

2015

# HAVING FABIAN

February 2015

In this edition;

Stephen Timms

Jon Cruddas

Whippersnapper

The third installment of our series to mark 50 years of  
Having in 2015

- The Havering Council Elections 1971

- Future meetings  
David Marshall on the Falklands



# HAVERING FABIAN

VOLUME 2 EDITION 21 February 2015

## Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter. We reflect on recent meetings and prospects ahead on 2015.

Our presence on social media is bringing us closer to a number of new organisations, and we welcome their involvement. In this edition we have a contribution from “Whppersnapper” a group of young people with an interest in politics.

We continue the series on the Council elections in Havering since 1964, bringing you the results, the personalities and the movement in the politics of the borough. We are short on details for the earlier years (although we do have all the results) so if you can help we would be glad to hear from you. We have inspired former Havering Councillor Del Smith to finish a similar piece of work on Harold Hill politics, and there is more on this below.

The local Labour Parties have candidates in place and are campaigning hard for 2015 – keep up to date at our twitter site [@haveringfabians](#) for the latest news. We are affiliated to the four local Labour Parties, and will do all we can to support their campaigns.

Both Romford and the Hornchurch and Upminster Labour parties have upgraded their websites and are active on Twitter – no doubt both will be used to keep you up to date as the campaigns take shape.

We continue to work with Sam Gould, the Labour PPC for Romford, and Paul McGeary, now the Labour PPC for Hornchurch and Upminster, Jon Cruddas, and Margaret Hodge in the run up to the General Election.

We will also be supporting the Labour candidates in South Essex – Polly Billington, Mike Le Surf and Gavin Callaghan have been speakers at our meeting. Watch our social media outlets for further details.

As opinions are the lifeblood of politics, we welcome a reply to any of the articles. The Fabian Society exists to promote political debate, both within and outside the Labour Party. Progressive politics extends beyond the Labour Party and contributions from the Labour Movement as a whole are welcome.

Attendances at recent meetings have remained excellent and the quality of speakers remains exceptional. We are glad to see a number of new people attending the meetings, and have an ever increasing number of followers on Face book and Twitter.



Our website address is <http://haveringfabians.org.uk>  
Our main Face book site is a closed group, please contact David Marshall to be added to the site or e-mail [Haveringfabians@outlook.com](mailto:Haveringfabians@outlook.com) and we will add you to the growing list of followers. We now have a public site as well, so follow us on whichever media suits.



## **The future of politics lies with the whippersnappers <sup>1</sup>**

**By Adrian Burbie & Ché Applewhaite ~ Editors**

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Whippersnapper is an online opinion platform set up and run by 16 year olds, aimed primarily at other young people. We founded our platform on January 1 2015 because we felt there was not enough youth engagement in politics, and more broadly, a lack of interest in the politics and governance of our country. We noticed that hardly anyone inside Parliament, its affiliates, the press or amongst young people themselves were doing anything about it, so we decided to.

We want to change the perception of national issues to young people and also get MPs listening to what we want/think is important, because it is us who will have to live with the long-term consequences of their policies. When one surveys the current political landscape, the UK seems like a gerontocracy, rather than a democracy, at the moment.

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<sup>1</sup> *What are you waiting for? It's time to get more young people into politics.*  
(Source: BBC News)

Our aims:

- \* to give us and like-minded young people a platform to voice their views
- \* to promote lively discussion around the hot topics of the UK and world today
- \* to show the breadth of political views amongst young people
- \* to give our readers a fresh and informed view of the world
- \* to get the young engaged in politics and increase youth participation

We are a rapidly growing political opinion publication, and can be found at [ukwhippersnapper.blogspot.co.uk](http://ukwhippersnapper.blogspot.co.uk) and on Twitter [@whipper\\_snap](https://twitter.com/whipper_snap). We have a network of young writers across the country, writing on a wide variety of issues that are important to them, and their works are published to our followers, an audience of 1100+, including notable MPs such as Sadiq Khan and Tessa Jowell, MEPs, Peers and leading journalists such as Louise Mensch, Eamonn Holmes, Louise Minchin and Martha Kearney.

At this point, we want to stress that we are non-partisan. However, we guarantee all of our writers the independence and freedom to support whatever parties and issues they want to.

