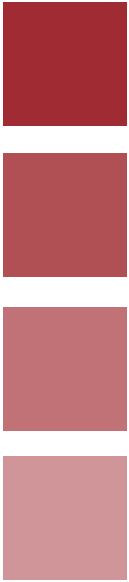


annual report
2008/2009

YOUNG **FABIANS**



FABIAN SOCIETY

YOUNG FABIANS

The Young Fabians

The Young Fabians are the under-31's section of the Fabian Society, Britain's foremost centre-left think tank. Set up in 1960, we remain the only think tank run by and for young people. Our Membership numbers over 1,400 and includes young professional, students, parliamentary researchers, political activists and academics. The Young Fabians promote policy debate through seminars, conferences, pamphlets, and online through our website and blog. To find out more about the Young Fabians, visit www.youngfabians.org.uk.

The Fabian Society

The Fabian Society is Britain's leading left of centre think tank and political society, committed to creating the political ideas and policy debates which can shape the future of progressive politics. Fabian publications, events and ideas reach and influence a wider audience than those of any comparable think tank. The Society is unique among think tanks in being a thriving, democratically constituted membership organisation, affiliated to the Labour Party but organisationally and editorially independent. For more information, visit www.fabian-society.org.uk.

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Executive Committee 2008/9


Chair	Kate Groucutt
Vice Chair	Emma Carr
Vice Chair	David Chaplin
Secretary	Rebecca Rennison
Treasurer	Richard Messingham
Trade Union & Elections Officer	Dan Whittle
International Officer	Adrian Prandle
Parliamentary Officer	Tom Stoate
Anticipations Editor	Alex Baker
Web Editor	Sam Strudwick
Policy & Publications Officer	Claire Leigh
Training and Development Officer	James Green
Equalities Officer	Preth Rao*
Social Secretary	Kunal Khatri*
Officer Without Portfolio	Sara Ibrahim*
Schools Project Officer	Steve Race*
Universities and Regions Officer	Susan Nash*

*co-opted





From the Chair



It has been another successful year for the Young Fabians and I would like to thank the entire Executive Committee for their hard work, creativity and commitment. In what has been, at times, a difficult political climate, we have held dozens of excellent events, with a diverse range of speakers and topics, and produced a number of publications, which have received positive feedback from members. This annual report gives you a flavour of our activities and you can find out more by visiting our website www.youngfabians.org.uk. I hope that we have demonstrated that the Young Fabians can be a dynamic, relevant and constructive force within the Labour movement, and that we have the ideas to rejuvenate the progressive left in the years ahead.

This year we have focused on increasing the number of ways that our members can get involved, with a new blog function on the website and our Policy Forums which were open to ideas submitted by email or via Facebook. We have also made progress in the difficult task of managing our data and communications with members, which I know has been a tough job for those involved, but is essential as we seek to professionalise the way that we interact with members.

Events have focused on a range of domestic and international issues with top speakers including several Cabinet Ministers, and we have managed to react quickly to events with a discussion on the Gaza conflict in February and an event on young people and the recession in June. The latter topic was also the subject of our summer school, which took place in Leeds in May, which formed part of our continuing efforts to engage members around the country and in universities. In addition, initiatives such as the Schools Project and the Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs) network ensure that we also have a practical focus, and give members other opportunities to get involved in our activities.

We have produced a number of publications, including three further editions of our magazine *Anticipations*, and our Policy Newsletter. We also published three publications following the Young Fabian/Labour Staff Network trip last October to Ohio to campaign for Barack Obama, looking at the lessons for the UK for Labour Party campaigns and for trade

unions. Two further pamphlets were published this Autumn: one containing recommendations which came out of our Policy Forum process, and one featuring contributions from 12 PPCs.

We have also made efforts to increase the diversity of the Executive, and the members who attend our events and get involved in our activities. By creating the new role of Equalities Officer we have demonstrated our commitment to ensuring that our events are accessible, and are giving greater thought to equality considerations in all our activities.

As usual, we have managed to hold several social events alongside the more serious ones, including our annual boat party, new members reception, several pub quizzes and a trip to the British Museum. We also hosted a successful reception at Labour Party Conference, supported by UNISON, and will be holding our annual dinner on the eve of the AGM.

