

2017

HAVING FABIAN

In this edition;

Election 2017

Our Country a work in progress – Review

Limehouse – Review

The next installment of our series to mark 50 years of
Haverling in 2015 - the Haverling Council Elections 2010

- **Future meetings**

12th July – Darren Rodwell

4th October – Vince Maple



HAVERING FABIAN

VOLUME 2 EDITION 31 June 2017

Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter. A lot has happened since the March edition, when there was no election on the horizon. Politics has moved on dramatically since, and we are pleased that Jon Cruddas and Margaret Hodge were re-elected. Congratulations to both Angelina Leatherbarrow and Rocky Gill in re-establishing Labour in second place in Romford and Hornchurch and Upminster – poised to improve further when the next election is called.

Our presence on social media is bringing us closer to a number of new organisations, with 991 followers on twitter.

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. This edition covers 2010, which was the only time so far that the Borough elections have been held on the same day as a General Election. for those involved.

We were sad to hear of the death of Hornchurch and Upminster Labour Party member Tom Horlock. Tom was a lovely man, and will be much missed. Our condolences to his friends and family.

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. Havering Young Labour are on twitter [@ylabourhavering](#) and hope they reflect a growing interest in Labour politics in Havering.

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 good 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.



Website – our website is currently being updated (and this may take a few weeks) - Our website address is <http://haveringfabians.org.uk> - we will let you know when it is back!

We have an open and a closed Face book site, the closed site deal more with local administration while the open site is used to publish interesting articles; please contact David Marshall to be added to the site or e-mail

We are now using Mail chimp as a means of communication, which is a controlled mailing list – if you are not on the list please send us your details, and if you are please check your spam folders.

Our e-mail address is Haveringfabians@outlook.com

Election 2017?

Well no one saw that coming – while the polls at the start of the campaign were based on answers when there was not an election on the cards, the May Council elections were poor. A large Labour defeat seemed inevitable, So, all credit to those who kept their nerve and remained focused.

The Tory campaign was awful and will do them lasting damage. Labour had too much to do after 2010 and 2015 to have hoped to win outright, and

just as in 1964 (a wafer thin majority) and 1974 (minority government), it was always likely that Labour would need more than one election to win outright.

It is too early yet to know for sure why there was an undetected increase in the Labour vote, but an increased turnout of the under 24's is a likely cause. Labour was also ahead in the 35-44 age group, suggesting a wider change took place. The promise to replace student loans with grants helped win in some unexpected places – Canterbury the most obvious, but Reading and Warwick and Leamington can also be explained by this.

Labour needs to build on this, and the work done so far by Havering Young Labour has re-energised the younger membership, and includes many new people (including some from Dagenham). It was a shame that their Brexit discussion at the sixth form college was cancelled due to the election being called, and let's hope it can be re-arranged.

Jeremy Corbyn has been vindicated – his profile was high during the campaign and has every chance of being Prime Minister within a year. The political momentum is with Labour. However, we need to remember we did not win. The task now is to broaden the appeal of the Party without losing the radical edge.

The right call was made to cost the manifesto promises – the Tories made a major mistake in not doing the same, giving Labour an easy defence and taking the focus off the detail – they are unlikely to do this again.

The Brexit discussions will become real now, and the full consequences of negotiation with 27 others will be felt as there will be no room for the government to act on other issues. The leadership may well have changed by the time you read this, the issues remain. The June election was called to strengthen May's position in her Party and make her less reliant on the pro-Brexit elements within her right wing. It is they that are now in a stronger position, supported formally or otherwise by the DUP.

Labour needs to be ready for a second election later in 2017 or early 2018. Politics in Britain has never been as complicated, with a variety of seats changing hands that have no history of being in play. Despite this, the two main Parties received a higher combined percentage of the vote since the 1970s. This could well mean voters change again- Labour needs to

recognise this, and in seeking the extra voters it needs to win, recognise that there is a need to secure the voters switching to Labour in June. How the Brexit negotiations play out is key to this?

Our Country a work in progress...

We try and have a least one non meeting event each year, and this year we went to “Our country a work in progress” at the Theatre Royal Stratford East. The play is the National Theatre production touring countrywide. It was written before the 2017 election, and consists of a series of interviews undertaken across the United Kingdom with residents from all corners of the United Kingdom. The focus is outside London, Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham in concentrating on areas that could in no sense be described as part of the Metropolitan elite.

The play is structured around interviews held before and after the referendum, and makes clear that not only are there different views across the Country about the outcome, but there are different views on a range of subject

Interspersed with this of contributions from a major political players, including Cameron, Boris Johnson, Michael Gove, Nigel Farage, Jeremy Corbyn. The tragic Jo Cox and finally Theresa May.

