



Complaint by Mr Jeremy Corbyn MP¹ about *The Cathy Newman Show*

Type of case	Fairness and Privacy
Decision	Not upheld
Service	Sky News
Date & time	29 April 2026, 19:00
Category	Fairness
Summary	Ofcom has not upheld this complaint about unjust or unfair treatment in the programme as broadcast.

Case summary

The programme included a discussion about the stabbing of two Jewish men in Golders Green, north London, the political reaction to the attack and, in particular, whether the government was doing enough to protect the Jewish community. During the discussion, the presenter asked one of the contributors a question which included the comment “*the rot really started under the previous Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, didn't it, in this country?*”.

Mr Corbyn’s representative complained that the programme was unfair to Mr Corbyn because it alleged that his leadership of the Labour Party marked the beginning of antisemitism in the United Kingdom. He said this was a serious allegation in relation to which Mr Corbyn was not provided with an opportunity to respond.

Ofcom found that the comments made in the programme, given the context in which they were made, were unlikely to have materially or adversely affected viewers’ perceptions of him in a way that was unfair to him.

¹ The complaint was made on Mr Corbyn’s behalf by his Media and Communications Officer, Mr Oliver Durose.

Programme summary

On 29 April 2026, Sky News broadcast an edition of *The Cathy Newman Show*. Part of the programme discussed the recent stabbings of two Jewish men in Golders Green, north London, and the political reaction to them. Joining the presenter, Ms Cathy Newman, in the discussion, was Mr Jon Craig (Chief Political Correspondent), Ms Gillian Keegan (a former Conservative Party Cabinet Minister), and Baroness Thangam Debbonaire (a Labour Party member of the House of Lords).

During the discussion, at around 19:29, the following exchange took place:

Presenter: *"... And you know, very, it must have been very alarming. Gillian, you heard the Tory leader there talking about an epidemic of violence against Jews. Would you say British Jews just aren't safe?"*

Ms Keegan: *They don't feel safe and they haven't since October the 7th. We had all of those same COBRA meetings then. You cannot say antisemitism is unacceptable, and then accept it. So, we were doing lots of things with universities. There's lots of communities where this hate is becoming acceptable. You had, you know, marches on the street saying all kinds of things which were deeply offensive, and also calling for violence. You've got the Iranian Embassy in London now saying things which could be interpreted as a call for violence. The FCDO should be getting the ambassador in and making them held to account...*

Presenter: *You don't think enough is being done by the government?*

Ms Keegan: *No, you have to really show action very quickly, the words have been going on now for years. And we did, you know, we tried to ban hate marches. I remember I was rowing with some of those same people there [i.e. those who attended the COBRA meeting], saying 'you need to do more. The police have powers, make sure you use them'. So, I do think that the action has to be really visible to that community that has felt so vulnerable now for so long and in this country, which is so, so upsetting to everybody.*

Presenter: *And Thangam, you know, the rot really started under the previous Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, didn't it, in this country? This isn't, you know, it's a home-grown problem. Is the current leader doing enough?*

Baroness Debbonaire: *I think that the roots of antisemitism which Keir mentioned, I think we need to own the fact that they come from the sort of attitudes which display themselves when people criticise the government of Israel, the actions of the government of Israel.*

But instead of saying they're talking about the government of Israel, they talk about Israel or Israelis, and sometimes, I'm afraid to say, openly attacking Jews for the actions of the government of Israel. And I think the October the 7th, which I think you've mentioned, it doesn't just go back there. Antisemitism goes back centuries, but we have seen in the last century what happens when antisemitism is unchecked and that's clear.

