

Cabinet Office Minister visits Greggs HQ in Newcastle

Yesterday Cabinet Office Minister Nigel Adams visited Greggs House in Newcastle to hear how the food-on-the-go retailer is investing in communities and is helping to get people back into work.

During the visit, Minister Adams heard from a number of employees at Greggs' HQ about the Fresh Start programme which offers training and work experience to people who are transitioning into work, including care leavers, people who have been unemployed for a long time, or who are leaving the armed services or prison.

The Minister also took the opportunity to promote the government's Places for Growth programme which will benefit Newcastle and the surrounding areas. The ten year programme will move 22,000 roles outside of London by 2030 to other regions in the UK by 2030.

The number of civil servants working at government locations in the north east increased between 2020 – 2021 by 5.7%. The programme has also committed to more than 350 roles being relocated to Tyneside by 2025.

As a prominent business employing more than 25,000 people and operating over 2,200 shops nationwide, Minister Adams heard from the senior leadership team, including Roisin Currie, CEO Designate and Emma Walton, the organisation's People Director, about their ambitious plans to reach 3,000 shops and double Greggs' sales in the next five years – which in turn will help to achieve the governments levelling up agenda by investing in communities and providing thousands of jobs in all regions of the UK.

In November, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) announced a new core hub office in Newcastle upon Tyne which will enhance and support the close working and co-location between existing Defra staff in Newcastle, and number of arms-length body colleagues.

The Departments for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), DEFRA, Work and Pensions (DWP), Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and HMRC have all made commitments to grow their workforce in Tyneside and the surrounding areas.

Minister Nigel Adams said:

Greggs is an iconic British company that has not forgotten its roots and continues to support and create jobs for local communities throughout the UK.

The government is committed to strong local growth through our Places for Growth strategy. There are more than 16,000 civil

servants already in the Tyneside area from at least 15 government departments, and it's vital that we continue to build a more diverse and inclusive civil service that reflects local communities across the UK.

Roisin Currie, CEO Designate said:

Whilst Greggs is a National business, the sheer 'localness' of our operations means we can have a hugely positive impact on the communities we serve both through offering employment opportunities including to those who need more support through our Fresh Start programme, but also through our longstanding partnership with The Greggs Foundation supporting initiatives such as the Breakfast Club programme.

Our people are what makes our business successful and we pride ourselves on offering them a great place to work. It was good to hear more about the Levelling Up agenda from the Minister, and we are supportive of any positive steps made to further drive equal opportunity for UK communities.

Notes to editors

- Government departments who have a presence in the Tyneside area include Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Department for Work and Pension (DWP), Cabinet Office, Home Office, Ministry of Justice (MoJ), DEFRA and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).
- The government [announced](#) this week that employers businesses hiring former members of the UK armed forces in their first year of civilian employment can save thousands of pounds through National Insurance relief.
- Civil Service Statistics as at 31 March 2021 are available [here](#).