British Glass responds to Chancellor's industrial decarbonisation announcement



Sheffield 21/05/2026

The UK glass sector has been overlooked in today's announcement from the Chancellor on support for industrial decarbonisation, despite the urgent challenges facing the industry and the extensive work British Glass has undertaken with the Government to evidence the need for action.

British Glass strongly believes the reported £470 million packages for chemicals and ceramics falls short of the scale of support required to safeguard foundational manufacturing industries in the UK and enable them to be internationally competitive as they transition to Net Zero.

Since the current Government took office, British Glass has worked closely with critical government departments to set out both the opportunities and challenges facing the sector. The industry has consistently made the case for support to enable glass manufacturers to invest in electrification, improve competitiveness and decarbonise in line with the UK's net zero ambitions.

As a priority, British Glass has also been asking for urgent reforms to the packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR), due to its devastating impact on the container glass industry.

Urgent action is needed

In the last 12 months, the UK has lost Nippon Electric Glass (NEG) in Wigan, which was the country's last remaining continuous glass fibre manufacturing site resulting in ~ 250 job losses.

Within container glass, demand has declined by ~ 20% in recent years, driven in large part by the implementation of pEPR, alongside continuing uncertainty and misalignment around Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) policy in Wales.

Flat glass and glass wool has also faced sustained demand pressures over recent years, linked to reduced construction activity and weaker conditions across key building and infrastructure markets.

These pressures are already translating into lost capacity, with the recent closure of a furnace in Knottingley further underlining the fragility of the sector.

Standing up for British industry and for British jobs

Dr Nick Kirk, Federation Director of British Glass, said:

"Glass is a foundational material that supports UK manufacturing, food and drink supply chains, construction, healthcare, energy and the transition to net zero. Yet the sector continues to face a combination of high energy costs, policy uncertainty, reduced demand in key markets and mounting competitive pressure from overseas.

“Today’s announcement does not provide the confidence needed to unlock the major investment required for electrification and industrial decarbonisation in glass manufacturing.

“The Chancellor has stated that Government ‘will always stand up for British industry and for British jobs’. British Glass and its members now look forward to hearing how that commitment will be applied to the glass sector, which is battling significant challenges around energy costs, reduced demand, policy uncertainty and the investment needed to decarbonise.”

“If Government is serious about protecting foundational industries and delivering the ambitions of the Industrial Strategy, it must support all foundational industries rather than a chosen few (steel, chemicals and ceramics).

Without a more ambitious approach that aligns with the Industrial Strategy, the UK risks losing further capacity, skilled jobs and critical industrial capability.”

British Glass is calling for Government to work with the sector on a clear package of support that addresses electricity costs, enables investment in low-carbon furnace technology, and ensures packaging, recycling and industrial policies are aligned and material neutral.

British Glass stands ready to continue working constructively with Government to secure a sustainable, competitive future for UK glass manufacturing.

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