

# PEOPLE

Spring 2009 Edition

Delivered FREE

## The Liberal Democrats are the challengers to Labour!

**Lib Dems 19**

The Conservatives have no Borough Councillors anywhere in Northampton North!

**Lab 2 Con 0**



**Also in this edition:**

- Gordon Brown's bus ticket con
- New train for Abington Park



# EDUCA-SHAM!

Once again the Conservatives are failing Northampton. Our county's schools are among the worst in the country.



## Parents and Pupils say 'No' to Academy plans

Parents, pupils and teachers at Unity College and Weston Favell Upper School are saying 'No' to Academy status for their schools. Their position has been backed by local Liberal Democrats.

"Northampton Schools have been through years of disruption under Labour" said Andrew Simpson.

"From the abolition of Middle Schools to the sale of playing fields, we've had our fill of fake Labour change.

"It's time our schools were given a period of stability so they can plan for the future without any more government tinkering."

"Liberal Democrats would stop the endless reorganisations and allow Heads to exercise their professional judgment in the day-to-day running of schools.

"The era of central targets and quick fixes from Whitehall must end. We must invest extra cash to support children who fall behind.

"Liberal Democrats would introduce a Pupil Premium to ensure extra money tracks the progress of children, not the failure of schools."

## Northampton schools "among worst in the country"

**N**orthampton's young people are being failed by a cocktail of Conservative cuts in County Hall and Labour government meddling according to Northampton's Liberal Democrats.

New statistics revealed last month, show that over half of Northampton's secondary schools are among the worst performing schools in the country. The Government is having to step in to deal

with the failure of the Conservative controlled County Council.

Unity, Kingsthorpe, Weston Favell and Abbeyfields (formerly called Mereway) Colleges all fall within the government's 'National Challenge' scheme - with fewer than one in three students achieving 5 GCSE passes at grade C or above.

Northampton Academy - Labour's flagship Academy in Northampton also

fell into the 'National Challenge' category - just 3 years after opening.

"These shocking statistics confirm what parents and teachers in Northampton have been saying for years. School standards in Northampton are falling behind the rest of the country," said Andrew Simpson, Lib Dem Parliamentary spokesman for Northampton North constituency.

"After four years of Conservative County Council cuts and twelve years of Labour failure nationally, it's time to make a positive change.

"Liberal Democrats are the only party to have consistently argued for more resources to raise school standards.

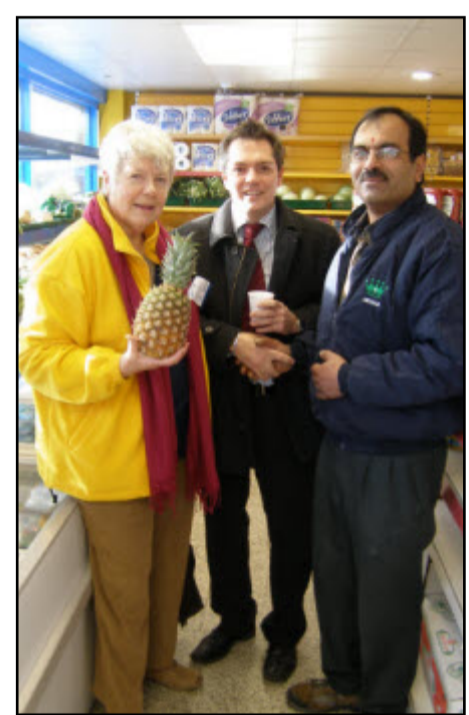
"Labour can't and the Tories won't - but the Liberal Democrats will take the tough choices needed to right the wrongs in our failing schools."

# Broadmead Avenue shop opens

A new shop in Broadmead Avenue has been welcomed by local Lib Dem Councillor Jean Hawkins.

"This new shop is great news for the local community" said Jean.

"Not only is it bringing back into use a vacant shop but providing a good range of healthy food options for local people. I hope everybody will support it".



● Cllrs Jean Hawkins and Andrew Simpson are urging residents to support the new shop on Broadmead Avenue.

# Tories spend £250,000 on mobile phones

Figures reported to the Chronicle & Echo show that the Conservative run County Council spent almost £250,000 a year on mobile phone bills.

"This smacks of financial mismanagement" said Lib Dem County council Group leader Cllr Brian Hoare.

"In these difficult financial times the Council must review its arrangements for mobile phones."



