

## **NEW MAYOR SEES VISION OF FUTURE ON TOUR OF WILTON INTERNATIONAL SITE**



The influential new Mayor of the Tees Valley has deepened his understanding of Wilton International's role in the future regeneration of the area with a special visit to the site organised by two of the main companies.

Ben Houchen joined a group of Teesside University engineering students on a tour around the 2,000 acre site organised by the Teesside University in conjunction with Sembcorp and SABIC.

Mr Houchen was elected as the Mayor of the Tees Valley in May and heads the Tees Valley Combined Authority – the partnership of the five local authorities in the area created to drive economic growth and job creation.

TVCA is the first authority with devolved powers to be created by the Government outside London and gives local control over £450 million of spending over the next 30 years and provides a further £500 million to invest in local projects.

As part of the tour, Mr Houchen viewed Sembcorp's power facilities and the Wilton 11 waste to energy plant which he is due to formally open in October.

He said: "Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed the fascinating tour of the Wilton site and the insight into the manufacturing chain. It re-enforced to me how important it is that we ensure there is a skilled workforce, ready to take up the opportunities our ambitious plans will deliver."

He added: “The sheer scale of the site, its energy and superb infrastructure offers significant opportunities for potential investors. There’s no doubt it will play a key part in driving growth in the Tees Valley as well as creating jobs for the next generation of engineers and plant operators.”

Mr Houchen, centre, is pictured with the graduates overlooking the Olefins 6 Cracker plant at Wilton which has seen significant recent investment which will extend its lifespan. To his immediate right in the picture are Terry Waldron of Sembcorp and Steve Jones, Senior Manager for Workforce Development and Continuous Improvement at SABIC.