



Cabinet Office

Cabinet Office Second Headquarters 2030 Strategy



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Foreword

As Permanent Secretary of the Cabinet Office, I am delighted to introduce this ambitious four-year strategy for our Second Headquarters in Glasgow. This document marks an important milestone in our journey, building on the significant progress we have made since establishing our presence in the city four years ago.



This strategy outlines our ambition for the Cabinet Office, Scotland, and the wider UK.



Cat Little

Our Second Headquarters in Glasgow is central to our commitment to have a Civil Service that is more representative of the country it serves. As the Civil Service moves out from London through the Places for Growth programme, the Cabinet Office has made a commitment to building a strong presence in Glasgow. Being more connected to the communities that we serve is an essential part of the government's mission-led government approach and its long-term plan for the country to achieve a decade of national renewal.

Our driving ambition for 2030 is underpinned by three core pillars: Progress, where we will build on our successes by growing our presence and seniority in Glasgow; People, where we will invest in Scottish talent and celebrate our thriving community; and Partnerships, where we will deliver value by working collaboratively across government, with institutions in Scotland, and within local communities.

This strategy is a testament to our focus on innovation across the public sector and our commitment to working in partnership with the country.

This strategy reflects our continued commitment to the Second Headquarters, a place where we deliver the Cabinet Office's highest priorities while contributing to a thriving UK wide Civil Service. Achieving this vision requires continued strong support from our senior leaders and strengthened partnerships, working closely and engaging meaningfully with our local communities.

I am confident that this strategy provides a clear roadmap for the future of our Second Headquarters in Glasgow.

Cat Little

Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office

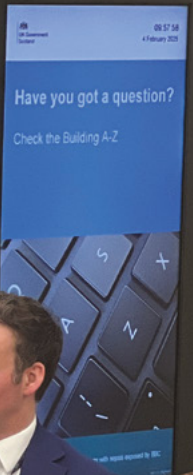
Minister Oppong-Asare

Visit to the Cabinet Office 2nd HQ

04.02.2025



Cabinet Office



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The purpose of this strategy is to share this ambition, set out the road to achieving it, and invite our people and our partners to join us in making it happen.

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Executive Summary

In the first four years of the Cabinet Office's Second Headquarters in Glasgow, we have made significant progress.

We have grown rapidly in size and built partnerships with leading institutions across Scotland in government, industry, the third sector and academia. We have forged a strong culture of community inward and outwardly. Yet, we have more to do, and we are ambitious to seize the opportunity of the next phase in the Second Headquarters' growth and development.

Our driving ambition for 2030 is to maximise the benefits for the Cabinet Office, for Scotland and the UK. The purpose of this strategy is to share this ambition, set out the road to achieving it, and invite our people and our partners to join us in making it happen.

The strategy and its implementation will be overseen by the Cabinet Office Senior Sponsor for Scotland, led by the dedicated Second Headquarters development team and the continued contributions of staff across the Second Headquarters and the whole of the Cabinet Office, along with our external partners who have been instrumental to everything that has been achieved in its first three years.

Our strategy for 2030 has three central pillars:

1



Progress

We will build on our success and realise the full potential of the Second Headquarters by growing the number and seniority of our Civil Servant community, up to the most senior levels of the department; by making it possible for whole careers, across the full breadth of activity of the department, to be Glasgow based; and by continuing to invest in the infrastructure that is essential to a headquarters location.

2



People

We will invest in Scottish talent and celebrate our community by providing learning and development opportunities to support everyone in the Second Headquarters to reach their full career potential; by growing the range and scale of our already thriving staff community groups and activities; and by redoubling our efforts to promote the Cabinet Office as an organisation that welcomes talent from any background. This will enable us to foster innovation across the public sector by tapping into a diversity of thought and experience.

3



Partnerships

We will deliver value by working in partnership with others. With other government departments to maximise the benefits of UK government presence in Scotland; by seeking opportunities to draw on the expertise of partners across sectors in the design and development of policy and strategy by continuing to ground ourselves in Glasgow and Scotland through purposeful partnerships with leading institutions across sectors; and actively contributing to local communities by building partnerships with purpose and measurable outcomes.

