

Strolling into Australia: Manchester baby business secures major export contract

- Cosatto, a bespoke baby product manufacturer, exports to Australia for first time in over a decade as a trade deal nears
- Government support helped them secure a £130,000 order for over 1,000 prams, strollers and highchairs
- The Manchester-based business now expects to turn over £14 million this year, with more exports across the world made easier thanks to Free Trade Agreements

A family-owned Manchester business has secured its first export to Australia in 15 years, shipping £130,000 of its bespoke baby products with the financial support of UK Export Finance (UKEF).

The UK and Australia are important economic partners. A new free trade agreement between the two countries would be worth billions of pounds to the UK economy and is close to being signed.

[Cosatto](#) is an award-winning baby product manufacturer and works with the University of Sussex's Baby Lab to create colourful and engaging patterns that help young children to develop. It already sells to retailers large and small in the UK, and sales to distributors in countries like Japan account for 15% of its growing export business.

However, when it came to arranging the insurance for a major deal with a distributor in Melbourne, their insurance broker would not cover the risk if the deal fell through. At risk of losing the contract, Cosatto turned to UKEF, the UK's export credit agency, which was able to step in with its [export credit insurance scheme](#). This enabled the business to export 300 prams, 750 strollers and 200 highchairs to another family-owned business.

Despite COVID-19 adversely affecting some of Cosatto's largest retail customers, the ingenuity of the business in moving its operations online has allowed it to adapt to a new way of working. It now expects to turn over £14 million this year and is talking to the distributor about new product lines.

Graham Stuart MP, Minister for Exports, said:

This is a prime example of how innovative British brands have the potential to go global with the right support. Exporting companies like Cosatto are more productive, create more jobs and pay higher wages, which is why we are radically changing how exporters access the government finance they need to sell to the world, allowing them to take full advantage of upcoming trade deals with countries like Australia.

Andrew Kluge, Chief Executive Officer at Cosatto, said:

We're incredibly proud of our business and of the way we've adapted this past year. Australia is an important market for us, and so was ensuring we could meet demand when the first door opened in years. Our unique products are backed by science, and continue to save the world from boring baby stuff – one happy child at a time.

Steve Cowles, UKEF Export Finance Manager for North West England, said:

We are here to ensure businesses in the North of England have the funding and support they need to win contracts, fulfil orders and get paid. Cosatto is a strong family business that has managed to crack a competitive market, and this demonstrates the huge potential that lies in trading overseas.

About UK Export Finance

[UK Export Finance](#) is the UK's export credit agency. It exists to ensure that no viable UK export lacks for finance or insurance from the private market, providing finance and insurance to help exporters win, fulfil and get paid for export contracts.

[From scheme to screen: Married At First Sight, Midsomer Murders and independent film Mothering Sunday among titles coming to screens soon thanks to Restart Scheme](#)

- 230 projects have restarted production thanks to the Government's Film and TV Production Restart Scheme
- 50 productions that have benefitted are either on screen or close to airing named
- More than 25,000 screen sector jobs have been supported by the scheme since launch in October
- Scheme will help keep the cameras rolling for the rest of the year with six month extension of support until 31 December 2021

Titles of more than 50 productions that are currently airing or soon to reach screens thanks to the Film and TV Production Restart Scheme have been published today.

The Scheme has already registered 230 film and TV productions, providing confidence to the screen sectors and protecting more than 25,000 jobs across one of the country's leading creative industries.

The Chancellor announced a six month extension to the £500 million Film and TV Restart Scheme as part of this year's Budget.

Productions that begin filming before 31 October 2021 will now be able to submit compensation claims for Coronavirus-related losses including filming delays from illness amongst the cast and crew that occur up to 31 December 2021. Productions will have until March 2022 to submit claims for compensation.

The latest extension is projected to support another 20,000 jobs this year, taking the total number of jobs supported by the Scheme to over 60,000 as planned production schedules stabilise after disruption due to the pandemic.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

Our Restart Scheme has already helped the UK's world class Film and TV sector bounce back strongly, with studio business booming, filling film studios and helping generate more than a billion pounds in production spend.

Now we're standing by it for another six months, supporting tens of thousands more jobs and many more box sets and box office hits.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

Our world-leading film and TV industry supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and is a significant driver of economic activity. As part of our Plan for Jobs, we extended the Restart Scheme to continue giving productions the confidence they need to keep shooting, and it's great to see so many are benefitting from it.

Productions registered to the scheme include crime drama Unforgotten currently airing weekly on ITV; popular weekday favourites like Pointless and Ready Steady Cook; and Boxing Day the UK's first ever festive romantic comedy starring an all-black cast.

A list of productions currently available to watch or due to be released later this year is published below. The Scheme is also supporting projects in production that are yet to be publicly announced. Further detail on registered productions will be shared in due course.

