

*Question 1: How do you intend to support the role of liberation groups such as Jewish Greens within the Party?*

Liberation groups play an important role in building party solidarity around external campaigns and in providing a locus for members to develop policy in particular areas of interest. I do, however, think we are suffering from divisiveness in the party which these liberation groups could help to overcome. Take the slogan, “nothing about us without us”. Of course, I agree with the principle and spirit of it, but with the caution that there can be a tendency to assume that genuine consultation has included all the relevant people when in fact it hasn’t, because more people are affected than were originally assumed. Moreover, delegating initiative to interests groups can carry with it a risk of excluding others who are equally affected. For example, proposals for GRA reform arguably affect everyone equally and so assuming only one group should have authority in the matter would be a mistake. The “about us” and “without us” is not always obvious. Another example is that a bad definition of antisemitism could disproportionately affect Palestinians, or their allies, as well as Jews – precisely because it would be counterproductive on its own terms and not help to tackle genuine antisemitism by conflating legitimate political criticism. The Campaign Against Antisemitism, which promotes adoption of the highly problematic IHRA, has been caught out for peddling Islamophobic stereotypes and so we must look out for all communities and call out any racist stereotyping, equally.

*Question 2: What is your strategy for tackling antisemitism within the party? What do you see the leadership’s role in this as?*

I oppose all racism, including anti-Jewish racism, which is sadly on the rise. I regard our party as a safe and tolerant space for members of all religions or none, but this is not something we can be complacent about. We must ensure that members treat one another with respect and that they feel safe and supported in reporting any incidences of antisemitism. We can improve trust in our processes, and where necessary this includes the use of disciplinary ones, by adopting good definitions, such as the Jerusalem Declaration of Antisemitism instead of the IHRA. The JDA supports a robust interpretation of how to identify antisemitism, especially within the context of free speech on Israel and Palestine, following a critique of the IHRA. I have a motion to conference to do just this, which I know another candidate pair now supports, too. I also support training on all forms of anti-discrimination awareness and think it is important that these both be delivered by properly licensed and vetted organisations and that we fulfil our duties under the Equality Act by being proactive on all forms of discrimination. As one among equals on GPEX, I would be part of the deliberation and decision-making on how best to achieve this. I would like us to introduce and prioritise training on active bystander techniques against bullying in the party. Standing by and witnessing should not be an option, especially among our leadership figures.

*Question 3: What should the Green Party’s role be in tackling new far-right and conspiracist movements, which have strong antisemitic elements, particularly on social media?*

One of the great strengths of the Green Party is our commitment to the principle of assessing information based on evidence. Conspiracy theories appeal to those who are trying to make sense of an increasingly complex world; many of these theories are indeed antisemitic. We need to make it clear that there is absolutely no place for such false and destructive theories in our party. We must concentrate on promoting evidence-based factual information to counter such falsehoods, while encouraging critical thinking so that people can more accurately assess the tremendous amount of information with which we are faced every day.

*Question 4: As leader how would you promote outreach to faith communities such as the Jewish community?*

I agree that outreach to religious communities is important. I have been taking part in the commemoration activities of Holocaust Memorial Day every year for many years. Here's a recent example just pre-lockdown:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShahrarAliGreenParty/posts/1157593461078817> I am delighted that this year's Rosh Hashanah can be properly celebrated this week, with the lifting of the Covid restrictions. And of course, in addition to the three main religions of this country, I am also keen to reach out to people of other traditions: Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and others. We need to celebrate the common values of our wonderful range of traditions in the UK, while respecting differing expressions and contributions to society.

*Question 5: What do you believe the Green Party's stance should be on ritual slaughter practices such as Kosher and Halal meat?*

We should promote dialogue with religious communities around humane slaughter methods, many of whom are already engaged in this matter. The Green Party is rightly committed to promoting animal welfare and where there is a conflict between that and religious tradition, we must not be afraid to face that conflict and look for a positive way forward. I am aware that the proponents of ritual slaughter methods claim that these methods are humane, but more research must be done in this area. I also have a good relationship with East London Mosque and have been impressed with their commitment to reducing meat consumption in its own right as part of responsible environment action. With a diploma in Theology and sometime teacher of classes in philosophy of religion and animal ethics, I am confident in being able to address audiences or journalists on these matters with minimal preparation. I hope I'd be well-placed to avoid the kind of cross-fire which Jonathan got into over his incautious, nay offensive, remarks about halal meat. Despite his apology those comments did stick with many in the Muslim community, one we would do well to better reach out towards.

*Question 6: With a year on year rise in reported antisemitic hate crime since 2015 (excluding data collected during the pandemic), what steps should the Green Party be pushing for to reduce this?*

The Green Party must send an unmistakable message utterly condemning antisemitic hate crimes. Just one aspect of this is clamping down on racially motivated hate-speech in the context of international politics. By setting out our own policy regarding antisemitism within the Party, based on a clear definition of antisemitism that permits the justified critique of the actions of the Israeli government (instead of a conflation of the two), we will demonstrate a clear model and protect others in our party from vexatious allegations.

*Question 7: Jews and GRT [Gypsy, Roma, traveller] communities share common histories of racial violence and discrimination. What would you do as leader to help tackle discrimination against GRT communities?*

Racial violence and discrimination against the Roma and wider travelling community is a big issue. I am extremely concerned about the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts bill currently making its way through Parliament. Not only does this bill have grave implications with regard to our right to

protest, it also has potentially very negative implications for travellers. One of my first acts, if elected leader, will be to speak out strongly against this bill, pointing out the implications and the hardships it would inevitably lead to if passed. I have already begun the work of speaking out against these abuses of state power in my role as spokesperson for Policing and Domestic Safety.

*Pledge 1: Would you support the Guidance on Antisemitism being included in the Framework for Ethics and Conduct?*

No [with more about context of better alternative above].

*Pledge 2: Would you commit to the principle of “nothing about us, without us” when talking publicly about issues relating to liberation groups?*

Yes [with more about context of saying yes above].

*Pledge 3: Would you attend antisemitism training and support its role out across the party?*

Yes [with more about conditions for saying yes above].