Our Opportunity

Now is the moment to set a clear strategy for the next phase in the growth and development of the Cabinet Office’s Second Headquarters in Glasgow. We must be ambitious for the future, capitalising on all that Scotland offers to unleash the full potential of a Second Headquarters outside of London and contribute to a thriving UK-wide Civil Service. This is part of the government’s wider mission-led approach and long-term plan for the country.

We have made significant progress in the almost four years since the Second Headquarters was opened. We have grown rapidly, from under 100 staff in 2021 to over 700 today. Our success is not just measured by growth. We are outward looking and have established strong partnerships with leading organisations across sectors in Glasgow and beyond. We have also fostered a distinct culture of community within the office, which our people say creates a sense of belonging and a spirit of collaboration.

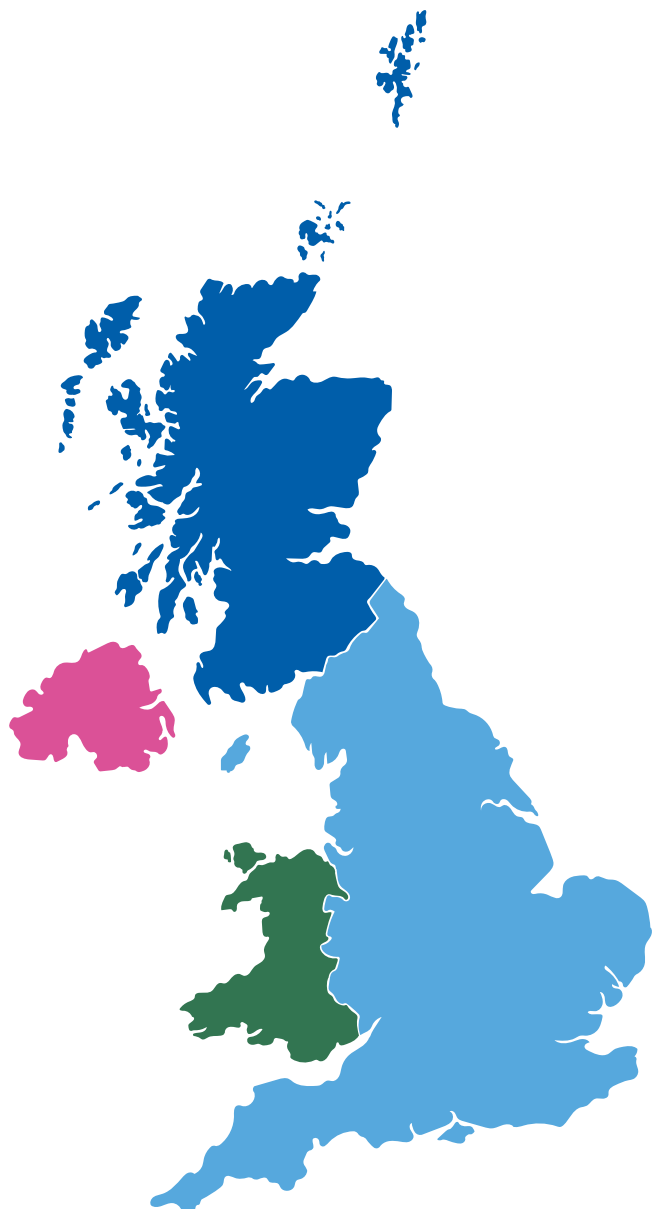
Glasgow offers the Cabinet office a wealth of benefits as the location of its Second Headquarters. One of the largest city regions in the UK, Glasgow has a dynamic economy, a highly skilled workforce, leading universities and high living standards that are more affordable than many other parts of the country.

There is more to do, particularly in growing the presence of senior leaders and policymakers, and attracting the best of Scottish talent not just with great jobs but great careers.

