

### **Young Enterprise Awards**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> March our President, Phil Scarlett, was a judge at the South Holland Young Enterprise Awards. This year there were entries from nine schools. The winners were from Spalding High School who will go through to the next stage of the competition. Their model company and products were excellent and would have stood up well if they had retailed on the high street. The standard of entries was exceptionally high and our appreciation goes to Chamber members who have offered to mentor future applicants.

### **Transport Issues**

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March the Chamber of Commerce facilitated a visit by Cllr. Richard Davies, the Lincolnshire County Council Portfolio Holder for Transport. Three separate meetings were arranged.

Cllr. Davies was firstly briefed about the fact that the fresh produce industry in South Holland was growing and that growth was forecasted to exceed 20% per annum during the next three years. Currently 37% of the UK's fresh food comes in/out of South Holland, with over a million truck movements per annum, of which 67% go south on the A16. The current road infrastructure is only just coping, but local businesses did not want a repeat of Kent's food businesses experience which is at the point of strangling itself due to its poor road infrastructure. A discussion followed on the key "pinch points" for traffic congestion. It was agreed that various roundabouts (the one at Eye in particular) needed improvements and the introduction of a third lane would greatly assist traffic flow and safety at some locations. We will keep on lobbying for these improvements and will meet again in two months' time when Cllr. Davies will be accompanied by the relevant officers from Highways.

Dennis Hannant, Town Centre Manager, then asked Cllr. Davies to look into the possible use of the Market Place, Hall Place, Red Lion Street and Bridge Street for commercial enterprises on non-market days i.e. Sun-Mon & Wed-Fri. This would be for use by specialist markets, car dealerships, local flea markets and other relevant and suitable activities, all of which would be required to abide by current road closure restrictions and licensing obligations. Cllr. Davis agreed to check out the details of the Market Charter. He also asked if we could consider having buses going through the town centre (as in Boston) and we now understand that there is a process under discussion for this to take place.

Finally, the Spalding & Peterborough Transport Forum expressed the desire for a new station at Littleworth, which was supported by their research. Cllr. Davies urged them to pursue the train operator to provide more passenger trains, including a Sunday service. The Forum Chairman agreed to contact the operators of East Midland Trains to arrange a meeting which Spalding Chamber is prepared to attend to give their support for a more frequent service.

## **Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture**

Our continued lobbying for South Holland to be recognised by the County Council as a key food distribution area within the UK has resulted in an invitation for Trevor Hyde (Logistics Chair) and Phil Scarlett (Chamber President) to attend this Forum's next meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April in Horncastle.

## **Diary Date**

Thursday 19th November is the date for this year's Business Awards, to be held again in Springfield Events & Conference Centre. Look out for details of the various Award categories in the Spalding Guardian to make sure that you celebrate and share the successes your business is enjoying in South Holland.