German candidate reflects on standing for the Green Party in the North West Region

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Astrid Johnson, 55, is a candidate in the Green Party in the North West region in tomorrow's election.

Writing for Metro, she's reflected on the experience of being an EU27 candidate in these elections, and how she's felt since the 2016 referendum result.

She wrote: "I fell in love with England when I was 12 years old. I came for a language exchange, and immediately knew that I wanted to move to live here from my native Germany. I loved the easy-going politeness of the English people in comparison to the formalities of home.

"So over twenty years ago I left Germany to enjoy the cosmopolitan atmosphere of London. In 2009, I went to the Proms, and met my now husband.

"My step daughter is 19, and she wants to go and live in Paris. But without freedom of movement from the UK's membership of the EU, her options are likely to be much more limited than the ones I had when I was younger."

Astrid added: "I felt immediately at home when I moved to the UK, but since 2016 I've felt like 'a migrant'. This is my home, but I'm not being treated like it is.

"Applying for settled status is frightening and angering. Even the technology is not fit for purpose. Why do they tell me I have to have an Android phone? (I don't.)

"Why should I have to 'apply' to stay in my own home? Why did I not have a vote in 2016?

"Those with resources, skills and money will probably find a way through eventually, but what of those without the language skills, the computer knowledge, or the resources to navigate their way through the new 'settled status' procedure? What about their children, if they don't have sufficient documentation?"

Astrid concluded: "I want to improve life here in Manchester and the North West, my home, to make things better for my neighbours, my community, the country in which I hope to live for the rest of my life. But I also see the EU as a way that we can make life better for people across Europe."

Tweet