

Members' Newsletter



Labour Party —
Evesham Branch

August 2023

From the Vice-Chair: Sue Wood-Griffiths

August has been an atypical month for us as we have not held a branch meeting so that we could focus our efforts on campaigning in Evesham South. We all extend our thanks to David Tasker for stepping up to stand in the by-election, Matthew Rea for acting as agent, and Brian Gregory for managing the campaign and leafleting (more from Brian later). We have not stood in elections in the ward for some time and the executive felt this by-election was an opportunity to build upon what we had learned from the May campaign. Fighting an election in August is hard, as many members had holidays planned. Furthermore, the unseasonal weather made getting the gazebo out and about challenging or impossible.

We would like to thank everyone who supported the campaign at the planning stage and delivering leaflets to every household in the ward. The long sunny walkabouts we might have expected often being reduced to several short sprints of a road group to avoid showers and soggy leaflets. We extend particular thanks to Brian Chilver for allowing us to pitch the double-sided 'Vote Labour' and 'David Tasker: Speaking Out Taking Action' banners in a prominent position on Broadway Road, and Mary Campbell for her mobile 'banner van' displaying the David Tasker banner. It was a real team effort and we must again thank our chair Matthew Rea who consistently drives our efforts, ordering campaign materials and storing and delivering the gazebo.

The outcome of the election was a clear victory for the Green Party and we congratulate Peter Knight on becoming a councillor which means no overall change to the composition of the district council. Unsurprisingly, there was a very low turnout on election day with one polling station (Fairfield) being open for fifteen hours for eighteen people to attend and vote! Nevertheless, we had some positive exchanges during the campaign and gained 79 voters which we have not had before. To win in a General Election given the latest seat predictor

(<https://www.electoralcalculus.co.uk> accessed 14 August 2023) we need to determine how to encourage tactical voting. The Tories are currently expected to gain 41.8% of the vote share so it is not an impossibility.

The town council enjoys an August recess, despite the many activities happening in the town while at district level it is business as usual. Thank you to those who supported Councillor Heather Kelleher's request to assist the Evesham Anti-Litter group litter picking at the Battle of Evesham re-enactment. It was a spectacular occasion and pleasing to see that the efforts of the group over the weekend were successful and kept the site immaculate.

Councillors Tasker and Kelleher held the second of their monthly surgeries at the end of July and are starting to deal with casework brought to them at the surgeries.

This edition of the newsletter is largely focused on our forthcoming AGM. Most of the current branch executive are conducting their roles in an acting capacity. This is because we had to reassemble the executive in January following resignations. After the council elections in May we co-opted those who stood for election to join the executive to expand our activity and share the workload. The AGM will provide an opportunity for any member who is willing to stand for any role to be elected, so please don't feel deterred. Brief descriptions of roles are detailed below. These have been taken and adapted from the Labour Party website where they describe the roles at CLP rather than branch level and there is lots of scope to make a role your own.

Next month we will resume normal service with the newsletter so please don't hesitate to contribute stories, updates and images to our newsletter inbox newsletter@eveshamlabour.org as well as details of forthcoming events to add to the calendar. The activities we report on are starting to draw interest from members who have not been active, and we welcome this.

By-election leafleting — thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone that answered the call to deliver leaflets ahead of the Evesham South by-election. The response was heroic with eighteen people delivering approximately 2400 leaflets to the twenty-three road groups that comprise the ward. Unfortunately, the exercise was not incident free, with Anne O'Hagan bitten on the finger by a dog. Fortunately, Anne tells me that no serious damage was done and that she is pain free. As the attached picture shows, Edgar Harwood also had an interesting dog encounter which resulted in his leaflet spatula being damaged (more on spatulas shortly). Finally Peter Daw had what he describes as a 'slightly embarrassing moment' when both he and a Green Party leafleter ended up at the same letter box at the same time. Apparently a very affable discussion ensued so all was well. Once again thank you to everyone for what was a monumental effort at very short notice.

A leafleting essential...

