

Press release: International Trade Secretary Dr Fox visits China

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, travels to China today (Tuesday 2 January), in his first international visit of the new year to advance the UK's trade and investment relationship.

In a 2-stage visit to Beijing and Shenzhen, Dr Fox will meet the Chinese Minister of Commerce Zhong Shan and the chairman of one of the world's largest insurance companies, Ma Mingzhe from Ping An. He will also promote the government-backed [GREAT 'Festival of Innovation' taking place in Hong Kong](#) later this year to showcase the latest technology from the UK and Asia.

China is the UK's fifth largest trading partner in the world, with trade between the countries worth £59.1 billion based on the latest figures (2016). In the same period the UK exported £16.8 billion of goods and services, making China the UK's eighth largest export market.

The Department for International Trade has also just announced up to £25 billion in financial support – including loan guarantees – for UK businesses operating along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The initiative, set up by the Chinese government, aims to increase economic cooperation with countries around the world along key transport routes.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

China as a world leading economy and the UK's fifth largest trading partner is an important market for British companies as we look to build independent trading relationships across the world.

As an international economic department, we want 2018 to be the year of exporting with businesses across the UK seizing the opportunities that the world provides.

That's why we're determined to make exporting even easier, and we have announced we're making up to £25 billion of funding available for UK exporters and buyers of UK goods and services along the Belt and Road Initiative so that no viable export fails for a lack of funding.

The Trade Secretary's visit follows the [Economic Financial Dialogue in China](#) last month (December 2017) where more than £1.4 billion of trade and investment was agreed in Beijing. Trade Minister Mark Garnier supported the Chancellor as they reaffirmed their commitment to developing a global partnership, establishing the next steps for a deeper trade and investment relationship as the UK builds an economy fit for the future.

The UK has also attracted more foreign direct investment projects than ever

before (year 2016 to 2017). With 2,265 projects recorded, figures show an increase of 2% on the previous year. This means more than 75,000 new jobs were created, and 32,600 safeguarded, amounting to over 2,000 jobs per week across the country.

Total trade in goods and services (that is exports plus imports) between the UK and China totalled £59.1 billion in 2016 an 8.9% increase from 2015 (Source: [ONS Pink Book 2017](#)).

In 2016, UK exports to China amounted to £16.8 billion (a 2.4% increase from 2015).

The top 5 UK goods exported to China in 2016 were:

87 – vehicles other than railway or tramway stock (27.6% of all UK goods exported to China)

27 – mineral fuels or oils, products of their distillation (12.1%)

84 – machinery and mechanical appliances (10.5%)

85 – electrical machinery and equipment (6.8%)

71 – precious stones and metals (6.5%)

[Press release: Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Grant opens for applications](#)

From today (Tuesday 2 January 2018), applicants can apply for the [Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Grant](#) – a scheme to help landowners reap the environmental and financial benefits of woodland creation.

The grant is open to all qualifying land managers. Successful applicants will receive a two-year capital grant of up to £6,800 per hectare, as well as an opportunity to apply for annual maintenance payments for ten years.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Planting trees is one of the best ways we can invest in our environment for future generations. They provide a haven for wildlife, reduce flood risk and improve water quality – making them some of our most cherished assets.

I have seen first-hand how planting trees can really make a

difference at places such as the Lowther Estate in Cumbria, so I would urge landowners to apply to this scheme.

Richard Greenhous, Forest Services Director for the Forestry Commission, said:

Aside from the environmental benefits, planting trees on your land can offer an alternative source of income.

Your local Woodland Officer can provide advice and support throughout the application process.

Guidance and application forms for the scheme were [made available](#) in September to give potential applicants more time to develop their plans. The process has now been streamlined to make it easier to apply.

Alongside the Woodland Creation Grant, landowners can also apply for the [Woodland Creation Planning Grant](#) to help with planning and proposals. This grant has already supported two large-scale planting schemes in England this autumn: [Doddington North Moor](#) in Northumberland and the Lowther Estate in Cumbria.

The Forestry Commission has appointed a new team of specialised woodland creation officers to assist landowners through the application process for large scale projects.

More information on the funding options available is available [here](#) and applicants can [contact the Forestry Commission](#) for further advice and assistance.

Case study

Mr Hugh Davis, the owner of Treworder Barton Farm in Cornwall, has received funding from the Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Grant to plant a new productive woodland that enables him to quickly produce a crop of timber for wood markets. The grant has covered 80 per cent of the planting costs with an ongoing payment of £200 per hectare for the next 10 years.

Speaking about his application, Mr Davis said:

Planting is relatively straight forward. For the first two years, you need to keep weeds under control and protect young trees from other threats, for example pests, frost or drought. Once they are established, looking after the trees is relatively low maintenance.

The thing with forestry is that you can't play catch up. You need to plan ahead and invest sooner rather than later. I'm very pleased I've done it.

Press release: November 2017 Price Paid Data

This month's Price Paid Data includes details of more than 106,000 sales of land and property in England and Wales that HM Land Registry received for registration in November 2017.

In the dataset, you can find the date of sale for each property, its full address and sale price, its category (residential or commercial) and type (detached, semi-detached, terraced, flat or maisonette and other), whether it is new build or not and whether it is freehold or leasehold.

