

2015

HAVERING FABIAN

April 2015

In this edition;

Tessa Jowell

David Marshall on the Falklands

Election 2015

Sam Gould

The fourth installment of our series to mark 50 years of
Havering in 2015

- The Havering Council Elections 1974

- Future meetings

Gareth Thomas



HAVERING FABIAN

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Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter. We reflect on recent meetings and prospects for the election in May 2015.

Our presence on social media is bringing us closer to a number of new organisations, and we welcome their involvement. The next edition will include an article from Chadwell Heath Asian Women's group.

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 former Hornchurch GLC Member Alan Williams will be providing details of the 1970's including some of the elections we have already covered.

Del's articles on Harold Hill can be read on the following link

<http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/>

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.

Our best wishes go to recent visitor to the Society John Biggs, who will now be the Labour Candidate in the re-run of the Tower Hamlets Mayoral election. The 200 page report into the election in 2014 has a lot of detail on abuses of the electoral system. It is vital these are eradicated and voters can cast their vote free from outside influence. John is an able confident and honest politician and his election as Mayor in Tower Hamlets will be a positive step towards restoring confidence in the political system

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 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.

Tessa Jowell

Tessa Jowell was the speaker at the February meeting, which was held jointly with Hornchurch and Upminster Labour Party held in the former Council Chamber at Langtons. This was the venue for the largest ever attendance (93) at a Havering Fabian meeting, with the Dagenham MP Bryan Gould.

Holding a joint meeting meant a number of new faces, and a variety of questions. Tessa went canvassing with Paul McGeary, Sam Gould and others beforehand, identifying some Labour voters. She began by suggesting a “twinning” approach between inner and outer London Labour parties, so the two could understand each other’s issues.

Inner and Outer London don’t understand each other, and for a Party to be credible, it must speak one “language” even though the histories and traditions change. Tessa had stood in the 1978 Ilford North by-election, and had recently been canvassing in the area, noticing many changes. Although only 6 miles from Hornchurch, the population was very different, both in demographics and attitude.

The “three seat challenge” had seen a number of Labour activists tour the Country canvassing in three seats on the same day – the team had recently been to Harrow East, Hendon and Golders Green and Finchley- this confirmed the same pattern, London is changing very fast. It is important that Labour activists support colleagues and avoid the surprises that a rapidly changing population can bring.

There is a need to be wary of viewing London as a Labour city – because the Party has worked hard to build a core vote, the Party will always have a presence, but to win Council and Parliamentary seats the Party has to reach beyond this. The Labour vote in London has been relatively solid since 1997, but this has not always been the case¹.

The London Mayoral elections had shown this in the past- Ken Livingstone won the first with around 100,000 Tory Votes, and Boris Johnson had collected 200,000 or so “Labour” votes on both occasions he was elected. So Labour would be vulnerable if we ever stop campaigning.

Without taking action the City could become polarised – the very rich and the rest of the population do not share the same sense of belonging.

¹ The 2006 Council elections being a prime example that London electors will vote for other Parties if Labour is not seen as credible.

Luxury flats were being developed, very different from the traditional family home. There are more billionaires than ever, and yet one in three of the population live in poverty. One in four of those between 18-24 are out of work- this inequality is holding London back.

Addressing these issues was one of the priorities for the Olympics and remains so.

Tessa has announced she was standing down as an MP and after the election would seek nomination for the Labour candidate for Mayor of London.

She would aim to bind the City together, as one city, stronger, fairer, with more affordable housing. There are three main priority areas

1. Housing

There is a need to build more homes. The current Mayor is missing his own target.

There is a need for fairer rules for renting dealing with

Security of tenure

Caps on rent levels

Affordable Rents

Without these the young will be priced out.

There is a need to end the Housing giveaway and not let Developers get out of their obligations.

Housing in London is in a serious crisis – there is a need to be impatient and be clear what Labour will do about this. identifying how Labour will build more housing and offer a range of tenure.

2. Young people

The Tories are not delivering in this area.

Large number of young people can't stay in work, need greater literacy skills and are missing the social skills needed to obtain and retain employment. "Soft skills" are essential but one in four of the 18 to 24 age

group are not helped to address this. These skills are needed if they are to be equal citizens of the City.

Without this the population will become divided, and will not flourish in the long term. London could mirror the Paris “donut” – empty in the middle. There is a lack of “serenity” of a City being “at ease” with itself. This is only achievable only if we have “One London”.

Tackling in equality is not just about assets and wealth. Children are born fit and healthy but by 5 have their lives defined – if they are not ready for school they will be behind their classmates and never catch up. Future life opportunities are defined in the first 1,000 days. It is therefore fundamental to build parenting skills.

