

HAVERING
FABIAN
SOCIETY

HAVERING FABIAN

Volume 2 Edition 51 December 2022

**Havering
Fabian Society
Meetings with
Councilor
Andrew Achilleos,
Martin Edobor
and Hilary Benn
MP. Future
programme of
meetings with
Hope Wilson
Mendy, Saima
Ashraf, Jennifer
Craft and
Margaret
Mullane.**

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VOLUME 2 EDITION 51 December 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter. Since our last edition the country has moved on to the Third Prime Minister of the year, and the economy has imploded. Double digit inflation has returned, and industrial disputes are at near 40-year highs. The country has the highest tax levels in a generation and declining public services.

This has led to a large Labour lead in the opinion polls, and the prospect of a Labour government. The legacy it stands to inherit is likely to be challenging, and there is a need to establish priorities.

Our programme for 2023 is coming together, and we have Labour prospective candidates Margaret Mullane and Jen Craft lined up for early in the year. More details below

We now have 1,352 followers on twitter. Keep up to date at our twitter site @haveringfabians for the latest news. We have a blog now as well as our website <https://haveringfabians.org/posts/> You will need to follow us to get updates.

We are affiliated to the four local Labour Parties and will do all we can to support their campaigns. Havering and Dagenham Young Labour are on twitter @HavAndDagYL 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 are welcome.



Our website address is <http://haveringfabians.org>. As you are no doubt aware GDPR means we need to keep our mailing list up to date. If you are not on our mailing list (we use Mailchimp – please check your spam folders!) contact us via the website or email and we will add you in.

What Next?

The Conservatives are sleeping walking towards electoral oblivion on a scale greater than the defeat they experienced in 1997. The Labour Party stands to achieve a big majority, but there are any number of problems that will be left behind by the Tories that are going to give Labour reasons not to introduce the radical change required. There is a need to adopt coherent and radical policies to put the country back where it deserves to be.

The country has been suffering from a lack of productivity for several years^{1 2}. The Conservatives' attempts to address this have failed to make any impression hence the need for a growth agenda. Supply side issues needed to deliver it, such as having an appropriately skilled workforce, have been basically ignored.

Labour has produced a new industrial strategy³ which forms the basis of an approach to deal with this. This must be aligned to the green policies announced by Rachel Reeves⁴.

¹ [Productivity crisis: Is the UK's 'Lost Decade' at an end? - Business Leader News](#)

² [UK productivity slowdown worst since Industrial Revolution – study | Productivity | The Guardian](#)

³ [Prosperity through Partnership: LABOUR'S INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY - The Labour Party](#)

⁴ [Rachel Reeves pledges £28bn per year investment in green transition – LabourList](#)

The economic position Labour will inherit will put pressure on those involved to delay or redefine the objectives. The consequences of doing this would be more global warming, and the danger of irreversible damage to the planet – Labour needs to stand firm.

FEPS-FABIAN NEW YEAR CONFERENCE 2023

Pathway to Power

LOCATION Friends House 173-177 Euston Road London,
NW1 2BJ United Kingdom

WHEN 21 January 2023, 09:00 - 18:00

PRICE £5 - £40

CONFERENCE

The FEPS-Fabian new year conference is one of the biggest events in the political calendar and we're pleased to announce that it will return on Saturday 21 January 2023.

Join voices from across the labour movement and Europe who will take part in our fully hybrid conference as we discuss the left's Pathway to Power.

Saturday 21 January 2023 9-6pm (9-10am registration)

Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ and online

Andrew Achilleos Climate Change – the Barking and Dagenham approach

Our speaker in September was Barking and Dagenham Councillor Andrew Achilleos.

We were joined by friends from Havering Friends of the Earth and Extinction Rebellion, who were keen to hear of progress elsewhere, in the hope Havering Council could be persuaded to adopt best practice.



