

Brighton & Hove Fabian Society Hon Secretary's Annual Report for Y/E 31.03.13

Each year all of the 60 plus Fabian Local Societies are asked to submit a form reporting on membership and the Local Societies activities.

During this, our 70th year, BHFS held 9 speaker's meetings and 2 social events which all together had an average attendance of 23.5 members and visitors, all done with support from our President Joyce Gould and V-P Dr. Malcolm Cornwall.

It's always difficult to answer the question, " what was your most successful event of the past 12 months?" but space is available for 2 entries and I've chosen the events with the lowest and highest turnout more or less for the same reasons.

The first was held at 6:30pm on a Thursday in May at The University of Sussex, Fulton Building Room 104, a meeting organized with the support by The Sussex University Politics Society. David Lamy MP had a booking to pay them an afternoon visit and they arranged our accommodation. It was a seamless handover once all 12 of our members and 4 visitors found Fulton 104. David's offered an impassioned analysis of Britain's riots to a questioning and receptive audience. It taught us a bit about important flexibility can be to be able to present a given speaker. And it encouraged our society to donate to the USPS to support their work.

The second was held at 7pm on Tuesday 22nd January at Jurys Inn, Brighton and our largest turnout of 36 members and visitor gave a warm welcome on a snowy night to Rachel Reeves MP, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury who delivered a thorough and thoroughly up to date statement on the economy followed by lively questions till just past 8pm. Notably, more than 70 people had prebooked by email to attend this meeting. I went home to find close to 36 apologies from members who were snow-bound in Sussex.

In addition to those mentioned, we met at Community Base, Friends Meeting House, and Calvary Evangelical Church, in addition to social events. Our Summer Garden Party at The Garden House and our New Year Party at The Sundial House. We offer special thanks to Rob Stephenson and Jackie Jones for hosting the NYP.

How much did we charge for membership? Still £5.00 individual/£9.00 joint at an address and £3.00 for concession. I minded to remind members they can claim a reduced charge on Labour Party membership based on their membership of this Labour Party Affiliate.

We've received support from the Fabian Society office who publicize our meetings on the website and through emails to National Fabians, including Young Fabians.

Our life would be made easier if we always knew the copy deadlines the Society is working to and if the date of the NYC once announced could stay fixed for a change.

Penultimately, the Society asks what is the greatest threat to your Local Society? The answer is not a lack of members, BUT a lack of members willing to put themselves forward to be active on the EC. The ultimate question, how long has your society been formed? BHFS was formed during WWII and is now entering our 71st year.