So back to spatulas. One of the most valuable pieces of advice given to me ahead of leafleting was to 'always use a spatula'. Some people's letter boxes are more like medieval torture devices which snap back in an attempt to take your hand off, so it really does help. My sympathy and respect for



posties has increased greatly ever since I started to deliver leaflets!

With more by-elections possible, and a General Election approaching, the need to build an even bigger team of leafleters will be essential going forward. This therefore seems like as good a time as any to pass on the advice that I was given:

- Always use a spatula or something similar when leafleting.
- Fold the leaflet over the end of the spatula such that you can open the letterbox with one hand and easily push the leaflet through with the other.
- Don't push the leaflet in too far or an embarrassing conversation follows with the householder to retrieve your spatula!

From the Chair: Matthew Rea

That smell in the air, the first hint of Autumn, which is my favourite season. It always seems like a time to reflect and that is the theme of our up-coming September branch meeting. We will meet and use the time to reflect on what we have achieved in the last twelve months and then hold a vote to fill as many of the branch exec positions as possible for next year. I urge anyone who is deliberating about whether to put themselves forward to do so. This is a great time for the Evesham Labour Party; we are seeing greatly renewed interest and, as a national party, we stand on verge of a great political victory.

Right now we are reminded – every day – how urgently needed our political victory is. Just in the last month we have the immigration processing backlog reach new unthinkable levels, the shambles of the *Bibby Stockholm*, the troubling GCSE results that mask a potentially lost

generation, the announcement of record obscene CEO pay-rises, and the shocking news that once again our Prime Minister has failed to correctly declare his wife's monumental share portfolio.

Even if you look overseas it is difficult to muster optimism. Just this week we have had the spectacle of the first Republican presidential nominee debate featuring numerous climate-change deniers, just as the prediction of imminent species wipe-out is announced for Emperor Penguins, due to Antarctic sea ice collapse.

Still we must focus on the positives and the future. In October many of the branch exec, myself included, will attend the annual Labour Party conference, from which we expect to return ready for the final showdown of an imminent General Election. Change is coming, so don't lose hope!

The Annual General Meeting

The AGM provides an opportunity to review the work of the branch during the past year and to elect branch officials for the forthcoming year.

We appreciate that being a branch official can sound rather dull and you might worry that it is a lot of work. The reality is very different; while Labour HQ lays out great guidelines and best-practice ideas for doing this, we have to work with what is achievable and just keep focused on doing this better each year. So there is space for everyone who would like to help and, if you volunteer, you will get lots of support.

Below is a list of roles and current incumbents. Each role is described briefly in terms of the core responsibilities, but we have also identified our goal for each role. If you think you could achieve that goal or are motivated by the idea of giving it a try, then please consider volunteering.

Each role is what you make it and we will not coerce people into taking on more than they want to. All roles are up for grabs.

We have listed where the current incumbent is prepared to stand again, but don't be put off by this. The executive meets face to face once a month for two hours, the week before the branch meeting.

As at all meetings, we welcome friends and supporters to attend the AGM, but you will only be eligible to stand for roles and vote if you are currently a member. You can put your name forward at the AGM meeting but, better still, if you are thinking of standing, please contact Sue or Matthew.

Further detail is available on the Labour Party website [My local Labour team](#)

Evesham Labour Party Branch Roles

Branch Chair: currently Acting, Matthew Rea
Prepared to stand again? YES

Responsibilities:

- Strategic lead for all branch activity
- Support the other branch officers
- Ensure Labour Party rules are followed around fairness and equity.

Goal: Grow active membership, increase diversity and make progress in local and national elections.

Vice Chair:
currently Acting, Sue Wood-Griffiths
Prepared to stand again? YES

Responsibilities:

- Deputise for Branch Chair
- Support the other branch officers
- Ensure Labour Party rules are followed around fairness and equity.

Goal: Maintain a full and engaging schedule of branch meetings and activities.

Membership Officer: currently Matthew Rea
Prepared to stand again? YES

Responsibilities:

- Lead on membership administration, engagement and retention.
- Ensure regular membership communication.
- Drive membership initiatives and make all new members welcome.

Goal: Increase membership by 10% and focus on initiatives to increase youth membership significantly.

