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A TVR car

£250m boost for motor building in principality

THE automotive industry in Wales kicked off 2016 in rude health as almost quarter of a billion pounds of fresh investment was announced for the sector in the first three months of the year, according to research revealed today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

The announcements mark a milestone for Welsh manufacturing, with the welcome return of car production after an absence of 43 years as both Aston Martin and TVR will invest significantly in new car plants.

More than 150 automotive component and system companies are currently based in the country, employing 18,000 people and generating £3billion for the economy.

In addition to Aston Martin's announcement of a new £200million plant in Glamorgan to build its all new DBX crossover, TVR announced its comeback plans with a sports car facility worth £30million in the Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone.

Meanwhile, Toyota pledged £7million to produce its next generation of hybrid engines in Deeside, and £500,000 will be invested in new plant equipment by Powys-based precision cold forming machinery specialist Dawson Shanahan. Together this investment will create more than 1,000 new jobs in Wales.



MINI milestone marks 15 years at Cowley plant

THE BMW Group, which is marking its centenary year, is also celebrating 15 years since the first new MINIs rolled off the production line in 2001, at its Oxford production plant.

Since then more than 2.5 million MINIs have been produced at the former Rover works at Cowley, with the three million milestone expected to be hit later this year.

Eighty per cent of the cars made there are exported to more than 110 countries around the world.

The 2001 MINI launch was the reinvention of a British motoring icon and sales of the MINI, both in the UK and internationally, have gone from strength to strength over the past 15 years.

In its first year nearly 40,000 MINIs were sold worldwide. By 2015 this number had risen to nearly 340,000, with more than 63,000 sold to customers in the UK – the highest since the brand's creation.

More than 4,500 people are employed at the site in Cowley, which manufactures three and five door MINIs, the MINI Clubman and its first all-wheel drive ALL4 model as well as the high-performance MINI John Cooper Works.



Anna King with a Mustang

Family fun in store as big motor show rolls into splendid setting

IT seems everyone in the county will be getting ready for the Gloucestershire Motor Show over the coming weeks.

The event, which raises thousands of pounds every year for the Pied Piper charity will be staged on the lawns of Highnam Court on June 11 and 12 and will feature not only hundreds of new and classic cars but an enormous array of family activities, making it one of the best family days out in Gloucestershire this summer.

The Army is bringing a climbing wall, there will be rescue demonstrations on the lake given by Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service and dog agility displays and falconry demonstrations are planned.

More than 40 acres of gardens will be open to explore, a car will be set aside to be coloured in, and a large number of trade stalls are also booked.

In addition the county's police are bringing along their mounted officers.

There will be an engineering zone and Blade Motor Group is com-

ing with not only a huge range of Audi, Seat and Honda cars but also a mini golf course.

Warners Motor Group will be bringing with them a range of Peugeot and MG cars as well as a giant Scalextric track.

Marc Warner from Warner's Motor Group – representing Peugeot, Citroen, MG and DS brands – said: "As a group we are incredibly proud to be working with the show and the charities it supports.

"We're planning to bring the MG GS which doesn't launch in the UK until the week after the show, so it will be wonderful to give everyone who comes along a preview."

One of the sure-fire favourites of the new motors display area will be the new Ford Mustang, especially the 5.0 V8 version which Bristol Street Ford in Gloucester will be bringing along.

Anna King from Bristol Street Ford said: "The Mustang is certainly a crowd puller and pleaser."

"We have been supporting the motor show and Pied Piper for some years now and it is a great platform to interact with current cus-



Milly Buckley, from Pied Piper, in the passenger seat of a 1930s Bentley. Left, police horses and fire service boats will be exciting the crowds a Highnam Court

tomers, meet new ones and to display our products in the wonderful surroundings of Highnam Court while at the same time supporting a fantastic charitable cause."

Mark Lee from Blade Honda's Gloucester dealership said: "One of the things I love about it especially is seeing the kids react to the new cars and technology we bring along with us.

"Seeing them all so excited really makes it worthwhile."

Chris Pockett from Renishaw, which is sponsoring the show's en-

gineering zone, said engineering with cars is core to the work it does and the motor show is a perfect opportunity for the firm to support a great cause and inspire the next generation of engineers.

He said: "There is a not a car, plane or train in the world that Renishaw products haven't touched in some way.

"The motor show for us is a chance to not only support a great cause but also to show people that engineering can be fantastic career working with some really exciting products."

