

Speech: The Industrial Strategy: forging our future

Thanks everybody for coming. It is fantastic to see so many familiar faces here in the audience.

The modern [Industrial Strategy](#) is our long-term plan for preparing and investing in the areas that strengthen our economy and can create big opportunities for us in the future.

This is one of the most exciting times there has ever been in the history of commerce, science and enterprise.

This is the national conversation and the international conversation that I think we should be having, and it is fantastic that we're going to be able to do that this morning.

Over the last 2 years, it's been very clear talking to businesses: large and small, up and down the country, every part of the United Kingdom; talking to our colleges; our universities; our scientific bodies and; our partners in the voluntary sector that everyone is completely consistent in talking about the opportunity there is.

Not just to continue the successes that we've enjoyed recently, but to open-up new opportunities and build on established relationships. That's why when it comes to the discussions about Brexit, this Industrial Strategy was formed from the conversations.

It is absolutely essential that we should preserve and build on the ability to continue to be leaders, outward looking, and recognise all of the aspects that require the highest quality of international relationships. They require investment that reinforces our strengths, they require the ability to look to the future and accelerate some of the progress that needs to be made on areas like infrastructure and to double down on the investment that we have been making in research and innovation.

The fact that we formed the Industrial Strategy very much in collaboration with businesses across the country, gives us a strong mandate to be able to shape our future policy decisions and discussions. In all my work in cabinet I very much have that in mind and apply it.

To be in Bristol is not a coincidence. Bristol is a place that I come to a lot. I love to be here because it is a place that is synonymous with industrial innovation and it has been for centuries. You can look over the Avon and be reminded of the ingenuity that was represented in the floating harbour that was here in 1809. The engineering behind it to overcome a big natural challenge, one of the world's highest tidal drops stopping cargo ships getting stranded at low tide and opening up this city to further trade around the world.

Bristol still is associated in the minds not just of people in this country but across the world with trade and with innovation. The advanced manufacturing plants all contribute to one of the strongest clusters of aerospace expertise that exists in the world – people know that this is synonymous with this city. More recently of course the Bristol area has been synonymous with animation.

Reinforcing the connections between the ingenuity that comes from different sectors different businesses and one of the big themes from the Industrial Strategy is the convergence, the breaking apart of the silos that I think previously held the industries apart.

Truly world leading science innovation and businesses have no borders and now more than ever we need to make sure that we capitalise on the strengths that we have.

Andy Haldane, the Chief Economist at the Bank of England is the chair of our new Industrial Strategy Council and he will set about how that council is going to hold us to account and make sure that the proposals and the commitments we make are not only being delivered, but are making a big difference in this country and making us fit for the future.

When we published the strategy last year, it followed a consultation involving thousands of people, thousands of groups and businesses right across the UK.

Our ambition was to address the foundations of the economy:

- How we can develop and commercialise great ideas. R&D is very important for us. Often, we've been brilliant at the discovery but have let the application in terms of industrial processes and manufacturing opportunities sometimes slip through our fingers and go to other places.
- How we can get the skills that themselves drive the earning power of the men and women in this country who can take advantage of the new technological opportunities ahead of us.
- How we can make sure that we can upgrade our infrastructure not just our transport infrastructure, but our digital infrastructure on which an advanced economy depends.
- How we can create the best environment to start and also to grow businesses.
- How we can support prosperous communities throughout the UK and help those communities that haven't enjoyed the same prosperity as others to join in that story of success and to do that deliberately.

These foundations of productivity are the basis of the Industrial Strategy and tackle the productivity puzzle in ways that need to be addressed and with determination.

Secondly, we wanted to build on the success that we've enjoyed where sectors have worked collaboratively with their supply chains, with companies large and small, with scientific research institutions, and with government bodies to make sure that the alignment of strategy is deliverable and is powering

investment.

The [Sector Deals](#) that we have set out are strategic, long term partnerships with businesses to drive investment, to create jobs and support the ability of a much wider range of sectors to compete on the world stage.

Thirdly, we've set out areas where whole industries and the experience of people in every country are being transformed by technological opportunities. In some of these areas Britain is well placed to be a leading player and a leading innovator to supply more of what the world is looking for.

[4 Grand Challenges](#) that we set out in the Industrial Strategy:

- AI and the analysis of big data
- clean growth
- future of mobility
- ageing society

Areas in which we have particular strengths and where we know demand for insights and new applications is going to increase around the world and where we can do great things together.

These ambitions were set out very clearly in the Industrial Strategy when it was published a year ago, a long-term plan to transform the economy. I was always very clear that if you're to have a strategy it must be for the long-term. A short-term strategy is a contradiction. These commitments must endure, they have to be made by successive governments, by institutions and by companies over a long period of time. It seems to be the essential lesson that you take from looking at what other countries have successively done in terms of its long-term commitment to the economy.

Billions of pounds of government and private sector investment, thousands of new jobs and career opportunities, hundreds of projects and businesses in every part of the United Kingdom can follow in getting this right.

What's been happening since we set out these proposals?

First of all, we are seeing the biggest increase in public investment in research and development this country has ever seen. In the last year alone more than 600 projects have been funded through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and its associated funds right across the UK. From companies like the Welsh-based Deregallera, which is developing new hybrid energy storage systems to extend vehicle battery life by 50%, to Perpetual Robotics, a Bristol-based spin-out, which, with engineers from the University of Bristol is developing drones to inspect offshore wind turbines. This type of service robotics are hugely important for the UK and in great demand around the world. I will be at the Bristol Robotics Lab later today meeting some of the people involved in this research and application.