Presenter: *Keir Starmer got a lot of praise for rooting out antisemitism in the Labour Party, but has he done enough to root it out in the country?*

Baroness Debbonaire: *Well, demonstrably we still have antisemitism, and I think people are afraid. I know people are afraid, Jewish friends of mine who are afraid. And I think the challenge here is actually on those of us who are not Jewish to make sure we are not standing back when we should be moving forward, to make sure we are picking people up when they say things. But, even if they think they're not being antisemitic, they are allowing that atmosphere of hate to prevail. That's important.*

Presenter: *The Metropolitan Police Commissioner drew attention to that, didn't he, today in Golders Green saying, you know, 'a failure to condemn and we've got to ask ourselves why that it is'. We've all got to ask ourselves questions, haven't we, Gillian?*

Ms Keegan: *...Kemi² was very, you know, fluent in, you know, knowing who to condemn and who to stick up for. I've been very clear on that from the beginning, as well. But some people are not. I mean, I could say some political leaders are, you know, let's say more nuanced or, or, or even leaning towards, you know, making this situation worse with some of their words... So, we all have to be very careful, but we do have to call it out. You know, the hate marches, we have to call it".*

The programme continued to its conclusion without any further reference to the complainant.

Summary of the complaint and broadcaster's response

Complaint

Mr Durose complained that Mr Corbyn was treated unjustly or unfairly in the programme as broadcast because during a panel discussion about the reaction to the stabbing of two Jewish men in

² The Rt Hon Ms Kemi Badenoch MP, Conservative Party Leader and Leader of the Opposition.

Golders Green, the presenter, Ms Cathy Newman, asked the question: “The rot [of antisemitism] really started under Jeremy Corbyn in this country didn’t it?”.

Mr Durose said that this was a serious allegation to make, and that Ms Newman had provided no evidence “for the claim that Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership of the Labour Party in 2015 marked the beginning of antisemitism in this country, or that became a serious problem when – and because – he became leader”. Mr Durose added that although Ms Newman’s claim was said as a question, it was “framed as a statement of fact, which gives a totally false impression to the viewers”.

Mr Durose added that at no point did the programme “reach out” to Mr Corbyn or his office. He said that when he contacted the programme asking for a retraction, “they refused, displaying an unwillingness to offer us an opportunity to respond”.

Broadcaster’s response

Sky News said that the programme included a panel discussion concerning the recent stabbing of two Jewish men in Golders Green, and the wider political response to those events. The broadcaster said that the discussion was wide-ranging and addressed the current state of antisemitism in the United Kingdom, the adequacy of political and governmental responses, the experiences of Jewish communities, and the historical context in which those issues have arisen. It was in that context that Cathy Newman posed the question complained of.

The broadcaster said that the words complained of were, on their face and in their context, a question directed to Baroness Debbonaire, who had been a Labour Party MP during Mr Corbyn’s leadership. It said that the complainant had themselves acknowledged that the words were framed as a question. Sky News said that the question was not a statement of fact, nor was it presented as such – “it was a journalistic device designed to invite comment and analysis, and facilitate a wider discussion about antisemitism, its historical context, and the adequacy of political responses to it”. The broadcaster said that viewers of current affairs programmes understood that presenters routinely used challenging questions to test propositions and elicit informed responses from contributors. It said that the ordinary viewer would have understood that the question was introducing a topic for discussion, rather than making a definitive statement about the complainant.

Sky News said that the question reflected a long-standing and widely reported political controversy concerning allegations of antisemitism within the Labour Party during Mr Corbyn’s leadership. It said that that controversy, and the extensive public debate surrounding it, were matters of public record and the subject of sustained media, political and public scrutiny over a number of years. The broadcaster said that the question was also grounded in a matter of genuine public concern. In support of its position, the broadcaster referred to reports from the Community Security Trust which, it said, “recorded a substantial increase in reported antisemitic incidents during this period compared with earlier years”³, and an investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission which found “significant failings” over the Labour Party’s handling of antisemitism complaints and “concerns over a lack of leadership in the party”⁴. The broadcaster said that trends in reported antisemitic incidents demonstrated that concerns regarding antisemitism during that period “were

³ Community Security Trust [‘Incident Reports’](#).

⁴ [‘Investigation into antisemitism in the Labour Party’](#), Equality and Human Rights Commission, October 2020, page 3.

real, significant and widely discussed matters of public interest”. The broadcaster said that against this backdrop, it was entirely legitimate for a presenter to raise the issue in the form of a question during a discussion concerning contemporary antisemitism. It added that, even if some viewers understood the question as reflecting criticism historically directed towards the complainant and the Labour Party during his leadership, the question did not allege that the complainant was personally responsible for antisemitism in the United Kingdom, nor did it attribute any specific conduct to him. Sky News said that the question merely referenced a political controversy that has been the subject of extensive public debate, and that there was an important distinction between referring to the existence of that controversy and asserting personal culpability.

