UN2 Kirsty McMillan

Agenda item: E.1.17 Under 18s Officer (x1)

Which role are you applying for?:
Under 18s Officer



Local Party:
Richmond Green Party

Candidate Statement

I am running for election as Under 18s Officer on the Young Greens Committee because I am determined to transform our failing secondary education system, and I am committed to getting more young people into politics.

Over the last year, more and more young people have been learning about the issues facing our generation and our planet, more and more young people are realising the devastation the Conservatives have left us with, and more and more young people have been joining the Green Party.

We must continue this trend. We must engage young people: talk about politics in a way that is accessible and covers issues teenagers care about. We have to show young people that being a Green isn't a waste of their potential: that it isn't a party full of old people or a single-issue pressure group.

That is what the Under 18 Greens have started to do over the last year, under my leadership as co-chair. We have set up social media accounts on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, hosted an online event about the importance of COP26, established a mailing list and created a Slack group to communicate with our members. My fellow co-chair and I were even featured in one of Sian Berry's mayoral campaign videos!

One of the most pressing problems facing under 18s has to be our failing education system. The issues facing under 18s are fixed in the short term, but the long-term issues that plague the education system are not dealt with. For example, last year's A-Level scandal was disastrous for students, and after intense pressure, the government revoked the algorithm and the problem was fixed. However, there has been no attention on the mental health crisis in schools, or the demotivating and one-size-fits-all approach to learning. Currently, too many students feel they have no reason to attend school: we are sleep-deprived, we have poor mental health, and we are forced to chase a grade in order to prove our worth.

Education should not be a production line churning out the next generation of workers, it should be an opportunity for students to learn about the subjects they want, without those subjects being constantly devalued or deprioritised, like in the case of English and creative subjects. It should be an opportunity for young people to learn about the world they live in, through political, climate and inclusive education. These are what culminate to make well-rounded, strong-willed students who feel motivated to attend school. Changing the education system to suit young people should be front and centre of the Young Greens, and I will ensure it is so. By working with the Green Students Committee, educational think tanks, charities and other political groups, I will put this issue on the map.

Throughout my time as the Under 18s Co-chair, I have demonstrated my unwavering passion for getting young people into politics, whether that's through leafleting in elections or attending protests. Politics will only benefit young people when we speak up and demand to be heard, and if I were to become the Under 18s Officer, I would not stop until change happens.

Twitter:
@KirstyMcMillan8

Supporter 1 Name:
Josh Morris-Blake
Supporter 1 Local Party/Affiliated Group:
Brighton and Hove Green Party
Supporter 2 Name:
Fola Adedeji
Supporter 2 Local Party/Affiliated Group:
North Surrey Green Party

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