**Jewish Greens questions for Deputy Leaders**

**Thomas Daw**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

The greens need to take this head on. We need to make clear and sensible immigration policy that will put trust into the electorate. We need to push against the Reform lies and the media agenda that this is a crisis, we need show in policy how this can help shape Britain's future and improve economic growth.

The biggest, most critical action needing to be taken (if we were elected incharge) is to fix the system and get people sorted, so they can finally start their lives and help contribute to this country. It is shocking how governments have delayed sorting to create a crisis for political gain. These are people's lives.

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

I believe faith has a place to play in advising governments on laws and regulations. Society has been built on the fundamental dos and don'ts from many religions over the many years. This I'm sure will continue to progress however I do believe there can be a point where religion interference with politics goes to far. Normally at a point where we see human rights and freedom's begin to be pulled back.

Within our party I am pleased by how diverse our membership is. Something that does worry me is the rise in "tokenism" and how this can actually have a negative effect on diversity. Firstly people should be judged on their personal qualities but secondly everyone represents and practices religion differently.

I think there is definitely a place for religion in politics but it shouldn't be a defining part.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

• in society?

I believe this needs to be taken in 2. Individual and organised. All anti semitism should be taken with zero tolerance and dealt with immediately.

Individual needs to be dealt with a quick response but also an area for conversation to allow those to learn and change. If people are not willing to engage in conversation to better themselves then it needs to move on to something more serious with either mandatory training courses or possible prosecution.

For organised and socialist anti semitism, it needs a much bigger joined up approach. It needs to be killed from it's roots to ensure the safety of all. Currently we fail to deal with it because we ignore the signs untill it's too late.

We will never solve the inequality crisis untill we have a change of power in this country. The oppression of the people keep the rich and elite above us all

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues?**

It's very difficult to be impartial on the situation that is currently ongoing but it is critical everyone gets the opportunity to talk on the topic and representative of the side they support. Independent and non partial chairing is critical.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

I think it's important to try and persuade more Jewish people to become active within the party to boost representation in the policy and running of the party

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

Well as a vegetarian I will struggle to support any type of slaughter however I do understand the need to protect certain religious practices.

**Chas Warlow**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

The Party is tackling those narratives in its public stances and statements. We need to be very clear that we understand why these narratives have arisen and why they are being promoted. There have been decades of under-investment in the more deprived regions in our country and people have felt left behind. They've not been listened to by the mainstream parties and have turned to reactionary parties for answers. The Green Party has the positive answers to those problems and our task is to promote those answers and gain the trust (and votes) of those communities, while at the same time standing in solidarity with refugees and migrants.

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

I think faith is a personal matter and any attempt to use it in order to gain political advantage undermines the credibility of a party's political positions and policies. We live in a secular democracy that guarantees everyone's rights, regardless of their religion, and legislates against discrimination on that basis.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

• in society?

There is no place for antisemitism in any part of society. The problem continues to be the actions of the Israeli government in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which leads to the conflation of Judaism and

the Israeli government.

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues?**

I'm listening to a range of voices: I know Jewish and Israeli people and hear their concerns. I also hear the very strident voices calling for action by the UK government to end the war in Gaza. As Deputy Leader, I would hold a space for reasonable debate and hope to maintain a balanced view. We do need to push for a peaceful solution to this conflict and for a democratic and free Palestinian state that can live in peaceful co-existence with the state of Israel.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

I don't have a lot of connections within Jewish communities, so I would need to make those connections and talk to them about their concerns.

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

I don't know enough about these practices to know how best to protect them. I'd need to discuss the issue with Jewish people and Muslim people.

**Alex Mace**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

We have to speak in plain language about the real solutions to the problems that are blamed, falsely on migrants. I have done this locally in Worcester, where a Reform councillor raised that a couple in his ward couldn’t get housing due to the Home Office housing asylum seekers in properties in his ward. The truth here is that we are due to spend £70 billion in the next five years paying housing benefit to private landlords accommodate housing benefit recipients in private rentals, while only spending £11 billion on building new social housing. We would better off in the long term building social housing with those billions, which could solve the housing crisis and offer young people options when they are old enough to live on their own. We have to be brave and do the work to solve these problems.

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

I am not religious myself, but I generally agree with Tony Benn that religious teachings can provide a sensible guide to how we act in politics. Story telling is a important part of explaining policies, and there are many religious parables and examples that are useful stories, e.g. Jesus saying that it easier to get a camel through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to get into heaven. That said faith and religion can be easily misused to oppress others and excuse persecution and discrimination.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

• in society?

