

President's Notes April 2014

Economic Growth

I have had the opportunity to talk and more importantly listen to a number of our large food and flower processing companies. They all have a similar message, volumes are down as a result of less waste by the supermarkets and the consumer. UK Households waste around 20% of all the food they buy – but the good news is that this suggests there has been a 17% reduction since 2007. We're improving! These companies are making substantial capital investments in either energy efficiencies, storage or automated packing to reduce their cost base.

ShopWatch

Our ShopWatch scheme goes from strength to strength under the guidance of our Co-ordinator Stuart Brotherton. This is a radio network linking shops together, allowing them to quickly spread warnings to each other when they spot known shoplifters heading their way or crimes in the area. ShopWatch has led to arrests and prosecutions for retail crime, the return of stock, and shop staff feel safer knowing there's a community of at least 30 retailers watching out and listening in to what's going on in our busy shopping streets. Stuart will be working hard during the next couple of months to get the scheme extended into Springfields and Holbeach. With the improvements to the CCTV system and monitoring taking place in Boston we will have to make improvements to our current radio system by relocating the aerial and equipment. This would be an ideal opportunity to extend the system.

Town Centre Manager

As many of you will be aware from reading the local newspaper the timetable for the recruitment of the Town Centre Manager has now started. Recruitment is through the Association of Town Centre Managers who have e-mailed their database and featured the vacancy. The position is also detailed on the Chamber website: www.spaldingareachamber.co.uk. The closing date for applications is the 5th May and shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview during week commencing 19th May. They will be asked to prepare a short presentation on quick fixes and one key project that they would deliver within the first year. This presentation will be made in front of the interview panel and any town centre traders who wish to attend. Appointing the right person is key to the success of this demanding role.

Retailers Forum

Two meetings took place on Wednesday 16th April. Discussions took place on the demands and complexities of the role of Town Centre Manager and that other groups have their own priorities including the Night Time Economy and the Civic Society which have to be recognised. The Forum will meet again on Wednesday 14th May at 5:45pm in Sainsburys Meeting Room. It was agreed that a couple of traders representing each area of the town would keep their neighbours informed and up to date ensuring none of the town centre was excluded. The areas of the town are: New Road/ Red Lion Street; Sheep Market/Swan Street/Winsover Road; Holland Market; The Crescent; Bridge Street, Market Place/Hall Place and the Market.

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Spalding in Bloom

What a great response we have had this year from the town centre traders in sponsoring a hanging basket. Already we will have at least 25 additional baskets this year. This summer the newspaper will promote, "Spalding's Best Front Garden" competition again, sponsored by Birchgrove Garden Centre.

Last year the winners were Mr. & Mrs T. Wing of Park Avenue, followed closely by Mr. & Mrs Knight of Livingstone Drive and Mr. Michael Pratt of Chestnut Avenue. Please watch out for details on this competition during May in the Spalding Guardian.

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