



Nothing about us, without us

© Disability Labour 2019

**The Ultimate
Disabled
Activist's Guide
to the
Labour Party
and the
Equality Act 2010**

www.disabilitylabour.org.uk

© 2019 Disability Labour

INDEX

Introduction	1
Disability Labour - a brief history	2
The Democracy Review	5
Ableism and the Labour Party	6
Labour Party Terminology	9
The Equality Act 2010 & the Labour Party	13
Labour Party Structures	23
Labour Party Codes of Conduct	25
Labour and the Social Model of Disability	28
Becoming an Activist	29
Differently Paced Canvassing - a Guide for CLPs	30
Making Campaigning More Accessible - a Guide for CLPs	32
Meetings at Inaccessible Buildings	44

Introduction

This Activist Guide has been written by members of Disability Labour (DL), a socialist society affiliated to the Labour Party. DL exists to help represent disabled Labour Party (LP) members as currently there isn't a section for representation within the party. DL provides a space for disabled members to come together and discuss the barriers to being Labour Party activists and living independent lives. We also campaign inside and outside of the Labour Party for disability equality.

The contributors to this handbook have widely ranging experiences within the party. Some have been candidates; some have run campaigns, and some are or have been local councillors and others have been involved in running local CLPs. The major thing we found to be common across this experience there isn't one place to find answers to questions people have when getting started with activism within the party.

We have a website www.disabilitylabour.org.uk where you can access information about campaigns, tools and information free to download to members. We can produce this information in a variety of accessible formats as well. If the format you require isn't listed, please contact us at info@disabilitylabour.org.uk and we will get it to you if possible.

Finally, this Activist Guide is a living document and we want input from our members. If you haven't joined, please join Disability Labour at: <https://disabilitylabour.org.uk/join/>.

Our membership is free to disabled members and we welcome affiliation from carers and others interested in access and inclusion issues. All this information can be located on our website.

Sections of this guide that are in red type refer to the Equality Act 2010 and the responsibilities all levels and sections of the Labour Party have in ensuring they do not breach that act.

Good luck!

Disability Labour - a brief history

Up until 2018, DL was not a very outwardly active organisation. It didn't campaign on important issues; it didn't publish any guidance documents and the benefits to members was limited. This changed when a group of disability activists got together in January 2018 to try and force change. They wrote a 12-point plan for change and campaigned to take over the executive committee at the Annual General Meeting. During the AGM, the new group was successful in being elected to the committee. The new era of Disability Labour began.

DL felt a change of attitudes within the party in regard to access and inclusion could make a great deal of difference. The reaction to our work on Liverpool Labour Conference 2018 was promising and the feedback from disabled members was the most positive of any previous conferences. The Labour Party seems to want DL's input and we will continue to work with the party to improve access for disabled members in any way we can.

From 9th September 2018, the new executive started making changes. It's first decision was to abolish the membership fee. It was felt disabled members may not have the funds to purchase the Labour Party membership and a membership of Disability Labour. In order to fund any projects DL wanted to undertake, other funding streams would have to be established.

DL is fortunate. We have a large membership with a wide variety of skills. We are working with the Shadow Cabinet on a variety of topics including a National Independent Living Service to replace the current punitive system. In addition, we are working on holistic assessment tool for benefit claims which looks at what support someone needs to help them leave their home and enjoy activities others take for granted.

We assisted the Party to run the Women's Conference in Telford. We made some steps toward bringing Mental Health First Aid to our members by having two instructors with a third toward the end of their training. By May we had had several meetings with the events team and as of mid-August, we were well under way to fulfilling our goal of training more Mental Health First Aiders to assist members at the 2019 Party Conference in Brighton.

Since being elected, the new executive has worked tirelessly to have conversations with the Labour Party to build inclusion. To assist the Labour events team, we provided access audits, suggested possible support equipment to help with charging mobility scooters and mobile phones.

Disability Labour - a brief history

We provided accessibility audits and made recommendations about the issues faced on entering the security cordon.

DL thought the best way to address some of the issues disabled members face every day was to put together this Activist Guide. Hopefully many of the questions you have can be answered in this guide, however, if you don't find an answer here please email us on info@disabilitylabour.org.uk and we will try to help. DL wants this handbook to be a living document and a starting point for an information library

Across the UK, National, regional and local party organisations don't understand what their obligations are under the Equality Act 2010. The executive committee realised the Labour Party needed our help. which is why we have come forward to offer positive practical advice to tackle the issues which have been causing disabled members distress.

We feel the party needs the skills which we possess and most importantly our lived experience. We need to help write the policies the party will must have when we get into government. Providing our perspective will make sure the policies are fit for purpose. We can help to stop the reckless deaths due to the Conservative's punitive welfare regime.

The basis of our proactive approach was a Twelve-point plan. This is the plan and how we are fulfilling our promises to the membership so far.

Twelve Point Plan

This is what the executive signed up to once elected.

1. Free membership for all Labour Party members with a disability or informal carers of disabled members. Funding to come from affiliations and donations. **Achieved**
2. We will be a strong campaigning voice for disabled members & their carers, within the LP and externally. **Ongoing**
3. We will implement OMOV for all DL elections. Participation at DL AGMs and Conferences to be available by remote access. We will campaign for this to be implemented across the Labour Party. **Work in progress**

Disability Labour - a brief history

4. Exec meetings be monthly and to be fully accessible via Zoom for members unable to travel. Open to members to attend with time for questions and contributions. **Achieved/On-going**
5. Officers will be directly contactable and responsive to enquiries and concerns. All Officer roles will be a job-share to ensure continuity should a post holder be unable to carry their duties temporarily. **Achieved/on-going**
6. Minutes of Exec Meetings will be published promptly. Members will receive regular updates about campaigns and other important issues. Accounts will be properly audited and present in an Annual Report. **On-going**
7. We will adopt the DEAL handbook and “It’s our Party – Let us in”. We will campaign with Project 125 and other DPOs such as DPAC. **On-going**
8. We will set up working groups to develop Labour Party Policy on Disability issues and work with the Parliamentary Labour Party. **Work in progress**
9. We will set up strands to support members who are Neuro-diverse, have learning disabilities and who are unwaged carers of adults or children with disabilities. With members who are also neuro-diverse, we supported the creation of Neuro-diverse Labour. We will continue to provide support where necessary and will keep the communication going. **Outstanding**
10. We will:
 - a) liaise with CLPs to disseminate information
 - b) provide expert advice and training throughout the party on reasonable adjustments for disabled members
 - c) develop training for CLPs on disability and mental health equality.**Work in progress/on-going**
11. We will campaign for dedicated disabled members seats on Regional Boards, the National Executive Committee, National Policy Forum and all Conference Arrangements Committees. **Work in progress**
12. We will support and endorse disabled members standing for public office and LP positions. We will campaign for inclusion of disabled candidates on all short lists for local government and parliamentary elections.
Work in progress

The Democracy Review

In 2018 the Labour Party launched the democracy review. The intention of the review was as a result of the huge growth we experienced in Labour Party membership. The purpose was to figure out how to turn this huge growth into a more democratic movement.

