

News story: Scottish Secretary discusses economic development in Argyll and Bute

On his two-day visit [Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 August 2018], Mr Mundell's programme included:

- Meeting the leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Aileen Morton, to discuss local economic issues and their proposals for a rural growth deal.
- Traveling to Inveraray for a roundtable with a number of Argyll and Bute businesses. They discussed the challenges and opportunities of EU Exit, and the Government's recently-published EU Exit White Paper. Mr Mundell also visited Loch Fyne Oysters and Fyne Ales to discuss the implications of Brexit for their businesses.
- Meeting personnel at HMNB Clyde in Helensburgh, to discuss the economic partnership between the local community and the base, and see newly-refurbished service personnel accommodation in the town.

Mr Mundell said:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet Argyll and Bute Council, HMNB Clyde and a number of local businesses to discuss the issues and opportunities for the local economy, and to hear more about the Council's proposals for a rural growth fund.

We also discussed the priorities of businesses as we prepare to leave the EU. The UK Government is determined to get a deal with the EU which works for Scotland and the rest of the UK – one which allows us to continue trading with the EU while also striking ambitious new trade deals around the world.

HMNB Clyde is set to become the home of the UK's entire submarine service from 2020, and the MOD is investing hundreds of millions of pounds in developing the base. In February 2017 the base, the UK government and the local authority Argyll and Bute signed a partnership agreement to ensure that the investment in the military site will benefit the growth and regeneration of the wider community.

Mr Mundell added:

The work of the team at HMNB Clyde demonstrates clearly how

Scotland benefits from the UK's armed forces, and how our military contributes to the safety and prosperity of Scotland. The Faslane base makes a huge contribution to the local area, providing skilled jobs, supporting the local economy and contributing to regeneration. This project, which will improve service families' accommodation, is a great example of that strong partnership with the local community in action.