – they need your help!

What you can do

- Make sure you say hello to any young members who turn up
- Offer to “buddy” a new young member to their first CLP meeting or meet them for a coffee beforehand so they’re not going alone
- Take time to talk to them and take interest in what they say – this can make the difference as to whether or not they come back
- Speak to your CLP Executive and make sure that they’re doing all they can:
 - Holding meetings in accessible venues for under 18s
 - Using the Local Party jargon-buster (this can found at the back of this guide)
 - Listening to what young members want to see when planning future events/speakers



GET CAMPAIGNING

Most young people join the Labour Party because they're passionate about changing the world we live in for the better – and that means campaigning for change.

Whether in the 2015 General Election, the 2016 Mayoral, Local and Devolved Parliament Elections or the EU Referendum, young members have been the engine of Labour's campaign machine.

But Labour's young members don't just wait until election time to make a difference – they get stuck in to local campaigns on issues that matter all year round.



WINNING FOR LABOUR

As CLP Youth Officer, it will be your job to turn new young members into active campaigners who can deliver Labour victories in Parliaments, Assemblies and Councils across the country.

6 STEPS TO TURN NEW YOUNG MEMBERS INTO ACTIVE CAMPAIGNERS

1 Personally invite them to a campaigning session: A phone call is more effective than an email, and you can use this to find out if there's anything they're unsure about or might be putting them off

3 Make sure they're properly briefed: One of the barriers to new young members canvassing door to door is that they don't feel they know enough about Labour policies or local issues. Remember: campaigners don't need to be experts, but you can give your new activists more confidence by getting a local Labour councillor or MP to briefly explain some of the key issues

5 Plan a social for after the session is finished: This will give you a chance to get to know your new campaigners, and allow them to share their impressions

2 Meet together beforehand: Standing alone on a street corner won't fill new young members with confidence – agree to meet at a specific location with new young members so you can head to the session together

4 Buddy up first-timers with experienced activists: At least for the first few doors, so that they can learn how it's done, and see that it's not all that scary!

6 Say thank you: You should always thank campaigners for their time. Also keep a record of who came along – it's good to know who your keen campaigners are.

Make sure you check out Labour's new Doorstep App, which makes canvassing sessions easier and lengthy data inputting a thing of the past. To find out more check out our 'Introducing the Doorstep App' Webinar at members.labour.org.uk/webinar-library



BEST PRACTICE



"In Edinburgh we've been able to get new young members to come canvassing with the local Labour Party by pairing them up with more experienced young members who can show them the ropes. We also help them to feel as confident as possible by working with the local Party to provide a script with useful local background information, including answers to tricky questions which could come up. It's understandable that people can be nervous about knocking on a stranger's door for the first time, so I always remind them that they don't need to be experts – after all we're only volunteers!"

Shonagh Munro, Edinburgh Southern CLP

RUNNING A COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

Election campaigns aren't the only way to make a difference – young members can also run local campaigns on issues that matter to improve the lives of young people in their area.

For a comprehensive guide to running a successful campaign in your community, download the Labour Party's Community Organising Guide by visiting <https://members.labour.org.uk/resources-for-organisers>.

For a successful campaign, you need to get three things right

Pick an issue

Questions you should ask:

- 1 - Does this issue matter to young people locally?
- Is this issue consistent with Labour's values of equality and social justice?
- Is this issue 'SMART'? (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed)

Build capacity

Who can you get involved in your campaign and how? Why not approach:

- 2 - Local Students Union officers/sabbaticals?
- Young Trade Union branch officers and shop stewards?
- Members of the local Youth Council?

Take action

How will your campaign achieve change? You could think about:

- 3 - Gathering signatures at a street stall and organising an event to deliver these to a decision-maker
- Inviting a decision-maker to a community Q&A
- Using the personal stories of young people affected by your issue to win your argument

Remember, your CLP Executive and your Regional/Scottish/Welsh Office will be able to give you help and support as well as access to resources, so be sure to keep them in the loop.