Local Police officers show Cllr Jane Hollis the new speed camera in action.

# Tackling Speeding Drivers

Northampton motorists are being reminded to watch their speed as two safer community teams have been presented with speed monitoring guns by a local County councillor.

St David's ward representative Jane Hollis used part of her "Empowering Councillors Fund" to purchase the equipment.

"Tackling speeding in Harborough Road, Boughton Green Road, Welford Road,

Eastern Avenue South, Bective Road and Nursery Lane remains a top priority of the safer community team," explained Cllr Hollis.

"So far over 50 warning letters have been issued to motorists pointing out they will receive a £60 fine and 3 points on their licence if they are caught speeding.

"The Police are also working with local children who go out with the speed camera and a police officer to explain to motorists how speeding affects them."



● Cllr Trini Crake and Heart FM's Jagger and Woody show off the winning design

# New Train for Abington Park

A new train made out of recycled steel is planned for Abington Park after previous ones were destroyed twice by vandals. The new train will be provided by Speedy Skip Waste Management free

of charge and at no cost to the Council. The design of the train was decided by a competition run by Heart 96.6 radio and the winner was picked by a panel including Jagger and Woody and Cllr Trini Crake.

# New Super Wardens Planned

Northampton Borough Council has reviewed the current Neighbourhood Warden scheme.

Changes are being made to increase the enforcement powers available to them to deal with people dropping litter, fly-tipping, dog fouling and other anti-social behaviour.

The new set up means that 3 new Environmental Enforcement Offices will be employed to work round the town.

"We have looked at how the current scheme works and listened to what people want and come forward with changes" said Cllr Trini Crake, Lib Dem Environment spokesperson.

"In effect we are creating 'super wardens' with more powers and getting them to concentrate on the key 'hotspots' around the town. The wardens will work in partnership with the Police Safer Community Teams in each area".



30 new trees have been planted across the Kingsley area thanks to Lib Dem councillor Richard Church.

# Tree planting

Over 30 new roadside trees have been planted in Kingsley.

Councillor Richard Church has allocated money from a budget to be used by County Councillors in the areas they represent. Sites include Kettering Road, The Drive, The Crescent, Milton Street North, Kingsley Road and Kenmuir Avenue.

Trees have also been planted in Headlands, Boughton Green and Kingsthorpe thanks to Councillors David Garlick, John Yates and Sally Beardsworth.

# Kingsthorpe Meadows Update



Cllrs Richard Church and Sally Beardsworth have welcomed the news that part of Kingsthorpe Meadows will be sold to the NN2 Residents Association.

After a campaign by local residents, Labour Councillor Iffy Choudhary has now agreed to sell part of the land at Kingsthorpe Meadows to the NN2 residents association.

"What a shame he didn't talk to the residents group before bidding against them at auction," said Cllr Sally Beardsworth.

# Green light for Park Marina

Lib Dem run Northampton Borough Council has given the go-ahead for a brand-new marina at Becket's Park to provide a new point of interest for narrow-boaters across the region.

Cllr Richard Church, welcomed the move. "A marina at Becket's Park would provide a much-needed focal point for activities on the river and create a new attraction on our neglected riverside.

"Boaters from across the region pass through Northampton and we want them to be able to stop here. A new marina near the town centre will attract new visitors to the town.

"I am pleased the Liberal Democrats are securing external funding for the project so that council costs are kept to a minimum."



The Lib Dem Council has attracted external funding to build a new marina at Becket's Park.

# SAVING THE MARKET

## Lib Dems pledge to tackle long term decline in Northampton's Market

## Helping the town centre beat the recession

Lib Dem run Northampton Borough Council is putting the town centre first as the recession hits local businesses.

Despite an unprecedented shortfall in the council's finances due to chronic government underfunding and the global credit freeze, local Lib Dems are:

- Capping parking charges for a third year in a row, despite a 25% hike in on-street fees from Conservatives in County Hall.
- Investing new money in the Market Square, with demountable stalls, better catering and more specialist markets, entertainment and events.
- Pushing ahead with long term plans for the redevelopment of the Grosvenor Centre and Bus Station to attract shoppers back to the town.
- Saying 'no' to out-of-town shopping that would harm the town centre
- Improving Becket's Park and supporting the development of a Marina to make better use of our riverside.

Liberal Democrat run Northampton Borough Council is tackling the long term decline in our Market Square.