I would like to thank our sponsors – UNISON, GMB, Canary Wharf Group, Vote for a Change, CWU and Clifford Chance LLP – as well as the Fabian Society Executive Committee, Sunder and the rest of the staff for their support and cooperation throughout the year.

It has been a honour to be Chair of the Young Fabians, and I wish next year's Executive – who will have the pleasure of celebrating our 50th anniversary - the best of luck.

Kate Groucutt
Chair, 2008/09





Policy Forums

In March 2009 the Young Fabians launched four new Policy Forums to discuss ideas and policy suggestions that our members believed should be priorities for the next Labour Government. The task for Young Fabian members was to discuss radical new proposals for the next decade, aimed at influencing both Labour's next manifesto and the long-term future of the left.

After more than 12 years in power, people rightly expect Labour to have the answers to their concerns and to be relevant in turbulent economic times. Our policy forums provided a unique perspective from our members across the UK with the aim to offer constructive suggestions to help Labour meet those expectations in the run up to the next general election.

The policy forums held meetings and seminars with MPs, Ministers and others including the Transport Secretary Lord Adonis, the Lords Chief Whip Lord Bassam, Jessica Asato the acting Director of Progress, Lord Soley, former Chair of the PLP, Dr Tony Klug from the Oxford Research Group,

The four policy forums were:

- International & Security chaired by Brian Duggan
- Public Realm chaired by Conor McGinn
- Democracy & Communities chaired by Councillor Matt Cooke
- Economy & Prosperity chaired by Nirmalee Wanduragala

Each of the forums has now concluded and the reports from those meetings have gone into our pamphlet *Fast Forward: The Next Generation of Progressive Politics*.

The pamphlet was edited by Young Fabian executive members David Chaplin and Claire Leigh. It featured a chapter from each of the policy forum chairs and set out the best and brightest ideas from the policy forum meetings and challenges the Government to be bold with power and start an honest and open debate with voters about policy. The pamphlet's authors call on the Government to use the remaining months before the General Election to reclaim the centre-ground of progressive politics and engage the next generation of Labour activists and thinkers.



International

Our international work in 2008/09 built strategically upon the success of the Young Fabian and Labour Staff Network delegation to the Obama campaign last October, seeking to capitalise on the interest in President Obama and the need to rescue the Labour Party's political predicament.

Within a month of returning to the UK, we held a workshop at the TUC for British-based participants in the Obama campaign, and the other side of Christmas, hosted a roundtable with Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP, Labour's general election coordinator. These events and the written contributions of Young Fabian members formed the basis for a series of e-pamphlets, launched on the Young Fabian website as President Obama reached his 100th day in office. The 'lessons learnt' in Ohio have allowed us to influence the Labour Party at senior levels including playing a key role in the creation of new campaigning initiatives. Young Fabian members of the delegation have also addressed a range of CLPs.

Policy-wise, as well as the International and Security Policy Forum, Young Fabians took part in events at both the Chinese and Taiwanese Embassies, looking at China's relations with the West and cross-strait relations respectively.

Relationships have been built, and partnerships explored, with other London Embassies, ECOSY, Café Babel, Action for Southern Africa, others who participated in the Obama campaign, and the Labour Party's International Manager. A new International page was created for the Young Fabian website: <http://www.youngfabians.org.uk/content/view/229/45/>.

With a trip to the European Parliament being planned and the opportunity to return to Sweden for their general election in 2010, we are confidently positioning the Young Fabians as the youth organisation on the left with the foremost international programme of work, offering opportunities to participate at home and abroad.



Online activity

Whilst last year was all about getting the fundamentals right, with a new website and back-end technology, this year was about building our presence online and engaging with a wider audience. We have seen a good increase in visitors to our main website which has featured all our events this year along with all our publications from Policy News and Anticipations all the way through to our new pamphlet Fast Forward.

We have also seen strong growth in the number of contributions and visitors to our blog. Launched at the end of last year it has proved a valuable outlet for our ideas. We have also extended our podcasting programme with a series around the conference season syndicated on iTunes.

