

EC7 Lucas North - Convention Officer

Proposer: Lucas North
Agenda item: A Reports

Report Details

General

I was coopted to Young Greens Executive Committee around halfway through the year, as Convention Officer. Since being coopted, I have attended Young Greens Residential and fortnightly EC meetings, as well as being active in the committee's general business such as social media sign-off and responding to events within the Green Party.

Being on EC has been difficult at times, especially when there have been tensions between the Young Greens and GPEW, as I held roles in both groups. This year also saw a stark rise in transphobia, prompted by the Government's consultation on reforms of the Gender Recognition Act, which has meant that large amounts of online transphobic abuse have been directed at me personally, and as (until recently) co-chair of LGBTIQ+ Greens, and more generally as Young Greens EC. I have been very active in combatting the rise of transphobia within the party which has at times been extremely damaging to my own wellbeing, and has affected my capacity to do work for the Young Greens.

At the most recent Green Party conference, I was involved in putting on the Young Greens quiz, and was also a member of standing orders committee throughout the event. This meant I was unfortunately unable to complete the volunteer shifts on the Young Greens stall which I had signed up for as I was called into last minute meetings around a number of topics, including the running of conference, responding to protests at conference, and a rescheduled meeting with Caroline Lucas about the consultation on reforms to the Gender Recognition Act. I am sorry that I wasn't able to devote more time at Conference to supporting the Young Greens, and the extra work other had to do as a result.

Convention

When I took on the role, there was no events subcommittee in place. Although I established an Events Subcommittee, levels of engagement were low and the group failed to hold an online meeting in it's first month of existence. I therefore took a more centralised approach to planning convention than in previous years, and have taken personal responsibility for most aspects of the event.

This year I produced a resource pack available to all young greens groups, and interested parties, to help them promote convention to their members. This included a copy of the central email schedule for Convention promotional emails, email templates, graphics, and a guide on how to effectively promote Convention to different groups.

I ran a session at Young Greens Residential about how to make sure Convention would be representative of our membership, taking into account the diversity of our members.

Digital

This year, I redesigned the Convention website, and set up and customised an installation of the software used by the Federation of Young European Greens for their AGM papers. This has greatly helped with the online aspects of Convention such as motion and nomination submission, keeping track of paper submissions, and being able to control these when previously they were under the sole control of the GPEW digital team.

Working with SPC, a number of guides were added to the website to provide information about Convention, the elections, and paper submission.

In response to budgetary pressures associated with the annual ballot, I built a ballot collection and vote counting platform which has been used in this years Young Greens elections. The system was designed in conjunction with the ERO and DERO, to ensure it met all the needs of the annual ballot. The system will be available to any groups wishing to use it for their own elections, and is powered by a graphical admin interface.

Venue

At the time I was coopted, bids to host convention were already being accepted, and one of my first acts as Convention Officer was to organise the EC vote on which venue would be chosen to host Convention. It came down to a decision between Brighton and Sheffield, and Sheffield won in a vote of EC members. The Sheffield bid was submitted after the deadline, but was accepted due to the low number of other applications.

Part of the bid process is agreeing that the group putting in the application is able to provide a suitable venue, with a minimum number of rooms available. On this occasion, after being awarded the bid, it became obvious that the requested number of rooms was not available. As a result, we have been unable to offer a dedicated quiet room, unable to offer a safe space room, and have not been able to secure rooms which I believe meet the needs of liberation group meet-ups. For this I am truly sorry, and have included in my handover guide to next year's committee that they should advise groups to book rooms at the point of putting in bids, where this is free, or that groups should be absolutely certain of being able to meet the bare minimum requirements before applying.