

# PM welcomes Angela Merkel on final UK visit as German Chancellor

- The Prime Minister will welcome Angela Merkel to Chequers for her final visit ahead of stepping down as Chancellor later this year.
- PM has announced new award for British and German women in science in honour of Chancellor Merkel.
- Leaders will agree to hold annual joint UK-German Cabinet meetings and Chancellor Merkel will address a meeting of the British Cabinet

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will make her final visit to the UK today (2 July 2021) before she steps down from her post later this year. This will be her 22nd visit since taking office in 2005.

Germany is the UK's second-largest trading partner and every day 730,000 people in the UK go to work for German companies or vice-versa. More than 21,000 Germans study or work at UK Universities.

Collaboration between the UK and Germany improves and saves lives. During the coronavirus pandemic, for example, University College London teamed up with Mercedes-AMG to develop and produce new breathing aids for patients with major respiratory problems that are now being used in over 130 NHS Hospitals.

The number of links between the UK and Germany have only grown during Angela Merkel's time as Chancellor, and during her visit today the Prime Minister will announce the creation of a new academic medal in her honour.

The award of £10,000 will be given every year to a UK or Germany-based female scientist who has excelled in the field of astrophysics. The medal will be named after Caroline Herschel, a German-born British astrophysicist who was a pioneer in the field.

Chancellor Merkel is herself a scientist by training. She was honoured in 2010 by the Royal Society with the King Charles II Medal, which is awarded to foreign Heads of State or Government who have made an outstanding contribution to furthering scientific research in their country.

Today Chancellor Merkel will visit Chequers for discussions with the Prime Minister on deepening the UK-Germany relationship. The Chancellor will also address a virtual meeting of the British Cabinet – the first foreign leader to do so since President Clinton addressed Cabinet in 1997.

The Prime Minister and Chancellor are expected to agree a number of new initiatives to expand the links between the UK and Germany across a range of sectors, including:

Annual joint meetings of the UK and German Cabinets. This will be the first arrangement of its kind for the UK and an opportunity to share expertise and expand joint working between the governments of our countries. The

establishment of a new UK-German Cultural Dialogue which will meet annually to bring together cultural figures from both our countries and create new opportunities for talented young people. Underlining their shared support to youth exchanges and collaboration between Germany and the UK, including an intention to increase future funding to the UK-German Connection, a bilateral programme which 4,300 young people participated in in 2019.

Speaking ahead of the visit, the Prime Minister said:

The UK and Germany have a steadfast friendship and a shared outlook on many issues. Our scientists, innovators and industrialists work together every day to make the world a better place.

Over the 16 years of Chancellor Merkel's tenure the UK-Germany relationship has been re-energised and re-invigorated for a new era. And the new joint ventures we will agree today will leave a legacy that will last for generations.

Collaboration between the UK and Germany is already helping tackle some of the greatest challenges of our time, including defeating the coronavirus pandemic and tackling climate change, and today the Prime Minister and Chancellor Merkel will reaffirm the importance of that work.

This includes support for 'Neuconnect', a new electricity interconnector that will create an energy highway between the UK and Germany. Neuconnect is the largest UK-German investment project currently underway and will allow our energy grids to share excess power – making sure renewable energy is not wasted and helping both our economies decarbonise more rapidly.

Earlier this month Ofgem confirmed key licence details for the project, which is funded by £1.4bn of private investment from Meridiam, Allianz Capital Partners and Kansai Electric Power.