One of our key challenges this year was email. Email is perhaps our most imported means of communication with our supporters and this will only increase as we publish more of our ideas online. That is why we have put a lot of focus on improving our email strategy throughout the year. A victim of our own success, our strong list growth this year meant we outgrew our existing technology. However as the year closes we have a new solution in place and a sustainable strategy for the future.

We have also joined most other think tanks and political organisations in using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to communicate with our members and reach a wider audience.



Candidates Network

The Young Fabians Candidates Network was set up at the beginning of this year and is now supported by young Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidates from across the country. From Bristol to Berwick, from Worthing to Wiltshire, the network has provided a valuable forum for Labour PPCs to develop their campaigns and share their ideas about the future of progressive politics.

The network has hosted a number of informal meetings, including a get together for young Labour PPCs at Labour Party Conference. It has also provided an important platform for young PPCs' to foster debate and discussion and build strong links between them and Young Fabian members. Over the course of the year the network has published contributions from PPCs on a wide range of current issues including the Budget, Margaret Thatcher's legacy and constitutional reform.

To mark the end of conference season and the beginning of the final Parliamentary term before the General Election, the candidates network also coordinated the first ever Young Fabians' PPC week. Throughout the week young PPCs shared their ideas for the future. The Young Fabians held an important debate with prominent Labour PPCs, published articles from young PPCs across the Labour blogosphere, including on Progress, Open Left and Labourlist, and hosted guest contributions from young PPCs each day on the Young Fabians blog. To view these posts visit www.youngfabians.org.uk/blog. The week also saw the launch of a major pamphlet from the candidates network.

After twelve years of Labour government, at a critical moment for progressive politics, we invited twelve of Labour's young Prospective Parliamentary Candidates to share their vision for the future. Contributors included Rachel Reeves in Leeds West, Emma Reynolds in Wolverhampton North East, Chris Ostrowski, who fought the Norwich North by-election, and many more.

View your copy of 'The New Progressives: Voices of Labour's Future' at <http://www.youngfabians.org.uk/content/view/236/5/>



Schools Project

This year the Schools Project has expanded its range of activities in order to meet our objectives of engaging young people with politics. At the turn of the year we carried out a consultation of school students which received hundred of responses, and resulted in the best 20 students visiting the House of Commons for an insight day.

Over the summer we launched a partnership with IntoUniversity, an organisation who work on behalf of various London Universities to deliver Widening Participation activities to school students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

In October, 15 students came to Parliament to experience a day of activities including a Parliamentary Tour, a Q&A session with Ben Bradshaw MP, Secretary of State for Culture Media & Sport, and to take part in a Young Fabians session whereby they imagined themselves as Secretaries of State to create their own policies.

The next Young Fabians Schools Project newsletter will go out to schools in December and will have questions asked by participating students answered by Ed Miliband MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, on the issue of the Copenhagen Summit and climate change.



Trade Unions



Our good relationships with a number of trade unions have continued this year. We have received support from three unions – GMB, which supported the new members’ reception, CWU, which supported the Fast Forward pamphlet, and UNISON, which both supported the Fast Forward pamphlet and hosted the reception at Labour Party Conference at which the pamphlet was launched. We have also held several joint events with Unions 21.



Our work with unions is even more important in the context of the recession, where younger workers are losing their jobs. Through working with trade unions, we can show our members the practical work that unions are doing to support workers and develop policy, and discuss our shared history as founding parts of the Labour movement.





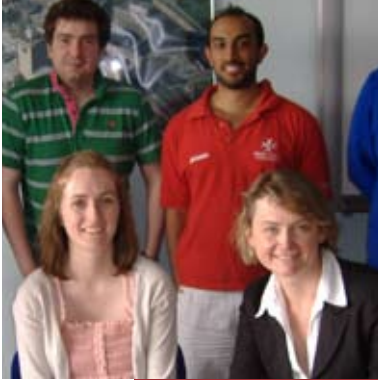
Equalities

This year we co-opted our first Equalities Officer. Building on previous positions such as Women's Officer the idea was to co-ordinate a comprehensive, progressive and inclusive idea of equality and to specifically concentrate on the internal equality practice of the Young Fabians as well as policy positioning.


