



Tate & Lyle visit note

Date: 28 January 2025

Location: Tate & Lyle Sugars, Thames Refinery, Factory Road, London

Attendees

Alistair Carmichael (Chair), Charlie Dewhurst, Jayne Kirkham, Josh Newbury, Tim Roca, Henry Tufnell

Tate & Lyle Sugars: Gerald Mason (Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs), Tom Newham (Head of Government Relations), Chris Abell (Head of Property and Local Affairs)

Topics of discussion

The Committee received an introduction to Tate & Lyle's history in its museum. It then undertook a tour of its site, including visiting the raw sugar shed, jetty, gran house, and warehouse and packing lines. The visit also included a discussion with GMB Union representatives working at Tate & Lyle.

Notable points of discussion included:

- The **UK's trade policy** and its impact on access and availability of raw cane sugar.
- The future of the **sugar autonomous tariff quota (ATQ)**. There was discussion on whether there should be an extension of the scheme, and the impact of the sugar ATQ on the sourcing of raw cane sugar from suppliers with high environmental and ethical standards. There was also discussion on the merits of making the sugar ATQ permanent and its potential effects on encouraging investment in factories and automation.
- The **resilience of the sugar supply chain**. There was discussion of the balance of the UK's sugar production, and of how the importation of raw cane sugar can alleviate any problems in the domestic production (e.g. poor beet crop yields) and fill gaps in the supply in the market.
- The company's chartering of ships and **welfare standards of workers on ships**, including contracts with seafarers.
- **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism**, including challenges in its implementation and the practicalities of businesses making long-term investment decisions on it.
- **Automation** in the factory and corresponding impact on jobs and skills. The risk of cyberattacks disrupting business was also discussed.
- **Packaging reforms**, including the trialling of making packaging for Tate & Lyle's brown sugar more recyclable.
- **Apprenticeship levy**, including steps Tate & Lyle have taken to career development opportunities to its employers.
- **Increases in National Insurance Contribution (NICs)**, including effects of this on international confidence in investing in the UK and impact on cost to suppliers.