

Press release: Board of Trade convenes to ensure the benefits of free trade are spread throughout the Union

- Welsh Secretary joins President of the Board of Trade Dr Liam Fox at the first new Board of Trade today in Bristol
- First meeting attended by representatives from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Advisers from across the United Kingdom present, providing local expertise to guide the Board on trade and investment matters

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will today (12 October) take his place at the table of the new Board of Trade convened to help boost exports, attract inward investors and ensure the benefits of free trade are spread equally across the country.

The new Board of Trade will bring together prominent figures from business and politics from each part of the UK to provide local expertise and guide the Board on trade and investment matters.

Alun Cairns will be joined two expert business advisers from Wales, Lord Rowe Beddoe and Heather Stevens CBE.

Lord Rowe Beddoe has a distinguished international business career and brings with him decades of experience gathered during his years as Chairman of the Welsh Development Agency and Cardiff Airport.

Heather Stevens CBE was part of the small team which launched the insurance group Admiral in 1993 in Cardiff. Since its launch Admiral has grown to become one of the largest private sector employers in Wales with a turnover of more than £2bn. She is also currently the chair and founding member of The Waterloo Foundation, an independent grant-making foundation, dedicated to projects that help globally such as support for child development and protecting the environment.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Every day in every country around the world, there are business opportunities for Welsh companies' products and services. But we know that striking out into new and unfamiliar markets can sometimes look daunting – particularly now as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Board of Trade will engage with the whole of the UK on our global trade and investment agenda and aim to demonstrate that there has never been a better time for Welsh companies to export overseas.

I'm delighted to be joined by Lord Rowe Beddoe and Heather Stevens in this effort. Together, we will be a strong voice for Wales as we aim to help more businesses across the nation build their brand abroad and encourage more inward investment to our shores.

Wales is already an exporting nation. There are currently more than 3,800 businesses in Wales that export, with a combined value of £13 billion in the first quarter of 2017. Wales is also an attractive place for inward investment, with latest figures showing that 85 foreign direct investment projects were secured in Wales, creating 2,581 new jobs and safeguarding almost 9,000 more.

To mark the reconvening of the Board of Trade, Mr Cairns will visit Pontypridd based business Concrete Canvas which is celebrating another record breaking year of export growth, with 85 per cent of turnover directly resulting from export sales. (See case study below). The company has benefitted from UK Government support to access new global markets and is now looking to explore export opportunities across Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and other neighbouring countries in the region.

Darren Hughes, International Business Development Manager, Concrete Canvas said:

When we first started exporting, we received invaluable support from the Department for International Trade (DIT), both with specific market advice and funding for trade missions and in-market projects. We gained a lot from visiting our target markets in person and meeting local contacts whilst we were there.

DIT provided important advice to us when entering new markets and the potential risks, helping us to grow our revenue streams, but whilst safeguard our intellectual property – the foundation of our business.

The Board of Trade will meet four times a year with meetings rotated around the UK guaranteeing all parts of the union have a chance to raise the issues most important to them.

The first meeting will be held today at Bristol Robotics Lab. The lab which brings together over 200 academics, researchers and industry practitioners, is the most comprehensive academic centre for multi-disciplinary robotics research in the UK, and is spearheading Britain's efforts to become a world leader in modern advanced robotics.

The agenda of the meeting will include a Bristol Airport Presentation on Regional Transport Access, an area that will be key in the promotion of future UK exports for the whole of the UK.

The President will also invite a discussion on how the Board will promote a

culture of exporting and investing across the whole of the UK and celebrate the very best of British businesses which are already creating jobs and driving prosperity through their international outlook.

Concrete Canvas

Welsh business Concrete Canvas is celebrating another record breaking year of export growth, with 85 per cent of turnover directly resulting from export sales.

Founded by Peter Brewin and Will Crawford, Concrete Canvas manufactures a range of innovative products that disrupt traditional construction techniques. The material is a flexible concrete impregnated fabric that hardens on hydration to form a thin, durable, water proof and fire resistant concrete layer. The duo invented their unique material technology whilst studying Innovation Design Engineering at Imperial College and the Royal College of Art.

Their first concept was the Concrete Canvas Shelter, a rapidly deployable hardened shelter which only requires air and water for construction. Essentially, the Shelter is a “building in a bag”. This product won numerous accolades, including a Saatchi & Saatchi award for World Changing Ideas and was the subject of a National Geographic short video which has received over 10 million views and generated immeasurable international interest in the product.

Whilst the domestic market was key to proving the business model and providing early growth during the company’s infancy, international markets were quickly identified as an enormous potential opportunity and key to the long-term success of the business. In the last six years, the company has attended numerous trade missions, OMIS and ITO projects across South East Asia, Oceania and MENA resulting in the strong distribution network that Concrete Canvas now has in place as its primary route to market.

