

Angela Rayner

Fighting to win.

BAME Manifesto for a Movement



 Labour

With thanks to

The many Labour and trade union members who contributed to this Manifesto at our BAME Manifesto for a Movement workshop and via our online discussion site.

- Roger McKenzie
- Rehana Azam
- Navendu Mishra MP
- David Lammy MP
- Tan Dhesi MP
- Tulip Siddiq MP
- Afzal Khan MP
- Ravishaan S. Rahel Muthiah
- Wajid Khan

Introduction

Labour is and will always be the Party of equality. The progress we have made in diversity of representation is a tribute to the work of generations of activists and elected representatives within our Party – our 2019 Parliamentary intake was the most diverse in history. But there is still more to do.

The working class is international: it has no single race, colour, faith, or creed. Workers of all nations have always migrated to find better work and a better life for themselves and their families. BAME people have been part of the labour movement, and the Labour Party, since the very beginning.

BAME members are the Party, our Party is our BAME members.

As part of the Angela Rayner for Deputy Leader campaign, activists, members and trade unionists have worked together to look at where there are barriers to participation in our party and in public life. This document is not the end of that discussion, but a chapter in it. It is part of a Manifesto for a Movement that puts organising, empowerment and communities at the heart of how Labour campaigns.

But what comes next cannot be 'The Party' simply doing things for BAME members, it cannot be a top down process, it must be about giving BAME members the space to self-organise and drive priorities determined in communities, churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras across the country.

In the coming months and years, as we focus more on real Community Organising, BAME members must be at the heart of driving change in communities and also sharing those experiences with Party members of what works, because there are many lessons to be learned by Labour from the self-organisation and solidarity displayed in many BAME communities.

It is all of our responsibilities to make Labour's structures, practices and organising truly representative and in doing that, we will be much closer to delivering the Labour government we all so desperately want.

Roger McKenzie & Angela Rayner

Labour Party structures

BAME Labour and representation in Party structures

The Labour Party Black Section of 1983-1993 was a strong self-organised body of the Labour Party that built a legacy of MPs and activists including Diane Abbott and Bernie Grant.

In recent years, there has been debate about the role, structure and status of BAME Labour. It is now time to implement the 2018 Democracy Review recommendations, while taking care not to replace organising and building our mass movement with meetings that don't have outcomes. Conferences are a fantastic way to build networks, but we must make them more than arenas for discussion – we must use them to upskill our members and drive real action in our Party and in our communities. After all, the whole idea of a Manifesto for a Movement revolves around the idea that we are a movement, not a meeting.

Progress has already been made on ensuring a more transparent process for electing the BAME NEC representative, including giving all self-defined BAME members a vote and that is very welcome.

Ideas for next steps:

- Support the reformation and reinvigoration of BAME Labour as a self-organised group within the Labour Party, setting a clear date for a 're-launch', with renewed and transparent democratic processes supported by central Party resources.
- Support the formation of a National BAME Members Conference, setting a date for the opening conference, with clear rules on policy making powers and internal elections.

- Review of how self-organised strand groups feed into representative structures: should it be, for example, through the Equality Committee of the NEC?
- Ensure that equality mapping and self-identification of BAME members is not a one-off process conducted around the NEC election process but something built into the mainstream functions of the Party, so that we know who and where our BAME members are as starting point to proper engagement
- Supporting BAME activists to promote and recruit to Labour in all communities, showing that Labour is open, diverse and welcoming – this will mean working with BAME members to ensure that we have the right materials, messages, policies and ways of working
- With a view to ensuring a much more simple and transparent process for 'Labour Friends of' affiliations, there should be a review of the process by which groups can affiliate with clear guidelines and benchmarks on transparency, democracy and funding
- Provide support for the formation of Regional BAME Groups that feed in to BAME Labour
- Ensure there is BAME representation on all Regional Boards, including gender balance
- Write into rule that BAME officers in any elected Party position should identify as BAME and be elected exclusively by BAME members
- Encourage and include BAME members of Labour International CLP to take part in BAME Labour

Labour Party structures **continued**

We're a movement, not a meeting - but how about CLP meetings?

Constituency Labour Party meetings must be a safe space for BAME members to share their thoughts and opinions. Labour must have zero tolerance on all forms of racism and hate speech – we must call it out wherever we see it.

