

LCER Executive Elections 2023: Candidate statements (page 1 of 4)

There were 19 candidates for 14 positions on the Executive. Of these, five nominations were for women candidates. LCER's Constitution specifies a quota of five women, and all the woman candidates were therefore automatically elected. The election statements for these candidates may be found on the last page of this document.

You are therefore asked to consider 14 candidates for the remaining 9 places on the Executive. The order of candidates is randomized on the ballot papers, in order to avoid the "Aardvark" effect. Candidates are ordered by last name on this list of statements.

Deadline for submission of completed ballots: 11.59pm on 23 February 2023.

William Bain

(Glasgow Maryhill & Springburn CLP)

Nominated by Richard McCready, Stephen Curran



LCER secured an amazing result at the Labour Party Conference last autumn - delegates supported a motion committing the Party to replace first past the post for Westminster elections with fair votes. We need an active, campaigning Executive Committee working alongside LCER members over the next 2 years to seek to turn that motion into a Labour commitment to introduce proportional representation for the House of Commons. As a former Scottish Labour MP, Fabian, Co-operator, member of Unite, Labour Movement for Europe and past LCER chair, I know it's crucial to win over hearts and minds on this issue among MPs, trades unions and other affiliates, and among party members. We need to show how with a PR system we can make electoral gains as we did in local government elections in Scotland, particularly Glasgow and Lanarkshire last May. I ask for your support for election to the Executive so that we can further build our movement, and consign first past the post at Westminster to history.

John Doolan

(Hertsmere CLP)

Nominated by Billy Hayes, Nic Hesper



It has been an honour to be the Parliamentary and Political Officer for LCER for the last two years. During that time I have worked hard to further our campaign to have the Labour Party embrace PR. I have contacted all our MPs, been a very active part of our Speaker Programme around the country, worked hand in glove with the Labour for a New Democracy Campaign to work on strategy, and do whatever is needed to make our Labour Conference as successful as possible as a key member of the Conference Team. And we have achieved great success together over this year, with a historic positive vote for PR on the Conference floor. All of us have put in a lot of effort to achieve that, but there is so much more work to do. If re-elected to the Executive I will work as hard as possible to make the next phase of our campaign successful. I am also proud that our campaign has been truly non-factional and will continue to ensure that remains the case in order to maximise our success.

Benjamin Eckford

(Newcastle upon Tyne North CLP)

Nominated by Reed James, Mary Southcott



I served on the exec for several years and would love to be back on. I played my fair part in the success we built from the ground up from 2015 to 2021, speaking to countless CLPs, leafletting events, helping to organise behind the scenes and run our conference operations.

I want to see the North East represented on the exec and will push for LCER to hold Starmer's feet to the fire to honour the conference decision.

Duncan Enright

(Witney CLP)

Nominated by Sandy Martin, Ken Ritchie



Please support me to remain on the executive. At this crucial time it is vital that we continue to press for PR and put it on Labour's manifesto "to-do list".

I have recently been elected by members to serve on the National Policy Forum so am well placed to argue for it. I am also in favour of PR in local government, as a County and District Councillor and Cabinet Member in Oxfordshire.

Our current system leads to unstable alliances and poor long-term strategy. Enough of sticking-plaster politics, and on with devolution, reform and strong purpose in a socialist Britain!

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Rick Gaehl

(Totnes CLP)

Nominated by Helen Nash, Aileen McLoughlin



Following a career in education, I joined the Labour Party in 2015. Since then, I've spent over five years as a CLP Secretary and also served on Devon Campaign Forum. I've attended and campaigned at every national and regional party conference since 2017, and am part of a core band of South West LCER activists. I'm well-connected in regional Labour circles, have been an LCER speaker at numerous CLPs, and also have strong links with MVM. My PR campaigning motto has been: 'if you can't punch above your weight, it's not worth getting in the ring'.