BEST PRACTICE



I wanted to run a community campaign to galvanise the huge number of new young members who had recently joined in Rushcliffe. I set up a Facebook group for young members and used this to advertise a meeting where we could discuss ideas for a campaign - we eventually decided on the issue of mental health. We used our Facebook group to promote street stalls where we spoke and listened to members of the public - lots of them said how glad they were to see Labour out and about, especially as Rushcliffe is a safe Tory seat. We reached out to a number of youth groups in the area and organised a meeting with Luciana Berger MP, then Labour's Shadow Minister for Mental Health. As well as raising the importance of the issue in our community, our campaign was hugely successful in making our new young members feel involved and like they could make a difference"

Nadia Whittome, Rushcliffe CLP



RESOURCES

EVENTS CALENDAR

If you can plan events far enough in advance, you could produce an events calendar for local young members – this makes it easier for people to make

time in advance to come along. Below is an example of what an events calendar for young members in your CLP might look like.

Organise faith events? Check this year's dates for:
Eid
Diwali
Rosh Hashanah
Easter

My draft events calendar

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Jan		CLP AGM – just been elected as Youth Officer!		Burns' Night social event?
Feb	LGBT history month – invite speaker from local LGBT youth charity 		Introduction to canvassing session for new members with local Labour councillor	
Mar		International Women's Day event – ask CLP Women's Officer for help 	#labourdoorstep campaign session	New young members policy discussion event
Apr	Run a voter registration stall at schools & colleges	Run a voter registration stall at schools & colleges	#labourdoorstep campaign session	#labourdoorstep campaign session
May	POLLING DAY! 	Take a break post-elections! <i>Check exams?</i>		<i>leaflets?</i>
Jun	Introduction to Trade Unions – ask CLP trade union officer to help find a good speaker		CLP BBQ – get young members to come along! 	Summer campaign meeting – pick a local issue and plan campaign for change
Jul	Young members' policy debating event – invite our regional Youth Rep on the NPF	Labour Party training webinar – remind people to bring their laptops!		Summer campaign action – need to plan what this could be – ask Regional Office to help?
Aug	<i>train times?</i>			Congrats social for everyone who received exam results?
Sept		Social to celebrate win from Summer campaign & plan possible future steps?	Pre-conference meet-up for any young members going to Annual Conference	Joint new members' event with local Uni Labour Club? Ask someone from Labour Students to help
Oct	Black History Month talk – get in touch with Young Labour BAME Officer for help with a speaker		Introduction to canvassing session for new members with local Labour councillor	CLP Halloween fundraiser – need to get lots of young members along! 
Nov	Organise a trip to the fireworks for Bonfire Night	Intro to Young Labour talk. Invite Young Labour Chair/NEC Youth Rep to speak?		Regional Conference + Youth Day – encourage young members to come
Dec	International Day of Persons with Disabilities – organise a speaker?		Xmas social – Secret Santa? 	

KEEPING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

The Labour Party has a legal obligation to safeguard all of its members under the age of 18. It is not your responsibility to uphold this, but you do have a responsibility to report any concerns. There are four important things you need to know:

1. If you have a concern about a young member or behaviour which could put them at risk you must report this to your CLP Secretary or Regional Director
2. You should not distribute the contact details of members under 18 unless as part of party activity agreed by your CLP Secretary
3. Behaviour online, particularly in Facebook groups, should adhere to the Labour Party's Social Media Policy
4. If you think a child or young person is in immediate danger you must call 999

You can find the Labour Party's detailed Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy on the Membersnet legal hub at members.labour.org.uk

ASKING FOR HELP

Being Youth Officer for your local Labour Party might sound like a big job, but there are lots of people who can offer help and support, as well as tons of handy Labour Party resources and training you can access.

CLP Executive

Your CLP Secretary or Chair should be able to support you in your role, helping you contact young members, plan events, and offer guidance with any issues you're struggling with. They'll also be able to ensure all activity is compliant with the Labour Party's legal responsibilities to children and young people under the age of 18.