Sky News said that the complainant had attributed a meaning to the question that an ordinary viewer would not reasonably have understood it to bear. It said that the complainant argued that the question amounted to a claim that antisemitism in the United Kingdom began under his leadership, or that it had become a serious problem because he became the leader of the opposition. The broadcaster said that it rejected this interpretation of the material, and said that the question could not reasonably be understood as suggesting that antisemitism first came into existence in the United Kingdom during the complainant’s leadership, and that such a proposition would be self-evidently unsustainable and was contradicted by the discussion that immediately followed. The broadcaster said that Baroness Debbonaire had responded to the question by observing that “antisemitism goes back centuries” and discussing the wider challenge of combating antisemitic attitudes. It said that her response was broadcast in full and was not challenged or contradicted by the presenter. Sky News said that viewers therefore heard, within moments of the question being asked, an explicit statement that antisemitism long pre-dated the complainant’s leadership. It also said that Baroness Debbonaire was a serving MP in the Labour Party during the complainant’s leadership, and was well placed to comment on the matters raised. It said that it was significant that Baroness Debbonaire did not appear to have understood the question as requiring her to defend the complainant personally or to address any specific allegation against him. The broadcaster submitted that this was because she appreciated, as a reasonable viewer would have done, that the question was directed towards broader issues concerning antisemitism and political responses to it, rather than constituting a specific criticism of the complainant.

The broadcaster said that the interpretation advanced by the complainant depends upon reading into the question a series of propositions that were neither expressed nor reasonably implied by the words used. It submitted that this was not a fair or reasonable interpretation of the broadcast when viewed in context and as a whole. It said that the programme was discussing a violent antisemitic incident and wider concerns regarding antisemitism in contemporary Britain and, in that context, it was both relevant and legitimate to refer to periods in recent political history during which antisemitism had become a particularly prominent topic of public debate.

Sky News further submitted that the reference to the complainant was brief, passing and incidental to the wider discussion. It said that the programme as a whole concerned the stabbing of two Jewish men in Golders Green, the safety of Jewish communities, and the adequacy of current political responses to antisemitism. The complainant was mentioned briefly on a single occasion in the context of a question posed to a panellist and was not the subject of the programme and there was no sustained discussion, investigation, examination or criticism of him. Sky News said that the discussion moved immediately to broader questions concerning antisemitism and the contemporary political landscape, and that the reference occupied only a few seconds of a much wider discussion and was not material to the programme as a whole.

Turning to the complaint that Mr Corbyn was not afforded the opportunity to respond, the broadcaster said that, in the circumstances, it did not consider it necessary or practical to contact the complainant or his office prior to broadcast. It said that live current affairs programmes necessarily require presenters to have flexibility to pursue discussions and ask questions as issues arise. It said that questions are not generally scripted in advance and it would be impractical to seek prior comment from every individual who may be mentioned during the course of a live political discussion.

The broadcaster said that it also did not consider that there was any obligation to seek or provide a post broadcast right of reply. It reiterated that the reference to the complainant was a brief contextual question within a broader discussion and did not attribute responsibility to the complainant for antisemitism in the United Kingdom. It said that the programme had simply referenced a well-known political controversy that had been the subject of extensive public debate, and that this did not constitute a material allegation of wrongdoing.

Sky News said that to require a broadcaster to seek comment whenever a political figure is referred to in passing during a live current affairs discussion would be wholly impractical and would significantly impede the free flow of political discourse. It said that when the complainant's representative subsequently contacted the programme requesting a retraction, Sky News had carefully considered the complaint and the concerns raised on Mr Corbyn's behalf. The broadcaster said that the decision not to issue a retraction or offer a right of reply did not reflect any unwillingness to engage with the complainant's representatives. Rather, Sky News had concluded that neither was warranted because the broadcast contained no material allegation against the complainant or unfairness requiring remedial action. It said that the question was legitimate, contextually appropriate and did not misrepresent any matter of fact.