The report following this consultation was presented to the National Executive Committee (NEC) in the autumn of 2018. The report suggested rule changes which would help the party to change and allow local parties to better reflect the diversity of the communities in which they exist. This was one of the most important aspects for disabled members. The Review included provision for a section within the party for disabled members and a separate disability conference. Unfortunately, at the time of writing this handbook, there have been several delays and we are not sure when the changes will happen now as the party is focused on a possible General Election.

The Democracy Review also increased the role of Disability Officer - DO. Disability Officers would become voting members on the CLP Executive Committee and branches could now elect a Disability Officer. It is envisioned this post will be the lead on issues affecting disabled members. The DO would keep the CLP or branch apprised of disability issues affecting people both in the Labour Party and the population at large. We have a separate Guide to being a Disability Officer, it is on the members' section of our website or email: info@disabilitylabour.org.uk for a copy.

The person spec and job description will assist any disabled member wishing to know what a DO does. In order to have a DO, CLPs may need to have a motion passed locally at their AGM to allow for this position to sit on the executive committee. Our website has sample motions which members can use to change their local standing orders.

There is already a Facebook group of DO's networking and sharing good practice and we would hope that all DO's would look to be involved in the information sharing. Following on from there, we would hope regional groups would grow and be able to help regional offices make events more inclusive. Hopefully, over the next few months we will see results in our work with the party.

Ableism and the Labour Party

One of the most prevalent and difficult aspect of disability discrimination is Ableism. In this section we will explain what Ableism is and how best to challenge ableist behaviour within the party and more widely in daily life

Ableist Language and how avoid it

Ableist language is any word or phrase that intentionally or inadvertently targets an individual with a disability.

Examples of ableist language include “crazy,” “insane,” “lame,” “dumb,” “retarded,” “cripple,” “bonkers” “idiot,” “imbecile,” “wheelchair bound,” “maniac,” “nuts,” “psycho,” “spaz.”

Ableism is discrimination against disabled people. It describes the actions and attitudes experienced by disabled people when able-bodied people treat disabled people in a discriminatory way or use inappropriate language towards them.

Being ableist or using ableist language is regarded as discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The Act lists direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation as being the different types of discrimination that disabled people (and others with protected characteristics) may experience. (Sections 13, 15, 19, 26 & 27 Equality Act 2010)

Ableism is also about attitude. Many disabled people have professional knowledge and skills. Some of this ability may have come through their professional lives, other abilities are gained from life experiences. Treating a disabled person as ‘just disabled’ without recognising or acknowledging our knowledge, skills and abilities is both demeaning and ableist. It is also contrary to the Equality Act 2010.

Ablism and ableist language are also contrary to Labour Party values. Some Labour Party guides, including the Rule Book, still use some ableist language. We will be working with the party to address this.

Ableist language is not just about political correctness, but about respect for disabled people. The phrase “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me,” which many people grew up hearing or being taught, is a totally mistaken belief.

Ableism and the Labour Party

Words are powerful and can have a huge impact on people. You only have to think about the way those from the Windrush generation have been treated. The deliberately hostile environment that the Tory government has created towards disabled people, underlined by the gutter press calling them 'scroungers', 'work shy' or 'benefit cheats', has helped to increase hate crime against disabled people by 33% in 2017-2018.

Some phrases are often used without thinking of their impact - 'the blind leading the blind', 'lunatics running the asylum', 'crippled by.....'. We can all make mistakes, but we can all learn from them. We need to stop and think about the things we say and how we say them.

Many more words, especially those related to mental health, are both offensive and unnecessary. 'Wacko', 'insane' 'bonkers' and 'madhouse' should never be part of political language.

Then there is the issue of the general language we use to describe disabled people. Yes, that's the right phraseology. Some people do prefer 'people with disabilities', but disabled people is the majority term.

The reason for saying 'disabled people' is that the Social Model of Disability regards those of us with disabilities as being disabled by the society we live in. The lack of accessible housing and transport, together with the practical difficulties disabled people face in trying to access shops, theatres and other buildings disables us. Denying us the freedoms non-disabled people enjoy.

There has been a recent trend to call non-disabled people TAB, Temporarily Able Bodied. It's an interesting way of thinking. After all, it only takes a car crash, having a serious fall or sustaining a sporting injury to turn someone's life from abled-bodied to disabled.

Language used to describe people who are neuro-diverse is still the subject of intense and often heated discussion within neurodivergent groups. What is acceptable to one person may be offensive to another.

An autistic, a person with autism, on the spectrum, aspie (meaning someone has a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome), are some of the phrases neurodivergent people use to describe themselves.

Ableism and the Labour Party

So how do we know what terminology we should use? The answer is very simple - ask the person you are talking to! We will soon tell you.

Some neurodivergent people use the phrase, neuro-typical to describe people who are not autistic. Others find the terminology insulting and it ignores those whose neurodivergent condition is less obvious. Being dyslexic, dispraxic or having dyscalculia are all neurodiverse conditions.

The most important thing all of us can do is to call-out ableism and ableist language wherever we find it – recognising that it may stem from lack of knowledge rather than the desire to cause offence. That means being vigilant and knowledgeable, to challenge offensive language and attitudes where we encounter them.

Labour Party Terminology

The Labour Party is strewn with terminology or acronyms. It seems every document needs a guide to go with it. The following are some of the terms which you will hear in your local CLP or branch:

Affiliate: A socialist society or union with established formal link such as Disability Labour or Unite.

Affiliated Supporter: A member of an affiliated trade union or socialist society who actively chooses to be an individual supporter of the Labour party.

AGM: Annual General Meeting. The yearly business meeting at which the financial accounts are presented, reports of the past year's work are given, officers are elected and standing orders are amended. This could include adding a disability officer to the executive committee.

ALC: Association of Labour Councillors, the affiliated organisation which represents Labour councillors in England, Wales and Scotland.

AMM: All member meeting. A meeting of the Constituency Labour Party which is open to all members.

AWS: All women shortlist. This is the process to increase the representation of women in the party. With AWS the intent is to ensure that 50% of Labour Councillors and MPs will be women. We want to see parity for disabled members, ie to have 20% of Councillors & MPs who are disabled.

Back Bench: An MP or councillor with no front bench responsibilities.

BAME Forum: Part of the Labour Party's equality structures, a constituency-wide body open to all members from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities.

BLP: Branch Labour Party, the local party which is based on council boundaries which are referred to as wards. All members and affiliated supporters are allocated to a branch where they live.

Cabinet: Committee of senior government ministers/shadow ministers. The main decision-making body of a council, consisting of the Leader/elected Mayor and councillors with portfolio responsibilities. Can be referred to as the front bench.

Labour Party terminology

CLP: Constituency Labour Party, which is made up of several branches and covers the area represented by an MP.

Collective Affiliation: Formal link between affiliated trade unions and the Labour Party.

Co-operative Party: The political voice of the co-operative movement. It is a separate political party which has an electoral agreement with Labour.

Delegate: Person elected to represent a Labour Party or trade union branch at other meetings, such as general committees or at a conference

EC: Executive Committee. Subgroup of the Constituency Labour Party, consisting of officers and representatives from trade unions, that oversees local party business.

