

# Edinburgh MP bids to become SNP Deputy Leader



Edinburgh East MP Tommy Sheppard was elected as an SNP MP in 2015. When we met him he assured us that he has the experience for the job he now seeks as Deputy Leader of the party.

He explained: “I might not have been in the SNP for many years but I have been active in Scottish politics for nearly 40 years, so I’ve been around the block a few times and run a few campaigns in my time.

“I think I know how to do this job. I have been a member of the SNP longer than most members of the party. 80% of our membership have only been in the SNP for a couple of years.

“I hope that I can bring a fresh perspective to the top table in terms of how the party does things. I came into the party from a different place as many others have done. I think it is important that that viewpoint is represented inside the party leadership.

“For me it’s all about organisation. We have 120,000 members now. Last time we looked at our rule book we were a fifth of the size we are and hadn’t even been in government so we need an organisational upgrade.

“I want to see a lot of changes that allow us to involve more members actively on the ground. I also want to see us appoint a network of professional officers so that they can back up the activities and the efforts of local activists.

“I believe that is important to get this organisation match fit to lead the next independence referendum campaign which

may come sooner rather than later.

“I think the SNP is in a fortunate position both that it has a range of highly able candidates competing for this position but they are doing so in an amicable way. I think the party will be stronger as a result of having this contest because lots of members will be involved in hustings and debates. They are going to do so in a positive way which allows them to assess where we are at this point in our history and what we need to do to go forward and at the end of this on 13 October this party will not only have a good Deputy Leader, it will be a lot stronger as a result.

“Not many political parties can say that.”

[Tommy Sheppard MP tells us why he wants to be SNP Deputy Leader.](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).