The reaction to the Brexit vote is covered with a series of comments from members of the public, who express a range of horror surprise and delight at the outcome. The prevailing message is one of descent into chaos, although from a position that started as fairly chaotic, with no clarity of what the desired outcome was.

There are quotes from the major political players in the campaign, and Cameron’s resignation speech from the steps of Downing Street is delivered almost in full – the sheer folly of going for a referendum for the benefit of Party not Country is exposed as the words are recited – create the chaos, then move on letting others clear up the mess. In retrospect

Cameron sounds weak, and the damage caused to the County and the union itself will take generations to become clear.

The transition to Prime Minister May is covered – history could surely not repeat with an election for the benefit of Party rather than Country? That would never happen...

A good night out, in an excellent venue. The Theatre Royal has a long tradition of political theatre, and we look forward to a return visit. The play is neither pro or anti Brexit, (the author of this article, less objective) but gets across that views differ considerably, and reflect wider divisions in society that run deep. As Britain moves into the negotiation phase, the aura of chaos continues, and looks likely to claim a second Prime Minister in just over a year. Not a consequence of a Country at ease with itself.

Limehouse

Limehouse at the Donmar captures the founding of the SDP. The performance was running before the election was called and looked very topical as Labour trailed badly in the polls and the prospects looked bleak. So it looks very different after the election. As you would expect, the acting was excellent Roger Allum looked very like Roy Jenkins, Debra Gillett like Shirley Williams.

Although it's about the Gang of Four, it's clear there are three big players and Bill Rogers. The inner turmoil of people about to leave the Labour Party is captured, with only David Owen appearing to have no doubts. This of course adds to the topicality of the play, as there are many people who may be in the same position

I was reminded of Giles Radices book friends in high places - which deals with the friendship and rivalry between Jenkins, Dennis Healey and Anthony Crossland. All three had excellent minds, were intellectual giants of the Party, but none would ascend to the leadership. Jim Callaghan was better at politics and built the alliances the others did not. The only person

to hold the top four positions in British political history – being the cleverest person in the room is not enough.

Jenkins was a Labour man, with roots deep in the Party, and despite an accent that suggested a middle class background, had solid working class roots. The play makes clear his view that to succeed the SDP needed to align with the Liberals; Owen's loathing of the Liberals was to become clear and is captured in the play.

The tension between the four reflects the issues a new party faces - no roots, no history and few ideas. The latter can be addressed but the first two are key - loyalty to the Labour Party runs deep, and as was subsequently clear, many people who were on the right of the Party would never leave it; this is why a new Party is not on the cards now.

The play ends with the Gang of Four leaving to meet the press, the deed done. Would they break the mould of U.K. Politics? the fifth character in the play asks what if Williams had been leader rather than Jenkins then Owen?

What if the Falkland had not happened?
Could the SDP have defeated Thatcher?

Politics is not like that and there are no second chances. You have to get it right at the time. An alternative view would be the break with Labour ensured Thatcher's second term, and by extension the third. It delayed the modernisation of the Party and led to a minority Conservative government (in terms of public support) breaking up the post war consensus, ending Britain as a manufacturing nation and leaving areas of the country economically damaged in a way they still have to recover from (and may never do so).

What if indeed.

The power struggle between Owen, not a man I have ever had time for, Jenkins and David Steele who as leader of a party with roots and an

established electoral base was always in the strongest position was always going to end in tears.

The real what if of the early 80s is what would have happened if say Michael Foot failed to beat Dennis Healey to become Labour leader? Foot was a lovely man, loved by all the Party (like Williams?). Healey was a bruiser, who didn't suffer fools gladly if at all (this is clear in the Radice book- and also applied to Jenkins). But he did not build alliances, alienated his natural friends and could not command support in the party.

However he would have been formidable in opposing Thatcher....

What if.....

The irony of the situation then, and now, is that a split in the Labour Party will only complicate the alliances that form the party already. The two parties will need each other to achieve power and agree on much more than they differ on. Staying together in the Party and focusing on improving the lives of the community is essential and what we exist for. The temporary issues of who leads the party are a distraction from the essential aim to represent the interest of working people and their families at all levels of government. We do little in opposition and the party exists to be in government.

The 2010 Election

The 2006 election had left Labour with just two Councillors, and with no other elected representatives, the position was grim. The first test would be the Mayoral election in 2008. Ken Livingstone was Labour candidate for the second time, and would face Boris Johnson.