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Now is the moment to set a clear strategy for the next phase in the growth and development of the Cabinet Office’s Second Headquarters in Glasgow.

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What Glasgow Offers

A thriving city

Glasgow is one of the largest City regions in the UK, with a population of **1.84 million people**¹.



**1.84
million
people**

71%



54%

A highly skilled and flexible workforce

71% of the population are of working age (between 16 and 64) and **54%** are educated to degree level².

A dynamic, innovative economy



Glasgow has been recognised across Europe as a leading destination for Foreign Direct Investment³ and has secured **£32.7 million** in UK Government Innovation Zone funding for projects ranging from advanced manufacturing and finance to aerospace and robotics⁴.

World class universities



Glasgow's world class universities produce **39,800** graduates a year in subjects ranging from finance and business (**8,985** graduates a year) management to science and engineering (**7,065** graduates a year), **51%** of whom stay in the city after graduation⁵.

A growing UK Civil Service presence

The Glasgow region hosts both the Second Headquarters of the Cabinet Office and the Joint Headquarters of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, alongside thousands of UK Civil Servants across other departments creating opportunities to develop strong synergies and expertise.



A home for some of the UK's leading companies

The advantages Glasgow offers have attracted some of the UK's leading organisations to headquarter in the city, from Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan and Barclays to the BT Group.

1 <https://www.investglasgow.com/why-glasgow/talent>

2 <https://www.investglasgow.com/why-glasgow/talent>

3 https://www.gla.ac.uk/news/archiveofnews/2024/february/headline_1047588_en.html

4 <https://glasgowcityregion.co.uk/innovation-accelerator/innovation-accelerator-projects/>

5 <https://www.investglasgow.com/why-glasgow/talent>

Delivering as Second HQ: Cabinet Office Priorities

The Cabinet Office's Second Headquarters in Glasgow plays a key part in delivering core government and Cabinet Office priorities, ensuring a more resilient, representative, and effective Civil Service across the UK.

Places for Growth

The Second Headquarters is a direct result of the Places for Growth agenda, addressing the need for a Civil Service that is more representative of the country it serves. The move is strategically designed to widen the department's access to the best talent across the UK, tapping into Glasgow's highly skilled workforce and world-class universities. Crucially, by locating senior leaders and policy roles outside of London, the Second HQ helps bring decision making closer to communities. The Second Headquarters strategy will contribute to key Places for Growth targets including 50% of SCS outside of London by 2030 and 50% of the fast stream outside of London by 2030.



Productive and Agile State & Civil Service Reform

The work of the Second Headquarters is integral to driving a more productive and agile state and transforming the civil service. The strategy prioritises creating a cost effective, highly skilled and empowered civil service through place based initiatives. We are driving forward this priority through our partnerships with local stakeholders and within government. As a result, we are reducing silo working and duplication of effort with other UK government departments in Scotland, allowing for more efficiency and coordinated outcomes. The Second Headquarters will continue to drive forward place based innovation and support key Cabinet Office projects including regional delivery of pilot programmes like test and learn.



Mission Delivery

The five government missions aim to drive innovation across the public sector in partnership with businesses, civil society, the British people and devolved governments galvanised towards delivery of five key goals. The Second Headquarters plays a supporting role in engaging with regional external stakeholders to ensure their perspectives, skills and expertise are utilised in the mission delivery process. Building on these engagements, we have a key role to play in ensuring that Missions reflect and serve the diverse needs of all regions.