EPLP: European Parliamentary Labour Party. Group of British Labour MEPs in the European Parliament.

GC: General committee or GMC General Management Committee. A meeting of the Constituency Labour Party formed by delegates from local branches and affiliate trade unions and socialist societies.

GOTV: Get out the vote. Campaigning actions to identify Labour Party supporters and encourage them to vote using canvassing and mailing and social media.

Labour Group: Grouping of all the Labour councillors in a local authority.

LCF: Local Campaign Forum – The committees that plan and organise electoral campaigns. They also shortlist potential local government candidates.

LGC: Local Government Committee. Former name of the LCF.

LIST System: Used to elect candidates in London, Welsh, Scottish and European elections, where seats are allocated in proportion to the number of votes the party receives.

Labour Party terminology

NEC: National Executive Committee, made up of elected representatives from every part of the party, MPs, Councillors, the Trade Unions, CLPs, BAME and LGBTQ members and socialist societies. Currently there is no disability representation. We hope this will change soon.

NPF: National Policy Forum - a series of committees that seek evidence from within the Party and from experts outside the Party to formulate party policy, which is then voted on at National Conference. The committees are representative of all sections of the party and of party affiliates as well as members elected regionally.

OMOV: One member one vote, the ballot system used for Labour Party elections, such as the Leader and Deputy leadership elections where all members receive one vote and all votes carry equal weight.

Panel: A list of candidates, approved by from which branches can select who they wish to stand in their ward council elections.

PLP: Parliamentary Labour Party - the group of MPs in Parliament.

Policy Commission: Subject specific body that develops detailed policy, comprising members of the NPF, NEC and Shadow Cabinet.

Policy Forum: Local or regional meeting of Labour Party members to discuss issues and feed views into the policy process.

Portfolio responsibility: A specific council service such as housing or social care, that a front bench councillor has responsibility for overseeing.

PPC: Prospective Parliamentary Candidate a candidate for MP chosen by a CLP to stand in the general election.

Quotas: Policy to ensure gender balance e.g. at least 50% of CLP delegates to Labour Party conference must be women.

Selection: The process by which Candidates are chosen by a Branch or CLP to stand as a council candidate or PPC.

Labour Party terminology

Socialist Society: Independent organisation affiliated to the Labour Party, e.g. Disability Labour, SEA – Socialist Education Society, SHA Socialist Health Association.

Standing Orders: Set of rules governing local Labour Party structures.

TULO: Trade Union Liaison Officer - a CLP officer elected to build links with local trade unions. Also, the umbrella organisation that co-ordinates the national and regional activities of trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party.

Trigger ballot: Process where Labour Party branches and local affiliates to a CLP decide whether to confirm that a sitting MP can stand for re-election or should face a full selection process.

Ward: Alternative name for a branch.

Women's Forum: Part of the Labour Party's equality structures, a constituency-wide body open to all women members in the area.

The main Labour Party structures mirror those of local and national Government.

HOW DOES THE LABOUR PARTY WORK?

YOUR BRANCH

- Your **local branch** is your first port of call for getting involved.
- Branches meet **once a month**.
- Any member who lives in the Ward can **submit and vote** for motions at meetings.
- Branches are run by an **Executive Committee** who are elected at the Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- Branches also **elect delegates** who represent the branch in your CLP.
- The branch also chooses Labour **candidates for local elections** e.g. local councillors.

YOUR CLP

- Your **Constituency Labour Party (CLP)** meets monthly.
- These are either **General Committee** meetings (where all members can normally attend but only delegates from branches, affiliated trade unions or socialist societies can vote) or **All Member** meetings (where all local members can vote).
- At the **Annual General Meeting** you will elect positions to the Executive Committee, which runs the CLP, including Chair, Secretary, Campaigns Officer, Youth Officer, Women's Officer and more.
- You will also elect delegates to Labour's **regional** and **National Conferences**, to other bodies and forums.

YOUR LOCAL LABOUR PARTY ALSO ORGANISES ELECTION CAMPAIGNS FOR COUNCILLORS AND MPS AND CAMPAIGNS ON MANY DIFFERENT LOCAL ISSUES!

Branch / Ward

Going to your local branch meeting is the best way to start getting involved. Your branch will usually cover the area of a local Council Ward. In areas where there are fewer members some branches hold joint meetings.

Branches normally meet monthly and:

- discuss political issues and plan local campaigning activities;
- send motions to the Constituency Labour Party (CLP) meetings;
- nominate candidates for election to the CLP Executive Committee;
- elect delegates for the CLP;
- select local council candidates and
- participate in trigger ballots for sitting MPs;
- organise speakers on local issues and concerns - this is a great way of raising awareness and offers to find speakers should always be welcomed.

The main Officers elected at the Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) are:

- Chair and Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Women's Officer
- Disability Officer

*At least 50% of these seats MUST be held by women.

All of these posts, other than Treasurer can be done as a job share.

Getting involved and holding Branch Office is a great way of starting to become an activist. Disabled members don't just have to be a Disability Officer - they can put themselves forward for any role they are capable of doing.

Showing willingness to help organise meetings and events is always appreciated.

The Disability Officers role should be held by someone with a disability.

All LP members who want to stand for office in their Branch, CLP or at Region, usually have to make a speech 1-2 minutes long. Any disabled member who needs a longer time because of an impairment must be given that extra time if they ask for it as a Reasonable Adjustment.

The number of Branch delegates to the CLP is dependent on the number of members in each Branch. There should always be a youth delegate and, again, 50% of the seats MUST be held by women.

The Branch Secretary is usually an automatic member of the CLP Executive Committee. Sometimes other Officers have automatic places, but this varies within each CLP.

Constituency Labour Party - CLP

CLPs are based on the electoral district for the MP. Most CLP meetings take place monthly and:

- discuss political issues;
- plan local campaigning activities;

The Equality Act 2010 and the Labour Party

- send motions and delegates to Labour Party Conference;
 - elect officers to the Executive Committee, which oversees the day-to-day business of the CLP;
 - organise hustings during candidate selections for the MP, MSP, Assembly Member(s) and MEPs.

The main CLP Officers are:

- Chair
- Vice chair (Membership)
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Women's Officer
- Youth [and Student] Officer
- Campaigns Organiser - sometimes this is a second Vice Chair position
- BAME Officer
- Disability Officer
- LGBT+ Officer
- Policy Officer
- Trade Union Liaison Officer - TULO
- Community Engagement Officer
- Fundraising Officer

All these roles other than the Chair and Treasurer can be job shares. Doing a job share is another great way to learn from a more experienced activist how things work.

There are two main models for CLP meetings:

a) some CLP meetings are open to all members and are known as All Member Meetings (AMM) – this structure was introduced in the late 90s, when meetings were extremely small;

b) more traditionally, CLPs operate on General Committee (GC) structure. Some GCs allow all members to attend but only elected delegates can vote, whilst some GCs are restricted to delegates only. Delegates are elected from Labour Party branches, affiliated trade union branches and affiliated socialist societies.

CLP Executive Committee

All the CLP Officers are on the EC and everyone has voting rights. Where an Officers post is held as a job share that attracts only one vote. You need to agree with your job share partner how that vote will be exercised.