To call it out wherever I see it. I found David Baddiel’s exploration of anti-semitism in “Jews Don’t Count” to be really eye opening about the prejudice Jewish people experience in every day life to be really eye opening, and how it anti-semitism pervades in ways I had not even considered before. In Worcester we passed a motion in 2020 adopting the IHRA definition of anti-semitism, but I am not naive to think that

has “fixed” the issue locally.

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues**?

I was born in 1982, and lived through the latter parts of The Troubles in Northern Ireland, and have distinct memories of the Manchester bombing, the Omagh bombing, and the regular reporting on the news of terrorist attacks. I also lived through the peace process and saw that there had to be acceptance of wrongdoing on both sides, but also that the occupying force has to concede the most. Peace is a fragile things and the debate continues today over things like the prosecution of British soliders for their actions in Northern Ireland. It is a matter of fact that the Israeli Government is an occupying force in both Gaza and the West Bank, enacting collective punishment and genocide on the Palestinians. I don’t personally feel that peace is achievable in Israel/Palestine until that is accepted by all sides. We need to keep condemning Hamas, their holding of hostages, their policy that Israel should be destroyed, their attacks on October 7th, before and afterwards - as we did in Worcester in our November 2023 motion that called for an immediate ceasefire. We must also condemn the ongoing actions of the Israeli Government, especially as a number of members of the Government expressed intent that supports accusations of genocide in Gaza. The Israeli Government, as a recognised sovereign state has access to far more resources to raise voices that support their position. I would work to ensure other voices are heard that don’t have the same resources as a Government, whether that be citizens of Israel who don’t agree with the Government’s position, Palestinian voices or others.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

Direct asks are the most effective way of engaging communities and getting them to vote Green, so I would be looking to repeat with Jewish communities what I have said with all communities that are under represented in the Green Party - reach out and ask what we can do to help, ask leaders in those communities to stand for the Green Party, and if they won’t stand, what their barriers are to standing, and then working to break down those barriers. It is important to me that we are a part of every community that makes up Britain and we reflect those communities back.

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

I have been asked about this before, by a Jewish resident who was upset that The Green Party didn’t have a policy to ban halal slaughter. My answer then is the same as it is now: I don’t think it is useful to single out particular religious practices when it comes to slaughter. However, meat production is very environmental intense, using great amounts of water and produce to grow animals. So we do need to reduce meat consumption for environmental reasons, which would reduce the amount of halal and kosher slaughter as a by product. We are a long way from the point where the most important issue to prevent climate change is interfering with religious practices.

**Ash Routh**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

We need to actively demonstrate that the far right are using vulnerable communities and minorities as scapegoats for broader social problems that are largely cause by income inequality and government- enforced austerity.

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

My faith guides my politics, as I think is true of many other politicians and activists, and I think it's right for faith groups to be able to meet, discuss and organise within a political sphere - while the spaces in which ideas are ultimately debated and voted on (from workshops and conferences to the Common and the Lords) shnould be secular spaces, where everybody is equal, and every voice carries the same weight.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

• in society?

I think one of the most effective counters to any attempt to marginalise a community is solidairty. Faith groups and community groups standing shoulder to shoulder with Jewish people and demonstrating that they do not stand alone is, I believe, the most effective way to counter the isolation and hate that antisemitism drives

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues?**

Calling out the genocide in Gaza is a job for all communities, and as a party we should create a platform for all of those voices to be heard. Solidarity is essential, and as a party we shouldn't leave the burden of raising awareness on the shoulders of Jewish people nor Palestinians.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

We need to prioritise uplifting leading voices in Jewish communities, especially as prospective elected representatives. As Deputy Leader, I have committed to prioritising my campaigning time to champion candidates from communities that the party needs to do better in representing.

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

I won't do anything to protect the slaughter of animals for food generally, but I recognise and will actively challenge far-right and racist narratives that target Halal and Kosher slaughter specifically, which I believe is not at all motivated by animal welfare, but rather uses animal welfare as an excuse for bigotry by proxy.

**Rachel Millward**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

The scapegoating of migrants for the cost of living and housing crises is abhorrent and a distraction from the real problem of inequality. The best way we can tackle reform is by radically boosting our own profile and getting our message of truth and hope out further than ever before.

