

Close to 1,000 jobs moved from London to Scotland under UK Civil Service shakeup

- Major progress made with 933 UK Civil Service jobs moved out of London to Scotland
- UK government has committed to relocate 1500 jobs to Scotland by 2025
- Cabinet Office second HQ to more than double department's presence in Glasgow by 2025

Almost 1,000 London-based Civil Service jobs have moved to Scotland since March 2020, the Cabinet Office has announced today.

The latest figures have been announced as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Nadhim Zahawi, visited the department's new second HQ at Atlantic Square, Glasgow ahead of chairing the inaugural Islands Forum in Orkney on Wednesday.

The relocation programme, known as Places for Growth, is moving 22,000 Civil Service jobs out of London by 2030. Already 933 jobs have been relocated from the capital to Scotland since the start of the scheme, with a further 600 high-quality jobs to be permanently based in Scotland by 2025.

The Cabinet Office will more than double its current numbers of Glasgow employees to around 750 by 2025.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations Nadhim Zahawi said:

We want to drive growth right across the United Kingdom and moving Civil Service jobs out of London is crucial to delivering this. I am delighted to say that the Cabinet Office is leading the way with this work by ensuring we have key decision makers based in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

It is imperative that we continue to build on this momentum and expand opportunities for people outside of London, giving them the chance to build successful careers right across the UK and bring diversity of thought and experience right to the very top of government.

The number of Senior UK Civil Servants now based in Glasgow has grown by 1,400 per cent under the scheme, with 30 senior officials now permanently located in the city. The government plans to have at least 50 per cent of UK-based Senior Civil Servants located outside of London by 2030.

Cabinet Office roles previously based in London but which are now in Scotland

include directors in the Counter Fraud Function, Consulting Hub and Debt Management teams. This signals the end of the era where staff who wanted to climb the ladder to senior level needed to move to London or nearby, or made the long commute from further afield. Staff are now able to lead teams delivering exceptional public services while based anywhere in the UK.

Naomi Hunter, who was born in Edinburgh but moved to London to join the Treasury in 2013, is now a Senior Civil Servant based in the Cabinet Office's Glasgow HQ. After joining the UK Civil Service, she spent the next seven years living in London and travelling back to Scotland regularly to see family and friends.

Ms Hunter, who leads the strategy team for recovering public sector debt, said:

When I first joined the UK civil service, I moved to London because it was the only option if I was going to progress in my career. The opening of the Cabinet Office HQ in Glasgow has meant I've been able to move back to Scotland and still do what I'm passionate about. I'm so pleased for people in Scotland that they no longer need to move south to start their careers or get good, expert jobs in their field.

The expansion has meant graduates are remaining in Scotland, preventing a 'brain drain' as young people travel south to further their careers.

Ceilidh MacDonald, aged 27 and originally from Inverness, was her family's first university graduate. After initially ruling out a job at a central government department due to the requirement to live and work in London, she learned of the Cabinet Office's expansion in Glasgow and took a role in the Grants team.

Ms MacDonald said:

I thought the only way to have a career was to move to London but when Covid hit, I realised that was the last place I wanted to be. I'm now not only gaining more experience than I ever thought possible in Scotland, but we're working in the community to get the word out that there's fantastic opportunities on your doorstep.

Other cities have also benefited from the expansion with hundreds of roles moved to Edinburgh and East Kilbride in departments including the FCDO, Ministry of Justice and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

It is expected that these jobs will provide a significant boost for local business and enterprise, with government research having shown that workers put around 50% of their salaries back into the local economy.