

United Kingdom Innovation

Celebrating past and present success

This triptych interweaves three visions of Britain past, present and future

Below: Triptych image for 'UK Past'

In the third room of the UK Pavilion British innovation is celebrated through an animated mural created by Factory Fifteen, a London based design and animation studio. This highly creative triptych interweaves three visions of Britain past, present and future, with scenes of industry, transport and energy production unfolding over five generations.

"Factory Fifteen were very excited to be invited to design the 'We Are Energy' artwork. Our passion is architecture and animation, so for us this was the ideal project. We were inspired by Gaku Kinoshita's 'Animated Tokyo Scroll' and Hieronymus Bosch's 'The Garden of Earthly Delights'. Both are visually compelling, telling a story about how people interact with each other and the city over time. We aimed to create a similar landscape in a playful and informative way, to refer to Britain's past, current and future in terms of culture and technology. As such, the animated landscape is one of interconnected movement and stories, highlighting that — we are all energy."

Jonathan Gales, co-founder, Factory Fifteen

"As the Earth harnesses energy from the Sun, so do humans and our inventions. The UK is a global leader in innovation, through the ages and in the present. We seek ways to connect to natural energy processes, more efficiently and more in balance with our planet."

Our Past

From years past visitors can watch steam trains transporting freight and materials to factories, steam ships crossing the ocean, and canal boats moving coal to power the machinery of the Industrial Revolution. This is a world where the first light bulbs are coming into manufacture and a monster swims in Loch Ness.



“The UK’s climate for creativity and innovation has resulted in some of the world’s most ground breaking discoveries, from the invention of the world wide web, to the discovery of electromagnetism leading to X-Rays, radio, television, microwaves, radar and satellite communications; steam engines in trains and turbo jet engines in planes that led to global trade, mobility of labour and tourism to the discovery of DNA – a discovery that revolutionized what we know about ourselves and fundamentally is what connects us all.”

“The UK is at the heart of delivering the new technologies that drive how we create, conserve and use energy. We are committed to energy security and to action on climate change. We will cut UK greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80 percent by 2050 and source at least 15 per cent of energy from renewable sources by 2020. We are world leaders in the development of Smart City technologies which will help with the challenge of mass urbanisation.”

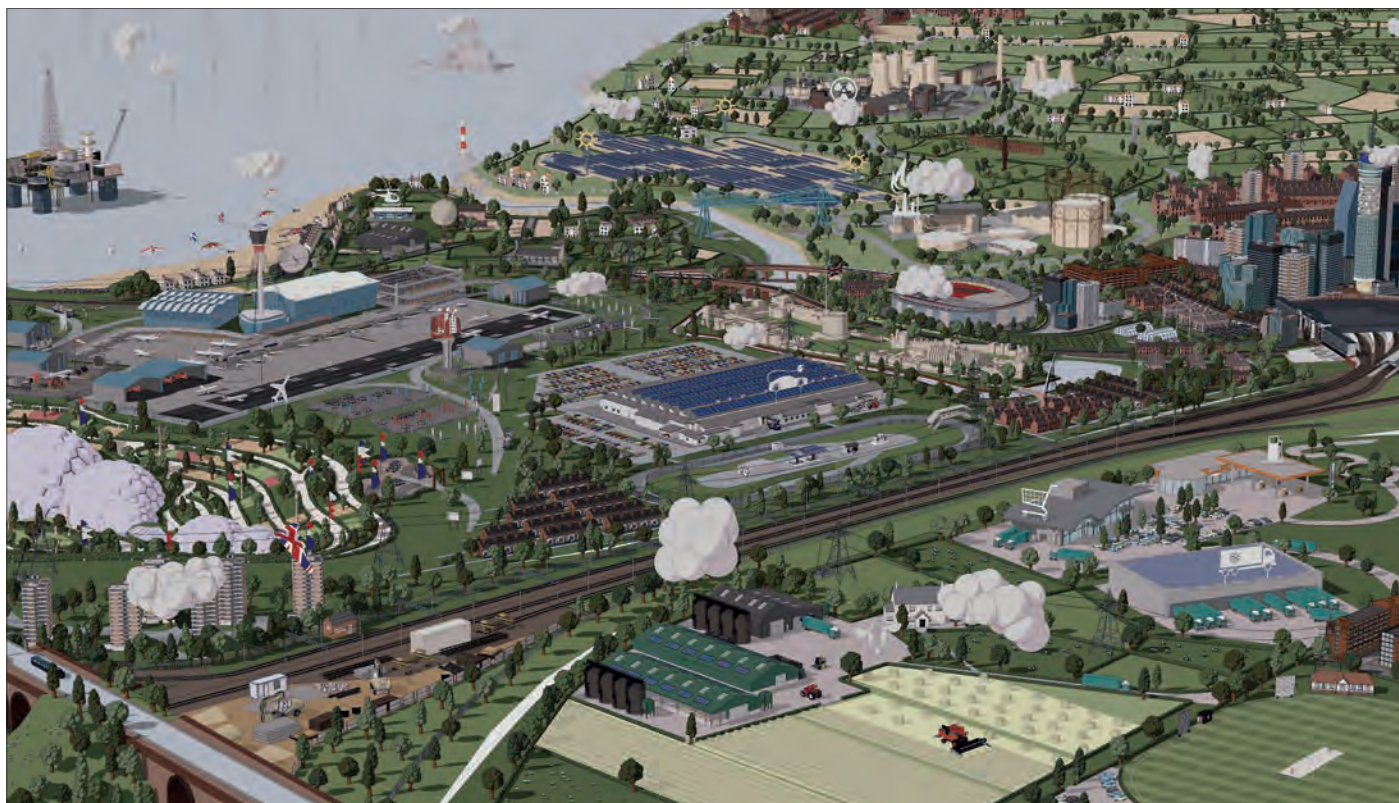
The former quarry has morphed into a nature biome similar to the Eden project

Our Present

Moving from scenes of past history to the present day, the Falkirk wheel connects the canals from the UK Past mural to the Now scenes. The traditional hot air balloon is shown with a lorry delivering gas to power it, the crops harvested from the farms are delivered to the end consumer using refrigerated transport rather than train

and horse power, the former quarry has morphed into a nature biome similar to the Eden project. Where once there was a traditional airplane carrying the British flag, now the triptych shows the Red Arrows and commuter jets flying through the air and satellites orbiting overhead. And where once the power of the wind was harnessed to turn mills, now there are offshore windfarms to provide energy.

Below: Triptych image for 'UK Now'





Our Future

The third element of the triptych provides a vision of the UK's future, although one that, as the Pavilion's architect Asif Khan points out, "in many cases could be no more than twenty years ahead". Now kites harvest energy from the wind, the harvesting of the farm is performed by drones and the jet planes are replaced by a space port transporting people out of orbit. Sustainable communities use solar panels and turbines to subsidise their energy use and desalination plants purify water from the Thames estuary. And, in a reflection on one of the UK's most renowned innovations of recent years, graphene is shown being harvested from the air.

“The UK is home to great ideas. We have 78 Nobel Prizes in science and technology, second in the world and more than anywhere else in Europe. Our partnerships with industry globally create a thriving innovation ecosystem for turning ideas into commercial success. Our latest discovery to change the world is Graphene.”

Above: Triptych image for 'UK Future'