

# Kwasi Kwarteng MP In contact

My journal

Christmas edition 2013



Every year, it seems like Christmas comes around quicker. Looking back though, a lot has happened since my June newsletter and during the brilliant British summer we enjoyed this year. This journal is an opportunity to keep you updated on my activities and offer some opinion on local and national issues.

## In Westminster

Between July and September, the UK economy grew by 0.8%, faster than the US, Japan and Germany. This is good news and shows we are on the road to economic recovery.

My experiences in Spelthorne, however, still convince me that more must be done to support small businesses. Every week, they tell me that tax and red tape is stifling them.

As Head of the Free Enterprise Group in Parliament, I have argued for tax cuts to incentivise hard work and enable businesses to grow. Recently, I proposed that business rates should be frozen for three years, and that ordinary workers should be taken out of the higher rate income tax bracket by raising the basic rate limit from £32,010 to £40,000.



Speaking in a cost of living debate, November 2013

In July, I left the Transport Select Committee after three years. I subsequently joined the Work and Pensions Committee in October. The budget for The Department of Work and Pensions is more than £200bn. Being on this Committee gives me an opportunity to scrutinize where and how this money is being spent. I want to help address the worrying state of pension provision in our country and push for sensible reform of the Welfare system.

## Fire Services

Surrey County Council has proposed to close two fire stations permanently in Sunbury and Staines and replace them with a single new station with only one fire engine in the central Ashford area. I want to make it clear that this plan is unacceptable. I fully support Spelthorne Borough Council in their opposition to it.

Spelthorne is the most urbanised area of Surrey and must have proper fire protection. At the very least, that means having two fire engines stationed here.



Helen Hicks, winner of the Spelthorne Business Plan Competition 2013

## Business Plan Competition 2013

On December 12, the final of the inaugural Spelthorne Business Plan Competition took place at BP Sunbury. I helped organise the Competition with Spelthorne Borough Council. It was a good community event and a great celebration of the Borough's business life.

The overall winner was Helen Hicks from Sunbury. She plans to launch a pet funeral service. From Halliford School, Alex Osborne, Jason Brannigan and Robbie Bosier were runners-up with their student jobfinder website idea. David Dusnoki was in third place with his innovative restaurant order management system idea. Many congratulations to the winners, all the participants and a big thank you to the sponsors: BA, BP, Heathrow, Johnson & Johnson, Natwest and Shepperton Studios.

**Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a brilliant Christmas, a good rest and a happy 2014.**



## Out & about

Being in Spelthorne is a part of my role that I enjoy immensely; here are some of the things I have been doing...

### St Michael's R C Primary School

In July, I visited St Michael's R C Primary School in Ashford. I met Miss Beirne, the Headteacher, and toured the classrooms to meet pupils and talk about my job in Parliament. The School is a very happy place, in the classroom and in the playground. It was also good to see that achievement in sport and in the classroom is readily celebrated and rewarded.



At St Michael's, July 2013

### Remembrance Sunday

This year, I went to the Remembrance parade and service in Stanwell Village. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful crisp morning. Hundreds of people turned out to gather around the war memorial. They included representatives from the armed forces, veterans, cadets, scouts, guides, cubs, brownies, beavers, rainbows and Town Farm Primary School. For me, the whole morning highlighted the strength and unity of our local communities.



Remembrance Sunday in Stanwell, November 2013

I hold regular advice surgeries from my office in Staines. As your MP, I can only assist with those matters for which Parliament or central government is responsible. I may be able to help you with problems relating to:

- \* Central Government policies
- \* National Health Service
- \* HM Revenue and Customs (tax issues, child benefit)
- \* Department of Work and Pensions (benefits and pensions)

To arrange an appointment please call 020 7219 4017

## Kwasi's Quiz

**When did Heathrow's Terminal 1 open?**

**In what year did Staines Town FC earn a place in the 3rd Round FA Cup Draw?**

**When was the Staines lino factory set up?**

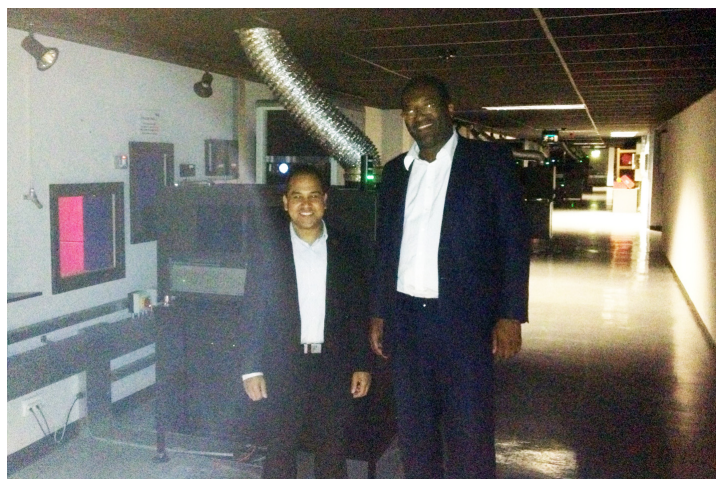
**How big is the Queen Mary reservoir?**

**What is the population of Stanwell?**

Answers in next edition

### Cinema

In August, I visited the Vue cinema in Staines. The visit was organised by the Cinema Exhibitors' Association. I took a tour of the cinema, met staff and learned more about the importance of the cinema exhibition sector. It was a really interesting morning and a good opportunity to learn about what happens behind the scenes at a cinema.



In the projector room at the Vue cinema in Staines, August 2013

### National Citizen Service

Over the summer, the Challenge Network, a national charity, came to Spelthorne to run a programme as part the Government's National Citizen Service initiative. One hundred and eighty young people from across Spelthorne designed social action projects with the support of local charities. They pitched their ideas to a panel of judges, including myself, with the aim of securing funding support. The pitches were impressive and the young people spoke passionately.