Branch Officers, usually the Secretary, attend the CLP EC.

The EC is the decision-making body for deciding the day to day running of the CLP. They will agree and organise Fundraising events as well as political events.

Equal Access to meetings and events

All branch and CLP meetings including EC, campaign and fundraising events **MUST** be held in an accessible venue, which also has appropriate toilets. Not doing so is a breach of the Equality Act 2010 (EA2010).

It is the responsibility of CLP Officers, with the Disability Officer acting as an advisor, to find suitable venues. The DO's expertise on accessibility should be the deciding factor in any decision.

The LP recommends that meetings are not held in rooms with a bar or in rooms with religious imagery. Doing so would breach other aspects of the EA2010.

We recommend that in large rooms a speaker and microphones are used to increase audibility.

Having a loop system is important. These loops enable people who use hearing aids to hear more clearly. Action on Hearing Loss can advise on portable systems. <https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop/>

Disability Labour has members throughout the country who can advise on disability accessibility and carry out an Access Audit for CLPs. We can advise CLPs with their own premises and those using other venues. This service is free, we just ask for travel costs to be met – though we always welcome donations.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Labour Party

Conduct of meetings

Meetings should be conducted in a polite and comradely manner.

All LP members should treat each other with respect and not shout down or over other people when they are speaking.

Outbursts or personal attacks on individuals or groups of people are never acceptable.

It is the responsibility of the person chairing the meeting to ensure that members behave in a polite and comradely way.

However, where there are differences of opinion on political matters, some branch or CLP meetings can seem intimidating.

This can make attending meetings difficult for some disabled members. Several CLPs are trialing remote access via Zoom or a similar system to increase inclusion.

DL holds most of its meetings online. Meetings are set up securely with password access and people can join in by phone or online. It is part of being democratic and open.

Online access can also enable parents with children or people with caring responsibilities to join in meetings.

Reasonable Adjustments

If a disabled member asks for a Reasonable Adjustment, such as having a PA or support worker attend a meeting with them, that must be properly considered and not unreasonably refused. Failing to do so is a breach of the Equality Act 2010

Some CLPs will ask PAs to sign a confidentiality agreement if they are not a LP member.

The Chair of any meeting should allow anyone with an impairment extra time to speak if their impairment warrants it, and at their request.

Meeting agendas may need to be supplied in larger fonts or on different colour paper to make them more readable. Some disabled people may need papers supplied as Word or PDF document which can be read by screen reading software.

Some CLPs use a laptop and screen to help people follow business – in particular where motions are discussed and voted on, or for elections.

What to do if your RA is not being met or is refused

All Reasonable Adjustments are anticipatory - meaning that organisations should already be doing them.

CLP Officers should ask what RAs you need. If they have not done this, write or email the CLP Chair, Secretary and Disability Officer and explain what you need.

If you need equipment such as a loop system and you know the best one to use, CLP Officers will usually be glad of your expertise.

Some RAs such as a signer can be very expensive. There may be students who are learning to sign who can provide this service.

If you have concerns or questions about asking for a RA, contact Disability Labour. We are always happy to help and can speak to or email your CLP Officers if needed.

The Labour Party has an Inclusion and Development Fund. CLPs can apply for financial assistance for making a building they own more accessible or to fund the cost of a signer, but the CLP will need to raise some of the money needed. This a link to the booklet about the fund:

<https://labour.org.uk/about/how-we-work/national-executive-committee/nec-funding-application/>

It is against the EA2010 to ask a disabled person to pay for any RA they may require.

Often when a RA is made other CLP members will benefit from it.

The role of the Disability Officer

Disability Labour has written a separate guide for Disability Officers. It contains a job description and guide to carrying out the role.

Please email info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

Social Events

All Branches and CLPs must have a two-tier structure for events where members have to pay to attend.

Not doing so is a breach of the Equality Act 2010.

Tickets should be full price and half price for those on a fixed or low income.

This would usually apply to pensioners who only receive a state pension and anyone who is claiming benefits.

Some CLPs ask members who can afford to pay extra or those who would like to pay for an extra ticket to do so.

There should be no extra charge for a disabled person bringing a support worker or PA with them.

Nobody should be excluded from events for financial reasons.

The system for ensuring those who need financial assistance must operate confidentiality. It is not acceptable that all the officers of a CLP know who has applied for help.

If party members who are disabled, BAME, or young need help, the requests should be made via the relevant officer to the Fundraising Officer.

Proof of benefit etc. should not be asked for. It is rare for people to abuse this system.

Regional

CLPs elect delegates to Regional conference and that Conference elects the Regional Officers and the Regional Board

The structure is similar to that of CLPs, without a membership Secretary, Treasurer, Political Education Officer, Fundraising Officer or Community Engagement Officer

Regional Conferences must follow the same rules as CLPs regarding accessibility and charging for attendance. CLP delegates must be funded in full by the CLP, particularly when a disabled delegate needs the reasonable adjustment of an extra night's stay

Failure to provide any of the reasonable adjustments is a breach of the Equality Act 2010

Delegates should make arrangements via their CLPs for attending Regional Conference, ASAP, after election to get all the assistance they need. Regional staff should know the venue and its accessibility issues. Any venue must be signed off by the Regional DO before it is booked.

Regional Conferences should have adequate Accessibility Stewards and must provide Access Guides. DL can provide staff training on Disability Equality.

Disability Labour can also provide guidance for Regions and we have members in all regions who can carry out Accessibility Audits.

Disabled Regional Delegates should contact Disability Labour quickly via email or phone if there are any issues in relation to them attending Regional Conferences.

The Reasonable Adjustments quoted earlier also apply to Regional Meetings and events.

Local Campaign Forums

The LCF is a group of representatives from all CLPs in the same local authority with responsibility for overseeing local election campaigning and the selection of candidates for council elections.

The membership of the LCF should include the leader and deputy leader of the Labour Group (where appropriate), any local and regional organisers, and appropriate representatives from the relevant CLPs, including CLP campaign coordinators, representatives from trades unions and, where appropriate, other organisations affiliated to the constituencies.

Disability Labour believes that the LCF should always have a DL representative to help ensure that the selection of council candidates does not breach the EA2010.

The most common breach of the EA is failing to provide RAs for disabled members who cannot canvass in the same way as non-disabled members. This can happen during the approval process and during the run up to local elections.

It is a breach of the EA2010 to exclude a disabled person from approval or withdraw that approval because they cannot canvas in the same way or for the same length of time as other candidates.

The LCF should agree with the disabled candidates what could be achievable and review that if needed.

Disability Labour can give advice to both disabled members and LCF Officers. We can suggest solutions to ensure that disabled members are not discriminated against.

We have produced a guide to Accessible Leaflets and two separate campaigning guides, one on Differently Paced Canvassing and another on Inclusive campaigning, some of the info is in this guide but full copies of all three guides are available by emailing: info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

National Conference

**BECOMING A
CONFERENCE
DELEGATE**

WHY GO TO REGIONAL CONFERENCES?
Here you can help to shape your region's policies, campaigns and priorities.
You will also elect representatives to the regional board.

WHY GO TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE?
This is officially the supreme decision-making body of the Labour Party.
Here you can shape national policy direction and priorities.

