

Last Friday I visited the Kent County Show. Having seen the awful accident on the M20 which led to its closure and knock on chaos, coupled with the knowledge that the showground traffic is normally abominable, I left an hour to get from Aylesford to Detling. Typically it took me 15 minutes but that gave me loads of extra time to wander around before the formalities at lunch time.

My memories of the County Show go way back. I think my first County Show was when I was about 7 and I went with my primary school and have some vague recollection of giving the Duchess of Kent a posy of flowers. Although I am sure I was on the TV, an exciting moment for the family back then, not so much now where it is just boring to see me on the screens again, I am grateful that there is probably no surviving footage. I was pretty goofy in my rolled up long white socks!

Over the years I have returned to the showground and shared in the celebration of our agricultural heritage across the county. We have long been such a fantastic producer of fine food and drink and I feel real pride as I travel the country and world to see something Kentish served to the great and good. But those who know me, or even just read my election literature, will know that I have a bit of a thing for tractors, particularly vintage tractors. I am not an expert or nerd, I just like them. So arriving at the showground and seeing an old Ferguson pootling around made my day!

So I wanted to use this column to say thank you to all who organise the Show, show their trade, sell their produce and to those who attend. It is an amazing celebration of what we contribute to the Country and long may it continue.