The campaign was fought against the backdrop of the change from Blair to Brown; Johnson was a popular if erratic personality with no history in local government. Although the campaign was close, the vote was not, and after second preference votes were allocated, Labour has lost the Mayor. The count went on well into Friday evening as second preference votes were allocated, which has become a pattern.

In the GLA election Redbridge Labour Councillor Balvinder Saund was second in Havering and Redbridge, although 43,025 votes behind Roger Evans. In the list vote, Labour was way behind, coming third in Havering behind the BNP with just 14.7% of the vote. Ward level voting figures showed Labour had not won the vote in any Havering Wards either at Candidate or Party level. The BNP polled highest in Heaton. Labour's historic hold on Harold Hill had gone, and would not return.

The 2005 General Election had seen Labour lose Hornchurch by a few hundred votes – there was no sign of this with wide margins in the Hornchurch wards. The dip was so deep that the Labour vote in Emerson Park was close to the vote everywhere else.

With the collapse of the Bradford and Bingley building society, the Financial crisis rapidly spread, and governments across Europe moved into crisis mode. Gordon Brown was almost managing a crisis a day, and Labour's hold on government was starting to loosen. The 2009 European elections would be the next test, and with UKIP now a growing electoral force, prospects were not good.

The elections were again conducted using proportional representation (see newsletter 29 for details). Turnout was 34%, and Labour slipped to third, behind UKIP and the Conservatives, with only 15.7% of the vote nationally.

The position was even worse in Havering – Labour secured only 6,956 (10.7%) in the Borough and were in fourth place, behind the BNP in third – UKIP were only 1,566 behind the Tories in second place. Despite there being 12 BNP Councillors in Barking and Dagenham, the BNP vote in Havering of 8,627 was the highest in any London borough. The deepening Labour crisis got worse when James Purnell resigned on the night of the election, it what may have been the start of a failed challenge to Gordon Brown. Labour returned two MEPs from London, Claude Moraes and Mary Honeyball. Nationally Labour came third behind the Conservatives and UKIP, and had only 13 MEPs.

It became highly likely that the 2010 Council election would be held on the same day as the general election. This proved to be the case, and turnout was therefore significantly higher, leading to some very large majorities particularly in Cranham and Upminster in the Council elections.

In the General Election, Labour lost 91 seats and the Conservatives were left short of a majority. After a lot of horse trading, they formed a coalition with the Liberal Democrats, and the Labour Government fell. Harriet Harman took over as interim Leader of the Labour Party as the leadership election took place.

Boundary changes meant there were now two Havering seats- Romford (which gained Hylands and lost part of Emerson Park to Hornchurch and Upminster, while gaining an almost sliver of Havering Park from Upminster) and Hornchurch and Upminster (the old Upminster wards plus Hacton and St Andrews from Hornchurch). Elm Park, South Hornchurch and Rainham moved to the new Dagenham and Rainham seat, the first seat in Havering history to cross borough boundaries.

Andrew Rosindell comfortably defeat Labour candidate, nurse Rachel Voller by 16,594 votes, while in Hornchurch and Upminster, Angela Watkinson beat Labour Candidate, Barnet Councillor Kathy McGuirk by 16,371 vote. The Party had originally selected Darren Wise (now a Havering Resident Councillor), and replaced him with McGuirk for reasons that were not widely publicised.

In Dagenham and Rainham, a declaration much delayed saw Jon Cruddas beat Conservative Simon Jones (who unsuccessfully sought the Hornchurch and Upminster nomination in 2017) by 2,630 votes. Given that the Council wards in Dagenham all returned Labour Councillors, the Havering vote for Labour was limited.

In the Council elections, counted on the Friday, the Labour vote was up across the board is the result of the higher turnout, but the hoped for breakthrough hoped for breakthrough did not materialise, only five seats being won, three in Heaton where Keith Darvill was joined by Paul McGeary and Denis O' Flynn, Pat Murray was elected for Gooshays, and

in South Hornchurch Dennis Breeding won the seat in a seat split three ways (Resident and Conservatives filling the other seats)..

Even these victories were narrow -Paul McGeary the third place candidate and only two votes ahead of the fourth placed Conservative.

In Rainham, Tony Ellis who had lost in 2006 was 86 behind in Rainham as the residents took all three seats. In South Hornchurch Dennis Breeding was the third placed candidate with Stephen Jack's sixth and Brian Vincent seventh some 150 behind Dennis who is in turn was 196 behind the second place conservative.

Elsewhere in the borough Graham Carr was 264 behind the third place Conservative in Elm Park. The high turnout meant that labour polled well in places like Brooklands, where Eamon Mahon fell just short of 2,000, but was still significantly behind the third place Conservative.

