

Havering Election Results 1964 – 2022

**A history of fortunes of the Labour
Party in elections in the Borough**

HAVERING
FABIAN
SOCIETY

Contents

Introduction.....	5
1964 Election Birth of a new Borough	8
Bill Fiske obituary.....	11
Bertie Edwin Roycraft	14
1968 Election – A rude awakening as London rebels	14
1971 Election – Victory!.....	17
1971 Footnote	20
Michael Ward -Labour MP and local government expert	21
1974 Election – Three elections in a nine months... ..	24
1978 Election – Boundary Changes and grim times.	28
1982 Election – the more things change.....	32
1986 Election – the fightback begins.....	37
1990 Election – Goodbye Poll Tax.....	42
1994 Havering Council Elections – in a word “Almost...”	47
1998 Havering Council Elections – more interesting that it first appears!	52
2002 - Havering Council Elections – The beginning of the end?	55
Arthur Latham obituary	59
2006 - Havering Council Elections – The sky falls in.....	61
The 2010 Election – A bit better.....	66
The 2014 Election – Almost wiped out	71
2018 Election Great Expectations.....	77
Havering Elections 2022.....	85
Summary	95
Jack Hoepelman 1932 to 2013	98
Percentage share of the poll, 1964-2018.....	110
State of the parties, 1964-18	110
INDIVIDUAL WARD RESULTS 1964-2018.....	111

Introduction

Havering Fabians were formed in 1974 and have held meetings on a regular basis ever since. As social media grew, the Society has moved with the times and has a website, and pages on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

We began a newsletter in 2007 which covered the meetings for those who could not attend and gave an opportunity for contributions from local Labour Party members on topical issues.

In 2015, the London Borough of Havering celebrated 50 years since its formation, and to mark this, we began a review of the elections from the inception in the Borough.

This was partly inspired by a review in Tribune of a pamphlet published by Windsor Labour Party to mark the brief period when Labour controlled the Royal Borough of Windsor Council in 1946¹. Labour have only won outright control of Havering from 1971-74, so there were similarities. Labour has at other times had minority control or gained control with the benefit of defections.

This publication brings together the articles from each newsletter into one document and attempts to remove inconsistencies and errors. There have been several amendments as those involved have corrected errors, provided insights, and provided a context that was not obvious at the time.

The publication deals primarily with elections and views these through a Labour viewpoint. If you are not a Labour supporter, there are references to other Parties, so you should still find this an interesting read.

There is another exercise required to track the policy implications of each administration, which is beyond the scope of this publication.

¹ <http://www.theroyalwindsorwebsite.com/windsor%20history/local%20politics/LabourPartyYWTS1946.html>

The presence of the Residents as a significant third force in Havering has meant that “no overall control” has been the outcome in eight out of the fourteen elections held since the borough was formed. Havering initially was a borough that voted in the same way as the rest of the Country. In recent elections this has not been the case, as the Conservatives have become the dominant force in national elections.

The Labour Party in Havering has a proud record and will keep advocating a progressive, socialist agenda. The efforts of those who have served the Labour cause in the area, either on the Council, within the Party and Trade Union movement are appreciated by those involved, hopefully including the residents of the Borough.

I would like to thank the late Del Smith, John Reid, Martin Earley, and Alan Williams for providing interesting background.

No Havering Fabian publication could feel complete without mentioning the late Alan and Eirlys Thake, who were the mainstays of the Society from formation in 1974. They are sadly missed by all who knew them and would be pleased to know the society is in good health as it approaches its own 50th anniversary in seven years’ time.

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. The 2022 update is still to be published.

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

1964 Election Birth of a new Borough

The first elections were held in May 1964, to allow the new Councillors to settle in when the new Council began work in April 1965.

The election would see the merger of the Romford and Hornchurch Urban District Councils. This led to tensions within the local political parties that resonate today –that the Romford Conservatives hold twenty of the 22 Conservative seats on the Council causes tension between them and the rest of the Borough that surfaced during the 2014 campaign.

The electoral politics were quite different. Havering had two large parliamentary constituencies, Romford, held by Labour, and Hornchurch a Conservative held marginal.

In the 1964 October General Election, the Conservatives retained the Hornchurch seat by 234 votes. In 1966, Alan Lee Williams won the seat with a majority of 3,033. So Labour was in a strong position, and outright control looked possible.

In the GLC elections held in April 1964, Labour won all three seats with the candidates elected on a borough wide basis. William Fiske, Bill Gilman, and Bertie Roycraft were the successful candidates, on a turnout of 49.3%. Labour won sixty-four of the one hundred seats, and with the Alderman added had a clear majority on the GLC.

For those of you not familiar with Alderman, the following extract from Wikipedia may be helpful.

“Under the Municipal Reform Act 1835, municipal borough corporations consisted of councillors and aldermen. Aldermen would be elected not by the electorate, but by the council (including the outgoing aldermen), for a term of six years, which allowed a party that narrowly lost an election to retain control by choosing aldermen. This was changed by the Municipal Corporations Amendment Act 1910, so that outgoing aldermen were no longer allowed to vote. Aldermen were finally abolished under the Local Government Act 1972 in 1974, except for London boroughs where the position was abolished in 1978.”

The Havering election took place in May, and the result was likely to be a close one. So, it proved with Labour taking twenty-seven of the fifty-five seats, the Ratepayers² twelve and the Conservatives 16. 8 Alderman supplemented the elected Councillors – the great and good of the previous Urban District Council’s – these tilted the balance away from Labour control.

There were many names among the candidates that would resonate across Havering politics in the coming years. Future MPs Michael Ward and Arthur Latham were elected for Labour, and future Council leaders Jack Moultrie and Bill Sibley for the Conservatives.

Other notable candidates were future Labour MP for Ipswich Ken Weetch, who was defeated (narrowly) in Harold Wood, newly elected GLC member Bill Gillman, who was defeated along with future Labour leader Ron Whitworth in Cranham, and former International Brigade member Harry Moss, defeated in St Andrews. Harry was the father of future Havering Councillor Howard Moss.

² The current Resident Association Councillors on Havering do not like to be referred to as Ratepayers – however in 1964 and for some years after their predecessors stood on a Ratepayer platform.

Alderman aside, the outcome of the election hinged on the result in Harold Wood where future Havering Councillor Pat Ridley was 18 votes short of the third-place Conservative candidate – as we will see later in the series, this was an indication that Harold Wood would be the key seat for Labour in more than one future election.

Labour polled comparatively well in Hacton, (three hundred votes behind), St Andrews (480 behind) and while well behind the resident\ ratepayer candidates in Rainham, piled up an average of 1,850 votes per candidate.

So, with a General Election due later in the year, Labour prospects were bright for a gain with candidate Tom Williams.

All eight seats were won on Harold Hill, while the remaining nineteen covered the wards in the west of the Borough (Mawney, Oldchurch, Central, Collier Row, Hylands, Elm Park and South Hornchurch). The Conservatives did not stand a full slate, standing only one candidate in Elm Park, and none in South Hornchurch or Rainham.

There were no wards which returned candidates from more than one party, and the highest turnout were in Harold Wood (50.2%) and St Andrews (47.2%). The lowest Heaton (29.5%) and Oldchurch (25.5%).

At this point in the Borough's history, Labour looked well placed, one seat short of a majority and close in four others.

The ratepayer/ residents held twelve seats, Cranham and Hacton – which they have held ever since, Upminster (which the Conservatives have won) and Rainham, which has changed hands several times but never yet elected a Conservative Councillor.

1964 Result

Party	% Vote	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	42.8	27	4	31
Conservative	30.4	16	3	19
Resident	19.7	12	2	14
Liberal	7.2	0	0	0
Turnout 40.9%		55	9	64

Next in the series - 1968. A very different result.

Bill Fiske obituary

In the preamble to the 1964 article, we covered the GLC elections in April 1964. While Bill Gillman was known to many in the local Labour parties, while for younger members, little was known of the other successful candidates. Further research has revealed that Bill Fiske, one of the other candidates elected was the first Leader of the GLC, and as Lord Fiske, went on to oversee Decimalisation in Britain.

The following is taken from a Wikipedia entry (so needs treating with care).

Bill Fiske, was the first Leader of the Greater London Council and oversaw the decimalisation of the Pound Sterling as Chairman of the Decimal Currency Board.

When World War II broke out, Fiske was drafted as a specialist into the Civil Service where he founded the Society of Civil Servants. The war helped to

energise him in politics generally and he unsuccessfully fought the constituency of Hampstead for the Labour Party in the general election of 1945.

The next year saw Fiske elected to the London County Council for Hammersmith South, a seat previously held by the Conservatives. He managed to hold his seat and make it safe, while gradually becoming so enthusiastic about council work that by 1955 it had eclipsed his previous ambitions to be elected to Parliament. (On becoming Leader of the GLC, he observed that "Here you see far more of the results of what you do than you can across the river.") In the 1956 New Year's Honours he was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Fiske became popular among his colleagues in the Labour Group and in 1960 he was elected as Chief Whip, deposing Freda Corbet who had held the job for 12 years and was a close ally of the Labour leader Isaac Hayward. He was less popular among individual members of the Labour Party, and when the LCC was abolished, he was selected as a candidate for the new Greater London Council in Havering, which was marginal. He was however selected as the Leader of the Labour Group for the GLC elections.

He fought the 1964 elections on traditional lines, campaigning on the record of the LCC in building new council housing which was regarded as good quality at the time. Despite predictions that the wider boundaries of the GLC would hand power to the Conservatives, Fiske was returned in his own seat, and Labour won a comfortable victory. When Labour won the general election later that year, Fiske was given a knighthood.^[2]

In power Fiske's administration treated the GLC as a version of the LCC with wider boundaries, which ignored the increased power of the new London Boroughs. Attempts to press GLC policy on unwilling boroughs were made but could now be resisted. The GLC also had to cope with increasing road transport

problems because of the increase in the number of cars. Fiske proposed to increase charges for parking in inner London, with residents' parking permits required for those living in the zone, stating that he hoped more people would leave their car and use public transport. The scheme proved unpopular among car drivers.

Fiske carried on a policy of subsidies for the arts, and it was under his leadership that the decision was made to build the Royal National Theatre on the South Bank site. He himself served as a member of the board. However, he was unable to hold council house rents down as far as he wished.

The 1967 elections took place when the Labour Government of Harold Wilson had become unpopular and it was accepted that Fiske would find it difficult to hold on. However, the result was shattering. Not merely did Fiske lose his own seat, the Labour Party was reduced to only twenty members. Fiske accepted immediately that his career in local politics was over. He received a life peerage with the title **Baron Fiske**, of Brent in Greater London as a consolation.

He had already been handed a lifeline by Chancellor of the Exchequer James Callaghan who, thinking of his Bank of England experience, appointed him Chairman of the Decimal Currency Board on 12 December 1966. Fiske was charged with arranging the changeover from a Pound consisting of twenty shillings, with each shilling containing twelve pence, to a decimalised Pound of one hundred new pence.

In the event, despite some predictions of disaster, D Day went off smoothly, with the main concerns being over retailers using the opportunity to round prices up and thereby boost inflation. The Decimal Currency Board was wound up at the end of 1971, and Fiske then went into retirement. He used his seat in the Lords to

campaign in support of council tenants, statutory control of estate agents, and for better treatment of diabetes.

Bertie Edwin Roycraft



Memorial Plaque in Broadway, Barking

Bertie Edwin Roycraft OBE, JP (1909-29 December 1978).[1]

Born in Poplar, he was the son of Richard and Harriet Roycraft.

Labour Party member of the Greater London Council: Havering 1964 – 1967.

A member of Barking Town Council and the successor Barking London Borough council, he was Mayor of Barking in 1949-50 and 1964-65, and was Awarded the OBE in the 1968 Birthday Honours. He remained a member of Barking Council until his death.

1968 Election – A rude awakening as London rebels

The 1966 General Election saw both Havering seats return Labour MPs. Ron Ledger retained Romford (he had been the MP since 1955) with a majority of 8,061. In Hornchurch, Alan Lee Williams overturned a majority of 234 to win by 3,133 with 38,406 votes. So, the area had moved towards Labour since 1964, as Harold Wilson's government won a large majority at a national level.

This did not last. The 1967 GLC elections saw a landslide victory for the Conservatives, with all three Havering seats (at this point still elected on a Borough wide basis) returning Tory Councillors. One of these was Jeffery Archer, who went on to bigger if not better things as an MP, novelist, Conservative Party official and was later detained at her majesty's pleasure.

The prospects for 1968 were not good; Devaluation (Wilson's "pound in your Pocket speech") and concerns about the economy hit at the floating voter while disputes with the unions, ("In place of Strife") alienated Labour's base support and the prospects in Havering were not good.

Pessimism was proved correct. Labour lost all seats in the west of the Borough. While we have been unable to trace records for Hornchurch and Romford Urban District Council's (can anyone assist?) but we believe wards such as Elm Park, and Oldchurch were lost for the first time.

Labour retained all seven seats in Harold Hill, and the Conservatives won thirty-five seats, including seats where they had not stood in 1964. The Ratepayers won thirteen seats, including a seat in Hylands, which became Havering's first split ward. Again, no Liberals were elected.

The turnout was 40.8% just 0.1% below that in 1964. Upminster at 56.3% was the ward with the highest turnout, while the Labour wards on Harold Hill had turnouts of 27.7%, 27.3% and 26.8%. Labour took 22.6% of the poll against the Conservatives 54.5%

The election saw several defeated Labour candidates who would become major players in Havering in later years, among them Jack Hoepelman, and future Education chair Margaret Latham.

However, both Labour heavyweights Arthur Latham and Michael Ward were re-elected, and were joined in a much-reduced Labour group by Quakers Frank and

Rita Coffin, Reg Whiting, Mrs Barber and TSSA official Dave Burn, who had been selected after a late drop out. I have not been able to trace who the Alderman were for either 1964 or 1968 elections – anyone able to assist?

Across London, the pattern was similar, and the Labour vote collapsed. Only four boroughs (Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Southwark, and Tower Hamlets) remained Labour, and there were large Conservative majorities in Islington (37) and Haringey (46). The Conservatives won the remaining 28 Councils outright.

These were grim days indeed, and although the Wilson Government is now viewed as one of the great socially reforming administrations (legalising both abortion, homosexuality, and abolishing the death sentence), it remained deeply unpopular. Prospects for the 1970 election were then far from favourable, and a landslide Conservative government under Ted Heath almost certain.

A Heath victory did follow, but not the landslide anticipated.

1968 Result

Party	% Vote	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	22.6	7	1	8
Conservative	54.5	35	6	41
Resident	19.1	13	2	15
Liberal	3.2	0	0	0
Total	100.0	55	9	64
Turnout 40.8%				

Next in the series - 1971. Victory!

1971 Election – Victory!

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

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

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

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

All the seats won in 1964 were regained, and Harold Wood, which had been narrowly lost in 1964, returned Labour Councillors for the first time. Anecdotes suggest local traffic issues played a key role in making the difference. The gap

between third placed Labour Candidate Geoff Otter and the fourth placed Conservative was 104 votes, so a narrow win and a turnaround of 122 from 1964. Future Council leader Roger Ramsey came fifth.

In Hacton Ward, former Hornchurch UDC Mayor Harry Moss (Father of future Havering Councillor Howard Moss, and a member of the International Brigade) lost by 102 votes, the closest Labour has come to winning in the ward. In St Andrews Labour Candidate K. Ince was fifty-four short of third place (although Labour did win a seat in the 1994 election when Graham Carr won a seat as the votes split between the Residents, Tories and Labour).

In Rainham, a seat Labour would win in 1994, all three candidates polled over 2,000 votes but there was still a gap of 287 to the lowest placed Ratepayer candidate.

In all three of the parliamentary seats, Labour was ahead of the Tories – by 25.9% in Hornchurch, 14.3% in Upminster but by only 0.1% in Romford. Labour got 47.7% of the vote, an increase of 25.5% from 1968.

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

The change was reflected elsewhere with Labour in control of twenty-one councils in London, up from just 4 in 1968. The Heath government was under pressure. Nationally, this was very much an era of two-party politics, although the Liberal vote and number of MPs would begin to increase in the 1970's and eighties. Many of the borough's residents worked at Fords in Dagenham. This was Labour's electoral highpoint in Havering (the 1997 general election being the other contender). Elections in Havering were closely fought, usually resolved

in the same way as the national result, and in Hornchurch in particular, majorities were small whoever won.

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

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

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

Proving someone had a sense of humour, the administration's representatives on the Crematorium committee were Councillors Frank Coffin, Dave Burn and Geoff Otter³.

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

1971 Result

Party	% vote	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	47.1	30	5	35
Conservative	32.5	13	4	17
Resident	19.0	12	0	12
Liberal	1.4	0	0	0
Total	100.0	55	9	64
Turnout 42.3%				

Next in the series - 1974. No Overall Control,

1971 Footnote

Unusually there were four by-elections on the same day in July 1971, because 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 an extended 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 twenty-two votes. It would be interesting to know whether this was an attempt at humour or seeking to address disability issues. Del Smith advised this was a long forgotten far left group who campaigned against the Vietnam war.

Michael Ward -Labour MP and local government expert

Obituary by Alan Lee Williams (from the Daily Telegraph)

The most prominent role exercised by Michael Ward, who has died aged 77 of cancer, was as Labour MP for Peterborough, when the party was in government in the 1970s. But that was just one phase of half a century of public service by a highly efficient expert on local government.

