

TIME TO TRADE WITH THE COMMONWEALTH

Emma has been meeting with officials from across the Commonwealth to make the case for strengthened UK-Commonwealth trade relations post-Brexit.

In October, Emma was in New Zealand and Australia discussing the opportunities that will arise from Brexit for the UK to work with likeminded partners to promote a trade agenda that will benefit SMEs and consumers.

Emma said: "For too long the EU has grossly neglected opportunities to build enhanced trading relationships with countries such as: Canada, India, Australia and New Zealand. When we regain control of our independent, international trade policy after 29 March 2019, the UK will prioritise strengthening our alliances with Commonwealth partners, with whom we have a shared history and common interests."

She added: "On my visit to Australia and New Zealand this autumn, I had positive discussions with colleagues who emphasised their readiness to build on our existing trade relations. It is clear that countries across the Commonwealth will not be limited by creeping protectionism, pursuing instead an ambitious free-trade agenda."



EAST MIDLANDS BUSINESSES TO BE GIVEN A BOOST BY PROJEKT HANSA

This month Rupert launched Projekt Hansa, an exciting new venture to promote trade, tourism and culture across Northern Europe.



Projekt Hansa takes its inspiration from the medieval Hanseatic League. A powerful trade alliance that dominated commercial activity in Northern

Europe during the 13th & 15th centuries. The original league linked merchants in over 200 cities and towns across Northern Europe, one of which is Boston in the East Midlands. The new Projekt Hansa will be concerned with trade, travel and culture.

Rupert said: "We will be encouraging the links between businesses and communities that will drive the future prosperity of our region. We will be campaigning for the changes that businesses need to trade freely. All whilst celebrating exports from all countries and our shared cultural heritage."

"Our programme begins in January 2018 and I look forward to bringing the project back to the East Midlands where we can showcase all our region has to offer."

PROTECTING MELTON MOBAY PORK PIES

Rupert visited Melton Mowbray in November to champion local food products and to talk to food producers and sellers about their protected status.

During the day he visited Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe where bakers have been making the famous pork pie since 1851. Whilst there, he also visited the Melton Cheeseboard stall at the Melton Mowbray Cattle Market where he spoke to shop owner, Tim Brown.



The visit is one of a number that Rupert is doing around the East Midlands region to promote local food products. In Melton,

under the Protected Food Name Scheme, both Pork Pies and Stilton are given legal protection under European law.

Whilst at the market, Rupert said: "The protected status of both Melton Mowbray Pork Pies and Stilton Cheese is crucial to the livelihoods of authentic producers of these excellent products, unique to the East Midlands. Not only this, but their export to the rest of the UK, and beyond, is crucial for the prosperity of our local economy."

He added: "I want to see these protections continue after we leave the European Union in 2019 to safeguard Pork Pies, Stilton and numerous other products against imitation elsewhere. Ensuring they can continue to be produced authentically here in the East Midlands is incredibly important. I look forward to continuing my work on UK protected foods in the New Year."

TOASTING LOCAL FOOD & DRINK

In October, Emma attended the Carlsberg UK Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards, a competition that celebrates local produce.

Co-ordinated by The Mallows Company, which provides expertise in local food and drink across Northamptonshire, and supported by the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership, the awards have grown rapidly and expanded from 4 to 17 different awards categories over the past 6 years.

Following the success of the awards, The Mallows Company and Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership have also set up a countywide networking group called Made in Northamptonshire, which brings local businesses from the food and drink sector together in a supportive setting.

Emma said: "I am delighted to support the excellent local food and drink that the East Midlands has to offer, not to

mention the fantastic local enterprises that work so hard to make sure that culinary excellence in the county is recognised and promoted. Initiatives like the Carlsberg Food and Drink Awards mean that more and more of us here in the East Midlands can shop local."



She added: "From rewarding farming innovation to local food heroes and even the community pub of the year, the Carlsberg UK Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards is a fantastic forum for supporting the 'buy local' philosophy."



*Working for you,
Working for the East Midlands*

Emma McClarkin MEP and Rupert Matthews MEP

Winter 2017

FIGHTING FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS

2017 has been an incredibly exhilarating year; full of hard work and campaigning, to deliver on the issues the East Midlands cares about.

In only a few months since his election, Rupert has championed a number of initiatives. As Chair of the Working Group on Sustainable Development, he has explored the role of the private sector and financial markets in ensuring continued innovation, rather than forcing the taxpayer to foot an increased bill. He has also joined the Moldovan Friendship group where he discussed the developing UK-Moldova trade links and stressed the need for good governance.

Meanwhile, Emma has been fighting back creeping protectionism that threatens economic growth and prosperity in the East Midlands; laying the foundations for future UK Free Trade Agreements across the globe and making good ground with her multiple campaigns. Emma is particularly proud of the Government's announced that it will ban

domestic Ivory Trade which is a big step in our fight against illegal wildlife trade.

With that said, there is so much more work to be done. Since Article 50 was invoked in March, we have been at the forefront of negotiations; fighting for Team UK. Good progress has been made and we will soon begin discussions on our future relationship with the EU.

However, we will maintain momentum in the New Year, putting pressure on the EU to deliver and championing UK interests to secure the best Brexit deal. While Rupert is looking forward to strengthening community links through Projekt Hansa and securing sustainable energy provision at reasonable prices, Emma will continue to champion international free trade and relations through her leading role on the International Trade Committee and as Chair of the Commonwealth Forum.

Finally, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Emma and Rupert

CHAMPIONING TRANSATLANTIC FREE TRADE

In a recent meeting of the British-American Business Council (BABC) in Nottingham, Emma made the case for enhanced trade relations with the United States and Canada.

She outlined her vision for the UK as a bastion of free-trade and highlighted the potential for ambitious Free-Trade Agreements with the United States and Canada.



