

Press release: UK named “Country of Honour” as trade mission heads to flagship Chinese International Industry Fair

A business delegation including some of the UK’s best advanced manufacturing and innovation companies will head to China this week to boost growing bilateral trade and investment ties.

Minister for Trade and Export Promotion, Baroness Rona Fairhead, and Minister for the Northern Powerhouse, Jake Berry, will be joined by 100 leading business figures from across the Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine and the East of England to represent Britain at the Chinese International Industrial Fair (CIIF), where the UK has been named Country of Honour.

The UK and China enjoy strong trade links, with bilateral trade increasing by 8.9% last year to more than £59 billion, and goods exports to China rocketing by 32%.

Ministers believe there is huge potential to build on this progress and expand trade ties, especially for smaller businesses based in the East of England, Midlands and the North. The trade mission to Shanghai has been designed to showcase these companies and demonstrate what they have to offer to their Chinese counterparts.

Delegates include:

- Johnson Matthey, a global leader in sustainable technology who have made a strong commitment to support the Chinese alternative energy vehicle industry
- Liverpool Vision, who are seeking to attract further Chinese investment into the Liverpool City Region through city-city links
- Domino Printing, a provider of coding and marking solutions for Chinese enterprise, who are looking to build on their relationships which have been established since 1995

Baroness Fairhead will also meet with prominent UK businesses based in China to explore how the Department of International Trade can continue to expand support for new exporters as well as companies with an existing presence in the Chinese market.

China’s services imports have more than tripled since 2010, making China already the second largest importer of services worldwide. China’s middle class is expected to number 600 million by 2020, greater than the current entire population of the European Union, presenting unrivalled opportunities for UK business.

Minister for Trade and Export Promotion, Baroness Rona Fairhead, said:

UK exports to China are growing strongly, but it's clear that there is still vast untapped demand for British goods and services in the Chinese market.

The opportunities for growth are there, and we will continue to use trade missions not only to build the UK culture of exporting, but also to help businesses of all sizes forge ties and cultivate relationships with potential buyers and investors.

As part of his visit Jake Berry will be attending the Northern Powerhouse Day that the Chinese International Industrial Fair is holding along with key members of the UK delegation.

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse, Jake Berry, said:

Northern Powerhouse businesses have so much to offer so it's fantastic to see them at this year's Chinese International Industrial Fair in Shanghai, demonstrating the strengths and opportunities for investment in the region.

This trade mission represents an exciting opportunity for the UK and China to build on an already flourishing commercial relationship.

The CIIF is the flagship event for advanced manufacturing in China, with more than 2,500 exhibitors and 160,000 visitors. It covers new energy vehicles, big data, robotics, aerospace and clean energy amongst other innovative technology.

As the Country of Honour, the UK trade mission will demonstrate the strength of British advanced manufacturing and emphasise that Britain is open for business as we prepare to exit the European Union.

The UK pavilion will exhibit the very best of the UK business, featuring companies including Jaguar Land Rover, Rolls Royce, Graphene Institute, Shadow Robotics and McLaren.

Baroness Fairhead will also visit Chongqing where she will attend the China-UK graphene standards working group, promoting the UK's leading role in the research, development of and commercialisation of graphene. UK companies are already benefiting from the use of the innovative material, which is 200 times stronger than steel, and it is expected to open up vast new markets around the world for British businesses.

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News story: HMCTS Reform Roadshows

Over the next year, we will be hosting a number of roadshows, aimed at legal professionals, to engage and gain feedback on the reform programme and ideas for the future.

These events will be held in each region, and will be advertised locally.

Please use the links below to register interest in attending:

We will add more venues to this list as they are confirmed.

Press release: Brokenshire in Brussels to meet key EU officials

The Secretary of State is in Brussels to continue his engagement with key stakeholders in between Brexit negotiation rounds. Mr Brokenshire will inform and update leading EU figures on the current political situation in Northern Ireland as well as emphasising the unique issues affecting NI as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Secretary of State will meet Michel Barnier, the European Union's Chief Brexit Negotiator, and update him on talks to form an NI Executive and the remaining political challenges Northern Ireland faces in relation to exiting the EU.

He will also hold meetings with Sir Julian King, the British European Commissioner, to discuss the latest security developments in Northern Ireland, and Phil Hogan, the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, to discuss Northern Ireland's agricultural interests in view of Brexit.

The Secretary of State will use the opportunity to update MEPs, including those from across the island of Ireland, on talks to restore an Executive at Stormont and discuss the unique economic, social and political context of Northern Ireland in view of Brexit.

Speaking ahead of his visit, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

My visit to Brussels today comes at an important time. Negotiations

are underway and we want to secure an agreement that delivers for all parts of the UK, including Northern Ireland. "As Secretary of State I am fully committed to ensuring that, as negotiations progress, the interests of Northern Ireland are protected and advanced, through the development of specific solutions to address its unique circumstances.

Of course it would be better if there were an Executive in place, with whom we could also engage directly, and that is why we are working to ensure the resumption of stable devolved government in Northern Ireland. I and my department will continue to advocate for Northern Ireland's interests and needs at the heart of Government.

