

# Snapshots

## China Club launch marks beginning of golden era in China-UK relations

By WANG MINGJIE  
wangmingjie@mail.chinadailyuk.com

The China Club launch event was held at Bank of China's London headquarters on July 28, with more than 100 guests attending from various business sectors, including Lord Wei of Shoreditch, and Jin Xu, the minister counselor for the Chinese embassy's economic and commercial office.

Powered by China Daily and hosted by talkholiday, China Club is an online platform dedicated to meeting the growing interest in China, especially the Chinese market and its growing tourism industry, and facilitating better understanding of Chinese economy and Chinese culture.

Handing over his gift of calligraphy to officially open the China Club, Jin said investment and trade cooperation between China and the United Kingdom is entering a golden era.

"Sino-UK trade reached \$36.7 billion in the first six months of 2015, a similar level to 2014. The UK is China's second-largest trading partner in the European Union, while China remains the UK's second-largest trading partner outside the EU," Jin added.

With Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming state visit to the UK in October, at the personal invitation of Queen Elizabeth II, Jin said: "Close interaction at the top boosts mutual trust. In turn, this drives our business ties forward by opening up new areas and enabling new models of cooperation."

There are many areas in which China and the UK can cooperate more, he said, underlining that Britain was the first major Western country to announce its intention to join the China-initiated Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in March as a founding member.

Lord Wei of Shoreditch, the youngest member of the House of Lords and the first British-born person of Chinese origin to have become a member, said he was delighted to witness the birth of China Club, saying: "Now what happens in China truly reverberates instantaneously over here to the UK. I'd like to think that similarly what happens here in the UK will have an impact on China."

Both business and political relationships between two nations are deepening, and with 2015 being the year of culture, culture is also an important part of deepening our relationship, Lord Wei said, adding: "I am excited that we are going to be learning more about each other's cultures and I believe China Club would be an instrumental part in bringing that popular understanding of both cultures to each other."

>> PAGE 5



Jin Xu, minister counselor for the Chinese embassy's economic and commercial office (third right); Lord Wei of Shoreditch (fourth left); Ji Tao, editor of China Daily Europe (second right); Chris Newlands, CEO of talkholiday (first right); Sun Yu, CEO of Bank of China UK (third left); Zhang Lei, general manager of China Mobile UK (second left); and Zhang Mei, managing director of CTS Horizons UK (LI), jointly inaugurated the China Club with Jin's calligraphy on July 28.

PHOTOS BY JIANG SHAN / CHINA DAILY



Guests take part in the China Club event.



Gerard Lyons, chief economic adviser to the Mayor of London (left) and Richard Muir, deputy chief executive at Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.



Lin Ning (center), chief representative of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade in the UK, talks to guests at the event.



David Collyer, tourism director for Bicester Village, which will soon open its second China store in Shanghai.