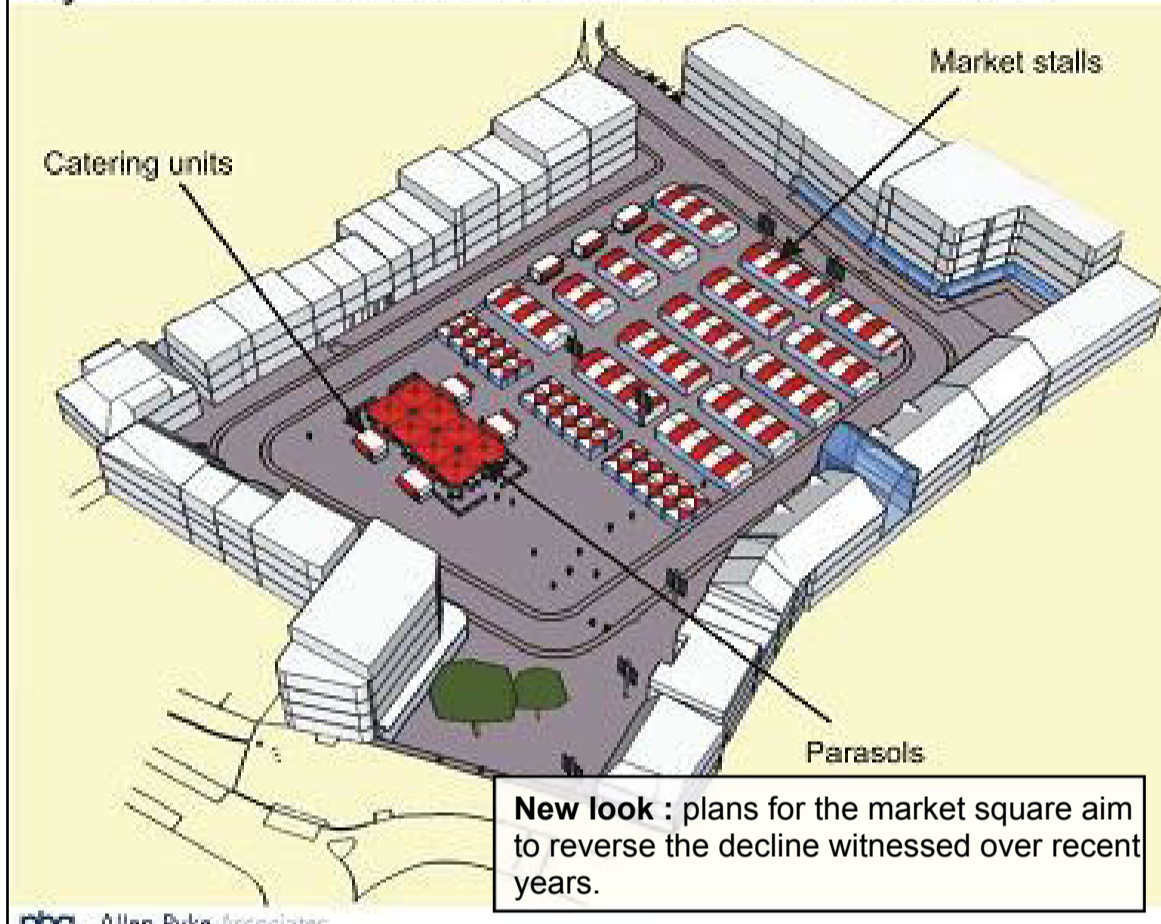
Improvements will provide new demountable market stalls, which will be cleared when not in use by traders, as well as better catering and additional space for events, including specialist markets, activities for children and entertainment.

Despite reports to the contrary the proposals actually allow for the market to expand should demand be there.

Cllr Richard Church said "We said in the elections in 2007 that putting life back into our town centre and our market square was a priority.

"Our market square is one of the largest in England, we want it to be once again the heart of our town, a place to meet shop and relax."

Layout 1 - Events area with market and food kiosks



# TORIES SWITCHING

## Tories turn to the Lib Dems as Cameron fails to impress

More and more Conservatives in Northampton have said they will be backing the Lib Dems at the next election as David Cameron's party fails to impress.

"I watched both Vince Cable and Nick Clegg's conference speeches on YouTube and realised I had made a mistake in joining the Conservatives," said University of Northampton student Andy Broughton.

