

Press release: Government Ministers visiting Wales as part of Industrial Strategy engagement programme

- Ministers visiting sites across Wales to explain how plans for a modern Industrial Strategy will benefit Wales.
- Business Secretary Greg Clark to be joined by Wales Secretary Alun Cairns at General Electric (GE) Aviation to tour production line and meet staff.
- Engagement will be followed by an evening reception with leading Welsh businesses and organisations in Cardiff.

The Government's engagement programme for its Industrial Strategy continues today, with Ministers set to meet with universities, companies, and workers in Wales to hear their views on how to get the economy firing all cylinders.

Business Secretary Greg Clark and Wales Secretary Alun Cairns will visit General Electric (GE) Aviation in Cardiff to meet with production staff and management, before touring the plant to see the world-class services GE offers to airlines around the world.

Greg Clark, Alun Cairns and Business Ministers will then host an evening reception at Tramshed Tech in Cardiff with Welsh businesses, trade groups and local leaders, discussing the views of the Welsh business community on the priorities for a modern Industrial Strategy.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark said:

We recognise no two places in the UK are the same with each place having its own unique identity and strengths.

Through our modern Industrial Strategy we plan to build on these strengths in fields such as aerospace, technology and life sciences, to make Wales one of the most competitive areas in the UK to start and grow a business.

We launched our strategy as a Green Paper because we want this to be a conversation with businesses and employees. Today my ministerial team and I are visiting Wales to discuss how the Government can work with business and academia to deliver a high-skill economy, prepared for the future.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The UK Government's modern industrial strategy is a plan for everyone. Wales has a strong competitive economy and by pulling

together we can build on our strength to grow key sectors and business in Wales.

We need to ensure people throughout Wales benefit from the creation of a highly skilled and strong workforce; this is what the industrial strategy sets out to do.

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson is visiting world-leading engineering and scientific technology company, Renishaw Plc, while Lord Prior of Brampton is visiting a Tata Steel plant in Shotton and the military aerospace facility, Raytheon.

Climate Change and Industry Minister Nick Hurd is going to the Liberty Steel plant in Newport and sustainable cement manufacturer Cenin Cement in Bridgend.

Small Business and Consumer Minister Margot James will be visiting a leading microbrewery, Tiny Rebels Brewery, to find out more about its recent export successes, before visiting the largest animation production company in Wales, Cloth Cat Animation. Margot will then be part of a creative industries roundtable on the Industrial Strategy, with representatives from the creative industry in Wales.

In its Green Paper, Building our Industrial Strategy, the Government has outlined ten key pillars of focus to be discussed as part of a 12 week consultation period, inviting contributions from industries, businesses, local groups and workers across Wales.

With a clear ambition of creating an economy that works for everyone, the Green Paper contains a number of proposed announcements set to benefit the Welsh regions such as:

- The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and foundation of UKRI, creating new opportunities for Wales' world class universities to bid for UK Government funding.
- Recognising the excellence in research and innovation that exists across the UK, and investing an additional £4.7 billion by 2020-21.
- Investing in digital infrastructure, which has for too long been a barrier to economic growth across Wales.
- Finding a sustainable way to support energy intensive industries such as steel with energy costs.

The Government has issued an open invitation to industries, businesses and local groups across Wales to visit the GOV.UK website and help set the priorities for a modern Industrial Strategy. The consultation period runs for 12 weeks after which the Government will consider responses before publishing a White Paper later in the year.

Notes to Editors

Industrial Strategy pillars

The Green Paper seeks views from Wales on how the Government can refine its vision to help the UK economy meet future challenges and opportunities. The 10 pillars which the Green Paper seeks feedback on are:

- Investing in science, research and innovation – we must become a more innovative economy and do more to commercialise our world-leading science base to drive growth across the UK.
- Developing skills – we must help people and businesses to thrive by: ensuring everyone has the basic skills needed in a modern economy; building a new system of technical education to benefit the half of young people who do not go to university; boosting STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills, digital skills and numeracy; and raising skill levels in lagging areas.
- Upgrading infrastructure – we must upgrade our standards of performance on digital, energy, transport, water and flood defence infrastructure, and better align central government infrastructure investment with local growth priorities.
- Supporting businesses to start and grow – we must ensure that businesses across the UK can access the finance and management skills they need to grow; and we must create the right conditions for companies to invest for the long term.
- Improving procurement – we must use strategic government procurement to drive innovation and enable the development of UK supply chains.
- Encouraging trade and inward investment – government policy can help boost productivity and growth across our economy, including by increasing competition and helping to bring new ways of doing things to the UK.
- Delivering affordable energy and clean growth – we need to keep costs down for businesses, and secure the economic benefits of the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Cultivating world-leading sectors – we must build on our areas of competitive advantage, and help new sectors to flourish, in many cases challenging existing institutions and incumbents.
- Driving growth across the whole country – we will create a framework to build on the particular strengths of different places and address factors that hold places back – whether it is investing in key infrastructure projects to encourage growth, increasing skill levels, or backing local innovation strengths.
- Creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places – we will consider the best structures to support people, industries and places. In some places and sectors there may be missing institutions which we could create, or existing ones we could strengthen, be they local civic or educational institutions, trade associations or financial networks.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy brings together the responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation,

energy, and climate change. The Department is responsible for developing and delivering the Government's vision for an ambitious industrial strategy, and continuing to ensure that the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation. The Department leads the Government's relationship with business, and is responsible for improving corporate governance and securing better outcomes for consumers. We also make sure that the UK has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean and take action to tackle climate change, working in partnership with the business community.