

Speech: Matt Hancock speaking at the launch of Tech Nation

Good morning.

It's a great pleasure to be here and it's a very exciting day to mark Tech City UK and Tech North evolving into Tech Nation and the launch of this fourth Tech Nation report .

The name says a lot. This rebranding shows Tech Nation's commitment to being the sort of dynamic organisation that we've got used to round here in east London, but also spreading the benefits right across the country as a whole.

I warmly welcome this move and the progress you have been making in recent years.

Today's milestone is a great opportunity to step back and think about what we're doing, and to keep up this momentum for the UK as a place to start and grow a tech business.

Because it is as vital now as it's ever been. The impact over the last decade has been huge.

The tech sector has been growing over two-and-a-half times faster than the rest of the economy; but there is much more to do. There are challenges we must face and people snapping at our heels.

And along with Tech Nation, we are working regionally, nationally and globally so the UK is ready for these challenges that lie ahead.

Regional

Tech Nation and its predecessors, have been championing regional tech clusters since 2014.

And I am thrilled with the ambitious plans to help 40,000 entrepreneurs and 4,000 start-ups to scale and to deliver this support directly into a dozen key cities around the UK.

And the crucial Government aim, stated clearly in our Digital Strategy, is making sure that the benefits of growth and the tech sector work for everyone in our country.

We are committed to encouraging investment and developing tech clusters right across the UK.

It is easy, especially here in the centre of London, to focus on the prosperity that we see here in London, and of course this is mission critical. Nobody gains by doing down our world beating capital.

But we need to have a full-spectrum approach, so everybody can participate and get the benefits. And so far, there have been some brilliant results.

London is a fantastic haven for European tech investment. But did you know this? Nearly 70 per cent of investment into the UK tech sector last year was in regional clusters beyond the capital.

The benefits of digital for local economies are incredibly clear – 16 towns now show a higher proportion of digital tech employment than the UK average.

And over 1.5 million people across the country belong to more than 3,000 informal tech meetup groups.

That's people up and down this country working together to develop their businesses, and as they do so, powering their local economies.

So I'm really encouraged that Tech Nation is going to take this work to the next level and provide some of that entrepreneurial juice to expand their programmes even further, to truly connect right across the cities of the UK.

National

As a nation, our digital tech sector is in great shape, supported by the fantastic work Tech Nation has done and the engagement with all of you here.

But to attract more investment and support, we need to fly even higher in the future, and we need to shout loud about this success.

After all, the tech sector nationally is booming and the numbers speak for themselves.

Over £100 billion added to the UK economy in 2016 and real opportunities for investment. After Silicon Valley, London ranks as the second most connected place for tech in the whole world.

And you can rest assured we are firmly committed to maintaining this thriving tech sector and this energy.

Because we want the UK to be the location of choice for tech innovation and investment – so we can build our world-leading digital economy.

Our Digital Strategy, launched about 15 months ago, sets out the key pillars of how we are putting that into practice.

It's about making sure that nationally there's great infrastructure. This means rolling out the existing infrastructure, but also unlocking the potential of full fibre and 5G.

Second, making sure the skills needed are there to fully engage with the digital world.

A full spectrum approach, from people getting on the internet for the first time, which now includes over 90% of the population, all the way through to

the highest end skills and capabilities and beyond.

From making coding in the curriculum compulsory at school age, through to supporting a more flexible labour market and expanding digital training for adults, so we have a far-reaching programme to support digital skills.

Third, making sure the UK is the safest place to live and work online. Not least through the National Cyber Security Programme and it is great to see people from the upcoming London Cyber Innovation Centre here.

All of these things mark us out as an incredible destination for tech.

Part of our task is to pull off the tricky balance between ensuring we make the UK a safe place to be online, whilst also being unambiguous about our enthusiasm and support for innovation.

And for making sure that we use the freedoms that this amazing technology brings.

And I want Tech Nation to be both conveners and cheerleaders – encouraging investment and also telling the world what our tech sector can do.

I want everybody here to talk to the Government about what more we can do to make the UK a great place to grow a digital business.

As someone who started in a tech company, I know that answers to this questions are not only to be found in Whitehall but are to be found in conversations with you as you grow your businesses.