His experience began as a councillor for the borough of Romford from 1958, and for its successor, the London borough of Havering (1964-78), whose council he led from 1971 to 1974. There he adroitly managed to assuage quarrelsome ratepayers reluctant to spend money, placate the Tories and deal amicably with the extreme left in his own party. He disliked class warfare in politics, and his equable, debonair personality and detailed committee work had persuaded a highly divided council to accept his sensible and pragmatic approach.

The skills that Michael brought to parliament in 1974 should have led to ministerial office, but Harold Wilson's inconsistency did not appeal to him. Michael served as parliamentary private secretary in three departments - Education and Science, Overseas Development, and the Foreign Office - and during the Lib-Lab pact of 1977-78, saw the advantage of co-operating to avoid a return of Tory government and party conflict. He played a significant role in the Manifesto Group of Labour MPs, concerned at the party's lurch to the left. One practical victory lay in the passing of his 1977 private member's bill to protect consumers against small print conditions in contracts.

After losing the constituency to the Tory Brian Mawhinney in 1979, Michael resumed his previous work as press officer to the Inner London Education Authority (Ilea), and then for the London borough of Lewisham (1980-84), before

returning to Ilea as director of information for two years under Frances Morrell, the authority's redoubtable left-wing leader.

In 1987, he contested Tonbridge and Malling, Kent, for the Social Democratic party, and went on to be executive officer (1988-89) for Paddy Ashdown, at the start of his leadership of what became the merged Liberal Democrats. Michael was extremely popular across party lines as he could work cheerfully and with good outcomes for all, and he returned to Labour after it had come to its senses. His final PR post was with the Association of Chief Officers of Probation (1989-95).

He was born in Romford, and went to schools there and in Bungay, Suffolk, before taking a degree in public administration at the University of Manchester. Commissioned in the RAF on national service, Michael spent four years from 1953 as an education officer. He then became registrar of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries (1958-60), advised local authorities on organisation and method (1960-61), and was the Labour party's local government officer (1961-65). The first time he stood for Peterborough was in 1966, when the Tory Sir Harmar Nicholls held the seat by three votes, after seven recounts.

From 1965 to 1970, Ward advised local authorities on public relations and was then a press officer for Ilea until 1974: Peterborough eluded him in 1970, and by just twenty-two votes in the February 1974 election, but he eventually won the seat the following October.

Michael achieved much after his involvement in elected politics and PR had ended. He and his wife Lilian, whom he had married in 1953, moved to Blackheath, south-east London, where he was administrator of the vast Cator estate (1995-2001), where a widely diverse crowd of powerful personalities, pressed for immediate action. With his usual aplomb and good nature, Michael

administered finances, and negotiated road projects, planning applications and environmental campaigns. From 1999 to 2004, Michael was chairman of the Charlton Triangle Homes, Greenwich, a project to demolish and rebuild social housing in a deprived area.

He is survived by Lilian and his two daughters, one of whom, Alison Seabeck, has been Labour MP for Plymouth Devonport since 2005.

- Michael John Ward, politician, and public relations consultant, born 7 April 1931; died 25 March 2009

1974 Election – Three elections in nine months...

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.

The 1974 Council elections were likely to be close – the 1971 elections had seen Labour collect most 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 twenty-two votes.

The Council election results in May were like 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 of those elected in 1971 (see note about by-elections) with a few new names.

Current Havering Fabian press officer David Ainsworth came sixth 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 defeat seemed a temporary setback.

In Manway, Labour won two of the three seats with Harry Moss losing out (not for the first time – see the 1971 election summary) by seven 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 nine 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?

1974 Result

Party	% vote	Councillors	Alderman	Total
Labour	33.2	26	5	31
Conservative	37.9	20	3	23
Resident	19.2	9	1	10
Liberal	9.7	0	0	0
Total	100.0	55	9	64
Turnout 38.7%				

Next in the series - 1978. Tories in overall control

1978 Election – Boundary Changes and grim times.

The 1978 Council elections saw the end of Alderman and boundary changes. Havering would now have 63 Councillors across twenty-five wards. Prospects for Labour were not good.

Although Harold Wilson had narrowly won the election in October 1974, this was not enjoyable time to be in Government. The 1975 European Referendum had ended in a yes vote, but at a political price that would take decades to become clear; Wilson had resigned in 1976, which seemed strange at the time but has subsequently been explained by onset of Alzheimer's. Jim Callaghan had taken over.

One of the mainstays of the Government Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland had died in office and replaced by David Owen. The economy was under pressure and the relations with the Trade Union movement were "difficult."

So, it was no great surprise when the GLC Elections saw all three Havering seats return Conservatives, Serge Lourie losing by almost 4,000 votes in previously Labour Hornchurch. Majorities in Romford and Upminster were around 10,000. The Conservatives won the GLC by sixty-four seats to twenty-eight.

It has been a feature of re-organisations in Havering that wards names are retained even when the boundaries are significantly changed – so a note to those looking at the figures, a straight comparison of ward results over time can be misleading.

The 1978 election results were bad for Labour. The Conservatives had 38 Councillors, Labour 12 and there were two groups of residents, nine in the main group and four in the two Cranham wards. The latter group included current Havering Cabinet member Ron Ower (previously a resident candidate in Newham).

The geographical patterns remained, with Labour secure on Harold Hill, at this point never having been in danger of losing a seat. The election in Heaton was delayed by the death of Labour's Bill Cole during the election, causing a halt to the election and a re-run a few weeks later. Labour won all three seats with a large majority. The Party marked Bill's death for a period with an annual lecture, once given by Jack Straw at Romford Town Hall.

On the Labour group, Bessie Whitworth was the only woman, Margaret Latham having lost in Mawney. In the rest of the Borough, no Labour Councillors were returned in Romford – sitting MP Arthur Latham lost by 211 votes in Chase Cross, while Labour were sixty-eight votes short in Brooklands (where Councillor Albie Tebbutt was elected for the Conservatives for the first time).

In the Hornchurch Wards, only newly formed Airfield ward returned Labour councillors- Steve Clarke, moving over from Hylands, Sid Jack and former Tower Hamlets Councillor Tom Mitchell. In Elm Park, Labour were forty-six votes short, Dave Burn being in the unexpected position of winning in 1968 and losing 10 years later. Jack Hoepelman lost a Council election for the second and last time.

Labour were fifty votes short in South Hornchurch, where Harry Rivers came top of the Labour candidates. Labour was well behind in Hacton (over 1,000 votes

and third behind the residents and Tories) and 1,000 behind the Tories in St Andrews.

In Rainham, the local candidates Harry Webb, Ray Emmett and not quite Local Harry Moss were between 360 and 600 or so behind the residents, laying the foundations of eventually winning the seat many years later. Although Labour appeared well beaten, the Conservative majority was based on narrow wins in Elm Park, South Hornchurch, and Brooklands – a few hundred votes the other way and the political complexion of Havering would have looked very different. Labour was still a force and capable of at least winning minority control.

Notable among the defeated Liberals in Elm Park was Mark Long, who was to become one of the Borough's first Liberal Councillors in Rainham at the 1982 election.

Elsewhere, current Council leader Roger Ramsey was finally elected for the Conservatives in St Edwards Ward.

In Barking and Dagenham, future Havering Labour Council Leader Ray Harris was well beaten in Chadwell Heath ward (at this point never won by Labour) while local Co- Op Party stalwart and Fabian regular Alf Ott came further behind with forty-six votes for the Communist Party.

The Havering turnout was 43.4% with the Conservatives polling 47.4% and Labour 34.1%. The Conservatives were narrowly ahead in the Hornchurch constituency – 38.1% to 35.7% - others were 23.9%. Alan Lee Williams was reputed to have said that the Hornchurch seat could still be won, which was not received well by some of the defeated Councillors (see Jack Hoepelman

obituary). There were tensions in the local parties, which would emerge when we cover the period up to the 1982 elections.

1978 Result

Party	% Vote	Councillors
Labour	38.6	12
Conservative	45.7	38
Resident	15.8	13
Liberal	1.8	0
Total	63	63
Turnout 43.4 %		

Next in the series - 1982. The grim reality.

1982 Election – the more things change...

The results from the 1982 Council elections in Havering look very uneventful, with little change from 1978 Labour retained twelve seats on the Council. However, the journey from 1978 could not have been more eventful.

The 1978 Council elections left Labour on the back foot in Havering going into the 1979 General Election- there was next to no chance in Romford and Upminster, but Alan lee Williams had a majority of around 6,500 in Hornchurch so there was prospect of holding on.

Election night shattered that illusion, and slowly as a recount delayed the result, Robin Squire winning the seat by 739 votes, on a swing greater than the national trend. Nationally, Margaret Thatcher had a majority of forty-four seats, with Labour stuck on 36.85% of the vote (well above its share in 2010 and 2015). Labour retained Thurrock, but lost Ilford South, and in Newham Northeast, Tory defector Reg Prentice was defeated. In Paddington, Arthur Latham was narrowly defeated by 106 votes.

The first European elections followed a month after the General Election and Labour did very badly – hardly a surprise in the wake of an election defeat, and the Conservative Alan Tyrell had a substantial majority in London East, which covered Havering, Redbridge, Newham and Barking and Dagenham.

Labour began a civil war\ challenging debate (delete as appropriate) around the selection of Leader and Deputy; with the dividing line defined by views on Europe, although sometimes blurred – this was not the case with those about to leave and form the SDP, whose common bond was being pro Europe.

Locally there was an impact, with some leaving to join the SDP – including Alan Lee Williams, sitting Councillor Tom Mitchell and Hornchurch Agent Harry Rivers. Although no longer in the area former GLC Member Lourie also defected.

Havering Fabian stalwart Alan Thake did not join the SDP but briefly left the Party (Eirlys Thake remained a member). With the SDP founded in 1980, they had not established a presence by 1981 ahead of the GLC elections – by this point, the Thatcher Government was loathed, and Labour confidently expected to win the Hornchurch seat, which Alan Williams duly did, with a comfortable majority of 3,089. Jack Hoepelman was the defeated candidate in Romford, losing to Bernard Brooke Partridge by a respectable 3,012 votes.

Labour won the GLC taking fifty of the ninety-two seats – subsequent defections reduced the majority further, and Ken Livingstone rose to power as the visible face of opposition to Thatcher. The GLC Labour group had some big names – future sports minister Tony Banks, future MP, and Ambassador to South Africa Paul Boetang, Audit Commission Chair Steve Bundred and future MP Valarie Wise. John McDonnell was Deputy Leader, and years became an influential figure in the Labour Party leadership.⁴

So ahead of the 1982 elections, Labour could anticipate gains. however, the SDP gained traction and rose in the polls gathering support from the Labour right and disaffected Tories.

In February 1982 Argentina invaded the Falklands and in the pre-election period, TV screens were filled with the drama of the campaign as Britain retook the

⁴ John McDonnell was Shadow Chancellor in the period Jeremy Corbyn was Labour Leader

islands. This was not a backdrop where the opposition could expect to make ground and the Labour vote slipped back from 38% to 22%, although no seats were lost.

The Labour candidates just held on in Airfield, where Jack Hoepleman, Rosina Purnell and Ray Emmett replaced, Steve Clark, Sid Jack, and Tom Mitchell. The gap to the Tories was thirty-five votes.

In Rainham, the Liberals broke through led by Paul Long and Mary Bell, defeating the residents, who lost the seat for the first time. The Liberals also won both Chase Cross seats to achieve an all-time high of five seats. The Conservatives gained two seats in South Hornchurch, The Labour group had three women, with Rosina Purnell joined by Bessie Whitworth and Margaret Latham

Labour was well adrift across the Borough, as the SDP vote was sufficient to dent the Labour vote but not much more. Havering remained Conservative controlled. Labour missed out in South Hornchurch by around one hundred votes in a three-way split. Fabian Chair Keith Darvill came ninth, but was only 160 shorts of top spot, while in Elm Park, Labour trailed the Tory's by 250, with an SDP vote of 1,100.

In Harold Wood, the seat previously needed to gain control, Labour was in third place, some 1,000 votes behind the Conservatives with the SDP\ Liberal Alliance second.

Arthur Latham was at this point Chair of the London Labour Party, which allowed him to maintain a political profile (with Local Trade Unionist Bert Fry the treasurer).

Ron Whitworth led a group of twelve, and Labour looked a long way from ever being in control again. Romford and Upminster looked unattainable in General Elections, while the small majority in Hornchurch gave hope of future influence.

The optimism of the 1981 GLC win soon faded, and the SDP now in an established alliance with the Liberals, with the 1983 General Election in mind. Just how bad could this get?

1982 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	12	22.1
Conservative	37	44.2
Resident /other	9	12.7
Liberal	5	21.0
Total Turnout 44.4%	63	

Next in the series - 1986. The first steps on the long road back

1986 Election – the fightback begins....

The 1982 Council elections in Havering had seen Labour tread water with twelve seats although a significant reduction in votes. This was a gloomy period for Labour in Havering. The General Election in 1983 saw a bad position get worse. The SDP Liberal alliance had gathered momentum and moved into second place in Romford and Upminster, with Labour just remaining in second place in Hornchurch. Alan Williams and Jack Hoepfelen stood for Labour in Hornchurch and Romford, as they had done in the GLC election in 1981. A Hughes stood for Labour in Upminster.

The 1983 Hornchurch campaign was hard fought, as the Conservative majority in 1979 was 739, in theory well within range. Hornchurch had a majority that made the seat one Labour had a chance of winning, and heavyweight Dennis Healey spoke to a packed meeting at Abbs Cross School, boosting hopes of swing against the national opinion polls. Older heads soon realised that this was a remote possibility, and the aim was to stay in contention for the next time. The result was a majority for Robin Squire of 9,182, with Labour in second place (12,209 votes 26.85%), with a gap of 958 to the SDP in third.

In Romford Labour were third with 7,494 votes (19.27%). In Upminster, the position was marginally better (9,829 votes, 20.53%)

The mood was depressed but defiant, and the local parties remained active. This almost led to an unexpected gain in a Council by election in October 1983 when Labour candidate Tony Hunt was eleven votes short in Hylands ward, behind the Conservative candidate.

The Thatcher government was returned with an overall majority of 144, with Labour losing fifty-nine seats. This enabled the Thatcher administration the space and continued an assault on the post war consensus that had been kept in check. Striking ambulance personnel collecting on the street was a prelude to the Miners' strike. This was the defining moment of the Conservative assault on the unions, and years of preparation and the full force of the state were brought to bear to defeat the NUM. There are books and articles on this era, and many defining moments. There were regular collections (50 pence a week was the expected contribution, gladly given by thousands) visits to the coalfields, (Hornchurch were linked to Durham Main colliery – I have a tie somewhere).

This was a dispute that mattered, and it was critical the union won – however, this did not happen, and the mining communities were often shattered as the pits closed – the industry is now a shadow of its former self.

The local parties remained energised by the campaigns, and received a boost when Carole Tongue was elected as the MEP for London East in June 1984, overturning a 13,030 majority to win by 12,159. She won the nomination ahead of Mike Gapes, who was to become the MP for Ilford South in the 1992 General Election.

The GLC election of 1985 was cancelled as the Thatcher Government decided to scrap the GLC – a series of by elections were held to garner public support for the campaign to retain the GLC, including one in Romford where Bernard Brooke Partridge (who despite being a Conservative was part of the campaign to retain the GLC) comfortably held the seat with Labour candidate Gill Hannah Rogers a distant second. During this campaign I had the rare experience of a canvassing session where no one was voting Labour, although they were very polite about it...

An unexpected by product was Alan Williams remaining in office for a year, and by the time his term ended on 31st March 1986, there was a month until the Council elections.

The campaign for the 1986 Council elections provided a chance for Labour to build on the work over the previous few years. The SDP Liberal alliance was still present but less important. Labour had begun to issue regular newsletters in several wards, and this was beginning to pay dividends.

The sitting Labour Councillors for Harold Hill and Airfield were not under threat, the polls being significantly better than 1982. Del Smith replaced Reg Whiting as candidate in an otherwise unchanged line up. Everything was returned with comfortable majorities, although in Hilldene the Conservative vote was over a 1,000, and early warning of what was to come.

The campaign saw Labour gain eight seats and narrowly miss several others. Alan Williams, at this point already the Labour Candidate for Hornchurch for the 1987 general election, was one of three Labour Councillors elected in Elm Park, the others being former Councillor George Saunders and newly elected Mike Lucas.

In Hylands, Dennis Daflon was elected with two Conservatives, Howard Moss, son of Harry Moss failing to be elected. He was to get elected in 1990 for Elm Park.

Arthur Latham returned in Brooklands, elected in second place behind with Conservative Alby Tebbutt, Dianne Tomlinson missing out by 170 votes in fourth place. votes. In Oldchurch, Tony Rew was elected, with colleague and future Councillor Sean Willis missing out by two votes. Labour gained two seats in

Mawney, Mike Davis and Bill Gilley being elected, Barry Nottage missing out in fifth place.

Elsewhere Eileen and Tony Gordon were around three hundred votes short in Collier Row, while Keith Darvill was a defeated candidate for Harold Wood, some eight hundred votes behind. Both Eileen and Keith would be elected to Parliament 11 years later, an unlikely outcome at this point! Tony was to be elected for Oldchurch in 1990.