Figure 1 Andrew (second from the right) speaks to an attentive audience including Cllr Matt Stanton (left) Cllr Keith Darvill (right)

He outlined the approach adopted by Barking and Dagenham Council. This included

- Purchasing electronic vehicles as the Council fleet is renewed

- Using the planning system to require new build housing to reach modern energy standards
- Starting a retrofit programme to bring the existing Council housing stock up to the same standards
- Planting trees to help the move towards going carbon neutral
- Working with other bodies, such as London Councils, to ensure a cross-Borough and pan- London approach
- Declaring a Climate change emergency, and reflecting this within the Council's Corporate Plan and budget strategy

A good discussion followed, with a greater appreciation of the role Councils can have in taking forward green initiatives. This will require co-ordination of cross-borough and in particular cross-London initiatives, suggesting Havering should increase participation in partnership working.

Hilary Benn MP

The meeting was recorded and what follows is a transcript of what Hilary said, (with the occasionally failures to mute by the audience removed).

If you missed the meeting or want to watch it again, the recording can be shared via “We Transfer” – the audio file is 83mb, the video 600mb, so these are large files, too big to email.

Get in touch and I will email a link, which you will have 7 days to download. This does work! The recording was one hour and 23 minutes long, including ten questions from the audience.

Hilary was speaking to us on the day of the Autumn statement, delivered by Kwasi Kwarteng during the brief Premiership of Liz Truss.



Figure 2 Hilary Benn MP

Autumn Statement\ budget

Hilary began with comments on the day’s announcement. He said the statement was in effect a budget. The consequence of the current economic crisis was going to be a reduction in people’s incomes which is going to be extraordinary. We are talking about a decade in which real wages will not have risen at all. As ever with budgets, once people get a chance to

read the different coloured books and to look at the OBR⁵ analysis of it, we get an even stronger picture.

However, I think the fact that we have won the fight to ensure that a benefits and pensions are increased by the rate of inflation is something, because it has obviously been an argument going on for the Conservative Party about that. It is important that there will be a bit more of a windfall tax on the electricity suppliers, although I was disappointed that the announcement did not address what is for me the central question on energy prices.

We have operated in a world where the price of energy is determined by the price of gas, and the price of gas has increased very quickly because of the war in Ukraine and yet we have some very cheap offshore electricity produced in the North Sea for which we are charging world gas prices.

Now that might have been a sensible system in the old days, it certainly is not a sensible system now and we ought to be getting of the benefit the fact that we have shed loads of offshore wind energy. The price of it has come down enormously in recent years. I remember the time when people said, “oh wind it's expensive and it and it never works,” well it is now the cheapest form of electricity and we've got a lot of it but we're going to need a lot more and I'll come back to that point a little later.

Secondly, he has put some money into education and the NHS; whether it will be sufficient to meet NHS needs I really doubt.

⁵ Office of Budget Responsibility

He has delayed the implementation of the Dilnot proposals⁶ on social care for two more years.

He has given a bit more money to social care. because we all know that an ambulance queuing outside A&E is principally there because the paramedics can't discharge their patient; they can't because A & E is full; and because A&E is full they can't discharge people into the hospital because the beds are full and the beds are full because there are quite a few patients who no longer need to be in hospital but for whom an appropriate placement in social care can't be found.

When I spoke a month ago to the chief executive of the Leeds hospital trusts he said that we have about 248 patients in the LGI⁷ and Jimmy's⁸ who do not need to be here for medical reasons, but we cannot discharge them, and this is two hospitals that are currently 99% full.

One of the truths about our NHS is it is very efficient, but we run with little spare capacity now. There is no spare capacity at all compared to say France or Germany where they have more beds per head of population than we do.

Europe

So, I want you to turn to the economic challenge because what you invited me to talk about originally was our relations with the European Union.

The truth about the government is they continue to be in a state of complete denial about the economic consequences of leaving the European Union. To put it very obviously if you make trade

⁶ [Architect of Tory social care cap plans 'puzzled' by Hunt's two-year delay | Social care | The Guardian](#)

⁷ Leeds General infirmary

⁸ Another Leeds hospital

with your biggest trading partner more difficult, more expensive and more bureaucratic, which is what Brexit has done, don't be entirely surprised if it has an economic effect. We see that there are many striking statistics, the most striking for me was the figures the HMRC published a little while ago, and they said between 2020 when we were still in effect in the single market and the customs union and 2021 the total number of British businesses exporting to Europe to the EU, which is our biggest trading partner had fallen by a third.