The company has now exported to 85 countries globally, with continued double-digit growth year on year.

In the last financial year, over 85 per cent of turnover came from export sales.

Concrete Canvas is now looking to explore export opportunities across Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and other neighbouring countries in the region. The company recently attended a trade mission to Kazakhstan with support from the Department for International Trade (DIT). In-country DIT International Trade Advisers were on hand to provide specialist advice on international market research, product assessment and sourcing local partners to work with.

The company has grown rapidly and now employs over 40 staff, with 4 based overseas in regional hub offices in Sydney, Kuala Lumpur, Durban and Brussels.

Notes to Editors

Further info

(i) Secretary of State for Department for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade (Chair)

(i) Secretary of State for Scotland

(ii) Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

(iii) Secretary of State for Wales

England (6)

(i) Patricia Hewitt – outgoing Chair of UK India Business Council

(ii) Andrew Mills – CEO Virtualstock

(iii) Collette Roche – Chief of Staff, Manchester Airport

(iv) Marnie Millard – CEO Nichols PLC

(v) Iqbal Ahmed – Chairman, Chief Executive and Founder of Seamark Group

(vi) Edward Timpson – former Minister of State for Children and Families

Scotland (2)

(vii) Brian Wilson – former Trade Minister

(viii) Ian Curle – CEO of Edrington Group

Wales (2)

(ix) Lord Rowe-Beddoe – former Chair of Welsh Development Agency

(x) Heather Stevens – Chair and founding member of The Waterloo Foundation

Northern Ireland (1)

(xi) Mark Nodder (CEO of Wrights Group)

[News story: Sunmi and Patrol report published](#)

MAIB's report into the fatal accident during pilot transfer between general cargo vessel Sunmi and pilot transfer vessel Patrol on the River Thames,

London on 5 October 2016 is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, subsequent actions taken and recommendations.

Press enquiries

Press enquiries during office hours 01932 440015

Press enquiries out of hours 020 7944 4292

[News story: Scotland Yard wins Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award](#)

The Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award recognises excellence in publicly funded buildings and infrastructure, and highlights projects that bring real change to communities, demonstrate innovative and efficient construction and deliver value for money.

The winning building is a £58 million project that remodelled and extended the former Curtis Green building. It represents a move back to Victoria Embankment by the Metropolitan Police service, having first previously occupied the address in 1890.

Other features include:

- a modern, flexible and efficient office environment for the Metropolitan Police Service
- extended floor space that facilitates agile working and more interaction between staff
- innovative design including an elegant curved glass entrance pavilion to enable greater access for the public

It was funded from the sale of New Scotland Yard's previous site at 10 Broadway, which was vacated in 2016 and acts as a central hub supported by nine local offices.

This award is supported by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), part of the Cabinet Office, and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It was presented for the first time in 2001. It is one of many awards presented at the British Construction Industry Awards (BCIA), organised by New Civil Engineer Magazine, and held in association with Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and the Architects Journal.

Minister for Government Resilience and Efficiency, Caroline Nokes MP, said:

This award for Scotland Yard is testament to the government's commitment to constructing public buildings which deliver value for money for the taxpayer and smarter public services.

The building's innovative design and use of technology helps the Met Police work in a more modern and efficient way. It was funded from the sale of its former building and acts as a central hub supported by nine local offices, putting police services more in touch with their local communities.

The project shows what can be achieved when government and the private sector work together to deliver innovative and efficient construction, completed on time and on budget. It demonstrates all the principles set out in the Government Construction Strategy – our plan to improve productivity and deliver £1.7bn efficiencies in government construction by 2020.

Cressida Dick, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service said:

I am delighted that our new building has been commended. This building, in the heart of Westminster and close to the Met's founding location, allows the Metropolitan Police Service to look forward to the future, providing excellent facilities and technology for our officers and staff.

From our glass pavilion and Eternal Flame Memorial, to the iconic revolving New Scotland Yard sign, the design has incorporated the past, present and future of policing in London. Many congratulations to all the colleagues past and present who made this a reality

Professor Tim Broyd, ICE President and BCIA judge, said:

Here is a building that is both functional for day to day police work and yet also accessible and welcoming to the public. The design is stunning, complementing its surroundings and demonstrating a redevelopment that has been completed to the highest standard.

Speech: Winner of the 2017 Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am very pleased to be here with you this evening to present the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award at the 2017 British Construction Industry Awards.

An awards ceremony which recognises and rewards excellence in construction and how projects can transform society. I am also informed that this awards ceremony is in its thirtieth year, so congratulations to you all!

Thanks to your hard work, the construction industry in the UK has a world-class reputation and underpins our country's continuing economic growth – creating much needed infrastructure and jobs, and helping export UK construction expertise around the world.

The government has a strong role to play in shaping this industry, with over a quarter of construction output from the public sector and central government being the biggest single construction client.