In Emerson Park Julia Darvill received 1,238 votes but was still owed 2000 behind the Conservatives. In Harold Wood Former Labour Mayor of Havering Brian Eagling topped the poll with future Resident Councillor Darren Wise (see above) in fourth place. Former councillor for Ken Clark, now Deputy Mayor in Newham and Sean Willis were 10th and 11th well behind the successful candidates.

Labour had made progress despite the heavy defeat in the parliamentary seats, but less than hoped.

The Conservatives secured 36.6% of the vote with 42.5% for others, primarily the Residents, boosted by vast majorities in the East of the Borough in Upminster and Cranham. The votes for the Residents are truly impressive; in Cranham two candidates scored over 4100 for third place candidates going to 3923. In Upminster ward, was even more impressive Ron Ower receiving 4871 votes and his two colleagues receiving similarly impressive total. in Squirrels Heath the three Conservative candidates received over three thousand votes.

Nonetheless, the Tories retained overall control with a net loss of one seat the Liberal Democrats losing their only Councillor as Nigel Mayer was defeated in Brooklands. The overall turnout at 66% was a record, being the first time that the Council election was on the same day as the General Election.

Elsewhere there was a major triumph for Labour in Barking and Dagenham clean sweep of all 51 seats for the first time, the added bonus was this saw the removal of the BNP from the Council.

2010 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	5	18.5
Conservative	33	36.6
Resident /other	16	42.5
Liberal/SDP	0	2.4
Total	54	100.0
Turnout 66.0%		

Next in the series - 2014 - An all-time low.

Future Meetings

The General Election meant we had to cancel our programme, and we are now putting it back together again

12TH July 2017, 7:30pm The speaker will be Darren Rodwell. Darren has been the Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council since 2014, and will be making his first visit as a speaker- the topic will be the Regeneration of the Borough. The meeting will be held at the Old Chapel, Sacred Heart of Mary Girls School, St Mary's Lane Upminster . RM14 2QR



Darren Rodwell, Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council

For October, we again cover Local Government, with the Labour Opposition Leader on Medway Council Vince Maple being the speaker – venue will be Saffron House, 273 South Street Romford Wednesday 7.30pm 4th October . Vince has been Leader of the Labour Group since 2007.



Vince Maple

Prior to focusing on local government service, Vince was a trade union officer for the GMB union, previously working as a civil servant in the Department of Work & Pensions and the Home Office. He had served as

Labour spokesperson on the council's children's services and finance committees and has been deputy leader of the group for the last year.

Vince was former Labour MP Jonathan Shaw's election agent in the 2005 and 2010 general elections and was recently elected to the South East Region Board of the Labour Party. Vince has lived in Chatham for most of life, and is currently Councilor for Chatham Central ward, which he has represented since 2007. He was Labour Candidate for Aylesford and Chatham in the General Election – and was a respectable second, well placed for the next time,

Later in the year - Dates to be confirmed.

We have lined up speakers for the rest of the year, including Sara Hyde, an expert on prison policy, and Labour candidate in Bromley and Chislehurst, Dagenham and Rainham youth officer Fay Hough, on being a young working class woman in politics and Alan Williams. Alan was Labour GLC Member for Hornchurch 1981-86, a Havering Councilor 1986-90 and after a spell as a Barrister worked as an immigration judge until his recent retirement.



Fay Hough makes a point



Margaret Hodge has been Labour MP for Barking since 1994 and a regular visitor to the Society. She was Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Her recent book “Called to Account” covered this period and was intended to form the basis of her talk.

Dates will be confirmed when we have co-ordinated diaries and venues, and some may carry over into 2018.

If you go to the Bekash in Romford mention you are a Havering Fabian



and get 10% discount off your food bill.

Next Edition

The next edition after this will include the final part of our review of Havering elections, covering 2014, review of our meetings and an update on political issues local and national. It is always possible we will be in another General Election campaign by this point, so your articles about what happens next would be welcome.



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 <u>david.c.marshall@talk21.com</u>
Vice Chair Sam Gould	Treasurer Dave Baldock	
Committee Members		
Cecile Duerinckx	Ed Glasson	Sanchia Alasia
Mike Flynn	Ian Carnochan	Hannah Dixon

Future Editions

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 @joncruddas_1

Barking Labour Party www.barkinglabour.org.uk/

Twitter @barkinglabour

Romford Labour Party www.romford-labour-party.org.uk/

Twitter @romfordabour

Hornchurch and Upminster Labour Party

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

Facebook Hornchurch-Upminster-Constituency-Labour-Party

Twitter @HULabour

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 31st 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