Now it is worth just holding on to that figure; a third is a catastrophic decline and mostly that is small and medium sized enterprises who frankly cannot be doing with the extra cost of bureaucracy and red tape that leaving the EU has pushed up on their shoulders.

So, there is the first truth the OBR of course says that we have not seen our trade recover in the way that other countries have done. They think there will be in the long term a 4% hit to GDP and our trade with the EU will be 50% lower than it would have been had we remained in it and until you recognise that fact then you can't begin to address the question. We've left but what are we going to do about building a better economic and indeed political relationship with the European Union?

Northern Ireland Agreement

Now the principal obstacle at the moment is of course the Northern Ireland protocol which was the way in which Boris Johnson eventually decided to square the circle, that if you leave the European Union and that's about the only thing in Brexit everyone agreed on, that you cannot under any circumstances have checks on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Either the whole of the UK must in effect remain within the rules of the single market, or Northern Ireland will have to remain within the rules of the single market and goods will have to be checked as they crossed the Irish Sea.

Having promised he would never do it, Boris Johnson promptly did the latter and that is how we ended up with the Northern Ireland protocol. Now there is no doubt that the Tories under Johnson whipped this up for political reasons because Boris Johnson always thought the best way to win again in the next election would be to remind those people who voted Tory for the first time over Brexit why they did so and therefore having a running punch-up with the European Union is a good way of doing that.



Figure 3 Stormont which would house the Northern Ireland Assembly

So, the government has done a number of things but principally and most recently it introduced the Northern Ireland Protocol bill which is a blatant attempt to rip up an international agreement that Boris Johnson signed.

His “oven ready” deal has caused huge problems, because the EU says perfectly reasonably if we cannot trust you to keep your word how do we know that any other agreement we signed with you will be honoured.

It has done enormous damage to Britain's reputation in the world; having said all of that there is a problem with the implementation of the protocols.

The protocol said we need to identify goods at risk of ending up in the Republic of Ireland. What the negotiations didn't do was to answer the question how do you identify goods at risk, and the reason why Northern Ireland was put (in effect) in the single market was if Northern Ireland operates to the rules of the single market, that reduces the risk that goods from Northern Ireland coming into the Republic will violate those rules, but what do you do about goods coming across the Irish Sea?

Now there's no doubt that the unionist community in Northern Ireland is aggrieved by the existence of the protocol and its practical application- the famous stories of the seed potatoes from Scotland that growers in Northern Ireland kept their hands on - or the debate that's going on about whether if you send a parcel from Havering to Belfast you need to put a customs form on it and a declaration.

Now I don't have any aunts in Belfast but if I wanted to send her a box of chocolates for Christmas, which is from one part of the United Kingdom to another part of the United Kingdom, why should I have to put a customs declaration on it? and frankly I think that's a very fair question. Now the EU comes back and says "smuggling." Well that is of course a risk, but if I were to smuggle something into Northern Ireland and put it in an envelope and fill in a customs declaration, I would write "box of chocolates" I would not write "drugs, counterfeit money, or explosives" so it doesn't seem to me that a customs declaration assists you in trying to deal with smuggling, but it does undermine the sense of unity and union between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

There are others who say openly at the moment we have very few checks, because in the wake of signing the Northern Ireland

protocol, both sides agreed when we cannot just implement it on the first of January, so let us have some grace periods and then phase it in later. Well, the grace periods are still operating, because the United Kingdom government, is, unlawfully under the terms of the protocol, continuing to apply them. Now the EU comes along says “yes we get the point” and we are proposing to reduce the checks compared to what they would normally be on a “third country”.

One version of the proposal Maros Sefcovic⁹ put forward would see a level of checks greater than at present with a significant level of paperwork and bureaucracy. So given that the DUP has said it is not going to go back into the Assembly or the Executive until this problem is sorted, saying to them we have a solution that will result in more checks than we currently have is not going to do it. Whether one agrees or not with the DUP motivation, it is a very serious business.

The power sharing in Northern Ireland is not functioning now. There has been a lengthy period where one side or the other has walked away from the institutions. We had the Sinn Fein boycott which originally started over the renewable heat incentive payments in Northern Ireland, the precise reasons may be lost in the mists of time.

