MIDLANDS ENGINE MAKES THE HOME OF BRITISH MANUFACTURING

NOVEMBER 2021
The Midlands is a region of pioneering minds, thriving industry and advanced technology, of inspiring heritage and incredible, determined people. We are the world’s original industrial powerhouse and we continue to lead the world in manufacturing ingenuity and invention.

In the 18th century, the modern factory concept was created in the Derbyshire textile mills and the Industrial Revolution was born. Here in the Midlands, some of the most innovative thinkers of the age were creating the future and developing the groundbreaking technologies of the day which would go on to shape the industry of the world: steam pioneers Matthew Boulton and James Watt; discoverer of oxygen Joseph Priestley; pottery pioneer Josiah Wedgwood; inventor of the spinning frame Richard Arkwright; physician Erasmus Darwin who was born in Shrewsbury and of course the father of modern science, Isaac Newton.

In more recent decades, our region has demonstrated a pioneering spirit that’s stronger than ever. Our region led the development of X-ray and MRI technology, and gave the world ibuprofen, and the Midlands continues to be the country’s leading force in manufacturing - a place where solutions for the future are being born. Our region has nationally and internationally significant strengths in health and life sciences, aerospace, agri-tech, automotive and transport, ceramics, heating and energy generation, and much more; powering people and unlocking productivity for growth and prosperity.

Now, more than two centuries after the Industrial Revolution, our region is seizing a new opportunity - leading the Green Industrial Revolution. Midlands manufacturers have been swift to act on the phenomenal opportunities the shift to a low carbon economy will bring, highlighting once again that the Midlands is the pioneering powerhouse of the nation, at the very heart of net zero making.

“Through consistent, scaled-up public and private sector investment in our region’s immense manufacturing power and potential, from our SMEs to Midlands based major global players, we will continue to bring and grow true wealth into our region and our country.”

Sir John Peace, Chairman, Midlands Engine

“The Midlands was the home of the first global Industrial Revolution - the manufacturing heartland of the UK that has powered our country’s economy with its pioneering spirit of invention and ambition. This region is where some of the most iconic brands were born and where ingenuous solutions to some of the world’s most pressing issues are being nurtured. With strengths in goods as diverse as cars, medicines, textiles and food, the Midlands will play a pivotal role in our post-pandemic, green recovery and in turning Global Britain into a reality.”

Lord Ravensdale, Co-Chair Midlands Engine APPG
Our country’s thriving manufacturing sector is the world’s workshop and the nation’s economic engine. The Midlands is the leading UK force in manufacturing, powering people and unlocking productivity for growth and prosperity.

FOSTERING INNOVATION
The Midlands is home to some of the UK’s and the world’s most iconic manufacturers, large and small, and a vibrant supply chain working at the cutting edge of creativity.
Through our world-leading universities and the highest number of catapult centres in the UK, we are fostering a rich environment of innovation, making those links between concept and commercialisation that can lead to regional economic prosperity.
THE MIDLANDS IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

FORGING OUR FUTURE WITH CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY & LOW CARBON INNOVATION
DID YOU KNOW?

- 30% of the English vegetable crop is picked in Lincolnshire
- 70% of all the fish consumed within England is processed in Grimsby
- Award-winning wines are being made in the Lincolnshire Wolds
- Boston in Lincolnshire is set to become Europe’s plant-based meat capital with its largest factory
- The National Centre for Food Manufacturing, a satellite campus of the University of Lincoln, is dedicated to skills development in this regionally significant sector
- The Walkers site in Leicester produces over 11 million bags of crisps a day

"The Midlands Engine has long been a formidable powerhouse of manufacturing and today it’s a sector which is perhaps more diverse and sophisticated than manufacturing anywhere in the UK. Working together with Make UK and many partners from across our region’s top universities, we’ve brought forward work through our Midlands Engine Observatory to look rapidly at regional supply chains, what needs to be done to strengthen these and how we can improve resilience regionally as firms rebuild and recover from the far-reaching impacts of Covid-19."

Rachael Greenwood, Executive Director, Midlands Engine
MIDLANDS ENGINE MAKES NOVEMBER 2021

DID YOU KNOW?

- Otter Controls in Derby supplies 90% of the world’s kettle connectors
- The textiles industry is worth £344 million in Leicester, which is home to 800 textile production sites and technical textile producers - and home to the most textile patents registered in Europe
- Salts Healthcare in Birmingham is one of the world’s oldest family-run companies - one of the surgical instruments they manufactured was used to remove Napoleon’s tooth!
- In 2012, teenager Ben Francis and a group of his friends created Gymshark - one of the fastest growing and most recognisable brands in fitness
- In 1985, Boots received a Queen’s Award for Technological Achievement for the discovery and development of ibuprofen
- Petroleum coke, a carbon-rich product manufactured in Immingham, Lincolnshire is used across the globe in smart phone and electric vehicle batteries

IN YOUR HOME...

Sophie Allport | Dunelm | John Smedley

next | Phillips 66 | Boots

Paul Smith

aamtico | Emma Bridgewater | Gymshark

David Nieper | Worcester Bosch Group

Brintons | AGA Rangemaster | Denby 1809
Westfield sports cars in Dudley created the autonomous pods that transport you around Heathrow airport

The agri-tech robotics being developed at the National Centre for Food Manufacturing in Holbeach, Lincolnshire are also being used to develop space tech

In 1896, the UK’s first car factory opened in Coventry, founded by the Daimler Motor Company

We have the highest number of MedTech companies of any region in the UK, generating £1.6 billion for the UK economy every year

Keele University is one of only two UK sites to manufacture the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine

Midlands SMEs are making the world’s first serviceable, upgradeable and recyclable lithium batteries

One quarter of all UK aerospace output is from the Midlands, with specific expertise in aero engines, complex aircraft systems and precision-engineered aircraft components

“Midlands manufacturing plays a wonderfully diverse and powerful part in UK industry. Nearly 600,000 people within our region work in our fabulous sector making things from pies to aerospace parts and everything in between. During the pandemic this has meant we can continue to put food and drink on our supermarket shelves, and our businesses have stepped up to provide ventilators for intensive care units and PPE for local hospitals.

“Manufacturing will continue to play a significant role in the region’s economy and will measurably contribute to our ability to bring about a post-pandemic recovery.”

Charlotte Horobin, Regional Director Midlands and East, Make UK
The Midlands is more than individual companies making products. Taken together these companies provide phenomenal capacity and capability. The interconnected supply chains across the Midlands form a network of companies all working together in innovative ways to manufacture products for our everyday use. From spices and ceramics, to aeroplanes and medical devices, these products are then distributed and used not just in the Midlands and UK, but across the world.