



Dear Newsletter Reader,
**AGM, Election of Officers,
Branch Meetings**

The AGM took place on February 10th and new officers were elected. Most of the filled posts are detailed on page two. Branch decided to operate a rotating chair giving all members the opportunity to be involved in day to day Branch activities. The weather that evening was terrible. The roads were icy and dangerous. It was no surprise that many of you felt unable to attend although the attendance was surprisingly good.

The appalling weather conditions that evening suggests that the Branch needs to have a discussion about when it would like to have meetings. Are midweek meetings in cold weather, on premises with more than one floor without lifts, a good idea? I think not. My own view is we should consider early evening meetings in the spring and summer months and Saturday lunchtime meetings when darkness falls early. Edna Forrest tells me they have some Saturday meetings in Saffron Walden. However, it is your decision. It is not possible to change the venue of Pearse House until the spring of 2010 but Branch needs to have a discussion now if it wishes to make changes enabling more members to participate in meetings and activities. This will be an agenda item for the May meeting. If you unable to attend **please** contact me with your views. If you receive the Newsletter by post and have an email address let us know.

Peter Mitchell
Secretary

Has the tide changed?

Since the last newsletter three members of our Branch attended a reception at Portcullis House on February 4 given by Bill Rammell MP and Jack Straw MP. They both addressed us about the challenge ahead and how important it is for us to continue to work to defend the values that we all share. The meeting was very well attended and indeed there were more of us than originally expected which caused a few problems when we broke into groups to tour the Houses of Parliament. It was quite moving to see so many people on tours at 9:30pm on a wet February evening and we admired the commitment of Bill who was still leading his group having just returned from Afghanistan via Pakistan that afternoon!

On 25 February four of us were at the launch of the Harlow Election campaign at the Study Centre, Waterhouse Moor. Here the key speaker was David Blunkett MP. The mood was very upbeat and the impression was that support for Labour, despite all of the unflattering copy recently, was solid and in the Harlow constituency as ours new members are joining the party. David Blunkett was very inspiring. He spoke of the importance of continuing to support the economy and reminded us that although there is pressure to cut the deficit the country has only recently repaid the WW2 loan from the USA which few would argue had been vital for our survival over 60 years ago. Harlow has been flooded with Tory money in recent years which is difficult to compete with but above all David urged us all to go out and talk to our neighbours and family to spread the word about Labour's achievements in the last 13 years....as the latest polls suggest it is still all to play for and the fight goes on for a Labour majority.

LATEST NEWS.....The death has just been announced of Michael Foot at the age of 96. He was born in 1913 and elected to Parliament in 1945 to serve for 42 years. He was the Leader of the Labour Party for 3 years (1980-83). Jack Straw said today he was "held in very great affection in all sections of the House and the country" and Speaker Bercow said that Michael Foot was "a quite extraordinarily distinguished Parliamentarian"



The Latest Polls

My item last month on opinion polls was popular with readers so I will update you on the latest position. The trend continues to show a falling Tory share of the vote and rising Labour share. The Sunday Times 'You Gov' poll, February 28th, showed a Tory lead of only two points. Nothing in the polling data alters my prediction that Labour will be the largest party after the general election. Watch out for a concerted Tory and city tycoon attack on Labour claiming a 'hung' parliament or a Labour Government will lead to a sterling crisis. This will be an attempt to change the polling trends. What cheek considering bankers and city financiers are responsible for the economic mess. Polling junkies can go to www.ukpollingreport.com for the latest polls.

Peter Mitchell

Local Labour Party Officers /Contacts

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Linda Mitchell *01279 654190*
Campaign Co-ordinator

Constituency Delegates: S Tripp, P Tripp, J Battersby, D Mitchell, L Mitchell, L. Tillbrook

Dates for the Diary

The next Branch meeting will be on **Wednesday 10th March at 8pm at Pearse House**, Parsonage Lane, Bishops Stortford
Branch Meetings: **CLP Meetings:**
Every 2nd Wed **15th March, Drill Hall,**
In month* **Ware**
Every 3rd Monday in
month*

All members are welcome and have the opportunity to discuss the latest political issues, nationally and locally, as well as meeting like-minded people in a friendly atmosphere. *Meeting dates in March and April may change depending on the date of the General Election.

Your Newsletter, Your Say

Not getting your views heard? Ring a Branch officer or email the Secretary on mitpeter1@ntlworld.com. The deadline for items for the next newsletter is:
April 5th 2010

100 Club Draw Winners

143 O Parrish
201 M Campbell
203 R Clarke

The 100 Club raises funds for fighting elections. If you would like to join the 100 Club, please call: Peter Wood on **01992 584398** for a form.

CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY at Newport Village Hall, Station Road, Newport, Essex from 7:30 Monday 8th March. Tickets £3.50. Details from Peter Mitchell or 'phone 01279 812127 – Supporting Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research