Michelle Martin, the Irish Prime Minister, and the Taoiseach - have said we ought to reconsider the way which powers-sharing operates.

I would say in response that with power sharing you have a First Minister and the Deputy First Minister basically with the same power.

⁹ Vice President of the EU Commission and EU chief negotiator

This was absolutely fundamental to getting the Good Friday Agreement over the line, because it forced both traditions, both parties, both sides to agree formally to share power with the other and therefore we have to find a solution which is going to bring the DUP back into government and is going to solve the problem of checks and for me it is all about the detail.

Asda, Sainsbury's etc - they only sell goods in supermarkets in Ireland, so given that that is the case do you really need to check food and other products that are moving from the warehouse in Britain? They go to can run the lorries across the border and be in the stores by 3 o'clock in the morning to be sold when the doors open at 8 or 9 the following day. Because they only sold in Northern Ireland now I would argue I don't really see why you do need to check them anyway, in which those goods could end up in the Republic is that if somebody from Donegal were to go shopping in Londonderry - which lots of people from Donegal do- but the risk to the integrity of the single market is in my view pretty darn minimal and we've had the grace periods operating now for almost two years.

Every time I meet EU colleagues and Commission officials, I say can you point to a single example in nearly two years where the integrity of the single market has been undermined by the fact, we're not doing checks right across the Irish border and that is a good place to start now in fact the EU and the UK are not a million miles apart.

The EU talks about an express "Green Lane" for goods that are not going into the Republic and the EU wants more information about what going on to the ship so they can check it in real time and see if they think there may be a problem so the items can be checked when they arrive in Belfast.

It is clear to me that Rishi Sunak has apparently told Joe Biden he will get an agreement with the EU by the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement next April. That is a very different approach to that which was being taken by Boris Johnson and Liz Truss. There will come a point where the government must just drop the Northern Ireland protocol bill into the wastepaper basket because if they proceed with that there will not be any agreement and Northern Ireland could end up being removed from the single market altogether.

Most businesses in Northern Ireland like the protocol because it gives businesses the unique privilege of access to both the UK market and the EU market we do not have that in England, Wales and Scotland.

In the same way there is not much point in the EU trying to fine Britain for operating the grace periods illegally because I suspect the Tory government would say hello, we have left the European Union we are not paying your fine.

So, neither of the paths that the two sides are on is going to solve the problem. Only a negotiated settlement will do so and when that day comes then we can begin to turn our attention to the new question which is what Britain's future economic relationship should be with the European Union, which remains our biggest and most important trading partner and that requires a change of mindset on both sides.

The Tories have finally got to admit that Brexit is damaging the British economy and we need to make our free trade easier. The EU needs to accept they have made the point that leaving is bad for the country that's left, but Britain is still a very important trading partner for the EU and so can't we ease the terms of trade between us, and the bureaucracy and paperwork you get to

veterinary agreements, recognition of professional qualifications and the free movement of touring artists (as it is a big problem for British artists now to tour in Europe) and begin to construct a new but a different relationship?

The EU has shown its willingness to do this in the past with countries coming towards it but of course it has never done so with a country that has just left the institutions of the European Union and that is what I think the future needs to hold because this may be a question that comes up.

The Labour Party is not going to fight the next election on a commitment to re-join the EU, the single market, or the customs union. All those things will require a referendum which we are not having.

There are very few people who say the next Labour government should get elected and then spend the next two years fighting a referendum on the matter of Europe.

Even if people say well, I am not talking about re-joining the EU, but what about the single market? there is a debate to be had about the wisdom of joining a market in which you have absolutely no say about the rules. That is a very powerful argument for not having left the EU in the first place which was a terrible mistake.

There is clearly buyer's remorse or voters' remorse judging by the latest polls, but we must deal with the situation that we find ourselves in.

The third and final point I wanted to make was about the state of the world because we can see enormous challenges with the war in Ukraine. It is very striking how Europe has come together to respond to that. President Putin having invaded Crimea and Donetsk and Luhansk in 2014 and seeing what the world did then must have thought if I invade again Europe's divided it will be fine.

