

Peter Apps

Running for Labour Party NEC

FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Current endorsements: Disability Labour, Aldershot, Colne Valley, South West Surrey, Tunbridge Wells, Vauxhall, Wimbledon CLPs
Union: GMB/NUJ



This country desperately needs a Labour Government, and we have failed to provide it. I am running for the NEC because I believe we need the Labour Party's structures to be more accountable, effective and representative. Whoever becomes leader will need to be both supported and held to account, and stitched up factional slates are not the way to do that. We cannot have a working party without a working NEC that tackles anti-semitism, harassment, complaints, bullying and more.

As a career foreign correspondent for Reuters News Agency, I've seen what happens when democratic systems falter and fail. After breaking my neck covering the Sri Lankan Civil War, I found myself completely paralysed and dependent on the welfare state. Without a compensation package won by my trade union solicitor, I would have spent the last five years in a nursing home. I get why the country needs our party, and that's why I joined. I helped coordinate Labour Friend of the Forces during the 2017 election campaign, and since 2018 I have been fundraising officer for Vauxhall CLP.

In Vauxhall, we had to fight hard last year for the right to select our own candidate for the parliamentary seat – which is why the fantastic Florence Eshalomi is now our MP. For the last term, I have taught one day a week at a local comprehensive, helping pupils start a student newspaper. I know how vital it is people see political representatives they can identify with. I am proud to be a member of Disability Labour, and believe the party must do more to promote all forms of diversity. Only by listening to all voices can we find the solutions we need, deliver a Green New Deal and government as genuinely transformative as 1945.

Clearly, we need to learn lessons from this election defeat. But that mustn't mean losing the energy, ideas and values of those who flocked to the party under Jeremy Corbyn. The more radical we want to be, however, the deeper that must be rooted in competence and realism. This party must become more democratic, not less.

As priorities for the NEC, we need to make our party systems work. Fixing the complaints system is key to tackling anti-semitism, bullying and harassment. Serious policy thinking for the 2024 manifesto must begin sooner rather than later. We need simple, clear messages on how we will deliver housing, opportunities and jobs while rebuilding the welfare state and keeping people safe. The world is getting more dangerous, and it desperately needs a credible, compassionate and competent Labour party ready to move forward.

Membership number: L1461912

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