Ben Roberts, chief executive of BFI, said:

The Government's Film & TV Production Restart Scheme has been instrumental in enabling our independent production industry to get back up and running. Cameras rolling on new productions generated a £1.19 billion uplift in spend in the final months of last year and a significant chunk of that has been generated by the 200-plus film and television productions which have been covered by the scheme against potential Covid-related disruption. Extending the scheme to the end of the year will ensure more productions can get made, unlocking millions of pounds of production spend and generating more jobs across the UK.

John McVay, chief executive of Pact, said:

The latest extension to the Production Restart Scheme is hugely appreciated by the UK audio visual economy which has been using the PRS to get back to pre-pandemic levels of production and employment. This is not only good news for the economy but is great news for UK and global audiences who look to the UK as a global centre of excellence as recently highlighted on the Golden Globe wins.

The terms of the scheme will be kept under review as the sector recovers from the impact of the pandemic over the course of this year.

In addition to the significant scheme extension, the screen industry is to benefit from more support to independent cinemas through the Culture Recovery Fund, which will allocate a further £300 million to help culturally significant recover from the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Notes to Editors

The following production titles have registered to the Government's Film and TV Restart Scheme and are in the public domain.

Name of production	Production Company
Alex Rider series 2	Eleventh Hour Films
Angela Black	All3Media
Annika	Annika SPV Ltd
Apocalypse Wow	Tuesday's Child Television Ltd
Ballywater	Empire Street Productions
Baptiste series 2	All3Media
Beep	Happy Tramp North Ltd
Big Zuu's Big Eats series 2	Boom Cymru TV Ltd
Boxing Day	Boxing Day Productions / Raindog
Breeders	Avalon

Name of production	Production Company
Britain's Got Talent Christmas Special	Thames TV
Celebs Go Dating: The Mansion	All3Media/Lime Productions Ltd
Celebs Go Virtual Dating	Lime Productions Ltd
Cheaters	Clerkenwell Films
Cobra series 2	All3Media
Danny Boy	Expectation Entertainment
Essex Lorry Deaths	Expectation Entertainment
Expedition with Steve Backshall	True to Nature
Fell Good	Objective Media Group
Guessable series 2	Tuesday's Child Television Ltd
Guilt series 2	Guilt Ltd
HRT	Finestripe Productions Ltd
Inside Bond Street	Finestripe Productions Ltd
Jamie Johnson series 6	Short Form Film (JJ Productions) Ltd
Jazz 625: The British Jazz Explosion	Somethin' Else Sound Directions Ltd
Magpie Murders	Eleventh Hour Films
Manhunt	Buffalo Pictures
Married at First Sight	CPL Productions Ltd
Midsomer Murders	All3Media
Mother, Victim, Killer: The Story of Fri Martin	Expectation Entertainment Ltd
Mothering Sunday	No.9 Films
Murderous History	Warehouse 51 Productions Ltd
My Name Is Lizzie	Story Films/Objective Media Group
Nova Jones	Jam Media/TJNI
Pointless	Endemol Shine UK Ltd/Remarkable Television
Ready Steady Cook	Endemol Shine UK Ltd/Remarkable Television
Sarah Beene's Renovate Don't Relocate series 2	Outline Productions
Say Yes to the Dress Lancashire	True North
State of the Union series 2	See-Saw Films
Still So Awkward	Channelx
The Fantastic Flitcrofts	BFI
The Forest	Expectation Entertainment Ltd
The Gallery	Paul Raschid Media
The Larkins	Objective Media Group
The Little People	Tempo Productions
The Road Dance	Road Dance
The Thief, His Wife and the Canoe	Objective Media Group
This Is My House	Expectation Entertainment

Name of production	Production Company
Unforgotten series 4	Blink Films
When William & Kate Married	Finestripe Productions Ltd
Who Do You Think You Are	Wall to Wall Media
Y FfLam	Vox Tan Ltd
You What	Screen Glue YW Ltd
Yr Amgueddfa	Boom Cymru TV Ltd

[Prime Minister launches £3 billion bus revolution](#)

- government publishes major new bus strategy, outlining most ambitious reform to the sector in a generation
- buses will be more frequent, cheaper, greener, and easier to use as government continues its levelling up agenda
- councils and operators will work in partnership for the benefit of passengers

Prime Minister Boris Johnson today (15 March 2021) unveils the most ambitious shake-up of the bus sector in a generation, which will see lower, simpler flat fares in towns and cities, turn-up-and-go services on main routes, and new flexible services to reconnect communities.

The government's new bus strategy, backed by £3 billion of investment, will see passengers across England benefiting from more frequent, more reliable, easier to use and understand, better coordinated and cheaper bus services.