Sky News said that politicians who aspire to, or who have held, the highest offices in the land are rightly subject to a high degree of public scrutiny and critical assessment. It said that the complainant served as Leader of the Opposition and sought the office of Prime Minister. The broadcaster added that broadcasters must retain appropriate editorial freedom to ask challenging questions and to refer to matters that have been the subject of significant public controversy and debate. It said that a finding of unfairness in circumstances such as these, where a presenter briefly referenced a well-known political controversy in the form of a question during a wider discussion of matters of public interest, would risk discouraging robust political journalism and inhibiting legitimate editorial inquiry.

Sky News said that the robust discussion of political issues, including critical assessment of the records of political leaders past and present, was fundamental to democratic discourse and to the role of broadcast journalism, and that the material complained about fell squarely within the bounds of legitimate and fair journalism. The broadcaster said that it would be undesirable if political figures were able to invoke the fairness regime in circumstances where programmes are engaging in legitimate discussion of matters that have long been the subject of public controversy and debate.

Ofcom's Preliminary View

Ofcom prepared a Preliminary View that Mr Corbyn's complaint should be not upheld. Both parties were given the opportunity to make representations on the Preliminary View, and both chose to do so which, insofar as they are relevant to the complaint entertained and considered by Ofcom, are summarised below.

Complainant's Representations

Relevant Context

Responding on the complainant's behalf, Mr Durose submitted that the Preliminary View rested on the significance of the surrounding context which included "considerable media scrutiny and public debate about allegations of antisemitism within the Labour Party, and a perceived failure on Mr Corbyn's part to tackle this when he was its leader". Mr Durose said that the Preliminary View therefore appeared to take the view that it was appropriate to imply that "the rot" of antisemitism started under Jeremy Corbyn, given there existed a public debate about the complainant and his perceived failure to tackle antisemitism in the Labour Party. Mr Durose said that the existence of "considerable media scrutiny and public debate" did not constitute a sufficient contextual basis on which to claim that "the rot of antisemitism started under Jeremy Corbyn". He said that the Preliminary View relied on an unduly broad and inaccurate understanding of the "surrounding context" to "help make sense" of Ms Newman's claim.

Mr Durose submitted that "the rot of antisemitism" clearly and intuitively referred to the pervasiveness of antisemitism in society, and that this was how most people would interpret the comment. Mr Durose said that it was therefore intuitive to interpret Ms Newman's comments to mean that antisemitism became a serious problem with the arrival of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. He said that the "surrounding context" cited by Ofcom "in no way substantiates this specific claim". Mr Durose said that while the Preliminary View made specific reference to the EHRC report, the report itself made "no claim whatsoever" about the general prevalence of antisemitism in society and was instead focused on the Labour Party's handling of antisemitism complaints. Mr Durose said that Ms Newman was therefore relying on the conclusions of the EHRC report to make an entirely different claim which was entirely without basis (i.e. that "the rot of antisemitism started under Jeremy Corbyn").

Mr Durose said that, given the "surrounding context" bore insufficient relevance to the claim that was made, and the Preliminary View rested on the relevance of that context, the complainant maintained that Ms Newman's statement adversely affected viewers' perceptions in a way that was unfair to him.

Qualification of Ms Newman's Comment

Mr Durose said that the Preliminary View acknowledged the broadcaster's submission that the presenter's question was a "journalistic device designed to invite comment and analysis and facilitate a wider discussion about antisemitism". Mr Durose submitted that this claim largely rested on the alleged significance of the qualification near the end of the question, "didn't it?". Mr Durose said that the Preliminary View that this qualification "was likely to have signposted to viewers that the presenter was inviting Baroness Debbonaire to give her views" was wholly unconvincing. Mr Durose said that the central claim rested on a "highly counter-intuitive" interpretation of the use of the qualification in question, and that it was "obvious to anybody who watches the clip and listens to the tone with which Ms Newman asks the question" that this qualification was not used as a "journalistic device... to invite comment". Mr Durose said that, if Ms Newman had wanted to ask Baroness Debbonaire whether the rot of antisemitism started under Jeremy Corbyn, then she would have said: "Do you think the rot of antisemitism started under Jeremy Corbyn". He said that, instead, Ms Newman used the qualification "didn't it?" in order to cement the claim as a given, unchallengeable fact. Mr Durose said that this was not a reasonable way in which Ms Newman's comment could be interpreted as an "honest, good-faith question".