Asking the questions. What can we do to make your lives easier? And how can we help you to expand?

Global

The Tech Nation report has quickly been established as an invaluable industry resource.

And this year's report confirms we are well placed to achieve our goal of making the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business.

It has also been helpful in identifying where our strengths lie.

One of those important strengths is in Fintech and AI. We and Tech Nation are doing a huge amount to cultivate AI.

And travelling to America and India in the last couple of weeks, people have already noticed the effort and cold hard cash we have put into driving its development.

The nature of tech is collaborative. But having said all that I still want the UK to be the leader...

So we'll work with you and Tech Nation to make sure this happens.

I'm sure you all know that research already ranks the UK as the most AI ready country in the world.

That's to say we're the best prepared to seize and exploit the amazing potential of this transformative technology.

But we are a medium sized country and the US, China, India and other larger countries are working hard to make sure they too are leading.

This is not an opportunity we are prepared to let slip. The investment from Government is deadly serious and crucially it can only be done in partnership, with you, in the private sector.

You may have seen last month brought the fantastic news that the British cybersecurity company, Darktrace, whose "immune system" is powered by AI, have become the latest unicorn, when they hit a valuation of over a billion dollars.

We should all take confidence from Darktrace and its success.

And we are seeing this dominance in FinTech too. There are now more people working in UK Fintech than in New York – or in Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia combined.

We have real strengths in bitcoin, cryptocurrencies and in crowdfunding.

And this spirit of innovation and enterprise is exactly what we need. To work with other nations at a time when agreements and frameworks on new technologies will become more important than ever.

And especially as we leave the EU, we are determined to seize many opportunities around the world, as part of becoming a truly Global Britain.

Open and outward looking. Engaging with the world and gregarious.

And to do that, we need the best tech talent from home and abroad. Making sure that we train people here at home, but also attracting the brightest and best.

We have doubled the number of exceptional talent visas. We have met with technology experts to make sure the processes are as efficient as possible.

While we are updating immigration rules so that world-leading scientists and researchers endorsed as 'exceptional talent' can apply for settlement after three years in this country.

The countries and economies that succeed in this digital world are those that are outward-looking and forward-looking and that is the approach we will take as we leave the EU.

Conclusion

I am determined that the UK will be the best place in the world to become a

digital citizen.

Because tech is a real force for good.

It makes our services better and our products faster.

It creates wider benefits for communities across the UK.

We can't do this alone in Government, just as private companies can't do it alone either.

The answer lies in working together to create the conditions for success and that's why Tech Nation is such an asset.

You've been driving the creation of jobs. The development of skills and improvement of productivity.

It's great for our economy and it is great for our society too.

And every single person in this room has their part to play.

You're part of a Great British renaissance and it's a joy and honour to be part of it too.

Thank you very much.

[Press release: Government launches fund for restoration of UK coastal landmarks](#)

Coastal landmarks which have fallen into disrepair have the opportunity to have life breathed back into them by a government fund launched today (17 May) by Coastal Communities Minister Jake Berry.

The £1 million [Coastal Revival Fund](#) will support the restoration of some of the nation's most iconic and best-loved coastal architecture – including places like the Pavilion Theatre within the Grade II* Winter Gardens building of Blackpool – and Swanage's historic Victorian pier in Dorset.

The fund, now in its third year, will provide grants to at-risk coastal heritage sites to fund repairs and restoration, or support large scale projects to see them through to completion.

The government is inviting bids from local communities, charities and councils to receive up to £50,000 per project from today.

Coastal Communities Minister, Jake Berry, said:

The protection of our iconic coastal landmarks plays an important role not just in making the Great British Coast an attractive tourist destination, but in regenerating our coastal communities and supporting them to grow.

The launch of this new Coastal Revival Fund today represents government's unwavering commitment to support coastal communities and we're investing over £250 million in our coastal areas by the end of the decade.

Jake Berry made the announcement while visiting Bournemouth today (17 May 2018) to officially open the Pier Approach which has been completely transformed into a world-class gateway to the south coast thanks to £1.9 million of funding, part of £5.6 million granted to the Dorset Coastal Connections portfolio from the government's [Coastal Communities Fund](#) (CCF).

