

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact John Hemming MP
07958398388

John.hemming@john.hemming.name

Emily Wilson-Gavin
Press Officer
07811440947

Emily.wilson-gavin@john.hemming.name

BIRMINGHAM'S FUTURE POLITICAL LEADERS QUESTION JOHN HEMMING MP

A group of Birmingham's potential future political leaders visited John Hemming MP and debated political issues such as the deficit, tuition fees, benefits reform and the economy in his Yardley Constituency office on Friday 18th February 2010.

The youths from the **UpRising Leadership Programme**, which is currently in its first year running in the City, embraced the opportunity to question Mr Hemming and observe how his constituency office on Yardley's Coventry Road operated.

Henriatta Brealey, a student from the Uprising Programme reported that Mr Hemming *'handled all of the UpRisers questions with ease and is very earnest about his reason for getting into politics; to change things for the better.'*

Of the running of his constituency office Henrietta further added that it was clear that through the *'open door policy and its friendly and casual atmosphere he (John) is clearly doing his best to encourage local residents to feel more connected to their political representative and diminish the generally held feeling of alienation from the political process.'*

John Hemming MP said; *"Young people are interested in politics, but often turned off party politics. It is important, however, to look behind what appears on the television and engage with party politics in a wider sense to understand it. One way of doing this is through schemes like UpRising. "*

UpRising was launched in 2008 in the East London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets and the programme is now expanding to Birmingham and other major cities across the UK.

Over the course of six months participants will receive training from senior journalists, politicians, business leaders, social entrepreneurs and representatives from community groups and charities. They will also run their own social action projects (previous participants have successfully lobbied for legislation change, started their own social enterprises and been elected to local government).

Project Leader Zehra Zaidi stated that the Programme participants '...certainly seemed to have taken a lot out of the visit' to Mr Hemming's Office.



NOTES TO EDITORS

- More information about the UpRising Programme can be found at www.uprising.org.uk/birmingham.
- Henrietta Brealey's full article can be found at <http://uprising.org.uk/birmingham/highlight/visits/yardley-bound>
- The programme was launched on Tuesday 19 October by Geoff Mulgan, Chief Executive of the Young Foundation, at an event with the Lunar Society.
- The **Birmingham UpRising programme** is funded by Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Leadership Foundation, Civil Service West Midlands, West Midlands Strategic Health Authority and Hodge Hill Worklessness Fund. The programme is being supported by a range of private, voluntary and public sector organisations including Birmingham Future the Birmingham's membership organisation for young professionals; Common Purpose; Lunar Society; Birmingham University.

- **The Young Foundation** is a not-for-profit institution bringing together insights, innovation and entrepreneurship to meet social needs. We have a track record of over 50 years' success creating organisations ventures such as the Open University, University of the Third Age, Futureversity, and the School for Social Entrepreneurs (www.youngfoundation.org).
-