

Press release: Increase in global exports for UK stationery

National Stationery Week is in full swing and recent statistics show that global demand for UK stationery is high as exports of British-made notebooks alone increased by 20.6% to £23.62m in 2018.

One stationery company riding the wave of this burgeoning overseas interest in high quality UK products is Cheshire-based Chase and Wonder, an independent stationery, home fragrance and gift brand.

Founded in 2010 by husband and wife designers David and Faye Aspinall, the company produces its range of gifts and accessories from a converted cowshed in the heart of rural England.

The company first approached the Department for International Trade (DIT) for support in 2014, and through an introduction made by the DIT team in Italy, secured an initial contract worth around £8000 for one of the country's largest department stores.

Since this initial contact and having supplied its products to some of the world's finest emporiums including Liberty of London, Fortnum and Mason, Harrods and John Lewis, international interest in Chase and Wonder's stationery has gone from strength to strength with exporting now accounting for 45% of the business' turnover.

David Aspinall, Co-founder at Chase and Wonder said:

Our products are full of British personality so exporting seemed like a logical step. It's a big world out there, full of great opportunities and overseas sales have really helped us to grow as a company.

DIT provided a number of really useful resources for us, and I would certainly recommend their services to other businesses looking to explore opportunities to export.

The best thing is that their advice and expertise comes free of cost for the most part, and their international trade advisers are genuinely invested in making sure you succeed.

If we can export successfully, so can other independent UK companies.

Natalie Bain, DIT's Head of Northern Powerhouse said:

It's always rewarding to see a company like Chase and Wonder

successfully exporting to every continent in the world after coming to us for advice and support five years ago.

“This serves as a perfect example of how a small independent business can find success in vibrant new markets, and it’s the passion of individuals like David and Faye that enables British brands to flourish overseas.

I have every confidence that a bright future awaits UK-made craft and stationery producers, and I encourage more British companies to consider exporting.

Businesses looking for support should visit [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk) for more information.

Press release: North Tyneside man fined for illegal fishing

David Hetherington, 27, of Matfen Gardens in Wallsend, was charged with fishing without a licence and failing to give his name and address to an Environment Agency officer.

Hetherington had his case heard at Newcastle upon Tyne Magistrates’ Court on Thursday 2 May. He was ordered to pay a total of £649 in fines, victim surcharge and costs, and his fishing tackle was confiscated.

Prosecuting for the Environment Agency, Matthew Treece told the court that on 28 September 2018, David Hetherington fished without a fishing licence and without permission from Wylam Angling Club, which owns the fishing rights.

Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officer, David Shears, was on patrol along a stretch of the River Tyne in Wylam, Northumberland, where he found Mr Hetherington fishing.

The officer approached Mr Hetherington, who was sitting on a bank downstream with a spinning rod. Hetherington was asked to produce his licence, which he could not. Hetherington refused to cooperate and a scuffle took place, after which Mr Hetherington ran away, leaving his fishing equipment behind.

The officer was able to track down Mr Hetherington to his home address, when it was confirmed that Hetherington did not hold a licence.

The Environment Agency is reminding anglers of the importance of having a fishing licence.

David Shears, Senior Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency

in the North East, said:

The majority of anglers fish legally and buy a fishing licence. Those that don't are cheating their fellow anglers and endangering the future of the sport.

In addition, those that flout the law risk a criminal conviction, a fine, and could lose their fishing equipment. It's just not worth it.

The River Tyne is an important habitat for salmon, trout, coarse fish and eels. It is among the premier salmon rivers in England and Wales.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and Angling Trust. Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Income from licence sales is used to fund Environment Agency work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, including improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.

Buying a fishing licence is quick and easy. You can buy [fishing licences online](#).

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

[Press release: Call for caravanners to "check it before towing it" this summer](#)

There are around [4,000 incidents every year](#) involving all forms of trailers, which equated to around 11 per day in 2017.

Highways England is reminding anyone towing, before setting off, to ensure they have the correct licence and insurance to tow whatever the weight, that the vehicle is connected correctly and that the load is secure and within the limits for the vehicle.

Highways England's Assistant Regional Safety Co-Ordinator Marie Biddulph

said:

Safety is our top priority and we want caravanners and everyone towing vehicles on our motorway and major trunk road network to get to their destinations safely. Our advice is simple: check it before you tow it.

Besides ensuring they and their vehicles are properly prepared, Highways England is reminding people towing mirrors are a legal requirement when towing a unit and should be fitted to both driver and passenger sides to improve rear visibility.

The advice comes in the wake of the launch of a new All-Party Parliamentary Group to raise awareness of trailer and towing safety in the UK.

The primary focus of the Trailer and Towing Safety All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) will be to bring together parliamentarians, industry representatives and consumer groups to discuss and raise awareness of trailer and towing safety.

The National Towing Working Group, chaired by Highways England, aims to reducing towing-related incidents, both business and domestic related, across Great Britain's road network.

Highways England Traffic Officers give advice to caravanners at an event at the Barn Hill services on the M40 in Warwickshire. Image supplied courtesy of Iain Geddes / Camping and Caravanning Club.

Highways England held a recent event at Barn Hill services on the southbound M40 in Warwickshire to raise awareness about the significance of checking the vehicle before setting off.

The event was supported by organisations including Halfords, Vin Chip, The Camping and Caravanning Club and Warwickshire Police.

Senior Technical Advisor at the Camping and Caravanning Club Iain Geddes added:

We're pleased to be working with Highways England to raise awareness amongst people towing and this event was a great way for us to speak to people towing caravans or trailers to make sure they were safe and equipped for the journey ahead.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: New Immigration Services Commissioner appointed](#)

John Tuckett has been appointed as the Immigration Services Commissioner, responsible for regulating immigration advisers and services across the UK.