As our name suggests, we are a group of like-minded, young individuals who have too much to say, and what to unleash their opinions on anyone that will listen. Young people are often labelled as feckless layabouts, who are apathetic about politics and contribute little to society. We hope we can be the exception that disproves the rule.

We have many opinions on today's political world that we want to share, because too often, the views of the young are discounted and ignored when it comes to politics. Whether it be in Westminster, Capitol Hill or even your local high street, we have got opinions galore when it comes to politics, which we want to shout from the rooftops to anyone unfortunate enough to be within 100 ft.

The winds of change are blowing in our favour. It is clear that as a generation, we are starting to realise our potential power that can only be fully unlocked if we are engaged and active. We want to mobilise the group of people we bundle up and call "the young", and just because we don't have as many miles on the clock, that doesn't mean that our

opinions are invalid. The road to an active and engaged youth population is by no means a smooth or straight one. However, it is a challenge which we must not shy away from, and that process starts today.

Contact details [ukwhippersnapper@gmail.com](mailto:ukwhippersnapper@gmail.com)

## **Stephen Timms –Labour Market policy**

Eat Ham MP Stephen Timms has made several visits to the Society, including one while he was in the Cabinet. The subject of his talk was Labour Market policy under a Labour Government.

Stephen began by outlining that there are big choices ahead and the collation has not eliminated the deficit. There has been no growth for 3 years, and the deficit has not been halved.

Stephen has been shadowing Ian Duncan Smith as he introduces welfare reform. The intention was to have a million people on Universal credit by April 2014; by this date there were five thousand (now 23thousand). So the government have got nowhere near their target. In 2011 the intention was the transition would be completed by 2017, this has now slipped to 2021.

The biggest impact of this has been over a million people using foodbanks<sup>2</sup>, a twenty fold increase.

Ministers refuse to face up to this – Ian Duncan Smith had refused to meet the Tressell Trust who he saw as “publicity seeking” . The trust won’t keep quiet.

Before Christmas, an all party enquiry into hunger had generated publicity with the Archbishop of Canterbury quoted saying “Hunger storms the Land”. This kept the pressure on IDS. He sought to raise the profile of emergency payments so recognised that the system was not working – exactly what the Trust were telling him.

In respect of the wider Labour market, the monthly unemployment statistics had shown a decline after a 3 year period of no growth; while unemployment had declined in December, youth unemployment had increased in November and December. Female unemployment had

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<sup>2</sup> source – the Tressell Trust

increased in the last quarter, so there were worrying trends. New jobs are not going to unemployed people and disadvantaged groups needed work.

A new approach is needed and this was the basis of Labour policy. The Future Jobs fund and the jobs guarantee would be the central change.

The Future Jobs fund had been scrapped by the coalition, who none the less continued with a review of its effectiveness. The evaluation was glowing. The fund cost £750 million, of which half came back to the exchequer as people went back into work, off benefit, paid tax and National Insurance. About half of those on the scheme were in work six months later.

The Labour proposed Jobs Guarantee scheme would see the Government guarantee an offer of a job for at least 25 hours a week at least the minimum wage; the Government would pay for 6 months, and encourage job seekers to take up the offer. After 6 months the Job Seekers Allowance would stop; the expectation is that many would remain employed beyond this.

This is the biggest single financial commitment that Labour has made, to be funded by a tax on Bankers bonus and personal tax relief on salaries over £150k.

The European Union is backing this proposal and Britain is the only State not doing this at present.

Long term unemployment has not fallen – so there is a divergence in the short and long term employment markets.

There have been lots of issues around job centres, with many people livid about their treatment.

A more localised approach has been tried on a regional basis. A range of agencies have been used e.g. the Skills Agency, Health, Housing – as these cannot be co-ordinated at a regional level, and Ministers in Whitehall are even more remote.

Stephen had worked with David Lammy during the last Labour Government and Whitehall led initiatives on employment and skills have limited success.

So the intention under an incoming Labour Government would be commissions at Whitehall level but contracts at City or Regional level.

In Manchester there had been success, with scope for involving colleges, Local Authorities and the NHS.

Stephen gave an example where providing a man with false teeth was enough to get them back into employment – with a traditional approach there would be no local health input and this would not have happened.