Labour was well behind in Rainham but had begun a long campaign of regular newsletters that was to pay dividends later, In South Hornchurch, Labour trailed the Residents, although the defeated candidates, Harry Webb, Tony Hunt and Mick Wood were to become Councillors in subsequent elections.

Elsewhere, future Conservative Council leader Michael White was defeated in South Hornchurch. The Liberals retained Rainham with a huge vote and held Chase Cross. Successful candidates stood as Liberal Focus team rather than Liberal\SDP as elsewhere in the Borough.

Across the Parliamentary seats, Labour was ahead in Hornchurch (31.2% against 27.2% for the Conservative) and behind in Romford (15%) and Upminster (9%). While the resident vote (16%) prevented a straightforward projection of the national position in the run up to 1987, all was not gloom. The turnout at 43.3% was 1.1% down in 1982, with the highest turnouts in Cranham West (52%) Upminster (52.3%) and Elm Park (51%) the lowest Hilldene (39.9%) Gidea Park (39.8%) Heaton (37.2%) and Oldchurch (33%).

The results meant Havering moved to no overall control; Arthur Latham became Labour Leader, and Labour was relevant and influential. The 1987 General

Election proved a chance to build on this, and to recover lost ground. The Government was loathed by many, and politics was polarised. However, the opinion polls suggested that there was still a lot to do before Labour would return to government. Opinion polling in this era had a lot to answer for...some things do not change.

1986 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	20	31.0
Conservative	28	35.0
Resident /other	10	13.1
Liberal/SDP	5	20.9
Total Turnout 43.3%	63	100.0

Next in the series - 1990. Goodbye to the Poll Tax...

1990 Election – Goodbye Poll Tax

The 1986 Council elections in Havering had seen Labour gain eight seats which increased the influence in the Council chamber. Arthur Latham took on the leadership of the Labour group, and the foundations were laid for further progress in 1990.

There was hope of progress in the 1987 General Election; Alan Williams was again the Candidate in Hornchurch, with Nigel Smith (husband of Angela Smith future Labour MP for Basildon and current Labour leader in the Lords) the candidate in Romford. Denis O’Flynn was the candidate in Upminster. The results were no more than a marginal dent in the Tory majorities, although Labour returned to second place in Romford and were third by twenty votes in Upminster. The Thatcher government was returned with a huge majority despite losing twenty-one seats. The campaign had not gone well, with Thurrock MP Oona McDonald losing her seat by 690 votes, and Ilford South remaining Conservative. The Labour leadership remained with Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley. The Thatcher Government pressed ahead with their agenda, which included the Community Charge – the Poll Tax. This was trialled in Scotland and was a factor that led to the near terminal decline of the Scottish Conservative representation at Westminster in future elections.

Tory unease was growing, and the 1989 European elections saw significant Labour gains and Carole Tongue comfortably re-elected. The local Labour Parties were highly active in some wards and there were grounds for optimism going into the election – the Manifesto was drafted with care, as there was a prospect that it would provide the basis for negotiation with other parties; an outright victory seemed unlikely.

The Poll Tax was introduced on 1st April and accompanied by riots in central London. The Tories still maintained a significant level of support but were getting worried and Thatcher was coming under pressure.

The Havering results captured the mood, and Labour made five gains.

These were made where Labour had won a split seat in 1986; Dennis Daflon stood down in Hylands, Labour gaining all three seats as Mike Flynn, Mick Wood and Ray Shaw were elected. In Collier Row, Labour gained a seat as Stefan Koseda and Pat Ridley (who had lost narrowly in 1964 in Harold Wood, defeat preventing a Labour majority) were elected, Pat Ridley winning by one vote. Labour also gained a seat in Oldchurch where Tony Gordon (husband of future MP Eileen) joined Tony Rew. In Mawney Bob Kilbey returned, joined by Lorna McInnes, but not Paul Sytgal who lost by eight votes.

Elsewhere Labour had significant majorities in the seats it already held – Masie Whitelock replaced Jack Hoepelman in Airfield. Jack switched back to his local and former ward Elm Park and generated the largest vote for any candidate in the Borough as a vibrant campaign saw a large Labour victory. Mike Lucas was elected with the second highest vote, despite having a serious heart attack in the run up to polling, Happily Mike recovered and is now enjoying life with his grandchildren. They were joined by Howard Moss, son of Harry Moss, the former Mayor of Hornchurch UDC, who had failed narrowly several times to be elected to Havering.

The nine seats on Harold Hill were won with large majorities: Tony Hunt being elected for the first time alongside now Southend Conservative Councillor Mark Flewitt.

Arthur Latham was returned in Brooklands, which remained a split seat with Alby Tebbutt returned for the Conservatives. Future leader of the Council Michael White was a close third in the two-seat ward.

While progress had been made, outright control would remain out of reach. In the seats Labour did not win, there were some significant changes. In Rainham, Labour had been producing regular newsletters and ran a strong local team of Pat Emmet, Harry Webb, and Christine Watson. While the Liberal Democrats retained the seat (with future Conservative Councillor Barry Oddy one of those elected), Labour had narrowed a large gap to around 360 and were well placed for a gain in 1994.

In Hacton, Bill Howard was 180 behind the Residents, a robust performance building on an earlier by-election.

In St Andrews, Graham Carr came in sixth and was 146 votes off being elected – this again would be a pointer to later success. Future Councillor Barry Norwin was also defeated.

In a result that now looks more significant than it did at the time, the 22-year-old Andrew Rosindell was elected in Chase Cross, taking seats off the Liberal Democrats; Labour candidates Pauline Kosedá and former Councillor Dennis Cook came ahead of LibDem Terry Hurlstone. The turnout at 55.7% was the Third highest in the Borough, behind the 57.9% in Cranham West, and 56.3% in Upminster. The lowest were Oldchurch (41.8%) and Heaton at 41.8%. The overall turnout was 49.1%

Elsewhere future Labour Upminster MP Keith Darvill went to a predictable defeat in Upminster, which was retained by the Conservatives against a strong Resident challenge.

The results showed wide variation at Constituency level – Labour won 30.7% of the vote in Hornchurch against the Conservatives 26.7 % and the LibDems 24.9% - the Residents made up the difference. The Conservative vote was much stronger in the other seats and for the Borough totalled 36%, Labour being second on 29.6%, with the Lib Dems on 20.5% and the Residents 12.9%. The overall turnout was 49.1%

Arthur Latham was a considerable politician; despite being short of a majority he became Leader of the Council. While Labour would not go into coalition, the six Liberal Democrat Councillors would provide support on some issues, and the Residents would not always vote with the Conservatives – so there were some policy objectives that were achieved,

The foundations for the next election had been laid – an unpopular Government, an unpopular leader and presence on the Council in all three constituencies. Surely things were changing for the better. The Poll Tax would go, and so, later in 1990, would Thatcher.

1990 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	25	39.6
Conservative	19	36.0
Resident /other	13	17.2
Liberal/SDP	6	7.2
Total Turnout 43.3%	63	100.0

Next in the series - 1994. One more heave?

1994 Havering Council Elections – in a word “Almost...”

Labour had done well in Havering and across the Country in May 1990 and the pressure was building on the Tories. Sir Anthony Meyer had stood against Thatcher as a “stalking horse” (and had accepted an invitation to Havering Fabians from a delighted and mischievous Alan Thake). In November, Michael Heseltine resigned, and the end was near. In one of those “where were you when ...” moments⁵, Thatcher resigned.

The 1992 General Election was in the balance. Held in April, canvassing was limited by dark nights before the clocks went back. Early signs were encouraging, but it soon became clear that locally at least Labour were not going to win. Still, there were high hopes of at least a hung Parliament, and a reduced majority would mean Hornchurch could be marginal next time, and with a hung Parliament, next time could be months not years.

Well, for our younger readers ...Sheffield rally, an alternative budget (which proposed putting up income tax – which scarred left economics even in 2015) and most disappointingly of the lot, an exit poll showing a hung parliament that melted away in the early hours. All too familiar.

Leonie Cooper (recently elected to the GLA for Merton and Wandsworth) became the first candidate in Hornchurch not called Williams since Jo Richardson in 1959; and barely dented the majority. The better but hardly great news was Labour were second in both Romford (with Eileen Gordon the candidate) and

⁵ Anyone with an interesting story let us know and we will publish here...

Upminster (Terry Ward). The better news was Mike Gapes election in Ilford South and Andrew McKinley regaining Thurrock for Labour with a small majority. Nationally, John Major had a small workable majority, but the Tories polled two and a half million more votes than Labour. On more heave was not going to remove them.

Things looked grim. Then the ERM⁶ collapse happened. Interest rates rose 5% in a day, the Tories lost the trust of the electorate on the economy, and from October 1992, the Tories were behind in the polls until 2006 (of which more below).

John Smith took over from Neil Kinnock as leader; defeated left candidate Bryan Gould attracted the largest ever audience of ninety-one to Havering Fabians as the political tide turned. John Smith addressed a crowded meeting at East Ham Town Hall with Carole Tongue, and the approaching 1994 European election was never in doubt.

Labour led massively in the polls and Havering was within range of a Labour majority.

Labour gained six seats, and 42% of the vote to finish on thirty-one out of sixty-three seats. The Conservatives slipped to third in the Chamber with eleven seats, the Residents collecting seventeen, the Liberals losing two seats to fall to four.

The results contained many near misses.

Labour gains were George Taylor in Brooklands, replacing Tory Alby Tebutt. There was one Labour gain in Mawney with Lorna Feeny, Shelia McCole and

⁶ Exchange Rate Mechanism – an arrangement that tied the Pound to a basket of European Currencies to ensure a stable exchange rate.

former Councillor Bob Kilbey being elected. The highlight was gaining all three seats in Rainham, reward for years of graft with Harry Webb, Tony Ellis and former Liberal Councillor Brian Kent elected. Interestingly there were no Tory candidates. How relevant would this be a decade later when control of the Council would rest on a by-election in Rainham?

The major surprise was Graham Carr being elected to the third seat in St Andrews- a seat Labour had never previously won. He was elected five votes ahead of the fourth-place candidate – his wife Georgina. Had she received ten more votes, Labour would have had overall control for the second time.

Overall control would come with defections from the Residents and Liberals; it would be lost again by defections which saw Resident Louise Sinclair take over from Arthur Latham as Council leader and regained again as Wilf Mills replaced Latham as Labour leader; it all got rather complicated.

Notable changes of personnel took place. Rosina Purnell stood down to be replaced by husband Chris in Airfield. In Elm Park, future Council Leader Ray Harris (the only person to be a Councillor in Barking and Dagenham and Newham as well as Havering) was elected with a large majority. Mick Wood and David Martin became Hylands Councillors for the first time.

Elsewhere late Havering Museum curator Ian Wilkes gained a seat in Gidea Park with future Labour Romford MP Eileen Gordon a defeated candidate,

The switchover seat of Harold Wood remained Liberal Democrat with Keith Darvill and future Labour Councillor Jan Davis were the defeated candidates.

In Hacton, future Councillor Ken Clark (now a Cabinet member in Newham) was 450 behind in fourth place. In the Hornchurch seat, Labour had thirteen out of 21 Councillors, an all-time high.

Future Labour Councillor Pam Craig was defeated in Rise Park. In Chase Cross, a strong showing from Conservatives saw future MP Andrew Rosindell and future leader Michael White comfortably elected. On the swing, this could have been a Labour gain; the Rosindell influence was starting to impact beyond his own ward.

St Edwards saw Liberal Charles Harrison replace tory Ann Cockerton while the Residents took all three Upminster seats from the Tories (and have held them ever since).

Four of the five turnouts were in Resident seats (Upminster, Cranham East and West and Hacton), with Chase Cross also above 50%. Lowest turnouts were in Oldchurch (35.2%) and Hilldene (36.4%), The overall turnout was 45.9%

Tragedy then struck in May 1994 as John Smith died from a heart attack Shadow Home Secretary Tony Blair took over, and the poll lead remained strong.

A month later, Carole Tongue did indeed storm home to win London East in the European elections as Labour had its best result.

Prospects for 1996 or 1997 looked good – surely once marginal Hornchurch would be in play next time?

Well, you know how that ended – so can you let us know your memories of 1st May 1997 and we will publish them in a future edition...

1994 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	31	42.0
Conservative	11	27.4
Resident /other	17	19.0
Liberal/SDP	4	11,6
Total	63	100.0
Turnout 45.9%		

Next in the series - 1998. Things can only get better.

1998 Havering Council Elections – more interesting that it first appears!

After the 1994 Council elections ended with a near miss (Labour one seat short of an overall majority), there was no respite for the Major Government. Defections, by-election defeats and cash for questions, added to a general air of panic and loss of purpose would have been bad enough, but Major was confronted by a resurgent Labour with a young and vibrant Leader with a coherent set of policies. Defeat in 1997 was never in doubt, although the majority was, and in the aftermath of 1992, Labour took nothing for granted.

There was no need to worry, the election was the landslide predicted, helped by the Referendum Party taking votes off the Tories, tactical voting at a level never seen before and an electorate that turned against the Tories in substantial numbers. A majority of 179 followed, which included all three Havering seats. We will do an in-depth analysis next year to mark the 20th Anniversary⁷. Interesting to note that despite everything Labour polled 43% and was only 7% ahead despite the “perfect storm” of events,

The Council elections in 1998 were a year into a new Government; usually a time when the opposition recovers a little, or sometimes significantly. Given 1994 appeared to be a high point locally, a reduced majority was to be expected. There had been serious issues within the Labour group which saw Arthur Latham replaced initially with Wilf Mills then Ray Harris, and loss of control during mid-term. A reduced majority was to be expected. This duly occurred, with a net loss of two seats.

⁷ See Newsletter edition XX which has contributions from Romford MP Eileen Gordon, Mary Breeding and Dave Baldock

The Rosindell effect saw a large Conservative vote in Chase Cross, and the Conservatives winning Collier Row from Labour. Pat Ridley was only eight votes short – Pat had been beaten by handful of votes in 1964 when victory would have given Labour outright control. Indecently, Pat is one of the old soldiers in the picture in Saffron House –David Martin is one of the others and if you know who the third is we would be pleased to know.

The unexpected gain of a seat in St Andrews ward at the 1994 election was reversed (Graham Carr being defeated and returning in 2002.) This was expected – what was not was loss of Oldchurch, with Tony Gordon and Tony Rew beaten by Lib Dems including Nigel Mayer.

Even more unexpected was gaining three seats not won in 1994, Brian Eagling and Caroline Wood winning two seats from the Lib Dems in Harold Wood (last won in 1971, and in doing so ensuring the only Labour Majority administration) and in a very close contest then Fabian Treasurer Tom Binding became the first Labour Councillor for South Hornchurch since the 1974 election. This was more important than it seemed at the time, as will become apparent when the series reaches 2006.

The results elsewhere reflected a 6.5% reduction in the Labour vote from 1994, with only a 2% rise in the Conservative vote.

The Labour majorities elsewhere were reduced; in Elm Park Jan Davis replaced Howard Moss and the margin was down to 449 and was reduced elsewhere. In Airfield, Barry Norwin was elected for the first time as Labour retained all three seats, although the majority fell to 265. Airfield was abolished as a Ward in 2002, so remains the only seat Labour has won at every election contested.

Ray Harris remained Labour Leader of the Council, as the party took minority control. Labour in Havering at this point had control of the Council, three MPs and the MEP. Short of outright control, it is hard to imagine how the Party could have a stronger position.

Labour won all nine Harold Hill seats with large majorities, new councillors included Yve Cornell, Kevin Robertson and current⁸ Newham Cabinet Member Ken Clark.

Turnout fell alarmingly to 34.7% having been 46.1% in 1994 and 48.2% in 1990. In neighbouring Barking and Dagenham, the turnout was 25%. In the Referendum to restore London wide Government Havering voted 60% for 40% against, below the overall for vote of 72% on a 34% turnout.

Boundary changes were due for 2002, a list system was to be introduced for the 1999 European elections, and elections were likely if there was a positive vote to restore London wide Government.

Interesting events for the next in the series.

1998 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	29	35.5
Conservative	14	26,7
Resident /other	17	30.1
Liberal/SDP	3	5.7
Total	63	100.0
Turnout 34. %		

⁸ At the time this was written – Ken did not stand in the 2022 elections.

Next in the series - 2002. All change...

2002 - Havering Council Elections – The beginning of the end?

The 1998 election had left Labour in a strong position in Havering. The next test would be the European elections in 1999. The complication was the change to a list system which saw the end to a constituency link and a London wide list system. Election was via the D'hondt system (which is described here https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D%27Hondt_method). In effect it meant Labour could only win four of the London seats – and sitting MEP Carole Tongue was fifth on the list. This caused upset and accusations that her stand against the Murdoch press had cost her a higher place.

In the event the European elections followed the traditional pattern of going against the Government, and London elected only three Labour MEPs. There was a strong showing nationally by the Greens, and UKIP began to register.

Labour remained popular nationally and an election in May 2001 seemed likely – it was delayed a month by an outbreak of mad cow disease. When the election was called there was little doubt about the outcome, as Blair was the dominant political figure and Tory Leader William Hague had failed to register as a credible alternative – wearing a baseball cap to the Notting Hill carnival and claiming a hard drinking past did not ring true; ironically, when he became Foreign Secretary years later, the gravitas missing in 2001 emerged.