Mr Durose also submitted that Ofcom's view that Ms Newman made a claim about Mr Corbyn for the specific purpose of inviting a discussion about the actions of the current Labour Party "simply reinforces" Mr Corbyn's complaint. Mr Durose said that guests were encouraged to simply accept the claim that was made about Mr Corbyn and move on to answer a different question about the actions of the current Labour Party or, in other words, guests were asked whether the current Labour leader was doing enough given that the rot started under Jeremy Corbyn.

Counterbalance

Mr Durose submitted that Ofcom's Preliminary View that Ms Debbonaire's response would reasonably be interpreted as a counterbalance to the presenter's comments was not credible. Mr Durose said that, although Baroness Debbonaire conceded antisemitism "*goes back centuries*", most viewers would have interpreted her response as validation of Ms Newman's claim. Mr Durose said that this was because Baroness Debbonaire was a well-known critic of Mr Corbyn and had repeatedly made accusations about him relating to antisemitism, and "made a specific comment about those who 'criticise Israel'". He said that viewers were more than likely to have understood this to include Mr Corbyn, particularly as Baroness Debbonaire was responding to a question that singled Mr Corbyn out. Mr Durose said that, contrary to the position in the Preliminary View, the absence of a direct rebuttal did not qualify as a counterbalance, and that fact that Baroness Debbonaire did not allege that Mr Corbyn was personally responsible for antisemitism could not be interpreted as evidence of a counterbalance to the presenter's claims.

Right of Reply

Mr Durose said that it was "disappointing" that the Preliminary View did not give an opinion on the broadcaster's claim regarding a right of reply. Mr Durose said that the broadcaster's argument that "to require a broadcaster to seek comment whenever a political figure is referred to in passing during a live current affairs discussion would be wholly impractical and would significantly impede the free flow of political discourse" was a "remarkable claim". Mr Durose submitted that the goal of free-flowing discussion cannot possibly take precedence over responsible and honest reporting, and that it was "extremely disappointing" that the Preliminary View did not take any stance on the complainant's right to respond to "such a grave claim, in the context".

Broadcaster's Representations

Sky News submitted that the complainant's comments on the Preliminary View did not identify any new broadcast material, factual omission or Code issue that would justify departing from Ofcom's provisional finding. The broadcaster said that the complainant's representations advanced a narrower interpretation of the presenter's question by seeking to isolate the brief reference to Mr Corbyn from the wider context of the live discussion in which it appeared, and that Ofcom was "right to reject that approach".

The broadcaster said that the complainant's submissions on the qualifying phrase "didn't it?" were similarly dependent on a particular interpretation of how viewers would have understood the phrase. It said that, in context, the formulation was part of a question put to Baroness Debbonaire in a live political discussion, and viewers would have understood the exchange as inviting comment on a broader issue.

The broadcaster said that it did not accept the complainant's disagreement with Ofcom's assessment of Baroness Debbonaire's response, and that the Preliminary View was right to take account of the fact that her answer expressly located antisemitism in a much wider historical and

societal context, including the statement that antisemitism “goes back centuries”. The broadcaster said that the complainant’s alternative interpretation did not introduce any new evidence or provide a basis for Ofcom to revisit that conclusion.

The broadcaster also said that it did not agree with the complainant’s submission that the Preliminary View had left the question of an opportunity to respond unresolved. The broadcaster said that it agreed with Ofcom’s provisional conclusion that, in the particular context of the programme, the comments did not amount to a significant allegation against Mr Corbyn such that an opportunity to respond was required.

Decision

Ofcom’s statutory duties include the application, in the case of all television and radio services, of standards which provide adequate protection to members of the public and all other persons from unjust or unfair treatment in programmes on such services.