**HOW TO BECOME A
CONFERENCE DELEGATE?**

1. Any Labour Party member can stand to be a conference delegate.
2. If your CLP has GC meetings you don't need to be a GC delegate but you do need a nomination from your branch or affiliated organisation.
3. A vote is then held in the CLP meeting.

i **THE NUMBER OF DELEGATES YOUR CLP CAN SEND DEPENDS ON HOW MANY MEMBERS YOU HAVE. THE FIRST 750 MEMBERS = 1 DELEGATE, THEN AN ADDITIONAL DELEGATE FOR EVERY 250 MEMBERS. YOU MAY ALSO BE ABLE TO SEND YOUNG PERSON'S AND WOMEN'S DELEGATES.**

HALF THE DELEGATES YOU SEND TO CONFERENCE MUST BE WOMEN!

The Labour Party Conference directs and controls the work of the party. It is the supreme decision-making body and decides the Labour Party's policy framework and rules. It also considers NEC reports and policy documents.

If a disabled LP member is elected to attend Conference their CLP **MUST** pay all of their expenses, including any extra Reasonable Adjustments needed.

This may need to include specific accommodation and paying for an extra night's stay. DL has written guidelines on this for use by CLPs, email us at: info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

CLPs must not prevent a disabled person standing to be a conference delegate because of their disability or the cost of their RAs

Failure to meet the RAs of a disabled conference delegate is a breach of the EA2010.

NEC and its Sub-Committees

The National Executive Committee represents all component parts of the Labour Party and its affiliated trades unions and socialist societies. Its process can be difficult to understand.

Its membership comprises:

- 3 Ministers/Shadow Ministers nominated by the Cabinet/Shadow Cabinet
- 3 backbench MPs or Members of the European Parliament elected by the PLP and/or European PLP
- 1 elected by the National Young Labour Conference
- 1 elected by the Black and Minority Ethnic Labour Conference
- 1 representative of the Scottish Labour Party
- 1 representative of the Welsh Labour Party
- 12 elected by trade union delegates at the Party Conference
- 1 elected by delegates from socialist, cooperative and other affiliated organisations at Party conference
- 6 elected by a biennial national postal ballot of party members
- 2 elected by a biennial national postal ballot of councillors, directly elected mayors or police commissioners

There will also be a disabled members representative elected to the NEC in the near future.

NEC Sub Committees

The NEC has several sub committees. You can find details here:

<https://labour.org.uk/about/how-we-work/national-executive-committee/nec-committees/>

The Equalities Committee looks after the interests of women and minority groups within the Party.

Disability Labour has a seat on that committee. We use our voice to stand up for disability equality.

National Policy Forum

The NPF is a body of representatives from all the major groups in the Labour Party, from constituency parties and regions to affiliated trade unions and socialist societies. This link gives more information.

<https://policyforum.labour.org.uk/about/npf>

Its role is to shape the Labour Party's policy agenda. NPF Representatives read and discuss submissions received via the Labour Policy Forum website and discuss them in the relevant Policy Commissions.

Disability Labour has a seat on the Work, Pensions and Equality Forum. We believe every party policy should reflect the difficulties disabled people face and ensure we are treated equally. We believe that policies must recognise that not all disabled people can work.

The NPF website allows individual members or groups of members to make submissions to the Policy Commissions and we would especially encourage all disabled members to submit ideas for discussion. You can also contact our members on the Work, Pensions and Equality Forum via info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

NCC Disputes Panel

The National Constitutional Committee not only deals with issues such as party rules but oversees the Disputes Panel. This panel looks at the most serious allegations against members who may have breached any of the Party's Codes of Conduct or are accused of bringing the Party into disrepute.

Disability Labour is looking at ways in which we can support disabled members going through the complaints system. This could include supporting someone who has made a complaint or someone under investigation.

Labour Party Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct

The Labour Party has several Codes of Conduct. The most important one is the Members Pledge:

“I pledge to act within the spirit and rules of the Labour Party in my conduct both on and offline, with members and non-members and I stand against all forms of abuse.

I understand that if found to be in breach of the Labour Party policy on online and offline abuse, I will be subject to the rules and procedures of the Labour Party.”

All the Codes of Conduct are in the LP Rule Book

[\[http://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-RULE-BOOK.pdf\]](http://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-RULE-BOOK.pdf)

The Party also has Codes of Conduct on Sexual Harassment and Gender Equality, also Antisemitism and other forms of Racism

<https://labour.org.uk/members/my-welfare/my-rights-and-responsibilities/>

Any abuse towards another party member is unacceptable, either in meetings or on-line.

Using ableist language such as; retarded, cripple, imbecile, spaz or spastic to someone who may or may not be disabled is offensive and unacceptable.

This link explains more:

<http://deareverybody.hollandbloorview.ca/resources/tips-and-tools/how-to-avoid-using-ableist-language/>

Social Media

Social Media posts are frequently used in disciplinary cases to show that a post is abusive or racist. We would advise all activists to think carefully before they post. Never post in anger, when you have may have had too much to drink or when your medication may influence your behaviour. Some discussions need to be face to face. Messages do not always convey what someone thinks they have said.

Labour Party Codes of Conduct

This can be a difficult area for some disabled people. If you know that you are likely to say something in a way that could upset other people, you should be cautious about how you post or respond to messages. Outbursts or tirades of anger can be very upsetting for many people and have no place on social media. If the post or tweet is public it could be seen as bringing the LP into disrepute, which is a serious breach of the LP Rule book.

Make sure you understand the Social Media Code of Conduct.

<https://labour.org.uk/members/my-welfare/my-rights-and-responsibilities/coc-social-media/>

If in doubt, don't post!

Facebook

Many CLPs and Branches have both a public and a private Facebook page. Joining in the political debate is a privilege not a right. Posts and responses must be polite and not include abusive language.

Be careful about posting messages on pages belonging to other political parties. Whilst tempting, this can be used against the Labour Party and do damage. Calling out racism or homophobia is important, but it must be done without resorting to abuse.

Facebook can seem very intense for some disabled people. Lots of notifications and updates can trigger anxiety for some people. Learn how to use Facebook settings to help with this or ask someone more knowledgeable for advice.

Instagram

This is a new platform for many LP organisations. The Codes of Conduct about posting or commenting still apply.

Twitter

Tweets are often quoted in disciplinary cases. Tweets that can be viewed as supporting other political parties or being racist in any way are common reasons for suspension of someone's party membership. Even if you tweet under a different name, you can still be traced.

Labour Party Codes of Conduct

Twitter can also feel a very overwhelming place with tweets and retweets coming from all directions. Some people find they need to limit their use of Twitter or delete their account to look after their own mental health. There is no shame in doing this!

Labour and the Social Model of disability

The Labour Party uses the Social Model of Disability.

The Social Model of disability was first outlined 40 years ago by Mike Oliver who is credited with coining the phrase. It has become the disability community's accepted standard to describe their lived experience. It changes the focus. Rather than the person being the problem that needed fixing, it is society that constructs the barriers that disable us, by both physical barriers and the attitudes and prejudicial behaviours of others.

