

Press release: UK Government Ministers back Welsh SMEs on Small Business Saturday

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns and UK Government Minister Guto Bebb will visit independent businesses in their constituencies this weekend, in celebration of the annual Small Business Saturday campaign on 2 December.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox will also visit small businesses in Newport who are making their mark on the local economy.

Now in its fifth year, the campaign encourages consumers to shop in small, local businesses. Last year, consumers spent £717m in small businesses on the Saturday – a 15% increase on 2015.

The UK Government recently unveiled its Industrial Strategy, which includes driving over £20bn of investment in innovative and high potential businesses, including establishing a new £2.5bn Investment Fund incubated in the British Business Bank.

In Wales, the British Business Bank has already guaranteed over 1,251 loans to support small businesses since its inception in 2014, with a cumulative value of £134.8 million. The Start-up Loans Company has also provided 2,086 loans to businesses in Wales, worth in excess of £17.1 million.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Small Business Saturday is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the hard work that business owners put in to make their firms a success.

SMEs represent a key part of the Welsh economy and are a crucial support network to our communities. I'm delighted to support my local high street businesses on Small Business Saturday and throughout the year.

The UK Government is determined to make sure Welsh businesses have the tools and support they need to be successful. The Industrial Strategy builds on conversations we have had with businesses and employees right across Wales, facilitating major investments in infrastructure and research and creating growth corridors to foster greater cross-border working.

This is a strategy which plays to our economic strengths and addresses some of the challenges Wales is facing, with the aim of driving productivity and generating prosperity across the country.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said:

Small businesses are the backbone of the UK economy, and Small Business Saturday provides the perfect opportunity to emphasise how they can grow through exporting.

Through websites like great.gov.uk, and now with the launch of our How to Sell Overseas Guide, my department is committed to helping businesses across Newport and the whole of Wales make the most of global demand for British goods and services, and take advantage of growing markets around the world.

UK Government Minister Guto Bebb said:

I look forward to supporting the business owners and entrepreneurs who provide so much to our communities this weekend. From the corner shops that have all life's essential items, to the innovators who come up with inventive ways to change the world, we have so much to thank small businesses for.

The UK Government recognises the need to support these businesses to ensure economic growth and prosperity, and through the Industrial Strategy we are delivering that support.

I encourage small businesses across Wales to take advantage of the financial backing and informative advice available to them to unleash their potential.

For more information about government support available to small businesses, please visit [finance and support for your business](#).

For more information on the Small Business Saturday campaign visit smallbusinessaturdayuk.com or follow the conversation on social media via #SmallBizSatUK.

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