

Small businesses big focus for Conservative politicians

Jeremy Balfour, Scottish Conservative MSP visited Bonnyrigg High Street this week to hear about the success of Small Business Saturday, an event run on the first Saturday in December every year celebrating the benefits of a diverse and thriving community centre. Janet Lay-Douglas, Conservative Councillor for Bonnyrigg also came along to show her support for her local High Street businesses.

The two politicians met with Jenny Ross, owner of Jenny Blossom Jewellers, who has taken part in the event for several years and who organised a local raffle with other independent local shop owners to encourage and reward residents for shopping locally.

Jeremy commented : “Our High Streets are a key part of our local communities, especially for elderly, disabled and young families who don’t want to travel far for essential services. It was lovely to meet Jenny and her team and see first-hand how local shops with a strong emphasis on customer service can really benefit and be the heart of their local communities.”

Jenny Ross said : “I opened the doors to my jewellery shop two years ago and have been delighted by the response of the local Bonnyrigg community to having a local jewellery and gift shop on their High Street. With the local bank branch and Post Office closing this year, trading conditions have been extremely challenging, but we hope to pull together and provide a valuable and important service to the area. It was great to have Jeremy and Janet here today to show support for our local business community.”

The Scottish Conservatives have launched a ‘Save Our High

Streets' campaign, promoting a plan to support Scotland's high streets to become more dynamic, flexible and welcoming.

They are calling on the SNP to cut business rates, free up planning restrictions in town centres and increase the use of public procurement to rebalance local authority spending.

Jeremy said, "with almost 300 stores going out of business across Scotland in 2017, the worst rate of closures across the UK, now is the time for the SNP to act to halt this harm to our local communities. I hope this Christmas, people can support their local shops to ensure we have thriving High Streets in the future."