Blair had created such a dominant hold on the national mood that the election following Labour's landslide in 1997 saw a net loss of six seats. Tactical voting saw gains in seats not won in the previous election. These were Dorset South and Yns Mons (Anglesey) for the political anoraks.

In Havering the story was different – to no one’s great surprise, Andrew Rosindell won Romford back for the Conservatives with a comfortable majority (almost 6,000) and a large swing. Havering Fabian chair Keith Darvill was narrowly defeated (1,241 votes) in Upminster, while John Cryer retained Hornchurch with a comfortable if reduced majority of 1,482. The most unexpected gain in Essex in 1997 was reversed – defeated candidate Christine Butler (Castle Point) had been a speaker at Havering Fabians.

The Council elections in Havering in 2002 would be contested on new boundaries, with fifty-four seats rather than sixty-three, split equally across the three parliamentary constituencies. The new boundaries were contentious – in a particularly strange decision Elm Park was split in three with one polling District added to St Andrews and Hacton, while the two western districts remained in Elm Park with polling Districts from Airfield and South Hornchurch added. The Havering tradition of redefining wards but leaving the name unchanged remained – As advised earlier in the series this makes comparison with earlier years something that must be taken with care.

The new boundaries meant there were six rather than nine seats on Harold Hill and to win the Borough Labour would have to win all these, and probably Elm Park, South Hornchurch, Rainham, Hylands, Brooklands, Mawneys, Harold Wood and hope for an unexpected gain elsewhere. In a good year – 1971 perhaps – this would not have happened. A year into Blair’s second term, even less likely. To add to the uncertainty, as an experiment the election would be all postal votes. This would increase the turnout from the low of 34.3% in 1998 to 45%.

The result was not a good one – Labour ended with just nine seats and 24.9% % of the vote. Both Harold Hill seats – Gooshays and Heaton – returned Labour

Councillors but with reduced majorities – the Independent Workers Party, which included former Labour members made a significant dent in the Labour vote on the Hill reflecting a changing electorate. Fabian Chair Keith Darvill was elected to Havering Council for the first time for Heaton Ward alongside Denis Flynn and Wilf Mills – Conservative Keith Wells was only 266 behind. In Gooshays, Bill Harrison, Yve Cornell and Jeff Stafford were 490 clears of the Conservative candidate in fourth place.

Elsewhere Labour Leader Ray Harris was re-elected in Elm Park, alongside Graham Carr and Jan Davis. The Conservatives were a strong second, 296 behind. Former Labour Mayor Brian Eagling was ninety-nine votes behind in Harold Wood, no other Labour candidate got as close. Nigel Mayer was the sole Liberal elected in Brooklands, with 119 votes covering the top six candidates. Former Liberal Councillor for Rainham Barry Oddy was elected for the Conservatives in Hylands.

The Conservative vote rose to 37.7% % from 28.7%. For the first time in the Borough's history Labour were third behind "other" candidates – essentially the residents in different forms. This was in part due to the remarkable vote achieved in Cranham and Upminster where all six resident candidates polled over 4,000. Current Village Ward Councillor in Barking and Dagenham Councillor (and Labour Candidate for Romford in 2005) Margaret Mullane (who has written for the newsletter) was beaten in Mawneys (where the "s" reflected the change from the 1998 boundaries).

The Tories were just short of a majority which meant by elections would be crucial as majority control was at stake. There were two separate by-elections in Rainham, and both were won by Labour – Harry Webb and Tony Ellis both winning back the seats they had lost, taking the Labour Group to eleven by 2006.

Labour had an experienced group, but with minimal support needed from the residents to reach a majority, the Conservatives were back in effective control. Michael White took over as Leader of the Council, as the Rosindell effect began to see a shift in influence from the established Conservative leadership to the next generation.

The postal vote experiment was not repeated. The turnout was much higher than 1998, but in line with elections prior to that (lower than the 45.9% achieved in 1994). There were concerns that postal voting is easier to manipulate. There was no evidence of this, although experience elsewhere in the Country suggested problems did exist. Early voting was tried elsewhere, and enabled people who would have voted anyway to vote over several days, at greater expense. Turnout remained almost unchanged. The subsequent Rainham by- elections suggested grounds for optimism, (two Labour gains) but Labour were now on the edge in Havering. Council representation was as low on the Council as it had been since 1968. John Cryer remained MP for Hornchurch but would be vulnerable to swing away from the Government in 2005 or 2006. The GLA seat was almost unwinnable, and in the Council Seats Labour had won, majorities were vulnerable on the Hill for the first time in the Borough's history.

2002 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	9	24.9
Conservative	26	37.7
Resident /other	18	32.1
Liberal/SDP	1	5.3
Total Turnout 45.0 %	54	100.0

Arthur Latham obituary

Arthur Latham was one of the leading personalities for Labour in Havering, from the formation of the Borough in 1965, through to 1998 when he stood down from the Council. He had previously been on Romford Urban District Council; he was elected to the inaugural Havering Council in 1964. From 1969 to 1979 he was the MP for Paddington. His defeat in 1979 by a tantalising 106 votes ended his period in Parliament. For most of this period, he remained on Havering Council, which now seems unusual.

Arthur had the distinction of being the last Labour candidate to stand against Winston Churchill in the 1964 election and had also stood against former Chancellor Ken Clarke.

After his defeat in 1979 Arthur assumed the position as chair of the London Labour Party, a daunting task. In 1983 he sought the nomination for the Bermondsey by election but was defeated by Peter Tatchell who went on to lose the seat in a famously dirty campaign.

Arthur returned to the Council in 1986 and was elected Leader of the Labour group. As the strength of the group on the Council increased after subsequent elections the party moved into minority control with Arthur as Leader of the Council.

Arthur was not a universally popular individual and had a robust style of leadership. However, he did command loyalty from his close followers and for a while seemed impregnable as Leader of the group. During a turbulent spell which saw defections and loss of control, he was replaced as Leader and did not stand for re-election to the Council in 1998.

Arthur remained loyal to the Labour Party (and Chelsea, where he was a season ticket holder) to the end, although he did leave the party briefly over Iraq. In his later years he was struck down by cancer and died in Queens Hospital early December.

2006 - Havering Council Elections – The sky falls in

Labour initially had hopes of improvement from the 2002 election. The Labour group had increased from the 9 Councillors elected in 2009 to 11 with the two by election victories in Rainham. There were also grounds for fearing the worst.

The 2004 Mayoral and European elections were held at the same time, so would give a key pointer to underlying trends ahead of the General Election in 2005.

The 2004 European elections had been unexciting, with London returning 3 Labour MEPs. The main story was the rise of UKIP to third place, and the Conservatives winning most votes. A year before the General election this was a concern for Labour. There was disappointment as Labour nationally lost 10 MEPs but confidence that the General Election was still winnable. Ken Livingstone comfortably won the 2004 vote for the London Mayor, after a “pragmatic” decision to allow him back in the Party to replace Nicky Gavron as the Labour candidate. This was after she had spoken to a well-attended joint meeting of Havering Fabians and the three Havering Constituency Labour Parties. In the GLA vote Roger Evans retained the seat with a 16,000 majority over Keith Darvill. For the first time ward level voting data was available. This showed the size of Labour’s problem with only Gooshays showing a Labour majority in the GLA assembly elections. – all other wards in the Borough voted for the Conservatives.

Labour did not top the vote in any of the wards in the European poll, with UKIP making inroads. The prospects for 2006 at this point looked grim; the Borough was changing fast.

The 2005 General Election would be fought against the backdrop of the Iraq invasion, and far greater public criticism that was present in 2004. At this point, Tony Blair remained popular, and the opposition was weak. The Conservatives had supported the invasion, so could make little political capital. The Liberal Democrats took any political advantage that was generated. The Labour majority fell to sixty-six, comfortably down in 1997 and 2001, but workable.

There was no expectation of repeating the 1997 results in Upminster and Romford, and so it proved, as Andrew Rosindell and Angela Watkinson won comfortably with increased majorities. Margaret Mullane, now a Councillor in Dagenham and Party Secretary, was the defeated candidate in Romford (11,589), and Keith Darvill (6,042) made one last attempt to win in Upminster. In Hornchurch, the national swing was expected to deliver the seat for the Tories - so it proved, but John Cryer reduced the swing to below the national average, and the majority for newly elected Conservative James Brokenshire was 480.

The run up to 2006 could not have been worse. By this point the dispute between Blair and Brown was being fought out in public. John Prescott was in the news for non-political activities in his office. A cash for peerages story was running, and the political fallout from Iraq was increasing. The Home Office was out of control. Charles Clarke was sacked just after the election as stories appeared about immigrants who were due to be deported committing serious crimes- even though the majority were released under the previous incumbent David Blunkett.

So, a perfect storm, and there was more. In nearby Barking and Dagenham, the BNP had previously had electoral success in by elections and were threatening an electoral breakthrough. The immigration story boosted their campaign and there were fears about how many seats they could win – in the end it was 12 (often

reported as 11 – there was a rare mis-declaration of the vote in one ward which understated the BNP vote and erroneously led to a Labour Councillor being announced by a no doubt embarrassed returning officer – an electoral court overturned the result shortly afterwards). and the knock-on effect was election of a BNP Councillor in Gooshays and in nearby Hainault in Redbridge. What is often missed is the effective Labour campaign elsewhere in the Borough saw gains from the Residents and Conservatives that kept a working majority. The shockwaves had an impact well beyond the Borough.

In Havering, the perilous Labour majorities in Harold Hill saw all but one seat lost- Keith Darvill just held on in Heaton, while Yve Cornell lost by 1 vote in Gooshays (on the toss of a coin), Ken Clark by 5 in Heaton– Labour fell to third in Elm Park, having held the seat since 1986, and both Rainham seats were lost the Residents. Elsewhere the collapse continued, with Labour third in Brooklands (where the Liberal Democrats lost their seat on the Council, unexpectedly gaining another in Harold Wood) and virtually everywhere else.

Amongst the carnage, Tom Binding, who had been a Councillor between 1998 and 2002, won one of the seats in South Hornchurch as the votes split four ways (there was a rare three way split with the Tories and Residents taking the other seats). Denis O’Flynn who has not been selected in Harold Hill, came bottom of the poll in Rainham, as Labour’s by election success was not repeated – Tony Ellis was 815 behind the third resident candidate,

So, ten of the eleven sitting Councillors lost their seats, although Harry Webb fought Squirrels Heath, and would have had little expectation of victory. Former Councillor’s Sean Willis (Emerson Park) Rosina Purnell (South Hornchurch), Ray Shaw and Mick Wood (Hylands) stood. The four-way split in South Hornchurch meant Rosina was only eighty votes short of election although eighth

in the poll. Future Councillor Paul McGeary was comfortably defeated in Mawneys.

Tory in fighting saw the loss of a seat in Havering Park to the Residents, Andrew Mann beating Henry Tebbutt by fifteen votes. Given that they gained control of the Council, this was of not great consequence.

John Reid functioned as agent during the campaign, and faced the usual traumas of ensuring nomination papers went in on time and were complete, which as we shall see later in the series does not always happen...

Ensuring the leaflets are accurate is another task facing the agent, and John had to withdraw one leaflet after the proof reading did not pick up an error. This had happened before with the infamous 1980's "Labour candidate" leaflet, and the "handyman driver" campaign in the 1970's – I am sure all parties have their moments!

In the Borough Labour were now solidly in third place behind the Tories (who now had an outright majority for the first time since 1982) and various resident groups. The Conservatives had thirty-seven seats out of fifty-four, with 37% of the vote – "others" – which included the Residents, UKIP and the BNP had 45%. Labour did worse than in 1968, with 15.3% of the vote. Turnout fell back from the 2002 all postal vote, to a level more in line with previous elections.

The Party in Havering had now just two elected representatives and was on the verge of being wiped out completely. With Labour in Government for three terms and by this point beginning the transfer to Gordon Brown, it would be a long haul back.

2006 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	2	15.3
Conservative	34	37.3
Resident /other	17	45.1
Liberal/SDP	1	2.4
Total Turnout 39.5%	54	100.0

The 2010 Election – A bit better

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 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 fiscal 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 twenty-nine 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 exceptionally large majorities particularly in Cranham and Upminster wards.

In the General Election, Labour lost ninety-one 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 a 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 votes. 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 break through 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 eighty-six 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 2,000 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 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 hugely impressive; in Cranham two candidates scored over 4,100 for third place candidates going to 3,923. In Upminster ward, was even more impressive Ron Ower receiving 4,871 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 fifty-one seats for the first time, the 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 Turnout 66.0%	54	100.0

The 2014 Election – Almost wiped out.

The 2010 election had left Labour with a group of five, enough to function and on one occasion win a vote in the chamber. Nationally the Labour Party was engrossed in a leadership election, which took all political energy until the result was announced in late September. This had serious implications- the coalition had a free ride for a few months, allowing the Tories to spend the period blaming Labour for the economic crisis without a rebuttal. The second was the nomination for London Mayor went on with little serious interest, allowing Ken Livingstone a virtual free ride to his fourth attempt at the role. In retrospect, one election too far.

Ed Miliband won the leadership election, and the focus was on holding the party together. This seemed sensible, as the coalition reflected the inability of the Tory party to cast off their history and secure a majority. In retrospect, the party would have benefited from a major rethink, and with it the internal rows to clear the air and relaunch as a party intent on regaining office. Instead, the party chose a slow and steady approach, with a move towards fairness and equality as cornerstones of policy. While these were clearly core values, there was no move to reach a broader coalition, and a general lack of big policy initiatives. This would have further consequences after 2015.

The earlier optimism about Livingstone winning back the mayoralty evaporated as Boris Johnson remained popular for reasons few on the left could grasp. None the less the gap was narrow, and in the end the vote went to Johnson by 62,000 on second preference. Livingstone had done himself no favours with a fallout with the Evening Standard, and unfortunate comments which alienated the Jewish vote. Indeed, if Livingstone had matched the Labour vote in the Camden / Barnet

GLA seat, he would have won. Lasting damage was done to the relationship between Labour and elements of the Jewish community that rumble on now.

In the Havering and Redbridge seat, the majority fell dramatically. Labour candidate Mandy Richards made two visits to Havering Fabians and had a successful campaign. The eventual majority of under 4,000 suggested a Labour win in future was possible. However, analysis at ward level showed similar patterns to previous elections - Labour had won no wards in Havering in either the list or constituency vote, and the majority was reduced to the growing Labour vote in Redbridge.

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In the GLA vote overall, Labour did well winning an extra assembly seat but not achieving a majority on the Assembly.

Thoughts now turned to the council elections in 2014. These were due to be held a month before the European elections. Sanity prevailed and the elections were held on the same day in June.

There were contrasting fortunes across the capital. In the European elections, Labour performed well winning four of the seven seats, with Lucy Anderson and Sen Dance joining Claude Morase and Mary Honeyball as London MEPs. Barking councillor and Havering Fabian exec member Sanchia Alasia was on the list and gained valuable experience on the campaign trail, and a role as an alternative member.

Labour did well in London, but not nationally. UKIP broke through and received the most votes, Labour edging second with the Tories third.

This was also reflected in the London council votes - Labour did well in inner London, winning seats not won since the early 1990s. Redbridge returned a Labour majority council for the first time and across London Labour was on the front foot.

Except for Havering. The previous European elections had seen the Labour vote slump behind UKIP and even the BNP. Havering was the most Eurosceptic area of London, and with the usual threat from the "apolitical" residents, the Labour vote was squeezed.

UKIP made huge strides, winning five seats on Harold Hill, one in South Hornchurch and, proving they were a threat to the Tories as well, beat long time councillor Paul Rochford in Emerson Park - the first time the Tories had lost a seat there since the borough was founded. UKIP had not fielded a full slate but made inroads across the borough. In the seats they did not win, they came second. This damaged the Conservatives as well. They were restricted to twenty-two seats, of which twenty were in Romford, (one seat being lost to the Residents in Hylands). Former leader Stephen Kelly and Roger Ramsey being elected in Emerson Park, the two from Hornchurch and Upminster.

Popular but deselected Conservative Andrew Curtin narrowly lost in Romford Town, where Neil Brindley was only 562 votes behind the third placed Conservative candidate. This could be a ward Labour wins in the future.

The complex position on Havering was further complications by two groups of residents being represented and, in some wards, competing against each other. The mainstream residents held the seats in the east of the borough Cranham Upminster, Hacton and St. Andrews, while the independent residents had seats in Rainham and South Hornchurch.

The mainstream residents took all three Harold Wood and Elm Park seats and one in Hylands.

UKIP managed to complete only two nominations in Heaton, allowing Keith Darvill to win Labours only seat. Fourth placed Denis O Flynn was forty-one votes behind Keith Darvill, but 341 behind the second placed UKIP candidate. Had UKIP completed the third nomination (rumours are the third candidate withdrew at the last moment) Labour would have been wiped out. In Gooshays, Pat Murray lost his seat, coming fourth 726 votes behind. This was the only other seat where Labour was second. UKIP stood a candidate in each ward, and apart from Hylands, their candidates won a seat or came fourth.