Branch Secretary:
currently Acting, Sue Wood-Griffiths
Prepared to stand again? YES

Responsibilities:

- Keep all members and supporters informed about all branch activity.
- Edit the branch newsletter.
- Manage the branch activity calendar.

Goal: Increase member engagement, increase member awareness of all activities.

Branch Treasurer: currently Wendy Logan

Prepared to stand again: NO

Responsibilities:

- Manage branch funds, complying with party and electoral rules.
- Manage branch bank accounts.
- Ensure all financial records are kept up to date.

Goal: Ensure we don't overspend and ensure we would pass an audit!

Fundraising Officer: currently Mary Tasker

Prepared to stand again: YES

Responsibilities:

- Plan, manage and co-ordinate fundraising events.
- Work with local venues, donors and supporters to raise funds.
- Publicise branch fundraising activities.

Goal: Raise significant funds for imminent General Election campaign.

Campaign Co-ordinator:

currently Acting, Brian Gregory

Prepared to stand again: YES

Responsibilities:

- Plan and manage branch campaigns (electoral and issue-focused).
- Manage all electoral campaign data.
- Manage and motivate local leaflet and canvassing teams.

Goal: Stand more candidates, win more elections.

Trade Unions Liaison Officer (TULO):

currently David Tasker

Prepared to stand again: YES

Responsibilities:

- Liaise with local unions.
- Co-ordinate protest and picket support with local groups.
- Provide trade union feedback to branch members and exec.

Goal: Ensure members know about local union issues and activity.

Public Relation Officers:

currently Acting, Heather Kelleher

Prepared to stand again: NO

Responsibilities:

- The public face of the branch, raising our visibility.
- Collaborate and communicate with local affiliate groups.
- Ensure branch initiatives and views are visible via local media (print, TV, radio).

Goal: Create and send regular articles/letters to local publications, ideally weekly.

Women's Officer:

currently Acting, Mary Campbell

Prepared to stand again: YES

Responsibilities:

- Ensure all branch activity has an equal focus on women.
- Work with women members to support and promote their ideas and initiatives.
- Liaise with, and support, local women's groups.

Goal: Specific focus on women's issues with regular features in our Newsletter.

Comms and Social Media: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Manage the branch online and social media presence.
- Create and manage digital campaigns in support of branch initiatives.
- Increase local awareness and reach of our branch.

Goal: Create regular balanced posts and responses on social media, ideally daily.

Political Education Officer: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Source of party policy knowledge and the party's history.
- Ensure party policy is central to our messaging and wider public interaction.
- Foster and encourage political discourse.

Goal: Start a branch book club to review and feature this through our Newsletter.

BAME Co-ordinator: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Represent BAME issues and views within the branch.
- Be a focal point for new BAME members, welcoming and encouraging them.
- Liaise and work with local BAME community groups to foster links.

Goal: To have recognised BAME representation within the branch.

LGBTQ Co-ordinator: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Represent LGBTQ issues and views within the branch.
- Be a focal point for new LGBTQ members, welcoming and encouraging them.
- Liaise and work with local LGBTQ community groups to foster links.

Goal: To have recognised LGBTQ representation within the branch.

Disability Co-ordinator: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Represent disability issues and views within the branch.
- Be a focal point for new disabled members, welcoming and encouraging them.
- Liaise and work with local disabled community groups to foster links.

Goal: To have recognised disabled representation within the branch.

Youth Co-ordinator: (currently Vacant)

Responsibilities:

- Represent youth issues and views within the branch.
- Be a focal point for new young members, welcoming and encouraging them.
- Liaise and work with local young person's community groups to foster links.

Goal: Significantly increase active youth membership and establish a youth focus group.

Evesham Labour Party AGM

13 September 2023

Evesham Rowing Club, Abbey Rd, Evesham WR11 4ST

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

**A review of our 2023 achievements
and the election of branch executive officers.**

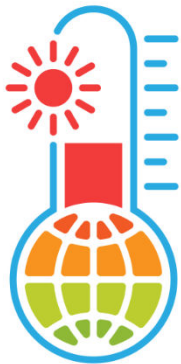
Your support is essential — this is the chance to have your say.