"The Lib Dems are offering a real positive alternative to Labour while the Conservatives seem to be offering much the same if not worse.

"It is also clear to me that in Northampton North constituency only Lib Dem Andrew Simpson can beat Labour at the next election."

Meanwhile just before Christmas a leading Conservative, the County Councillor for Weston Ward in Northampton, Cllr Maureen Hill joined the Liberal Democrats.



Cllr Andrew Simpson welcomes former Conservative student Andy Broughton to the Lib Dems. More and more former Conservative supporters are backing Andrew Simpson as the only candidate who can beat Labour at the next General Election.

# Northampton short changed again!

The recent cold snap has highlighted the poor state of the pavements and roads in many parts of our town.

Yet the Conservative controlled County Council has chosen to try and blame the Government for its own failings in providing adequate repairs and maintenance.

Figures obtained by Liberal Democrat County Councillors have highlighted the fact that the Conservatives are investing 7-8 times more in roads and pavements in rural areas rather than in Northampton.

Cllr Brian Hoare, Lib Dem opposition Group Leader said "This is an absolute disgrace.

The Conservatives are treating the people of Northampton as second class citizens when it comes to repairs to roads and pavements. Many elderly residents are now frightened to go out of their homes due to the poor pavements around where they live".

Liberal Democrat County Councillors proposed an alternative budget to the County Council which called for an extra £750,000 funding for pavement repairs. This was rejected by the Conservatives.



"Tory bosses are spending 7-8 times more money on repairing rural roads than on roads here in Northampton. No wonder many of our roads and pavements are crumbling," says Cllr Andrew Simpson.



"Gordon Brown's failure to properly fund the free bus service for pensioners is costing local taxpayers £1.5 million" - Andrew Simpson.

# Taken for a ride!

## Gordon Brown's bus ticket con is costing Northampton's taxpayers £1.5 million

Gordon Brown is shortchanging Northampton's council taxpayers by £1.5 million this year say Council leaders.

The Government are refusing to properly fund pensioners' free bus passes - leaving local residents to pick up the tab.

The national scheme, which costs the Borough Council over £3.5 million a year, will fetch less than £2 million in government support over the coming months. The

shortfall is the equivalent of 15% in Borough Council Tax for every household in Northampton.

"Liberal Democrats fully support free bus travel for pensioners" said Andrew Simpson, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary spokesperson for Northampton North.

"But government projects must be fully funded. Labour has left local people to pick up the tab and forced them to pay more in Council Tax."

These huge costs have put increased pressure on the Council's budget leading to some tough decisions according to Lib Dem Leader Cllr Tony Woods.

"In my heart I would love to continue with things such as the balloon festival. But with tough economic times the Council simply cannot afford it and we cannot justify charging every local council taxpayer £3 to subsidise it. We have to concentrate on providing good core services."

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# Help the Lib Dems win here

The Lib Dems work hard all year round for our area. If you would like to help our campaign, please complete and return this form.

Your name-

Your address-

Postcode-

Email-

I will vote Lib Dem at the next election

I would like to vote by post in future

I can display a poster at election time

I can deliver leaflets in my area

I can make a donation to the Lib Dems

£50  £20  £10  Other £\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to the Liberal Democrats. A donation of £10 or more entitles you to become a member of the Lib Dems. Please tick here if you do not wish to be enrolled



# Cutting crime is a top priority for Council

Since taking control of the Council the Liberal Democrats have hit the ground running in the fight against crime.

Northampton's Police have been granted new powers to tackle drinking in public places which can often lead to anti-social behaviour.

Northampton People readers have also given their thumbs up to new "restorative justice" measures which force petty

criminals to make amends to the community for the crimes they commit.

A new crime and anti-social behaviour unit has been opened in the town centre and work is going on to establish a permanent base for police teams in the Racecourse pavilion.

"Cracking down on crime is a key priority for the Liberal Democrats in Northampton," says Council Leader Tony Woods.

The Liberal Democrats would like to use the information above to contact you from time to time to keep you informed of campaigns we may think of interest to you. Please write to us if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.

Please return to: Northampton Liberal Democrats FREEPOST NH0482, Northampton NN1 3BR

You can also contact Andrew Simpson and the Lib Dem team at 78-90 Clarke Road, Abington, Northampton, NN1 4PW. Tel (01604) 633009 Email info@northamptonlibdems.org.uk