

HAVERING **FABIAN** SOCIETY

HAVERING FABIAN

Volume 2 Edition 62 October 2025

**Havering Fabian
Society
covering Lessons
for the Labour
Party Following
the Council
Elections in May,
Brian Keegan on
current issues in
the water
industry, Sue
Watson and
Emma Hawkins
on being
prospective
candidates**

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VOLUME 2 EDITION 62 October 2025

Introduction

Welcome to the new edition of the Havering Fabian Newsletter.

The difficult domestic agenda continues, and locally, Havering Council struggles to achieve a balanced budget.

We now have 1,343 followers on X (previously twitter). This number is slowly going down as people leave the site. Keep up to date at our X site **@haveringfabians** for the latest news.

Some of our followers have left or moved to Bluesky. **So, we have a new Bluesky account @haveringfabians.bsky.social** We have 133 followers already, including some who were not following us before. We have 306 followers on LinkedIn and 714 friends on Facebook.

We have a blog now as well as our website <https://haveringfabians.org/posts/> You will need to follow us to get updates. **We have recently added an Instagram account so follow us on there as well!** We have 124 followers.

We are affiliated to the four local Labour Parties and will do all we can to support their campaigns. 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.

Mike Davis RIP

As we went to press, we were informed that former Labour Councillor Mike Davis has died. Details of the funeral will follow via email, and an obituary will follow in our next issue. Mike was a former Chair of Housing. He was one of four Councillors who left the administration and Labour, which led to the removal of Arthur Latham as Council Leader. He rejoined the Labour Party. Our sympathies to family and friends.

Lessons for the Labour Party Following the Council Elections in May

An Analysis and Strategic Outlook

The Labour Party's performance in the Council elections in May offers several key insights that can shape its future strategy and policy direction. These lessons are crucial for the party to leverage its strengths, address its weaknesses, and better align with the electorate's expectations.

Understanding Voter Sentiments

The election results underscore the importance of understanding voter sentiments at a granular level. Labour must invest in comprehensive voter research to identify the issues that matter most to the electorate. This includes economic concerns, healthcare, education, and local governance. By addressing these issues effectively, Labour can build a stronger connection with voters and enhance its appeal.

Strengthening Local Campaigns

Local campaigns play a pivotal role in Council elections. Labour needs to empower its local representatives and provide them with the necessary resources and training to run effective campaigns. This includes leveraging data analytics, social media, and grassroots mobilization to engage with voters. Strong local campaigns can significantly influence election outcomes and improve Labour's overall performance.

Enhancing Party Unity

Party unity is essential for presenting a cohesive and compelling message to voters. Labour must work towards resolving internal conflicts and fostering a sense of solidarity among its members. A united party can better articulate its policies, respond to criticisms, and inspire confidence among the electorate.

Adapting to Regional Variations

The Council elections revealed significant regional variations in voter preferences. Labour must adopt a flexible approach that accommodates these differences. Tailoring policies and campaign strategies to address regional issues can help Labour gain traction in diverse constituencies. This adaptability can also demonstrate Labour's commitment to addressing the unique needs of different communities.

Improving Communication Strategies

Effective communication is key to winning elections. Labour should refine its messaging to ensure clarity, consistency, and resonance with voters. This includes simplifying complex policy proposals, using relatable language, and highlighting success stories. Additionally, Labour should harness the power of digital platforms to reach a wider audience and engage with younger voters.

Building Strong Alliances

Forming strategic alliances with other progressive parties and organizations can enhance Labour's electoral prospects. Collaborative efforts can amplify Labour's message, increase its reach, and consolidate support among left-leaning voters. Building strong alliances can also create opportunities for joint initiatives and shared resources.

Focusing on Policy Innovation

Labour must prioritize policy innovation to address contemporary challenges and future opportunities. This includes developing forward thinking policies on climate change, technological advancements, and social justice. By positioning itself as a party of innovation, Labour can attract voters who are looking for fresh solutions and progressive leadership.

Engaging with the Youth

The youth vote is increasingly influential in elections. Labour should actively engage with young voters by addressing their concerns and aspirations. This includes focusing on issues such as education, employment, housing, and climate change. Engaging with youth through social media, youth forums, and educational campaigns can help Labour build a loyal base among young voters.

Learning from Past Mistakes

A thorough analysis of past election mistakes can provide valuable lessons for future campaigns. Labour must be willing to critically assess its previous strategies, identify weaknesses, and implement corrective measures. This process of learning and adaptation is essential for continuous improvement and long-term success.