Job Centre Plus had become an issue – when introduced, Job Centres were seen as there to help. Now they are seen as an agency to catch out claimants and take benefits away. Some people actually hate them now, there is no dignity

While it has always been the case that claimants could be sanctioned, the University of Glasgow had estimated the level had increased from £50m in 2010 to £300m in 2014. The Tressell Trust had estimated 20/30% underuse due to benefit sanctions, with lots of low level sanctions.

This undermined the intention of the scheme. Labour would

- Scrap sanctions targets – while Ministers deny targets are used, it is clear managers discuss them.
- End assessment of managers is based on getting claimants off benefit each month, but not getting them into jobs

Sanctions and jobs for a week are seen as success but are not really!

The culture has to change, so that it does not clobber claimants but assists them.

Labour had learnt a lot since the New Deal, and from work programme. Stephen thinks the new model will deliver a better solution. The resources are in place; Ed Balls now needs the chance to deliver it.

Stephen laid out an impressive programme, and this was supported by the audience. Let's hope Stephen gets the chance to implement a policy designed to improve many people's lives.

## **Jon Crudas -What's at stake?**

Dagenham and Rainham MP Jon is a regular speaker, and after a rapidly concluded AGM addressed the Society on the up and coming General Election. He was confident enough to speak without notes and then took an extensive range of questions.

There were 90 days to go until the election. As 2010 was the worst result since 1918 (although 1983 bears comparison) is it so bad that Labour is still in with a chance of winning in May? Across Europe centre left governments are falling everywhere. The last Labour government's defeat followed this pattern not helped by some own goals. So it is unprecedented that Labour could get back after one term.

### **So what's at stake?**

A range of things, including the future of the United Kingdom. Polls suggest the SNP could get 51 out of 54 seats. Whatever the actual result it is hard to think the Scottish dissatisfaction with Westminster politics is not going away any time soon.

English votes for English laws is gaining some traction, but risks 2 types of MPs. Those would undermine the architecture of current politics and open the door to UKIP.

David Cameron could go down in history as the cost the UK its identity.

Economically, it had been a long recession, the longest since the 1930's. "Bank aid" was an attempt to put sticking plaster over the wounds; there has been no redesigning of the system. This (the redesign) needs a genuine debate. The previous government has seen 60 consecutive quarters of growth (dating back before 1997). This had brought some stability and "back end redistribution". The recession had ended this, and now there was an on-going risk of another debt-ridden crisis.

There have been changes in society much more dramatic than is realised. Jon's casework was now 850 cases per week – double the number 5 years ago. These were much more complicated than before, covering Housing, debt, zero hour's contracts, and agency contracts. The vulnerable in Society were more exposed than before – Society was "on tilt" and changing dramatically.

For those under 20, one in four have mental health issues. Society is being changed in ways unimagined previously. This government were getting away with things that Margaret Thatcher would not have dared to consider.

Five years more of this government would change the character of the Country and its basic unity.

#### Democracy and politics

In 1951, 95% of the electorate voted Labour or Conservative. Now there are significant votes for Liberal, Greens, the nationalists and potentially UKIP. This brings into question first past the post. Jon had been a long time supporter of this, but it no longer looks sustainable; for a number of parties to get lots of votes but few seats compromises credibility.

### Europe

The Country seems to be drifting into exit from Europe in a reckless and short sighted way, slipping into this outcome by sleepwalking rather than planning the exit. If the Tories get in a referendum would follow in 2 years with no certainty of the outcome.

Debt driven capitalism or modern social democracy is the stark choice.

Labour has started to think this through. Issues that have been off the agenda since the 90's are being considered again.

The Clinton era in the States saw wages driven down by globalisation a trend followed across the West. Wages were supplemented by tax credits as a push back against decline. This was funded by a deal with finance capital where an element of the upside was used to maintain living standards.

This approach works when there is growth – but post 2008 it doesn't – this is the area where a rethink is needed. There is the start of a distinct approach by Labour to address this, but it's in the development stage.

Social choices are also changing. With the political changes – visible more in Essex than London with the rise of UKIP, there is a real prospect of a reset of the political parties. First Past the Post has kept the lid on this but (as above) the issue of Electoral Reform is not going away. Jon now

favours changes as the public is expressing a preference for many different Parties.

