

Press release: Life-changing tech industries and fabulous foods of Somerset are key to the UK economy, says Liz Truss

Ahead of the Chancellor's Budget on 29 October, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss, is visiting technology and agriculture businesses in Somerset.

Liz Truss has praised the output of Somerset businesses and revealed the south west is on pace for a record breaking year of exports.

Latest figures show that Somerset has already exported £10.5 billion worth of goods in the first half of 2018, up on the same period last year.

And since 2010 there are 115,000 more businesses in the south west, all helping to ensure the region has the lowest unemployment rate of any region in the UK.

Liz Truss said:

The diversity of businesses across Somerset is striking and it underlines the importance of this vibrant region.

From life-changing apps that help children learn maths, to world class food and drink, Somerset is a region that benefits Britons every day.

And it's also showcasing the best of Britain around the world too.

Exports from this area were worth more than £20 billion in 2017, up by 10 per cent on 2016, and we are supporting the ambitions of business to trade more in the future.

Since 2010 taxpayers in Somerset have benefitted from income tax changes, saving the typical taxpayer more than £1,000 a year, and the government's balanced economic approach means local hospitals in Somerset are receiving nearly £90 million to transform their buildings and services, and £10.5 million to improve mental health services for children and teenagers in North Somerset and North East Somerset.

And with fuel duty frozen for the ninth year in a row it means motorists will be able to continue to keep more of what they earn.

Motorists and businesses also benefit from road investment, including upgrades to the M49 near Bristol which will ease congestion and help support

economic growth in the south west.