The South West is one of the most active LCER areas: we run regular events and lobby vigorously with CLPs and trades unions. I recently helped to organise a new regional group in the South East, and, ideally, I'd like every region and nation to be as active and successful as the SW. Electoral reform becomes a more pressing need with every passing day, and the next year or two will be critical in shaping the long term political future of the UK.

Billy Hayes

(Mitcham & Morden CLP)

Nominated by Mary Southcott, John Doolan



September 26, 2022: the day Labour ditched support for First Past the Post. PR for the House of Commons is now the agreed policy of our party. Being part of the team that helped deliver that vote was a great privilege. LCER has driven the need for change; the creation of the L4ND coalition that reached out across the Labour Party and beyond helped create and reflect the mood for PR.

A Labour Party member for 45 years, I have served as vice chair of the National Policy Forum and am a member of the Conference Arrangements Committee. I served for many years as an officer of the Communication Workers Union and later as its General Secretary.

I want to continue serving on LCER's Executive. We need a Labour government that will deliver PR.

Reed James

(Labour International CLP)

Nominated by Edward Kimberley, Lynne Armstrong



For the past six months, I have been LCER's Youth Officer and during that time I have led LCER Youth in order to amplify the young voices within LCER's internal structures and campaigns which has grown to over a dozen active members and done numerous successful campaigns. From hosting youth panels to speaking at University Labour Clubs. We have also focused on getting more young people to stand for election to LCER's exec to increase youth representation.

If I win re-election I plan to continue growing LCER Youths membership, specifically trying to get more women to stand for election. • Expanding LCER Youth's outreach by creating LCER Instagram and Tiktok accounts. • Running more youth-focused LCER events • Getting more young LCER speakers to speak at Young Labour groups about PR. Thanks for reading and if you have any questions feel free to contact me at reedjamescsg@gmail.com and please consider voting for me and any other young candidates to help increase youth representation!

Pablo John

(Streatham CLP)

Nominated by Alex Sobel MP, Billy Hayes



People like me don't usually run for a company board. I am a 22 year old disabled man and carer. I want to be a Exec Member to represent young people, overwhelming disadvantaged by First Past the Post. As someone who was until recently living in Tunbridge Wells I saw first hand my vote does not matter. Over 200,000 people voted Labour in Kent to receive a single MP, the nearest MP from a party I actually voted for is 30 miles away! I bring a great deal of experience in Electoral Reform, I currently serve as a Board Member for the Electoral Reform Society providing governance on ERS supported campaigns such as Labour for a New Democracy. Previous to my time at the Electoral Reform Society I also worked for Alex Sobel MP, the Chair of the APPG on Electoral Reform. I have also volunteered on L4ND conference motion campaigns, including being one of the proposers of a motion that changed Momentum's position to be pro-electoral reform.

Martin Linton

(Battersea CLP)

Nominated by Lynne Armstrong, Stuart Hill



I wrote 'Labour's Road to Electoral Reform' (1992) and 'Making Votes Count' (1998) together with Mary Southcott. I was Labour MP for Battersea from 1997 to 2010. Since leaving Parliament I have been on the board of Make Votes Count and served as chair from 2015 to 2019. I am on the L4ND Steering Group as a representative of Make Votes Count. I have been involved in LCER since sometime in the 1980s.

I was at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool last year to see the historic vote for electoral reform and I am keen to get more closely involved in LCER as we come to a period when vital decisions will have to be taken on the manifesto and our strategy during the run-up to the election. I know there are many good campaigners in LCER and L4ND who are doing a good job. I hope I will be able to make a small contribution.

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Sandy Martin

(Ipswich CLP)

Nominated by Pablo John, Joseph O'Toole



As Chair of LCER Executive I am immensely proud of the massive strides LCER has made since 2019, doubling membership, helping create and taking a leading role in the Labour for a New Democracy campaign, winning the support of CLPs and Unions, and passing our PR motion at Labour Conference 2022. LCER exists to engage with the Labour Party and we will remain a critical friend, doing our bit to secure a Labour Government that will transform the politics of the UK. We now have a vibrant Youth group and new regional groups, and are exploring new ways of engaging with our members. We have a crucial two years ahead of us, leading up to and into a new Labour Government. Together we will ensure that our Party respects the views of its members and incorporates PR into our country's much-needed democratic renewal. I hope you will want to re-elect myself as Chair, and our hard-working and effective Secretary, Political Officer, Treasurer and Youth Officer.