Prior to the Social Model, the medical world viewed disabled people in terms of what they couldn't do and aimed to fix the patient not the barrier.

Even in 2019, we are still not there. Things have come a long way, but there is much more to do. On the back of the last ten years of the austerity agenda, local authorities don't have the money to support or engage with disabled people.

Targets are being missed and services are currently failing those whom councils are tasked to protect. The Labour Party has accepted the Social Model of disability. It is up to everyone in the Party, not just disabled members to urge the party to become more inclusive.

This can be achieved by passing motions at your local CLP meeting requesting your local councillors to support policies that improve the lives of disabled people. Your CLP can also submit motions for debate at Party Conference.

You can raise issues for discussion by your local and Regional Policy Forums. You can also support campaigns being run by Disability Labour such as our Campaign for a National Independent Living Service.

You can also send evidence to the NPF when the Policy Commissions are seeking information and ideas on specific subjects.

Disability Labour can give you guidance on what motions to put forward.

Education on Disability Equality is vital, DL can provide a speaker/trainer who can come to your CLP.

Becoming a Labour Activist

The place to start is your local community. You can usually find information on your local group by searching the internet. You can also contact the Labour Party and find out where the local group is located. To be involved, there is no need to join the party, however, if you want to vote on issues in your CLP, this can only be done as a member.

Once you do decide to become a Labour party member. You can find the information you will need to join on the Labour Party Website which is <https://join.labour.org.uk>, you will be asked to decide the level of membership subscription you want.

If you have already decided you wish to run for a public office, you will need to be a member of the Labour Party for at least 12 months before you can stand.

If you have further questions in relation to membership, contact the Party directly as they can best advise you. The phone number is: 0345 092 2299

Joining Disability Labour is free, if you are disabled or care for a disabled family member. Donations are gratefully received. If you have questions with regard to membership of Disability Labour, please check our website for information.

If you are not disabled you can join as an affiliate member of DL.

CLPs and Trade Unions can also affiliate to DL our website gives more details: <https://disabilitylabour.org.uk/affiliation-to-disability-labour/>

There are many ways to be involved. The next two sections are about how disabled people can get involved in campaigning.

There is always something to do and usually not enough people to help.

For those who have an energy and/or pain impairment.

Most CLPs have tried and tested ways of organising canvassing sessions, so changing the way things are done means a shift in attitude as well as practice.

The ideas below have been tried and tested in CLPs, so we know they can help get more disabled people involved.

We are an inclusive party, that means everyone can canvass, if they want to.

Remember, those of us who have these impairments know our own bodies.

ASK what Reasonable Adjustments we need.

Check how far we can walk without needing to stop.

Slopes, steps & uneven surfaces are a problem for many of us.

Check if anyone needs to have someone with them all the time because of a medical condition or a mental health condition, such as anxiety.

Have a car parked nearby, making sure the driver is aware they may have to act quickly.

Train us to “do the board” ie direct the other canvassers which doors to knock. We should then always be in the middle of the group.

As the canvassers do a group of houses/flats either side of where we are, we can see if someone is stuck on a doorstep and can send someone to check they're ok.

Once a section of the road/estate is done then everyone moves up together to the next section.

That means nobody gets too far ahead or left behind.

Remember to be aware of safeguarding concerns for everyone interacting with members of the public.

Differently Paced Canvassing - a Guide for CLPs

Remind canvassers **NEVER** to go inside someone's home.

Pairing people up, if someone is new or not feeling confident.

Keep newer or less confident people closer to the board person and always pair them with an experienced canvasser.

Tell new canvassers they can always ask to go with a different person if they are uncomfortable for any reason. If someone does ask for a swap, gently check out the reason why. (Deal with any concern about behaviour promptly and inline with your CLP Safeguarding policies.)

In some areas pairing people up is essential. Make sure the person running the board **ALWAYS** has the mobile numbers of people who are canvassing & remind canvassers to keep their phones accessible.

Make sure the fittest people do the top floors of flats - with or without lifts.

Work from the top floor downwards.

If you know there may be difficult voters get the local Councillors to canvass them. Remind canvassers if they are being asked questions they can't answer take a note of the voter's details and pass them on to a Councillor or Candidate for action.

If you have a large team of canvassers, the person running the board should make a note of who has been sent where, initialling the canvass sheet. So in a large block of flats you can give canvassers 2 or 3 floors at a time.

Check in with the people with impairments regularly.

Make sure the car driver is ready to drive people where and when required without making inappropriate comments about distance or need.

Never leave someone on their own to wait for the car driver to pick them up.

These adjustments are just about awareness and care for everyone in the team. The majority of people appreciate it if you work in a way that considers their needs.

All of the Labour Party benefits from including and supporting disabled members to get involved in campaigning - we have a lot to offer!

This is a quick guide to make sure that your campaigning events are more inclusive and successful.

What is accessibility?

The Equality Act 2010 states that disabled people should have equal access to education, employment, goods, services, facilities and transport. This means removing obstacles that prevent, inhibit or limit participation.

You might not be aware that some of your members identify as disabled.

Disability is both visible and invisible and can be mental, sensory or physical. Many disabilities involve an energy impairment which limits how much people can do at one time or means that they need frequent rests.

A member does not have to tell you they are disabled but CLPs should always attempt to make our events accessible and engaging regardless. You should never assume you have no disabled members and therefore do not have to make events accessible.

Meeting access needs or Reasonable Adjustments as they are called in law, must never be treated as a burden, but a routine part of campaign planning.

All members should be listened to with respect and consideration.

Campaigning methods and what disabled people may or any not be able to do will vary from person to person.

It's important to ask disabled people what they are able to do and not pressure them to do more than they have agreed.

Making Campaigning more accessible - a Guide for CLPs

This is not a definitive guide - **ASK** people what they want to do

	Talking to voters	Walking for extended periods	Seated	Group activity	Out of doors	Inside	Solitary
Door knocking	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×
Voter ID Data Entry	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
Phone banking	✓	×	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
Street stalls	✓	?	?	✓	✓	×	×
Delivering leaflets	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	?
Creating Social Media Posts	×	×	✓	?	×	✓	✓
Photos of candidates and the campaign	✓	?	?	✓	✓	✓	×
Video making	?	?	✓	?	?	✓	?
Envelope stuffing	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	✓

Remember what may work for one disabled member may not work for another

Accessible Campaigning Methods

There are lots of fantastic ways to campaign to win elections for Labour!

When organising campaigns, you should always aim to try and give members a variety of options to choose from as possible.

We all have our strengths and a good organiser will find the right job for each activist based on what they're good at and enjoy. You should never decide what the best method of campaigning for someone is or make them feel bad or guilty for not participating.

Every Labour member matters, and every contribution is important. A member who does not attend a campaigning event due to their health or access needs not being met is no less committed to the Party than another member who does attend.

Campaigning Methods include but are not limited to:

- Telephone Canvassing
- Data Entry
- Displaying a poster
- Envelope stuffing
- Delivering Leaflets
- Canvassing door to door
- Street Stalls
- Delivering
- Digital campaigning

Campaign literature often needs to be delivered by hand.

Allow carers to attend and support.

Can be done alone or in a group.