Speaking at the meeting, Emma said: "Since the vote to leave the EU, well over a year ago now, the UK has taken a step of self-confidence into the global marketplace. The UK will forge a new path for itself as a truly global, free-trading nation building commercial and cultural links the world over. Securing a free-trade deal between the UK and the US will send a strong political message, showing that we are enviable free-trade forces in the international system."

Afterwards, she added: "Looking forward, there is huge potential for transatlantic trade. It is great that businesses here, in the East Midlands, recognise this tremendous opportunity and are ready to make the most of it."

You can hear more about the meeting at: <https://youtu.uk/Xld4sEbjrls>

MAJOR ENERGY REFORMS AHEAD

In October, Rupert became the Energy Spokesperson for the Conservative MEP delegation to the European Parliament.

He now speaks on issues relating to energy policy, a major area on which the EU legislates.

Rupert said: "I was delighted to take on the role of Energy Spokesperson and I am pleased to speak on behalf of Conservative MEPs on this subject. This is a hugely important policy area which affects not only the UK, but Europe as a whole.

"As Energy Spokesperson I support the development of liberalised markets and believe that competition will drive down

energy prices, benefiting consumers. I am also keen to find ways of harnessing our own indigenous energy sources, be it shale gas or offshore wind. But the pressing issue is security of supply and ensuring that the lights stay switched on. The challenge ahead of us is to ensure adequate, reliable

supplies of electricity at reasonable prices.

"I also speak on related matters such as energy efficiency

and I am delighted to see innovative technologies such as hydrogen-based fuels and next generation battery technology."



Buxton

Rupert went behind the scenes at Tarmac's cement and lime operation at Tunstead, near Buxton. Rupert said: "the success of the UK's economy relies on companies like Tarmac as we continue to invest in major infrastructure and building projects, helping create the 136,000 new jobs in the East Midlands since 2010."



Derby

Emma was invited by Amanda Solloway to join a meeting of her Business Club in September in Derby. Whilst there, she discussed the opportunities Brexit Presents for Medium-Sized Enterprises and exchanged views with local businesses about the future of Britain's trading relationship with countries across the globe.



Shepshed

In November, Rupert went to Shepshed to meet Rt. Hon. Nicky Morgan MP and Cllr Christine Radford to discuss local issues. Rupert said "I'm always happy to discuss local issues with local councillors as they are usually the ones who know what is going on in their area and have the local knowledge required to resolve local concerns."



Alfreton

Early in the autumn, Emma visited the new Thornton's Factory, near Derby, that has recently opened its doors for business, adding over 200 jobs to the local economy. Whilst there, she joined a roundtable discussion on the priorities for local businesses and highlighted the wealth of opportunities Brexit provides for businesses across the region.



Nottingham

Rupert joined volunteers collecting money for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal in the Victoria Centre. He spoke to many of the volunteers, listening to the stories of many former servicemen. He appealed to passers-by to donate generously and remember the sacrifice given by millions in defence of our nation.



Leicester

At Leicester Cathedral, Emma attended the Mattioli Woods Charity Dinner for Breast Cancer Now, the UK's largest breast cancer charity. Whilst at the dinner, she said: "The charity's goal to ensure that, by 2050, everyone who develops breast cancer will live is such an important ambition and one I care passionately about. I am full of admiration for this exceptional charity."



Working hard for the East Midlands with EMMA & RUPERT



Woodborough

Rupert met with local representatives of the National Farmers' Union at Woodborough Park Farm in Nottinghamshire to discuss the impact of a potential ban on the weed-killer glyphosate which may be imposed by the EU. He called on the Commission not to give in to political scaremongering and to renew the licence of the plant protection produce that is crucial for farmers in the East Midlands.



Desborough

On a frosty November Day, Emma met with WACOAL Chief Executive, Geoff Embley and his team, to take a tour of their factory near Kettering. Emma said: "It's a pleasure to be here at the WACOAL factory to see investment from a popular Japanese company here in the East Midlands. Business is thriving and I was very pleased to hear of their plans for ambitious growth in the East Midlands"



Lincoln

Rupert made his own Lincolnshire sausages earlier this year when he visited the Lincolnshire Sausage Festival at Lincoln Castle. The Festival is held annually and raises money for local charities. He also met local butchers and discussed the need to grant local produce legal protection after Brexit.



Witham

Speaking at the Witham Business Forum lunch in November, Rupert spoke about how Brexit will provide opportunities for local businesses. He said "It is fascinating to hear the views of business owners from across Lincolnshire and I am pleased that they share my positivity for the wealth of opportunities Brexit will provide."



Stamford

In November, Emma visited the new Head Quarters of Alltech UK Ltd, an innovative business that develops sustainable solutions to animal nutrition. During her visit, Emma praised Alltech for its ground-breaking research that supports local farmers and enables local farmers to increase food production.



Oakham

Emma visited the Grainstore Brewery for an afternoon drink with William Davis, the Brewery's owner. She highlighted that the unprecedented freeze in beer duty means that pubs and Grainstore Brewery, will remain the beating heart of town and village communities, all across the East Midlands.



Bingham

In September, Emma was invited to take part in a discussion with members of the Stocks Club about her journey to becoming an MEP. After the discussion, Emma said: "I am delighted to be here with ladies from the Stocks Club, a longstanding club that celebrates, champions and inspires women."



Kislingbury

This December, Rupert was delighted to bump into Father Christmas at the Kislingbury Christmas Fair, held in the village hall. A seasonal mince pie went down a treat with Santa, Rupert and local MP Chris Heaton-Harris. After the event, Rupert said: "I really enjoyed meeting people here in Kislingbury. Let me know the details of your local events and I will try to come along."



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