



# Clegg comes to town

**LIBERAL Democrat leader Nick Clegg visited Northampton to speak to the people of the town on matters close to their hearts.**

Members of the public were invited to meet to Mr Clegg and ask him questions on local issues.

The meeting was hosted last Thursday at the News Cafe on Fish Street.

Daniel Jwanczuk was one of the people asking Nick questions.

He said: "I told Nick Clegg that during the last cold snap we had to pay £30 on gas and £20 a week on electric.

"My wife and I are both registered disabled. She's confined to a wheelchair."

Daniel put forward the idea that a fuel supplement should be given to people that are registered disabled, a bit like the fuel supplement old age pensioners receive.

He added: "He (Nick Clegg) seemed very interested."

In an exclusive interview with Mr Clegg, the H&P spoke to him about the purpose of his visit.

He said: "The main thing for me today is to listen to anyone that wants to talk to me.

"It is really for me to get out of the West Minister bubble and to listen to what people's real problems are."

Nick spoke on the recession and how he thinks it will affect the town.

**BY LAURA CORCORAN**

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He added: "Northampton has been hit very hard. "You have some big employees that have cut back. There are a lot of ordinary people that find it difficult to pay bills.

"I am very worried that people won't have jobs to go to."

Mr Clegg expressed his concern for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 looking for work.

He felt redundancy and the threat of it is also an issue, saying: "It makes people feel very insecure."

Mr Clegg added: "I think it will get worse before it gets better.

"But we must not give up hope.

"We will get out of this."

Speaking after the event Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Northampton North, Cllr Andrew Simpson, said: "Nick said he wanted to get out of the 'Westminster bubble' and meet people on the ground who are affected by the recession or who wanted to put issues directly to him as a national party leader.

"It was a real boost to us that he chose to do that in Northampton and highlights the down to earth, grassroots approach that has made the Lib Dems so successful here."



**THE owners of News Cafe agreed to host the meeting with Nick Clegg and members of the public as it is a business that set up on the back of redundancy.**

Owners of the cafe Julian Cotterell and Erica Cotterell took the risk in opening their new business in November 2008, even though a recession was in the pipeline.

Mr Cotterell said: "For 20 years I have been in bingo clubs. Then I had a change of career."

Erica was made redundant from her job and they both decided to give opening the new café a go.

Mrs Cotterell is originally from South Africa and this was where

the idea of a news cafe was born as there is a chain of News Cafes there.

Julian explains: "It is an up market café in South Africa.

"The café is a place where people can meet and catch up on news."

Julian arranged the meeting with Cllr Simpson for people to be able to discuss the economic situation and how it affects them.

Speaking about the owners of the News Cafe, Mr Clegg said: "They are not giving up. But it's tough. You need customers."

**MEETING: The News Cafe owners with Mr Clegg and Cllr Simpson**

## Leader pops in to Uni

**DURING** his visit Mr Clegg popped into the University of Northampton to check out their Centre for Sustainable Wastes Management.

He was joined by Cllr Simpson in listening to Dr Margaret Bates, the centre manager, on the University's achievements in the field of wastes management research, education and business support.

Mr Clegg said the university's work was 'fantastic' and wanted to know what was required from Government to promote their work in the future.

Dr Bates felt key requirements were a level playing field for English universities but added: "Another vital issue is the withdrawal of Government funding from organisations such as Envirowise, which previously helped support free workshops, networking events and audits helping an average business save between one and five per cent of turnover or up to £1,000 per employee through resource efficiency savings."

This point was echoed by Malcolm Bolt, a businessman representing Timsons, a printing press manufacturer and supplier. He said: "Working with the University and Envirowise we were able to cut our water bill by 60per cent. I put my neck on the line by telling my company I could save the equivalent of my wages each year."

He added: "The Government lay down all these ideas on saving waste and energy but now the people who are trying really hard to spread the word are having their funding withdrawn."

Mr Clegg took questions from more than 60 students and staff on issues ranging from the environment through to the global economic crisis.

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