In conclusion, the Council elections in May offer several crucial lessons for the Labour Party. By understanding voter sentiments, strengthening local campaigns, enhancing party unity, adapting to regional variations, improving communication strategies, building strong alliances, focusing on policy innovation, engaging with the youth, and learning from past mistakes, Labour can improve its electoral performance and better serve the needs of the electorate. These lessons provide a strategic framework for Labour to navigate future challenges and seize opportunities for growth and success.

The above was written by AI rather than a human. Let me know what you think. Is it accurate? Do you agree with the analysis? What do you agree with ? Where does the analysis fall short? Please provide your feedback and I will collate and circulate comments.

Brian Keegan – Future of the Water Industry

Our speaker was Brian Keegan from Peterborough, with the meeting held via zoom.

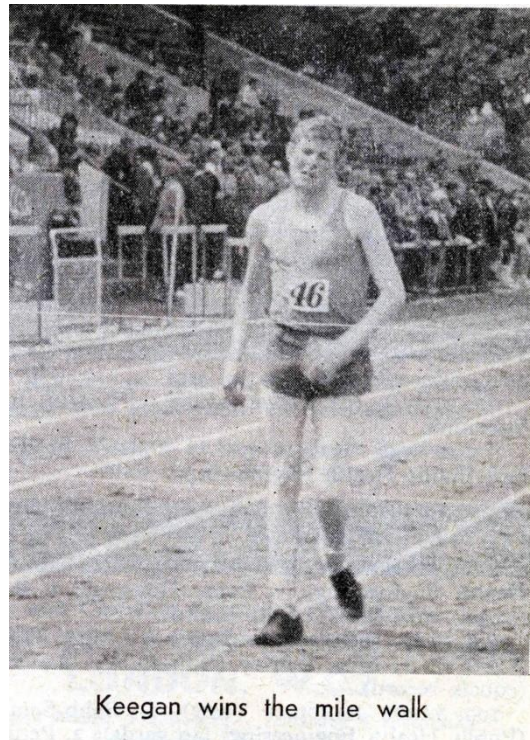


Figure 1 Brian in younger days winning the GLC staff mile walk for the third year in a row- thanks to David Ainsworth for the photo

Brian set out the legislative background in detail This is a summary; his slides are available via our website link below.

[havering-fabians-september-2025.pptx](#)

Sewage was made a local authority responsibility in 1936. Standards were established at this point, which was not the case with water.

The Water Act 1945 made water a local authority responsibility, with a requirement for “Wholesome” water in pipes for every part of their district. This was vague and left discretion. A standard was not introduced until 1989 with the EU standards were adopted.

The Act created the possibilities of joint boards to improve arrangements across local authority boundaries.

By 1950 there were 198 suppliers. There were 101 joint boards, 64 local authorities and 33 statutory water companies (private providers). The companies were regulated with price and dividends controlled.

Locally the South Essex Water Company was formed in 1861 and supplied 103 square miles from Grays to East Ham and Brentwood to the Thames.

Rivers were Local Government responsibility until the 1948 Rivers Board Act 1948 created 32 Catchment Boards including the Port of London Authority

The 1951 Rivers Prevention of Pollution Act created an offence of pollution.

The 1963 Water Resources Act established River Authorities establishing responsibility for managing rivers.

The 1973 Water Act set up 20 Water Authorities based on river catchment areas, inheriting responsibility from local authorities.

Privatisation in 1989 occurred in the same year that EU water standards were adopted. So, the new companies had a clear standard to achieve. Massive investment was required to achieve these.

Privatisation followed the Thatcherism belief in Markets and that the public sector was wealth sapping. The massive investment required by new EU standards was a private rather than public sector expense.

Ten new regional monopolies were created. Each had debt written off. Thames Water alone now has debts of £22.8 billion.

Water rates rose at RPI plus 5 per cent for 5 years. Future investment was no longer matched by government debt, so public expenditure declined.

Comparative competition was intended to ensure efficiency. Whether this was achieved remains debateable.

Companies were regulated via Asset Management Plans (AMPs). These set out prices for 5 years

Required asset to be maintained in serviceable condition
ensured companies a rate of return.

The AMP approach led to conflict with an under resourced Regulator. The Regulator dependent on information provided by companies, giving the industry had the upper hand .

The industry is a highly technical one. Water treatment involves dangerous chemicals (including chlorine and ozone). So, expertise is needed and is expensive, with significant skills necessary. This is not cheap to acquire and another cost for the Regulator.

The model Brian favours would reflect quality costing money. While shareholders may be required meet some of the cost via reduced dividends, ultimately the consumer would pay. Nationalisation would not change this although may change the impact on consumers and achieve other objectives.