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

I have a faith background myself and studied Theology at Oxford University, and have also worked with diverse faith communities as part of community arts projects in Hackney. I have a deep respect for faith and understand that it is deeply linked with social justice, a motivator to help improve the lives of others, to speak out for those less fortunate, and to take care of the most vulnerable in our society. Many liberation movements have strong faith-based threads which power and resource them, and that is a wonderful part of the human experience. Of course, faith can also fuel oppression. I studied in South Africa and you can’t fail to be struck by the contradiction that one part of the Christian church established apartheid, whilst another led the struggle to end it. So, like so many aspects of humanity, there can be deep contradictions and conflicting interpretations and actions. But religion is here to stay across the world, it is a deep deep yearning of humans to interpret our experience and acknowledge that there are bigger stories at play. And as I’ve already said - for most, it is a major motivator in the path towards working for justice and to improve society for the good of all.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

Obviously we cannot tolerate anti-semitism. I would like to discuss this directly with Jewish Greens and understand experiences and issues, before suggesting a best approach of the party. I’m sure much work is already going on, so would need to understand the landscape before deciding how best I support the Jewish Green community and ensure anti-semitism is absolutely never tolerated throughout the party.

Likewise islamophobia or any other hate narrative.

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues?**

If we learned one thing from the experiences of the 20th century, it is that is vital we speak out against genocide wherever we see it. The Jewish people have a deeper understanding of this than almost any other group, and thus can lead us in speaking out. Ensuring that support for the people of Palestine is understood as standing up for human rights, and not in any way standing against Jewish people, is vital. Thus it is important that our spokespeople include Jewish, gentile and Muslim voices.

As an aside: I visited Israel years ago as a guest judge for a women’s film festival in Tel Aviv. I thought a lot about the visit, spoke to political active Israeli friends, and decided to go in order to learn, listen, and take the chance to visit Ramallah and connect with Palestinian women filmmakers whilst there. It was an incredible experience and chance to connect with radical progressive activists, both Israeli and Palestinian. The complexity is real - but in some ways the simplicity too. Oppression is never justified, of any people. These communities have all suffered the horrors of oppression and the worst of human behaviours. May there be peace.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

As with any other community group, it is important to understand more about what the community is looking for, what communication channels they use, and find the strongest touch points for communicating our message of inclusive hope. Having Jewish spokespeople will help enormously, but also just demonstrating depth of understanding and respect and building deep alliances with community activists.

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

I would really like to talk more about this - it’s not something I have experience of or have thought about deeply to this point. I am very used to living somewhere where many families only eat halal (ex Finsbury Park, Islington) , and often thought about the complexities of honouring that in e.g. school diets, whilst also pushing for better animal welfare and more plant based eating. But I would want to sit down and have a good chat about these issues.

**Ani Townsend**

**How do you see the Green Party tackling the far-right and anti-migrant narratives?**

The far-right and fascism exploit deprivation, poverty and insecurity. Our policies have the solutions to these problems and more, and solve them with equity and empathy. We need to be unashamed of our policies, acknowledge the root causes of fear without validating the scapegoating already marginalised communities, and loudly, continually and consistently communicating these solutions into wider awareness

**What role do you see for faith in politics?**

I was raised in a faith, but I don't have one now. I understand that our faith or lack of faith informs who we are and our values, and in the Greens we have the shared values and aim of addressing the climate & social emergency with empathy & equity.

**What is your approach to combatting antisemitism:**

• in the party?

• in society?

Within the party it is about increasing understanding and awareness of the ranges of lived experiences of our members and how they intersect, and also differ. That's why I brought to conference the motion 'A toolkit Kit for healing divisions" to enable the party to have the skills and tools to do so. The work to develop this toolkit is on going, and I hope the working group will be updating the party a conference.

In Society, not dissimilar work is required but it's harder to implement. As spokespeople and politicians, it's important for us to call out antisemitism every time we see it.

**How will you ensure a range of voices are heard on Israel/Palestine issues?**

Listening first and foremost with empathy to colleagues with the lived experiences of the impact of global conflict must always be our approach.

**How will you reach out to Jewish communities across the UK to persuade them to vote Green?**

I have the largest Synagogue in Bristol in my ward, and I continue to work to build a relationship with the Jewish community across the city. As Deputy I would build on that work across the country

**How best will you protect religious practices such as Halal and Kosher slaughter?**

Both are protected in law, and our role is to proactively work to stop religious practices from being used to leverage division and stoke hatred.