In carrying out its duties, Ofcom has regard to the need to secure that the application of these standards is in the manner that best guarantees an appropriate level of freedom of expression. Ofcom is also obliged to have regard, in all cases, to the principles under which regulatory activities should be transparent, accountable, proportionate and consistent and targeted only at cases in which action is needed.

In reaching its decision, Ofcom carefully considered all the relevant material provided by both parties. This included a recording of the programme and transcript of it, and both parties’ written submissions, including representations made by the parties in response to Ofcom’s Preliminary View. After careful consideration of the representations, we considered that the points raised did not materially affect the outcome of Ofcom’s Preliminary View to not uphold the complaint.

When considering complaints of unjust or unfair treatment, Ofcom has regard to whether the broadcaster’s actions ensured that the programme as broadcast avoided unjust or unfair treatment of individuals and organisations, as set out in Rule 7.1 of Ofcom’s Broadcasting Code (“the Code”). In addition to this rule, Section Seven (Fairness) of the Code contains “practices to be followed” by broadcasters when dealing with individuals or organisations participating in, or otherwise directly affected by, programmes, or in the making of programmes. Following these practices will not necessarily avoid a breach of Rule 7.1 and failure to follow these practices will only constitute a breach where it results in unfairness to an individual or organisation in the programme.

In considering this complaint, Ofcom had regard to the following Code Practices:

Practice 7.9: “Before broadcasting a factual programme..., broadcasters should take reasonable care to satisfy themselves that material facts have not been presented, disregarded or omitted in a way that is unfair to an individual or organisation...”.

Practice 7.11: “If a programme alleges wrongdoing or incompetence or makes other significant allegations, those concerned should normally be given an appropriate and timely opportunity to respond”.

Ofcom recognises the broadcaster’s right to freedom of expression and the public interest in allowing them to broadcast programmes on matters of interest to viewers freely. However, in presenting material in programmes, reasonable care must be taken by broadcasters not to do so in a

manner that causes unfairness to people or organisations in programmes. Whether a broadcaster has taken reasonable care to present material facts in a way that is not unfair to an individual or organisation will depend on all the particular facts and circumstances of the case including, for example, the seriousness of any allegations and the context within which they are made.

In considering this case, we took account of the overall background context in which the programme was broadcast. We took into account that Mr Corbyn was a well-known, political figure who had previously held the positions of Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition and had, during this time, been the subject of media and public attention. In particular, the historic allegations of antisemitism within the Labour Party, particularly when Mr Corbyn was its leader, have been the subject of much public scrutiny and debate. We were aware that in October 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission investigation identified “significant failings in the way the Labour Party handled antisemitism complaints” during the complainant’s tenure as leader⁵. We were also aware that it was documented in media reports at the time that Mr Corbyn’s position was that antisemitism and racism had no place in the Labour Party, and that scale of the issue had been exaggerated by his political opponents⁶. It was in this context that Ofcom examined the comments that were made in the programme that it was alleged, unfairly, that antisemitism in the United Kingdom “became a serious problem when – and because – [the complainant] became leader”.

As set out in the “Programme summary”, the programme included the presenter asking the Baroness Debbonaire: “... *you know, the rot really started under the previous Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, didn’t it, in this country? This isn’t, you know, it’s a homegrown problem. Is the current leader doing enough?*”.

In our view, were we to consider the use of the words “*the rot really started under the previous Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, didn’t it, in this country?*” in isolation, without taking account of any of the surrounding context set out above, it is possible that viewers may have gained an impression that antisemitism within the Labour Party worsened significantly under Mr Corbyn’s leadership. However, in determining whether or not there is unfairness in the programme, Ofcom must take into account all of the relevant context.

While we acknowledged Mr Durose’s representations on the Preliminary View that there was not a sufficient basis for the presenter’s comment, we took the view that, in the particular circumstances of this case, the comment regarding the “*rot*” was contextualised. As set out above, there had already been considerable media scrutiny and public debate about allegations of antisemitism within the Labour Party, and a perceived failure on Mr Corbyn’s part to tackle this when he was its leader. Further, in Ofcom’s view, alleged historical issues with antisemitism in the Labour Party was directly relevant to a discussion about the ability of the Party and its current leadership to address renewed concerns about an increase in antisemitism.

