

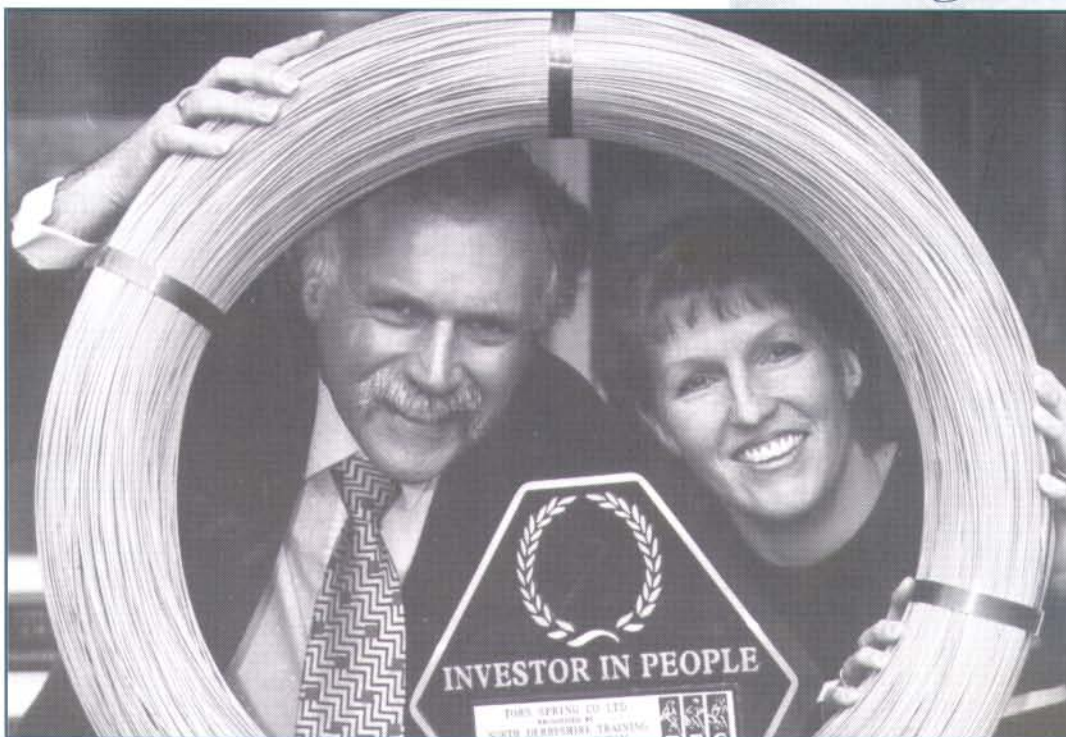
Tor Springs achieve Investors in People

Crich-based Tor Springs - a family-owned business with over 30 years experience in custom manufacturing springs and wire shapes for the electronic, white goods and automotive industries - has achieved Investors in People status.

The award was presented to managing director Alison Watson by Chairman of North Derbyshire TEC Alistair Steel.

The company, which employs 30 people, has already achieved ISO 9002 standard and hopes to achieve QS9000 later this year.

Said production manager Barry McDonnell: "What we



are trying to do is to move away from maintaining quality by inspection to building quality into everything we do and everything we make."

■ ABOVE: Alison is pictured receiving the award from Alistair Steel.

36,000 new firms set up

■ For the first time in two years, zero growth was recorded in the small business market in the last three months of 1998 with the number of start-ups and closures equal at around 110,000, according to Barclays. Despite this, 1998 saw an overall 1.4 per cent growth in the sector bringing the total stock at the end of the year to 2.65 million, an increase of 36,000 businesses since the end of 1997.

New TEC network boosts innovation

A new network aimed at helping businesses become more competitive by capitalising on the use of innovation has been launched by North Derbyshire TEC.

Based at Tapton Park Innovation Centre, the North Derbyshire Innovation Network will bring together businesses within different industrial sectors to exploit areas of common interest and solve shared problems.

The network will also have the potential to form partnerships with universities and research institutes from across the UK as well as organisations on a Europe wide basis, for involvement in research projects and product development programmes.

Rhodium scoops hi-tech accolade

Multi-national IT solutions provider Rhodium plc, which has bases in Chesterfield and Sheffield is the second fastest growing technology company in the North - and that's official!

The company scooped the coveted accolade in the Deloitte & Touche Technology Fast 50 Awards which were presented at a special ceremony in Leeds last month.

The Fast 50 Programme is a national campaign designed to recognise, reward and raise the profile of the fastest growing technology companies in six regions across the UK.

Formally established in 1995, Rhodium has successfully diversified product lines and business strategies to record outstanding growth.

The company's primary objective has been to target new markets and this has led to a steady increase in total group sales and the expansion of its consumer base.

**Do you have any news to share with other Chamber members?
Send it to Helen Carter at the Chamber's Information Department.**