

# Tips on MP/PCC visits to your business



As we approach the 2017 election MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PCCs) will be on the look-out for good opportunities to get out and about in their community. So why not ask them along to your business and see where they stand on the issue of exotic pets, like tropical fish, pet shop licences and online traders?

## 1 The promise of publicity

Politicians want voters to see them out and about so make sure you promise to help spread the word about their visit.

Task an employee who's good with a camera to take lots of photos of the visit and share them on your social media channels, like Facebook, Twitter etc. Don't forget to use the #handsoffmyhobby hashtag and include your visitor's @ Twitter handle so that they see what you've done.

After the event tell your local paper about the visit and send your best photo taken on the day. Make sure you do it promptly.

Or ask your local paper to send a photographer (see photo opportunities below). Make sure you give them plenty of notice.

Send OATA photos and details of the visit and we'll share it on the campaign website and on our social media channels.

## 2 Be prepared

Plan carefully what you want to show them and why. We want politicians to see fish-keeping as a great hobby that's just as acceptable as keeping a dog, cat, hamster or rabbit. Introduce them to your most experienced staff. Why not invite your most knowledgeable customers along as well?

Ask what their position is on keeping exotic pets & what they will do to support businesses like yours on issues like illegal and unlicensed trade?

## 3 Photo opportunities

A picture is worth a thousand words. So creating a good photo opportunity is vital. This could make a visit more likely and will help with publicity.

Could you set up a beautiful display tank of tropical freshwater or marine fish and corals that the MP/PCC could easily be photographed beside or even looking through the tank?

Think of ways to make an interesting photo that includes the MP/PCC & employees – fish rather than dry goods will always make a better photo.

Be imaginative if photographing fish would be difficult. Or is there an activity involving the fish you can ask the MP/PCC to do – but nothing that stresses the fish.

Send your photo to your local paper and always provide a caption of who's who with full names written out left to right.

## 4 Timing

Talk to their local office to see if they'd be interested to visit.

Before you phone sort out what you're going to say – why you would like them to visit, what they'll find when they come and publicity ideas eg your photo opportunity.

And tell OATA if you're successful in arranging a visit!