Every single one of his nightmares has come to pass. Europe has united in response, with the UK working with the EU. The EU, for the first time in its history has agreed to spend money on supplying weapons to a non-EU country, and to impose tight sanctions. President Putin has persuaded public opinion in Finland and Sweden to change its mind about NATO membership so everything he feared has happened because of his stupidity in invading a sovereign country and the Ukrainians have given him a bloody nose with the support they get from the West.

At present Putin is not going to give up, that is the first point. The second point is about climate change because the COP has been taking place very recently and I would simply argue that when the history of the 21st century comes to be written, the movement of people around the world fleeing war and persecution will have a major part. Plenty of people have fled Ukraine as people have fled Syria, Iran, and Afghanistan and in earlier times Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and Eritrea.

I speak as someone who has communities from all of those places in my constituency in Leeds, with other people fleeing the land of their birth in search of a better life - because some of the people getting in the boats to cross the channel that's what

they're doing, the majority of them have a legitimate asylum claim as the government is having to recognise.

The third if we do not tackle climate change will be that people will flee because they are not going to stay to drown or die of thirst in the land in which they were born.

During my time as International Development Secretary I met people who had fled where they were born and brought up, because it had stopped raining and they'd moved some distance to a village where they set up a camp next to the town rubbish tip, they built benders¹⁰ made-up of folded twigs of wood covered in plastic and cardboard.

I will never forget the conversation I had with a woman with a baby on her breast she had five other children they were living in a bender of about six feet waiting for the rains to return to the village in which they had been living.

You only have to look at the number of people living not that far above sea level Bangladesh as the prime example of people who might be on the move and I make the simple but important observation there is no wall strong enough and there is no fence high enough to get in the way of people who are on the move because they fear for their lives and that is the overwhelming argument as to why we need to do our bit to tackle climate change an every other country in the world needs to do its bit as well.

¹⁰ A **bender tent** is a simple shelter. A bender is made using flexible branches or withies, such as those of hazel or willow. These are lodged in the ground, then bent and woven together to form a strong dome-shape. The dome is then covered using any tarpaulin available. These tents can be heated during the winter using a woodburning stove, and they are easily capable of withstanding very strong winds so long as the covers are well weighed down.

We have made some progress in the UK, but we have not got a plan to get us to net zero. I am happy if you're interested in questions to talk about some of the elements of those plan particularly the decarbonization of home heating and transport, but these are enormous challenges that we face in the world and it's up to our politics to respond to them.

Politics is very difficult to undertake in a world in which some people live in a parallel universe where they deny what I would regard as facts and describe them as fake news.

I finish on this point I'm very much opposed to electronic voting because the great merit of the system we have in Britain is many of us would have been into accounts we watch we hear the rustle of papers and we watched the ballot papers pile up and in the end the pile that's here is the part of the person who's won and a pile here is of the person who came second and there's no argument about the result of the election.

In the land of my mother's birth there are many, many people who deny that Joe Biden won the presidential election and those denialist candidates had been standing in the recent congressional elections and I am pleased to see that they seem to have fared somewhat worse than other Republicans.

How can you run a democracy when you cannot even agree on who won the election? it seems to me this is a terrible challenge, and it is the function of social media- a great force for good but also for bad- maybe that's something we'd like to talk about, but I'll stop at that point because I'm very happy to as ever with a Fabian audience to have a discussion and exchange of views.

Hilary then took questions from the audience, with questions from former MEP Carole Tongue, Ann Black from the Labour NEC, Waltham Forest councillor Catherine Deakin and others from Havering, Peterborough and beyond. The Q and A will be available shortly once transcribed, let me know if you want a copy.

Martin Edobor

Our speaker at the October meeting was Newham GP Martin Edobor. Martin is also the Clinical Director of Newham CCG, and currently Chair of the National Fabian Society.



Figure 4Dr Martin Edobor

By this point, the Truss era had ended, and Rishi Sunak had begun to appoint his Cabinet. Suella Braverman had just been reappointed Home Secretary, which Martin thought a bad move. The new Cabinet was not too different to the last one in views if not personnel.

