

#GE2019 Tommy Sheppard SNP candidate for Edinburgh East

Tommy Sheppard is the SNP candidate for Edinburgh East. He is seeking election on a range of local issues as well as campaigning for Scotland to remain in the EU.

Previously owner of The Stand comedy club, he has been an MP since 2015. Mr Sheppard told us about his campaign : "I'm standing to get reelected for the third time, because I believe that this election will be the most important in my lifetime.

"We have an opportunity here to stop Brexit by putting the matter back to the people.

"We've an opportunity to lock Boris Johnson out of power.

"And most importantly, we can assert the rights of the Scottish people to choose how they should be governed in the future.

"That's what this election is all about. The stakes couldn't be higher.

"I suppose I'm best known most immediately before becoming an MP for running The Stand Comedy Club, which I set up with a few others in 1995 and turned it into a business in 1998. And it's still selling tickets today!

In Edinburgh East then what are the local issues

that you'll be campaigning on?

"Well, I mean, I think this election is probably about the bigger picture national issues and that's what most people are going to be motivated by, but there's quite a range of live local issues as well and which I've been campaigning on.

"I've been trying to curb the use of AirBnB particularly in the city centre, where it's now just wrecking the character of local communities, and there's a lot of widespread concern about that.

"So I'm one of a number of people who are pressing The Scottish Government for new legislation to put new restrictions on AirBnB.

"Also there's a big concern about the environment locally as well. I've been instrumental in the campaign against fracking, which we've now won in Scotland and have been able to persuade The Scottish Government to ban fracking in Scotland and I'm very proud of the fact that I was part of that as well.

"And I suppose the other thing which I've been doing recently, which people I think are, are aware of and are behind me on is campaigning to get the drug laws changed in this country.

"We've got a drugs epidemic with, you know, more than 1100 people dying last year from problem drug use, and we need to change the law so that can be defined as a public health emergency, rather than criminal activity, which makes it very, very hard to intervene.

"And of course, if the Home Office won't change the law, which they might, but if they don't and are reticent about it, then they should devolve that responsibility to The Scottish Parliament where we've already heard from the SNP Government that they will change the law to allow public health intervention."

