

# Chinese entrepreneur to open two new stores in Wales

The news announced today (Wednesday 22 Feb) in China follows a meeting in Shanghai between Economy Secretary Ken Skates and Bobby Zhou, CEO Anbo Holdings, a wholesale and retail business specialising in engineered and solid wood flooring products.

In the UK the company operates under the retail brand Flooring REPUBLIC which already has six stores in South Wales employing twenty people. The new stores will be in Bridgend and the other potentially in North Wales.

Ken Skates, who is leading a trade mission to China to further strengthen trade and export links between the two countries, said:

“Anbo, which was set up in the UK ten years ago by entrepreneur Bobby Zhou, is a great success story. Since its inception the business has flourished and seen an average 15% annual increase in turnover, with a projected £16m turnover this year.

“The Welsh Government has worked closely with Anbo Holdings in both in China and in Wales and this support has helped the business to expand and increase its footprint in Wales. I was particularly pleased to hear that its stores in Wales are amongst its most successful in the UK which has been attributed to the strong work ethic and enthusiasm of its staff.

“The news, confirmed today, that it is to open a further two stores in Wales is excellent while discussions are also underway on the potential of Flooring REPUBLIC opening a new manufacturing and training facility in Wales.”

Bobby Zhou said:

“Our Welsh stores are amongst our most successful across the country and our sales performance in Wales exceeded our forecasts .

“We chose to expand in Wales because of the fantastic infrastructure, hardworking people and the warm acceptance that we received. We are impressed with the business environment, the ease which you can get things done, and most of all because our people in Wales have a fantastic work ethic and understand our passion for great customer service – which is core value of Flooring Republic brand!

“The Welsh Government has assisted greatly by helping us find new suitable properties and has advised on expansion areas. One of our

main development areas is the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme which we are currently discussing with the Welsh Government."