We are going to make the most of the opportunities that our departure presents to Northern Ireland – getting out into the world and doing business right across the globe, while at home building a UK that works for everyone.

As I have said previously, the UK Government fully recognises the shared history that exists between the people on the island of Ireland as well as between Ireland and Great Britain so maintaining the Common Travel Area and preserving the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreements are top priorities for us.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK to share a land border with an EU member state, and we recognise the flow of traffic across the border on a daily basis for people going about their daily business is essential as we move forward. There must be no physical infrastructure at the border.

I believe that specific solutions can be found to Northern Ireland's unique circumstances, and the UK Government will do all in its power to secure an outcome that works for all parts of the United Kingdom. I will be reinforcing this message during my discussions.

During a keynote speech Mr Brokenshire will tell members of the European Policy Centre, EU officials and the assembled media that Northern Ireland is immeasurably in a better place today than it was 20 years ago but we must continue to tackle the challenges of today. A full transcript of the Secretary of State's speech will be published upon delivery.

[Press release: Every part of Wales must flourish after Brexit](#)

UK Government Ministers Robin Walker and Alun Cairns will today (6 Nov) meet with a panel of Welsh businesses, universities and the voluntary and farming sectors in Cardiff as part of ongoing engagement on the opportunities and challenges of exiting the EU.

This meeting will follow an evidence session with the National Assembly for Wales where the ministers will answer questions on the EU Withdrawal Bill.

The visit is part of an ongoing programme of engagement with all parts of the UK on Brexit, and builds on recent visits to Wales by the First Secretary of State Damian Green, Environment Secretary Michael Gove and International Trade Secretary Liam Fox.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

As we continue to make decisive steps towards our exit from the EU, we are committed to bringing all of the UK with us – ensuring that every sector's voice is heard and that every nation is able to flourish from day one of departure.

The people of Wales want to make Brexit a success and both the Welsh Government and UK Government want the same thing – we want Wales to prosper and we want an agreement for the whole of the UK with the European Union. As we leave the EU, Wales will share the benefits of the UK's new role as a strong, global, free-trading nation.

That is why we are stepping up our engagement with key sectors in Wales throughout the exit process. I'm delighted to welcome Robin Walker to Cardiff today to continue those discussions.

Minister at the Department for Exiting the EU, Robin Walker said:

We are committed to securing a deal that works for the entire United Kingdom, enabling Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England to fully embrace the opportunities our EU exit offers.

As we continue our unprecedented level of engagement on Brexit, I look forward to hearing from key sectors in Wales about their priorities for Brexit and to updating them on negotiations and the progress of the Withdrawal Bill.

The Withdrawal Bill is a key piece of legislation in the national interest which will convert EU law to UK law on exit day, ensuring we leave the EU with certainty, continuity and control. The Bill will enter committee stage on November 14th.

The Secretary of State for Wales established the Expert Panel to work with him to deliver a smooth and orderly exit from the EU in Wales. The third meeting today builds on the constructive conversations they have already had, helping to contribute to the UK's negotiating position.

NOTES

- The Ministers will be appearing in front of the National Assembly for Wales' Constitutional and Legislative Committee and External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee.

[News story: Community rail stations of the future to be shaped by new blueprint for success](#)

A scheme which allows local communities to adopt under-used stations and rail lines is set to enter a new era under multi-million pound plans to be announced by the Rail Minister Paul Maynard today (6 November 2017).

Nearly 60 [Community Rail Partnerships](#) (CRPs) have been set up around the country since 1993, and have helped to revive and reshape more than 80 routes and stations, thanks to volunteers, community engagement and funding from the government and train operators, which last year topped £3 million.

[The role and importance of community rail](#)

And now the Department for Transport plans to build on the success of the scheme by launching an updated community rail strategy – with millions of pounds of investment available for successful schemes. The plan is to see the scheme expanded and replicated on a wider scale across the country.

The most successful projects have seen passenger numbers boosted, while others have recreated railway stations as important community hubs.

Rail Minister Paul Maynard said:

We have seen nearly a quarter of a century of communities pulling together to breathe new life into railway lines and stations – and we want to build on that success.

We want give the volunteers the support they deserve, spread their success and encourage new partnerships to be created and flourish.

This forms a key part of the investment the government is making in the railways – the biggest since the Victorian era, delivering new carriages, new routes, track upgrades and better stations.

[Rail Minister Paul Maynard invites you to have your say on the new community rail strategy](#)

The minister is launching a [consultation into how to expand and enhance community partnerships](#) today at one of the scheme's success stories, Burnley's Manchester Road station. Over the past year, the station has seen passenger numbers rise by more than 100,000.

The funding each partnership receives allows them to promote their station or line in the local community and improve accessibility which has increased passenger footfall and helped to reduce vandalism.

More than 3,200 volunteers give 250,000 hours of their time every year to partnerships across the network.

The new strategy for England and Wales is the first since 2007, and will be launched in Spring next year following the end of the public consultation on 28 January 2018.

The consultation focuses on 4 themes

- connecting people to places and opportunities
- supporting communities, diversity and inclusion
- supporting local and regional economies
- suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP), the national umbrella organisation for community rail, has also produced a [booklet setting out the benefits of community rail](#).