

# NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Gary Spedding**

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## Elect Gary Spedding for 2018 / 2020

This will be the first time I have asked for the support of the Labour Party membership, as somebody who hails from a new generation of progressive left-wing political thought, and sees the potential that Labour has as a political movement. I have been inspired by the way in which over 570,000 ordinary Labour Party members throughout the country came together, irrespective of our diverse and rich political views, and worked collectively as a Labour family. Together, with our comrades in the trade union movement, we united under a manifesto that drew public attention to the real solutions that Labour will provide for the benefit of the many as opposed to the few. It was our united effort that showed we have the solutions to problems caused by years of Tory enforced austerity and it was our tenacity, dedication and ingenuity that allowed us to deprive Theresa May of her majority.

I have also been inspired by a party leader who has reintroduced a grassroots approach to engagement at every level of the party. Individuals such as me, along with those younger than me, have been inspired like never before by Jeremy Corbyn and the marked shift in the direction of the Labour Party. It is now our duty to channel the energy, enthusiasm and high quality of skills and wealth of ideas within the party, reconnect with our base and really embed ourselves within working-class communities, so as to build the mass movement of change that is so urgently needed in this country. Brexit is the defining issue of our time. As someone who believes strongly in remaining, I believe it is our responsibility to put an end to the divisiveness, confusion and utter chaos that suits the Tory agenda. Labour, as a mass movement, has the opportunity to show true leadership and tackle racism, xenophobia, chauvinism and hyper-nationalism head on. Under the coalition of chaos that the Tories have built by bribing the DUP we have come dangerously close to unravelling the entirety of the peace process in Northern Ireland and doing irreparable damage to the Good Friday Agreement. The Labour Party can only put a stop to this if we are in government. But we also need to have the confidence to make bold decisions and try to properly engage with the electorate. We can only provide the wider public with other options, and another chance to determine our future if we take back power by winning the next General Election. It is also only a Labour government that will protect jobs, public services, and our transportation system. Only Labour can end the strangulation of our beloved National Health Service and restore it to the bastion it once was. I am involved in the Labour Party because I believe firmly in the principles and values of this party and our wider movement. I want to have the opportunity to contribute toward building a society that has social justice, equality and prosperity for everyone at its beating heart.

### Accountability

At present our party is undergoing a democracy review, with many thousands of members already contributing with their ideas and views, this is a fantastic time to be involved and make a difference. I firmly believe that our NEC must be more transparent and accountable where it is possible, and this is why I commit to providing a detailed report to members on what has been going on at the NEC, the topics that have been discussed and the decisions that have been taken. I will also undertake to look more closely at how Labour Party policy is made, in particular the function and role of our National Policy Forum, so that members everywhere can have a far greater say in the direction of our party.

### Restoring Confidence and Eradicating Abuse

I welcome Jeremy Corbyn's statement of zero tolerance and total rejection of all personal abuse, online or offline. It is my hope that I can give support to the leadership of our party by bringing with me a pledge and full commitment to grounding activism within the Labour Party firmly in our anti-racist principles. We can also restore confidence in our party among communities who feel let down in recent years by taking the lead from, and working collaboratively with, those best placed to define their own oppression, giving us direction on how they wish the party to respond to oppression and what they'd like to see more broadly as a culture within our Labour Party family. In this vein, I commit wholeheartedly to bringing a nuanced and comprehensive opposition to anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, misogyny, sexism, transphobia and all other forms of oppression.

Our party must be genuine allies as we strive to eradicate all forms of abuse, bullying, intimidation and discrimination from within our ranks. We can also best serve the fight against anti-Semitism specifically by educating and training the membership on how to identify, recognise and oppose genuine anti-Jewish bigotry, whilst also equipping activists with the resources and know-how to distinguish between certain forms of political speech that might be uncomfortable, but not actually bigoted or racist and what is in actuality the very real anti-Semitism manifest in some of our spaces. Accurately calling out anti-Semitism, shouldn't be viewed as a distraction – it actually contributes to the health of a mass movement, giving strengthened credibility to any political group that claims to have strong anti-racist principles and it makes Jews safer.

### My Experience

Whilst I may be new to Labour Party membership, I most certainly am not new to the Labour movement as a broad coalition and my roots are firmly embedded in our national Students' Union movement. I joined the Labour Party in order to give as much of myself as possible to the movement both locally through my branch/CLP and nationally. During my time in the Students' Union movement I have sat on campaign committees, organised mass movements against fees and cuts, and have gained an in-depth knowledge of the political landscape in Northern Ireland. My background is mainly in foreign affairs, peace and conflict studies and immigration issues. I stand consistently for human rights, equality and restorative justice. I have campaigned specifically on LGBTQI\* rights and equality and been part of feminist movements for almost a decade, and I'm also a Palestine advocate and unapologetic anti-Zionist. I've been on the front lines smashing antisemitism, racism and all forms of discrimination and racial hatred; and placing myself physically as a barrier to the activities of fascist, racist and anti-Semitic groups.

Please contact me, either by e-mail or phone, if you have any questions for me at all: [gary.spedding90@gmail.com](mailto:gary.spedding90@gmail.com) / +44 (0)7476369469