

News story: DIT support helps green company expand UK operations

The company's product saves three times more trees than normal recycled paper, making it more affordable for British companies to go carbon neutral.

The investment will help Paper Plus Europe expand their London office and presence in the UK market, creating seven new jobs, as they aim to add to the more than half a million trees they have saved in last two years.

Part of the funding will be used for the company's product development, which will tackle plastic waste caused by single-use plastic food packaging. The company's R&D operation will also benefit, helping to further develop their envOPAP food grade packaging that will be biodegradable and compostable.

Minister for Investment, Graham Stuart said:

I am delighted that the Department for International Trade, through its international network, has been able to assist Paper Plus in landing this considerable new investment from India, which will have huge long-term environmental benefits both in the UK and abroad.

As an international economic department, we are committed to helping UK companies with trailblazing green ideas to locate the investment they need to reach the next level, creating jobs and prosperity across the country, and helping to ensure we leave our environment in a better state than we inherited it.

Director, Paper Plus, Kaushal Shah said:

We at Paper Plus believe in making sustainability the new normal for consumers in the UK and over the world.

The expertise and advice of DIT have been a significant accelerator for our business.

The professional knowledge of our DIT advisors is phenomenal and it enhances the credibility of the UK as an excellent place to do business.

The news comes as the Minister met companies and industry experts at the Advanced Engineering 2018 trade show in Birmingham.

Advanced Engineering is one of the biggest trade shows of its kind in Europe, and more than 600 suppliers and thousands of visitors were in attendance.

The Department for International Trade's UK Pavilion – which housed more than 18 companies – demonstrated expertise across the advanced engineering technical spectrum.

The announcement is one of £10 million of investment deals with global partners that have created more than 50 highly specialised jobs in the UK's advanced engineering sector in recent weeks with assistance from the Department for International Trade.

- In late September, Belgian company Solvay invested in a new specialist centre for aircraft materials in Wrexham, creating 50 jobs.
- Another Belgian company – Sioen Industries – continued their investment in Lancashire-based technical textile manufacturer James Dewhurst in 2017 with a £1.7 million investment in state-of-the-art machinery. Alongside its sister company Veranneman Technical Textiles, the company has also committed itself to creating further jobs at the site in the future.
- Gloucestershire-based engineering company Renishaw have invested £2.7 million in new premises in Mexico, enabling the company to further establish its global footprint.

Further information

- Paper Plus specialise in producing carbon neutral, sustainable, sugarcane-based paper products, and estimates that it has saved a million trees in the last two years. One pallet of its envoPAP paper saves 24 trees compared to only seven with normal recycled paper.
- There are over 100,000 advanced manufacturing companies in the UK, employing 2.7 million people, while manufacturing productivity is growing three times faster than the rest of the UK's economy as a whole. Research and development in the sector totals £13.5 billion every year.
- DIT's [Export Strategy](#) – launched in August – sets out the ambitious target of increasing exports as a measure of GDP from 30% to 35%, transforming the UK into one of the G7's most prolific exports.

[Find out more about investing in the UK](#)

News story: Education Secretary appoints new Social Mobility Commissioners

The new commissioners come from all walks of life and include leaders from the fields of business, education and technology. Many have their own personal stories of how they have overcome barriers to success and now work to improve social mobility in their sectors.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Dame Martina and I share a vision for a country where we raise our ambitions for every child, whatever their background. Education is at the heart of this, giving everyone the chance to fulfil the spark of potential that exists in them.

This new team of commissioners brings together established business men and women, policy makers, academics and young people all with important perspectives to bring. The Social Mobility Commission will benefit from the expertise of this diverse mix of individuals, all of whom will bring their own unique stamp to what social mobility means in their lives.

I look forward to working with the new Commission to make our shared vision a reality.

The appointments follow approval from the Prime Minister and the Public Appointments Committee, and include the editor of a women's magazine Cosmopolitan, a university professor, a headteacher and two youth ambassadors.

Dame Martina Milburn, Chair of the Social Mobility Commission said:

I am delighted to welcome a record number of Social Mobility Commissioners who will work to make England a fairer society.

This is a group of people with real-life experiences of social mobility to help challenge government, business, and society as a whole, to create a fair system where people can thrive.

Many of our new Commissioners had modest starts in life and know the barriers that young people must overcome to become successful. They are also individuals with the skills, resources, and energy to drive real change around the country, united by a passion for fairness and an ability to make a real difference to people's lives.

The Social Mobility Commissioners will take up their new roles next month with an event planned to mark the Commission's relaunch on 11 December.