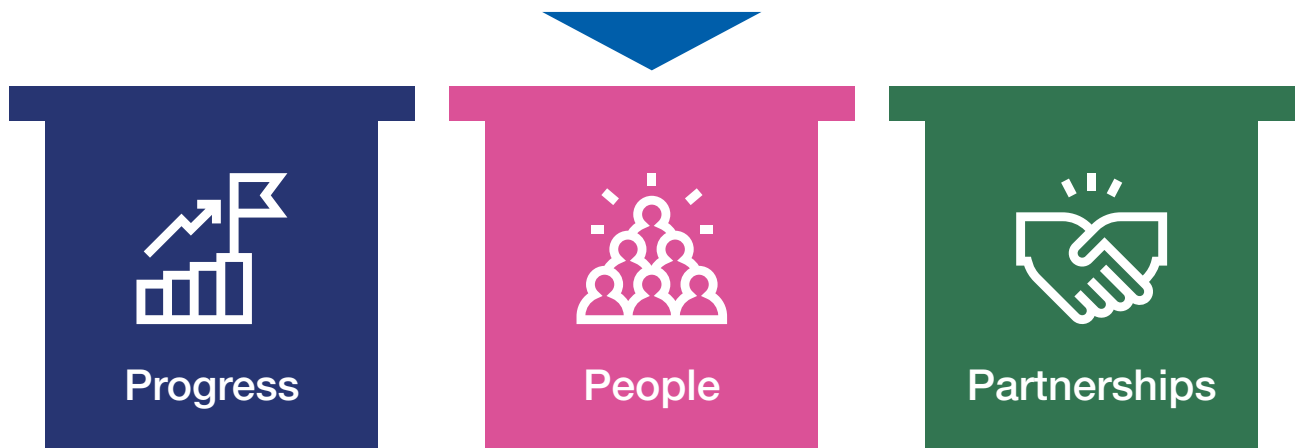
The Second Headquarters in Glasgow is a fundamental part of delivering and supporting the Cabinet Office's strategic priorities. By driving forward Places for Growth, fostering a Productive and Agile State, and ensuring policy reflects the needs of citizens across the UK. It is actively creating a more geographically resilient, diverse, and effective central government. This 2030 strategy will further support delivery in these critical areas and ensure that the Civil Service is better connected to the UK's regional strengths.

Our 2030 Ambition

Our driving ambition for 2030 is to fulfil our full potential as a Second Headquarters and maximise the benefits for the Cabinet Office, for Scotland, and the UK. In doing so, we will fulfil our fundamental role: to deliver the Cabinet Office's highest priorities, widen the department's access to the best talent across the UK and contribute to a thriving UK-wide civil service that is closer to the communities it serves.

To achieve this, we are setting this strategy for 2030, developed in consultation with Cabinet Office staff and senior leaders in Glasgow and London, and drawing on insights from other UK government departments working in Scotland and some of the country's most successful organisations spanning fields from finance to higher education.

Our strategy for 2030 has
three central pillars:

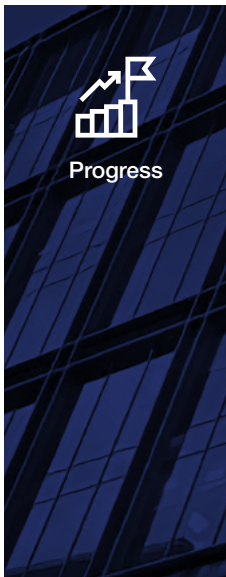


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**It is important that the Civil Service is
representative of the communities it serves.**

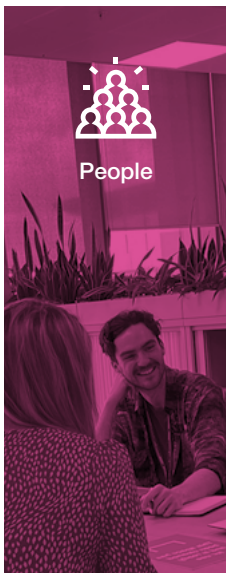
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Building on success to realise the full potential of the Second Headquarters

To realise the full potential of the Second Headquarters we need to embed the characteristics that define any successful headquarters: that it is a home location for some of our most senior leaders and that it supports delivery of the highest priority outcomes across the organisation. To this end, we will increase the presence of senior leadership and build towards a whole of department presence so that the Second Headquarters makes an even greater contribution to the core purpose of the Cabinet Office - to support the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, and ensure a safe, prosperous and resilient UK by helping government work together.