The average child will have heard 30 million words by the time they are 3 – a level achieved by 2% of infants in some parts of Inner London. This inexorably leads to long term unemployment and the seeds of unemployment start at this point. London needs to attend to attend to this and help the young to have the skills necessary to be employed. This can, in the long run assist in dealing with construction skills shortages as well. There is a need for apprenticeships across the City, and developing entrepreneurship is important.

3. Fair Pay

People are concerned about utility bills, the level of the minimum wage and zero hours contracts. In this context, the London living Wage has got to be good for citizens, and is one of the ways in which decency can be delivered.

It is a hallmark of decency and fairness to map out a route to a better London. Across London there is up to 20 years difference in life expectancy.

This is a reminder of why people are involved in Politics – Tessa does not accept the status quo. Labour does not have the financial resources to compete with the Conservatives but does have the activist base to get out and campaign. This will ensure the Party is always aware of what needs to be done as London changes and this is why the election in May is important.

Tessa took a number of questions. She will be campaigning across London in the run up to the election, and will be a strong contender to be Labour candidate for Mayor in 2016.

Falklands in the Spotlight

March's monthly meeting of Havering Fabian Society was held on Tuesday 24th March at Fairkytes Billet Studio, at which our speaker was well-known local conservationist and Havering Fabian Society Honorary Secretary David Marshall.

David's talk entitled "Falklands - 250 years and Beyond", was themed to coincide with the 250th anniversary year of the Union Flag being raised at Port Egmont by Commodore John Byron on January 23rd 1765. Indeed David is an authority, having visited these Islands 5 times.

David's thoroughly well researched talk included history well before 1765 and brought his audience into the picture about various nationalities who'd - at various times - settled on the Falklands. Even a Pope had got involved, at one stage, in trying to sort out various land claims between Catholic worshipping Countries! His talk covered events from early times to today...and of course...beyond. It was topical, as on the same day, Romford's MP (if one dare mention him) spoke on the Falklands in the Commons Chamber! Earlier that day a major announcement was made in the Commons about an increased UK Defence commitment for these Islands...so our meeting was really topical. Meeting Chairman (Vice Chairman Mike Flynn) noted this announcement before leaving home, and brought it to the audience's attention. Mr. Rosindell got a brief mention in the discourse as he's Secretary of the Falklands Islands All-Party Parliamentary Group and seemingly has plenty to say on such issues.

The talk was wonderfully complemented by posters, maps, literature, and books which were available for attendees to peruse. This talk ignited interest from audience members who asked about tourist opportunities...yes David had leaflets for that as well. His last visit in January, on one of 3 routes open to UK citizens... was from RAF Brize Norton on a military flight with a refuelling stop on Ascension Island each side of 8 hours flying time! Also on board was Mark Thatcher who travelled in order to unveil a bust in honour of Baroness T. As one deemed to be a V.I.P. Mark was allowed to leave the plane first. No...David didn't attend that unveiling ceremony!

Needless to say 1982's War, its build-up and aftermath were covered as was a vivid account of how bad conditions were for **Argentinian**

troops, most of whom were young conscripts with little training. Many went hungry owing a lack of basic rations while the Generals enjoyed banquet-style catering.

Followers of the Falklands wonderful wildlife weren't disappointed as David spoke with authority on that aspect of Islands life.

A question & answer session after "Notices" (also given out by David), saw "a first" at Havering Fabian Society...our speaker's final visual aid was a large chart with key points + "thought starters" that might be worth advancing from the floor? This idea truly worked as it directed debate along constructive channels.

Rounds of applause, both at the end of David's enthusiastic and informative talk and also at the meeting's end, said it all. It was a most interesting entertaining evening which deserved more than those 13 souls present, who'd dotted themselves around the Billet Studio.

Dave Ainsworth

Prospects in May

Havering has had key marginal's in the past, but a mix of boundary and demographic changes mean it is unlikely that the seats will change hands in May.

In 2010, the Conservative lead nationally translated into big majorities in both the Romford and Hornchurch and Upminster constituencies. Jon Cruddas had a majority of 2,630, so is in the most marginal of the three seats. Current opinion polls would indicate a swing to Labour if the national trend is reflected locally, but not by enough to alter things.

Havering has been an area where third parties have struggled to break through in the past in parliamentary elections. This time UKIP could change this. They are standing a current MEP in Romford, and have six Councillors in Hornchurch and Upminster. Having previously won seats in Harold Hill, their success last year in defeating Labour while disappointing, was not a total surprise. However gaining a seat in Emerson Park gave them an unexpected seat in a traditionally strong Tory area, so no one can be really sure whether this will repeat in May.

