

Shipbuilding Tsar praises south-west shipyards

- Defence Secretary and Shipbuilding Tsar Ben Wallace meets with key industry leaders at shipyards in the South-west
- Shipbuilding Tsar working with industry to deliver ambitions set out in the National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh

The Defence Secretary and Shipbuilding Tsar Ben Wallace met with Pendennis Shipyard, A&P Falmouth and Harland & Wolff Appledore to discuss how closer working between government and British industry can help the shipbuilding sector maximise its potential, boost UK shipbuilding and level up communities.

During the visit, the Shipbuilding Tsar met apprentices from the shipyards and the Cornwall College Group, who are developing the skills and knowledge to bolster the British shipbuilding industry into the future.

His visit follows the refreshed [National Shipbuilding Strategy](#), published in March, which set out more than £4 billion of government investment for the shipbuilding sector over the next three years, with a 30-year pipeline of more than 150 naval and commercial vessels.

The shipbuilding industry is supporting around 42,600 jobs across the country, and the South-West region is the second most valuable in the UK, employing more than 19,000 people.

Defence Secretary and Shipbuilding Tsar, Ben Wallace, said:

What I have seen in the south-west is a vibrant, thriving hub of global shipbuilding where cutting-edge innovation and skilled craftsmanship is being supported by more than four billion pounds worth of government-wide investment in the sector.

Meeting with young apprentices across these yards, where they are leading in highly skilled and varied roles has been hugely encouraging.

David McGinley, Chief Executive Officer, Cammell Laird Shiprepairers and Shipbuilders Ltd, Atlantic and Peninsula Marine Services said:

The National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh has come at a critical time for British shipyards and the wider supply chain, providing greater certainty of future UK shipbuilding projects, injecting vital confidence into the sector.

The Defence Secretary's visit to A&P Falmouth provided a platform for our business to share our strategy for the future and showcase our ongoing commitment to investing in our facilities and growing apprenticeship programme.

We look forward to working with the UK Government to deliver key pillars of the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

The National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh aims to build upon the success of the previous strategy launched in 2017, outlining the government's further ambitions to reinvigorate the whole British shipbuilding industry.

Harland & Wolff Group CEO, John Wood said:

It has been almost two years since the Appledore shipyard joined the Harland and Wolff group, which now not only boasts the UK's largest drydocks in Belfast but also the largest undercover dry dock in Appledore. It was great to show the Shipbuilding Tsar around what is now a busy and thriving shipyard, as work on the fabrication of a steel pontoon for the RNLi and vessel maintenance works continue.

By spreading our focus across five distinct markets, we will continue to grow the opportunities and workforce here in Appledore and across the Harland & Wolff Group. Apprentices are essential to realising our growth ambitions. Applications for our current apprenticeship programme are open, as we look to take on around 150 apprentices in the business.

Pendennis Chairman, Mike Carr said:

The National Shipbuilding Strategy is an exciting opportunity to bring together all aspects of the UK marine industry under one umbrella and Pendennis is keen to explore how we can play our part.

Additionally, the first two major developments since the publication of the Strategy have been announced today:

- £12 million of funding to accelerate the research and development of zero emission maritime technologies was confirmed by the Department of Transport. Part of UK Shipbuilding Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE), this investment will accelerate the sector's transition to a cleaner future supporting our voyage to net zero by 2050.
- The Chair of the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce has today been announced as Captain Paul Little, CEO and Principal of Glasgow City

College. The Taskforce, with membership drawn from right across the UK, is another initiative launched in the Strategy refresh and will work with wider industry to explore skills needs and shortage, supporting the development and implementation of a future-focused skills strategy for shipbuilding.

Seeking to deliver a globally successful, innovative and sustainable shipbuilding industry, the refreshed National Shipbuilding Strategy will support British shipbuilders, helping to ensure that the government continues to rise to the challenge and deliver for the people of the UK.