Climate change: Will Jarvis

Right now, not enough politicians or media channels are talking about our climate. They see it as a problem for another day. Well, they are wrong.

If the UK and other countries don't get a move on with the world's climate, then the problems that we have right now will just get worse. An example of this is migration; you would see high numbers of people leaving their homes because of forest fires, dried rivers which will lead to less food, and more extreme storms. I support *Just Stop Oil* because they seem to be the only people who are brave enough to bring attention to this. If you think this is disruptive and annoying, think how annoying it will be when sea levels are so high that most of London is under water.



This is where Labour could seize the advantage because climate issues will attract more young people to vote for us. It is the right thing to do and would highlight just how the Conservative's don't care — they just want their mates to get richer. We need to stick to the policy of £28 billion for green investments.

The UK should be influencing other countries to cut carbon emissions and helping poorer counties to be green.

Right now, I think there should be a climate cabinet (like Churchill's war cabinet) which is cross-party and can take on board ideas for green projects and ensure they are planned and implemented. When we are in government, I would like to see focus on making public transport better, connecting our rail network together so it's not just London-centric, with focus on upgrading existing instead of HS2. The money from HS2 could go be used much better on improving local and regional connections. This country has so much potential to be great and green. A green revolution is what we need.

Forthcoming events

3 September Evesham Civil War walk led by Helen Russell (details tbc)

9 September Fladbury Bellboat Regatta (team of eight needed)

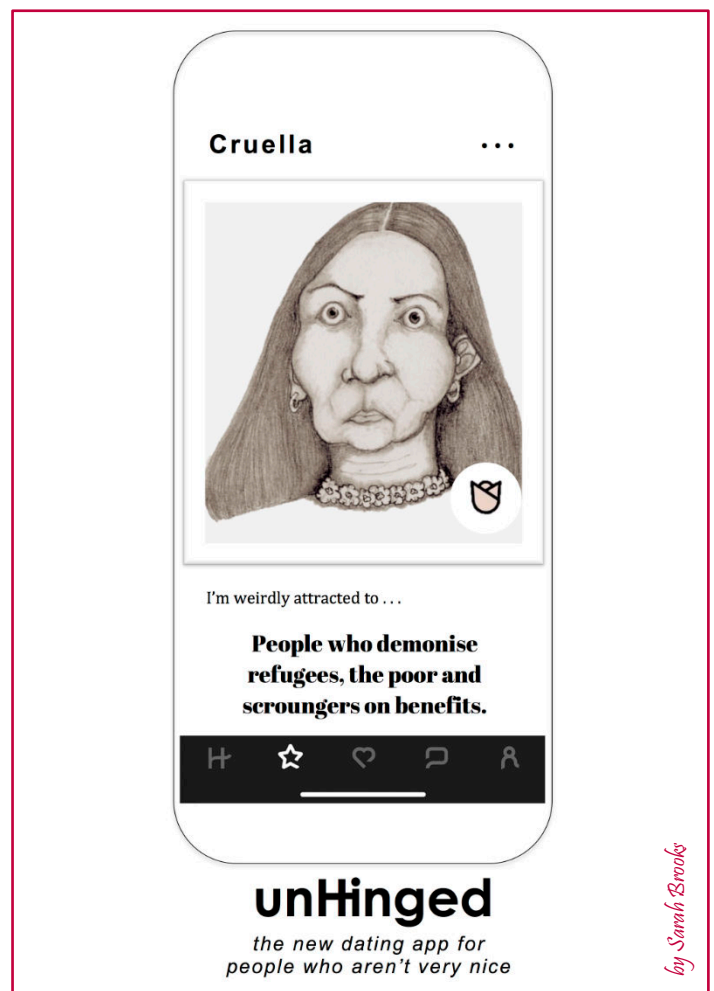
13 September Evesham Branch AGM

7 October Labour Party National Annual Women's Conference

8-11 October Labour Party Annual Conference

18 October Branch Meeting Feedback from Conference (*note change of usual meeting pattern to account for Conference*).

8 November Branch Meeting with guest Elise Roberts (Prospective West Mercia Police Commissioner Candidate for the Labour Party)



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