Total chaos followed as the Conservatives sought to form an administration. The mainstream residents would not accept a leader from Romford Conservatives, or Stephen Kelly. This left Roger Ramsey, last Leader of the Council in the 1980s as the only choice. After much horse trading, the mainstream residents split, with the senior councillors joining the Tories to form the administration. This caused all manner of fallouts in the resident camp, the consequences of which will not become clear until the 2018 elections at the earliest.

The depth of the Labour defeat was immense. With the results delayed until the Friday due to the European elections, results were posted online. The first result saw a large Labour vote in Romford Town ward, which suggested elsewhere in the borough, Labour could breakthrough. Discussions before the election, reflecting the Tory position in the national polls and the relative health of Labour in London, had suggested a Labour group of double figures was possible, even likely, with gains in Harold Hill, Elm Park and South Hornchurch, and Brooklands thought possible.

Reality was to hit home hard. UKIP took five seats on the hill, the residents came from third place to win Elm Park, Labour dropping back to 805 votes for the leading candidate Kim Arrowsmith., the independent residents won in South Hornchurch, with one UKIP victory. Labour were 466 votes behind, with Pat Brown the female candidate who came closest to a seat.

Labour were 398 votes behind in Brooklands, behind three Conservative and three UKIP, candidates. Labour candidate in the 2015 General election and current Havering Fabian vice chair Sam Gould came 8th, 434 votes short of being elected. In Rainham Tony Ellis was 417 votes behind the residents.

It was an even worse election for the Liberal Democrats. In Harold Wood Former Councillor Jonathon Coles polled only 202 votes. In Rainham, a seat the Liberals won in the 1980s, they polled seventy-four votes.

Elsewhere the votes fell away - in the Harold wood seat Labour had previously needed to win to take the Council Labour were 1,700 votes behind.

This was the worst Havering election results for the two main parties. The Labour vote fell from 18.5 to 13.7 percent, while the Tories vote fell from 36.6 percent on the day of the 2010 election to 23.1 per cent - which was 9.4 per cent lower than their previous worst result in 1971.

This was almost the end for Labour in Havering...but not quite. Denis O'Flynn would win a by-election in 2016 to double the Labour representation in the council. The unexpected increase in the Labour vote share in the general election saw Labour move back into second place in both Romford and Hornchurch and Upminster.

The 2018 council elections are around the corner and give Labour a chance to re-establish a presence on the Council at a critical time in the Boroughs history.

2014 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	1	13.7
Conservative	22	23.1
Resident /UKIP	24/7	61.3
Liberal/SDP	0	1.9
Total Turnout 43.1%	54	100.0

UKIP and the Residents did not stand a full state of candidates, so are shown together for convenience rather than reflecting any other reason.

2018 Election Great Expectations....

The 2014 Council election had seen Fabian chair Keith Darvill left as the sole Labour Councillor, despite cautious optimism going into the campaign. Havering once again voted differently to London, where Labour made great strides including taking majority control of Redbridge for the first time. The General election due in 2015 therefore offered little hope for Labour, and with key marginal seats in nearby Thurrock and Ilford North, resources were deployed elsewhere, reversing what used to happen in the 1980s and 90s.

Nationally, Labour had reasonable expectations of progress going into the General Election, with polls showing a hung parliament and a Miliband government the likely outcome. There was concern about what might happen in Scotland, where the ill-feeling on the independence referendum had boosted support for the SNP at Labours expense. Polls suggested a large SNP breakthrough, which resonated in England as well. UKIP were a further factor, with significant support in the south, including Havering, and in Labour seats in the North.

Once again, the exit polls punctured the optimism, with the Conservatives predicted to be the largest party and potentially moving into a majority. The early results were inconclusive, with a long touted (and, unlikely) Conservative breakthrough in Sunderland not materialising. The results were confusing, although the Liberal Democrat vote was collapsing, meaning Tory gains in the Southwest, and occasional Labour gains in Birmingham, Manchester, and the return of Bermondsey. Labour took several of its target seats in London, including Ilford North where Wes Streeting, who had first been involved in politics helping the successful Romford campaign in 1997 elected by 420 votes.

The SNP won 54 of 57 seats in Scotland, with the main national parties taking one each. UKIP polled four million votes and won one seat, the Greens a million and only seeing Caroline Lucas elected. The Conservative campaign had been subliminal and aimed at winning the key marginal and Liberal Democrat seats, enough to win a small overall majority.

In Havering, there was little prospect of a breakthrough, and given the support for UKIP across the East London/Essex borders, it was no real shock when Paul McGeary came third in Hornchurch and Upminster and Sam Gould did the same in Romford.

In Hornchurch and Upminster, Angela Wilkinson was elected with 27,051 votes (49%) with Paul McGeary third with 11,103 votes, 2,874 behind UKIP candidate Laurence Webb. In Romford, Andrew Rosindell secured 51% of the poll (25,067 votes) with Havering Fabian Vice Chair Sam Gould coming third with 10,268,940 votes behind the Gerald Batten the UKIP candidate.

In Thurrock, a close three-way contest saw Labour candidate Polly Billington defeated by 436 votes in a close three-way contest. Ed Miliband resigned the following day. This meant another Labour leadership contest, and a real fear that the same introspective thinking that had stymied the Labour Party in 2010 could be repeated. This looked likely to be the case until Jeremy Corbyn entered the campaign and struck a chord with the Labour membership to storm to victory. This was preceded by the announcement that Sadiq Khan would be the Labour candidate for Labour Mayor in the 2016 GLA election, ahead of the favoured Tessa Jowell.

Nothing would be the same again. David Cameron announced the European referendum, which would end his Premiership. Before the poll in June, the GLA elections saw a horrible campaign by Conservative Zak Goldsmith, with dog whistle overtones. This boosted the Khan campaign, and saw a vast Labour vote, with a Khan winning by 317,000 votes securing 56.8% of the vote on second preference votes.

In the GLA constituencies, Labour came within a whisker (1,438) of seeing Ivana Baroletti being elected. This was more remarkable, as all the Havering wards saw a majority for Goldsmith, although Labour was close in a few wards in the party vote. But there was some compensation as Denis O’Flynn was victorious in a by election on the same day to double the size of the Labour group. Unmesh Desai was victorious in the neighbouring City and East seat, with a majority just under 90,000.

Seven weeks later the Brexit referendum saw Britain narrowly vote to leave. Havering and Barking and Dagenham voted heavily to Leave, while Redbridge and Newham saw only small majorities for Remain, while the rest of London voted heavily to Remain. All wards in Havering voted Leave.

The narrowness of the unexpected result saw David Cameron resign by 9 am the following day. The country was divided as never before, with the result viewed as meaning different things to different people. Two years later this remains the case. The campaign itself was every bit as bad as the previous national referendum on the voting system, with facts secondary to propaganda.

The best way of explaining the result was that emotional factors were dominating the economics, but the campaign failed to reflect this. This meant a disconnect from all sides, leading to the areas that received most EU funding - Cornwall, west Wales, and northern Scotland - all voting leave.

Labour took the unexpected result badly. Jeremy Corbyn had not taken part in the big TV debates - keen not to be sharing a platform with Cameron perhaps, considering the Scottish referendum. The parliamentary Labour Party forced another leadership campaign, which ended with Corbyn re-elected and secure in his role.

With Teresa May having taken over from Cameron, the Tories began the Brexit process. Despite promising not to do so, May called an election in 2017, with the aim of increasing her majority and ability to shape the Brexit she wanted. What followed was the ineptest election campaign in modern history.

The Conservative poll leads neared twenty percent at the start of the campaign, which would have left Labour with a 1931 style result (30.8% of the vote and fifty-two seats). She had badly underestimated Corbyn as a campaigner and overestimated her own abilities. A weak manifesto committed the Tories to little, save reform of adult social care. Within days May announced a change in this policy, and the robotic “strong and stable” mantra was easily undermined by “weak and wobbly.”

The polls narrowed, and with UKIP marginalised and no meaningful Lib Dem revival, the exit polls would once again provide the first insight. As in 2015, the polls did not pick up what was happening in Scotland, which would prove crucial.

The Conservatives lost their overall majority, with Labour 2.4% behind in the polls. In Havering, Labour moved back into second place in both seats.

In Hornchurch, Julia Lopez replaced Angela Watkinson and secured 33,750 votes (60.15%) of the vote, Rocky Gill securing 28.57% (16,027 votes). In Romford, Angela Leatherbarrow secured second place with 15,893 (31.82%), 13,600 behind Andrew Rosindell. In Dagenham and Rainham Labour benefited from support across London and Jon Cruddas was re-elected with a 4,652 majority, a small reduction, although the Conservatives moved into second place.

Although Labour had done better in Havering, analysis of the results suggested Labour was not ahead in any of the Havering wards.

So going into the 2018 elections, Labour was cautious about the prospects. Target wards were identified, and resources focused. With the national polls level, and London polling showing a significant Labour lead, some improvement was likely. However, the London only polls had been good in 2014, and Havering voted differently. The fear was a repeat despite good responses in the doorstep in the areas most likely to vote Labour.

The resident presence in the Borough provides an option for the apolitical/ anti-political/protest voter not available elsewhere in London, partly explaining why the Liberals have only briefly featured on the Council. The residents started from a strong position, and with UKIP no longer relevant, anything could happen.

Little changed. The Labour Party gained three seats in Harold Hill, while Denis O'Flynn retained his by election gain. Elsewhere, despite significant campaigning in Brooklands and Romford Town, there was no breakthrough in Romford. The targets in the south of the borough were missed as well, with the Independent Residents holding on with reduced majorities on a lower turnout.

In Heaton, 22-year-old Tele Lawal joined Keith Darvill and Denis

O'Flynn, becoming Havering Labours youngest ever Labour Councillor - Tony Rew was a similar age when elected in 1990. Paul McGeary returned to the Council in Gooshays , with newcomer Carole Beth elected for the first time. The third Labour candidate Adam Curtis missed out by forty-six votes, squeezed out by the Harold Hill version of the residents.

In the South of the Borough, a lively campaign in Rainham dented the resident's majority and left top placed Labour candidate Fay Hough 74 votes short of being elected, Kim Arrowsmith 140 short and Chris Freeman 228. A marker for next time and a potential Labour gain in future very possible.

Labour was also just short in South Hornchurch, Pat Brown (243) and Trevor McKeever (267) being short of the independent residents, with Nicholas West 347 short of third place.

In Elm Park, Simon Darvill came fourth, but with 795 votes was well short of the resident in third place who had 2,012 The Labour decline in Elm Park from the 1990s has reflected not only the boundaries changing, but a quite different community. It remains a seat that Labour could win in future, although grounds for optimism are needed to see this being the next election in 2022.

Elsewhere in the borough Labour had made substantial efforts at toppling the Conservatives in Brooklands and Romford Town. The 2017 General Election candidate and Romford Party chair Angelina Leatherbarrow came fourth in Brooklands, but with 1,592 was 546 votes of the third placed Tory. Labour candidates came second behind he elected Conservatives Romford Town ward, with Neil Cassidy 624 behind the third placed Conservative.

Elsewhere Labour was well behind the winning candidates, although did come second in Harold Wood, although Christine McGeary was 1,900 votes behind the third placed Resident candidate. A feature of the election was several former councillors standing in unwinnable wards- Chris Purcell, Ray Shaw and Mick Wood were all some way short of re-election.

Elsewhere in the borough, the Conservatives made some key gains, to leave them just short of an overall majority. They gained one seat in Hylands, giving them all twenty-one of the seats in the Romford constituency. John Mylod has defected

from the residents to the Conservatives just before the election and narrowly (25 votes) retained his seat to give the Tories a gain from the residents. In Emerson Park, a Tory gain from UKIP seemed likely once UKIP declined following the referendum, although they were pushed close by the residents who fell four short of gimping a seat. This left the Conservatives up three from 2014.

The Residents did well and were within range of being able to form an administration if they were able to form a cohesive group. That was always unlikely given the views of the Independent Residents in the South of the borough and the variety of different groupings.

However, within a fortnight of the election South Hornchurch councillor Michael Deon Burton defected to the Tories and became Deputy Mayor as a result. A deal appeared to have been done with the Resident's councillors from Harold a Wood to give the Conservatives a working majority. Roger Ramsey stood down as Council Leader to be replaced by Damien White, the replacement of the old guard by the younger Romford Councillors being reflected in the new Cabinet.

Labour with five seats had greater influence than before, having representatives on all the committees. None the less the Party was disappointed not to have broken through.

Elsewhere in London. Labour won all the seats in Barking and Dagenham for the third election in a row and made further gains in Redbridge. The strong election performance in 2014 meant that there were few opportunities for Labour to make significant gains, although the Labour vote increased by 2 percent across the capital.

The future for Labour in Havering is uncertain. On a positive note, this was the first election since 2002 where Labour had won two wards. Newly elected Tele Lawal was only forty-five behind Denis O' Flynn, who in turn won the by election in 2016 due to his strong personal following. It was particularly pleasing to see a young Black women elected in the ward that returned a BNP councillor 12 years ago. There was a lot of energy in the campaign, giving hope that in the next election - the GLA in 2020 unless a general election is called - Labour votes from Havering can see a Labour candidate elected in Havering and Redbridge for the first time.

2018 Result

Party	Councillors	% vote
Labour	5	18.4
Conservative	25	33.2
Resident /UKIP	24	45.2
Liberal/SDP	0	3.2
Total Turnout 36.8%	54	100.0

Harvering Elections 2022

The Council elections in 2018 had seen Labour increase representation to five Councillors, all from Harold Hill. The political issues since had been considerable. Political discussion was dominated by the aftermath of the Brexit vote and the failure to reach an agreement with the EU. The next elections were the 2019 European Elections, which as Britain remained in the EU would have to take place. The newly formed Brexit Party had one issue to campaign on, ensuring that Britain left the EU. The two main political parties had divisions with the Remain groups in both Parties not fully on board with the idea of a referendum on the eventual agreement. The Lib Dems were fully behind the referendum and intended this to be the route to Remain. Voting reflected the range of different opinions and the Brexit Party polled heavily and topped the national poll, with the Lib Dems second and the Labour third. The Conservatives came fifth, behind the Greens which effectively ended Theresa May's period as Prime Minister.

Table 1 Results of the 2019 European Parliament election in the United Kingdom⁹

Party	Votes			Seats		
	Number	%	+/-	Seats	+/-	%
Brexit Party	5,248,533	30.5	<i>new party</i>	29	<i>new party</i>	39.7
Liberal Democrats	3,367,284	19.6	▲13.0	16	▲15	21.9
Labour Party	2,347,255	13.7	▼10.8	10	▼10	13.7
Green Party of England and Wales	1,881,306	11.8	▲4.0	7	▲4	9.6
Conservative Party	1,512,809	8.8	▼14.3	4	▼15	5.5

Havering saw Brexit Party top the poll, with Labour third behind the Brexit Party and Lib Dems, with Change UK failing to make an impression.

Table 2 Havering result in the 2019 European Elections

•	The Brexit Party	Share %	47.6	(+47.6)
•	Liberal Democrats	Share %	12.2	(+10.3)
•	Labour	Share %	11.2	(-4.4)
•	Conservative	Share %	9.9	(-14.8)
•	Green	Share %	7.0	(+2.6)
•	UKIP	Share %	5.4	(-38.2)
•	Change UK	Share %	3.1	(+3.1)

Change shown against 2014 European Election.

⁹ From Wikipedia [2019 European Parliament election in the United Kingdom - Wikipedia](#)

Labour topped the poll in Leave voting Barking and Dagenham but trailed the Lib Dems in Remain voting Islington. The unpredictable outcome across the Country, and low Conservative vote meant the Prime Minister Teresa May would be replaced by Boris Johnson, who went on to call an election in December.

The 2019 General Election was discussed in detail in Newsletter 41 and ended with Labour a remote second in both Hornchurch and Upminster and Romford, while Jon Cruddas held Dagenham and Rainham by 293 votes. The Tories won by a majority of eighty and Labour had its worst result since the 1930s.

Before the Government could do more than deal with Brexit, Covid dominated national politics. Locally the Tories' lack of accountability caused major friction with the Residents, with a defection caused by alleged gerrymandering reducing the Tory coalition majority.

The GLA elections were delayed by the Government due to Covid restrictions from 2020 to May 2021. The Havering and Redbridge constituency was a marginal that Labour had hopes of winning; the previous election in 2016 had seen a significant UKIP vote which melted away to leave sitting Conservative Member Keith Prince re-elected with a comfortable majority of 15,327 over Labour candidate Judith Garfield.

Sadiq Khan was re-elected Mayor with a reduced, but comfortable majority of 228,433.

In Havering, all wards saw Conservatives top the poll in the Member and Party votes, which did not bode well for 2022, although the boundary changes would complicate direct comparison. The Labour vote exceeded the vote for Sadiq Khan in all wards; there was one unusual statistic: all wards in the 5 East London Boroughs showed a small swing to the Conservatives in the List vote since 2016 bar ... Upminster ward which showed a small swing to Labour.¹⁰

Boundary changes made any forecasts for the May 2022 election difficult – a New Statesman prediction based on London wide polling showed potential for Labour gains¹¹ but was of limited use for Havering, being based on pre

¹⁰ Postal Votes may explain this as they are recorded by the returning officers on a Constituency level – so a successful Conservative sign-up campaign would see the votes counted for the Conservatives on the day reduce.