There is a need for a national forum to review and monitor standards
Regional forums should be responsible for

- Affordability
- Priorities
- Monitoring PIs

Regulators need teeth and independence.

Sewage has a high media profile. Water companies do not put anything into the sewers - they must deal with the consequences. Sewage enters the water stream via a variety of routes. Run off from roads and fields, rainfall etc for example, new car tyres typically have a tread of 8mm . As this reduces with wear the remains of tyres form on the road and end up in sewers.

Brian then took questions

Population growth would increase demand for water; how would this be dealt with? Asset management plans would include population growth in forward projections. This would mean borrowing more money.

New homes require a water retention scheme. It is not economic to deal with at an individual house level.

There will continue to be issues where there is a difference between shareholder and public interest. This is unavoidable.

If nationalisation occurs there may be issues in respect of existing employee share schemes and pensions. These complicate the nationalisation issue, which would require significant funds and so is not a current government priority.

Regulation is necessary, as the monopoly provision continues.

We thank Brian for an excellent presentation and leading an informed discussion.

Hopes Aspirations and Achievement – Sue Watson

Hello, I'm Sue Watson and I've been selected to be one of the prospective Labour Candidates for Rainham and Wennington Ward, Havering.

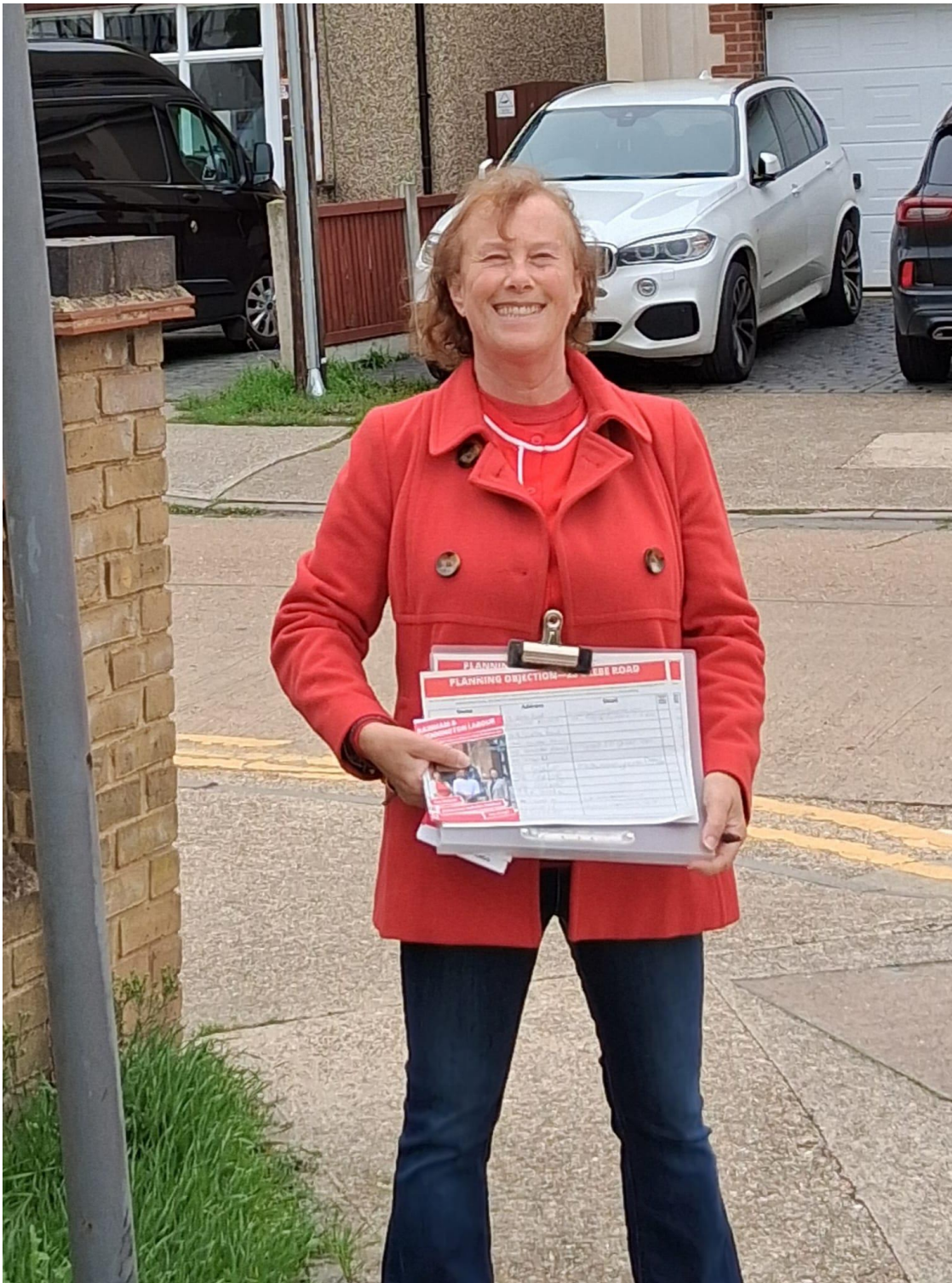


Figure 1 Sue on the campaign trail

So why Labour and why am I working hard to be elected in Rainham and Wennington?

It all started with my dad, as these things often do. Dad was a vocal supporter of the Labour Party having lived through the Great Depression and the impacts of being poor in the East End of London. He was of the generation that had no NHS, no welfare state, no support for people like him, so growing up in the East End of London was hard. His experiences including, fighting at the Battle of Cable Street and in the Second World War, forged his beliefs in progressive Labour policies to support people like us.

I remember so many discussions with dad around the issues in the country and how Labour was the answer. These discussions helped forge my thinking, my belief in progressive policies.

This started my engagement with Labour from a very early age. I was a member of what is now called Young Labour, many decades ago. This was the start of my personal journey into Labour activism.

This journey has continued over the years in many forms. Finally in 2024 I was in a position to consider standing as a Labour Candidate in the 2026 local elections. Anyone who knows me, knows when I make this serious a decision, I give all my effort to a successful outcome. So, with support from my MP Margaret Mullane and my CLP, Dagenham and Rainham, I made the decision to stand for selection.

The whole process allowed me to revisit my personal Labour journey and to explore the Labour principles and beliefs I hold to and that will inform

