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Statement

I am standing for Deputy Leader to breathe change into the Green Party, which has become stymied. As a non-practising barrister, I help disadvantaged people obtain their rights and get access to community care services, by ensuring that their voices are heard.

DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

Equality and social justice within our Party will be achieved when more people are enabled to be actively involved in the way that it is run. Currently, only a select handful of people in 'top positions' get supported, promoted and used for publicity and they do not represent the diversity within! I want to see mentoring and support systems to increase diversity in leadership/spokespersons used: It is not credible to have white spokespeople speaking about Black Lives Matter – it undermines Greens of Colour and the Party's integrity. Inclusion is about power-sharing based on the principle: 'nothing about us without us' for all 'self-defining groups' within the membership.

I would like to see members offered the opportunity to be part of an active volunteer pool: members could be chosen by a random selection process (e.g. tombola maybe one region at a time) ensuring that volunteers are drawn from different parts of the country, for help with campaigns input and for the recruitment process of staff.

The current unincorporated association status of the Party needs addressing to ensure equality of applicants - either by insurance to counter liability or by changing to an incorporated association.

Raised levels of climate change consciousness brought about by the Red Line demonstration (Paris 2015); Greta Thunberg and the rise of Extinction Rebellion in 2018 have resulted in an increase in Green Councillors. We now need to focus internal and external action on the social inequality issues under the spotlight from COVID-19 & Black Lives Matter. Connecting via technology removes geographic barriers (too much activity has been London-centric), and enables members with caring responsibilities to participate.

GREEN PARTY (GP) ROLES

I have been a member for seven years; standing three times in Lewisham local elections; once in the GLA London List, and most recently, in the 2019 General Election in Lewisham Deptford constituency - achieving just over 5% of the vote which saved our deposit.

My GP volunteering began in 2014 coordinating the “Renewable Energy Dinner Dialogue”: Persuading Heads of Renewable Energy Companies to get together with Green Party politicians to discuss mutual support. This event was a success and the companies involved supported the idea of annual get-togethers - which I would promote.

From 2015-18 I was the AGM Organiser for London Fed, and I expanded these events into mini-conferences, with organised workshops on a range of issues from Campaigning to Brexit to Housing. Keynote speakers included Kevin Courtney from the N.U.T., and Lord Bird’s representative on the Creditworthiness Bill. During 2016 I helped with Policy Education which led to me co-sponsoring the “Citizens’ Income, benefit sanctions, workfare and the Living Wage” motion at Conference in Spring 2017.

I also helped with the 2015 “Take City Hall event” - recruiting Matthew Egan the lead on Unison's Ethical Care Charter (Living Wage for all Home Carers/30 minute minimum care for disabled people) to be part of the “low pay circle”. In 2018 I persuaded Lewisham Council to put forward a motion to become an Ethical Care Council.

CAMPAIGNS

From 2015-2019 I campaigned to Save Tidemill Wildlife Garden as Coordinator of Deptford’s Neighbourhood Forum. Deptford is one of the most deprived wards in the country and I see Neighbourhood Planning (using the Localism Act) as a vehicle to obtain greater social justice in Housing; Health; Employment; Heritage issues, protecting green/open spaces and creating more child-friendly places. Last year I spoke at a GLA enquiry on Neighbourhood Plans. I was interviewed twice on London Live for the Tidemill Wildlife Garden Campaign.

My other campaigning includes: “Stop TTIP” train with Global Justice Now which involved co-chairing an open public meeting in Lewisham; Make Votes Matter campaigning; Keep Our NHS Public protesting the Health and Social Care Bill 2012; With my husband and daughter, standing under the Red Line in Paris; Stop the Silvertown Tunnel, outside London’s City Hall; marching to Unite against Racism and Peace for Gaza; the Free Her (anti-detention) campaign; speaking out in a meeting at the House of Commons against the automatic sharing of health information with third parties; Green Carding my MP advocating against fracking within the Infrastructure Bill; and sharing a platform at Goldsmiths with Owen Jones on housing issues and the mental health of students.

I’m now the Green Party 50:50 (a campaign to get 50% women MP’s in Parliament) ‘Director’ - encouraging women who have already been selected, and also those who want to become selected in the near future, to sign up to the 50:50 and Equal Power campaigns and offering women support and encouragement.

MY DEPUTY LEADER VISION

The establishment of a women's cross-party annual climate change event, to promote the Green New Deal led by Green Party Women (GPW) and Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah (GPW’s spokeswoman on Air Pollution, and WHO advocate on Health), an invited speaker at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference.

Campaign for Proportional Representation - which is our biggest barrier to getting more Green MP's. I protested at the 2019 election: "Without P.R. this is pointless."

Campaign for Housing as a human right: Lack of Council social housing to meet the needs of those on UK council housing lists is at a crisis breaking level: 1.5 million households in temporary b'n'b & living in poor/overcrowded conditions. Previously I have proposed this Early Day Motion to Caroline Lucas "To suspend the Right to Buy Council Housing in all English Cities for the next 5 years".

Improve our equality policies to strengthen the rights of Greens of Colour, Disabled members and GPW. As a woman, I have experienced bullying, harassment, and misogyny within this Party - having a Women's Rights Policy (which recognises the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)) will prevent this from happening going forward.