We also took into account that the comments were made during the course of a live discussion in a daily programme, viewers of which were likely to have expected in-depth debate of significant political and current affairs topics from the presenter and the programme contributors. We also considered that in a democratic society there is a genuine public interest in broadcasters exercising

⁵ See footnote 3.

⁶ ‘Jeremy Corbyn [rejects overall findings](#) of EHRC report’, The Guardian, 29 October 2020
‘[Corbyn apologises](#) for ‘hurt’ caused by antisemitism in Labour, BBC News, 26 March 2018

their right to freedom of expression by scrutinising the actions of politicians and senior public figures.

We had account of Sky News' submission that the presenter's question was a journalistic device designed to invite comment and analysis, and facilitate a wider discussion about antisemitism, and that viewers would have recognised it as such. We noted that the presenter appeared to caveat her comments, saying *"the rot really started under the previous Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, didn't it in this country?"* (Ofcom's emphasis). We recognised that, in his representations on Ofcom's Preliminary View, Mr Durose disagreed with this interpretation of the presenter's question and submitted that the phrase *"didn't it"* was instead used to cement the presenter's comments as fact. Mr Durose also submitted that that *"the rot of antisemitism"* clearly and intuitively referred to the pervasiveness of antisemitism in society, and that this was how most people would interpret the comment. Taking into account the wider context of the discussion in the programme, in our view this qualification was likely to have signposted to viewers that the presenter was inviting Baroness Debbonaire to give her views on whether the Labour Party was *"doing enough"* to address concerns about increased antisemitism – given the perceived issues it had faced in the past in relation to this particular matter – and whether this was a *"homegrown problem"*, rather than making a statement of fact about Mr Corbyn. Even if some viewers had been left with the impression that the presenter was seeking to *"cement"* her comments, we considered that this was balanced by the way in which Baroness Debbonaire responded to the question. In particular, we took into account that Baroness Debbonaire had clearly stated that *"we need to own the fact that [the roots of antisemitism] come from the sorts of attitudes which display themselves"* when people start *"openly attacking Jews for the actions of the government of Israel"*, that antisemitism *"goes back centuries"* and had gone *"unchecked"*. Further, in her response to the presenter, Baroness Debbonaire emphasised the long, centuries old, history of antisemitism in the country, and attributed the cause to certain *"attitudes"*. We considered Mr Durose's argument, submitted in response to Ofcom's Preliminary View, that most viewers would have interpreted Baroness Debbonaire's response as validation of Ms Newman's claim because she was a *"well-known critic of Mr Corbyn"* who the complainant alleged had repeatedly made accusations about him relating to antisemitism. However, having carefully considered the material broadcast, we noted that at no point did Baroness Debbonaire allege that Mr Corbyn was personally responsible for antisemitism in society as a whole. We considered that it was likely to have been clear to viewers from her response that while antisemitism was present in the United Kingdom *during* Mr Corybn's leadership, its origins predated this (i.e. was not present *because* of him). We therefore remained of the view that Baroness Debbonaire's contribution provided sufficient counterbalance to the presenter's comments.

We also noted that after putting the initial question to Baroness Debbonaire, the presenter did not make any further reference to the complainant. Moreover, the subject matter of the discussion throughout most of the programme had no direct relevance to the complainant, with the focus having been on whether the government was, at the present time, was being sufficiently robust in addressing the issue of antisemitism.

Given the overall context of the broadcast programme, as set out above, Ofcom's view is that the reference to the *"rot"* of antisemitism having started when Mr Corbyn was leader of the Labour Party was unlikely to have materially or adversely affected viewers' existing perceptions of him in a way that was unfair. On that basis, we do not consider that material facts were presented, omitted or disregarded in a way that resulted in unfairness to the complaint. Further, it is our view that, given the particular context, the statements being made in the programme did not

amount to significant allegations being made against Mr Corbyn, such that he should have been given an opportunity to respond.

For these reasons, we did not consider that Mr Corbyn had been treated unfairly in the programme as broadcast.

Ofcom's Preliminary View is to not uphold this complaint of unjust or unfair treatment in the programme as broadcast.