The number of sales received for registration by property type and month

Property type	November 2017	October 2017	September 2017
Detached	24,767	22,849	22,377
Semi-detached	27,093	25,558	24,911
Terraced	27,890	26,394	25,829
Flat/maisonette	19,635	19,048	17,958
Other	7,027	7,159	6,027
Total	106,412	101,008	97,102

Of the 106,412 sales received for registration in November 2017:

- 79,133 were freehold, a 10.3% increase on November 2016
- 13,095 were newly built, a 5.2% increase on November 2016

There is a time difference between the sale of a property and its registration at HM Land Registry.

Of the 106,142 sales received for registration, 30,458 took place in November 2017 of which:

- 489 were of residential properties in England and Wales for £1 million and over
- 293 were of residential properties in Greater London for £1 million and over

- four were of residential properties in Greater Manchester for £1 million and over
- one was of a residential property in Cardiff for £1 million

The most expensive residential sale in November 2017 was a semi-detached property in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for £13m. The cheapest residential sale in November 2017 was of a terraced property in Burnley, Lancashire for £15,000.

The most expensive commercial sale in November 2017 was in Solihull, West Midlands for £73,900,000. The cheapest commercial sales in November 2017 were in Islington, Cambridge, Fenland, Redbridge and Southend on Sea, each for £100.

[Access the full dataset.](#)

Notes to editors

1. Price Paid Data is published at 11 am on the 20th working day of each month. The December dataset will be published on 29 January 2018.
2. A total of 65,000 duplicate cancelled sales transactions (less than 0.003% of the total) have been removed from the October 2003 – February 2005 data. We are committed to the [accuracy of our data](#) and will continue to respond to customer feedback.
3. [Price Paid Data](#) is property price data for all residential and commercial property sales in England and Wales that are lodged with HM Land Registry for registration in that month, [subject to exclusions](#).
4. The amount of time between the sale of a property and the registration of this information with HM Land Registry varies. It typically ranges between 2 weeks and 2 months. Data for the two most recent months is therefore incomplete and does not give an indication of final monthly volumes. Occasionally the interval between sale and registration is longer than 2 months. The small number of sales affected cannot be updated for publication until the sales are lodged for registration.
5. Price Paid Data categories are either Category A (Standard entries) which includes single residential properties sold for full market value or Category B (Additional entries) for example sales to a company, buy-to-lets where they can be identified by a mortgage and repossessions.
6. HM Land Registry has been collecting information on Category A sales from January 1995 and on Category B sales from October 2013.

7. Price Paid Data can be downloaded in txt, csv format and in a machine-readable format as [linked data](#) and is released under [Open Government Licence \(OGL\)](#). Under the OGL, HM Land Registry permits the use of Price Paid Data for commercial or non-commercial purposes. However, the OGL does not cover the use of [third party rights](#), which HM Land Registry is not authorised to license.
8. The [Price Paid Data report builder](#) allows users to build bespoke reports using the data. Reports can be based on location, estate type, price paid or property type over a defined period of time.
9. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
10. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth more than £4 trillion, including more than £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles, which show evidence of ownership, covering more than 85% of the land mass.
11. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry.
12. Follow us on:

Contact

[News story: Saving energy with data from smart meters: apply for contracts](#)

Multi-storey building lit up at night. Credit: Chim at Shutterstock.com.

The [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) (BEIS) has up to £8.8 million to invest in new ideas for products and services that use smart meter data to reduce energy demand in small, non-domestic buildings. This includes shops, restaurants and schools.

Smart management solutions

Smart meters are being rolled out across the country and should be in most homes and businesses by the end of 2020. They will help consumers to manage their energy and promote more efficient use.

[BEIS research](#) suggests that data from smart meters could be used to encourage organisations to take action and reduce their energy use if they get the right prompts.

This competition is looking for projects that develop software tools from smart meter data that are then used to encourage organisations to save energy. This could be through:

- information such as estimates of financial costs or savings
- information and advice on actions that can reduce energy demand and costs such as heating controls and lighting
- tailored messages designed to encourage the uptake of advice and sustained behaviour

Funding for the competition is under SBRI (Small Business Research Initiative).

Funding available

Up to £1.8 million in contracts is available for feasibility studies in a first phase. Up to £675,000 is available in a second phase for feasibility testing. A further £4.825 million is available to develop ideas further in a third phase.

BEIS also has up to £1.5 million to fund a research and evaluation contractor to work with competition participants.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 9 February 2018
- it is open to any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea
- we expect contracts to be worth up to £200,000 in phase 1 and £100,000 in phase 2
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts

[**News story: MDP Officer awarded MBE in**](#)

New Year Honours



Constable Claire Batt, appointed MBE in New Years Honours, photo: Crown copyright. All rights reserved.

Claire has been appointed awarded her MBE for services to defence and policing and in recognition of her work as the Defence Police Federation Welfare Officer.

Claire has been with our organisation since 1992 and in 2009 became a member of the Defence Police Federation, acting as the Welfare Officer.

Her contribution to the MDP through her role as a Constable and her engagement as a Welfare Officer has been of valuable assistance to the Force, as well as supporting colleagues at times of need following organisational change, bereavement or ill-health. She has thrown herself whole-heartedly into this work, forging a role which is now recognised as a valuable element of the MDP structure. In doing so, she has balanced the organisational need with her DPF position to ensure that both are appropriately represented.

T/Chief Constable Andy Adams comments:

I am sure that many people will want to congratulate Claire individually but, I offer her many congratulations on behalf of the force.

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