Locally, the particular issues are a lack of housing, and a lack of school places. This is particularly an issue in Barking and Dagenham, where the

strain on school places has seen national coverage. House prices in Havering are beyond most first time buyers, and there is the growth of a private rented sector as a result. This will in turn make it difficult for the Borough's younger residents to continue to live in the Borough.

National issues are likely to determine the outcome, and in this context the implications of changes from the Care Act and future funding arrangements for the NHS are important for an area that has a significant elderly population. The dilemma of meeting increased costs without increasing taxation is not easily resolved. This is reflected in a range of services including the Local Councils whose funding is reducing at an alarming rate. The challenges this will bring over the next 5 years are daunting.

The Bedroom Tax is making life a lot harder for a number of people, and the inequity of Universal Credit will make life harder still for some of the Borough's poorer residents.

This means the Tories have to go; ideally this will mean a repeat of 1997. Polls suggest otherwise, so an increased majority for Jon Cruddas and significantly reduced majorities in the other Havering seats will have to do.

Sam Gould

Under the Tories Romford's Queen's Hospital has fallen into 'special measures' and is not far from breaking point. Only a Labour government will give Queen's Hospital the vital support it needs by investing more in the NHS.

The main problem identified by the Care and Quality Commission (CQC) at Queen's was staff shortages that mean the hospital "does not provide safe care", this comes as Tory cuts to the NHS have left us with 5,000 fewer nurses since 2010. Only Labour, the party that created the NHS, are serious about the saving the NHS by giving it the investment it needs to deal with new challenges like an aging population.

By reversing the Tories' millionaire tax cuts and tackling tax dodging by removing the non-dom tax status Labour would provide 20,000 more nurses and 8,000 more GPs for our NHS, helping to solve the staff-shortage crisis at Queen's Hospital.

Labour's Candidate for Romford, Sam Gould said:

“The evidence is clear, Queen's Hospital is failing and it is because of Tory cuts to the NHS. From visiting Queen's you can see that we desperately need increased funding to hire more doctors, nurses and ambulance workers.

A Labour government will do this and my number one priority as Romford's MP will be to secure more funding for Queen's Hospital.

Promoted by David Dawson on behalf of Sam Gould both at Saffron House, 273 South Street, Romford RM1 2BE

50 years of Havering

2015 marks the 50th 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>

1974 Election

The 1974 Havering Council elections took place between the two General Elections in February and October, so Havering went to the polls three times that year.

In the previous years' GLC elections, the Havering seats were elected on a constituency rather than a Borough basis for the first time. The Harold Hill estate was no longer in Romford but formed part of the new Upminster Constituency. This made the later a potential marginal, and in

the GLC elections the Conservatives took the seat with a majority of less than 1,000. Hornchurch elected Labour candidate Serge Lourie, later to defect to the SDP and emerge as Liberal Democrat leader of Richmond Council. Romford elected Conservative Bernard Brooke Partridge with a comfortable majority, and the GLC went Labour, continuing a trend of never being won by the Governing Party at Westminster. This continued through the life of the GLC.

So the 1974 Council elections were likely to be close – the 1971 elections had seen Labour collect the majority of votes in new Hornchurch and Upminster constituencies, so the 1973 GLC results showed a move to the Tories. This was replicated in the February 1974 election. While Alan Lee-Williams defeated John Loveridge to regain Hornchurch, a narrow win (majority 1,008 votes) for the Conservatives in Upminster and a comfortable one in Romford (3,073). Harold Wilson returned as Prime Minister, but without an overall majority.

Arthur Latham was elected as MP for Paddington but was also re-elected in May, while recent Labour Leader Michael Ward was defeated in Peterborough by a narrow 22 votes.

The Council election results in May were similar to those in May 1964. A close result was expected, and Labour lost the three seats in Harold Wood and one in Mawney, and with this, Havering returned to no overall control. No Liberals had at this point been elected to Havering Council. The Conservatives formed a loose alliance with the Ratepayers (later the residents). The Labour group consisted mainly of those elected in 1971 (see note about by-elections) with a few new names

Current Havering Fabian press officer David Ainsworth came 6th of 6 Candidates in Bedfords Ward. Future Conservative and current Council Leader Roger Ramsey lost in Central Ward, alongside Norman Symonds, who would be a major contributor to future Conservative administrations. Future Government Minister and former Abbs Cross pupil Bob Neill (21 at the time) was elected in Harold Wood for the Conservatives, and is seeking re-election as MP at the General Election for Bromley and Chislehurst 41 years later.

