

“ In a bid to save small businesses from being driven from the UK’s High Streets, the FSB urges the Government to support its Keep Trade Local Campaign and Manifesto

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Business Survival



Graham Russell, Former Chairman FSB Edinburgh

A VIEW FROM...The FSB

Edinburgh is branded the world over as the “Festival City”, it is a busy international conference venue and as Scotland’s capital it is a major financial centre. The city itself is a very beautiful place, steeped in history and majestic buildings, with magical views in all directions. It is no surprise that Edinburgh attracts thousands of tourists and visitors from all over the world throughout the year.

What have all these visitors and tourists in common? If they are anything like me, they will want to take something individual home with them that will remind them of their visit. That’s why there is in Edinburgh a thriving niche market for retail entrepreneurs who can offer those tempting somethings that are “just that bit different”.

The individual nature of the city’s streets make them the perfect home of niche market retailing. Think of Cockburn Street, Grassmarket, Jeffrey Street, Leith Walk, Rose Street, Victoria Street and of course the famous Royal Mile. Each is so very different in its look and retail offerings – certainly not the habitat of the derided “clone high street”.

These entrepreneurs are small businesses and, together with their colleagues in other business sectors throughout Scotland, are the essential lifeblood of the nation’s economy. All levels of local, national, UK and European Government must recognise the very heavy burdens that are placed on SMEs by an endless stream of legislation, petty regulations and ever rising unaffordable fixed costs. Lose these entrepreneurs and they are lost forever – Edinburgh’s tourists and visitors will take their money home unspent.



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Councillors, Council Departmental Heads, and business, educational and employment organisations.

Such links have been invaluable as the FSB works to redress some of the problems and gain compensation for those small businesses affected while Edinburgh’s transport system makes way for the tram – perhaps the biggest challenge facing small business in the city centre. Loss of parking and loading bays, long-term reduction in customer numbers and the general inconvenience created by building work are just the sort of problems that can affect a small business in a big way, so the role of the FSB becomes a vital lifeline.

Through regular meetings and networking sessions with these and many other influential decision making people, the FSB is able to discuss not only the issues that challenge our members but also gain a better understanding of the difficulties that their own organisations face. These discussions enable workable solutions to be identified and the necessary changes, in either policy or working practice, to be implemented at an early stage. Even where this is not possible, lessons are often learned for the future.

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