The concern was the public would need to fund the estimated thirty-five billion hit on public finances caused by the damaging impact of the Truss- Kwateng budget. Public expenditure cuts were coming. With the crisis in Ukraine the cost-of-living crisis and increasing energy prices the damage to the economy caused,

in just six weeks, was immense. Interest rates have risen, mortgages were harder to come by.

The underlying economic issues had not been addressed. Britain had a productivity issue for some time, and no reforms had been introduced to address this, just a vague commitment to growth.

No tax reform was proposed, with no wealth tax, no move on bankers' bonuses and no windfall tax. So, there is lack of funds to address the crumbling public services.



Figure 5 Martin Edobor (l) and Keith Darvill (r) get ready to start the meeting

The Conservatives had been poor stewards of public finances. As a GP Martin had seen a profound impact, including the need to run a foodbank from his GP surgery. He was seeing many malnourished children. GPs had to deal with many non-medical problems, and services were neither designed nor able to deal with the range of issues involved. This meant health outcomes were in decline, adding to the issues caused by the pandemic.

There is a lack of basic care, with waiting lists longer than ever. This including waiting time for oncologists which in turn means patients wait longer for assessment and treatment with inevitably adverse consequences.

The waiting time to see a GP has become ridiculous. There are not enough GPs to meet demand, with a shortfall of around 15,000. The Hunt\ Hancock promise of 6,000 extra GPs by 2020 has not been achieved. This is symptomatic of a wider problem, with a 50,000 shortfall in the number of nurses, with further shortfalls in staff numbers in Mental Health and psychologists. Cleaners are leaving in droves, and Brexit has led to further staff leaving across the workforce.

Public sector pay has not kept up with inflation, and nurses on £24k per annum can earn more elsewhere in a less stressful environment.

As a result, it can take two years to get a hospital appointment. This is not acceptable, and the Tories need to be called out, this was not the case when Labour left office. While the Tories deflect blame elsewhere, Sunak is faced with dealing with a mess they caused.

There is some hope for the future. The Shadow Cabinet are looking more like a government in waiting. There was a new energy at Party Conference, with a clear range of policies to address issues. This included.

- A clear workforce strategy
- An increase in medical schools and students
- Bringing back bursaries for Nurses
- Back to two weeks to see GPs

This will need targets – properly applied these can be transformative.

The four-hour target for being seen in A and E has been quietly dropped, with waiting times now about twelve hours.

The key issue is how to fund the NHS sustainably. The NHS has been underfunded for years. The Blair Government put investment into the NHS funded via borrowing and tax increases.

The Tories proposed an increase in National insurance to fund the NHS and Social Care, which was threatened by the Truss budget – the Tories' commitment to this is uncertain at best.

We do have to pay for world class services, particularly if we wish to be at the cutting edge of technology,

The Labour manifesto must be fully costed, and we have to fund the service if we want it.

The current poll lead is in part due to Truss and may fade. We need to provide reasons for people to stick with Labour. Sunak is seen as a technocrat who is (relatively) competent, and polls are likely to narrow.

Martin had stood against Priti Patel in the 2019 election, Residents of Braintree have similar aspirations to those in London. The Tories are failing on the key metrics that matter to people; Labour needs to provide more hope.

Martin then took questions from an audience that included a local GP and several other health workers, which led to an interesting discussion.

There was agreement about the level of underfunding and the consequences that followed, although some concern about highly paid administration posts within the bureaucracy. Wes Streeting had made some interesting comments on this (see newsletter 49).

There is a need to avoid another big reform; reorganisations can be overpowering and delay progress. The underfunding by Government has led to an undermining of confidence in the NHS.

Supply and demand within the service has always been an issue, complicated by both the complexity and the number of cases.

The approach to Public Health has been mostly reactive with the NHS treating people when ill. The preventative approach has not been the focus and has not been properly funded. Doing so would enable greater education and health promotion which would aid preventative measures. There is a need for a debate on whether the NHS should focus on Public Health. There is currently a lack of Public Health policy across government departments. Whilst this needs a discussion, the pandemic has had a negative impact, with budgets skewed towards acute services, when the focus should be primary care.

The average person now sees a GP six times a year, an increase from three until fairly recently. This adds pressure to the system, which is further impacted by GPs leaving the service.