Jon used to think 1997 was the important election of this era – however 2015 now looks far more important considering the issues outlined above. The Stakes could not be higher

Via this prism, the Tories are on the edge, and in crisis. The Leader manages the Party not the Country, a position that is becoming ever more awkward. There will be bloodletting on the right, win lose or draw.

Can Labour buck the historical trend and be back in office after a term? Being in contention is admirable but is it enough? The Party has not yet rebuilt the Policy agenda. There is discussion about how “big” Labour should go – in Jon’s view, it can’t go big enough.

There are huge challenges ahead. Politicians are less and less able to deal with them and therefore although elements of the electorate seek something different, such as UKIP Even though they have no new ideas either.

This is the backdrop to discussion about the Labour manifesto as it is finalised.

The population is not talking about how significant the changes are – will the Country change direction without realising it.

So everything is at stake – yet the campaign so far is “he said she said” and white noise rather than facing up to the huge changes about to happen.

The big elections have been 1931, 1945, 1979 and now 2015 – but we are tipping into it not driving the agenda.

Jon then took a range of questions – he admired Ed Miliband and the way the press critics failed to impact on him at all, and thought that Cameron was concerned that if the TV debates do take place, Miliband’s calm approach and grasp of detail would become apparent; this explained Cameron’s reluctance to engage.

He was concerned that the so called “35%” policy had got a grip of some of the Labour campaign advisers; this may achieve a win at the polls, but

without a grasp of the big issues and policies to deal with them, what follows would be a huge risk.

Almost unnoticed by the media, Labour now had a raft of policies – these are flowing on a daily basis- but this was not registering with the Public.

There is hope for Labour – the campaign will be intense and there is a need to win the argument as well as winning in the polls.

## **50 years of Havering**

2015 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the London Borough of Havering This is the second of a series giving details of the results and tracking the political history of the Borough from the Labour party perspective.

The details of the earlier elections are not well documented, and a number of those who stood as candidates are now deceased. If you can provide insight, or more details please get in touch – when we finish the series we will collate and publish an updated history.

For details on the election results in detail the following link gives every election result since 1964 across London – the 1964 results are at a borough level although we do have a copy of the detailed ward by ward result if interested.

<http://data.london.gov.uk/elections>

## **Del Smith**

Former Harold Hill Labour Councillor Del Smith has been collating a history of politics on Harold Hill. The articles can be found on the friends of Dagnam Park website via the following link.

<http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/politics/Harold%20Hill%20Politics%201964%2068.dwt>

We will be drawing on some of the material, particularly for the later years, where Del knew a number of the individuals involved.

## 1971 Election

Going into the 1970 election Wilson's government had regained some support after the devaluation and the opinion polls suggested a close call. This would be the last elections on the existing boundaries, and from 1974 Havering would have 3 parliamentary seats.

At the GLC Elections April 1970, the Conservatives won all three seats (as before elected on a Borough wide basis). Bernard Brooke Partridge was the most famous of the candidates, a man who many years later cause a by-election in Romford in a vain attempt to save the GLC. This did not bode well for the General Election due in the summer.

Harold Wilson was defeated by Ted Heath, with a Conservative majority of 30 seats. Locally Alan Lee Williams was defeated by conservative John Loveridge by 5,830 votes in Hornchurch. In Romford Dick Leonard beat future MP Michael Nuebert by 2,760 votes to retain the seat.

Heath's government became unpopular very quickly, and an outbreak of industrial relations breakdowns followed. So a much better result was anticipated in Havering when the Council elections took place in 1971. For once expectations were fulfilled and Labour won Havering outright for the only time. Michael Ward became leader of the Council.

All the seats won in 1964 were regained, and Harold Wood, which had been narrowly lost in 1964, returned Labour Councillors for the first time. Anecdotes suggest local traffic issues played an important role in making the difference. The gap between third placed Labour Candidate Geoff Otter and the 4<sup>th</sup> placed Conservative was 104 votes, so a narrow win and a turnaround of 122 from 1964. Future Council leader Roger Ramsey came 5<sup>th</sup>.