Currently Chief Executive of the Marine Management Organisation, John will lead the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to protect people from illegal immigration advice, set clear standards for the sector and reduce abuse.

He will take up the role in summer 2019 and remain in post for the next five years.

Immigration Services Commissioner John Tuckett said:

We have a duty to improve the quality of immigration advice and I want to ensure that people feel confident with the services they receive.

I am delighted to take on this new role and intend to do all I can to stop illegal immigration advice and promote good practice.

Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes said:

Our immigration system is fundamental to the UK's success and it is important that we make sure people are not given illegal and false immigration advice.

The commissioner plays a key role in setting strong industry standards and I look forward to working with John to build confidence in the UK's immigration system.

The OISC is a public body established by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and is independent of government, allowing it to challenge processes and regulations to improve the system. Where individuals and organisations have acted illegally, the OISC has the power to prosecute.

To help the public make informed choices, the OISC publishes a list of competent organisations and individual advisers who have been through a rigorous process of assessment. There is also a robust complaints procedure so people can report those who they feel have given inappropriate immigration advice.

Press release: Department for International Trade announces East of England Export Champions

Chief Executives, Managers and Directors from a group of East of England exporting businesses have been recognised as Export Champions by the Department for International Trade (DIT) at an event held at the Moller Centre in Cambridge on Wednesday 1st May.

The 25 Export Champions have been selected by DIT for their inspirational approach to growing their businesses through exporting, or for championing exporting in the East of England. Champions will encourage companies in their region to start exporting, offer practical advice on how to turn exporting ambitions into reality and share their experiences of how DIT helped them break into new markets.

The East of England-based Export Champions include Julie Deane from The Cambridge Satchell Company. 47% of the company's current turnover comes from exports to over 120 countries world-wide, including key markets such as the United States and China.

Other champions include Sue Jones from Hertfordshire-based Absolute Skincare, which supplies some of the world's most luxurious spas, and Dave Shanks from Water to Go in Bedfordshire, whose nano-tech filter water bottles convert any non-salt water source into instantly drinkable water.

Today's announcement comes as worldwide demand for British goods continues to grow. HMRC figures show that exports from the East of England generated more than £28 billion of income for the UK in 2018, highlighting the opportunity for British businesses to gain greater access to some of the largest and fastest growing markets in the world.

Trade Policy Minister, George Hollingbery visited Cambridge to announce the new Export Champions and to discuss opportunities for businesses to increase their exports. As part of the UK's future independent trade policy, there will be new opportunities for British businesses to gain greater access to some of the largest and fastest growing markets in the world.

To create these opportunities, the government is currently preparing to enter

into negotiations on future trade agreements with the USA, Australia, New Zealand and potentially joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Last year alone, exports to the United States from the East of England were worth £3.84 billion, highlighting the potential opportunities available for the region's businesses to make the most of rapidly growing demand for British products.

Exports to Trans Pacific Partnership countries increased by 6.7% in 2017, with exports from East Anglia to Vietnam growing by 46% and exports to Japan growing by 20%.

Trade Policy Minister, George Hollingbery said:

I am delighted to announce the expansion of DIT's export champion programme, with the addition to the network of 25 experienced exporters based in the East of England.

Through the programme we will continue to work with local businesses to provide expert support and advice, helping business in the East of England take advantage of the largest and fastest growing global markets, where there is high demand for quality British goods.

British businesses and exporters will play a major role in helping to forge stronger trading relationships as we leave the European Union and take control of our independent trade policy for the first time in over 40 years.

The Export Champion community, launched in March as part of the Exporting is GREAT campaign, was introduced in response to a desire from businesses to receive peer-to-peer exporting support. There are now 250 Export Champions active across England, and the Department's ambition is to expand the programme to at least 1,000 Champions by April 2020.

Thinley Topden, DIT's Head of Region in the East of England, said:

Whether they're a manager at an established business or founder at an entrepreneurial start up, our Export Champions are achieving international success worth shouting about. We've chosen these individuals as we know that their experiences make them the best candidates to encourage and guide other local businesses on their exporting journey.

The Export Champion event was the perfect way to celebrate and

recognise exporters right across the region. For any business interested in exporting, I'd say don't hesitate to get in touch. We have a network of committed International trade advisers based on the ground to help with tailored advice, guidance and workshops on a vast range of topics and funding support.

A total of 18 Export Champions from across the East of England attended the event and shared inspiring stories of export successes.

Stuart Gibbons, Managing Director at Le Mark Group said:

This was an excellent, professional event and it has set the focus for much-needed professional development of export in this region. As a company, we fully support the Export Champions initiative. We are excited about our role and look forward to highlighting the importance of getting more businesses to export and take advantage of the help available for those wanting to.

Paul Fletcher, International Sales Manager at Queen's Award winners Dura Composites said:

Dura Composites is pleased to be part of the Export Champions initiative. We hope that our success in developing an export market for our composite timber and fibreglass products can help inspire other UK businesses who haven't yet begun to sell overseas to take the plunge.

There's a wealth of help and support out there, and we look forward to working with our fellow Export Champions in the East of England to showcase the ways in which exports can strengthen your core business.

DIT also recently launched regional Export Champion networks across the country.

Alongside the launch, DIT is inviting businesses that have taken their first steps towards exporting to become Export Advocates. Export Advocates will form part of an online exporting community where they can ask questions about overseas trade, get advice on overcoming barriers, and find out about specific support available. Any company interested in joining the Export Advocate Community can sign up via great.gov.uk where they will also get access to an exporting toolkit.

Companies looking for support should call 01707 398 398 or email eastinfo@mobile.trade.gov.uk. They can also visit great.gov.uk, which has information on live export opportunities and includes general information on

exporting and events.