Joseph O'Toole

(Bath CLP)

Nominated by Sandy Martin, Abbie Jones



Hello! I'm Joseph, a student and activist from Rugby, living in Bath. I'm a member of Labour and LCER. I'm proud to have volunteered with Labour for a New Democracy since launch in 2020. I've spoken on behalf of the campaign at 15+ CLP meetings and supported efforts at both Conferences. I'm part of the new LCER Youth group, led by Reed James, aiming to diversify this campaign and argue for equal votes as key to the progressive future that our generation wants and deserves.

We're entering a new phase - our collective work has brought PR from a fringe issue to a cross-factional, Conference-backed consensus. But even as they borrow our rhetoric on redistributing power, the Leader's office still isn't on board. I believe that our responsibility is to boldly resist efforts to sidestep the unified will of the Party. Together, we can commit Labour to real democracy and build a collaborative, progressive, voter-led future. Please contact me with any questions, and consider ranking me #1.

George Peretz

(Hackney South & Shoreditch CLP)

Nominated by David Ward, Rick Gaehl



I am a barrister working in public law and member of the Exec of the Society of Labour Lawyers, and write and speak and tweet ([@GeorgePeretzKC](https://twitter.com/GeorgePeretzKC)) on constitutional issues (including pieces on Labour List). I put forward the L4ND PR motion and argued it through my CLP, have spoken on PR to ward and student meetings, and helped the successful campaign at the 2022 conference.

LCER needs to make the case that bringing in PR at all levels of government must be at the heart of Labour's programme of fundamental reform of our dysfunctional political and economic model; I would love the chance to contribute to that.

Ken Ritchie

(Perth & Kinross CLP)

Nominated by Maria Iacovou, Duncan Enright



As LCER's Treasurer for the past 3 years, I have overseen the financial arrangements (payroll, taxes, pensions etc) enabling LCER to host the Labour for a New Democracy campaign and staff. I now need your vote so that I can continue this work. Our superb team and members have brought us closer than ever to electoral reform. Our focus must now be on the final push we need to ensure the next Labour government acts on our successful 2022 conference motion. We need a reform that gives us PR but which also makes MPs accountable and puts power in the hands of voters.

After a career in international development and human rights, I was CEO of the Electoral Reform Society for 13 years and am a frequent speaker and writer on democratic reform and voting systems. Wanting a society free of rank and hereditary privilege, I was a founder of Labour for a Republic and am presently its Secretary. I've served as a councillor, as a parliamentary candidate (3 times), and as CLP chair for many years.

Matthew Simpson

(Burton CLP)

Nominated by Reed James, Abbie Jones



My name is Matthew Simpson, a 20-year-old student at the University of Leicester. I am running as a candidate for the LCER Executive Committee because I am confident that I will be a strong representative for young people and our enthusiasm for an equal voice for all in Parliament. As the Leicester University Labour Society's Secretary, I have effectively communicated with Labour supporters across the country as well as with local and senior figures in the Labour Party.

As a member of LCER Youth, I have contributed to meetings, including those that have discussed changes to LCER policy as well as new ways to promote LCER digitally. As a member of the Executive Committee, I pledge to increase LCER's social media presence so we can reach out to a wider audience, especially young people. I shall also be committed to continued campaigning efforts to make Proportional Representation a policy for the upcoming Labour Government. VOTE MATTHEW SIMPSON FOR THE LCER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE!

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The candidates whose statements appear below have been automatically elected under the women's quota in LCER's Constitution.