Later in the day, the Minister also visited Poole Harbour to officially open the new 650 foot £10 million berth. Catering for cruise and cargo ships, the new berth is set to increase revenue by £1.5 million or 10% in the first year of operation.

Over £23.3 million of government's Growth Deal Funding has been invested in the Port of Poole by the Local Enterprise Partnership delivering new approach spans for the Poole Bridge, 25000 new homes around the Port of Poole and major improvements to the A349.

Further information

The £1 million [Coastal Revival Fund](#) is in addition to a £40 million investment in Coastal Communities announced last year as part of a government pledge to invest over a quarter of a billion pounds in coastal communities by 2020.

Now in its fifth round, the Coastal Communities Fund supports the development of UK coastal communities by giving funding to create sustainable economic growth and jobs. Analysis shows this has been money well spent, with every £1 invested having the potential to create an £8 boost to our coastal economies.

By 2020 the £264 million awarded by the Coastal Communities Fund is expected to have attracted around £369 million in additional funding for coastal projects giving a total investment of around £633 million.

The Coastal Revival Fund grants will support communities in unlocking the economic potential of those hard-to-tackle buildings, landscapes, facilities and amusements and sustain them in the longer-term. We are therefore inviting bids from local communities, charities and councils of up to £50,000 per project. Further details and guidance on how to apply can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/coastal-communities.

The Bournemouth Pier Approach project involved major public realm regeneration of the principal coastal public space in Bournemouth to a world-class standard. The project included de-cluttering the street scene including investment in revolutionary semi-submerged waste bins. Beach at Pier Approach. Over £1.9 million of the £3.7 million project came from the fourth round of the Coastal Communities Fund with the remainder of the project supported by match funding.

Local Enterprise Partnerships are playing a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone. That's why by 2021 government will have invested over £12 billion through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to get all areas of the country firing on all cylinders. Analysis has shown that every £1 of Local Growth Fund invested could generate £4.81 in benefits. If you would like some further facts about the Fund, or the wider regeneration work going on across the country, please contact Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government press office by emailing NewsDesk@communities.gsi.gov.uk in the first instance to request any additional information you might need.

Dorset Coastal Connections – people and places is a portfolio project connecting and coordinating 18 coastal sites across Dorset, from Christchurch to Lyme Regis. The range of projects connects our urban coastal areas to rural coastal areas works to promote and sell the Dorset coast as a whole. It is funded by the Coastal Community Fund as well as partner organisations.



Lyme Regis, courtesy of Mattana via Wikicommons

This work is coordinated by the lead partner Dorset Coast Forum (DCF) who are hosted by Dorset County Council (DCC). DCF has a proven track record of project delivery on the Dorset coast. DCC are the accountable body for this project and the lead project delivery partners include: Lyme Forward, Bridport CCT, Dorset County Council, Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team, Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, Borough of Poole, Purbeck District Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, The Arts Development Company, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, Bridport Town Council, Dorset AONB, Bounce Back Arts.

Follow the latest tweets from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on coastal communities by visiting [@MHCLG](#) or searching [#GreatBritishCoast](#)

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News story: Andy Adams appointed as the Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police

Andy assumed the role of Temporary Chief Constable last July following the untimely death of Alf Hitchcock.

The MDP provides a range of specialist armed policing skills and capabilities that help to ensure the protection of Defence people, assets, information and the Defence estate. As Chief Constable, Andy will lead the MDP's delivery of armed policing services to a range of Defence and external customers.

Andy joined the MDP in September 2015 as the Deputy Chief Constable, having previously served as the Deputy Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary. He has overseen the MDP's ongoing programme of organisational reform and development, including the implementation of the new MDP Operational Policing Model and the MDP's deployments under Operation Temperer.

Julie Taylor, Director General Head Office and Commissioning Services said:

I am delighted that Andy has been appointed as Chief Constable for the MDP. Having worked for the Force since 2015 he has a comprehensive and effective understanding of the emerging threats facing our Armed Forces and the country. He'll continue to take the Force from strength-to-strength and I look forward to continuing to work with him closely.