It may involve travelling long distances and can involve steps to houses or flats.

You should always advertise if possible when you know a route is hilly or involves many steps or stairs or if tower blocks have lift access.

Always provide a map that is highlighted to show which areas need delivering to. Also, provide a contact number so the deliverer knows who to ask if they have a question about the route.

Provide a bag for the deliverer to carry leaflets.

Make it clear when you need the leaflets to be delivered by. You should also make it clear that if a deliverer doesn't complete the route that it is okay and they can let you know so you can find someone else to complete this route.

People can feel embarrassed or guilty for not completing a route but it is important to emphasise that we are a team and should help each other! Every contribution matters.

A disabled member with a car may be willing to deliver bundles of leaflets (with able bodied help) to deliverers or allow their home to be a pickup point.

Telephone Canvassing or Phone-banking

This method is often regarded as 'accessible campaigning' but this is not true for all disabilities for example those with hearing impairments or who struggle with social interaction or anxiety. Don't assume because someone is disabled they will want to or feel able to phonebank. If in doubt, just ask!

Host the event in an accessible venue. (See venue section for more info)

Provide a telephone canvassing script. This should be offered in various font sizes for those with visual impairments, including 18 or 20pt. Ariel 14 pt (as used in this leaflet) is the basic starting point. Coloured paper can also be useful - ask if anyone would prefer this.

Provide training and ideally a demonstration call to show the canvasser how a call takes place. Explain Voter ID codes and provide a Voter ID code sheet in LARGE font.

Coloured pens or highlighters may help some activists distinguish who they have called. If taking photos of volunteers, ask permission, especially if taking the photos with flash. If an activist does not want to be in a photo you must respect this and not make them feel uncomfortable.

Provide refreshments including water and snacks but check for allergies.

Remember that during an election activists should pay a contribution towards food and drink.

Allow for breaks and show activists where the toilet facilities are. Provide support if a canvasser has experienced a difficult call.

When promoting and organising the event, make sure you observe the new Labour Party Telephone Canvassing guidelines. Labour Party Members or supporters are no longer able to use their own phones to make calls on behalf of the Labour Party, even if they withhold their number.

You may wish to provide rulers or card. Some canvassers use these to help them see/match up which number they're calling and make sure they use the right name.

Some callers may wish to use earphones as not to strain their wrists by holding the phone.

Make it clear whether callers will be in a communal room or if there are secluded spaces for callers who would prefer to be more alone.

Allow carers to attend and support.

Voter ID Data Entry

This is a crucial part of any campaign. All of the information from canvassing needs to be entered into the Labour Party's online program - otherwise all information gathered from canvassing is lost and pointless! If we don't record who is a Labour voter, we don't know how many votes we have or who to remind to vote on the day!

It's a vital bit of work and is a great option for those who want to help but do not feel comfortable with the high contact element of direct canvassing. It is also seated and does not require travelling.

It does require screen time and reading data off physical sheets of paper and typing which may restrict those who have limited mobility or pain in their wrists or hands.

Ask your campaigns organiser to run a training session to explain the program to activists. It is easy to learn and only takes a 10-minute tutorial.

- Provide comfortable chairs.
- Host in an accessible building and show where the toilet are. Offer refreshments and allow for breaks
- Wrist rests are important as the activity does include typing.
- Allow earphones if people would like to listen to music.
- Allow carers to attend and support.

Envelope stuffing, leaflet sorting, folding

Most campaigns will have some literature that may need to be stuffed into envelopes or folded before delivery. Once this is done, the next stage is sorting into 'rounds'. This means counting or weighing enough leaflets to be delivered to every house in a road group.

These tasks can be done seated and can be good for those who struggle with the social interaction of canvassing. However, it can be quite physical and may not be ideal for those with restricted mobility in their hands, wrists or arms - for example those with arthritis or chronic pain.

- Host in an accessible venue, show where the toilet facilities are.
- Provide a full and clear explanation and demonstration of what task you would like done and how. Ask the activist if they have any questions.
- Provide a comfortable chair and a table for the task.
- Provide refreshments and allow for breaks.
- Allow earphones if people wish to listen to music.
- Provide any tools that may assist with the task e.g. an envelope moistener or ruler to help fold literature.
- Allow carers to attend and support.

Street Stalls/Distributing leaflets at busy locations

These methods are relatively high social contact but less so than canvassing. They involve distributing literature in locations with high footfall of local voters.

They can involve periods of standing but fold up chairs can be used for those who cannot stand for long periods of time.

They are predominantly outside. Check the weather and always dress appropriately. Sun protection and hats should be worn in sunny conditions. Events should be postponed in poor weather conditions.

Provide water in summer and warm drinks in colder weather for activists. Always advise if there is parking locally, including disabled parking bays and the closest public transport stops.

Allow an activist to leave whenever they wish to - make it clear that they are not obliged to stay for the whole session.

Provide a bag for additional leaflets or a table for the street stall.

Always provide a contact number for the activists should any issues arise, especially if activists are told they are not permitted to campaign there by officials.

Make sure that there are at least two or three people at the venue.

Displaying a poster

This is often overlooked as a campaigning tool, but it's integral to any election campaign. Posters in the local area are a visible way of showing support for Labour and Labour candidates.

Name recognition is really important for a candidate, so it is brilliant to have their name in as many windows as possible. Encouraging members and supporters to display a poster can be a great way to include and engage them.

Offer poster sizes, don't just decide which poster someone should have. Provide posters that already have double sided sticky tape so that it is easier for them to be put up.

Don't make a member or supporter feel guilty for not putting up a poster.

Some people live in politically split households or are politically restricted.

Offer to deliver posters to members or supporters, it increases the chances of them being used.

Not all members or supporters feel comfortable answering the phone, especially if they don't recognise the number or you are withholding your number. Sending a text can also be a good way to contact members.

Canvassing / Door-knocking / Door-stepping

Despite this method being probably the most popular method of campaigning, it can often be the most inaccessible, for a variety of reasons.

The tips below aim to help make it more accessible but it's important to remember that this is not the only way to campaign. If a member does not feel comfortable door knocking respect their choice and ask if they would like to do something different.

Be very clear about the area where the canvassing session is taking place. Let people know if it is hilly, has many steps, if lifts are available in tower blocks etc.

Provide contact details beforehand so activists can ask any questions. Give a clear and detailed description of the meeting point. Ideally, provide a map marking the meeting point.

Make sure all activists have a phone number for the organiser of the session. Information on parking availability and the closest public transport links should be given.

Provide a contact number if anyone is gets lost or arrives late. Provide a bag for any out cards or campaign literature.

Offer to buddy a first-time canvasser up with a more experience canvasser so they can watch how a conversation with a voter takes place.

Make it clear that a canvasser does not have to stay for a full session. They are free to stop at any time but should tell someone they are leaving. Always thank and encourage canvassers.

Offer support if a canvasser has had a difficult conversation with a voter. Make it clear that a negative response from a voter is not a failure on the canvasser's part.

Some voters can be rude and abusive. Make sure activists know to report back these voters for future canvasses.

Offer lifts to or from sessions when possible.

Remember that people walk at different speeds.

Organise canvassing sessions so that everyone feels included.