Levelling up services across the country will encourage more people to use the bus, rather than the car, as we build back better from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The changes include:

- simpler bus fares with daily price caps, so people can use the bus as many times a day as they need without facing mounting costs
- more services in the evenings and at the weekends
- integrated services and ticketing across all transport modes, so people can easily move from bus to train
- all buses to accept contactless payments

Hundreds of miles of new bus lanes will make journeys quicker and more reliable, getting people out of their cars, reducing pollution and operating costs.

The [Prime Minister's ten point plan](#) sets out how we will accelerate the

transition to greener and more sustainable transport.

We will:

- deliver 4,000 new British-built electric or hydrogen buses will provide clean, quiet, zero-emission travel
- transition cities and regions across England to emission-free buses, safeguarding the UK bus manufacturing industry
- end sales of new diesel buses, and we have launched a consultation on the end date today.

We expect to see local authorities and operators working together to deliver bus services that are so frequent that passengers can just 'turn up and go' – no longer needing to rely on a traditional timetable and having the confidence they won't wait more than a few minutes.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Buses are lifelines and liberators, connecting people to jobs they couldn't otherwise take, driving pensioners and young people to see their friends, sustaining town centres and protecting the environment.

As we build back from the pandemic, better buses will be one of our first acts of levelling-up.

Just as they did in London, our reforms will make buses the transport of choice, reducing the number of car journeys and improving quality of life for millions.

The fragmented, fully commercialised market, which has operated outside London since 1986 will end. We want to see operators and local councils enter into a statutory "enhanced partnership" or franchising agreements to receive the new funding and deliver the improvements.

It is expected that many councils will choose enhanced partnerships, where local authorities work closely with bus companies, drawing on their operating knowledge and marketing skills. Others may decide that franchising works better for them.

Because of the decline in use caused by the pandemic, bus operators have already received significant emergency support from the government. From this summer, only services under these arrangements will be eligible for continued support or any new sources of funding from the £3 billion transformational investment. The government will also consult later this year on reforming the [Bus Service Operators Grant](#) – the current main stream of government bus funding – to achieve the same objectives.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps, said:

Buses are this country's favourite way of getting around. They help us get to school, to the GP, or to the shops – but services across England are patchy, and it's frankly not good enough.

The quality of bus service you receive shouldn't be dependent on where you live. Everyone deserves to have access to cheap, reliable and quick bus journeys.

The strategy we're unveiling today will completely overhaul services, ensuring we build back better from the pandemic. Key to it is the new deal it offers to councils – we will provide unprecedented funding, but we need councils to work closely with operators, and the government, to develop the services of the future.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

Buses are the backbone of public transport in the West Midlands, carrying more than 250 million people every year. Today's strategy is therefore very welcome, and will enable big city regions such as ours to ensure buses remain at the heart of our future transport plans. Residents here want clean, decarbonised buses that are affordable and continue to remain reliable and punctual, and that's what the new strategy laid out today will deliver.

Anthony Smith, chief executive of independent watchdog Transport Focus, said:

For bus passengers, today's announcement of more frequent buses and simpler fares will be welcome news. For many, buses are a lifeline to employment, education, medical appointments and leisure, and are essential to the economy. We know that the key priorities for those considering using the bus are more services running more reliably, providing better value.

Since the pandemic, safety and cleanliness have become ever more important. We will work with bus operators and other partners to make sure passengers' needs are at the heart of new arrangements.

It also sets out ambitions to provide greater access to bus services for all, with plans revealed to require 'next stop' announcements onboard buses throughout Great Britain, helping disabled passengers and others to travel with confidence. The government will also launch a consultation on new regulations to improve access onboard buses for wheelchair users.

London-style services aren't appropriate for all rural and suburban areas, which is why the Department for Transport is today also announcing the recipients of the £20 million from the government's 'Rural mobility fund', which enables on-demand services – such as minibuses booked via an app – to

be trialled in areas where a traditional bus service isn't appropriate.

[DfT announces 650 roles to be created in Birmingham and Leeds](#)

- the Department for Transport (DfT) will create a second headquarters in Birmingham and a northern hub in Leeds as an initial 650 job roles are created in the cities by 2025
- the move demonstrates the government's commitment to levelling up all parts of the UK
- expanding DfT's presence in the Midlands and the North will boost local economies as government builds back better from coronavirus (COVID-19)

DfT has today (15 March 2021) announced the creation of a second HQ in Birmingham and a northern hub in Leeds, as part of a plan to create 650 roles in the cities.

The move is part of the government's commitment to diversifying the Civil Service, ensuring decisions are rooted in the communities it serves.

It is a particularly important step for DfT, given the huge role it has to play in levelling up the UK through investment in vital transport infrastructure and services.

It is the latest step in the government's drive to move 22,000 Civil Service roles from London to communities across the UK by 2030.

Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary, said:

This is a historic move for the department and part of a significant wider culture change across Whitehall.