That is why these awards are supported through the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award, sponsored by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority in the Cabinet Office and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

What makes a 'better' public building

Tonight we are all here to celebrate some of the very best examples of construction – from grand projects that are reshaping our cities, to smaller, more local, efforts that are serving our communities.

But these awards are not just about the technical merit of a building or the precise functional feat of engineering, important as they are. They are also about recognising how better building and construction can transform lives, communities and the UK as a whole.

A better public building achieves excellence in design quality, innovation and procurement practices.

A better public building is first class financial management – delivered on budget and providing value for money for taxpayers.

A better public building is constructed on time and has real social and environmental value for its local community.

These are the principles this government is committed to and that we are recognising tonight.

Government Construction Strategy

And these are the principles that are embodied in our Government Construction Strategy.

Our strategy sets out how we want to make the government a better client, improve construction productivity and deliver £1.7 billion efficiencies and 20,000 apprenticeships in construction by 2020.

We know that innovation inside the public sector can be used to support growth in the private sector. So we want to work with industry to ensure effective procurement, efficient delivery, competitive pricing, and design excellence all become the norm.

Tonight's winner embodies all of these principles – it is a building that is well designed, innovative and enables a smarter public service.

It acts as a central hub, supported by nine local offices, putting this service more in touch with local communities.

It was delivered on time and on budget – in fact funded from the sale of its former building – so at no extra cost to the taxpayer! As Minister for Government Efficiency, you can see why I am particularly excited about the winner this year!

This approach has enabled more investment to be put into the public services the building is there to support. And despite its high security, the design of the building makes it feel open, welcoming and more transparent to the public it serves.

As the judges said, it is 'fit for function' in the best sense of the phrase.

Announcement

I want to congratulate everyone involved in the projects shortlisted for the award this evening.

We continue to see increasing numbers of excellent projects all over the country. They are an inspiration to all public sector clients, and I'd like to see every new public building project meet the same high standards.

But there can only be one winner. So I am delighted to announce that the winner of the 2017 Prime Minister's Better Building Award is...

... the New Scotland Yard building on Thames Embankment!

Please join the stage to collect your award. Thank you.

Press release: Boost for island wind projects as UK government announces new funding for renewable generation

- Latest auction brought forward over 1GW of clean electricity for Scotland
- UK decarbonising faster than any other G20 nation, with renewables now providing 30% of the UK's electricity supply

The UK government intends to allow wind projects on the remote islands of Scotland to compete in the next competitive auction for less established renewable technologies (Contracts for Difference) to be held in spring 2019, it was announced today. The UK government has also announced that up to £557 million of support will be available for future Contracts for Difference auctions.

Ahead of the launch of the UK government's Clean Growth Strategy, Energy Minister Richard Harrington said:

The UK government's Clean Growth Strategy has set out how the whole of the UK can benefit from the global move to a low carbon economy.

Scotland already has a strong record in exploiting the potential of clean growth, with more than half of Scottish electricity consumption coming from renewable sources.

We want to go further creating thousands of good jobs and attracting billions of pounds worth of investment. That's why we are ensuring that remote island wind projects in Scotland, which have the potential to benefit the island communities directly, have access to the same funding opportunities as offshore wind in the next renewables auction round.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

Wind projects on the remote islands of Scotland have the potential to generate substantial amounts of electricity for the whole of the UK and I am delighted they will have the opportunity to compete in the next round of Contracts for Difference. This UK government investment is vital in realising the potential of less established renewable technologies, as well as providing Scottish jobs in the projects supported.

Clean Growth is at the heart of the Industrial Strategy, and the UK government is determined to unlock opportunities across the UK, while cutting carbon emissions as the world moves to towards a low

carbon future.

The last competitive auction to bring more renewable projects into the market ended in September and brought forward commitments for enough electricity generation to power 3.6 million homes. It secured 3.2GW of electricity from offshore wind projects including the Moray East offshore wind farm which will provide 950MW of capacity, capable of powering over 950,000 homes.

A 2013 report for the UK and Scottish governments concluded that wind projects on the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland could supply around 3% of the UK's total electricity demand.

With over 700MW of wind projects with current planning consents on these islands, this announcement gives certainty that the UK is an attractive place to invest. This will also benefit the skilled UK supply chain, with many projects expected to spend over 50% of their capital and operating costs within the UK.

The Clean Growth Strategy looks across the whole of the economy and the country. It includes ambitious proposals on housing, business, transport and the environment, as well as the power sector.

Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, met members of the Scottish Island Renewable Delivery Forum in April on the Isle of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. In August UK Energy Minister Richard Harrington chaired a roundtable in Aberdeen with a range of stakeholders to discuss how wind projects on the islands of Scotland (Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles) can directly benefit the local communities.

- The UK government has submitted an application to the European Commission seeking State aid approval for this change to the Contracts for Difference scheme.