Their appointments build on Dame Martina's vision to bring greater ethnic, gender and age diversity to Commission by tapping into a diverse range of backgrounds.

Younger commissioners, as well as members based outside London and the south east will make sure its work is better represented regionally, helping to raise its profile and influence young people directly.

Joining Dame Martina as commissioners will be:

- Alastair da Costa, Chair of Capital City College Group
- Liz Williams, Group Director of Digital Society at BT
- Farrah Storr, Editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan
- Harvey Matthewson, Volunteer, and part-time Sales Assistant at Marks & Spencer
- Jessica Oghenegweke, Project co-ordinator at the Diana Award
- Jody Walker, Senior Vice President at TJX Europe (TK Maxx and Home Sense in the UK)
- Pippa Dunn, Founder of Broody, helping entrepreneurs and start ups
- Saeed Atcha, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Xplode magazine
- Sam Friedman, Associate Professor in Sociology at London School of Economics
- Sammy Wright, Vice Principal of Southmoor Academy, Sunderland
- Sandra Wallace, Managing Partner UK and Joint Managing Director Europe at DLA Piper
- Steven Cooper, Outgoing Chief Executive Officer of Barclaycard Business

[News story: Industry and education join forces to inspire future engineers in Northern Ireland](#)

Northern Ireland's engineering innovation was in the spotlight as HM Government Envoy for the Year of Engineering Stephen Metcalfe MP visited the country to see first-hand how the industry is inspiring budding engineers.

During the trip last week Stephen Metcalfe visited a pioneering garden which prevents local flooding while acting as a resource to teach schoolchildren how engineering can help communities. He also met engineering apprentices and launched a new competition that will give thousands of schoolchildren the chance to discover what they could achieve as engineers.

Throughout 2018, the [Year of Engineering](#) has seen government join forces with

more than 1,400 industry, education and charity partners to transform perceptions of engineering among children, their parents and teachers – with a target of giving young people a million direct experiences of engineering by the end of the year.

As well as visiting the Clondeboye Rainwater Garden, a collaboration between Northern Ireland Water, the Department for Infrastructure and Aecom, Stephen Metcalfe saw first-hand some of the country's groundbreaking engineering at Bombardier, Thales and Ulster University – covering sectors from aerospace to nanotechnology.

He also helped launch the Northern Ireland Primary Engineer and Secondary Engineer Leader's Award, a competition which will bring thousands of schoolchildren face to face with real engineering role models and experiences. The competition is supported by Ulster University, Thales and the Royal Navy. Already running in England and Scotland, last year it saw 37,000 young people come up with their own inventions to solve real engineering challenges.

Stephen Metcalfe said:

Northern Ireland has a rich engineering heritage and it's been fantastic to see first-hand the creativity and innovation of the industry, and the vital work being done to inspire young people throughout the country to consider careers in engineering.

Bringing young people from all backgrounds face to face with engineering experiences and role models is at the heart of the campaign, so it's fantastic to see this in action with collaborative projects like the Clondeboye Rainwater Garden and the launch of the Northern Ireland Primary and Secondary Engineer Leaders Award.

I have no doubt that the combined enthusiasm and expertise of the industry here in Northern Ireland will inspire schoolchildren across the country and bring about a positive change in the number of young people realising what they could achieve as engineers.

Engineering makes a major contribution to the UK economy, but the sector faces a major skills gap and lack of diversity – there is annual shortage of 20,000 engineering graduates each year, only 12% of the engineering workforce is female, and less than 8% comes from a black, Asian or ethnic minority background.

To find out about the Year of Engineering, including activities, events, videos and school resources, visit www.yearofengineering.gov.uk.

Year of Engineering enquiries

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[Speech: Protecting Human Rights](#)

Updated: Location tagging changed.

Thank you very much indeed Mr Chairman. Having been the British Ambassador to the Human Rights Council, I'm particularly delighted to be able to join you today.

As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Kingdom remains committed to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all people around the world. But while we may all be born equal in rights and dignity, sadly there are wide differences in our enjoyment of them. This is something that should concern all members of the United Nations. It is incumbent on us here to advocate for those whose rights are the most vulnerable or the least respected, and indeed all too often violated by the very governments that have the biggest obligation to protect them.

For the journalists who are detained, tortured, or killed simply for trying to find out the truth, or speaking truth speak to power.

For the people who are discriminated against, put on trial, detained, or killed for exercising their freedom of religion or belief, whether they be Jehovah's witnesses, Christians, Muslims, Baha'i, Jewish, Buddhists or atheists. For those who are prosecuted for blasphemy or apostasy – or put into so-called re-education camps without trial or due process.

