

## [News story: Business Secretary and Ministers hold meeting with leading retailers](#)

Business Secretary Greg Clark chaired a roundtable today (22 February 2017) with the country's top retailers and trade bodies to discuss the sector's priorities and how the government's [Industrial Strategy](#) can help the industry respond to future opportunities and challenges.

At the meeting, Greg Clark stressed the vital role the UK retail sector has as a driving force in our economy, and the critical part it has to play in delivering the government's vision of an economy which works for everyone. The Business Secretary was joined by Small Business and Consumer Minister Margot James and Jane Ellison, Financial Secretary to the Treasury. They met chief executives from the UK's top retailers including ASOS, Boots, Shop Direct, Co-op Group, Dixons Carphone, Sainsbury's-Argos and Superdrug as well as key industry trade bodies, the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the Federation of Small Businesses and British Independent Retailers Association.

Following the meeting, Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

"The retail sector makes an invaluable contribution to our economy, delivering £340 billion of sales in 2015 alone. It is vitally important that government and industry work closely together to help the sector create high skilled and high paying jobs across the UK, improve productivity and shape the future of retail in the UK.

"The retail roundtable was a great opportunity to discuss the sector's priorities and how the government can support it through our Industrial Strategy, helping it build on its existing strengths, address challenges and seize new opportunities."

Helen Dickinson OBE, Chief Executive of the British Retail Consortium said:

"We are committed to ensuring that the retail industry is able to maximise its future contribution to the UK's success. There is a strong partnership role for the retail industry to play in assisting in the development of the government's Industrial Strategy, to contribute to a strong British economy in the future.

"The Industrial Strategy is an opportunity to collaborate to shape the implications of the industry's transformation for the benefit of our customers, the workforce and the government's productivity agenda."

During the meeting the retail sector presented their initial thinking on a potential sector deal with government, including how skills, trade and place based activity could help drive up the productivity, growth and sustainability of the sector.

As well as getting feedback from retailers on how the government can support the sector through its Industrial Strategy, other topics that were discussed included the future direction of the sector and how it can help improve UK productivity.

A full list of participants:

- Amazon
- Asda
- ASOS
- Associated British Foods (Primark)
- Association of Convenience Stores
- British Independent Retailers Association
- British Retail Consortium
- Co-op
- Dixons Carphone
- Federation of Small Businesses
- GFirst LEP
- John Lewis Partnership
- Kingfisher
- Lloyds Pharmacy
- Marks and Spencer
- WM Morrisons
- National Federation of Retail Newsagents
- Sainsbury's-Argos
- Shop Direct
- Superdrug (Hutchison Whampoa Europe Ltd)
- Tesco
- Walgreens Boots Alliance