

James Booth — Former Green Party Candidate, Makerfield By-Election 2026

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Last updated: 26 May 2026 (replaced by Sarah Wakefield — no further Booth developments) **By-election date:** Thursday 18 June 2026

?? Update: 26 May 2026 — James Booth Replaced

James Booth was the Green Party candidate for approximately 5 days (21–26 May 2026) before being replaced by **Sarah Wakefield**, a Manchester City Councillor.

The seat has seen three Green Party candidates in the space of five days:

1. **Chris Kennedy** — selected 21 May, withdrew after 9 hours over antisemitic social media
2. **James Booth** — selected 21 May as emergency replacement, served ~5 days
3. **Sarah Wakefield** — selected 26 May, current candidate

This file is retained for historical purposes. See [sarah-wakefield.md](#) for the current Green candidate.

Bio

Detail	Info
Full name	James Booth
Occupation	NHS nurse (20+ years)
Party	Green Party of England and Wales
Constituency	Makerfield

How They Got Selected

Selected as emergency replacement candidate after original candidate Chris Kennedy withdrew within hours of being selected on 21 May 2026. Kennedy withdrew after antisemitic social media posts resurfaced — he had shared a post calling an attack on Jewish ambulances a "false flag". The BBC reported the Green Party had selected a nurse as the replacement candidate.

Key Context

- The Green Party considered **not standing** at all in Makerfield to avoid splitting the anti-Reform vote
- Some voices within the party suggested backing Labour's Andy Burnham instead (per FT)
- The decision to stand was made; James Booth was selected as candidate
- **Senior Greens urge party to step aside** (24-25 May): The Times reported that senior Greens, including former leader Jonathan Bartley and multiple Green councillors and activists, urged leader Zack Polanski to stand the party down in Makerfield to help Burnham beat Reform. Upvoted 65 on r/ukpolitics (58 comments).
- Booth was subsequently replaced by Sarah Wakefield on 26 May

Twitter/X Discussion

“ Source: Nitter search, May 2026

Booth himself wasn't discussed much — the **Chris Kennedy saga** dominated Green-related Twitter discourse:

- **Chris Kennedy's 9-hour candidacy:** "Less than twelve hours after being announced as the Green candidate in the Makerfield by-election, Chris Kennedy withdrew."
 - **Accusations of antisemitism:** Widely shared
 - **Conspiracy theory defences:** Pro-Palestine accounts defended Kennedy
 - **Senior Greens urged Burnham support:** "Senior Greens 'tell party to make way for Andy Burnham'" was shared by both Greens arguing for tactical voting and by critics mocking the party's indecision
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Reddit Discussion

On r/ukpolitics, the Kennedy withdrawal was a major story for a day — described as an "incredible own goal" by the Greens. The debate about whether the Greens should stand aside for Labour was regularly revisited.

Threads (24-25 May):

- "Senior Greens urge party to step aside for Andy Burnham in Makerfield" (r/ukpolitics, score 65, 58 comments, 24 May)
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Sources

- [BBC — Green Party selects nurse as candidate](#)
 - [Manchester Evening News — Greens announce new candidate \(26 May\)](#)
 - [The Guardian — Green party announce new candidate for Makerfield byelection \(26 May\)](#)
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