

South Holland Business Awards 2025

Judging Criteria

Business of the Year

This award will go to the business that has not only increased its own profitability and potential but has also had a positive impact on the economy of the region as a whole. The size and age of such an enterprise will be considered against financial performance. The judges will also be interested in innovative new products, services or processes and expansion into new markets and areas of business activity.

Turnover must exceed £300,001 in the year under consideration.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Details of your success (financial performance, markets, productivity, organisational)
- Strategy for growth
- Commitment to your local area
- Commitment to sustainable practices and Net Zero
- Commitment to wellbeing of people

Business Person of the Year

This award recognises the business personality who best represents achievement and longevity. The award acknowledges the winner's sustained achievements within the business community during a distinguished career within the South Holland District Area.

Eligible business owners are those who have been actively involved in the business community and have demonstrated the following criteria:

- Has shown outstanding leadership characteristics
- Show exemplary business achievement
- Has demonstrated a strong connection to the economy and communities of South Holland District Council
- Association with community groups/ charitable organisations
- Industry influence and entrepreneurial success

Business Innovation of the Year

This award will go to the company that has introduced a new product or process, invention, idea or design that has made a significant contribution to the business. The judges will be interested in innovation that has improved an existing product or process, but equally they would wish to hear about innovation that has led to the development of new products or services. They will also be interested in how innovation is handled within the culture of the company.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Details your innovation
- The benefits
- Your achievements and successes

Doing Business for Good – The ESG Champion Award

This award recognises a business that is leading the way in embedding Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) values at the heart of their operations. Judges will be looking for clear examples of action and measurable impact across sustainability, social responsibility and ethical governance.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Clear ESG strategy or policies
- Evidence of environmental responsibility (e.g. waste reduction, Net Zero plans, supply chain sustainability)
- Evidence of social impact (e.g. employee wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, community investment)
- Governance practices that ensure transparency and accountability
- Measurable outcomes and improvements achieved through your ESG approach
- How ESG has strengthened business resilience or opened new opportunities

Excellence in Customer Care

This award will be made to the company that demonstrates a commitment to continuously improving its standards of customer care.

Judges will expect to see a clear, well-implemented customer care policy and examples of service exceeding customer expectations. They will also wish to hear how customer care initiatives contribute to the overall success of the business.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Details of your customer care policy
- Your achievements and successes
- The benefits

Food & Drink Business of the Year

This award will be presented to a Food & Drink business that has demonstrated excellence and innovation within the industry. Judges will consider the use of local produce, creative products and services, and a strong commitment to the local community.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business/organisation
- Details of your success (financial performance, market reach, productivity, organisational growth)
- Commitment to your local area (use of locally sourced products/services)
- Innovation in products or services
- Examples of sustainability practices
- Role as an ambassador and advocate for the local food and drink industry

Excellence in Production and Distribution Award

This award will recognise an agriculture or horticulture business that has demonstrated outstanding performance in the production, handling, and distribution of goods - with a particular focus on trade, supply chain strength, and innovation.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business or organisation, including products grown, processed, or distributed
- Strength and scale of production and/or distribution over the last 12–24 months
- Success in trading regionally, nationally, or internationally (e.g. new contracts, market expansion, export growth)
- Innovations in growing methods, handling, packaging, or logistics
- Effective supply chain management and collaboration with local growers or partners
- Commitment to environmental impact and resource efficiency
- Investment in technology, workforce skills, or infrastructure to support growth
- Tangible commercial outcomes, such as increased volumes, reduced waste, or job creation

Small Business of the Year

This award will go to the business that has increased its profitability and potential over the last financial year. The size and age of such an enterprise will be considered against financial performance (can include start-up businesses). The judges will also be interested in innovative new products, services or processes and expansion into new markets and areas of business activity. In addition the judges will wish to hear about the 'personality' of the business.

Turnover must not exceed £300,000 in the year under consideration.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Details of your success (financial performance, markets, productivity, organisational)
- Commitment to your local area
- Commitment to sustainable practices and Net Zero
- Commitment to wellbeing of people

Supporting the Community

This award is open to companies, organisations and social enterprises. It is intended to recognise organisations which are making a contribution to the community in which they operate.

In the case of commercial firms, the initiative could be in addition to their main business activity, or part of core activities, as long as there is a significant element of community benefit.

In terms of social enterprise, the organisation will demonstrate the achievement of social aims through its core trading activity and the judges will look for a genuine social enterprise with a strong enterprise ethic coupled with a clear commitment to the wider community.

The project or initiative should have been introduced or reached a meaningful stage within the last twelve months

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your business / organisation
- Details of your initiative
- Benefits to the community
- Helped get people involved and inspired others

Visitor Attraction of the Year

This award will be presented to a visitor attraction that has made a significant contribution to the local visitor economy through customer experience, community engagement, and sustainability. The judges will look for an attraction that delivers a high-quality experience, has demonstrated growth or success, and promotes South Holland as a destination.

Entries should demonstrate the following:

- Background to your organisation
- Visitor numbers and engagement over the last 12 months
- Innovation in visitor experience, events or programming
- Commitment to accessibility and inclusivity
- Economic impact (e.g. employment, local partnerships)
- Commitment to sustainability and Net Zero practices
- Contribution to the community or education initiatives

Young Achiever of the Year (up to the age of 30)

The awards will showcase and celebrate the achievements of those learners who have exceeded expectations and shown a dynamic approach to training. They will also have demonstrated initiative and enterprise, innovation and creativity, and shown an understanding of, and commitment to, the improvement of skills development.

Entries should demonstrate one or more of the following:

- Proven commitment by an apprentice to continued personal development
- An apprentice who has contributed significantly to the business and provided added value
- An apprentice who has demonstrated a high level of skills and/or has contributed significantly to the sector within which they work
- Evidence of commitment and ambition to succeed in their chosen field

Apprentices should currently be on a programme or have completed a formal apprenticeship within the past 2 years. The judges may require sight of certificates which will be requested where appropriate.