CLP meetings should be open, inclusive, comradely and a place to look at how we organise and win in our communities. As such we need to ensure BAME members are fully engaged in CLPs – having a BAME Officer is fantastic, but we should not confine BAME representation in CLPs to specifically to BAME positions; we need to see BAME activists as Party Chairs, Trade Union Liaison Officers and conference delegates, drawing on the best practice of many CLPs who take positive action.

In the same vein, while there are issues that are specific to the BAME community, BAME members are impacted by wider issues like austerity. We must ensure BAME voices are heard not just on BAME issues, but on all areas of policy.

Ideas for next steps:

- All member meetings and general committees should have broader discussion to involve and include all members; BAME organising shouldn't be contained only in BAME forums
- This should be reflected in time for discussion, workshops and socials rather than just procedure
- More practical opportunities should be provided in meetings for BAME members to provide education and training on BAME communities and issues
- In order to achieve the above in areas with a lower density of BAME members, BAME Labour could offer speakers and trainers to CLPs where the resource doesn't already exist, so that we are breaking down barriers to understanding across different areas of the country (something we could use 'Labour Community' to facilitate)
- The structure of CLP meetings should be majority discussion based and allow for thought and experience sharing



Labour Party structures **continued**

Diversity in staff

Labour Party staff are absolutely crucial to our Party. They are the unsung heroes who put in the hard graft of keeping the Party moving, from our internal democracy to finance to campaigns and everything in between.

As much as we need to ensure our elected representatives reflect the make-up of the country, we should do everything we can do to ensure our recruitment does too. Any processes or changes should be worked on and agreed with the recognised trade unions that represent staff.

Ideas for next steps:

- Develop a Community Organising Apprenticeship Standard – work with other organisations, including those working within BAME communities, to set up an Apprenticeship Standard using the Apprenticeship Levy to build the best trained organisers in the movement and open up opportunities to those from more diverse backgrounds
- Use the Apprenticeship Levy (as flawed as it is, it exists and we pay into it) to provide more opportunities for working class young people from all communities, ensuring vacancies are openly advertised and flagged to BAME Labour
- Conduct an annual equality audit and BAME pay gap assessment alongside measuring the Gender Pay Gap, with a view to looking at whether positive action is needed
- Ensure we provide facilities such as prayer rooms and quiet spaces in our major offices and events, including the provision of inclusive catering, Kosher, vegetarian and Halal options so BAME members are not excluded
- Prohibit Labour representatives at all levels from offering unpaid internships, and encourage properly paid apprenticeships or trainee programmes
- Look at how Labour Party offices can engage with local schools to provide work experience placements

BAME voices in public life

We need to find the next generation of Angela Rayner's but also the next Nav Mishra's, Abena Oppong-Asare's, Sadiq Khan's and Marvin Rees'; the next Rishi Shori's, Tulip Siddiq's and David Lammy's.

We have an absolute obligation to ensure our Party, at all levels, is fully representative. We've made real progress through Labour Unions' training schools, trade union leadership programmes and the Bernie Grant Scheme.

It is also important to ensure that Labour's outward profile reflects the entire diversity of our movement and our country, through how we look and sound, our accents and experiences. This will help us relate to and connect with the electorate but also encourage more people to get involved. A recent poll for the Angela for Deputy Leader campaign showed that 57% of women would be encouraged to achieve greater things if they saw a woman from their own background being successful.

Training not just to help people get elected, but to be able to articulate challenges, solutions and political positions is hugely important, as is ensuring an active awareness from those who control our media and social channels in ensuring diversity and representation..

Ideas for next steps:

- Continue to support and build on the work of the Bernie Grant Scheme to talent spot and develop candidates, representatives and leaders
- Ensure we also look at intersectionality in relation to BAME representation, e.g. ensuring gender balance
- Review the feasibility of using All BAME Shortlists and other positive action, while campaigning to change the law
- Fight for a right to paid time off for training and public duty, putting this into legislation when we are in government
- Through new Community Organising models and National Organising Academies, put in place clear routes of progression through political education and training for community activists (see [Manifesto for a Movement](#))
- Work with organisations that have a strong track record of encouraging participation, such as Operation Black Vote

Empowering members: organising, training and education

What we do as a movement is more important than minutes of meetings. To win back trust in BAME communities, we have to shake up how we campaign.

Voters need to see us active in their communities year round, not just on election day. Our members already do so much good work, running food banks, youth groups, helping the homeless and putting on community events but too often that work is not mainstreamed in the party.

We have to change how we campaign to truly reconnect, and BAME members and communities are an intrinsic part of not only doing that but in driving ideas and best practice.

