

PROSPECTIVE TORY MP COMMITS TO SUPPORTING FARMERS

Prospective Conservative MP for Skipton and Ripon, Julian Smith, has pledged to support farmers across the constituency should he be successful at this year's General Election.

On a fact-finding visit to Skipton Auction Mart (Wed, Feb 10), he unveiled plans to hold regular surgeries at the mart. He also announced the launch of the Skipton and Ripon Agriculture Group, which will meet twice a year.

Julian commented: "If elected, I want to make it as straightforward as possible for farmers to raise their issues and concerns with me. Farmers are very busy and I want to come to them rather than them having to come to me, so that I best represent their interests at Westminster."

Brought up in a farming community and living near Skipton, Julian says he is committed to robustly representing the interest of North Yorkshire farmers and agriculture.

Having co-authored a major report on red tape and regulation for Ken Clarke and the Conservatives, Julian says he has seen at first hand how paperwork and form-filling is making life more difficult for farmers.

"If successful at the upcoming election, I relish the opportunity of fighting to make life easier for our farmers. They should be as free as possible to focus on their core task of producing high quality food for our country," he said.

The visit to Skipton Auction Mart was hosted by general manager Jeremy Eaton, who explained the ramifications of new EU legislation governing electronic identification (EID) and individual recording of sheep, which became mandatory at the beginning of this year.

He told Mr Smith: "The cost of implementation of individual sheep eid has the potential to destroy all of our hard-earned businesses for little apparent gain. However, we are hopeful on closer examination that we can mitigate some of the disruption for both breeders and buyers alike."

- ***Detailed information on what Skipton Auction Mart is doing in response to sheep eid is contained in the latest issue of CCM News.***



Skipton Auction Mart general manager Jeremy Eaton, right, discusses the new sheep eid with Prospective Tory MP Julian Smith.