

# Jean Branch

For Lewisham North and Deptford



I believe in the importance of community and fully appreciate what an incredible area we have. We want Lewisham North and Deptford to shine – for it to be a destination place to visit and an aspirational place to want to live, with excellent services, schools, hospital, entertainment and leisure facilities, with opportunities for all our residents to thrive.

## About me

I grew up in New Cross and have lived in the Lewisham North and Deptford constituency for most of my life. My mother died in 2016 in Lewisham hospital (cancer, Parkinson's and old age) and my father in 2019 (aged 79) after 9 years of battling with Alzheimer's – with both my parents I dealt with adult social care – both at home and in care settings, this led me to working as a carer from 2019 through the pandemic to 2021. It was this involvement in social care that motivated me to get more politically involved.

Having experienced how workers in the care sector are treated I am hugely passionate about decent pay and conditions for people working as carers, we need to recognise the huge issue this is – with our ageing population and growing number of people needing care. We can't begin to sort out the NHS until we sort out social care. Social care is a key example of the type of work that is undervalued, overlooked and not spoken about in our society – when these workers should be appreciated and respected.

I am 54 years old, a mother of three children – two adults and one teenager, and I have a rescue dog from Kefalonia.

## My political background

I joined the Lib Dems in 2019: as a staunch remainder and supporter of proportional representation they are my political home. I stood to be a Local Councillor for Ladywell Ward - where I live – in 2022. I was approved as a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate in May 2023.

# My professional background

I worked for many years in the music and radio industries; but for the last 20 years I have been self-employed working as a Complementary Healthcare Practitioner. In 2019 I started working in Adult Social Care as a personal carer; I continued in this work until 2021. As well as running my own business, I also work one day a week in a small business in Blackheath.

I was involved in the Pre-School Learning Alliance both as a member for my children's pre-school and then on the Lewisham PSLA body from 2004-2006. I was a school governor and Chair of Governors for The Eliot Bank and Gordonbrock Primary schools federation from 2008-2019, and have been a Co-ordinating group member of my Local Ward Assembly for over a decade. I have been involved in many local campaigns with regards to developments, saving vital services and enjoy helping by volunteering with local organisations. For the last two years I have volunteered with the Brockley Max Festival – helping with their radio station during the festival, and this year I am helping to find sponsors and advertisers for this great local festival: with such limited funding available – it is our local businesses and organisations that help to make these community events happen.

## My priorities

1. We need people to look to politics as a positive force for development and change, not a dirty word associated with career politicians with no life experience only wanting personal power and wealth.
2. We need to speak for the silent majority – people working in jobs that are neglected by people in power and authority – we need to give a voice to people who should be respected and treated better, reflecting the contribution they make.
3. The Liberal Democrats are known for seeking out the key issues in areas – what really matters to people, I want to do that here, I know from my experience on the doorstep that people are fed up with their current politicians – because they don't feel they listen, and sham consultations are what we are offered in terms of engagement.



*Jean campaigning in Ladywell with Lib Dem mayoral candidate Chris Maines*