

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland occupies a unique place at the heart of the UK Government as the UK constitution evolves. In recent years the Office has been at the centre of the transfer of further powers to the Scottish Parliament through the Scotland Act 2016 and ensuring the interests of Scotland and the devolved settlement are fully considered as we leave the EU.

Our three core objectives are –

- **Strengthening and sustaining the Union**
- **Scotland’s voice in Whitehall**
- **Championing the UK Government in Scotland**

As part of the UK, Scotland benefits from the UK’s strength, security and stability. The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland works with a range of stakeholders, including the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament and with departments across Whitehall to deliver for Scotland.

Objective 1 – Strengthening and Sustaining the Union

To act as custodians of constitutional arrangements and in particular the devolution settlement.

We are working closely with departments across the UK Government and the Scottish Government to ensure that the UK’s exit from the EU delivers for all parts of the UK.

We also continue to ensure that the current devolution settlement works effectively in the interests of people in Scotland and the rest of the UK by overseeing the delivery of powers contained in the Scotland Act 2016. Together these powers have made the Scottish Parliament one of the most powerful devolved parliaments in the world.

Objective 2 – Scotland’s Voice in Whitehall

To represent distinct Scottish interests within Government and support the rest of the Government on Scottish matters.

City Deals & Industrial Strategy

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland continues to support economic growth and investment in vital Scottish and UK industries. We supported a £1 billion deal for Glasgow and the Clyde Valley in 2014, a £250 million deal for Aberdeen City Region and Inverness in 2016, and signed Heads of Terms with Edinburgh and the South East in summer 2017. We are conducting negotiations with Stirling, the Tay Cities and Borderlands.

To ensure Scotland benefits from improved productivity growth as part of the Industrial Strategy, we have committed to working collaboratively with the Scottish Government to maximise the impact of further support for businesses and communities in Scotland. As part of this, we have announced proposals for an inter-agency collaboration review that will identify opportunities to make Government services in Scotland as simple and effective as possible.

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland is supporting the work to establish a deep and special partnership between the UK and the EU for the future - one that allows for the strong trade and the closest cooperation on the issues that matter. As part of the UK, private sector employment is up by 215,000 since 2010 and Scotland has the second highest female employment rate in the EU, beaten only by Sweden. We are building an economy that is fit for the future through a balanced approach by reducing debt at the same time as supporting public services and investing to improve our productivity.

Oil & Gas and Renewables

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland continues to support the Oil and Gas sector, which is important for Scotland, and the wider UK economy, for energy security, jobs, and to support the development of a world-leading decommissioning industry. In recent budgets, the Government has provided a £2.3 billion support package to the industry which includes ensuring a competitive tax regime for oil and gas companies; providing £40 million for seismic surveys in under developed areas of the UK Continental Shelf; a new £250 million Aberdeen City Package deal which included work on Aberdeen Harbour and the setting up of the Oil and Gas Technology Centre, a world leader in developing new technology for the industry.

In the 2017 Autumn budget it was announced that operators in the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) will be able to transfer part of the tax when assets change hands, in order to facilitate the transfer of late life oil and gas assets. This will allow new investment coming into the UKCS to benefit from tax relief being offered when assets are being decommissioned.

We remain committed to decarbonising our economy by supporting major renewables developments in Scotland and across the UK with recent contracts secured in the offshore wind sector. The UK Government has also set out plans for renewables developments on the remote islands of Scotland to be able to bid for support at the next round of Contracts for Difference in Spring 2019.

International Trade

Boosting International Trade is key for Scotland and the UK, The GREAT Britain campaign is now operational in over 240 diplomatic posts in 144 countries around the globe. The campaign delivers targeted activity to promote the UK as a world-class destination for trade, tourism, investment and education. Scottish businesses benefit from this network and the expertise of advisers at the UK Government's 'exports roadshow'.

The Secretary of State for Scotland continues to make overseas visits to a number of international markets to bang the drum for Scottish businesses, including the promotion of oil and gas and Scottish food and drink exports. Recent visits have included the USA, Singapore, Paraguay and Argentina, Norway, and Brussels.

Defence

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland has supported the Ministry of Defence in its work to implement the Strategic Defence and Security Review in Scotland. The UK Government's commitment to defence in Scotland includes commitments to the production

of further warships at shipyards on the Clyde and the contract being signed for nine Boeing P-8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft to be based at RAF Lossiemouth. The Secretary of State for Scotland witnessed the signing of a Strategic Delivery and Development Framework between HM Naval Base Clyde and Argyll & Bute Council, the culmination of work to improve understanding and co-operation between the base and its community.

Objective 3 – Championing the UK Government in Scotland

To represent and advocate for the UK Government's policies and achievements in Scotland.

Digital Connectivity

The UK Government has invested over £120m in superfast broadband in Scotland. This has been supplemented by commitments for digital infrastructure as part of the Aberdeen (£5m) and Inverness (£20m) City Deals. The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland is ensuring that Scottish local authorities will also be able to share in new DCMS schemes for full fibre networks and 5G.

We are working to bring in a Universal Service Obligation by 2020 to ensure every home and business has the right to access broadband. This Government has several key initiatives in place to secure better mobile coverage including legally binding licence obligations with the mobile operators and 4G coverage, on the main road network throughout the country, as part of the update on the Home Office Emergency Service Network.

International Development

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland works closely with the Department for International Development's (DFID), which has its joint HQ in East Kilbride. DFID financially supports or links with a range of civil society organisations in Scotland and has launched a new fund, the Small Charities Challenge Fund (SCCF) which will support the UK's small non-for-profit groups, to scale-up and increase the reach and efficiency of their overseas projects. Grants of up to £50,000 will be available for projects of up to 2 years that have been too small to make realistic funding applications to DFID's existing grant schemes. This has been made available to Scottish organisations.

UK Government in Scotland

We work in partnership with other UK Government Departments to plan, deliver and promote events and campaigns in Scotland, explaining to the public how the UK Government is delivering for people in Scotland. Since the General Election in June 2017, the Secretary of State and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State have undertaken over 60 visits across Scotland, engaging with a wide range of stakeholders - in our priority areas for EU Exit; Region and City Deals; UK Government funded projects and strengthening the economy. The Secretary of State also promotes Scotland on the international stage.

We are engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and we support other Government departments in delivering programmes of outreach as set out in their Departmental Delivery plans. The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland will strengthen the UK Government

in Scotland network by improving linkages on issues such as personnel interchange and learning and development programmes.

Through to 2020 we will continue to make the case for a strong UK, to represent the interests of Scotland at Westminster, and increase public awareness of how the UK Government continues to deliver for people in Scotland.