During this year an internal equalities policy has been produced to guide the Executive, looking at accessibility, publicity, membership and representation. In addition an equalities statement has been produced which is added as a strapline to Young Fabian events, and we have been using a monitoring and feedback form for events.

We have also held several events which have aimed to give a voice to organisations and people that the Young Fabians may not usually hear from, such as a local authority officer who leads on reclaim the night marches in London and is a radical campaigner on violence against women issues. Both the Feminism and Inclusive Democracy Events have had a largely female representation on the panel with high visible ethnic diversity. The event on inclusive democracy was organised in conjunction with the Fabian Women's Network.

In addition, to reach out further to the membership and particularly to encourage people from groups who are currently under-represented on the Young Fabian Executive and membership a special Elections and Co-Options event was organised which enabled potential candidates to speak to the current executive about the process for elections and co-options as well as the role of being an executive member.



Regions and Universities



The role of the regions and universities officer on the Executive is to build up the Young Fabians' presence outside of London, and to support members to build our presence within colleges and universities. In recent years our approach to activities around the country has been to support individuals to organise events or set up groups, rather than trying to do it ourselves. Our limited resources make it difficult for us to organise more than one or two events outside London each year.

This year we began by mapping out where Young Fabian groups were currently situated, and supporting the emergence of some new groups. Advice and support has been given to groups and members who are considering setting up groups in Cambridge, Staffordshire University, East of England, LSE, Warwick, Oxford, Birmingham and York.

We also held a major event outside London in the form of this year's Summer School, which was held in Leeds. An event was also held in Edinburgh at the Edinburgh Festival, in conjunction with the Scottish Young Fabians.



Finances

The Young Fabians is run on a very small budget, and all Executive Committee time is given on a voluntary basis. This year has been a difficult year for our finances as there has been a significant drop off in major sponsorship due to the recession and the timing in the electoral cycle. We receive a core grant from the Fabian Society of £6,000 per year, and additional funding is raised from sponsorship and fundraising activities. This year around £2,000 has been raised, primarily for the Fast Forward pamphlet, but also for events such as the new members' reception.

The majority of our expenditure is for the printing and postage of Anticipations, which costs at least as much as our core grant over the year. We also have some other running costs, such as the hosting of our website, and our email newsletter provider. Events and trips must therefore be self-funding, and additional sponsors are required for other publications and activities.

Membership

2008 membership	2009 membership	Change
1284	1423	+139



Publications



Anticipations



Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, February 2009
After Kyoto, June 2009
Young people and the recession, September 2009
Edited by Alex Baker



Pamphlet



Fast Forward: the next generation of progressive politics
Edited by David Chaplin and Claire Leigh
September 2009

Online publications

To mark Barack Obama's 100th day in office, the Young Fabians and the Labour Staff Network published three papers based setting out the most important lessons for UK activists, from America. They chronicle the experience of Young Fabian members and others who took part in Obama's campaign and offer ideas for Labour and union campaigns in the UK.

From Ohio to Oxford East presents the collective thoughts of the delegation and subsequent workshops and roundtables to offer practical suggestions for your campaigns.

Lessons from the US union campaign for Obama brings together the methods of union campaigning in the US and presents a case for the Labour Party and trade unions to reassess the ways they work together in UK elections.

From Ohio to Oxford East: Essay Collection is a collection of individual articles written by grassroots participants from the UK.



Pamphlet: The New Progressives: Voices of Labour's Future
Edited by James Green
October 2009

Policy News

Our regular digest of policy news from think tanks, the third sector and Whitehall. Edited by Claire Leigh.

Issue 7 – December 2008/January 2009

Issue 8 – February/March 2009

Issue 9 – April/May 2009

Issue 10 – June/July 2009





Events listing



November | 2008

21st | Annual Dinner with guest speaker Bill Barnard, Chair of Democrats abroad
29th | AGM



December | 2008

3rd | Joint event with ACTSA (Action for Southern Africa) on 'World AIDS Day 2008: Tackling the pandemic in Southern Africa'. Speakers: Siphwe Hlophe, founding member and Director of Swaziland Positive Living, Kerry McCarthy MP, PPS to Douglas Alexander
8th | Brainstorming session to gather the lessons learnt from our trip to Ohio to campaign for Barack Obama – we also invited people who had campaigned in other states to compare experiences.



