

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome to Stoke – the centre of the universe! - The universe of invention, innovation and materials transformation.

For over 250 years, Stoke-on-Trent has led the way in transforming materials - and translating them to make, or help make, products.

Some examples:

- Flint to change our local red clay to enable the manufacture of creamware (1720 John Astby)
- Coal to energy, in order to power the kilns of our great pottery and clay industries
- Coal to energy in order to power our steel industry (sadly demised!)

Wedgwood backed his friend Brindley in having the canal structure developed - canals to transport raw materials and take products to market – an innovation which cut transport costs by 90%! – Indeed, Wedgwood was so involved he cut the first sod of the Trent and Mersey Canal on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1766.

Many of you will know our great city for these developments – and know how Josiah Wedgwood played a key role in the development of the ceramics industry – I am sure Tristram would be able to regale us all with even more fascinating detail.

Wedgwood himself manipulated, mainly by experimentation - some 3,000 materials to produce Portland Blue Pewter, to create a process that is remarkably similar today. He was admitted to the Royal Society in 1783, following that invention.

How many of you know that he was also the inventor of a technique for the indirect measurement of temperature – which is key to energy and process management? - That technique was “Pyrometry”.

This city and the region have continued to develop and create new materials and processes since Wedgwood’s initiatives. I am honoured to lead Lucideon (Formerly British Ceramic Research) – which continues to carry the flag of materials and process invention, innovation and commercialisation. Those of you who visit Lucideon later, will hear about and see some of the world leading technologies such as Field Enhanced Sintering and Inorganic Controlled Release - being developed and commercialised at our Penkhull facilities.

Invention - on its own, is not enough. This country of ours has always been inventive – but increasingly over the last 100 years, we have as a nation, stopped translating those inventions into products.

This must change. We know it. The Royal Society knows it - and I believe the Government has got our message. I hope they will support the AMRICC (Applied Materials Research and Innovation Commercialisation Company) initiative here in Stoke. Initiated and supported by Lucideon and the City Council, AMRICC is designed to **translate** technologies into products and process – at factory, not just laboratory scale.

Supported by Imperial College London, Manchester University and the Sir Henry Royce Institute, the centre will also produce the so, so important “commercial technocrats” of the future for UK industry.

This centre will have local, national and international scale and impact.

I have one more point before I close, a quote shared with me recently – one that I think is so pertinent to the Lunar Society, Lucideon, and the needs of our country. I think it is pertinent because as I see senior executives of companies around the world, I am often asked one question – but with very different emphasis. That question is “Are we the first with this technology Tony?” In the UK, it is spoken with trepidation. In the USA, it’s a badge of pride – to be the first mover.

The quote was:

“The Light bulb was **not** the result of continuous improvement of the candle”

... I do hope British industry will reflect on that point.

Thank you.