For the modern day slaves, including children, who toil in servitude in sweatshop factories; as domestic servants with their passports confiscated, in brothels, in fields or mines, or on construction sites in unsafe conditions; or as labourers sent abroad as commodities to generate funds for a repressive regime.

For the people who are denied the right to marry the person they love, or the ability to form a family; who are discriminated against, attacked or killed;

or denied services simply for their sexual orientation or gender identity. For those in non-conventional families, who find themselves under attack, even when they provide a loving home where children can thrive.

For the people who have had to flee to neighbouring countries to escape sexual violence, slaughter and ethnic cleansing, while the international community endeavours to hold the perpetrators to account.

For the people poisoned in foreign countries as political acts or because they have chosen to live in freedom, or criticised the repressive regime they left.

For people who are sentenced to death in mass trials, where due process is flawed, or put to death for committing minor crimes.

For the human rights defenders and their families, who are mistreated, arrested, 'disappeared' or killed for standing up for the rights of others. For people denied the right to vote, protestors and activists jailed for demanding democracy.

For girls discriminated against from birth; denied the same education as boys; denied control over their assets, income or bodies; married off too young or against their will; denied the right to choose when to have children, suffering increased maternal and infant mortality and complications.

Not only because our shared humanity dictates we should care about the human rights of all – although it does. But also because nations that respect human rights and the rule of law are the very societies that provide the best conditions for development, economic growth, peace, and stability and the happiness of their people. If we want to leave no one behind, we need to make sure we are all free to progress.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

Speech: Humanitarian Access, Refugee Return, and Security in Syria

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you Mark once again for a clear and stark briefing and to all your team on the ground.

I'd like to start by joining Kuwait in expressing our deepest condolences to the people and government of Indonesia for the plane crash. But I also wanted to say I thought the joint statement from Kuwait and Sweden was very powerful.

I wanted to start if I may not immediately with the humanitarian, but with the Istanbul Summit commitments, as briefed by the French representative – and thank you very much for that briefing. I completely agree with what the French Ambassador said about the political process. The Small Group is going on now in London. As we all noted last week, we hope that this combination of commitments and meetings will indeed Mr President see some real, concrete progress on both political and humanitarian tracks. But I think on the political side and on Idlib, I would very much like to receive confirmation today that the Idlib agreement between Russia and Turkey will indeed hold, that those 3 million civilians will indeed be kept safe. I'd like to see confirmation today that the Constitutional Committee will indeed be set up by the end of the year, and I'd like to know if that is something that both Syria and Russia agree should happen. I also agree with what my US colleagues said about CW.

Turning to the humanitarian side Mr President, which is the main purpose of the meeting today, I wanted to underscore what the Under-Secretary-General said about humanitarian principles and the aid needing to go to people in the most need. It's very worrying that we don't have full independent needs assessments; proper refugee return really can't happen without this so I'd be grateful to know from the Syrian Representative but also from the Russians; what is being done to address the UN's concerns on the independent needs assessment?

On Rukban, I take the point that there may be a security risk. I think it would be very good if the Council could have more detail on what that security risk is and how it might be overcome. I want to recall Mr President that UN Member States are obliged to ensure safe and sustained humanitarian access. So the Council needs to hear this assurance today, and it also needs to hear that something will be done about the security and that the UN convoys will then be able to get through to these desperate people. I think we keep ducking this issue in the Council, Mr President. We keep raising it but we keep not getting a satisfactory answer, so it would be very good to get clarity on it today.

I also wanted to note that on humanitarian access, refugee return, we do need to include the issue of security – freedom from political persecution and from arbitrary arrest – if communities are to feel safe and secure about returning to their homes.

Finally Mr President, I wanted to endorse the five asks that the Under-Secretary-General set out today. I want to echo the call for unity on renewing SCR 2165. I think that would be a very powerful signal of progress on the ground.

I want to speak again about the importance of movement forward on the political process. Mark mentioned the need for more generosity from donors in terms of funding some of the UN plan. I'd like to say that in response to the crisis, the British government has committed \$3.47 billion to Syria since 2012, and this includes \$1.25 billion actually spent inside Syria itself.

Notwithstanding that Mr President, I'd like to echo what the French

Ambassador said about reconstruction. There's a difference between humanitarian assistance and reconstruction money. Reconstruction money will only be available from Western governments in the context of a credible, sustainable political process that redresses and addresses of the underlying concerns in Syrian politics today.

Thank you Mr President.