what I do during any campaign and beyond. It also gave me opportunity to consider what I'd like to achieve if successful.

My hopes and aspirations are very much linked to my ongoing community activism. I have been a community activist for a long time. I believe in the power of communities to make a positive difference in where you live and how you live. This aspiration is something I will continue to actively work to progress.

Currently I'm active within the local and borough-wide police service, having undertaken a range of joint activities as well as advice and monitoring. I'm involved with women's groups, lead on local litter picking and a gardening group in Rainham Village, to name a few. I'm the Women's officer for my CLP of Dagenham and Rainham and a White Ribbon Champion. Currently I'm working with Havering Council around this year's White Ribbon days of action. I'm also looking to put on an event in Rainham itself.

So, what am I looking to achieve? I passionately believe in community representation that works hard for the community. A voice that speaks up for and on behalf of that community in all and every forum. A person that is a positive force for their ward, that is a positive representative. A councillor that has the question "how will this benefit and/or impact Rainham and Wennington" at the base of whatever work you are doing. All this underpinned by progressive Labour principles.

As a ward there is so much work to be done both small scale and bigger scale. I like, where possible, to adopt a proactive approach and work with communities to solve issues and concerns. This approach is far more

effective I feel and achieves better results. As I said it falls into where we live and how we live.

Issues such as Launderers Lane urgently needs a resolution. I, along with my comrades running with me, will work with our MP Margaret Mullane, to achieve this. I will be active in protecting and promoting the Conservation area. We have the oldest building in Havering in Rainham Village, St. Helens and St. Giles Church (1170) and the oldest War Memorial (November 1920) I'd look to work with the Safer Neighbourhood team around ASB and a range of policing matters. With reference to Havering's deprivation indices, Rainham and Wennington is one of the most deprived wards in Havering. This is not good enough and I'd actively look to address each of the specific indices to improve residents' lives. This may mean working with fellow Labour Councillors, an opportunity I'd fully embrace.

I'd be looking to build community cohesion as together we are stronger and can build rather than divide and destroy. This will take time, careful thinking and planning and a willingness to lead.

Within the Council itself I feel I can add to the Labour groups call for improved Overview and Scrutiny of the Council operations. I'd be able to be the voice for Rainham and Wennington residents in the chamber, a Labour voice that is reflective of my principles and beliefs.

So, as the long campaign starts it is with a sense of anticipation, of hope, of almost excitement. This is our chance, our chance to win Rainham and Wennington for Labour. That's when the hard work begins- I can't wait.

