

LB4 Kelsey Trevett

Agenda item: H.1. Disability Group

Which role are you applying for?:

Young Greens Disability Group Co-Chair

Local Party:

Three Rivers Green
Party

Candidate Statement

As a blind member, I have been delighted at the attitudes I have personally encountered within the Young Greens in regards to accessibility, and ensuring that my needs are met to facilitate full participation in everything the Young Greens do. However, I strongly believe that a platform to gather and channel the views of disabled Young Greens is essential; without it, it can be difficult for individuals to have their voices heard in an efficient and meaningful way, and accessibility can unintentionally be left to slide down the list of priorities. To guarantee an inclusive movement, it is crucial that the voices of disabled Young Greens are considered at every stage, so as to make sure that campaigns, events and other actions are fully open to all.

As well as this, especially in the world in which we find ourselves during and following the Coronavirus pandemic, it is more important than ever that we, as Young Greens, are a strong voice advocating and fighting for the rights of disabled young people and students. Of course, the best way to achieve this is to listen to the views and experiences of disabled people, and to allow us to lead on the relevant campaigns. Disabled people have been disproportionately affected by the economic, social and health implications of Covid-19, and have been repeatedly forgotten by the Conservative government at every turn. A clear, loud and organised voice to fight back, and to prevent the government forgetting us, or treating us as an afterthought, has never been more needed.

I believe I have the experience, drive and ability to co-chair the Young Greens Disability group: I've chaired a Student representative Group for two years, at a college for those with varying levels of visual impairment, leading on campaigns and organising events for the wider student body. In this role, I also reached out to those organising events, campaigns and so forth in the wider community, working with them to facilitate the participation of students from the college.

Alongside this, I have been active in campaigns fighting for the rights of disabled students to an equal and accessible education at all levels -- something which I think is particularly relevant to this role. Both the attitudes of educational establishments and of individuals, and increasingly the effects of government spending cuts, have led to disabled students facing barriers to education, leading to higher drop-out rates for disabled students in higher education, and an often long and stressful legal fight for an inclusive secondary and further education.

Finally, within the green Party, i have worked to raise awareness about accessible content, especially during exercises of internal democracy, to ensure that disabled people with accessibility needs online are not excluded from casting a ballot on the same footing as other members. This has enabled me to establish positive working relations with a variety of Green Party members, GPEX and Leadership candidates, and with the current Young Greens EC. This final project is very much on-going,.

I also believe that it is really important to state, front and centre, that I don't know everything. The term disability covers such a vast array of conditions, needs, and most importantly individuals. I will never claim to have knowledge or experience of all aspects: listening, and gathering as broad a variety of views and experiences as possible, is absolutely essential in successfully carrying out the work of the Disability Group. As co-chair, I will ensure that this is the ethos on which we base all of our work.

Finally, I believe that the fight for climate and social justice should always be intersectional. As well as creating and maintaining positive working relations with the Young Greens EC, and with the Green Party Disability group, I believe we should look to other liberation groups at all times, both to progress in our collective aims of social justice, but also to support in facilitating accessible campaigns, events and actions across the board. If elected, I will make sure that working relations and regular contact is maintained between the Young Greens Disability group, and the other Young Greens liberation groups.

Twitter:

www.twitter.com/CouldBeKel

Do you self-identify as belonging to this Liberation Group? (Yes/No/Unsure):

Yes