Investing in Scottish talent and celebrating our community

The Second Headquarters widens the Cabinet Office's access to the best talent the UK has to offer, from a greater diversity of backgrounds. To maximise this opportunity, we will focus our efforts on promoting the Cabinet Office as an employer of choice in Scotland, develop our civil service talent pipelines in Scotland and provide everyone in the Second Headquarters with the learning and development opportunities they need to reach their full career potential. Equally, while we want to build a headquarters that is as much at the centre of the work of the Cabinet Office as our headquarters in London, we are proud of our distinct community, which we will continue to grow and develop.



Adding value for the Cabinet Office and for our partners

Through our Second Headquarters in Glasgow we have the opportunity to strengthen the department by making it more representative of the United Kingdom and bringing decision making closer to communities far removed from Whitehall. To achieve this, we will work closely with other UK government departments present in Scotland to maximise the benefits of a thriving UK-wide Civil Service and engage with the Scottish Government. In areas of policy and strategy that the Cabinet Office leads or has a coordinating role, we will look for opportunities to draw on local insight and expertise, while helping partners better understand the UK government. And as a major employer, we will continue to build on partnerships with other key institutions in Glasgow and across Scotland, and make a positive impact on our local community by building partnerships with purpose and measurable outcomes.

Our 2030 Strategy



Progress

Building on success to realise the full potential of the Second Headquarters

Leadership for the future

Strengthen the visible leadership the Second Headquarters will need, up to the most senior level in the department, and normalising a regular presence of senior leaders and Ministers.

A place for great careers

Make the Second Headquarters a place not just for great jobs but great careers by building a whole of department presence and making it possible for any role in the department to be Glasgow based.

Building our HQ infrastructure

Create the foundations for long term success by continuing to invest in the essential infrastructure that an HQ location requires.



People

Investing in Scottish talent and celebrating our community

A whole career offer for Scotland

Enable everyone in the Second Headquarters to realise their full career potential through access to the best available learning and development opportunities and by bringing more senior roles to Scotland that allow people to have their whole career in CO.

Growing our community

Grow our distinct Second Headquarters culture of community by expanding the range and scale of inclusive staff community groups and activities.

Attracting a diversity of talent

Broaden the diversity of the department by raising the profile of the Cabinet Office as an employer in Scotland and creating routes in for talent from any background.



Partnerships

Adding value for the Cabinet Office and for our partners

Working in partnership across government

Maximise the impact of UKG's presence in Scotland by working in partnership with other UKG departments to realise the potential of growth outside of London and engage with the Scottish Government.

Connecting policy and place

Contribute to better policy making by drawing on the expertise of organisations in Scotland across a range of sectors and helping them understand and navigate government.

Purposeful partnerships

Delivering value for the Cabinet Office and for partners by building on relationships with leading institutions and adding value to local communities through corporate and volunteer activities.



Progress

Building on the successes of our Second Headquarters

Leadership for the future

To reach its full potential as a Second Headquarters it is essential that Glasgow is a home location for some of our most senior leaders and a working location for Ministers and senior leadership across the department. This centre of gravity of senior leadership will reinforce Glasgow's credibility internally and externally as a headquarters location of the department, provide the visible leadership that the Second Headquarters needs as it enters its next phase of development and demonstrate to staff that a career with the Cabinet Office in Glasgow offers the opportunity to progress to the most senior levels of the department. This has been instrumental in the success of the Darlington Economic Campus⁶, where the leadership of a Second Permanent Secretary, senior leaders (up to Director General) across the multi-department campus, and a routine presence of Ministers has powerfully illustrated that the work of Central government does not need to be limited to Central London.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Grow the size and seniority of our SCS community, up to the most senior level in the department, appointing our first Director General based in Glasgow at the earliest opportunity.
- ✓ Normalise a regular rhythm of Ministers and Cabinet Office senior leaders working out of the Second Headquarters.



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It is essential that Glasgow is a home location for some of our most senior leaders and a working location for Ministers.