It will take years to train medical students to address the shortfall. This means improving recruitment from abroad, although it is appreciated this should be from countries with an excess of staff, as there is a strong moral argument about recruiting from countries who have their own shortages and would suffer as a result.

Community pharmacy is in decline, with the numbers reducing. This adds to pressure on GPs and has an adverse impact on low level care.

Brexit has impacted on research. There are fewer research grants, and UK scientific collaborations has reduced; we need to rebuild relationships.

Pharmaceutical costs have increased, and there are shortages of some medicines, in part another impact of Brexit. There is a need for a conversation around the relationship with the EU so that the issues can be dealt with.

There are issues around Care homes, where the quality of care is a post code lottery.

The Fabian Society is working in partnership with UNISON on a social care commission to address the long-term issues.

For local authorities, around 70% of expenditure is on social care, leaving less for discretionary services, which in turn means less to spend on Public Health issues. This includes Sure Start and in Early Intervention services; less funding in these areas means greater problems later.

An excellent meeting and many issues to discuss.

Links

Blog	http://haveringfabians.wordpress.com/
Website	https://haveringfabians.org/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/HaveringFabians
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/havering.fabians
LinkedIn	https://uk.linkedin.com/in/havering-fabians

Online payment

There was a positive response to paying annual subscriptions online with 70 % of those responding willing to pay online. Details are included in the regular (ish) Havering Fabians email. Contact us for further details if you are not on the current mailing list.

Future Meetings

Thursday 12th January 7.30pm Hope Wilson Mendy Chair of Romford Labour Party

Venue – Romford Labour Party Saffron House, 273 South Street, Romford RM1 2B



Figure 6 Hope Wilson Mendy

Hope will speak on “Rethinking local politics.”

Hope was 46 votes short of being elected to the Council in May 2022 after a successful campaign that saw Jane Keane elected as the first Labour Councillor in Romford since 1998.

She became Chair of the Romford Party later in the year and together with Jane runs a foodbank collection point from Saffron House every Saturday morning.

Friday 3rd February 7.30pm AGM 8pm Councillor Saima Ashraf, Deputy Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council

Fairkytes Art Centre 51-53 Billet Lane, Hornchurch RM11 1AX



Figure 7 Councillor Saima Ashraf

Saima is Deputy Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council and Cabinet Member for Community Leadership & Engagement.

She was first elected in 2010 and is currently a Councillor for Norbury Ward.

21st March 7.30pm Jen Craft Labour PPC for Thurrock**2**

Figure 8PPC for Thurrock Jen Craft

On World Down Syndrome Day Jen will talk on the challenges of parenting a child with additional needs in the current political landscape.

Jen was selected as Labour Candidate for Thurrock in 2022. Thurrock remains a seat Labour needs to win to secure a majority. The Conservatives won the seat by 11,482 with 58.6% of the vote. Labour was second with 34.4% of the vote.

**24th April 7.30pm Councillor Margaret Mullane Labour
PPC for Dagenham and Rainham**



Figure 9 Councillor Margaret Mullane PPC for Dagenham and Rainham

Margaret Mullane has spoken to the Fabians on several occasions. Margaret was the Labour Candidate for Romford in 2005 and has been a Councillor for Village Ward in Barking and Dagenham Council since 2010. She was selected as prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Dagenham and Rainham in December 2022.

The subject of her talk will be determined nearer the time. As someone once said, a week is a long time in politics!

Figure 10 Andrew with Havering Mayor Trevor McKeever

Politics in Havering

You may already be aware of the excellent Politics in Havering Blog, which we repost via our twitter feed. This gives a regular update on politics within the borough – a link is below, please follow them (and our blog!) for regular updates!

<https://haverling.blog/>

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

	Contact
Chair Councillor Keith Darvill	David Marshall
Membership Secretary	31 Vicarage Road Hornchurch RM12 4AS 01708 441189 david.c.marshall@talk21.com
Vice Chair Sanchia Alasia	
Treasurer Dave Baldock	



Chair Keith Darvill reports ...

Future Editions

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. Our next edition will be in March 2023 – contributions welcome.

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 and Dagenham Young Labour

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.



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