In Hacton Ward, former Hornchurch UDC Mayor Harry Moss (Father of future Havering Councillor Howard Moss, and a member of the International Brigade) lost by 102 votes, the closest Labour has come to winning in the ward. In St Andrews Labour candidate K. Ince was 54 short of third place (although Labour did win a seat in the 1998 election when Graham Carr won a seat as the votes split between the Residents, Tories and Labour).

In Rainham, a seat Labour would win in 1990, all three candidates polled over 2,000 votes but there was still a gap of 287 to the lowest placed Ratepayer candidate.

In all 3 of the parliamentary seats, Labour was ahead of the Tories – by 25.9% in Hornchurch, 14.3% in Upminster but by only 0.1% in Romford. Labour got 47.7% of the vote, an increase of 30.x% from 1968

Elsewhere, occasional visitor to Havering Fabian events and long term Liberal candidate Terry Hurlstone came a distant 8<sup>th</sup> in Gooshays. All three Labour candidates in Emerson Park polled over 1,000 votes.

The change was reflected elsewhere with Labour in control of 21 councils in London, up from just 4 in 1968. The Heath government was under pressure. Nationally, this was very much an era of two party politics, although the Liberal vote and number of MPs would begin to increase in the 1970's and 80's. A large number of the borough's population worked at Fords in Dagenham. This was Labour's electoral highpoint in Havering (perhaps the 1997 general election being the other contender). Elections in Havering were closely fought, usually resolved in the same way as the national result, and in Hornchurch in particular, majorities were small whoever won.

The new administration, led by Michael Ward, drew heavily on the Councillors elected in 1968, complemented by the new intake. Many of these would be key players in the Borough for many years, including Wilf Mills, Margaret Latham, Ron Whitworth, Jack Hoepelman, and Quakers Frank and Rita Coffin.

This would be the last three year Council, so the Labour administration knew there was limited time to make an impact. The key policies for the administration were introducing Comprehensive education and purchasing 800 or so private properties for use as Council Housing to address an increasing waiting list.

The first proposal for the change over to a comprehensive system was rejected by Education Secretary Margaret Thatcher. The second was accepted, and in September 1973 the first comprehensive intake entered the Council's schools.

Proving someone had a sense of humour, the administration's representatives on the Crematorium committee were Councillors Frank Coffin, Dave Burn and Geoff Otter<sup>3</sup>.

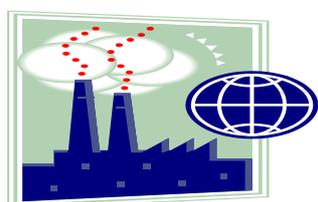
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<sup>3</sup> This may even be true - it has however been a story told at Hornchurch Labour socials going back decades. Dave Burn has never denied this, although he has always had a sense of humour....

## 1971 Result

Party	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	30	5	35
Conservative	13	4	17
Resident	12	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Turnout 42.3%</b>			

Next in the series - 1974. No Overall Control,



## Future Meetings

There will be one more meeting before the election, when Havering Fabians Secretary David Marshall will talk on the Falklands. The venue will be Billet Studio billet Lane Hornchurch 24th March 8 pm Billet Studio Billet Lane Hornchurch

Details of other speakers in the lead after May 2015 will be updated on social media once arrangements have been finalised.

### **Falklands 250 years & beyond** Talk by David Marshall

250 years ago a British settlement was established at Port Egmont on Saunders Island in West Falklands. The evening will focus on the history and international political controversy that haunts the islanders, including Nick Barker's contention in "Beyond Endurance" that events in April 1982 were an unnecessary war and loss of life. The fantastic eco-tourism possibilities will not be the main issue of this evening.

The venue is Billet Studio, 51 Billet Lane, Hornchurch (opposite Queen's Theatre). This is a short walk from Emerson Park Station. Buses 165/248/256/370/252.

Car parking in nearby streets, Sainsbury's Town Car Park and the Queen's Theatre.

***The Provisional Programme for after May 7<sup>th</sup> .....***

May.....meeting with some of the candidates for GLA;

June..... .meeting with some of the London Mayoral candidates;

July..... .Local Health service issues

July 14<sup>th</sup> Local Societies Meeting & Tea at House of Commons / Lords;

September...Reflections on outcome of May elections;

October..... Animal Welfare.