¹¹ [How will London vote in the 2022 local elections? - State of the Nation \(newstatesman.com\)](https://www.newstatesman.com/2021/05/how-will-london-vote-in-the-2022-local-elections/)

boundary change wards and not reflecting the significant Resident vote, which is not a factor elsewhere in London.

Just before the May 2022 Council election the Residents Leader made comments about the Conservative Leader at the last Full Council which did neither any credit. Any Resident – Conservative coalition was not going to be possible with such ill feeling between the two.

So not a background that reflected a Borough at ease with itself. The Residents election campaign set out a platform based on forming the Administration rather than being permanent opposition.

The Conservatives needed gains outside of Romford to remain in control, while holding on to the seats they already held. With Roger Ramsey retiring, Emerson Park (now a two rather than three seat ward) seemed likely to be won by the Residents.

Labour had recovered in the Polls and expected further gains, while aware that this had been the view in 2010, 2014 and 2018, where results had been disappointing.

Labour ran a focused targeting campaign with resources allocated to target seats and candidates selected early to allow engagement with the local communities. There was a lively social media campaign particularly by the Romford candidates, with a regular food bank collection providing a medium for positive engagement with the community. The need for this was of course an indictment of the Conservative Government. The chance to make this point by those providing support was not missed.

The Resident campaign online talked up prospects of forming an administration. Their candidate list included several disillusioned former Conservative Councillors and there were ongoing disagreements with the Independent Residents Groups to the point they opposed each other in several seats.

Once the votes were counted the speculation about what might happen before the election proved social media comments are not a guide to what will happen.

Labour made gains increasing its representation to 9 Councillors with seven new Members. The anticipated gain happened in Harold Hill where all six seats were won by Labour with newcomers Pat Brown, Mary Anderson, Katie Tumilty, and Frankie Walker joining sitting Councillors Keith Darvill and Paul McGeary. The majorities were narrow as the gap between the third place Labour Councillor and the nearest challengers was 378 in Heaton and 147 in Gooshays. The turnout in both Labour wards on Harold Hill were the lowest in the Borough, 23.79% in Heaton, 23.46% in Gooshays. This reflected a general trend, with the highest turnout 42.3% in Upminster, 41.2% in Hacton and 41.13% in Marshalls and Rise Park.

In the South of the borough the Beam Park ward returned two Labour councillors Trevor McKeever and Matt Stanton in one of the new two seat wards. The turnout was 30.1 % and the majority 78 – the new build in the area meant voter registration was low and could increase significantly by 2026 once new built properties are fully occupied by new residents.

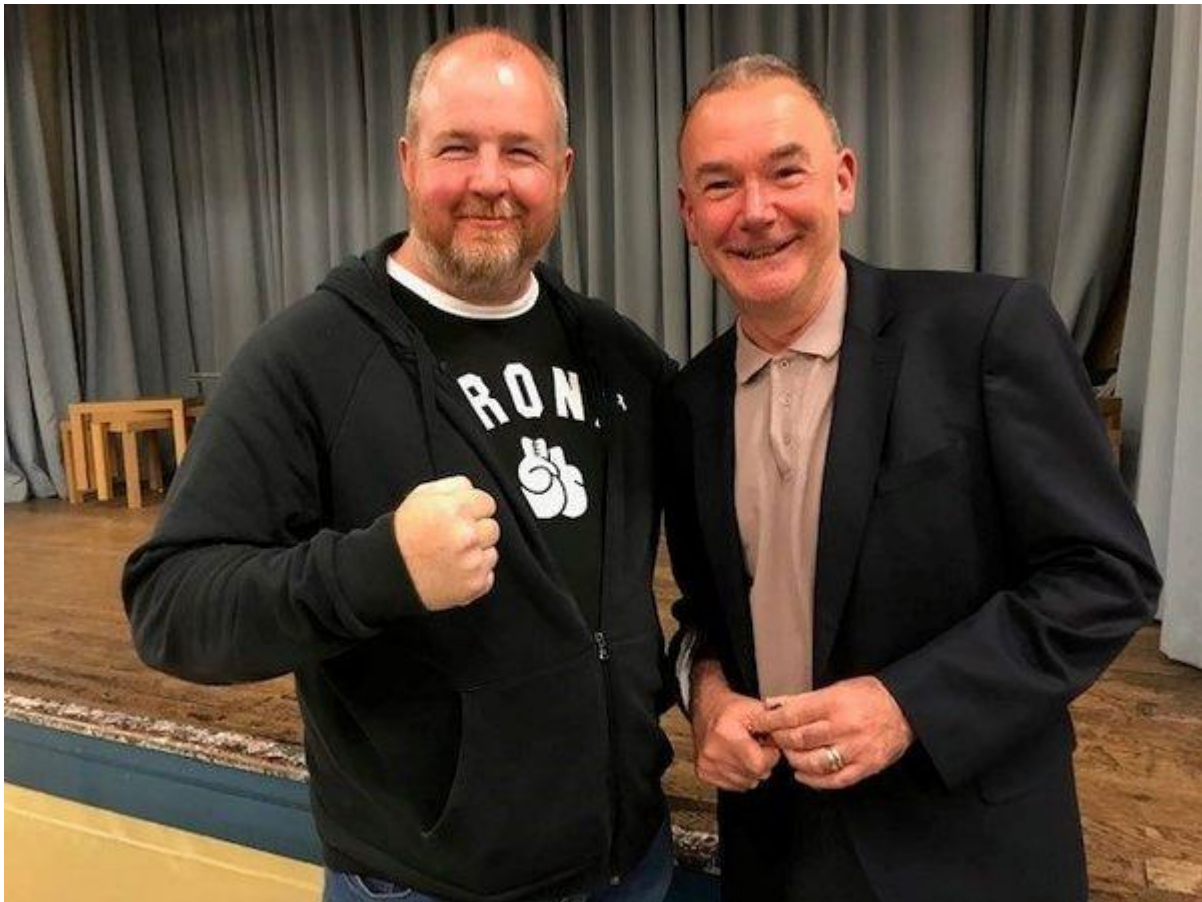


Figure 1 Matt Stanton celebrates with Jon Cruddas MP at the post-election social



Figure 2 Trevor McKeever (right) celebrates with July speaker Andrew Achilleos

The most pleasing Labour gain of the night was the election of Jane Keane in Saint Albans, a new ward primarily the previous Romford Town Ward, where Labour had been a distant second in 2018.

Labour narrowly failed to secure another councillor with Hope Mendy 46 votes away from displacing the Conservative candidate. The result in Saint Albans was important as it meant the Conservatives in Romford had lost the seat to Labour for the first time since 1998.

In the Romford constituency the second target seat was Rush Green and Crowlands Ward, where Labour pushed the Conservatives close with a gap of 196 between the top Labour candidate Angelina Leatherbarrow and the third placed Conservative. A great deal of effort had gone in by all the candidates, and it is the credit to the candidates that Labour is now a credible contender again in two Romford wards.

Labour had done well in terms of getting more councillors, and the result was also encouraging in seats where the Labour vote was up by a significant amount on the 2018 result. As regular readers will know the Havering tradition of naming wards the same even though the boundaries have changed means that direct comparisons can be misleading.

Without the same intensity of campaigning the Labour vote in Mawneys, and Squirrels Heath was significantly up on the previous 2018 election, with Havering Park and Havering Fabian vice chair and former Barking and Dagenham councillor Sanchia Alasia securing over 1,000 votes in Havering Atte Bower.

In the South of the Borough, the Labour defeat in South Hornchurch while disappointing left a gap by no means insurmountable in future elections with a good campaign run by Julia Pearman and Mirza Aktar getting within 350 votes of the two Resident Councillors.

The highest vote in the Borough was again for the Residents. Gillian Ford attracted 3,108 votes in Cranham, and Linda Hawthorn in Upminster with 3,028. These were the only personal vote over 3,000 although the other Resident Councillors in Cranham and Upminster, and the three each in St Andrews and Elm Park came close. The Residents won the overall vote, with their vote heavily concentrated in their existing seats.

The potential Resident breakthrough in Romford was limited to two gains in Hylands and Harrow Lodge, a seat which as Hylands with slightly different boundaries had returned Resident Councillors as recently as 2014. The Residents were successful in displacing Conservative cabinet member Ciaran White. However, by standing only two candidates¹² they left a space for a Conservative to claim the third seat. The two Resident Councillors polled 1,729 and 1,713 votes ahead of the third place Conservative Christine Smith on 1,596. An opportunity missed by the Residents to get a third Councillor which may prove to have significant implications going forward.

¹² Believed to be an error is submitting candidate nominations rather than a planned action.

The Residents as expected gained the Emerson Park seats from the Conservatives with a majority of 501 between the second placed Resident and losing third placed Conservative candidate. This proved to be significant particularly with the loss of three Independent Residents association seats to the Conservatives in Rainham.

This is the first time that the Conservatives had ever held Councillors in Rainham, and the majority for the leading Conservative candidate Sue Ospreay (249) was comfortable and close for the third-place candidate Sarah Edwards (1,206) who successfully displaced resident Jeff Tucker into fourth place after two recounts. There was consternation amongst the Independent Residents at this result and threats of legal challenges the results of which remind outstanding at the time of publication. The highest placed Labour candidate was Simon Darvill, 325 votes behind the lowest polling Resident.

The Harold Wood Residents held on comfortably despite Resident opposition, with Labour's Carol Beth 1,145 votes behind the third placed successful Harold Wood Resident councillor Darren Wise. The leading Resident candidate achieved 472 votes.

The consequence of this was a total 23 Resident Conservative councillors and 23 Conservatives. It is reasonable to assume that the position would be 24 and 22 had the Residents stood a full slate in Hylands and Harrow Lodge.

The lack of an overall majority, and the Residents friction with the Harold Wood Residents and the Conservatives complicated the negotiations post-election. The ability of the Residents Association to hold their group together would complicate any alliance either with Labour or the Conservatives and their ability to hold all their Councillors within the coalition.

On conclusion of an arrangement between the Resident and Labour groups, a Resident Councillor announced his intention¹³ not to form part of the

¹³ Councillor John Tyler – Cranham ward on twitter. He stated he would not join another group.

Administration, which effectively left the “coalition” with twenty-eight of the fifty-five seats.

The general low turnout across the capital also occurred in Havering. Overall turnout was down from that in 2018 reflecting the performance elsewhere in London and across the country.

The electorate do not seem to value local authorities to the extent that they have done in the past which is a worrying trend given the increasing division there appears to be in the country generally and that is something we may return to on further articles in future newsletters.

This cannot be a healthy sign whatever your politics, and one of the things that needs close consideration by all concerned given the importance of local authorities in acting as a support mechanism during the Covid and in reducing the impact of austerity.

Elsewhere in London Barking and Dagenham Labour again returned fifty-one out of 51 Labour councillors. The Labour Party was opposed by an incomplete slate of Conservatives or Lib Dem candidates in enough Wards to guarantee fifteen councillors before a vote was cast. The lack of effective opposition creates a vacuum into which can step particularly unpleasant politics.

The position in Redbridge improved significantly with only one Ward (Monkhams) now that does not have a Labour councillor. The Labour majority is now fifty-eight to five. The Labour group includes former Havering Fabian vice chair and Romford parliamentary candidate Sam Gould, elected in Hainault for the first time. While some majorities in Redbridge are small the ability of the Redbridge Labour to campaign effectively will keep the Conservatives in retreat and ensure the Havering and Redbridge GLA seat is a potential gain in 2024.

Elsewhere in London Labour regained Wandsworth (last won in the 1970's) Barnet and the previously thought to be unwinnable Westminster. The loss of Croydon and Tower Hamlets Mayoral votes and Harrow balanced this. While there were local factors, this was disappointing, particularly as the timing of

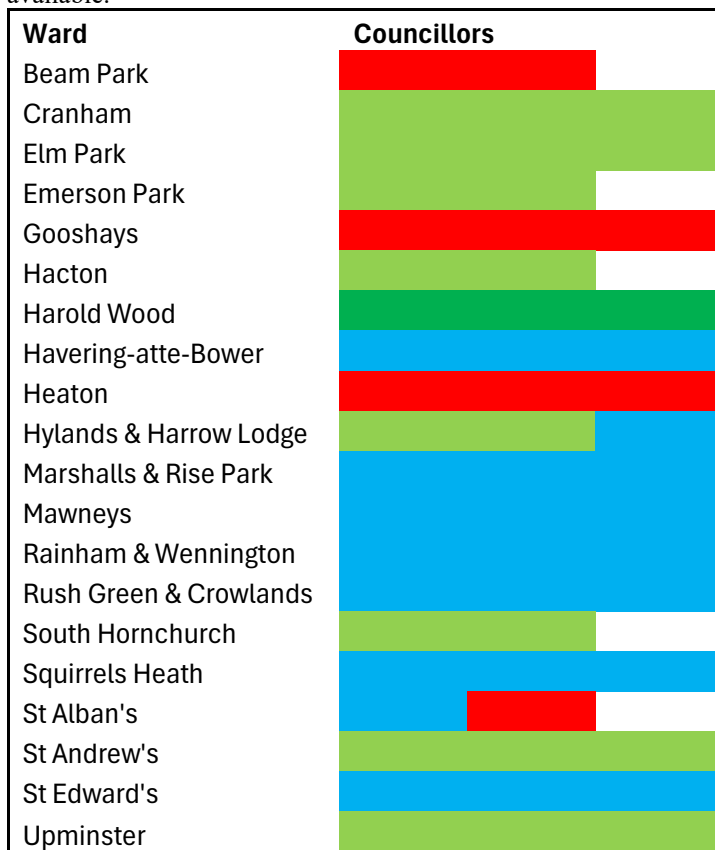
declarations meant the gains were covered in the press first, and the losses over the weekend became the discussion points for later media focus.

Labour can look forward to four years of being able to have influence in the Havering Council chamber again and can build for the next election in 2026

2022 Result

Party	% Vote	Councillors
Labour	22.3	9
Conservative	33.1	23
Resident / other	43.7	23
Liberal	0.9	0
Total	100	55
Turnout %		

Figures from Wikipedia – previous election results taken from GLA database, where 2022 results are not yet available.



Summary

Havering politics used to mirror the nations. Not backing Labour when it started, returning two labour MPs in the 1966 landslide. Giving Labour a kicking in 1968, voting for Heath in 1970, regretting it by 1971, and backing Wilson in a year of three elections in 1974.

By 1978, the tide turned, and Labour fell back as Havering turned to Thatcher. By 1986, the tide turned again, and representation increased gradually, until Labour had minority control of the Council. In 1997, all three MPs were Labour. It has been downhill ever since. The two Havering seats are now both safe for the Tories, and Labour just clings on to representation on the Council.

The composition of the council has been complicated by the presence of the ratepayers/ residents since the formation of the borough. They have had a solid presence throughout, and have held two wards - Cranham and Hacton, since the first borough election. Labour has at times held minority control and just once outright control.

The borough has changed considerably since 1964. The presence of the Ford plant in Dagenham meant large numbers of the borough residents worked there or depended on the plant for employment. As the production methods changed and employment at the plant reduced, the Labour vote slowly reduced, as manufacturing moved abroad.

There has been a trend toward a more ethnically diverse community, although the electoral impact has yet to materialise.

The Party has reduced as a force in the borough during a period when Labour has grown stronger in London. The politics of Havering are mirrored in Essex, where there are no Labour MPs and the previously held Councils of Thurrock, Basildon are now beyond Labours reach? Harlow has a Labour Council but even in 2017, the Party were not close to taking the seat.

The 2017 election did see Labour move back into a solid second place, although well behind the Conservatives. A 12% swing is needed to win Romford, more in Hornchurch and Upminster.

The Labour vote at the 2014 council election was 13 per cent, the Conservatives 23%. The residents and UKIP between them totalled 61%. With UKIP apparently a spent force, there may be votes to be redistributed. Labour has begun to rebuild with membership increasing in all the local parties. The rise of Havering Young Labour, with some seriously intelligent young people involved, gives hope of a revival. The demographics are slowly changing. Romford has a growing rented sector, and the population is becoming more ethnically diverse. Pressure on housing in the borough is increasing, and there is a need for affordable housing if the borough is to be more than a retirement home for former EastEnders.

The local elections in 2018 will be the first stage of what is likely to be a long journey back to the sort of influence Labour had in the borough in the 1990s.

There are many good people in the local Labour parties and many people in the borough who need a strong Labour presence at the Town Hall to represent their interest.

As the review of the elections in the borough has shown, Labour has done well in the past - the challenge now is to ensure it can do so again. The energy created by the increased membership, and in particular the thriving Havering Young Labour gives an opportunity to rebuild a presence on the Council.

Jack Hoepelman 1932 to 2013

Former Mayor of Havering and long-term Elm Park resident Jack Hoepelman was a man born before his time. In a different era, he could well have been a Labour MP. He was a Havering Councillor for 27 years and gave sterling service to the community.



Election night 1990 – Howard Moss, Kevin Lucas, Joanne Lucas, and Jack Hoepelman

After failing the eleven plus, he went to Suttons Secondary modern in Hornchurch (now Sanders Draper). He campaigned for the Labour candidate Geoffrey Bing in the 1945 election when aged thirteen and joined the Labour Party as soon as was allowed to. Initially he began working in upholstery, which he hated he moved onto work at Briggs bodies before their takeover by Fords. There he became a shop steward, and continued involvement in Havering politics. He would play a prominent part in ensuring generations that followed would not face selection and being thrown on the education scrapheap at 11.

