

Brexit 'freedom' is bringing a freeport to Wales for the first time says Welsh Secretary

The Government is using its Brexit "freedom" to "bring a freeport to Wales for the very first time", Welsh Secretary Sir Robert Buckland has said.

Speaking to Conservative Party members at Birmingham's International Convention Centre (ICC), Mr Buckland said: "We are using our freedom outside of the EU to bring a freeport to Wales for the very first time."

On plans for a freeport, he said: "Backed by millions of pounds of UK Government funding, a freeport will bring renewed growth to Welsh communities and it's why we're helping families and firms directly with the energy price guarantee, so that no-one will go cold this winter. This is what taking back control can deliver for Wales."

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The UK has previously had freeports while within the European Union. Seven freeports were set up in Britain after 1984, including at Liverpool and Southampton, but were phased out in 2012.

Freeports are also allowed in the European Union, which has around 80 sites in EU countries.

Mr Buckland also told party members that "being a proud unionist doesn't make anyone less Welsh and being proudly Welsh doesn't make anyone less of a unionist. The two go hand

in hand”.

He added: “We are all part of one United Kingdom with shared values and we are stronger together.”

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He turned his fire on Labour and Plaid Cymru, which he described as a “party more focused on stoking division and ripping apart our union than delivering for Wales”.

He added: “Rather than focusing on the people’s priorities, like delivering the M4 relief road that Welsh businesses and families are crying out for, this dysfunctional duo are hellbent on creating a larger Senedd, packed with even more politicians paid out of the public purse.”

Mr Buckland concluded his speech with his message of UK unity, telling members: “I want to finish by saying to those who might be losing faith, not just in Wales, but across the country, that this Conservative Government will deliver the growth and the prosperity that is only possible in a strong United Kingdom.”

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