Preparing people for the jobs of the future. In the last year 47,000 people started higher level apprenticeship, providing the technical expertise that we will need in our economy to support these ambitions. We are also addressing the challenges of the changing world of work supported by Matthew

Taylor's review into modern working practices. It seems to me that we should not only continue to be a place where we create jobs, but we should also be creating opportunities for people to perform good work. Work that is challenging that develops their skills and makes the full use of their talents, not just when they are in education and initial training but throughout their career. That should be a commitment we make to every single person in the workforce and those that are joining it.

We've now got the fastest growing infrastructure investment of any G7 nation. We're upgrading not just our roads, railways and airports, but crucially the broadband and mobile infrastructure on which a modern economy depends. Bristol has hosted the UK's first public trials to support new 5G technologies, which are showcased and discussed further today.

We have supported people looking to start and grow businesses. More than 78,000 smaller businesses this year are getting help from the British Business Bank.

As a further boost we want to make sure businesses that have the potential to grow, but sometimes have found it difficult to get that next stage of funding will be able to benefit from the Patient Capital Fund that we've launched. It will provide £2.5 billion of long-term investment for our most innovative companies.

Through all of this work, place has been pivotal. I've said a bit about Bristol and the West of England, there's much more we can do. For about a century the drift has been for power to be taken away from our great cities, towns and counties across the UK, and too many decisions to be centralised in London, in Westminster and in Whitehall. That is the opposite of what we need to do. We know that every place has its unique opportunities as well as its unique challenges. To give local leaders and with them local businesses and local workers the ability to work together to really make the most of their opportunities in each place is essential.

Over the last year I have agreed deals with sectors that are very important to our economy, but we also want to make sure we have local Industrial Strategies covering every part of the UK.

On sectors, I mentioned that we have a programme of Sector Deals. We've conducted and concluded in the last year, Sector Deals with the automotive sector, with the creative industries, with life sciences, with artificial intelligence, with construction, and with the nuclear industry.

This week I published the [second Life Sciences Sector Deal](#). Such is the momentum that has been established with the industry that we are already following it up with further joint commitments with the industry, government and NHS. We are also this week signing new deals on [Rail](#) and [Aerospace](#).

In line with our commitment to make sure the partnership between key sectors of the economy and the government is absolutely visible and strengthened and deepened.

With the investment that the government is making, one of the benefits of a long-term strategy is that it can give the confidence for long-term investment by the private sector. I was thrilled that yesterday UCB, a world-leading pharmaceutical company, has committed a £1 billion in new investment over the next 5 years, including a new discovery research hub in the UK on the back of the Life Sciences Sector Deal.

I have mentioned already about how important the aerospace industry is to Bristol and the South West. The Sector Deal we are launching today with the aerospace sector builds on an already successful partnership. We are setting out plans for a quarter of a billion pounds of new investment into the next waves of technologies – this will be joint funding equally between the government and industry. This includes a new ‘Future Flight’ programme to develop electric planes, drones and autonomous aircraft by 2025 aiming to apply the latest thoughts, the latest research and the latest applications to the future of one of our most successful industries.

Many of you know that Bristol has been home for some many decades to innovation in aerospace. It’s fantastic to know that many of the companies here, whether it’s Airbus or GKN, are at the heart of this important deal.

Britain is at the forefront of many of the big areas of the revolution that’s sweeping the world. I’ve mentioned many of the Grand Challenges. On the Future of Mobility, Technology is paving the way for self-driving vehicles.

Electrified vehicles are replacing conventional petrol and diesel ones. 1 in 5 electric vehicles sold in the first half of this year across Europe were made in the UK.

On clean growth we are now the world leader in installing offshore wind, driving down the cost by half in the last 2 years alone. Helping to make sure that green energy is now very often the cheapest form of energy.

On healthy ageing the astonishing breakthroughs that are taking place that are making us all live longer than ever we thought possible. In the Industrial Strategy, we noted in the UK today there are 15,000 people who’ve reached their 100th birthday. But in the current UK population, 10 million of us can expect to reach their 100th birthday. UK scientific and commercial know-how is absolutely pivotal to taking the opportunities domestically but all around the world.

Bristol has an important contribution to make to that. Appropriately enough in the city of Wallace & Gromit, ‘The Right Trousers’ project, which is developing new soft robotic technologies to help older people and those with disabilities be able to live more independently. It performs tasks at home that previously proved more difficult as age and infirmity have hampered independent living.

On artificial intelligence and data, we are transforming our industries through the work of the Turing Institute. It has just announced 30 Bristol academics as Turing fellows to help put the UK at the forefront of these new industries of the future.

We are taking forward 3 major new research programmes, including research that will turn food scraps sustainable plastics, supporting our Clean Growth Grand Challenge.

Around all of this we are looking to inspire and engage young people as we address the Grand Challenges and work with schoolchildren, students, teachers and parents. It is absolutely part of generating the excitement that there is in the areas of all these activities and industries. We must harness the skills, the ingenuity and the enterprising spirit of our people.

If we can take the opportunity to lead and make sure that we are supporting all the innovators, companies and entrepreneurs that are capable of achieving all these possibilities, there can be a time of substantial optimism for our country as we conclude our negotiations with the EU. We can set out the ways in which with Europe and our other partners can forge a prosperous future.

The Industrial Strategy describes what the opportunities are and describes how we can grasp them. The purpose of today is to make sure, as we move ahead into the next year, we continue to benefit from your expertise, your wisdom and your enthusiasm for making the most of what lies before us.

Thank you for coming today.