When taking photographs make sure you have everyone's permission.

Posting weather updates prior to a session can be helpful: everyone should dress appropriately, and sun cream should be worn if appropriate.

Postpone sessions in poor weather. Allow carers to support and attend.

Digital Campaigning

Digital and online skills are very helpful to campaigns. If you have a member who would like to design graphics or produce campaign videos, this is a great way for them to get involved. Photographs of candidates are also needed.

This is less of a contact role and can often be done seated or standing for short periods. Labour have a brand integrity guide that should be consulted when creating any digital content.

Graphics and videos can be made or edited at home or in the campaign hub, this is flexible and can be helpful for those who cannot travel or prefer to be in their home environment.

Make it clear if you are providing any equipment or software or if the member is expected to provide their own.

Always be clear what you would like from the member and the deadline.

However, all work is voluntary, and you should not get angry or annoyed if the member is unable to complete a task.

Allow members to wear headphones to listen to music or to cut out noise when editing. Allow carers to attend and support.

Accessible Venues

When hosting events venues must be accessible to all members. Please contact us if you need specific advice on accessibility issues:

info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

Your CLP Disability Officer should be able to give guidance on access needs. The requirement for a venue to be accessible is anticipatory, you must not wait for a member to ask about wheelchair or scooter access.

Doors must be wide enough to fit a wheelchair (900mm).

Ramps or lift access must be available if there is step access. There must be enough room between furniture to allow a person using a wheelchair or walking aid to move freely.

Check for dropped kerbs to ensure wheelchair users can cross the street safely. Parking should be available nearby.

Information about public transport links should be included.

Give the length of time for the event so that activists can plan accordingly, they may need to take medication.

Accessible toilets must have the emergency cord untied to allow it to be fully used if needed. Toilets should be properly signposted.

Tables should be the appropriate height to accommodate wheelchair users.

A quiet room can be very useful for disabled activists to allow a break from the campaign. Make sure it has level access. The room should be properly signposted and be separate from main rooms which will be noisy.

This not an exhaustive list - seek advice from your Disability Officer or contact Disability Labour

Accessible Information

Information about campaigning, CLP newsletters and election leaflets should be in an easy to read format.

For a more detailed information please see Disability Labour guide on producing accessible leaflets.

If making graphics, text should always be horizontal, this makes it easier to read and a plain text alternative should always be provided.

Videos should have closed captions or be subtitled.

Use easy to read fonts such as Ariel or Futura or Dyslexie. Use a mix of capitals and lowercase letters e.g. not all caps.

If you use images make sure you also have a text description.

Atmosphere and Breaks

A positive atmosphere and breaks are essential to the success of any campaign. Campaigns can be long and exhausting and we all need time to refuel and re-energise. It is important that everyone contributes to keep the atmosphere positive and supportive in line with Labour values

- Encourage members to take breaks whenever they need to
- Provide refreshments with appropriate warnings for food allergies.
- Support activists if they have had a difficult experience or interaction.
- Do not tolerate antisemitic, sexist, racist, transphobic, ageist, classist, homophobic or ableist behaviour or language.
- Make sure that everyone is aware of who to contact, in confidence, if they have an issue or complaint. Some people will need support with this process.
- Shaming people for not being involved in campaigning is disability discrimination and is not acceptable.

Self-Care for Activists

It important that we look after ourselves and each other. Here is some tips to keep in mind when campaigning:

- Always put your health and well-being first.
- Check the weather and dress appropriately.
- Keep hydrated
- Bring friends! Campaigning is fun so bring people who lift you up.
- Only do what you can manage. Listen to your body when it tells you need to take a break.
- Have downtime. Switch off from politics.
- Wear comfy shoes / boots
- Bring snacks and eat regularly

Remember that every contribution is valid and makes a difference

Want to learn more about accessibility?

This is just a brief guide with information on making campaigning more inclusive for Labour Party members who are disabled.

It was originally written for Labour Students and has been updated by Disability Labour and can be downloaded from the members section of our website: <https://www.disabilitylabour.org.uk>

Don't forget,.....

- Encourage your CLP to elect a Disability Officer.
- Don't make assumptions about someone's disability, just ask.
- Listen to disabled members, their skills will surprise you.
- Access requirements are anticipatory
- Kindness, courtesy and thoughtful questions make a big difference

If someone doesn't join in going to the pub after campaigning or meetings, they may not be being unsociable, but too tired or unable to cope with the noise.

Meetings at inaccessible venues

Out of the calls and emails we get at Disability Labour, this is the one of the two top questions we get asked. The other relates to disabled members being turned down as candidates for political office.

Holding a meeting in an inaccessible venue is a breach of the Equality Act 2010.

We would suggest you ask about the reasons why the venue has been chosen. Often it has been chosen because it is convenient.

Another reason is usually because its affordable. Or it is just that this is the venue that has always been used.

Many CLPs don't understand the difficulties faced by disabled members.

Even the simplest things like having a microphone and amplifier or a hearing loop isn't standard.

The CLP Officers who are responsible for hiring venues should be asking someone who does accessibility audits to ensure any venue the CLP uses is fully accessible and has at least one accessible toilet.

An accessible toilet is one that is of sufficient size to allow wheelchair user to get into the toilet and be able to shut the door behind then. There should be sufficient space to allow someone to transfer from their wheelchair onto the toilet. The room should have an emergency cord, which reaches the floor and is in a place where it can be pulled if the disabled person falls. There should also be an accessible washbasin in the same room as the toilet or very near by.

Many groups don't consider the need for a disabled toilet on site.

An accessible venue must have level access or a ramp which is at the right incline and safe to use. The doors into the venue and inside the venue should be wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs. A venue with bare floors can echo.

The lighting should comfortable especially if a member lip reads.

Once you identify a problem, you need to request a change of venue. It is important to highlight this issue as a matter of access for you.

Having a free venue isn't an acceptable reason for a CLP refusing to change the venue. The disabled member is not responsible for finding a new venue

If the venue is owned by the CLP it is equally important that every effort is made to ensure the building is adapted to be fully accessible. See the advice on page 19 of this guide.

If your request for an accessible venue is not actioned, we would suggest that raise the issue at a GC meeting or at an all members meeting or ask that the issue is discussed at the CLP Executive Committee.

If your CLP has a Disability Officer, they should be supporting your request and working with other EC Officers to find a suitable venue.

If the change isn't discussed, we would suggest writing to your CLP Executive Committee and address it to the Secretary. The Secretary is the one who will put items on the agenda for a meeting.

If you don't get anywhere with these suggestions, we would suggest you contact us. We can support members and liaise with your CLP Officers to help to find a suitable venue. Email us on info@disabilitylabour.org.uk.

We will suggest that a discussion is always the best approach and if we have a member in the local area, we might be able to provide someone to accompany you in facilitating an access audit and to deliver training about the Equality Act 2010 and why all levels of the party are under a legal obligation to comply with it.

Disability Labour is currently working with the party to develop Disability Equality Training for CLPs.

We hope that you have found this guide helpful. If you have any ideas to add please email: info@disabilitylabour.org.uk

Coming soon:

So you want to be a Councillor

So you want to be an MP