While Labour looked to have done reasonably well, losing 4 seats from the highpoint of the 1971 election, the majorities were down; In Elm Park, the gap was a comfortable but not secure at 437; the Labour vote in Emerson Park dropped to around 600 per candidate from over 1,000 in 1971, which in the context of the 1973 GLC election and, later in the

October General Election, was more important than it probably appeared at the time. At this point in Havering's history Labour had been the largest Party in three out of four elections, so

In Mawney, Labour won 2 of the 3 seats with Harry Moss losing out (not for the first time – see the 1971 election summary) by 7 votes.

Labour won all three seats in South Hornchurch, with Harry Rivers and Steve Clarke 731 votes clear of former young Socialist Len Long, who was to become a long serving resident Councillor in 1978. This was to be the last time Labour won all three seats in South Hornchurch (although there have been boundary changes since and a direct comparison is difficult).

Overall turnout was 38.7%, lower than previous elections; the Conservatives secured 37.9%, Labour 33.2% and Residents 19.2% - the latter stood in around half the seats contested, and were secure in their strongholds winning 9 seats.

The Parliamentary seats saw Labour lead in Hornchurch by 10.6%, Conservatives ahead in Romford by 14.3% and Upminster by 11%. This would prove important in that the core Conservative vote held up in the October election.

In that election Alan Lee Williams retained Hornchurch for Labour with a majority of 6,801. Upminster was a key target seat for Labour seeking a workable majority; however the swing to Labour was less than elsewhere in the Country and John Loveridge held on by 694 votes from Labour Candidate J. Whysall

Long term Labour Councillor Denis O'Flynn narrowed the majority in Romford to 2,651. Nearby Ilford North was another key seat; Millie Miller became the new Labour MP for the later as Wilson won a majority of 4 seats; Millie Miller died and at the subsequent by-election, recent visitor to Havering Fabians Tessa Jowell was the Labour candidate, beaten as Wilson's majority melted away (this was one of the by-elections briefly mentioned in the play "This House").

While not in control, Labour in Havering had a significant presence on the local and national scene. Parliamentary elections have been close since the 1945 election. What could possibly go wrong?

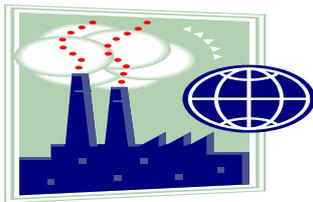
1971 Footnote

Unusually there were 4 by-elections on the same day in July 1971, as a result of Alderman nominations. These were all held by Labour, and were in each of the then safe 3 Harold Hill seats and Collier Row – notable among the candidates were Wilf Mills and Denis O’Flynn, both destined for a long stay on the Council. Wilf was joined by his brother Albert. The fourth candidate was May Rudlin, who beat future Conservative councillor Les Reilly by 1,183 votes (securing 85.79% of the poll). The “dwarf” candidate C.G Thomson secured 22 votes. It would be interesting to know whether this was an attempt at humour or seeking to address disability issues- can anyone remember?

1974 Result

Party	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	26	5	31
Conservative	20	3	23
Resident	9	1	10
Total	55	9	64
Turnout 38.7%			

Next in the series - 1978. Tories in overall control



Future Meetings

19th May Co-op Chair Gareth Thomas will return to Havering, meeting will be at Hornchurch Library 7.30 pm start.

Future speakers will be arranged around the Mayor and GLA timetables. Other Speakers who have agreed to come to Havering include young Fabian activist Louie Woodall and the Labour Candidate in the Rochester and Stroud by election Naushabah Khan (who we hope will be elected in May).

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

July..... .Local Health service issues

July 14th 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.

Finally from David Marshall...

I had a surprise visitor yesterday evening. A very smiley (spell check gave me slimy) Andrew Rosindell! He claimed he was the *only* candidate out knocking on doors! I personally have been out with Sam Gould but just assured him he wasn't correct there. I challenged him for failing to come to my talk on Falklands but his excuse was that I hadn't invited him... and then we went into Mark Thatcher which I noted he referred to as Sir... anyway he wished me well but I refrained for reciprocating !!



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

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

Future Editions

The next edition will be published after the election in late May or June. Articles welcome.

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 or 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

The Labour Party www.labour.org.uk

Jon Cruddas MP for Dagenham www.joncruddas.org.uk

Twitter @joncrudasmp

Barking Labour Party www.barkinglabour.org.uk/

Twitter @barkinglabour

Romford Labour Party 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

Twitter @Tribunemagazine

Hope not Hate www.hopenothate.org.uk

Twitter @hopenothate

Thames Chase Community Forest

Twitter @Thames_Chase

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

John Biggs GLA Member for City and East London

john.biggs@london.gov.uk or join his mailing list

biggsnews@london.gov.uk

His website is 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 22th 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.

I\ we wish to join Havering Fabians

Name

Address

.....

.....

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

E-mail.....

Phone number

Waged (£10) unwaged £5