Transport is absolutely vital to the local communities we serve and having hubs in major cities like Birmingham and Leeds will offer a fresh perspective on how we can better serve these areas.

Chris Heaton-Harris, Transport Minister, said:

Our department has a key role to play in this government's drive to level up across the country. Having hundreds more roles based outside of London will not only bring an economic boost for Birmingham and Leeds, but also ensure we are delivering the changes people around the country want.

The Birmingham headquarters will include new ministerial offices, with ministers expected to spend a significant amount of time there as the government works to rebuild the UK. The news of DfT creating a northern hub in Leeds comes on the back of the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, this month, also confirming that the UK's first-ever infrastructure bank will also be based in the city.

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leader of Bradford Council, said:

This is another positive investment recognising our region's strengths, following the decision to locate the UK Infrastructure Bank here, bringing benefits not just to Leeds but Bradford and the wider region. I hope it will help us as we make the compelling case for future investment in our transport system, to better connect our communities and raise living standards while cutting carbon emissions.

Cllr James Lewis, Leader of Leeds City Council, said:

This shows once more the importance of Leeds, not just to our region but to the North of England and the UK. Investment in transport is central to our plans for the future and I hope the presence of more decision-makers in our city helps ensure the case for further investment in Leeds is heard.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

The West Midlands has undergone a transport revolution in recent years, with the reopening of old railway lines, expanded tram routes, and an upgraded green bus fleet, along with the rollout of e-scooters and a cycle hire scheme. The DfT will be right at home here, and I look forward to welcoming the team to the best connected region in the UK.

Along with the relocation of MHCLG to Wolverhampton, this is a major vote of confidence in the West Midlands and a huge jobs boost at what is an incredibly difficult economic time. I'm delighted that after months of making the case we've won through, and a second major government department will be calling the West Midlands home.

DfT has already begun recruiting in Birmingham and Leeds, with 100 roles created so far. This includes senior civil servant positions, which otherwise would have been based in London, with attracting senior figures to these locations key to the success of the initiative.

The government is also announcing today that half of senior Civil Service roles will be located outside of London by 2030, addressing the current imbalance with the majority of senior roles being London-based.

Today's announcement will bring economic benefits, with new spending power of those civil servants working in and around the areas outlined. £65 million has been allocated for the overall government hubs programme in 2021 to 2022 for office works and improvements.

Evidence of past relocations of civil servants shows that bringing public sector roles to an area also stimulates the creation of private sector roles, investment in office space and opportunities for local businesses to supply services.

A recent study found that for every 10 public sector roles moved to a town under the Lyons Review of Public Sector Relocation in 2004, 11 private sector roles were created. The move of the 1,150 Met Office roles to Exeter was estimated to add £65 million to local gross value added.

£83m of Government funding to unlock 3,000 new homes in Nottinghamshire

The funding will support the delivery of the infrastructure needed to bring Fairham forward, accelerating the creation of new homes and jobs for the area.

As well as the new homes, Fairham will deliver a new school, community centre, health centre, sports pitches, community parks and woodland.

With 100,000 square metres of employment space, its location on the edge of Nottingham and proximity to East Midlands Airport, the M1 and the East Coast Mainline, the area is also well placed to create and sustain new jobs.

New roads, cycleways, utility provisions and landscaping will also form part of the infrastructure delivered as part of the development.

Homes England, the Government's housing delivery agency acquired 250 acres of the 606-acre site in May 2019 and is working jointly with Clowes Developments as Master Developers to deliver the primary infrastructure needed to create a high quality, sustainable urban extension.

£62m of the funding comes from Homes England's £1.3billion Land Assembly Fund and Clowes Developments has secured a £21million loan from the Home Building Fund.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP said:

“This is fantastic for Nottinghamshire and the East Midlands not only because we are building 3,000 new homes but also for the boost this will give to jobs and the local economy. This is part of our mission to build back better from the pandemic and deliver the homes this country needs.”

Gordon More, Interim Chief Executive for Homes England, said:

“This is a big milestone for Fairham and means that work can start in earnest. As the country starts to think about the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, large projects such as this not only meet a demand for high quality new homes but also support the housebuilding sector by creating a pipeline of work, providing much-needed stability.

“We’ve been working hard with Clowes Development and Rushcliffe Borough Council to ensure that our plans for Fairham will help meet local need and provide facilities that the whole community can enjoy.”

Robert Hepwood, Land and Planning Director at Clowes Developments, said:

“This funding package from the Government really helps us to make progress on site across Fairham and start to realise our vision of a green and distinctive new district for Nottingham.

“By working in partnership with public bodies we can now accelerate the delivery of new jobs and new homes for Nottinghamshire. We’re sure that people will begin to see further progress on site throughout this year with our first new homes due to start construction in the autumn.”