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⁶ <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/darlington-economic-campus-civil-service-relocations.pdf>

A place for great careers

The next phase in the growth and development of the Second Headquarters must be about creating opportunities for great careers. We have made significant progress, growing to over 700 people across a wide range of business units. Yet, we still have more to do to offer opportunities for progression (adding a greater number of roles from Grade 7 and above based in Glasgow) and a wider range of opportunities across the full breadth of the work of the department. Making Glasgow a great place for a career in the Cabinet Office, and realising its full potential as a headquarters location, will mean all parts of the department having a Glasgow presence and making it possible for any role to be Glasgow based. This supports the government's long-term plan for change to create a more diverse and representative civil service.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Build towards a whole of department presence, underpinned by stretching targets, and ensure that any role that is advertised is open to both London and Glasgow by default.

Building our HQ infrastructure

Ensure that we create the right foundations for long-term success by looking at the internal structures, systems and processes that we need to effectively function as a growing Second Headquarters. We will ensure that we have the right internal infrastructure and resources to grow and build our impact and deliver our priorities. This will allow us to operate with maximum efficiency contributing to a more productive and agile state.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Regularly review our facilities and requirements ensuring we can deliver current and future business priorities.
- ✓ Dedicate resources for Glasgow Second Headquarters to deliver critical office facilities and engagement.

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We will ensure that we create the right foundations for long-term success.

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Progress





People

Investing in Scottish talent and celebrating our community

A learning and development offer for Scotland

To sustain the growth and development of the Second Headquarters, and make the most of the talent of our people, we need to ensure that everyone in the Second Headquarters has access to learning, development, and opportunities they need to reach their full career potential. This will support our staff to grow and develop in their career while allowing the Cabinet Office to utilise these skills and incorporate different types of specialisms and diverse thinking into our work. Glasgow offers huge opportunities across our academic, public, private and third sector to support the development and cross-pollination of skills.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Work with Government People Group to utilise existing learning and create a programme of Scotland-based learning and development offers - aligning to key skills and professions - public policy, digital, data, technology and security.
- ✓ Create leadership development opportunities specific to the UK Government in Scotland to best utilise the skills and expertise within our location.
- ✓ Facilitate cross-pollination of skills through work shadowing and exchanges across sectors in Scotland, driving knowledge exchange and deepening understanding between government and external partners.



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Glasgow offers huge opportunities across our academic, public, private and third sector.

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Growing our community

Our people in the Second Headquarters have told us that we have a distinct culture and community where they feel a sense of belonging, purpose and collaboration across different business units. This way of working has been identified internally as one of our unique assets making staff feel valued and supported. It is critical that we continue this culture and sense of community as we continue to grow as a Second Headquarters to ensure that valuable ways of working grow with us.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Create inclusive mechanisms for all staff to nominate their time to working on Second Headquarters activities e.g. events, communications and volunteering.
- ✓ Create increased opportunities for engagement across the Second Headquarters such as staff events.

Attracting a diversity of talent

Glasgow has a huge range of diverse talent to capitalise on, providing us with diversity in both regional background and experience. This will be critical as we grow and develop our Second Headquarters. Tapping into talent from different backgrounds allows us to tap into diversity of thought and lived experience that is typically missing from the civil service⁷. The Institute for Government has found that by recruiting people from different professional backgrounds we can improve the quality of the civil service’s work⁸ allowing us to drive forward new perspectives in the work that we deliver.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Grow and nurture our future talent pipeline via targeted outreach and engagement with universities, colleges and schools in Scotland.
- ✓ Work with the UK Government and external stakeholders to raise the profile of the Cabinet Office as an employer in Scotland and creating routes for talent from any background.