Ideas for next steps:

- Expanded member focused training and development across the whole Party, providing the skills and tools activists need, from organising techniques to using digital tools
- Ensure training is focussed not just on personal development in politics but in how politics is used for the empowerment and betterment of all of our communities

- Showcase the impact our activists have on a regular basis – giving awards at conference is a good thing but we should be sharing our wins and techniques year round
- Establish National Organising Academies that include leadership development, campaign and public speaking training
- Develop Labour Community – a LinkedIn for Labour – to help people share their skills, experiences and talents across the movement
- Training more Trainers – BAME Labour and similar organisations have huge potential, but the central and regional Party cannot provide every resource (and the idea of self-organising is that they don't have to). Training more trainers from BAME Labour and affiliates will help to build sustainable structures and programmes that hugely expand our capacity to engage in our communities
- Ensure we have community language services, Labour Party literature: social media posts and video content must speak to our communities in languages they feel most comfortable with, and we must have resources available to organise in those communities too. Labour Party application forms must also be available in multiple languages, to speak directly to our communities.

Understanding Each Other

Though every Labour Party member should be committed to the fight for equality and against racism, being a Labour Party activist, member, councillor or MP does not mean you automatically understand all the issues or struggles.

We have seen through the need to tackle anti-Semitism in our Party, the pain that can be caused when we get it wrong. We must have zero tolerance on all forms of racism, while understanding how to educate those who are not malicious but uninformed or uneducated – this applies to all forms of racism.

This starts by members accepting that no one knows more about their own racism than the people affected. It is our collective duty to listen, learn and fight racism together.

Ideas for what next:

- BAME Labour can work with the Party to establish a standard training module that works at all levels of our Party on racism and unconscious bias, with a view to looking at how this could be delivered as a standard induction for all elected Labour politicians, potentially through an online module or webinar
- As we have previously touched upon, training more trainers to increase our capacity to reach out

- Provide space at national conferences for training and education sessions not just for BAME members, but for all members to be educated
- Use Labour Community to develop a range of training and education modules, online resources and network of trainers around the history of the anti-racism struggle including on:

- discourse regarding decolonisation, Empire and the active contribution of diaspora communities
- BAME cultures and interaction with religion
- The achievements of BAME leaders, the contributions and sacrifices made to societies across the world internationally.
- Open discussion about migration and why many communities arrived in the UK

We shouldn't wait for Black History Month to promote and learn from history.

- CLP chairs should have training on what it is to be in a position of power, how to enable BAME members to protect themselves, how to encourage participation of BAME members and deal appropriately with incidents of racism if they occur

Being Active Allies

Now as much as any time, there is a need for non-BAME members to be active allies of the BAME communities. The rise of the far right, the scourge of anti-Semitism and increasing hatred and discrimination mean we must do more than ever to show that the struggle of BAME

members is a struggle for us all.

I will work with BAME Labour to establish a BAME National Campaign Day each year to show that everyone in Labour stands with our BAME communities.

BAME voices in policy making

Austerity has hit our communities hard and our BAME members should have a platform to propose policy changes that materially affect their lives. This Tory Government continues to push through a range of policy that directly affects BAME communities - the Windrush Scandal, criminalisation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and most recently the illegal deportation of the Jamaica 50. The people best placed to lead the fight against oppression are those experiencing it. It is their voices that need to be amplified and their policy proposals that we must put forward.

The 2019 Race and Faith Manifesto took major strides in developing policy that would directly challenge the structural barriers faced by BAME communities and enable a better standard of living for all communities. The Manifesto also understood that there are certain policies that adversely target BAME communities more than others, as we saw when the government's 'hostile environment' led to the Windrush scandal. We must hold onto and build on policies like creating an Emancipation Educational Trust to ensure the historical injustices of colonialism, and the role of the British Empire is properly integrated into

the National Curriculum, to teach powerful Black history which is also British history. But this work must continue to involve our communities themselves.

Including BAME communities in policy making

Actions:

- Continue to hold community engagement and consultation workshops, like the ones held in the creation of this manifesto, for our BAME communities and members when crafting new policies.
- Ensure that we have constant policy input from BAME communities through the use of interactive policy consultations and our National Policy Forum.
- Work with our NEC to look at how self-organised sections can have their voices heard on the Conference floor, potentially through motions or reserved BAME delegate seats.

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<https://angelaraynerfordeputy.com/manifesto-for-a-movement/bame-manifesto/>

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