January | 2009

20th | Inauguration day party in Westminster
26th | Roundtable with Douglas Alexander MP to discuss lessons from Obama campaign for the Labour Party.

February | 2009

10th | Event on the legacy of the Gaza conflict. Speakers: Louise Ellman MP, Richard Burden MP, Richard Stanforth from Oxfam.
23rd | Schools Project – trip to Parliament for children who responded to our schools consultation. They were asked the question "If you were Prime Minister what would be the first thing you would do and why would you do it?" and a selection of the best responses were invited to come to Parliament. During the day they met with Dawn Butler MP and Ed Miliband MP.
24th | Trip to the British Library exhibition to see the Taking Liberties exhibition, with a talk by the curators. Exhibits include the first Fabian pamphlet!

March | 2009

12th | Lecture by James Purnell MP on 'Creating an egalitarian welfare state through raised expectations and fair reciprocity'.

12th | We also partnered with the Fabian Society in the Webb Memorial Conference, the Gary Titley MEP lecture and the How Liberal is Labour event with Shirley Williams.

31st | Ten years on: Labour's commitment to end child poverty in a generation. Speakers: Kerry McCarthy MP; Paul Dornan, Head of Policy, Child Poverty Action Group.

April | 2009

16th | Pub Quiz

29th | Can there be a British Barack Obama? Speakers: Shahid Malik MP, Dr Rupa Huq and Peter Kellner (YouGov)

30th | Social event marking 100 days of Barack Obama's presidency and launch of our three publications – see below

May | 2009

12th | Jack Straw lecture on Why Labour can still win a fourth term held at Clifford Chance LLP in Canary Wharf. Successful event with around 200 attendees.

14th | Responding to the recession - G20 and the budget. Speakers: Stephen Timms MP, Rachel Reeves, Will Hutton.

June | 2009

1st | David Miliband lecture on 'Don't let the Tories use the expenses crisis to isolate Britain from Europe', held jointly with Fabian Society

13th | Session at Compass Conference on 'After the euro election - What now for social Europe' with Unions 21 and FES. Speakers included: Claude Moraes MEP

20-21st | Annual Summer School was held in Leeds focusing on 'Young people in the new economy'. Speakers: Yvette Cooper MP, John Battle MP, Rachel Reeves, PPC for Leeds West

23rd | Seminar with Alan Milburn on his review of social mobility and fair access to the professions

July | 2009

1st | New Members Reception in Westminster, sponsored by GMB. Speaker: Denis Macshane MP

3rd | Thames boat party



August | 2009

29th | Young Fabians and the Scotland Young Fabians: 'Duck Houses or Democracy? Reform of the Westminster Parliament'. Roundtable with Mark Lazarowicz MP, Sarah Boyack MSP and Amy Rodger, Scotland Director of the Electoral Reform Society.

September | 2009

14th | 'Revisioning democracy', a discussion at SOAS in association with Fabian Women's Network and the Downing Street Project.

22nd | Denis Macshane MP, In Conversation with... Giorgi Baramidze, Georgian Vice-President and Minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration. Joint event with Labour Staff Network.

27th | Private meeting between YF Executive and David Miliband.

27th | Joint event with Fabian Society at Labour Party Conference: 'Next Labour: what next for progressives?'

28th | Reception at Labour Party Conference to launch Fast Forward pamphlet. Sponsored by Unison. Speaker: Ben Bradshaw MP.

October | 2009

15th | PPCs event – Why Labour can win. Chaired by Steve Richards of The Independent, with Stella Creasy, Stephen Twigg, Rachel Reeves and Chris Ostrowski

21st | Event at the Taipei Representative Office: 'Tendencies toward peace across the Taiwan Strait'

November | 2009

2nd | Briefing with Professor Alon Ben-Meir: An Arab Peace Initiative.

13th | Annual Dinner at Café Nawaz.

14th | 2009 AGM