7 <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/darlington-economic-campus-civil-service-relocations.pdf>

8 <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publication/civil-service-external-recruitment>



Partnerships

Partnerships

Adding value for the Cabinet Office and for partners

Working in partnership across government

Ensuring that the UK government in Scotland works together to share knowledge and best practice. Collaborative working will help us identify areas of mutual collaboration across departments allowing us to work jointly on synergies such as outreach, recruitment and stakeholder engagement. This allows us to function more effectively, reducing silo working and duplication of effort to contribute to a thriving UK wide civil service. Increased UK government collaboration also makes it easier for our partners to effectively engage and navigate government enhancing their interactions, input and opportunities.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Support delivery of the UK Government Head of Place Plan and working in partnership with the Scotland Office and other UK government departments on areas of mutual interest such as career and talent pipelines.
- ✓ Work as part of the UK Government Leaders in Scotland group to ensure we focus on long term impacts and outcomes across government in Scotland.
- ✓ Hold regular forums for knowledge and idea exchange across departments and grades.
- ✓ Maintain regular engagement with the Scottish Government and local government.



Collaborative working will help us identify areas of mutual collaboration across departments.



Connecting policy and place

A central objective in building a UK-wide Civil Service, with increasing numbers of senior leaders and policymakers based across the UK, is to make the Civil Service more representative of the country it serves and bring decision making closer to local communities. Relocating senior and policymaking roles to our Second Headquarters (as set out under the Progress pillar), is essential in this, but it is not the complete picture. For areas of policy and strategy that the Cabinet Office leads, or exercises a coordinating role across departments, we have an opportunity to more actively draw on expertise across Scotland, ranging from world class academic institutions to leaders in industry to inform policy development.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ For areas of policy and strategy led by the Cabinet Office, proactively identify opportunities to draw on expertise across Scotland in policy development and consultation exercises.

Purposeful Partnerships

Enhancing existing external engagement activities to ensure that partners are prioritised and engaged consistently, clearly and with purpose. This will allow us to build sustainable and long-term partnerships where we can work collaboratively on mutually beneficial goals with a sense of shared purpose. These partnerships will be measurable to demonstrate progress, outcomes and value. Glasgow's strong business base, academic institutions and reputation for innovation and technology demonstrate significant opportunities for joint working and knowledge exchange.

Establishing strong stakeholder relationships will be key to long-term success allowing us to build external awareness, trust and credibility.

To deliver this, we will:

- ✓ Increase awareness among external stakeholders of our role, our remit, and how we can work together with collective purpose.
- ✓ Deliver a regular and consistent external engagement programme with our local partners across the public, private, and third sectors.
- ✓ Deliver a communications and stakeholder engagement plan.
- ✓ Drive forward partnerships and initiatives that add value to local communities in Glasgow and across Scotland through corporate and volunteering initiatives.



Partnerships



Our Plan for Delivery

Successful implementation of the strategy will be critical to our success. This strategy is accompanied by an operational delivery plan that outlines key metrics and measurables for each year of delivery.



Senior Sponsor and Senior Leadership Team

Delivery will be overseen by the Senior Sponsor for Scotland. Each pillar will be supported by Senior Civil Servants who make up our Senior Leadership Team within the Second Headquarters. They will be responsible for measuring the success and delivery of the strategy against its agreed KPIs to ensure that the Second Headquarters delivers effectively on its ambitions.



Strategic Development Team

The strategic development team is unique to the Second Headquarters and their role is to support the growth and development of the Second Headquarters which includes strategy, stakeholder engagement, UK government collaboration and continuing to build our internal community. Their role will be heavily focused on delivery of the strategy and specifically responsible for pillar three which focuses on partnerships.



Cabinet Office Second Headquarters Staff

All staff within the Second Headquarters, have a key role to play in making the strategy successful and supporting our future ambitions. From modelling key behaviours, to embracing new learning opportunities, everyone across the Second Headquarters can play a key part in the delivery of this strategy.



External Stakeholders & Partners

Our stakeholders and partners have played a critical role in the development of this strategy and we cannot and should not deliver this strategy in isolation. We must have regular engagement with stakeholders to ensure collaboration, accountability and delivery of our key strategic pillars.

Measuring Success

To ensure accountability and transparency a yearly review of the strategy will be undertaken and published, to measure progress against our key pillars and KPIs. As part of this delivery, we will also be engaging regularly with our key strategic partners and wider UK Government in Scotland to ensure that we have a coordinated approach.







Cabinet Office

