



says...
**KEEP TRADE
LOCAL**

FEDERATION OF SMALL BUSINESSES (FSB)

The FSB is the largest campaigning pressure group promoting and protecting the interests of the self-employed and owners of small firms. Formed in 1974, it now has over 215,000 members across 33 regions. To its members, it offers assistance and support 24 hours a day, while its lobbying arm – led by the Westminster Press and Parliamentary office – applies pressure on MPs, Government and Whitehall, lobbies politicians in their constituencies and puts the FSB viewpoint over to the media. Area Policy Managers and Regional Organisers work to further FSB influence at the regional level. The FSB is in an ideal position to influence policy with its direct access to politicians and civil servants in Westminster and Whitehall. In addition the FSB has access to the European Commission through our office in Brussels.

Keep Trade Local Campaign

The Keep Trade Local campaign started in Sheffield by the FSB when businesses were devastated by the floods in 2007. The problems were made worse when the insurance companies did not support the local economy by sourcing products and suppliers from local companies for housing refurbishment.

At the FSB national conference in March 2008 it was decided that the Keep Trade Local campaign should be adopted as a national campaign. To get members and the public involved a petition was also launched. The petition is available online and also in many shops and businesses who support the campaign. Keep Trade Local is a campaign that highlights the plight of small businesses and the effect on communities when businesses close. The high street is at the heart of most communities and consequently the focus of the campaign has been on shops. However the campaign also encompasses smaller businesses like wholesalers who don't deal directly with the public.

The Keep Trade Local manifesto identifies six campaign areas that are detrimental to small businesses when not considered carefully enough by local authorities: parking charges; post office closures; business rates; public procurement; crime against businesses and planning. After the campaign was launched it has grown organically and taken on different shapes in different regions. However the basis for the campaign has remained the same. Keep Trade Local is about safeguarding communities and the diversity that the high street offers.

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