Regional/Scottish/Welsh Office

There is a dedicated Labour Party office in Scotland, Wales and every English region. They should be able to assist with support and resources, as well as speakers for local events. You can find the contact details of each of these offices by visiting <http://www.labour.org.uk/pages/scottish-welsh-and-regional-offices>

Young Labour National Committee

The Young Labour National Committee has a representative covering every region and nation, as well as a number of other officers who can help you make your local group a success. You can find their contact details by visiting <http://www.younglabour.org.uk/youyInc>

Labour Party Head Office

You can contact the Labour Party's National Youth Officer, Stephen Donnelly, by emailing younglabour@labour.org.uk

USEFUL LINKS/RESOURCES

My Labour – my.labour.org.uk

My Labour is a fantastic new tool designed to make it easier for each member to play a full and active role within the Labour Party. You can activate your digital membership by visiting my.labour.org.uk and requesting an invitation.

Membersnet- www.members.labour.org.uk

This is an all-purpose hub of information for members, including campaign resources you can download, and the Labour Party's training site and webinar library

Young Labour Website – www.younglabour.org.uk

Keep up to date with what Young Labour is doing, as well as the latest events and resources for young members

Young Labour on social media

You can follow these at www.facebook.com/YoungLabourUK and [@YoungLabourUK](https://twitter.com/YoungLabourUK) respectively

Training bulletin

This weekly email contains information about campaigns you can get involved in and training you can access – to subscribe email training@labour.org.uk with the subject line SUBSCRIBE

Labour Policy Forum – <http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/>

Labour Policy Forum is our online home of policy development and ideas, where you can take part in Labour's open and democratic policy-making process.

LOCAL PARTY JARGON BUSTER

From CLPs to NPF, you might have come across a lot of confusing acronyms and terms since you joined the Labour Party. In our jargon buster, we've explained some of the terms you're likely to hear.

AGM

Annual General Meeting: Yearly meetings of all members within a branch or CLP where the executive committee reports on activity and elections are held to fill roles for the next year

BLP – Wards & Branches – Branch Labour Parties

Branch Labour Parties operate over an electoral ward. Branch is the collective term for all party members within that ward (or wards). Branch meetings are usually held on a monthly basis.

CLP – Constituency Labour Parties

This is the local Labour Party within your parliamentary constituency. There is a Constituency Labour Party in every Parliamentary Constituency of England and Wales, for every Holyrood Parliamentary Constituency in Scotland and for members overseas.

EC or Exec – Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is a sub-group of the General Committee, they deal with business matters (money etc.) so that the GC can concentrate on political and campaigning issues.

GC or GMC – General (Management) Committee

The General Committee of your local party; branches elect local members to be delegates who attend and then report to and from each body. Local trade union groups and affiliates may also be part of the GC.

Labour Group

This is made up of all the Labour Councillors in the local government authority.

CLP Officers/ Co-ordinators

Role holders handle the day to day running of the local party. They can be part of the Executive Committee but they mainly co-ordinate campaigns, fundraising or socials. The positions are voted on each year at the AGM.

NPF – National Policy Forum

The National Policy Forum is responsible for developing Labour Party policy, which it does by regularly asking for ideas and feedback from Party members and supporters. The NPF is made up of Representatives from all parts of the Party, including CLPs, young members, affiliated trade unions and socialist societies.

National Executive Committee (NEC)/ Regional Board

The NEC is the committee that is responsible for the day to day running of the Labour Party. They keep a check on the politics, organisation, and finances of the party. The NEC is the Committee of the National Labour Party, in Wales there is the WEC (Welsh Executive Committee), Scotland has the SEC (Scottish Executive Committee) and each region has a 'Regional Board'. There are different representatives on these committees from all sections of the Labour Party including a constituency representative, Youth delegate, and representatives from Trade Unions and affiliates. They also decide on candidates in by-elections and which seats will select candidates from All Women Shortlists (AWS).

Panel

When people have applied to be a local government candidate they go through the application and interview process and if successful they are placed onto 'the panel'. A candidate is then selected from 'the panel'.

Affiliates

These are the wider part of the Labour Movement, for example trade unions and other groups pay a fee to 'affiliate' to the Labour Party. They have a say in internal elections.



Working Together for Real Change

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