Sir Brian Burridge, Chair of the MOD Police Committee, said:

As the new Chief Constable of the MOD's specialist police force, Andy Adams brings an extensive wealth of experience from across the spectrum of policing. This will be vital in transforming the MDP in order to meet tomorrow's complex security challenges.

Andy Adams, Chief Constable of the MDP, said:

I am absolutely thrilled to have been appointed as the Chief Constable of the MDP and look forward to leading the Force and continuing our important work, protecting our people at home and overseas.

"I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me whilst in the role of Temporary Chief Constable.

Andy formally takes up post with immediate effect.

[News story: Civil news: deadlines for civil 2018 tender opportunities](#)

Deadlines are approaching to submit bids and take advantage of further tender opportunities in four different areas of work.

Here is a reminder of the tender deadlines and the categories of law:

5pm on 21 May 2018

This deadline is to submit bids for face to face 2018 civil contract work in family/housing and debt/immigration and asylum.

5pm on 1 June 2018

This deadline is to submit a bid to work for specialist legal advice in the discrimination category of the Civil Legal Advice (CLA) telephone helpline.

There is more information about these tenders in the recent news stories listed below and on our civil 2018 contracts tender page.

Further information

[Further tender opportunities for 2018 contract work](#)

[2018 CLA contract discrimination tender opportunity](#)

[Civil 2018 contracts tender](#) – to find out more and download IFA documents

[e-Tendering system](#) – to submit your tender

[News story: Fintech envoy for Wales appointed](#)

Fintech – short for Financial Technology – is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK economy. It encompasses innovation in financial services including digital banking, payment technologies, peer-to-peer lending and crowdfunding platforms. Richard Theo will be responsible for championing

Wales' thriving fintech sector and promoting it as a place for firms to develop and grow their business.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

The financial world is being transformed by the fintech revolution, so it's vital that each corner of the UK can harness its power. That's why we've invited Richard Theo from Wealthify – one of Wales' greatest fintech success stories – to be our envoy for the region.

I'd like to congratulate Richard on his new role. His extensive experience in the industry makes him the ideal candidate, and I am certain he will build on the success of the existing envoys in helping the UK to remain at the cutting edge of the digital revolution.

Alun Cairns, Secretary of State for Wales, said:

Congratulations to Richard Theo for being appointed the UK Government's Fintech Envoy for Wales. This is an exciting and emerging technology in which Wales is now an established UK leader, with companies ranging from giants like Admiral and Go Compare to a burgeoning host of start-ups.

Financial services and fintech are a dynamo that will create many more high-pay high-skills jobs in Wales. I look forward to receiving Richard's advice on steering this sector to even greater success.

Richard Theo, co-founder and CEO of Wealthify, said:

It's a huge honour to be appointed as the Government's fintech envoy for Wales and to have a chance to help support the growth of fintech in our region.

Wales already enjoys considerable fintech success and is well placed to become a leading fintech centre. It is a fantastic place to do business, benefitting from a strong work ethic and entrepreneurial culture, low operating costs, excellent connectivity and a great lifestyle. It is already home to a wide range of accelerators and incubators, and a phenomenal network of tech, fintech and financial services businesses.

Richard joins the current envoys in championing fintech in their home region:

- David Ferguson, CEO of Nucleus Financial, and Louise Smith, Head of Current Account Design for RBS (envoys for Scotland)

- David Duffy, CEO of CYBG (envoy for England)
- Chris Sier, Professor of Financial Technology at the University of Leeds (envoy for the Northern Powerhouse)

The Chancellor also announced today that Georgina O'Leary, Director of Innovation, Research and Development at Allstate Northern Ireland, would become the government's new Fintech Envoy to Northern Ireland.

Further Information

- Fintech is the apps, computer programs and other technologies that support and improve how we bank and access finance. It encompasses innovation in financial services such as crowdfunding, e-banking, payment technologies, peer-to-peer lending, and cryptocurrencies
- Fintech is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK economy, contributing roughly £6.6 billion to GDP and employing over 61,000 people across the country. More people work in UK Fintech than in New York Fintech or in the combined Fintech workforce of Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan