

Sadly at school I wasn't very good at science. I'm not sure why because I had, and continue to have, a deep fascination for learning about interesting things and undoubtedly science would fall into that category. Maybe it was in part that the teaching of science when I started secondary school 27 years ago was quite dry. That only the basics were taught; I remember most of the periodic table but remain curious to this day about the science behind manufacturing.

So it is that curiosity that leads to such enjoyment when I visit local manufacturing or engineering firms. I love it! I love that in Larkfield there is a company that fuses together, through the magic of science, little bits of plastic into pipes of all shapes and sizes that end up all over the world. I love that there is a local company which is the leading producer of butter wraps and sugar bags. I love Aylesford Newsprint for pulping all our recycled newspapers and create new paper. And I must not forget my love for the company up by Rochester Airport that makes the widgets for practically every type of aeroplane in the world. Or the international company that through its clever engineers have pioneered technology that is being used by fighter pilots in active combat.

British manufacturing is essential to the growth of our economy and latest reports show some of the strongest balances ever seen by the manufacturing sector, beating every quarter since 1989. This is absolutely fantastic news for local businesses and employment. There are of course still challenges and on every visit I hear what problems still exist in the industry.

I take those concerns away with me and try to help. But most of all I take away a regret that I didn't get to see this side of science when I was at school because when you see what it can do, what it can create, it is inspiring.