

Economy Secretary hails success of company helping to turn black cabs green

Economy Secretary Ken Skates is attending the reopening of Norwegian owned, Sapa's Bedwas site today which will be producing aluminium components for the TX-5 – the all new zero emissions capable London cab.

This will replace the diesel powered black cab with a model that utilises a plug-in hybrid powertrain.

The investment is backed by £550,000 from the Welsh Government, which helped bring the project to Wales, despite competition from another European facility.

First Minister Carwyn Jones met senior officials from the Sapa group during his visit to Norway in January and pressed the business case for bringing the investment to Wales.

The Bedwas site was mothballed in 2014 following significant changes in market conditions but was retained by Sapa. The opportunity to re-open the facility occurred when Sapa Components UK, which supplies all the major vehicle manufacturers with aluminium based sub-assemblies and components, secured contracts to supply the new London cab.

Sapa has been working with the London Electrical Vehicle Company (LEVC) since 2015 and invested significantly in researching and developing lightweight aluminium prototypes and components for the new vehicle.

Economy and Infrastructure Secretary Ken Skates said:

“The Welsh Government is proud to have supported Sapa's extensive investment in the refurbishment of its site in Bedwas which will create at least 130 jobs over the next five years.

“Wales has a growing reputation for supporting innovative new technologies and opportunities, and the Low Carbon Vehicle sector is a particular growth area and a key sub sector for our advanced materials and manufacturing industry.

“I am delighted that SAPA is reopening its operation in Bedwas and proud that Wales will be playing a key role in the production of a new generation of environmentally friendly black cabs.”

Calvin Carpenter, MD Sapa Component UK, adds:

“This is a proud day as it is a culmination of nearly 3 years working with London Taxi throughout its development phases to enable us to supply major body components to the ‘new state of the art’ facility in Ansty, Coventry.”