

I am Cllr Dr Vicky Ashworth, a Labour and Cooperative Councillor, a JLM Ally and I am standing to be the next MP for Birmingham Northfield. I am seeking the nomination of the Jewish Labour Movement and set out my reasons below.

My unusual start in life, profoundly shaped who I am and what I stand for. My life started in the care system, I was given away and adopted into a white, British, Labour household. Growing up as a black child in a white family, my identity was questioned continuously by others. I learnt to be resilient and to understand what it is to be a minority and experience racial abuse. Aged 10, my adoptive parents moved to the Netherlands, more displacement.

The only brown face in the village, I had to fit in and learn Dutch. As a Catholic in a traditional, Calvinist area, again, my identity was challenged. From this experience of living abroad, I developed an interest in interfaith dialogue, but also a strong sense of my British identity, our place in the world and the value of the Commonwealth. Coming from a military family, I also had a strong sense gratitude to our Armed Services. The role of the Dutch in the First and Second World War left me with a deep sense of sadness for our Jewish communities around the world. Listening to stories from friends parents' about the resistance, but also knowing that many had collaborated, was hard. A visit to one of the Dutch concentration camps, in Westerbork, not far from where we lived, pained me to the core.

I carried that same sense of pain with me, standing as a PPC in Epping Forest in 2019 and met with the local Rabbi during my campaign. We prayed together and talked about the dire state of the party. After the elections, I returned and we talked again. For me this was about building relationships and listening and hearing. My voting record on matters affecting our Jewish communities is one I am proud of and I look to the JLM to continue to provide a steer.

My values are further reflected in other work I am involved in. I am a member of Labour Friends of the Forces, the political Armed Forces Champion for Waltham Forest and a voluntary Trustee of the Combined Military Services Museum in Essex. Equalities, community and volunteering is a key part of who I am. I am a Scout Leader, a school governor twice, a volunteer Care Worker during the pandemic and a volunteer at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham this year.

I am a Future Candidate, on the Cooperative Party Parliamentary Panel, proud recipient of MotherRED funding, Cohort 11 of FWN mentoring programme, member of Unison and Community Union and an active Fabian member. I have worked for the University of London, 2 think-tanks, the GLA and the Judicial Appointments Commission.

Why Northfield? Three generations of my family lived in Birmingham and my son lives there now.