As a political activist and shop steward in the early 1960's he became a target for Ford's management, and was forced out, as one of the seventeen union officials not re-instated after the "bellringing" dispute. The support he received from the union at the time left him wary of the motives of some union officials, an unusual

view for someone who would be seen as on the left of the party – but Jack was anything but a conformist. He then worked for London Transport as a bus mechanic, learning to drive buses before a car, which explained his approach to parking, with a fine grasp of small distances.

He married Margaret in July 1955, and the couple had two children, Chris, and Jenny. As they moved close to secondary school, he first stood for election in the 1968 Council elections. These followed the devaluation and Labour was all but wiped out across London, and Jack was defeated in his local Elm Park ward, which was lost for the first time anyone could remember.

The next election saw a complete reversal of fortune, and Labour won Havering outright for the only time. Jack worked as vice chair of Education with chair Margaret Latham to ensure that Havering's secondary schools went comprehensive, a major achievement that saw the first intake in September 1973 particularly as the initial proposal was rejected by the education minister, one Margaret Thatcher.

The late 70's were tough times for Labour, as the slide towards national defeat began. Elm Park was again unexpectedly lost in 1978 and Labour slipped back in Havering to just twelve seats. Jack had major differences with the Hornchurch Labour MP Alan Lee Williams, and ahead of the 1979 election wrote to the Hornchurch party saying he could no longer support him and would work for fellow Havering Councillor and MP Arthur Latham in Paddington¹⁴. Both lost, and Jack felt vindicated when Alan Lee Williams defected to the SDP. Interestingly although the letter was in Jack's name, it was written by Margaret's hand, Jack's handwriting being almost illegible at times, the result of being a left hander in a right-hand world.

¹⁴ Jack's reward while campaigning in Paddington was to be threatened by an elector with a sword. He continued to campaign.

The Labour fight back began, and Jack was selected as GLC candidate for Romford in 1981, coming a respectable second while his good friend Alan R Williams comfortably won Hornchurch¹⁵. The two were selected for the Parliamentary seats for the 1983 election. Jack came third in Romford a result in keeping with the national disaster, while Labour in Hornchurch just beat the SDP to finish second.

With typical gallows humour, Jack welcomed Alan to the post count party as a hero who had achieved a near miracle.

Jack's biggest public meeting was to have been a meeting with Tony Benn in Romford in the run up to the election in 1983 – instead the expectant audience saw Benn replaced as speaker by GLC member Dave Wetzel, about injustice in the changes in bus timetables, slightly less exciting than the crisis in global capitalism. Once again, Jack did not have the best of luck with timing.

Jack elected back to Havering Council in 1982 for Airfield ward. He defeated another SDP defector, and always one to bear a grudge actively campaigned for years to prevent him re-joining the party, even at the point where former Conservative ministers were welcomed into the party. Even now the older members of the Party in Hornchurch will have nothing to do with Alan Lee Williams, Jack's influence spreading beyond his natural support.

Better election results for Labour in 1986 and 1990 saw a larger Labour group and return to greater influence and from 1994 to 2002 periods of minority control.

Without an overall majority, the mayor's casting vote became critical, and Labour leader Arthur Latham twice turned to Jack to take the role in 1994/95 and again in 1995/96. Jack was far from being the obvious candidate, being less than popular with some members of the opposition for his forthright views – however

¹⁵ The Hornchurch Labour Candidate in 1964 was Tommy Williams 1966 – 1979 Alan Lee Williams and 1983 and 87 Alan R Williams – there is no truth in the rumour this was to save on the cost of posters.

many respected him and he won contested elections to become the Mayor of Havering.

He threw himself into the role on both occasions and surprised himself and many others with the warmth of his approach.

The 1997 election was a high after winning again in 1998 Jack chose not to seek re-election in 2002. This enabled him to spend more time with Margaret. His legendary speed at leafleting – putting many younger and allegedly fitter people to shame – was used to great effect to assist John Cryer get re-elected in 2001. However, at this point Jack's health began to suffer –and this was later diagnosed as Parkinson's disease. By the 2005 election Margaret was leafleting instead, and at not much slower pace.

Two incidents from canvassing with Jack sum up the man. In the first a constituent told us why they would be voting Labour and used to go to meetings but “stopped as every meeting was a row between Jack and Harry Moss” - as ever a man with similar views to Jack on most issues, but that did not stop them arguing nonstop. The second was when a woman went put her way to stop Jack in the street to thank him for his help some years ago in arranging adult literacy classes for her – she was delighted to be able to write her own Christmas cards for the first time. Although he professed not to enjoy casework, he clearly was an effective advocate.

He had been a governor at several schools in the Borough, including the sixth form college.

From the early 1970's until 2010 Jack assisted Margaret run the Elm Park share and loan club, which raised significant sums for the Labour party, and required their input every Friday night during the year. The Christmas pay-out was a major event in Elm Park, the pay-out in late November being the start of the Christmas shopping campaign for many locals.

Jack was a member of the National Trust, a regular badminton player (explaining the fitness) and ran an allotment, the source of vegetables for many a dinner party

with friends, colleagues and even on one occasion Conservative Councillor Norman Kemble, one of the few political opponents he admired and was friendly with. He can be forgiven his support of Spurs, as no one is perfect.

Jack had a fine and active mind, and a flair for politics. He did not suffer fools and could bear a grudge like few others. He was loyal to his friends, including Arthur Latham. The two eventually fell out over the latter's style of leadership, Jack being part of a group of former supporters who brought about his replacement as leader of the Council by Ray Harris. Typically, there was no retrenchment and the two after being close had not spoken for years.

He was a loving and besotted husband, a caring father and late in life a happy grandfather.

He was a mentor and inspiration to many (including the author). Had he been born later and had the chance of a better education that the comprehensive system brought about, he may well have been a Labour MP. As was typical of the man, he was as pleased as the rest of us when the Romford seat where he came third in 1983 was won by Eileen Gordon for Labour in 1997. No regrets as to what might have been. While no great fan of New Labour, he was convinced of the need to stay in power – as he had plenty of experience of opposition and was not an advocate for it.

Asked what his main achievements on the Council had been, he responded that it was not the introduction of comprehensive education, but the introduction of greater nursery education in Havering and playing a part in Havering becoming a leader for provision of autism support.

An enduring tribute to a fine local politician and a man who will be much missed by those who knew him.

Wilf Mills obituary

Collier Row based Wilf was a proud ex-serviceman who had served his country in several locations, including a spell of duty as part of the high-profile Berlin Airlift. Along with fellow councillor Denis O’Flynn he was one of those involved in establishing Harold Hill War Memorial at Hilldene Avenue shopping centre. Both Wilf and Denis were regular speakers at an annual remembrance Sunday open-air service, which as the years rolled on, saw congregation numbers rise considerably. Wilf often attended a second such service on the same day as those of the Jewish faith held a Remembrance Service in the afternoon.



Figure 3 Wilf Mills RIP

Wilf was a prominent in Havering Council politics from early in the 1970s and was something of a proverbial “rolling stone” as at various times he represented the good citizens of Mawney, Gooshays, Heaton and the long since defunct Hilldene Ward.

When at Heaton Ward a disgraceful stitch up took place as Wilf, along with Dennis and Flynn were deselected following a closed doors meeting in a proverbial smoke-filled room. To this day there were people present who nobody seen before - or for that matter ever seen since, everybody suspected of wielding

the dagger proclaimed, “not me”. Wilf and Denis were “out” as the Romford Recorder reported that Labour had ditched their two best drawing cards. The candidates drafted in to place the duo, who had both had large followings on Harold Hill failed to measure up. It was no secret that Wilf fancied his chances in Heaton Ward as an independent Resident, but he failed to pursue that course of action, Denis won nomination as one of the Labour candidates in Rainham and Wennington and worked hard in that ward but to no avail.

So committed to Labour’s profile on Harold Hill were the deselected duo, that despite being outside the Council Chamber they gave their time to hold advice surgeries in St George’s Church every Saturday morning, so becoming “the face of local Labour”, Despite goodwill generated by such worthy actions, Denis and Wilf received letters from Party officers criticising their efforts, ordering them to cease and threatening disciplinary action if continued. Continue it did and they brought much acclaim for Harold Hill Labour Party.

Wilf had held several positions at our Town Hall. He was a long serving Chair of Development and Transportation as it was then called - with Councillor Del Smith as his Deputy, Wilf was Deputy Council leader under former MP Arthur Latham and occupied the Leader’s office when Arthur dramatically fell from power. Wilf was also a loyal Deputy Leader to Ray Harris in the times when Labour enjoyed better fortunes in Havering.



Wilf, again with Denis O’Flynn formed a most informative “double act” on local radio station LINK FM where they had a weekly hour-long spot discussing local issues and answering questions. This feature ran for years and only ended when LINK FM went bankrupt.

Wilf enjoyed Havering Fabian Society meetings and rarely missed one. He liked the front row as his hearing often wasn't at its best and he always preferred to make telling contributions rather than ask the question after the Chairman opened up our meetings to the floor.

Sadly, the last years of Wilf's life were not good one's health wise, and he rarely went out and spent most of his life living downstairs. We have said farewell to one who was so often at the fore of Labour party activities within Havering.

Dave Ainsworth.

Havering Fabian Press officer

Obituaries – Del Smith

David Ainsworth wrote the following about former Havering Councillor Del Smith, who died recently. This was first published on our blog

DEL SMITH R.I.P.

I first met Del in the mid-60s when working at Lee Cooper's factory in Faringdon Avenue (Harold Hill) Del also worked there. Later, in the '70s/80s/90s I was in Ford's Dagenham Safety Department in which was Del's late father Arthur, so knew the family well. Most of Del's working time was as a self-employed carpenter, a trade in which he was skilled, much work came by personal reputation and previously satisfied customers' recommendations. Customers included many from our Labour/Trade Union ranks. Before, during and after his time as a Havering Councillor Del was a committed and enthusiastic Harold Hill community activist and campaigner on numerous issues. That's why, nowadays, he's still so well remembered by many Estate residents, long after his relocation to the village of Inch in Aberdeenshire.

Del made a Council Chamber debut in 1986 when winning in a now defunct Hilldene Ward, Labour's other's successful candidates being Dennis Cook &

Bessie Whitworth RIP. He didn't contest the 1990 local elections but, perhaps missing municipal action, earned selection for a 1991 Gooshays Ward by-election (caused by resignation of Sean Willis) when he finished streets' ahead of an equally hard campaigner in Liberal Democrat Terry Hurlstone RIP. He took the 1994 election in that Ward by storm when topping the poll with Bill Harrison & Mike Davis also winning seats. Come the 1998 Council election Del was no longer in the Labour Party and stated he'd no wish to stand against former Labour colleagues – as Yve Cornell, Bill Harrison & Kevin Robinson (now Southend's Deputy Mayor) convincingly claimed 3 Gooshays Ward seats. Del did so much for the people of Harold Hill – both as Councillor – and before-and-after his period of elected public service.

In 2003 Del was a founder member of “The Friends of Dagnam Park” and ran their website until his demise on August 2nd. – despite living in Scotland. The group emerged into one of the most effective campaigning organisations in the Borough. What ignited its arrival was the amount of neglect and anti-social behaviour in a large and lovely Dagnam Park.

Del was twice recently a hospital patient for serious illness and a few months ago requested no further treatment, as it was so painful. He never returned to hospital and accepted his forthcoming demise at home on August 2nd, where he spent most of his time asleep as he was so weak. He knew what was coming his way and accepted it with bravery.

The most controversial time during his year as Havering's Mayor was when appearing at Romford's Remembrance Day Parade in a suit – not in traditional Mayor's robes with pointed hat. Many wrote to local newspapers stating he'd betrayed the deceased of those being honoured by not dressing properly. Ex-Service organisations protested. A week after an avalanche of criticism, many wrote to support Del, saying his choice of dress wasn't important as long as he was there to take a salute and show respect. Opinion becomes more modern as years roll by. One critic was another former Havering Mayor, ex-Royal Navy man Conservative Ron Latchford RIP – who incidentally attended Havering Fabian Society 'open' meetings for years. On reading that critics were outnumbered by supporters of Del, Ron wrote to local newspapers stating he'd considered supporters' logic and changed his mind, admitting he'd got his opinion wrong in the first place.

In March 1996 Del took centre stage. along with fellow Harold Hill Councillors Dennis Cook (Hilldene Ward), Mike Davis (Gooshays Ward) & Tony Hunt RIP (Hilldene Ward). They were at loggerheads with Council leader Arthur Latham (a former MP) over several issues mainly affecting Harold Hill and his alleged dictatorial control. The “Gang of Four” as they became known – and still are to this day – broke from Labour to form “The Socialist Group” which reduced the Party’s presence in the Chamber to 26. All 4 were suspended from Labour membership. Soon afterwards another Labour Councillor resigned the whip but pledged to continue voting with Labour. Their defection was enough to tilt the scales against Labour. Reaction split both ways. Some never forgave the quartet for dumping Labour out of power, but as all were so popular, many remained friends for all time. One of Del’s biggest critics was former Council leader Wilf Mills RIP who wanted nothing to do with him – but buried the hatchet before his own fairly recent departure. When Tony was at death’s door, in a now-demolished Oldchurch Hospital for months after contracting legionnaires disease he was a recipient of Arthur’s get-well message. Tony recovered but still died at a young age, his popularity shown by a standing room only funeral at Corbet’s Tey Crematorium followed by a full-house gathering in “The Railway” public house near Hornchurch Underground Station. At his funeral a eulogist stated that Tony often regretted taking the action he did. Arthur Latham had the good grace to write kind words for an obituary for a local newspaper, in which he described Tony as “the least culpable of the four”. Mike went on to work hard for the Labour Party in election campaigns and when readmitted, stood for them. Dennis has always been supportive of Labour Party activities/campaigns and frequently attends Havering Fabian Society meetings. As for Del, he was one of many who returned to Labour when Jeremy Corbyn was elected Party Leader but resigned when Bro. Corbyn was forced to continue his political career as an Independent. Soon after re-joining he went to his first Labour Party function – a West Aberdeenshire & Kincardine CLP Christmas social. What a coincidence as he met that CLP’s former Vice Chairman Harry Bygate – another former Havering Labour Councillor who’d headed north after retirement. Harry, a then National Union of Seamen full-time Officer, topped the 1971 poll in South Hornchurch Ward with fellow elected colleagues Harry Rivers & John Whysall (who stood twice for Parliament at both 1974 General Elections in a newly created Upminster Constituency). Sadly, Harry left us in April 2019.

Del loved local history and wrote articles at length about Harold Hill on the Friends of Dagnam Park website. He wrote the history of St. George Church in Chippenham Road. On Harold Hill he resided in Edenhall Road for years just a few doors away from Hilldene Ward Councillor Reg Whiting RIP, who he always gone on with very well, before moving to Tring Gardens near a now boarded-up Havering College Quarles Campus. Years after settling in Scotland he appeared, by telephone, in an hour-long ‘live’ show on a now defunct Link FM radio station – hosted by Roni O’Brien (now broadcasting on Time FM). She asked him about many local issues and, such was his knowledge of Havering, he proved he knew as much while off our scene than when part of it. That’s because so many of his friends kept in contact, and he read a Romford Recorder every Friday on their free website. Del was a critic of the infamous Gallows Corner roundabout – his last public quote in the Recorder was earlier this year when they featured the 50th anniversary of a “temporary” flyover erected for 15 years’ use in 1971. Del said it’d been up so long it should be “*listed*”.

To his widow Gaynor and 3 offspring sincere condolence is expressed by so many. We say farewell to one of Harold Hill’s best-known residents – and one who leaves us with many memories of a life so well spent.

Dave Ainsworth

On a personal level, Del was very helpful in providing information for the review of Havering elections ([insert link](#)), with a good insight into some of the less obvious matters (such as why there was a “Dwarf Party” candidate in a by election in the late 1960’s (a long-forgotten campaign against the Vietnam war). Del also posted regularly on various social media sites and followed Havering politics with interest and insight.

For someone who left the Labour Party and ceded control of the Council to the “rainbow alliance” of non-Labour councillors, he commands great affection from those in the Party who knew him. It was a pleasure to know him if only vaguely, and for those who were closer to him, the loss must be greater.

Mike Lucas RIP

Sad to hear of the death of former Elm Park Labour Councillor Mike Lucas.

Mike was a Councillor from 1986-1994

Mike had a massive heart attack during the 1990 election campaign, and it was touch and go for a while. Alan Williams tells the story of arriving early in the morning on election day and seeing no one around, fearing the worst

Mike survived, and was nominated as chair of Social Services in the minority administration that followed...however he never assumed this role for a variety of reasons. He did not stand in 1994, and was a bit disillusioned with Labour politics.

He had great integrity, and when we made a error in an election leaflet naming him as current Chair of Benhurst school governors rather than former Chair, we manually wrote in the correct title to 4,500 leaflets.

He was Chair of Governors at Abbs Cross until 1992 resigning when the school became Grant Maintained.

Mike had been a social worker for Newham and later Essex County Council and helped out at Community Links, the main Charity in Canning Town.

He was a loss to the Labour Party, and a genuinely decent man.

Condolences to his wife June, and Joanne, Kevin David and his grandchildren
RIP.