Nic Hesper

(Chelmsford CLP)

Nominated by Maria Iacovou, Amanda Webb



As the secretary of my local CLP and living in a safe Tory seat, I see the real impact of FPTP. Political apathy is the side effect of feeling that your vote doesn't matter. The country is crying out for change. As a delegate at the last Labour Party conference, I felt the elation in the hall at Liverpool when the motion on PR was passed. This was a historic moment, but it isn't the end of the conversation. Only now does the real work begin. The Labour Party needs to commit to putting proportional representation on the next election manifesto. I want to play a key part in ensuring this. I joined the Labour Party because I believe in a fairer society, and I believe that PR is the best way to achieve it. FPTP is a relic of a bygone era where we are divided into 'us' and 'them' and the electoral system is in desperate need of modernisation. I would be honoured if you voted for me to be part of ensuring this historic change.

Maria Iacovou

(Harwich & North Essex CLP)

Nominated by Duncan Enright, Ken Ritchie



Since being elected to the Executive four years ago I have been involved in all aspects of LCER's work, serving as Membership Secretary and Secretary. I have spoken on voting reform at many branches and CLPs, and as a panellist and chair at large meetings and rallies. I've trained activists to speak on PR and worked with L4ND towards our momentous result at Conference last year.

We're now campaigning to ensure that Labour's next manifesto includes a commitment to PR. Looking ahead, we need to grow our movement, consolidating support for PR across the Labour party and trade unions, and reaching outwards throughout the wider public. And we need to work with the PLP and the party leadership, preparing for an eventual vote in Parliament. Labour is committed to a raft of democratic reforms, but in order for any of them to be truly effective, we need [PR for the House of Commons](#). We're winning the argument - let's finish the job.

Abbie Jones

(Bury South CLP)

Nominated by John Doolan, Joseph O'Toole



I believe that the only way we can effectively tackle the UK's biggest problems – from the climate crisis to social inequality – is to change the way we “do” politics in the first place. Electoral reform is a long-term solution that goes straight to the source of so many issues.

By day I'm a statistician, but in last year I've spent almost as much time organising the Make Votes Matter Greater Manchester branch, aiding the grassroots #Labour4PR campaign all the way to its conference win, and trying to convince my fellow young folk that one day, for the first time in our lives, we'll experience a government we actually voted for.

Aileen McLoughlin

(Bristol South CLP)

Nominated by Stuart Hill, Geoff Gibbons



Electoral Reform is a prerequisite for robust sustainable change. Without Labour it will not happen. I was involved in the LCER-SW work building CLP support for PR. The overwhelming constituency vote at Labour Conference21 was a credit to activists and L4ND. I was part of the teamwork that led to policy change in UNISON. I moved the successful motion at UNISON Conference. Both were pivotal in the ground-breaking decision at Labour Conf22. What an achievement but we cannot afford to lose focus. We must continue to raise awareness and win arguments in the party through the National Policy Forum and in the trade unions to maintain a high profile. We need to break through the barriers to a Labour leadership manifesto commitment. I have held roles in Labour and UNISON: Bristol Council Candidate May21, CLP Secretary to Nov22, UNISON national roles in Health & Labour Link where I have promoted PR. I can bring Labour and union experience. I can bring passion, determination and belief.

Mary Southcott

(Bristol West CLP)

Nominated by Aileen McLoughlin, Benjamin Eckford



26 October 2022 ought to go down in history. What I remember about that day was the talking with Unite, John McDonald and media people who told me it won't make any difference. I hope that makes you as angry as it made me. Keir Starmer thinks PR is a no brainer. Timing and Tory tabloids make him hesitate, and too much concentration on Scotland and Red Wall seats where PR isn't necessarily a vote winner for Labour. But it is in Tory-Labour marginal further south which we cannot win without an offer to the tactical voters in other parties. Liverpool 22 was a reunion and making new friends. I went back to the book Martin Linton and I wrote in 1998. Our arguments then are just as strong today: We want to rid our democracy of distortion, disillusion, tacticalisation, polarisation, demoralisation, domination, dichotomy which spring from our voting system. We need to make votes count: maths but the culmination of the Chartists' and Suffragettes' work to give us all agency.