

Northern Ireland Office moves to UKG Hub in Heart of Belfast

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) is relocating from Stormont to a new home in the heart of Belfast city centre as part of its mission to make Northern Ireland a better place to live, work and invest.

The plan will expand the UK Government Hub in Belfast city centre, highlighting the department's desire to become a more accessible, open and modern Civil Service department as it marks the 50th anniversary of the Northern Ireland Office's formation.

The move comes as the UK Government's Places for Growth programme continues to restructure the civil service by putting local people at the heart of decision making and ensuring civil servants are rooted in the communities they serve. Erskine House is another example of the programme's success which will see 22,000 Civil Service roles moved out of London by 2030.

The NIO will join government colleagues in Erskine House, bringing together UK Government departments including HMRC and the Competitions and Marketing Authority, with the Department of International Trade and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities also expected to base staff in the central UKG hub later in the year. The new location will allow departments to collaborate, to work in new ways, deliver better services for the people of Northern Ireland, and provide a modern and safe working environment for their staff.

From its new location, the NIO will be able to engage more effectively with a broad range of stakeholders to collectively build better outcomes for all citizens in Northern Ireland. The move will also bring increased footfall to the centre of Belfast, boosting the local economy as Northern Ireland continues to recover from the pandemic.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

"I am delighted that the department will be moving to this fantastic new building in the heart of Belfast city centre.

"Our new workspace will provide a modern working environment that will act as a foundation for the NIO's work to support the Government's levelling up agenda and make Northern Ireland a better place to live, work and invest."

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Steve Barclay said:

"There is fantastic work being done in Northern Ireland to ensure that the civil service is deeply rooted in the communities it serves.

"This move brings long-term job opportunities for people around Belfast and will boost town and city centre businesses through the increased footfall.

It's great to see levelling up in action.

Jim Harra, HMRC's First Permanent Secretary and Chief Executive, said:

"I'm delighted to welcome Northern Ireland Office colleagues to Erskine House. They will join staff at HMRC and the Competitions and Markets Authority at our Belfast UK Government Hub, building a professional and vibrant civil service community to deliver great services to our customers."