Standing as a prospective Labour Councillor -Emma Hawkins



Figure 2 Emma gardening outside Saffron House

I joined the Labour Party in 2019 just prior to the General Election and immediately started campaigning. Back then I had little knowledge of how the political system worked and would never have thought of

applying to be a Councillor. I didn't even know what they did! Over the next few years, I helped with campaigning from time to time, fitting things in around the rest of my life. In 2024 I was optimistic that we could change things in Romford and get a Labour MP, so I was out on the doorstep trying to persuade people to vote Labour. Campaigning was fun, but in such a short time we could meet so few people. Sadly, although his majority was reduced, the good people of Romford still elected a Conservative MP.

I decided to work harder on regular campaigning so joined our executive committee and became the Campaign manager. I wanted to help and support others to keep our current Labour Councillor and, in our target, wards get some new and enthusiastic people to come forward. As I found out more about what being a Councillor involved, I realised that it was something that would suit my skill set and so I decided to put my name forward. St Edwards Ward in the centre of Romford seemed the best for me. It would be a challenge to win as at the last council election we were behind the Residents Association and the Conservatives. However, I like a challenge, and I know it well as I live just outside the ward. I have been involved in litter picking and community gardening within the area.

I am passionate about environmental issues, equity and fairness. If my campaigning is successful, I would fight for access to green space for all residents of Romford. I care a lot about sustainability and believe that growing our own food is something we can do both as an enjoyable hobby and to help in the fight against climate change. I am fortunate to have an allotment in Havering and firmly believe that access to growing space should be available for more people.

I have been a member of Havering cyclists for many years and am keen to promote active travel not just for environmental reasons but also to promote health and wellbeing.

I worked for 20 years at BHR Trust as a consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, so I have knowledge of the social determinants of health. In that role I spend time writing and reviewing protocols and guidelines so gained extensive experience in analysing documents and awareness of the importance of getting these things right.

I am hopeful that if I am successful in my campaigning and manage to be elected, I will be able to demonstrate how staying true to Labour values can make things better for the people of Havering.

David Marshall will not seek re-election at the AGM

Havering Fabian Society Secretary David Marshall has shared with the Executive Committee he will not be seeking re-election at the AGM in February 2026. David has been Secretary for over 20 years. He is the third Secretary since 1974, following on from Alan Thake. and then Graham Carr.

We are grateful to David for his dedication, which has played a pivotal role in keeping Havering Fabian Society as one of the most active in the Country. We have had a range of interesting speakers over an extended period, including Jon Cruddas, Stephen Timms Carole Tongue and current MP Margaret Mullane,

David's energy and enthusiasm helped keep the Society active during a period that was often difficult for progressive politics. His talk on his visit to the Falkland Islands was also excellent and remembered by all present. Please feel free to share memories of David's tenure.

David was part of the 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2024 and we look forward to a bright future for the Society. He intends to continue to attend our meetings.

The new Secretary will be elected at the AGM in February 2026. Fabian Society rules require that all members of the local executive are National Society. If you are interested, please let David know, and he can provide further details of what is involved. All paid up members of the local society are eligible to vote.

We look forward to welcoming a new Secretary, and thank David for his hard work.

WhatsApp group

We are setting up a WhatsApp group as another form of communication

If you wish to be included, send an email with your phone number to haveringfabians@outlook.com

We will use this for reminders of meetings, links to national Fabian Society events etc and not for discussion purposes. So, you will receive one or two notifications a week at most.

If you think we should have a discussion group, let me know and we will create one - so far, a limited response on this !

Future Meetings

The Committee are working on the programme for the rest of the year. This will include a visit to the House of Commons in October at the invitation of Margaret Mullane MP on 21st October. **Please contact David Marshall if you wish to attend as places are limited.**

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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
Bluesky	@haveringfabians.bsky.social
Instagram	haveringfabians

Online payment

Details are included in the regular Havering Fabians email. Contact us for further details if you are not on the current mailing list. Membership is £5 waged, £10 unwaged. **This will increase to £6 and £12 from January 2026.**

National membership is also available via the link below.

[Join | Fabian Society](#)

National membership includes a regular quarterly magazine; regular email updates and invites to conferences. There are theme-based groups that develop policy in areas such as housing, the economy and environmental issues.

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

Chair Councillor Keith Darvill	Secretary David Marshall	Contact David Marshall
Membership Secretary Councillor Harriet Spoor		31 Vicarage Road Hornchurch RM12 4AS 01708 441189 david.c.marshall@talk21.com
Vice Chair Sanchia Alasia		
Treasurer Dave Baldock		
Committee Members Councillor Jane Keane Councillor Andrew Achilleos Cecile Duerinckx Keith Taffs		

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 **December 2025 or January 2026**. – 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 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

.....

.....

postcode.....

E-mail.....

Phone number

Waged (£10) unwaged £5