Venues and dates will be confirmed depending on the availability of speakers.



If you go to the Bekash in Romford mention you are a Havering Fabian and get 10% discount off your food bill.



**We value your input!**

The Society invites speakers on a range of subjects; if you would like us to invite speakers on a particular subject let us know and we will try to oblige.

The Society has a policy of rotating meetings around the Borough; if you need or can offer a lift or if you know of any suitable venues we could use, contact David Marshall.

## Local Fabian Society Contacts

<b>Chair</b> Councillor Keith Darvill	<b>Secretary</b> David Marshall	<b>Contact</b> David Marshall
<b>Membership Secretary</b>		31 Vicarage Road Hornchurch RM12 4AS 01708 441189 <a href="mailto:david.c.marshall@talk21.com">david.c.marshall@talk21.com</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b> Mike Flynn	<b>Treasurer</b> Dave Baldock	
<b>Committee Members</b>		
Cecile Duerinckx	Ed Glasson	Sanchia Alasia
Sam Gould	Ian Carnochan	

## Future Editions

The next edition will be published in the spring and focus on the General Election in May 2015.

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. The Fabian Society exists to promote progressive ideas from within and outside of the Labour movement.

As such we are happy to publish articles in keeping with this broad ethos, but reserve the right not to include all of part of any material which falls outside of this parameter.

## Links

The following links should be useful in keeping up with the debate in the Labour movement

National Fabian Society [www.fabian-society.org.uk](http://www.fabian-society.org.uk)

The Labour Party [www.labour.org.uk](http://www.labour.org.uk)

Jon Cruddas MP for Dagenham [www.joncruddas.org.uk](http://www.joncruddas.org.uk)

**Twitter** [@joncrudasmp](https://twitter.com/joncrudasmp)

Barking Labour Party [www.barkinglabour.org.uk/](http://www.barkinglabour.org.uk/)

**Twitter @barkinglabour**

Romford Labour Party [www.romford-labour-party.org.uk/](http://www.romford-labour-party.org.uk/)

**Twitter @romforlabour**

Hornchurch and Upminster Labour Party

Website <http://hornchurchandupminsterlabour.org.uk/>

Facebook Hornchurch-Upminster-Constituency-Labour-Party

**Twitter @HULabour**

Tribune [www.tribunemagazine.org](http://www.tribunemagazine.org)

**Twitter @Tribunemagazine**

Hope not Hate [www.hopenothate.org.uk](http://www.hopenothate.org.uk)

**Twitter @hopenothate**

Thames Chase Community Forest

**Twitter @Thames\_Chase**

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/recreation.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/EnglandEssexNoForestsThamesChaseCommunityForestTheThamesChaseForestCentre>

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[biggsnews@london.gov.uk](mailto:biggsnews@london.gov.uk)

His website is [www.johnbiggs.org.uk](http://www.johnbiggs.org.uk)

**Twitter @JohnBiggsAM**

## **Havering Fabian Society is affiliated to**

- National Fabian Society
- Dagenham and Rainham Labour Party
- Romford Labour Party
- Upminster and Hornchurch Labour Party
- Barking Labour Party



## **Havering Fabian Membership**

To join Havering Fabian Society, please complete the following and send to David Marshall. You can also join the Society nationally, David has more details. You do not have to be a member of the Labour Party to join Havering Fabians, but you will need to be a Labour Party member to take part in Labour Party selections and elections.



This is the 20th edition of the newsletter. Previous editions are available, please get on touch if you want a copy; all are available via e-mail.

## **Havering Fabian Society**

Founded in 1974, the Society promotes progressive political thought in Havering and beyond. Membership of the Society is not necessary to attend meetings, and neither is membership of the Labour Party.

However, to participate in nominations to the Local Labour Parties or in selection conferences, membership of both is required. The Society meets regularly throughout the year, apart from the summer and during election campaigns. Local Membership is currently £10 waged, £5 unwaged.

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**I\ we wish to join Havering Fabians**

**Name** .....

**Address** .....

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.....

.....**postcode**.....

**E-mail**.....

**Phone number** .....

**Waged (£10) unwaged £5** .....