Appendices

Percentage share of the poll, 1964-2018







Date	Turnout %	Conservative	Labour	Lib/ Lib Dem	other
5-5-2022	35.0	33.1	22.3	0.9	43.7
3-5-2018	36.8	33.2	18.4	3.3	45.2
22-5-2014	43.1	23.1	13.7	1.9	61.3
6-5-2010	66.0	36.6	18.5	2.5	42.5
4-5-2006	39.5	37.3	15.3	2.4	45.1
2-5-2002	45.0	37.7	24.9	4.3	32.1
7-5-1998	34.3	28.7	35.5	5.7	30.1
5-5-1994	45.9	27.4	42.0	11.6	19.0
3-5-1990	49.1	36.0	39.6	7.2	17.2
8-5-1986	43.3	36.0	29.6	20.5	13.9
6-5-1982	38.7	44.2	22.1	21.0	12.7
4-5-1978	43.4	47.4	34.1	1.8	16.7
4-5-1974	38.7	37.9	33.2	9.7	19.2
13-5-1971	42.3	32.5	47.1	1.4	19.0
9-5-1968	40.8	54.5	22.6	3.2	19.6
7-5-1964	40.9	30.4	42.8	7.2	19.7

State of the parties, 1964-18

Date	Turnout %	Conservative	Labour	Lib/ Lib Dem	other	Total
5-5-2022		23	9	0	23	55
3-5-2018	36.8	25	5	0	24	54
22-5-2014	43.1	22	1	0	31	54
6-5-2010	66.0	33	5		16	54
4-5-2006	39.5	34	2	1	17	54
2-5-2002	45.0	26	9	1	18	54
7-5-1998	34.3	14	29	3	17	63
5-5-1994	45.9	11	31	4	17	63
3-5-1990	49.1	19	25	6	13	63
8-5-1986	43.3	28	20	5	10	63
6-5-1982	38.7	37	12	5	12	63
4-5-1978	43.4	38	12	0	13	63
4-5-1974	38.7	20	26	0	9	55
13-5-1971	42.3	13	30	0	12	55
9-5-1968	40.8	35	7	0	13	55
7-5-1964	40.9	16	27	0	12	55

INDIVIDUAL WARD RESULTS 1964-2022

KEY

	Conservative
	Labour
	Ratepayer\ Resident
	Liberal\ Lib Dem
	BNP
	UKIP

BEDFORDS



1964		
1968		
1971		
1974		
1978	X	X
1982	X	X
1986	X	X
1990	X	X
1994	X	X
1998	X	X
2002	X	X
2006	X	X
2010	X	X
2014	X	X

CENTRAL



1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002	X	X	X
2006	X	X	X
2010	X	X	X
2014	X	X	X

COLLIER ROW



1964			
1968			
1971			
1974			
1978			x
1982			x
1986			x
1990			x
1994			x
1998			x
2002	x	x	x
2006	x	x	x
2010	x	x	x
2014	x	x	x
2018			
2022			

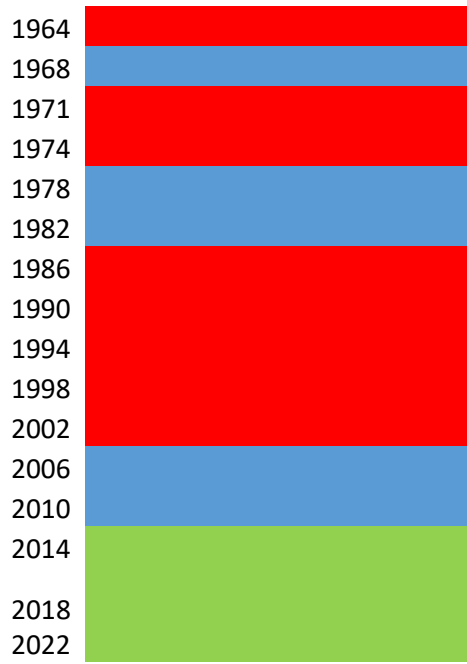
CRANHAM



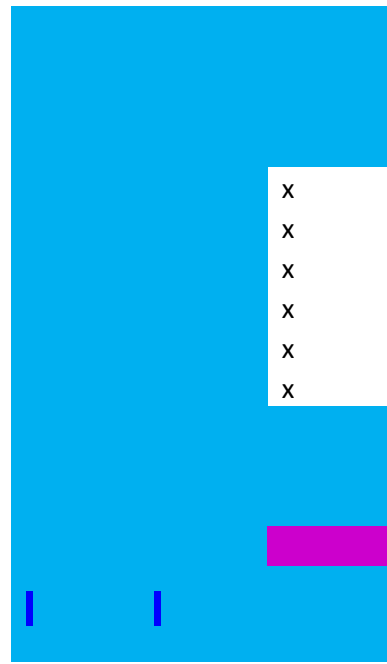
1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X



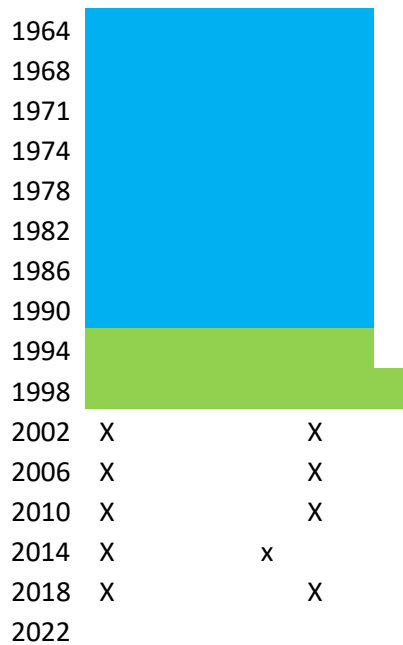
ELM PARK



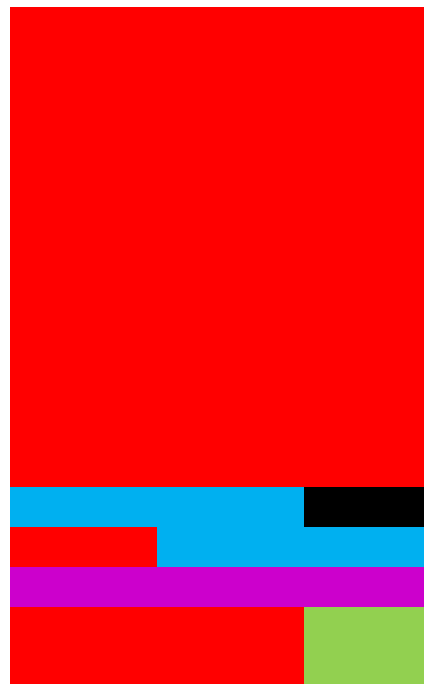
EMERSON PARK

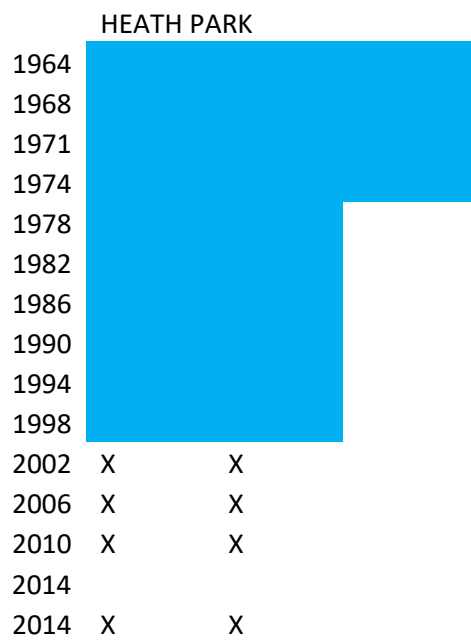
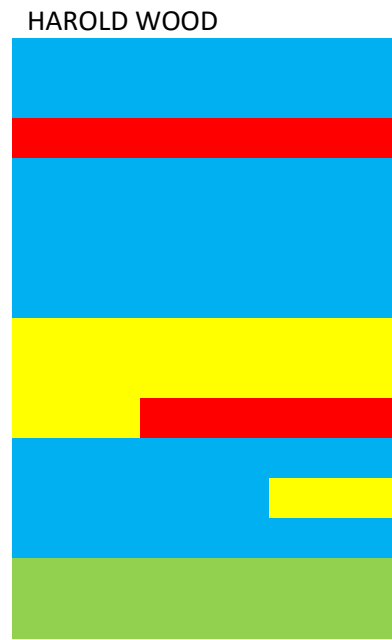


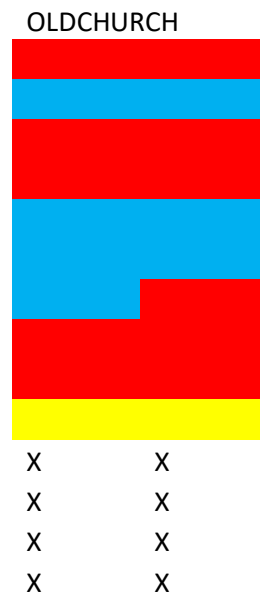
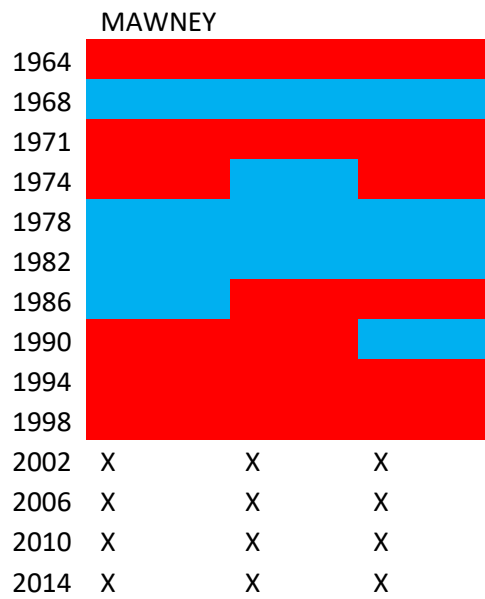
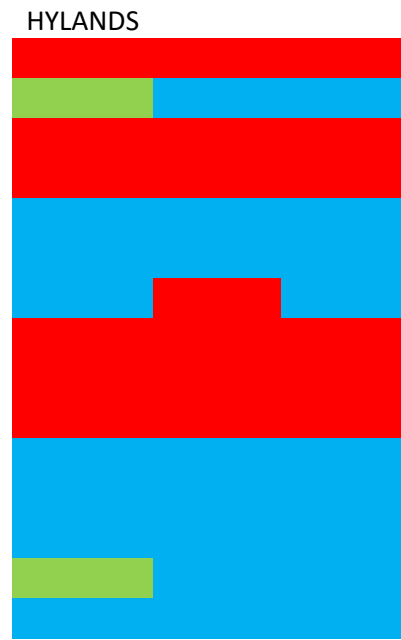
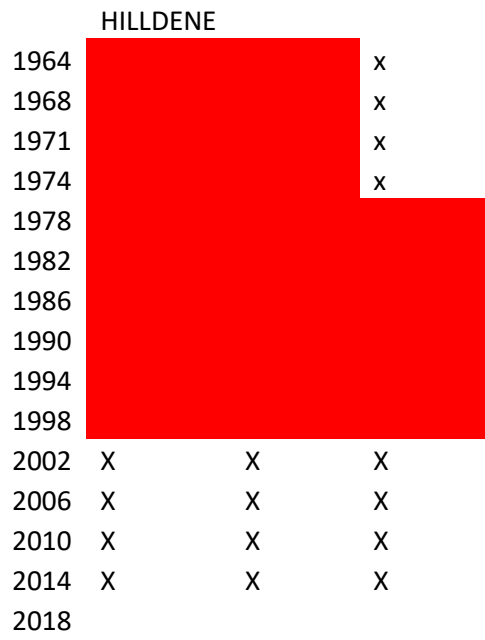
GIDEA PARK

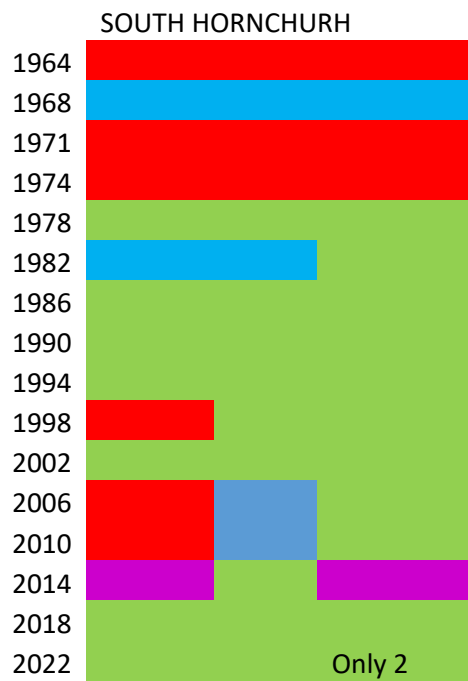
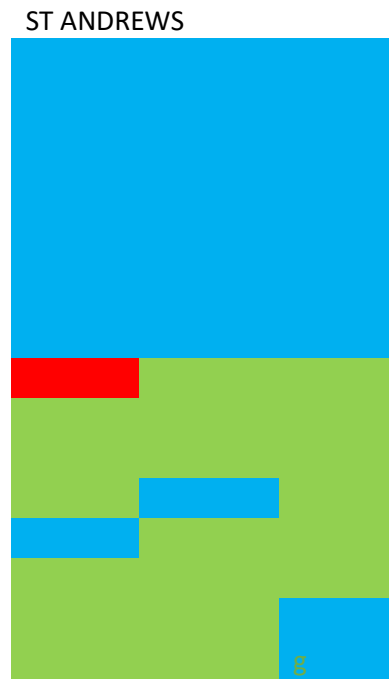
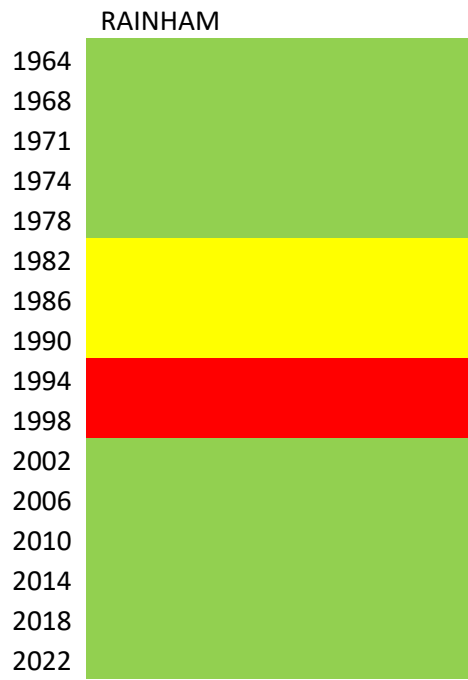



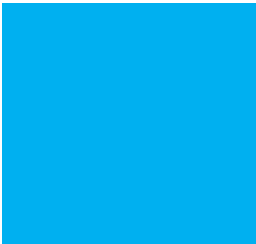
GOOSHAYS*****













	AIRFIELD				ARDLIEGH GREEN	
1964	X	X	X	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X	X	X	X
1978						
1982						
1986						
1990						
1994						
1998						
2002	X	X	X		X	X
2006	X	X	X		X	X
2010	X	X	X		X	X
2014	X	X	X		X	X

	CHASE CROSS			CRANHAM EAST	
1964	X	X	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X	X	X
1978					
1982					
1986					
1990					
1994					
1998					
2002	X	X		X	X
2006	X	X		X	X
2010	X	X		X	X
2014	X	X		X	X




CRANHAM WEST

1964	X	X		
1968	X	X		
1971	X	X		
1974	X	X		
1978				
1982				
1986				
1990				
1994				
1998				
2002			x	x
2006			x	x
2010			x	x
2014			x	x

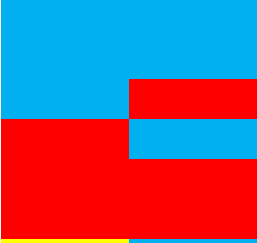

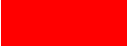
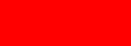



RISE PARK

1964	X	X		
1968	X	X		
1971	X	X		
1974	X	X		
1978				
1982				
1986				
1990				
1994				
1998				
2002			X	X
2006			X	X
2010			X	X
2014			X	X


ST EDWARDS


1964	X	X		
1968	X	X		
1971	X	X		
1974	X	X		
1978				
1982				
1986				
1990				
1994				
1998				
2002			X	X
2006			X	X
2010			X	X
2014			X	X
2018	x	x		


BROOKLANDS


1964	X	X		
1968	X	X		
1971	X	X		
1974	X	X		
1978				
1982				
1986				
1990				
1994				
1998				
2002				
2006				
2010				
2014				
2018	x	x		

2020





HAVERING PARK			
1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002			
2006			
2010			
2014			
2018			

SQUIRRELS HEATH			
1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002			
2006			
2010			
2014			
2018			

MAWNEYS			
1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002			
2006			
2010			
2014			
2018			

ROMFORD tOWN			
1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002			
2006			
2010			
2014			
2018			

PETTITTS

1964	X	X	X
1968	X	X	X
1971	X	X	X
1974	X	X	X
1978	X	X	X
1982	X	X	X
1986	X	X	X
1990	X	X	X
1994	X	X	X
1998	X	X	X
2002			
2006			
2010			
2014			
2018	