

## 10-2-1 with Tim Crockford

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Every month, City Branch asks leading Birmingham Conservatives 10 frank questions.

In January 2009, we spoke to Tim Crockford (the outgoing Chairman of the City Branch and the National Deputy Chairman of the Tory Reform Group )

1. Mr Crockford, what do you do in the real world?

I am a trainee solicitor at Wragge & Co LLP and from March 2009 I will be seconded to work as a lawyer at Mercedes-Benz.

2. When did you first get involved with the Conservative Party?

I joined the Faversham and Mid Kent Conservative Party back in 1998 just before I started my A-levels.

3. Why are you a Conservative?

I believe in giving people opportunities. I was lucky enough to go to a local grammar school in Kent. I was taught that if you worked hard and applied yourself you could achieve anything and be socially mobile. That idea is at the core of conservatism. There is a horrible phrase "Give people a hand up, not a hand out" - I always found it hard to argue with though. Human endeavour is limitless when people are properly motivated and opportunities exist.

4. What is the best thing about Birmingham?

City Branch of course!

5. What is your favourite restaurant in the City centre?

Well probably San Carlo but honestly I seem to have spent most time at Cafe Rouge in the Mailbox. I love the view down the canal first the thing in the morning over breakfast with my girlfriend on a Sunday!

6. What would you describe as your worst vice?

My girlfriend tells me that it is that I have papers everywhere - I like to think it is organised chaos!

7. If you could have any job in the world what would it be?

Non-political - it must be a SCUBA diving instructor on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia..

8. What is your greatest political success to date?

I have no idea I have been very lucky to have been involved in fantastic Party successes since I became involved in our Party in Kent, London and Birmingham. I have had the opportunity to work with some fantastic people and have learnt that political successes are always the results of a great team. However my funniest political moment was nearly being elected a Councillor in Kent accidentally when I tried to be too clever for my own good. I was Campaign Manager in Shepway in Kent and had orchestrated our first local Council victory back in 2002. The next year the Labour Party were ready for us and so I thought we would put me up as a candidate in the most hopeless seat in the area and then put out the most provocative leaflet possible highlighting Labour failures. The Labour Councillors were furious with the leaflet - the Labour Party moved all their efforts out of the seat we were targeting and attacked me! It was a great success and we won the seat we wanted. Unfortunately I was told half way through election night that I was neck on neck with the Labour Party and was likely to win the seat. I was at the time a student living most of the year at University and so was terrified! In the end I lost by about a dozen votes and did not ask for a recount!!

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9. Who is your political hero?

Benjamin Disraeli - the architect of Modern Conservatism and the first to call for One Nation (what today might be called social justice and compassionate conservatism). One of the greatest thinkers our Party has ever known.

10. How would you describe yourself?

A hopeless optimist.