

News story: New ministerial champion to back jobs, growth and opportunity in Salisbury

Business Minister Lord Henley has been appointed Ministerial Champion for Salisbury, providing local leaders with a single point of contact in the heart of government as the local area focuses on boosting business following the nerve agent attack last year.

The news comes as Lord Henley today met Wiltshire Council, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) and local businesses while seeing recovery efforts first-hand (Thursday 7 February) during a 2-day visit to South Wiltshire.

Lord Henley received a briefing from Wiltshire Council on the Salisbury Recovery Programme during a visit to the Guildhall. He then walked down the High Street to hear from businesses directly impacted by the incident that have been supported with government funding, including:

- Zizzi, a restaurant which re-opened in November having been given the all-clear following decontamination work
- Smith England, an independent hair salon
- Pritchett's, an independent family-run butchers

He then visited The Tintometer, one of the region's most innovative businesses, supplying water analysis equipment for the leisure, environmental and industrial sectors to understand their perspective on local challenges and opportunities. The company now employs more than 370 employees and delivers products and customer service to customers in 160 countries.

During a visit to the Porton Down Science Park tomorrow, Lord Henley will meet with John Glen MP, Wiltshire Council and Dstl representatives to hear about their plans for the future development of the Science Park. He then met with Wiltshire Council and the SWLEP to discuss progress towards developing a local Industrial Strategy to boost growth across the region.

Last year the government announced more than £7.5 million of funding to boost businesses, tourism and support the local community as a result of the incidents in Salisbury and Amesbury. The government is committed to supporting this historic British city as it recovers and will continue to do everything possible to help keep South Wiltshire and its businesses thriving.

There is now only one remaining site of decontamination to bring back into safe use, at Christie Miller Road. While this work is ongoing, our focus also remains on ensuring a prosperous local community in Salisbury and the wider region.

Wider government investment in the SWLEP area includes nearly £170 million

worth of Growth Deals, supporting 26 projects and programmes including skills support at Wiltshire College, Salisbury and the redevelopment of central Salisbury.

Business Minister Lord Henley said:

As the newly appointed Ministerial Champion for Salisbury I look forward to supporting efforts to ensure this great Cathedral city of commerce, culture and character continues to thrive.

As Salisbury gets back to business, the government is working hand-in-hand with local leaders to deliver an ambitious local Industrial Strategy for the area, ensuring Salisbury not only recovers, but leads the way in some of the industries of the future.

Alistair Cunningham, chair of the South Wiltshire recovery coordinating group, said:

We welcome Lord Henley to South Wiltshire and are pleased to have the continued support from central government in helping Salisbury and South Wiltshire to move forward.

South Wiltshire is looking to the future, and working closely with the government will deliver economic regeneration and cultural improvements to the city.

A long-term programme has been developed to re-position Salisbury and improve the offer for residents, visitors and tourists.