

# **Lewisham Momentum: plan for 2017**

## **Our aims**

Lewisham Momentum was founded in September 2015 as Lewisham for Corbyn, becoming a branch of Momentum a month later. We are a socialist organisation rooted in the Labour Party and labour movement, seeking to strengthen and transform them as an essential part of:

- Building a strong, community-rooted, campaigning labour movement in Lewisham and beyond.
- Making Jeremy Corbyn prime minister and achieving a government which reverses austerity and carries out radical changes in the interests of working people.
- Supporting workers' and community struggles, helping develop consciousness and self-organisation.
- Promoting political discussion and education, including debate about socialist ideas and alternatives to capitalism.
- Working for solidarity, unity and internationalism across divisions and borders.

We will pursue these goals through the Labour Party and through our own autonomous activity, seeking to cooperate closely with other Momentum groups in London and elsewhere.

## **Our campaigning**

We have suffered from being too reactive. In the period ahead we will therefore focus on three campaigns in a sustained way and try to seriously develop them:

- Migrants' rights / free movement – because this is a huge, even decisive political issue. We need to raise in Labour while taking our arguments to the public and the streets.
- Fighting education cuts – because this is a battle which Lewisham teachers and the community are already beginning, one where we can throw our weight and links in the Labour Party into the scales.
- Housing – because this is a pressing issue for thousands of people in the borough and one where we can make clear, concrete demands on the council and the government and win wide support.

Of course we will support and get involved other campaigns as they come up, but these will be our focuses as a group in the coming period barring something else decisive arising. We will raise them in the Labour Party and act on them ourselves.

We will continue the migrants' rights working group and establish working groups for the housing and education cuts campaign. However, we also want these campaigns to be the property of the whole group and involve as many people as possible. We will produce a variety of campaign materials and ensure public activity such as a stall for one of them at least every fortnight.

We want to establish stronger links and footholds in workplaces and workers' organisations in Lewisham. We will establish a working group responsible for developing our links with and work in trade unions and working-class community organisations.

## **In the Labour Party**

We work to strengthen and transform Labour in a democratic, socialist direction, starting with our local wards and the Lewisham CLPs. We will do this by:

- Encouraging all Momentum supporters to get actively involved in the party, attend meetings and take part in campaigning, providing support to make people feel more welcome and confident.

- Seeking to work in a cooperative, straightforward, comradely way with all party members, regardless of affiliation or views.
- Pro-actively mobilising for Labour in elections.
- Making proposals for and wherever possible organising campaigning by the party, around struggles, campaigns and political issues as well as for elections.
- Encouraging people to take motions to the Labour Party, and acting as a source of model motions and ideas.
- Promoting democracy and mass involvement; opposing attempts to shut down or diminish party life.
- Helping to build a lively, campaigning Young Labour group or groups in the borough.
- Campaigning to abolish the mayor and cabinet system in favour of collective council democracy, and for councillors to be accountable to the movement and engage in a serious discussion about resisting cuts and austerity.
- Supporting comrades who hold officer or delegate positions.
- Encouraging and organising for people to stand as officers and delegates in the branches and CLPs, to try to ensure a strong left-wing voice in and for the direction of the local party.

We ask our CLP caucuses to meet as soon as possible after this AGM to formulate plans for the next months, and to continue meeting regularly.

### **Political education**

We have a responsibility to develop the movement triggered by Jeremy Corbyn, educating ourselves and learn from each other as activists, as well as the movement and community around us. Putting our political discussion and education work on a more systematic is also a good way of attracting people to get involved in Momentum.

With this in mind, we will set up a working group to run a regular political discussion and reading group, with at least monthly discussions and other events – as well as continuing to encourage political discussion and debate at our general meetings.

Political education will give people more confidence as activists and as people able to engage in debate wherever it occurs – in the Labour Party, at work, out campaigning, in everyday life. The working group should also organise practical education and skills training, including public speaking, formulating concise arguments, writing motions and other written materials, campaigning skills and understanding of Labour Party structures and rules.

In organising events we must employ different ways of running meetings, educational techniques, etc.

### **How we organise**

We will continue to hold monthly general meetings and monthly organising/steering meetings (in New Cross, where possible at New Cross Learning). All the officers we elect at the AGM should attend the organising meetings. They should also consider meeting separately as a committee to ensure decisions are carried out and our work taken forward.

We want to involve many more people in Lewisham Momentum and to become more diverse and representative, with a particular emphasis on involving more black/minority ethnic comrades. We need a proper discussion about this.

We strongly encourage the creation of more working groups to generate activity on different issues. We will hold regular socials and fundraisers.