

DISABILITY COORDINATOR – ASHLEY BOWHILL

Hello, my name is Ashley, I'm 26, born and bred in this fine city of ours. I am a wheelchair user myself. When I was younger, I'd question why people of a certain age seemed bitter with society, rather "glass half empty ". My mum told me that people of various minorities had to handle ridicule, accessibility issues, isolation to name a small amount of obstacles. At 26, I am very lucky not to have encountered such struggles- things have changed, and I am eager to ensure we continue to turn minorities into majorities.

However living as a minority doesn't mean that the dreams and ambitions held by the majority are instantly curtailed. It's vitally important that we reach out to all quarters, and unite as one regardless of ability, age, gender, or sexual identity.

On a personal note, it is imperative to instigate the improved accessibility of the west Earlham shopping centre. A popular shopping area, hosting a convenience store, a cafe, and library to name but a few, with only the library truly accessible.

This undoubtedly means our local shops are in decline, with one shopkeeper telling me that he faces closure as trade is so slow. Going forward, thinking about the fine work taking place in the Town Close Ward, and the re-developments of the Suffolk Square shops, where these shops have experienced an increased footfall thanks to these alterations, I would like to see the same outcome for small businesses in West Earlham.

Campaigning for the accessibility of west Earlham shopping centre is far from my only concern.

After witnessing and volunteering with a person who had been made redundant from the former Remploy factory, it made me realise how difficult it is for someone with no computer skills, no CV to fall back on, and to bounce back into the workplace. A problem that may face workers at the closure of the Colman's mustard factory!

It is for the party to show the public that we are an all-inclusive party, welcoming involvement from all, and help us to shape our future, from Norwich Pride, to Disabled campaigners. I want to help shape a multi-coloured future for Norwich and the Labour Party.

I am filled with excitement to with our candidates Clive Lewis and Karen Davis to ensure when a general election comes we win both seats for Labour., and wish to unite a diverse city, and to let the city know that we, the Labour party are alive and kicking, with our fingers on the pulse, encouraging and supporting diversity across our wonderful city, supporting both our electorate, and our local businesses in the process.