

# Lauren Townsend for Labour NEC #LT4NEC

I first came into the movement as a waitress who had enough of her exploitative bosses and decided to do something about it. With very little knowledge of trade unionism, I threw myself into every aspect of it, recruiting members, training as a rep in an unrecognised workplace, and leading a series of strikes across the U.K.



Since then I have travelled the country, visiting CLPs and labour events to lead workshops on organising in 'difficult' workplaces and to speak about my experiences. I fought my dismissal from TGI Fridays on grounds of trade union discrimination and won. I became heavily involved in the Labour Party locally, and now sit on both the EC and LCF, as Vice-Chair and Campaign Co-Ordinator for MKLP. In May 2019 I unseated an incumbent Tory to be elected as a councillor onto MK Council, and am now Chief Whip of the Labour Group. I was hired as a part-time hospitality organiser by Unite the Union, and now work for the CWU, as a project lead on the New Deal for Workers. I am also a spokesperson for Labour for a Green New Deal.



Coming into the movement as a fresh face with fresh eyes; having proved my credentials as a grassroots activist, organiser and elected representative who is able to build relationships and get things done; and being so enthusiastic about our potential as a Party; I believe now is the best time for me to stand to serve on the NEC.

The strategic direction for Labour right now, as we head into 5 more years of opposition, is more crucial than ever. It's important that we have new people coming up through the Party structures, as well as retaining existing talent, to ensure we do not stagnate in our thought processes or decision making and that we continue to build on the vibrancy

and excitement we've seen grow over the last couple of years. It is absolutely key that we have diversity, and a wide range of voices on the NEC – ones that will not be shy in speaking out on behalf of the membership, who comprehend the importance of decisions we make in regards to our electability and who will maintain members trust and consistently stay true to our principles.

We need to ensure that our Party continues to commit to, and builds upon, the goal of being a truly member-led, democratic and socialist organisation. Our radical manifesto was popular with both members and the public, and we must remember that. Despite some now trying to claim otherwise, it is completely possible to be both radical and electable,

the two are not exclusive. It is our job, as the Labour Party, to put forward a vision of hope and prosperity for all, to rebuild trust within our communities and to nurture a diverse group of hard-working people, who share our values, to stand for positions at all levels of government.

Our members have more raw talent and energy than any other political party, they are enthusiastic, engaged and intelligent and we must allow them room to voice opinions and be heard through our Party structures. Our CLPs should be exciting and welcoming places, with regular campaigning, community outreach, full social calendars, accessible training and meetings that encourage discussion and debate whilst providing a safe space to do so.



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